

Communicates the culture

Sociology



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Topic: Ethnocentrism s Lecturer's Culture communicates the way of life of a given society, which in most situations differs from that of other societies. As such, individuals believe that their culture is better-off than that of other societies and are willing to engage in any debate as far as it will show how superior their cultural orientation is. Sociologists refer to this process as ethnocentrism, whereby an individual views his/her cultural orientation as superior, while that of other people is inferior (Brym & Lie, 2010). In other words, ethnocentrism involves the use of ideals, norms, mores and values from an individual's cultural orientation to make a judgment on another cultural orientation.

Ethnocentrism has diverse effects on the well-being of an individual and the society. Firstly, ethnocentrism offers an individual a sense of belonging and identity. That is, by identifying with ones cultural background, an individual is certain that he/she belongs to a given community. While in the community the individual feels safe and confident as he/she is with people who comprehend his/her way of life adequately (Brym & Lie, 2010). He/she does not need to change the way he/she conducts business as it is similar to that of other people in the community. In regard to the society, ethnocentrism enhances cohesion among the people in the society. That is; the society develops collectivism and thus, it becomes easier to carry out duties together.

Secondly, ethnocentrism enhances the pride among individuals and the society that shares the same cultural orientation and beliefs. This pride helps in establishment of standards that the individuals and the society are required to adhere (Brym & Lie, 2010). These standards allow individuals from a given cultural orientation to reflect on the cultural identity they share

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and; thus, they manage to utilize the resources in the society appropriately. Conversely, ethnocentrism creates misunderstanding among different cultures and thereby makes it difficult to enhance diversity in the community. Misunderstanding emanates from the belief that one's cultural orientation is better than that of other people. For instance, owing to the dressing code of Arabic women, women from the Western world would believe their culture is better than of Arabic women. That is; Western women are free to wear what they want and can present their insight even when it is against that of men. Moreover, ethnocentrism enhances the development of prejudice and bias towards a given cultural orientation (Vivek, Dalela & Patwardhan, 2011). The slavery period is a good example of prejudice in ethnocentrism where, whites believed they and their culture was better than that of blacks. This prejudice encouraged them to oppress blacks, a situation that resulted in slavery.

A film that communicates culture that is different from the American culture is 3 Idiots (2009). The 3 Idiots film is an Indian comedy film, which helps display the Indian cultural orientation through three individuals that join an engineering university. The first cultural factor that emanates from the film is that India is a patriarchal society. In other words, India is a male dominated society; this is illustrated by the high number of male students in the university that the three idiots, Farhan, Raju and Rancho attend. Additionally, the university dean is a man, Professor Viru Sahastrabudhe (Virus) and there are no female lecturers (Gowariker, 2009). The other factor is that collectivism is a crucial factor in the Indian society as people like to do things in union, as opposed to the individualistic culture in most Western societies. For instance, when Raju's father falls ill, the three idiots believe Raju cannot

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take care of him alone, and are willing to assist him. Simplicity is the other factor that the Indian film presents; while visiting Raju's father, the three friends ride on one motorbike and appear to be comfortable, although Rancho is from a wealthy family (Gowariker, 2009). Further, rather than use the language that is easily understood, English, the film uses Hindi, meaning that the individuals identify with their language.

My personal experience with a different culture was from Tanzania, Africa. Swahili was the prime language in this region, but people show a high degree of hospitality and were willing to learn a new language as well as teach their own in order to enhance communication. The dressing code and the foods that individuals in this community ate were entirely different from my culture, but since they enjoyed them, I believed I would like it too.

References

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