

The Terrifying Left Hand Mystery in Africa

{{Instruction for Video editor}}

Did you know that in many African cultures, the act of giving or receiving items with the left hand is considered disrespectful or inappropriate.

While this cultural norm may seem puzzling to those who are unfamiliar with it, the reason behind it is rooted in deep social, historical, and symbolic traditions.

This is "Mysterious and Wild". And in today's video, I'm going to take you through the different reasons why Africans don't give or receive things with their left hand.

Across the African continent, respect, hospitality, and social interactions are governed by very long-standing customs that vary from region to region. However, surprisingly, the rejection of the left hand when giving or receiving is a common tradition in many of these cultures.

But why is it so? Does giving and receiving items with the left hand have any significant meaning?

Well, that's what we're about to find out. So keep watching as we unravel this mystery.

{{write across the screen as the voiceover reads}} Cultural Beliefs Surrounding the Left Hand

In many African societies, the left hand is traditionally associated with tasks considered less clean or polite. In countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda, for instance, the left hand is used for personal hygiene, such as cleaning oneself after using the bathroom. And as a result, the left hand is seen as the "unclean" hand, reserved for less respectful or private tasks.

So when someone offers or receives something with their left hand, it is often interpreted as an insult or a sign of disrespect. In fact, it is assumed that using the left hand indicates a lack of regard for the person on the receiving end.

Also, since giving is often a sign of goodwill, respect, or friendship in many African communities, using the "wrong" hand to offer a gift or a handshake is seen as undermining the very gesture of kindness.

In many African traditions, community and social interactions are deeply intertwined with notions of respect and hierarchy. Elders, for instance, are highly revered, and addressing them with

utmost courtesy is crucial. So offering something with the left hand to an elder can be seen as a grave violation of these norms, as it reflects carelessness or disregard for their status.

And it's not just within homes. This belief also extends to formal settings, such as weddings, ceremonies, and public gatherings, where etiquette is especially important.

And that's not all, because hidden behind this surprising tradition is a scary history. A history that explains why many Africans do not receive or give things with their left hand.

{{write across the screen as the voiceover reads}} Historical Roots of Left-Handedness Stigmatization

Historically, left-handedness has been stigmatized in many cultures worldwide, and Africa is no exception. While the practice of rejecting the left hand in social interactions is often attributed to cultural beliefs, it also has historical roots in colonialism, religion, and even superstition.

In many African countries, particularly those that colonial powers introduced to Western norms, there is a strong emphasis on right-handedness as the "correct" or dominant hand.

This colonial influence reinforced the existing cultural biases against the left hand, as left-handed people were often discouraged from using their dominant hand in favor of conforming to social expectations.

Also, in some African communities, left-handedness has been associated with bad luck or misfortune. People born with a natural preference for the left hand were sometimes viewed with suspicion, and efforts were made to train them to use their right hand instead.

This leads us to the topic of right-handedness and its cultural significance.

In African societies, the right hand is often the one used to greet others, to eat, and to exchange goods or gifts. It signifies intention and honor, particularly in situations where social hierarchies are at play.

When people give or receive with their right hand, they are seen as offering their full respect and sincerity. This is why, even in the modern era where cultural norms have adapted to more contemporary lifestyles, the practice of using the right hand when exchanging items remains highly prevalent.

Furthermore, in some parts of Africa, the right hand is believed to represent one's spiritual and social connection to others. By using the right hand to give or receive, it is believed that individuals acknowledge and honor the mutual bond that exists in the act of sharing.

In West Africa, particularly in countries like Nigeria and Ghana, using the left hand is considered highly disrespectful, especially in interactions with elders or in formal settings. In these regions,

children are reprimanded and taught from an early age to always use their right hand when giving or receiving something.

However, interestingly, as African societies continue to modernize and interact with global cultures, some traditional practices, including the rejection of the left hand, are evolving. In urban settings for instance, where people are exposed to more diverse customs and lifestyles, the strict adherence to using the right hand is becoming less valid.

Also, younger generations, who are more influenced by global trends and multicultural environments, really do not place as much emphasis on this practice as much as their elders.

So what is the true nature of things?

{{write across the screen as the voiceover reads}}Can you receive and accept things with your left hand in Africa?

Well, while some aspects of the left-hand taboo may be fading in certain areas, the underlying principles of respect, hospitality, and social harmony remain as important as ever.

Also, since this cultural practice is deeply rooted in history, symbolism, and social values, it may be very difficult to eradicate or abolish.

But what do you think about this tradition? Let me know in the comment section. Don't forget to like this video and subscribe to the channel for more content like this.