

Ethnocentrism and cultural relativism

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Chapter 3: Question: Compare and contrast ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. Which stance do sociologists strive to adopt, and what are the difficulties associated with that position According to Andersen and Taylor (5), culture refers to the values a given society holds, the symbols they admire, the language they speak, the material goods they can create and the norms they adhere to. Cultural identity and ethnocentrism are two aspects that result in cultural diversity. Ethnocentrism refers to the practice of judging other people's culture based on the standards of their culture (Andersen and Taylor, 65). On the other hand, cultural relativism refers to the practice of judging a society or a group by its own standards (Andersen and Taylor, 56). According to Mayer (7), ethnocentric individuals judge other groups comparative to his or her own specific culture based on customs, language, behavior and religion.

These ethnic differences and subdivisions act to define the unique cultural identity of each ethnicity (Andersen and Taylor, 66). Ethnocentrism might be subtle or overt, and whereas it is regarded as natural liking of human psychology, it has developed a bad connotation. According to Ritchters and Waters (18), cultural relativism depicts the beliefs, ethics and customs comparative to the person within his or her social context. Modern anthropology embraces cultural relativism. This is because relativists strongly believe that all cultures are significant own right (Ritchters and Waters, 77). Many sociologists also strive to adopt this stance due to the fact that it views all cultures to have the same value (Ritchters and Waters, 45).

Chapter 4 Question: Describe how people learn gender roles and elaborate on the roles of the family and the media in this learning process. Compare

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and contrast Freud and Chodorow's theories of development of gender identity? People learn gender roles through social factors that include schooling, media and family. Children are socialized differently depending on the culture (Andersen and Taylor, 45). The agents of socializations that include schools, family, mass media transmit various messages to young boys and girls concerning how they should behave and what roles they should perform in the society (Andersen and Taylor, 67). Through the gender socialization process, children are taught gender roles that are the masculine roles dispensed to boys and men and the feminine responsibilities dispensed to girls and women (Andersen and Taylor, 11).

Young children acquire the indications about gender during interaction with their family members. For instance, children might recognize their mother's clothing as feminine or realize that their father plays a different role from their mother's role. In addition, Parents frequently correct their children when they show behaviors that do not comply with the gender expectations (Andersen and Taylor, 33). For examples, parents can correct boys when they show preferences to playing with dolls instead of a truck. Debates concerning gender socializations were influenced by Sigmund Freud and Chodorow (Andersen and Taylor, 44). According to Freud's theory, gender identity focuses on possession or absence of a penis.

This theory also portrays children's fear and sexual attraction in relation to parents. Critics have argued that Freud's theory concentrates too much on the genital awareness and not on important social factors. Ritchens and Waters (56) also criticized the theory by claiming that it places emphasis on the comparison of male and female genitalia with no clear evidence of doing <https://assignbuster.com/ethnocentrism-and-cultural-relativism/>

so. Moreover, Freud's theory views fathers as authoritative figures. On the other hand, Chodorow's theory focuses on emotional attachment.

Similarly, Andersen and Taylor (45) pointed out that the contribution of this theory is concerned with the emotional attachment instead of genitalia. Children are usually attached to their parents emotionally at an early age, though the attachment eventually breaks as children begin developing a separate sense of self. According to this theory, boys seem to break from their mothers more than girls (Andersen and Taylor, 55). Chapter 7: How do sociological theories differ from biological and psychological explanation of deviance? Illustrate your answer with relevant examples. Biological explanation of deviance concentrates more on genetic or biological disposition to deviance. According to Andersen and Taylor (56), some literatures have advanced the concept that the body type of an individual was linked to nonconformity or conformity.

Other researchers such as Mayer (78) have argued that deviance is a hereditary behavior. With the focus on how individuals are socialized to implement certain norms and values that influence their behavior, sociologists ask how nurture and nature interact to produce behavior. The elucidations for deviance that encourage biology over social factors are not sociological as claimed by Andersen and Taylor (76). Psychological elucidation of deviance primarily focuses on the association between personality type and compliance (Andersen and Taylor, 56). In relation to psychology, individuals holding particular types of personalities are most like to commit offenses. Examples of such personalities include psychopaths.

Psychopaths are withdrawn and do not have concern for other and moral sense. However, sociologists are more critical of these psychological explanations. Many researches linking personality types and criminality only assess the individuals convicted of crimes that seem not to represent population of personality types or of criminals (Ritchters and Waters, 65). Moreover, sociologists ask if various types of personality find outlets in society for their desire, which are socially acceptable in order to keep away from sanctions. In general psychology fails to clarify how types of personalities associate with the various crimes that exist (Andersen and Taylor, 66).

According to sociological theory, the definition of a crime is based on the culture of society and its social institutions (Mayer, 55). Individuals communally decide what is not or what is deviant. In addition, individuals in powerful positions have most of the say in the definition of a crime. Unlike the other theories, sociological theory has three different traditions: functionalism, symbolic interactionism, control theory and conflict (Andersen and Taylor, 67).