**Psychological Impacts of Race, Culture, Gender and Ethnicity**

Mary Thompson

Post University

Adam McCabe

PSY102

Date

Identity is one of the theoretical concepts in human life that is known to be a stressor in the life of human beings. Identity is associated with the cultural practices of an individual, their belief systems, their race, ethnicity and gender. It influences their thought processes and eventually their mental health and psychology. Psychological concepts are used to explain the relationship between identity-relevant stressors and the thought process of individuals.

The relevance of discussing the different concepts of psychology is that they determine the well-being of an individual. For instance, mental health based on personal identities affects thought processes of an individual and thus their actions.  The impact that personal identities have on psychology is witnessed through how people handle their relationships with others such as family members and spouses.

Psychology defines identity as the way that an individual views themselves as a distinct individual from others. Identity is thus a product of race, culture, ethnicity and gender. The elements influence identity in that they create norms and beliefs held by individuals that are commonly shared with individuals having a similar identity.  Psychological concepts that will be discussed in this paper will include the following;

The first focus is on the behavioral concepts which will discuss how the elements discussed influences the mental processes and actions of individuals; it will also focus on the cognitive concepts that will major focus on the way that the minds of individuals work concentrating on mental health. The paper will focus on the biological concepts of psychology showing how the identity of gender influences processes of thinking.

**Impact on View of Self**

The identity elements listed can have an impact in the way that an individual views themselves.  Based on the race, gender and cultural roles that are placed on individuals, it is possible to change the way that one views themselves within the society. For instance, if you are a lady in a men led society or environment, it is likely that such a setting impacts the view that the woman has on themselves and their capabilities.

Arshad and Chung (2022) discuss the impacts that culture, race, and ethnicity have on personality psychology. The authors understand that the culture, race, and identity of an individual affect access to resources, socioeconomic status, and social mobility. Such elements are directly related to the psychology of an individual as they impact their mental health status. Social structures directly influence personality psychology and thus the possibility of relating social structures to the identity, race, culture, and ethnicity of an individual. The expression of personalities by individuals differs across positions held

**Impact on Behavior**

Behavior is a psychological process as it is a reflection of thought processes. The elements of identity, race, cultures, gender and ethnicity also have an impact on the psychology of an individual in that they influence the type of behavior that such an individual portrays. The gender of an individual will affect how they behave in society. For instance, the male and females behave differently in society due to their gender identities. Being male or female affects the thought processes which in turn subconsciously influences our behavior and reactions towards situations and towards others.

Culture is something learned when an individual is born and determines their thought processes and, thus, behavior. Adames & Chavez-Dueñas (2021) prove that identities are a psychological element through their research based on previous literature on sexual orientation and behavior of individuals. The others suggest the Racial Queer Identity Framework, as a way to show how identities then and oppression led to the sense of self and thus affected the behavior elicited by African Americans.

The race, ethnicity and culture of an individual also influences their thought processes. Each race, ethnicity and culture have their practices that are different from other cultures in the world. The cultural practices for instance influence the behavior elicited by individuals bound by similar norms and traditions, which at times seem queer to others from other cultures. The differences in the behavior based on culture, ethnicity and race shows that identity factors influence psychology. It shows that it is because of the impact that such factors have on the minds of individuals and what they deem acceptable that they elicit particular behavior. Another proof that culture and race influences psychology is culture shocks that are associated with an individual of a particular culture moving to an area with a totally different culture or racial/ethnic practices.

Identities affect behavior in that they determine the reaction of an individual toward conflicts and how they solve life problems. Marcelo and Yates (2019) discuss ethnic and racial identities and the impact they have on a child’s behavior. Their article relates directly to the topic of discussion in that behavior is a psychological process. It is influenced by the thoughts that an individual has and the response related to elicited behavior. Race and ethnicity thus prove to influence the psychology of a child and thus influence their behavior. Early discrimination causes negative behavior showing that it negatively impacts the psychology of the children.

**Impact on attitudes**

Personal identities based on elements such as ethnicity, race, gender and culture have an influence on psychology in that they impact the attitudes of individuals. Personal identities influence the way that the individuals feel about themselves and that is termed as a psychological process. The mental processes such as aggression, are as determined by racial, cultural, or gender practices an individual is exposed to. Nadal et al. (2019) focus on the impact of racial microaggressions on the mental health of individuals. The authors show that trauma studied in the past excludes racial trauma. The authors conclude their study with a recommendation to psychologists to have a better understanding of racial trauma and how it influences the mental health of an individual. The article directly relates to the research topic by focusing on the aspect of race and understanding how it is related to psychology.

Racial traumas are experienced by individuals that share common characteristics such as the color of their skin, genetics, and also ancestral origins. The article points out that race has a major impact on influencing the mental health of an individual. It shows that the race one identifies with influences their thoughts, what others think of them, and thus their personality and psychology. Emotions and beliefs elicited towards objects, persons, or things in society, as a product of experience and upbringing, influence thought processes (Ilagan &amp; Heatherington, 2022)

Problems of self and identity reflect in psychopathology and many of the personality and mental health disorders elicited by human beings. Shiner et al. (2021) shows the interaction between narrative identity and development of personality disorders. It is through the narrative identity that individuals shape their well-being and also cope with adversities. The authors focus on adolescents who are more likely to get impacted by identity and develop PD related issues. The personality disturbances in self and the relationship processes that are associated to their identity with race, culture, ethnicity and gender at the center thus shapes their mental health.

It is also evident that psychological issues arise when one lacks the feeling of ownership of self, based on identity factors such as race, gender, culture and race. Gender-related conflicting situations lead to a decline in self-esteem which eventually leads to mental health issues. Shahar (2019) confirms such claims by proving the centrality of the subjective-agentic personality sector in mental health issues such as anxiety disorders, depression and PTSD.

**Conclusion**

Race, ethnicity, culture, gender and other identities have a direct impact on the psychology of an individual. Identities influence the action elicited by a group of people hence affecting their behavior. Gender for instance determines the type of behavior shown by boys and girls. Elements of race, ethnicity and culture influence the norms of a group of people sharing an ancestry or participating in similar norms and activities. It influences their thought processes and how they interact with others around them. The identity element therefore has an impact in determining the thought processes of individuals and differentiating it from others that have a different form of identity.

**References**

Adames, H. Y., & Chavez-Dueñas, N. Y. (2021). Reclaiming all of me: The racial queer identity framework. Queer psychology: Intersectional perspectives, 59-79. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-74146-4_4>

Arshad, M., & Chung, J. M. (2022). Practical recommendations for considering culture, race, and ethnicity in personality psychology. Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 16(2), e12656. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12656>

Ilagan, G. S., & Heatherington, L. (2022). Advancing the understanding of factors that influence client preferences for race and gender matching in psychotherapy. Counseling Psychology Quarterly, 35(3), 694-717. https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2021.1960274

Marcelo, A. K., & Yates, T. M. (2019). Young children’s ethnic–racial identity moderates the impact of early discrimination experiences on child behavior problems. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 25(2), 253. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/cdp0000220>

Nadal, K. L., Erazo, T., & King, R. (2019). Challenging definitions of psychological trauma: Connecting racial microaggressions and traumatic stress. Journal for Social Action in Counseling &amp; Psychology, 11(2), 2-16. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JSACP.11.2.2-16>

Shahar, G. (2020). The Subjective-Agentic Personality Sector (SAPS): Introduction to the special issue on self, identity, and psychopathology. Journal of Personality, 88(1), 5-13. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12497>

Shiner, R. L., Klimstra, T. A., Denissen, J. J. A., & See, A. Y. (2021). The development of narrative identity and the emergence of personality disorders in adolescence. Current Opinion in Psychology, 37, 49-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2020.07.024>