PSYC 245: RESEARCH METHODS

GLOBAL ASSIGNMENT

Psychologists have long emphasized objectivity on research and have expressed concern about bias that stems from the researcher being too close to the groups they are studying. In contrast to psychologists, anthropologists have taken and approach that involves taking part in the circumstances one is describing or analyzing. What are the advantages of being a cultural outsider or a cultural insider? This assignment is to clarify differences between the insider perspective and the outsider perspective in conducting cross-cultural research.

DIRECTION S TO STUDENTS:

Find an organized group or club that is well known on or off your campus. Identify two people to interview about this group; one who is a member (an insider) and one who is not (an outsider). Ask the same questions (below) to both interviewees. Assure your respondents that their identities will remain confidential. Do not include their names on these sheets.

Ask the following questions TWICE: To a member and a non-member of the group

1. How did you learn about this group?
2. What is needed for membership?
3. How would you characterize the members of the group?
4. How effective is this group in achieving their goals?

REACTIONS: Compare the responses from the two accounts then answer the following questions:

1. Describe the major differences between the two accounts
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using insiders as an information source?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using outsiders as an information source?
4. What would you recommend for cross-cultural psychologists in terms of being an insider or outsider relative to the cultures they study?