



## Afrocentricity

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### What is it?

Afrocentricity is an intellectual paradigm that privileges the centrality of Africans within the context of their own historical experiences. Among the key concepts are *agency*, *location*, *place*, *centeredness*, and *subject*. Aiming to redirect the discourse on phenomena related to African people away from Eurocentric attitudes and conceptual frameworks, the Afrocentrists are seeking to advance agency in every given place where the examination, critique, or analysis of African people happens.

### Who uses the concept?

Afrocentricity is used widely among scholars of communication, history, sociology, social work, psychology, and education. Students of language development, economics, and intercultural communication often use the concept of Afrocentricity. Research has dealt with *consciousness*, *agency*, *identity*, *race*, *rhetoric*, *metaphors*, *aesthetics*, and *ethics* as fundamental topics of concern. The word *Afrocentrism* is sometimes used by those who seek to critique Afrocentricity. However, Afrocentricity is an open system with the possibility of argument and differences over what is agency, centeredness, or subject position. It is neither a religion nor any system of belief. Afrocentricity is a way to view data and to create information. Thus, as an orientation to data, it is beyond any permanent conceptual structure.

### Fit with intercultural dialogue?

Afrocentricity seeks a mature relationship to other cultures, neither imposing nor seeking to advance its own material advantage. By centering their culture and claiming it as a valuable part of humanity, African people own or assume agency within their own contexts, thereby fulfilling their roles as legitimate partners in multicultural discourse, something constructed together. Such an idea is fundamentally more about humanity than materialism, winning, and domination.

### What work remains?

Afrocentricity seeks to elevate all discourse on African people transgenerationally and transcontinentally from the lowlands of Eurocentric victimization and objectification. Research into the various ways that Africans have come to terms with culture, identity, and language in the national cultures of Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Uruguay, Mexico, Canada, France, Britain, the Caribbean, and other nations and regions will greatly enhance our understanding of intercultural communication.

### Resources

- Asante, M. K. (2014). Afrocentricity: Toward a new understanding of African thought in the world. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.), *The global intercultural communication reader* (2nd ed., pp. 101-110). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Mazama, A. (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.