



Textbook of Applied Sociology for NURSES

As per the Revised Syllabus



**TK Indrani
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3rd
Edition



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3 UNIT

Culture



CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Nature, characteristic and evolution of culture
- Diversity and uniformity of culture
- Difference between culture and civilization
- Culture and socialization
- Transcultural society
- Culture, modernization and its impact on health and disease



Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

- ➔ Define culture
- ➔ Explain its nature and characteristics
- ➔ How culture is evolved
- ➔ Differentiate between culture and civilization
- ➔ Understand the concept of culture and socialization
- ➔ Discuss about the transcultural society
- ➔ Learn about the impact of culture on health and disease



Key Terms

- ➔ **Culture:** The way of life of a particular people shown in their behavior, habits and attitude towards each other.
- ➔ **Diversity:** The wide variety of something
- ➔ **Uniformity:** The quality or fact of being the same, or of not changing or being different in any way.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is derived from the English word 'Kulthra' and Sanskrit word 'Samskar' which denotes social channel and intellectual excellence. It means cultivating and refining a thing to such an extent that its end product evokes our admiration and respect. This is practically the same as 'Sanskriti' of the Sanskrit language. The term 'Sanskriti' has been derived from the root 'Kri (to do)' of Sanskrit language. Three words came from this root 'Kri; prakriti' (basic matter or condition), 'Sanskriti' (refined matter or condition) and 'vikriti' (modified or decayed matter or condition) when 'prakriti' or a raw material is refined it becomes 'Sanskriti' and when broken or damaged it becomes 'vikriti'.

Culture is a way of life. Culture has an influence on social life. The food you eat, the clothes you wear, the language you speak and the God you worship, all are aspects of culture. In very simple terms, we can say that culture is the embodiment of the way in which we think and do things. It is also the things that we have inherited as members of society.

Culture can be used to describe all of humankind's accomplishments while living in social groups. Culture can be viewed as having elements like music, literature, architecture, sculpture, philosophy, religion, and science. But culture also refers to a person's outlook on different aspects of life as well as their conventions, traditions, festivals, ways of living life.

From place to place and country to country, cultures differ. Its growth is based on the historical process that is currently taking place at the local, regional, or national level. For instance, our greeting routines, attire, eating habits, and social and religious practises are different from those in the West. In other words, all nation's citizens are distinguished by their unique and distinctive cultural traditions.

MEANING OF CULTURE

The most commercially used meaning for culture is that when a person possess polished behavior, intelligence, refinement is said to be cultured and is generally conform to the accepted and recognized ways of society.

The person who does not conform to the ways of society considered that; the person is uncultured. But in anthropological sense, There is no such thing as an uncultured person because all humans have culture of their own which may be simple or complex. Culture is a design and plan for living in society. It is very difficult to live without

the minimum of cultural elements for the sociologists, culture denotes acquired behaviors that are shared by and transmitted among the members of society and the same is also passed on from one generation to the other.

Many requirements of men are met by culture. It has the quality of being integrated. Culture is the special quality of men, and a reflection of their social heritage. The culture, what was created today combines with what has been first created by our ancestors. Thus, in every generation something new is added to the culture and thereby it is enlarged. Culture is found only among the human beings who are the most highly evolved. By way of culture, we can distinguish the human society with that of animal society and by way of culture, the different human societies can be differentiated.

The only thing that constitutes culture is how man altered his environment to better support his way of life. The evolved and matured brain of man allows him to take advantage of his surroundings.

DEFINITION

According to **EB Tylor**, an English anthropologist, *'culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.'*

According to **EA Hoebel**, *'Culture is the sum total of integrated behaviour patterns which are characteristics of the members of a society, and which are therefore, not the result of biological inheritance.'*

According to **Ralph Piddington**, *'The culture of a people may be defined as the sum total of the material and intellectual equipment whereby they satisfy their biological and social needs and adopt themselves to their environment.'*

According to **Koening**, *'Culture is the sum total of man's efforts to adjust himself to his environment and to improve his modes of living.'*

According to **Malinowski**, *'Culture is the handwork of man and the medium through which he achieves his ends.'*

According to **Lundberg**, *'Culture refers to the social mechanism of behavior and to the physical and symbolic products of their behaviors.'*

According to **Lapierre**, *'Culture is the embodiment of customs, traditions, etc. of the learning of a social group over the generation.'*

According to **Herskovits**, *'Culture is manmade part of environment.'*

According to **AF Walter Paul**, *'Culture is the totality of group ways of thought and action duly accepted and followed by a group of people.'*

According to **Bierstedt**, '*Culture is complex whole that consists of everything we think and do and have as members of society.*'

According to **HT Naxumdar**, '*Culture is sum total of human achievements material as well as non-material, capable of transmission, sociologically, i.e., by tradition and communication, vertically as well as horizontally.*'

According to **Bogardus**, '*Culture is composed of integrated customs, traditions, and current behaviour pattern of human behaviour.*'

It can be concluded that the cultural behavior is learned behavior. It is essential to the concept of culture that instincts innate reflexes, and any other biologically predetermined forms of behavior be ruled out. Culture is, therefore, organized behavior.

Almost all aspects of culture come to be symbolically identified and symbolically transmitted from the old members of any society to its new members, so it is that every way in which the members of a society see and understand the world in which they live in shaped by the symbol system that makes up their culture.

As a result, there are many activities that people who lived in earlier eras of history are still capable of performing but that others who lived hundreds of years later are no longer able to. The recipe for creating the stained glass that adorned medieval buildings is unknown today. Culture may thus be conceived of as a kind of stream flowing down through the centuries from one generation to another.

NATURE OF CULTURE

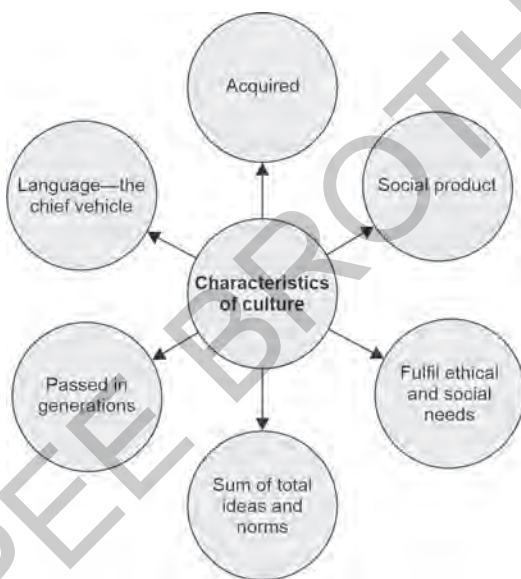
The word culture is widely used in sociology.

- ❖ It is defined as the training and refinement of mind, tastes, and manners.
- ❖ Culture is the product of human society; a man is largely a product of his cultural environment.
- ❖ Culture is that it is acquired by man and persists through traditions.
- ❖ Culture regulates our lives at every turn from the moment we are born until we die there is culture, even we are conscious of it or not. Constant pressure upon us to follow certain types of behavior that other men have created for us.
- ❖ Culture represents a store house of readymade solutions to problems.
- ❖ Culture helps for insuring some stability in the functioning of the society as a whole.
- ❖ Culture refers to patterns of behavior developed because of membership in a society.

- ❖ Religion and family background can be used for cultural behavior.
- ❖ Cultural influences are probably more important than societies.

Culture is usually acquired through enculturation. It is the process through which an older generation induces and compels a younger generation to reproduce the established lifestyle. It is embedded in person's way of life. It tends to be so pervasive that it escapes everyday thought.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURE



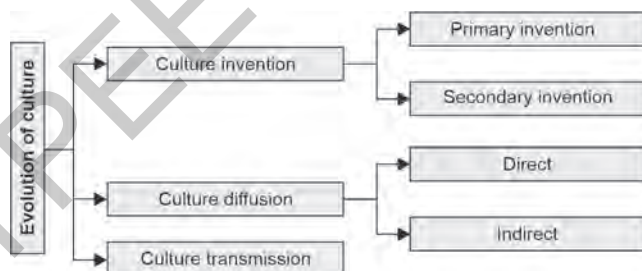
- ❖ Man is not born with culture. Culture is learned and acquired.
- ❖ Culture is based on some ideal and norms of behavior and each member of the society has to follow them.
- ❖ Culture provides socially acceptable patterns or regular ways of meeting biological needs (sex, procreation) and social needs, etc.
- ❖ Culture is human product of social interaction.
- ❖ Culture is learned by each person in the course of his development in a particular situation.
- ❖ Culture is always linked with past experiences and keeps on developing as it passes from one generation to another.
- ❖ Language is the chief vehicle of culture. Man lives not only in the present but also in the past.

- ❖ As man possesses language the knowledge that he learnt in the past is transmitted in present or future through the medium of language.
- ❖ The influence of culture is so great that it formulates the personality of an individual as well as community that he belongs to.
- ❖ Culture separates the individual from society to society.
- ❖ To each individual, his culture is great. This feeling of greatness and accepting the facts that his own culture is greater than other cultures make him non-cooperative to other cultures. This tendency is known as ethnocentrism.
- ❖ Culture and society are interdependent. Culture possesses continuity and extends beyond the lifetime of those who possess, create, and utilize it.

ELEMENTS OF CULTURE

- ❖ Culture is a learned behavioral pattern. It is created by man for fulfilling some of the basic needs and necessities.
- ❖ Culture is a pattern of living or design for living. It is a way of life shared by all members of a group.
- ❖ Culture is then passed from generation to generation. Culture keeps on modifying as it passes from generation to generation to suit the passing of time and demands.

EVOLUTION OF CULTURE



Cultural growth takes place in three ways. They are invention, diffusion, and transmission.

Cultural Invention

- ❖ Invention is the discovery of new material and non-material objects or ideas which serve as a stimulus to cultural growth. New materials or findings were discovered by accidents. Invention can be deliberate.

- ❖ Invention can be classified as either primary or secondary.
 - ◆ **Primary inventions** are those which make possible significant advances in humanity's struggle to shape the environment. They are the basic building blocks, upon which many other cultures developments rest, e.g., the wheel, the phonic alphabet is melting and atomic energy.
 - ◆ **Secondary invention** is those which represent improvement upon existing design, e.g., steering own at the year of sailing vessels, self-start or in an automobile.

Cultural Diffusion

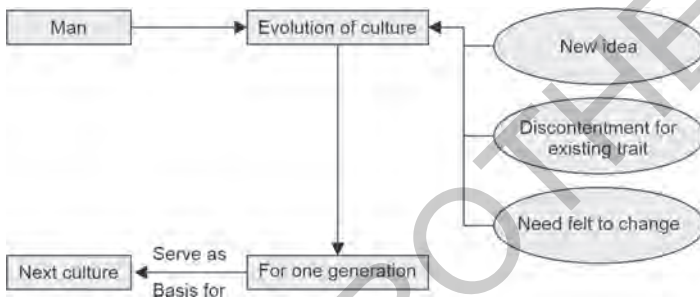
- ❖ Diffusion takes place when societies borrow traits complexes or patterns from one another. Hence, it is popularly known as cultural borrowing. Influence of diffusion can be seen in the spread of the industrial revolution.
- ❖ One of the primary goals of modern third world nations is to borrow culture traits, complexes and patterns needed to create higher levels of industrialization.
- ❖ Diffusion can be direct or indirect.
 - ◆ The **direct** spread of culture takes place when members of different societies come face-to-face contact with one another, e.g., migration, trade, war, and missionary activities.
 - ◆ **Indirect** diffusion on the other hand does not involve personal contact. It depends upon communication media—such as printed page, radio, television, and films.
- ❖ Various factors affect both the rate and direction of cultural spread of element. It is spread from the more advanced culture to the less advanced culture.
- ❖ Cultural diffusion depends upon intercultural contacts which result in an exchange of ideas. Societies which fail to establish contacts with neighbouring groups cannot benefit from diffusion. It is tied to its own culture based and borne by whatever limitations that imposes. Cultural isolation is the result of geographical accident.

Cultural Transmission

Transmission is the process by which the accumulated knowledge of one generation is passed on the other generations, within societies that possess a written language, traits, complexes, and patterns can be transmitted in written form, within non-literate societies they are transmitted by word of mouth.

When the transmission of culture takes place imperfectly, certain aspects of culture are being lost. Such culture loss is especially apt to occur during the transmission of knowledge and skills which are exclusive prosperity of small groups or categories rather than entire societies, e.g., written language of Egypt.

The sociology of knowledge deals with the process by which knowledge arises in a particular culture. It also analyses how cultural knowledge is transmitted and controlled, and the effects that this has on behavior within the culture.



DIVERSITY AND UNIFORMITY OF CULTURE

Diversity of Culture

The biological drives influence human behavior in a significant way. For example, human beings have to eat and drink on a regular basis, optimally, a number of times each day. This means that hunting, gathering, fishing, and cultivating various forms of foods are essential activities in every human society. This satisfaction of biological drives through learned behavior not only permitted homo sapiens to survive but also accounts for human cultural diversity.

Culture is not innate, individuals create culture. It consists of set of principles and traditions transmitted from generation to generation. Human culture is linked to biological evolution of human beings. Human beings are creative by nature, so they have developed diverse or different ways of life.

Cultural diversity is the result of geographical location, religious beliefs, and lifestyles. It is found in heterogeneous society like India, where people belong to various religions, castes, subcastes, linguistic, etc. These variations subjects' people to differ in the way they live, eat, dress, work, etc. Hence, these emerges number of smaller groups within a larger group. The culture of particular smaller group (caste) in a larger whole (India) is termed as subculture. Hence, a subculture is

need to inform yourself through education and research. A great way is to read about different religions, cultures, customs, and traditions if you have to develop appreciation for the richness of cultures of the world. What distinguishes Asian culture from European culture it helps to read history as well as educate yourself about societal and biological evolution to understand how we are all interconnected and how we all become 'different' because of events that shaped our culture and the environment that we live in.

Widening your prospective will not only help enrich your understanding of your patients from diverse background but it will enrich your understanding of life and yourself. In more practical terms, tolerance and flexibility are very important factors for cultural understanding. Respecting your patients (or all individuals for that matter) no matter what background is very important.

However, you should not make special privileges or overcompensate just because the patient is from a different cultural background. Respect should be given in the same accord as everyone what you have to do is give more understanding because it is not as easy compared to a patient that shares your world view.



- ✦ Culture is the way of life of a particular people shown in their behavior, habits, and attitude towards each other.
- ✦ The culture is acquired, a social product, fulfils the needs of group, total of ideas and norms of a group and also passed from first generation to generation.
- ✦ Culture can be acquired through enculturation. It is embedded in person's way of life. It tends to be so pervasive that it escapes everyday thought.
- ✦ Socialization process begins soon after birth. Through socialization, child learn language and fundamentals of culture.
- ✦ Culture influences the health and disease. The harmful activities of culture can cause morbidity and mortality among people whereas the good cultural practices maintain the health of people.



Review Questions

Short Answer Questions

1. Define culture.
2. Enlist the characteristics of culture.
3. Explain the nature of culture.

Long Answer Questions

1. Define culture. Discuss the evolution of culture. Write down the characteristics of culture.
2. 'Diversity and uniformity of Culture'. Comment.
3. How culture affects the health and disease?

Textbook of Applied Sociology for NURSES

Salient Features

- This is a comprehensive textbook of sociology as per the revised syllabus for BSc nursing students.
- Student-friendly, simple, and easy to understand.
- Consistent approach is used to organise the content.
- Figures and flowcharts are used for better understanding of the concept.
- Pedagogical features like chapter outline, learning objectives, key words, summary and review questions are included in each chapter.
- The point-wise presentation of the text helps students to recall the text.
- Explanations are well supported with figures to make the understanding easier.
- Each chapter ends with review questions that will help you assess your learning.

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