

Difference between ethnocentrism and racism

Sociology



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Of importance is the fact that ethnicity is not related to the biology of a person, therefore being alterable and flexible. This is not true for race, which is considered to be the innate qualities of a person, which therefore is unalterable and fixed. Therefore, we can infer that race is a profound reality based on biological origins while ethnicity is relatively superficial.

Ethnocentrism, therefore, does not give importance to the physical characteristics of a person as long as that person remains a member of that culture. Contrary to this, racism does not give importance to the cultural attachment. Rather it favors those who are biologically similar. Racism, therefore, fails to accommodate those who have similar ideas and interests but are biologically different.

In what ways might ethnocentrism affect the quality, accessibility, and appropriateness of health care delivery?

The delivery of health care to growing populations of multiple ethnicities in the modern-day world is a challenge for modern-day health care providers. Lapses in cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding which mainly stems from the ethnocentric behavior of health care professionals result in non-compliance of the patients (Thiederman, 1986). Differences in religions and practices may, in turn, become the cause of disliking a patient by the health care providers. Superstitious behaviors may lead a health care provider to think that the patient has some mental abnormality, while the patient is merely practicing what he believes in. Such matters require careful consideration by the health care providers to avoid causing loss to patients. Similarly, patients may suffer from a poor standard of care due to the fact that a particular health care provider dislikes a particular ethnicity.

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Despite cultural diversity and policies of multiculturalism, are there universal standards of right and wrong?

Vienna Declaration states that “ the universal nature” of all human rights and fundamental freedom is “ beyond question” (Ayton-Shenker, 1995). This is true for all practical purposes since humans all over the world have some basic rights which are similar. However, the standards of right and wrong in any given population are not based on human rights. They are in fact influenced by a number of factors like religion, education, and society. Therefore, universal standards of right and wrong are not practically possible. What is accepted and celebrated as a ritual in one society may be a sin in another. Similarly, any practice in one society may be considered as acceptable, but in other societies, it may be totally illegal. Some basic values like truthfulness, honesty, and modesty are appreciated by all humans as being ‘ good’ but this is not true for all values/situations.