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Ethnocentrism & Cultural Relativism

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Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism

Ethnocentrism and cultural relativism are two contrasting terms that are displayed by different people all over the world, ethnocentrism is defined as, “judging other groups from the perspective of one’s own cultural point of view”. On the other hand, for cultural relativism is defined as, “not judging a culture to our own standards of what is right or wrong. Instead, we try to understand cultural practices of other groups.” Even though it is not easy to accept beliefs, values and practices of other cultures it is essential not to become judgmental and harsh towards any specific cultural value and norms.

One important part in a culture is every day -to-day norm people go by, what we predict next from an individual’s behavior. Our culture and surroundings influence how we all perceive the world. As a young kid we grow based of what our parents teach us, whether is a certain religion or belief, and as we get older, we tend to start questioning them. This falls into the Ethnocentrism category, few people within our society judge or point out wrong based on their own point of view. Some people might feel discriminated or feel like they can’t share their own practices around others.

I believe that it’s important for everyone to know the differences between ethnocentrism and cultural R because it’s something important to know due to how much it has affected culture itself and people’s way of living in a different environment

Annotated Bibliography

Andrew. https://www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/80241/guided_inquiries/articles/cultural_rel.html.

In the article written by Andrew, Andrew talks about cultural relativism and how it affects culture how there can be negative attitudes towards other cultures and/or ethnic groups and rise to ethnocentrism, he states, “Because of this ethicists believe that the concept of cultural relativism threatens the discipline of ethics since, if values are relative to a given culture than this must mean that there are no universal moral absolutes by which the behavior of people can be judged.”

Kini, Simba. “9 Interesting Taboos Around the World.”

Sima is able to describe and explain different taboos many cultures may have. This connects to my paper of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism because a lot of people who visit different cultures tend to judge others, while few others are open minded and see the differences or even try to follow and show respect to these cultures as well as their taboos. For example, communicating with someone without eye contact, talking with your mouth full, giving thanks to others after eating, never ask someone their age etc.

Khanacademy medicine. “What Is Normal? Exploring Folkways, Mores, and Taboos | Behavior |

The author was able to show how norms connect to culture through folkways, mores, laws, and taboos and how it can change over time. folkways are thing that is followed through day to day in our daily lives. Mores are norms of what’s right or wrong, for example people tend to want others to speak the truth. Taboos are more moral behaviors. This connects to my paper because it’s able to show differences based on norms and how it connects to culture.

Murphy, Rebecca. “Culture Shock Stages: What You Need to Know.” *GoAbroad.com*,

In the article written and published by Rebecca Murphy, Murphy describes how cultural shock can happen anywhere and anyone can experience. Cultural shock a feeling of disorientation brought on by experiencing an unfamiliar culture, lifestyle or set of attitudes. Some enter a new place and start judging on what they see, its essential to be open minded and experience these new differences. Murphy also explains a few stages when you may be experiencing cultural shock, 1. Honeymoon stage, 2. Anxiety stage, 3. Adjustment stage, 4. Mastery stage which is adaption and biculturalism.

Shah, Shelly. "Values and Norms of Society." *Sociology Discussion*

Shelly Shah writes about the meaning of values, how it's a cultural standard that indicates general good deemed desirable for an organized social life. An individual's value is how its enjoyed or sought by the individual which an individual seeks for himself. Norms on the other hand Shelly explains how it's an essential characteristic of group life that is possessed of set values. "Norm is a standard of behavioral expectation shared by a group of members against which the validity of perception is judged and the appropriateness of feeling, and behavior is evaluated"

Tracy Evans, S. A. C. (n.d.). *Cultural Anthropology*. Lumen.

Ethnocentrism is the term anthropologists use to describe the opinion that one's own way of life is natural or correct. It can mean that one may see his/her own culture as the correct way of living. for instance, one example of ethnocentrism is in the Asian culture the way of eating is using chopsticks with every meal, and what other people find is that it's very unnecessary to eat with chopsticks, as well as others who don't use any utensils. Another is Colonialism that is defined as cultural domination with enforced social change. Colonialism refers to the social system in which the political conquests by one society of other leads to "cultural domination with enforced social change".

Zimmermann, Kim Ann. “What Is Culture?” *LiveScience*, Purch, 13 July 2017,

In Kim Ann’s written article, she explains and defines what culture is, when we go out, we see different things every day, different people, people communication and all defines culture. Culture which is the characteristic and knowledge of particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. It all adds on, what we wear, how we wear it, how we sit at a table, how are our own behaviors towards others.

“Cultural Differences in the U.S. and Abroad.” *Mobility International USA*, 7 Sept. 2019,

In the article by MIUSA they explain the cultural differences, how every culture has a way of communicating, body language, ways of eating, taboos, different communicating skills, etc. For example, in the U.S, Canada, or even Germany using eye contact is considered important and known as honest, respect, attentive and confidence. The way we eat some eat with chopsticks, with their hands, fork or any other way different cultures may eat. MIUSA also explains how transportation is another difference in every culture. Throughout the article is defines the difference of cultures and how we can experience them.

