

Chapter IX

CBM Elements III

This chapter continues with CBM Elements and the design factors related to the anthropology of culture. Cultural demographics and Cultural environment are covered in their entirety.

CULTURAL DEMOGRAPHICS

E6. Cultural Demographics - Characteristics of a population.

Cultural demographics provide the characteristics of a population for a geographic area. Geographic areas are identified by levels such as nation, state, city, county, tracks, blocks, province, and so forth (U.S. Census Bureau [USCB], 2005). This information is usually statistical. Demographic data provide mostly a quantitative picture of a population and aid in predicting economic or market trends. Through the use of demographic data, predictions about populations can be made in reference to increases in the demand for food, clothing, educational achievement, entertainment, housing, insurance, investments, health services, and so forth. Examples of Westernized demographic trends include: baby boom years, single parent families, two income families, and nuclear families. Demographic data are also culture-spe-

cific and can not be generalized to other populations. A culture-specific example is data from Japan's 2000 census that calculated the total population of males at 62,110,764 males to 64,815,079 females. The number of females outnumbers males by 2,704,315 (Statistics Bureau of Japan, 2000).

The collection of demographic data is unique to each society or culture. What works for one culture may not work for another. Or the collection of such data may not be operational due to other social, political, or economic factors.

The characteristics of a population might include data based on the following: age, assets, birth, death, density, disease, educational achievement, ethnicity, family, growth, housing, incarceration, income, language, marital status, migration, mobility, occupation, race, sex, and size (USCB, 2005). All of these characteristics are described in this chapter. The collection of demographic data could begin with an examination of characteristics in a population such as "age" and multiple characteristics of a population, such as sex, income, household, geographic areas, disease, marriage, and so forth. Therefore, the data collection might look at age and its relation to sex, or age and income, or age and household.

The guiding questions, in this section, focus on human beings; however they can be adapted to other species and entities.

Age

Age demographics record the length of time in existence, duration of life, or life expectancy. This could include the stages of life (e.g., infant, child, adult, elder) and the month, day and year of birth (Meyer, 2001). These data provide many sources of understanding how age impacts a society or culture and its classification with other characteristics of a population (e.g., age and disease, age and death) (USCB, 2005).

According to the 2007 U.S. Census Bureau International Database, the country with the longest life expectancy is Andorra, a small nation located in the Pyrénées Mountains nestled between France and Spain. People are said to live an average of 84 years (USCB, 2007a).

Culture GQ

What characteristics should be considered with the age of a population (e.g., age and race)? What are the ages of people in this population? What are the month, day, and year of births and self reported ages? What is the average age of life expectancy? What are the stages of life? Is the population divided according to age? What are the total number of births within a given time period? What is the total number of people in each age category? How are age demographics perceived in this society or culture?

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