

Review Article

Do All Homo Sapiens Stand Equal? The Role of Culture in Defining Superiority and Inferiority

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Abstract

This paper examines the paradox of inherent biological similarities among Homo sapiens and the divisive cultural constructs that promote notions of superiority and inferiority within this unified species. Despite overwhelming genetic similarities that classify Homo sapiens as a single species with shared ancestries and capacities, cultural narratives have historically created hierarchical distinctions. Using Sri Lanka as a focal point, this review aims to explore how cultural, ethnic, and religious identities have been manipulated to construct and institutionalize social hierarchies, and to analyze the broader social, psychological, and economic consequences of such divisions. Findings indicate that while our biological makeup underscores human unity, cultural frameworks, shaped by colonialism, patriarchy, and globalization, continue to reinforce inequality and limit inclusivity. The review concludes that education, cross-cultural dialogue, and policy reform play a critical role in dismantling these inherited hierarchies and fostering equality and dignity across societies.

Keywords: Culture, Discrimination, Equality, Gender, Human rights, Patriarchy

1. Introduction

Introducing the concept of Homo sapiens as a unified species, delving into the inherent biological similarities that bind us together, irrespective of geographical boundaries. Homo sapiens, a term that translates to 'wise man' in Latin, categorically defines us as a singular species known for our extensive cognitive abilities, complex language use, and adaptability. This species, which emerged approximately 300,000



years ago, has showcased a remarkable range of physical and intellectual traits, from the ability to create sophisticated tools to the development of rich cultural traditions (Harari, 2014). Human history is interconnected by numerous commonalities, yet cultural structures have often created divisions among us. These established systems,

deeply rooted in our cultures, have traditionally encouraged beliefs of superiority and inferiority amongst various tribes. This essay argues that although *Homo sapiens* have a common biological base, it is the influence of cultural narratives and practices that have shaped a landscape characterized by hierarchical differences.

Taking Sri Lanka as a case study, observing a microcosm of such cultural constructs at play. This island nation, with its rich tapestry of history and diversity, offers a poignant example of how cultural, ethnic, and religious identities have been leveraged to construct social hierarchies. The historical context of Sri Lanka, marked by colonial legacies and post-independence ethnic tensions, underscores how cultural divisions can be institutionalized and how they contribute to enduring perceptions of group superiority and inferiority (De Silva, 2005). The biological unity of *Homo sapiens* is a testament to the shared genetic and biological framework that underpins our species. Scientific evidence unequivocally supports the notion that all human beings, regardless of geographical, cultural, or phenotypic differences, belong to a single species, *Homo sapiens*, with a shared ancestry. The Human Genome Project, an ambitious international research effort to map all human genes, has revealed that the genetic makeup of any two individuals is 99.9% identical, emphasizing the profound genetic similarity that exists among all humans (International Human Genome Sequencing Consortium, 2004).

Despite this overwhelming genetic similarity, the minor genetic variations that do exist among humans, accounting for just 0.1% of each individual's DNA, have often been misconstrued or exaggerated. These variations can manifest in physical differences such as skin color, hair texture, and eye shape, which are superficial traits shaped by adaptation to different environments rather than indicators of inherent superiority or inferiority. The concept of race, as it is commonly understood, has no genetic or scientific basis; it is a social construct that has been utilized to justify discrimination and inequality (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Adding complexity to the discussion of human variation is the concept of the "atavistic man," which refers to the appearance in a modern individual of physical traits thought to be characteristic of earlier stages of human evolution. This concept has been historically misapplied to perpetuate stereotypes and rationalize social hierarchies, suggesting that some individuals or groups are more "primitive" or less evolved than others. However, such traits are merely examples of genetic diversity and do not reflect an individual's capabilities, intelligence, or value (Gould, 1981; Lombroso, 1972). The misuse of

biological concepts to justify notions of racial or ethnic superiority underscores a profound misunderstanding of our species' genetic underpinnings. It is critical to recognize that the minor genetic variations among humans are the result of our species' remarkable ability to adapt to a wide range of environments across the globe. These variations do not confer any group with inherent superiority or inferiority; they illustrate the diversity within our species.

Culture plays an instrumental role in human society, acting as the fabric that weaves together the identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and communities across the globe. Geertz (1973) defines culture as a complex system of meanings and symbols, along with the rituals, traditions, and customs that give shape to the way of life of a group of people. It encompasses the languages we speak, the religions we practice, the art we create, and the norms and values we hold dear. Culture is not static; it evolves over time, influenced by internal developments and external interactions, reflecting the dynamic nature of human societies. The significance of culture in shaping human societies cannot be overstated. It is the lens through which we interpret the world around us, guiding our behaviors and influencing our interactions with others and the environment. Culture imbues our existence with meaning, providing the narrative context for our personal and collective identities (Hofstede, 1980). Through shared cultural practices and beliefs, individuals find a sense of belonging and community, fostering social cohesion and continuity.

Furthermore, culture is a catalyst for creativity, innovation, and adaptation. It inspires artistic expression and intellectual pursuit, driving the continuous reinvention of society through new ideas and technologies. Hennessey and Amabile (2010) highlight the role of culture in promoting creativity, noting that cultural support for risk-taking, experimentation, and appreciation of diverse perspectives can significantly enhance creative output. This creative energy, in turn, fuels societal progress and adaptation, enabling communities to respond to challenges, seize opportunities, and shape their futures. Culture also contributes to the diversity of human life, enriching the global tapestry with a multitude of perspectives, practices, and ways of understanding the world. This diversity is a source of strength and resilience, offering multiple pathways to solving problems and enhancing the collective well-being of humanity (Nussbaum, 1997). The exchange of cultural knowledge and practices among different groups can lead to greater empathy, understanding, and cooperation on a global scale.

Throughout history, cultural constructs of superiority and inferiority have significantly shaped societies, often leading to systemic discrimination and social stratification. These constructs have been based on various arbitrary criteria, including technological advancement, military power, economic wealth, as well as

deeply ingrained societal norms such as patriarchy, caste systems, religion-based customs, occupation inheritance, and gender norms. These criteria and norms have historically been manipulated to justify and maintain unequal power dynamics and social hierarchies.

The role of colonialism and imperialism in perpetuating cultural hierarchies cannot be overstated. Said (1978) argues in "Orientalism" that Western powers established a dichotomy between the "civilized" West and the "uncivilized" East, using this distinction to justify the colonization and exploitation of Asian and African societies. This binary framework contributed to the enduring perception of Western cultures as superior, directly influencing global power structures and economic dependencies that persist in the form of neocolonialism. Globalization, while facilitating cross-cultural exchange and economic interdependence, has also played a role in perpetuating cultural hierarchies. As Tomlinson (1999) notes, globalization has often led to the dominance of Western culture and values, marginalizing local cultures and traditions. This cultural dominance is not just a matter of economic imperialism but also reflects a deeper imposition of Western norms and lifestyles, contributing to a homogenization of culture that erases diversity and reinforces the idea of Western superiority.

Patriarchy and gender norms have also been instrumental in creating and sustaining notions of superiority and inferiority. Connell (1987) describes how patriarchal structures privilege men over women, often relegating women to subordinate positions in both public and private spheres. This gender hierarchy is further complicated by intersections with race, class, and ethnicity, leading to complex layers of discrimination and inequality. Similarly, caste systems, particularly those observed in South Asia, institutionalize social stratification based on birth, perpetuating intergenerational inequality. Dumont (1980) highlights how the caste system in India has historically dictated occupation, social status, and marriage, enforcing a rigid social hierarchy that deems certain groups as inherently superior or inferior. Religion-based customs and occupation inheritance are additional factors that have contributed to social stratification. Weber (1930) discusses how religious ideologies can reinforce social hierarchies by prescribing roles and statuses based on religious doctrine. Meanwhile, occupation inheritance, the practice of passing down professions from one generation to the next, has historically limited social mobility and reinforced existing social hierarchies. Cultural divisions among *Homo sapiens* have profound social, psychological, and economic consequences that permeate every aspect of human life. These divisions, often rooted in perceptions of ethnic, racial, religious, or gender superiority, foster environments where discrimination, conflict, and inequality thrive, undermining the inherent equality and dignity of all individuals.

This narrative review aims to achieve three key objectives. First, it seeks to examine how cultural narratives, norms, and institutional practices have historically constructed and perpetuated perceptions of superiority and inferiority among Homo sapiens. Second, it explores the social, psychological, and economic consequences of these cultural divisions, highlighting how they undermine equality and human dignity. Third, the review identifies and discusses contemporary responses, such as human rights movements, decolonization efforts, and multiculturalism, that offer pathways toward a more inclusive and equitable global society. Together, these objectives provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how culture, despite being a unifying human trait, can also serve as a tool of division and hierarchy.

2. Methodology

This paper adopts a narrative review approach, integrating theoretical and empirical insights from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and human rights studies to explore how cultural constructs shape perceptions of superiority and inferiority among Homo sapiens. The review process involved purposive selection of scholarly literature published in English between 1970 and 2024, using databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ResearchGate. Keywords included “cultural hierarchy,” “superiority and inferiority,” “patriarchy,” “colonialism,” “human equality,” and “Sri Lanka.”

Only peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and credible institutional reports were included, while opinion pieces or non-academic sources were excluded to maintain academic rigor. The sources were thematically analyzed and synthesized under major conceptual domains, biological unity, cultural construction of hierarchy, and socio-psychological and economic consequences, allowing the integration of theoretical perspectives with contextual realities. This flexible, interpretive process follows narrative review principles, emphasizing conceptual depth, interpretive reasoning, and holistic understanding over quantitative measurement.

2.1. Social Consequences

The social consequences of cultural divisions are profound, affecting the fabric of communities and societies at large. These divisions often lead to segregation and marginalization, eroding the sense of unity and cohesion that is vital for the collective well-being of any society. Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory provides a crucial framework for understanding these dynamics, illustrating how individuals categorize themselves and others into various social groups, leading to a distinction between "us" (in-group) and "them" (out-group). This categorization

process is not merely an exercise in social identification but carries significant implications for how people perceive and interact with each other.

Prejudice and discrimination emerge as direct consequences of in-group and out-group distinctions. Individuals tend to favor members of their own group while harboring biases and negative stereotypes against those perceived to belong to an out-group. This bias can manifest in various forms of discrimination, from subtle microaggressions to overt acts of hostility and exclusion. The ramifications of these behaviors are wide-ranging, affecting the targeted individuals' access to resources, opportunities, and social support. Segregation, both physical and social, is another significant consequence of cultural divisions. Communities may become divided along racial, ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic lines, leading to homogenous enclaves that lack diversity and impede cross-cultural interaction. Such segregation reinforces stereotypes and prejudices, as individuals have fewer opportunities to engage with and learn from those who are different from themselves. Massey and Denton (1993) have documented how residential segregation contributes to racial disparities in housing, education, and employment, further entrenching social inequalities.

Moreover, cultural divisions undermine community cohesion and social solidarity. The sense of belonging to a wider community is weakened when societal fault lines are emphasized over shared identities and common goals. Putnam (2007) has explored the challenges that diversity poses to social cohesion, noting that in the short term, increased diversity can lead to lower levels of social trust and engagement. However, he also suggests that over time, inclusive communities can overcome these challenges by fostering a broader sense of shared identity and mutual respect.

The erosion of social cohesion and the proliferation of segregation and discrimination have far-reaching implications, not just for the individuals directly affected but for society as a whole. The loss of social capital—the networks of relationships that facilitate collective action and mutual support—can hinder social progress and exacerbate social tensions.

The social consequences of cultural divisions demand attention and action. Efforts to bridge divides, promote inclusivity, and foster mutual understanding are essential for building resilient and cohesive societies. Education, community engagement, and policies that encourage diversity and inclusion can play pivotal roles in overcoming the challenges posed by cultural divisions, ultimately leading to a more equitable and unified society.

2.2. Psychological Consequences

The psychological consequences of cultural divisions are profound and multifaceted, impacting individuals' mental health and well-being in significant ways. Cultural divisions, which often manifest through racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of discrimination, can lead to feelings of alienation, identity conflict, and reduced self-esteem, particularly among those perceived as belonging to "inferior" or marginalized groups. The internalization of societal stigma and stereotypes can have deleterious effects on an individual's psychological state, affecting their behavior, performance, and overall mental health.

Steele and Aronson's (1995) concept of stereotype threat provides a critical lens through which to understand these dynamics. Stereotype threat occurs when individuals are at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about their group. This phenomenon can significantly impair the academic performance and psychological well-being of individuals from marginalized groups, as the anxiety and stress associated with the potential of fulfilling these stereotypes can hinder cognitive functions and self-confidence. The impact of stereotype threat extends beyond academic settings, influencing various aspects of life and contributing to a pervasive sense of inadequacy and diminished self-esteem. Further research has expanded on these findings, illustrating the wide-ranging psychological effects of cultural divisions. Pascoe and Smart Richman (2009) have documented how experiences of discrimination can lead to heightened stress responses and chronic health conditions, as well as psychological effects such as depression and anxiety. The cumulative burden of facing discrimination and navigating a society structured by cultural divisions can lead to a state of chronic vigilance, or "minority stress," which can exacerbate mental health problems over time (Meyer, 2003).

The psychological impact of cultural divisions is not limited to the immediate effects of specific discriminatory incidents. The broader societal context that valorizes certain identities while marginalizing others can lead to a pervasive sense of alienation and identity conflict. Individuals may struggle with reconciling different aspects of their identity in a society that implicitly or explicitly devalues them, leading to internal conflicts and a fractured sense of self (Phinney, 1996). Addressing the psychological consequences of cultural divisions requires a multifaceted approach that includes promoting inclusive and affirmative social environments, implementing strategies to mitigate the effects of stereotype threat, and providing mental health support that is sensitive to the experiences of marginalized individuals. Encouraging resilience and affirming diverse identities can help mitigate some of the adverse psychological effects of cultural divisions, promoting a healthier, more inclusive society.

2.3. Economic Consequences

The economic consequences of cultural divisions are both profound and pervasive, reinforcing cycles of inequality that affect not only individuals and families but also the broader fabric of society. Systemic barriers, rooted in discriminatory practices and biases, restrict access to education, employment, and essential resources, disproportionately affecting marginalized groups. This economic stratification is not only a matter of social justice but also a significant impediment to economic development and societal progress. Pager and Shepherd (2008) provide compelling evidence of the economic impact of cultural divisions, particularly through racial discrimination in the labor market. Their research demonstrates how racial biases in hiring, pay, and promotion practices significantly limit employment opportunities and wage prospects for minority groups. Such discrimination not only undermines the principle of meritocracy but also contributes to persistent wage gaps and economic disparities that can span generations.

The repercussions of these economic disparities extend beyond individual and family well-being, impacting broader economic development. When a substantial portion of the population is unable to fully participate in the economy due to systemic barriers, the entire society suffers from the underutilization of talents and abilities. This underutilization represents a loss of potential economic output and innovation, hindering growth and competitiveness in a globalized economy. Moreover, economic inequality contributes to social instability and reduces social mobility, making it more challenging for individuals from marginalized groups to break the cycle of poverty (Corak, 2013). Economic disparities can exacerbate other forms of social inequality, leading to a compounding effect that entrenches divisions and hinders efforts towards social cohesion and inclusivity. To address the economic consequences of cultural divisions, it is crucial to implement policies and practices that promote equity and inclusion. This includes enforcing anti-discrimination laws in the labor market, promoting equal access to quality education, and implementing targeted interventions to support marginalized communities. Additionally, fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce can enhance creativity and innovation, driving economic growth and development (Phillips, 2014).

The economic consequences of cultural divisions are a critical barrier to achieving equality and prosperity for all. Addressing these issues requires concerted efforts from governments, businesses, and civil society to dismantle systemic barriers and create opportunities for all individuals to realize their potential.

2.4. Undermining Equality and Dignity

Cultural divisions, with their capacity to segregate and marginalize, fundamentally challenge the principles of equality and dignity that are foundational to human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), a cornerstone document in the

history of human rights, proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. This declaration is a global acknowledgment of the inherent worth of every individual, irrespective of any distinctions, including those based on culture, race, or religion.

However, the enduring presence of cultural divisions within societies not only perpetuates inequality but also infringes upon the dignity of individuals deemed to belong to "inferior" groups. These divisions are not merely superficial or isolated incidents of prejudice; they are symptomatic of deeper systemic issues that permeate social structures and institutions. The differential treatment based on cultural distinctions can lead to unequal access to resources, opportunities, and justice, thereby undermining the universal principle of equality (Sen, 1999). The implications of such divisions extend beyond the violation of individual rights to impact the social fabric as a whole. When certain groups are systematically devalued, it not only affects those directly victimized but also diminishes the collective humanity by fostering environments of exclusion and hostility. This erosion of dignity and equality necessitates a multifaceted approach to redress, involving education, policy reform, and cross-cultural engagement.

Education plays a pivotal role in dismantling cultural divisions by promoting understanding and respect for diversity. An educational framework that incorporates a comprehensive understanding of human rights, cultural diversity, and social justice can equip individuals with the tools necessary to challenge prejudice and advocate for a more inclusive society (Banks, 2004). Inclusive policies that actively promote equality and protect the rights of marginalized groups are essential for addressing systemic inequalities. Legislation and policies need to be designed with the recognition of cultural diversity as a strength, ensuring that all individuals have equal access to opportunities and protections under the law (Kymlicka, 1995). Cross-cultural dialogue is another critical component in fostering a society that values diversity. Such dialogue encourages empathy, understanding, and mutual respect among individuals from different cultural backgrounds. It provides a platform for sharing experiences, challenging stereotypes, and building bridges between communities, thereby reinforcing the principles of equality and dignity for all (Bohm, 1996).

Cultural divisions pose a significant challenge to the principles of equality and dignity enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Addressing these divisions requires concerted efforts across education, policy, and societal engagement to build an inclusive world that honors and respects the diversity of the human family. Challenging the deeply ingrained cultural constructs of superiority and inferiority is crucial for fostering a more equitable world. Throughout history, various movements and philosophies have emerged to confront these divisive

notions, advocating for a society that values diversity and promotes inclusivity. Human rights campaigns, decolonization efforts, and the philosophy of multiculturalism stand as beacons of progress in this ongoing struggle.

2.5. Human Rights Campaigns

The role of human rights campaigns in challenging systemic inequalities and advocating for the fundamental rights of all individuals, including those discriminated against based on their cultural background, with a focus on Sri Lanka, it's important to contextualize within the broader global human rights movement. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948 is a foundational text that has inspired numerous international treaties and national laws. This declaration, adopted by the United Nations, set forth basic human rights to be universally protected. Organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have been instrumental in this ongoing struggle, leveraging the UDHR's principles to call attention to violations and advocate for justice.

In Sri Lanka, as in many parts of the world, discrimination can intersect with various aspects of identity, including ethnicity, religion, and gender. Cultural discrimination often exacerbates social and economic disparities, leading to cycles of violence, exclusion, and injustice. Human rights campaigns focusing on these issues aim to not only highlight these injustices but also to promote systemic change through legal reforms, education, and public advocacy.

2.6. Human Rights Campaigns and Cultural Discrimination in Sri Lanka

Human rights organizations have played a crucial role in documenting and advocating against cultural discrimination and human rights abuses in Sri Lanka. The country's long-standing ethnic conflict, marked by the civil war between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), has been a focal point for human rights advocacy. The conflict, which lasted from 1983 until 2009, led to significant human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and displacement of civilians. The post-war period has also seen challenges related to reconciliation, accountability, and ensuring the rights of all communities, including minority Tamil and Muslim populations. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have reported on various issues in Sri Lanka, including the rights of internally displaced persons, freedom of expression, and the rights of detainees. Their work emphasizes the importance of addressing past abuses as part of the reconciliation process and the need for comprehensive legal reforms to ensure the protection of human rights for all Sri Lankans, regardless of their cultural background.

2.7. Decolonization Efforts

Decolonization efforts represent a critical aspect of the global struggle for self-determination, challenging the legacies of colonialism and imperialism that have shaped the world. The mid-20th century saw a significant wave of decolonization, particularly in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, where countries fought for and gained independence from European colonial powers. This movement was not only a political struggle for sovereignty but also a cultural and intellectual assertion against the imposed identities and values of colonial rule. The decolonization process extends beyond the political sphere, encompassing efforts to reclaim and affirm the value and dignity of indigenous cultures and perspectives that were marginalized or suppressed under colonial rule. Intellectual and cultural decolonization involves challenging and dismantling the Eurocentric narratives and frameworks that have dominated global discourse, advocating for the recognition and inclusion of diverse voices and knowledge systems.

Frantz Fanon's work, particularly "The Wretched of the Earth" (1961), provides a seminal analysis of the psychological and cultural impacts of colonialism, arguing for the necessity of decolonization for the true liberation of colonized peoples. Fanon highlights the importance of overcoming the inferiority complex instilled by colonial domination and the need to rediscover and valorize indigenous cultures and traditions. In contemporary times, decolonization efforts have taken various forms, including academic movements to "decolonize the curriculum," which seeks to challenge and expand the Eurocentric perspectives traditionally emphasized in education. This includes incorporating literature, theories, and histories from non-Western sources and perspectives, thereby acknowledging the richness and diversity of global knowledge.

Sri Lanka's decolonization process involved not only the transfer of political power but also efforts to reclaim and affirm Sri Lankan cultural identity and heritage. This has included the revitalization of local traditions, languages, and arts that were suppressed or undervalued under colonial rule. The country has also engaged in intellectual decolonization, challenging Eurocentric historical narratives and promoting indigenous perspectives within its education system and public discourse (Gamage, 2018). The post-independence era in Sri Lanka has been marked by efforts to forge a national identity that respects the diverse ethnic and cultural makeup of its population. This has been a complex task, given the ethnic tensions and civil conflict that have occurred, partly as a legacy of colonial divide-and-rule policies.

2.8. Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism as a philosophy promotes the recognition and celebration of cultural diversity, advocating for policies and practices that respect and include diverse cultural expressions within a society. Kymlicka (1995) argues that multiculturalism facilitates a more inclusive society by acknowledging the rights of minority groups to maintain their distinct cultural practices, thereby challenging the assumption of cultural homogeneity and superiority. Multiculturalism encourages dialogue and mutual respect among different cultural groups, fostering a sense of belonging and participation for all members of society.

Sri Lanka is home to a diverse population, including the Sinhalese majority, Tamil minority, and other groups such as Moors, Malays, Burghers, and indigenous Vedda people. The country's colonial history, particularly under the British, exacerbated ethnic divisions, notably between the Sinhalese and Tamils, leading to prolonged civil conflict. In the post-war era, embracing multiculturalism has been seen as a vital step towards reconciliation, peace-building, and the creation of an inclusive national identity. Kymlicka's (1995) argument for multiculturalism underscores the importance of recognizing minority rights and cultural differences as a foundation for a more inclusive society. This perspective is particularly relevant in Sri Lanka, where policies and practices that embrace cultural diversity and promote intercultural dialogue are essential for healing and building a united nation. Efforts to implement multicultural policies in Sri Lanka have included constitutional safeguards for minority rights, language policies that recognize Tamil as a national language alongside Sinhala, and educational reforms to promote awareness and respect for cultural diversity. These measures aim to foster a sense of belonging and participation among all cultural groups, challenging the legacy of division and promoting a shared identity as Sri Lankans (Coperehewa, 2011).

2.9. The Role of Education, Dialogue, and Empathy

Education plays a critical role in overcoming cultural biases and dismantling notions of superiority and inferiority. By incorporating multicultural perspectives and critical thinking skills into curricula, educational institutions can equip individuals with the tools to critically examine cultural assumptions and to appreciate the value of diversity (Banks, 2004). Dialogue and empathy are also essential for bridging cultural divides. Engaging in open and respectful conversations about cultural differences and shared experiences can lead to greater understanding and empathy among individuals from diverse backgrounds. Such interactions can dispel stereotypes and reduce prejudices, paving the way for more inclusive and equitable social relations (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

3. Conclusion and Implications

In conclusion, the exploration of cultural divisions and their multifaceted impacts on human societies underscores a critical challenge facing the global community today. From the social to the psychological, economic, and the profound undermining of equality and dignity, the ramifications of these divisions are far-reaching, affecting every aspect of human life. The evidence presented highlights not only the pervasive nature of these divisions but also their deep-seated influence on perpetuating inequality and injustice.

However, within this examination lies a beacon of hope. The potential for societal transformation through education, inclusive policies, cross-cultural dialogue, and a commitment to human rights offers a pathway to a more equitable and inclusive world. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) serves as a reminder of the foundational principles upon which such a world can be built—one where every individual is valued, respected, and provided with equal opportunities to thrive. Addressing cultural divisions requires a collective effort. It demands an acknowledgment of our shared humanity and an unwavering commitment to dismantling the barriers that separate us. Through concerted actions aimed at promoting understanding, empathy, and solidarity, societies can move towards overcoming the legacy of division and building a future grounded in the principles of equality and dignity for all.

The journey towards such a future is undoubtedly complex and fraught with challenges. Yet, the resilience and creativity of *Homo sapiens* have shown time and again that transformation is possible. By embracing diversity as a strength and recognizing the inherent worth of every individual, we can forge a world that truly reflects the ideals of freedom, equality, and dignity. This is not merely an aspiration but a necessity for the continued progress and well-being of the human species. In the face of cultural divisions, the choice is clear. We must strive towards unity, not division; empathy, not indifference; and inclusion, not exclusion. As we move forward, let us carry the torch of equality and dignity for all, lighting the way to a brighter, more inclusive future for generations to come.

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