

WAYS OF THINKING

ARE THE STEREOTYPES TOWARDS CULTURES AND RACES TRUE ENOUGH TO BE THE TRUTH?

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- Based on my very own perspective, truth is something every individual has their very own viewpoint on. Not everything that we see or listen can end up being the truth. If you may wonder, almost everything that is been said by people are very easily believable and very convincing. There are so many times where I ask myself repeatedly if the information that is being told by another person is right, wrong, truthful, or false. Not just that, I would find it difficult to believe a statement made by an individual as the truth unless and until I am presented with appropriate justification. For instance, during this pandemic, there have been numerous speculations about Malaysia's economic state, as well as stories claiming that the country will declare bankruptcy by the end of 2021. But, in my opinion it is unrealistic because businesses continue to pay their taxes even in these difficult circumstances. Coming back to what I intent to focus on which is stereotypes on cultures, even though the country is extremely diverse, each person has built a stereotype about each culture and their own perspectives.

As a child, I was always convinced to believe in variety of things, even if it did not make sense to me. For example, all Asians excel at mathematics. However, there is no scientific evidence that Asians excel in Math. Not just that, it is so cliché that most people all around the world believe stereotypes upon cultures and are continually convincing themselves that they are right. These types of people, when are proven wrong, they tend to go into a defense mode and protest to our statements. Most problems in Malaysia are caused by racial and cultural discrimination, which eventually leads to widespread racist outburst. Yes, I agree that it might be difficult to believe certain things, especially when other people look down on our culture. However, I also believe that not all stereotypes are entirely negative. One stereotype that has affected me personally as a Malaysian resident is when people claim that all Indians are drunkards or are even referred to as gangsters. Furthermore, this type of stereotype can influence people to cause racial issues and constant discrimination against one another.

Back in June 2020, the Black Lives Matter protest that erupted at the United States of America had a positive impact on people all over the world. During this protest, half a million people gathered in nearly 550 locations across the United States to fight for their rights on how the coloured community should be treated, as well as the fact that all citizens deserve equality. This protest was initiated since March 13 where the police killed Breonna Taylor, 26, in Louisville. S West End. Not long after Taylor's story went viral, the world saw footage on May 2020 of George Floyd screaming, "I can't breathe", and crying out for his mom under the knee of a white police officer before collapsing in Minneapolis, Minnesota. When this issue was taking place, everyone in Malaysia was sceptical and

was also supporting this protest through social media platform by posting the dos and don'ts during the protest and also spreading more awareness. But little did they know, issues that involves racial inequality is also taking place here in Malaysia. Growing up in Malaysia while experiencing the diversity in this country, I have also learned that being stereotypical is almost everyone nature. People may disagree to my statement but most of us do it unintentionally.

I am sure not everyone realises this but imposing a certain standard on cultures can have disastrous consequences. First and foremost, the possibility of another world war to exists, and it will be solely due to racial conflict. Our country is filled with people from various cultures; all we have to do is to understand them and be patient in learning and respecting them. Furthermore, if people do not try to understand another person's culture or beliefs, it may lead to constant misunderstanding. For example, in Malaysia, when someone fails to understand another culture, they may encounter a variety of issues such as sarcastic racial remarks, disagreements over beliefs, and so on. On top of that, the media has a significant impact on people's perceptions of minority groups all over the world. Long-term television exposure predicts a decrease in self-esteem for all girls and black boys, but an increase in self-esteem for white boys, according to researchers (Nancy.W.Y, 2019). These disparities are related to Hollywood's racial and gender practices, which primarily cast white men as heroes while erasing or subordinating other groups as villains, companions, and objectifying women. Having said that, People often rely on media stereotypes to form ideas about people outside of their own race when there is a lack of interaction between racial and ethnic groups.

Following that, I will discuss a few strategies for preventing cultural stereotypes around the world. First and foremost, have open discussions about the threat of stereotypes. The foundations of change are honesty and openness. Reflecting on your own personal prejudices and owning up to and correcting your mistakes is a good starting point. When you set a good example, you can create an atmosphere for tough conversations and encourage students to address their own flawed thinking. Next, is by creating an open environment that can involve everyone all together. To elaborate on my point, individuals can share and pinpoint information, resulting in a bias-free environment. For example, in a school, when a teacher does not separate students, whether physically or verbally, it helps to create a much more peaceful environment in the classroom. However, renovating a classroom wall with images that primarily teach about other cultures and beliefs will aid in teaching students to respect others. Lastly, encourage a growth mindset in children and adolescents. Encouraging a growth attitude is an excellent way of countering ingrained stereotyped messaging. Always be open to them and also allow them to make mistakes but always be aware to guide them later on. It is important to not force them into understanding the issues immediately and give them the space to read on their own which can also help in gaining their own knowledge.

Besides all that I have stated above, Race stereotyping, unfair treatment shows human inclinations to perceive and value particular phenotypical characteristics differently in our interactions with members of racial categories and to respond to them. Racial categorisation refers to a procedure in which people are placed in different groups based on diversity in the physical characteristics of face and body, such as skin colour, hair and texture, the shape of the eyes, the width of the nose and the lip. Many of us, especially prejudice students, can recruit shows determination of racial distinctions and their repercussions. Even though being in a very diversified country, that does not give anybody the right to be racist or giving false judgements on other individuals beliefs. I also believe that racial stereotyping can affect one psychologically. Significantly, being stereotypical against races means an overgeneralized and steady belief in a certain race group. And although some individuals claims that they do not stereotype, it is not entirely true because sometimes people do it unknowingly. Most of us normally make spilt second judgements based on the appearance of another person when we come across them. Our brain tries to assist us asses if a person is trustworthy and safe, or if they are likely to offer emotional, social or physical risks in a certain way. And these evaluations effect your feelings and your behaviour. If these issues run for a long term, the chances of an individual to feel pressured is very high, since they are put in a situation whereby, they are not able to change the labels that were put on them.

In conclusion, racial stereotypes are being put everywhere on almost every individual. Even if the person is genuine and nice, they are yet to have a tag on them which is not always easy to accept. No matter which ends you go to around the world, there will for sure be something that everyone has to worry about. Like in Malaysia for instance, we are maybe a large country but that does not make us a perfect one. Even till these days, we have a quota system in universities for students' applicants here in Malaysia and that clearly says that cultural stereotypes and unfairness implies a lot in our country. From all statements that I have produced above, I firmly believe that cultural stereotypes are definitely true enough to be the truth.

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