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Principles of Sociology for Graduate Nurses

(As per Revised INC Syllabus)



PR Nalini

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Chapter 3

Culture

Highlights of the Chapter

- Culture
- Nature of Culture
- Evolution of Culture
- Diversity and Uniformity of Culture
- Culture and Socialization
- Transcultural Society
- Influence of Culture on Health and Disease

CULTURE

Sociologists and anthropologists use 'culture' as a collective noun for the symbolic and learned, nonbiological aspects of human society, including language, custom and convention, by which human behavior can be distinguished from that of other primates.

In the Anglo-French tradition, the concept of culture is often used synonymously with 'civilization'. In Anglo-American sociologists do refer culture of social groups as the total set of beliefs, customs or way of life of particular groups, they more commonly employ more differentiated concepts such as 'belief system', system of values' or even 'ideology'. The notion of the culture of social groups thus occurs most frequently in the areas of sociology of knowledge or deviance. Indeed, since sociologists typically regard the culture of industrial society fragmented and diversified, they are more likely to conceptualize contemporary society as plurality of life worlds rather than possessing unified approaches modern society in terms of conflicting subcultures thereby rendering the idea of coherent normative cultural problematic.

Culture is the way of life accepted by the group of people. It includes customs, folkways, mores, religion and education.

Definition

The word culture is derived from English word 'Kultura' and Sanskrit word 'Sanskar' which means social channel and intellectual excellence.

MacIver: Culture is the expression of nature in our modes of living and our thinking, inter course, in literature, in religion, in recreation and entertainment.

Lapiere: Culture is the embodiment in customs, tradition, etc. of the learning of social group over the generation.

EB Taylor: Culture is complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morels, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by the man as a member of society.

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Mujumdar: Culture is the sum total of human achievements, material as well as nonmaterial, capable of transmission, sociologically by the tradition and communication, vertically as well as horizontally.

Anderson and Parker: Culture is the total content of the physio-social, bio-social and psycho-social products man has produced and the socially created mechanisms through which these social products operate.

NATURE OF CULTURE

Culture regulates the conduct and make individual to learn group life. It provides him to develop a right pattern of behavior which is acceptable by the society.

Culture is a Learned Behavior

Man learns culture from society, i.e. wearing of clothes, combing hair, etc. Culture is social not individual. Culture is communicated from one generation to another. It varies from one society to another. Each society tries to satisfy its own needs through its particular pattern of behavior. Culture also varies from time to time.

Culture is Shared

Cultural products such as customs, traditions, beliefs and values are shared by the members of society.

Culture is dynamic, not static. New inventions and discoveries may force the individual to follow the new ways of life.

EVOLUTION OF CULTURE

The origin and evolution is too difficult to reveal. The basic factors involved with evolution of culture are discovery and invention. Groups that share values, norms and behavior that are not shared by the entire population.

Cultural diffusion: The process of spreading cultural traits from one society to another.

Perspectives on Culture

- **Functional perspective:** Culture reflects and enforces society's central values. It encourages harmony and stability by integrating individuals into society. Subcultures diffuse discontent of subgroups in society. Ethnocentrism encourages group solidarity.
- **Conflict perspective:** It reflects and enforces the values of those who hold power. It encourages and maintains social equality. Subcultures and countercultures challenge those in power. Ethnocentrism encourages discrimination against the powerless.
- **Interaction perspective:** Culture is maintained and modified through everyday social interaction. Interaction among subcultural groups helps to transmit customs and traditions and also introduces new cultural meaning systems.

Components of Culture

- **Technology:** Knowledge and tools people use for practical purpose.
- **Symbols:** Anything that stands for something else and has a shared meaning attached to it.
- **Language:** Organization of written and spoken symbols into as standardized system.
- **Values:** Shared beliefs about what is good or bad, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable.
- **Norms:** Shared rules of conduct that tell people how to act in specific situations.

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Cultural groups help to transmit customs and traditions and also introduces new cultural meaning systems. An invention brings modification in culture and cultural traits. The new material and nonmaterial cultural traits change the existing cultural traits.

Nonmaterial Culture—Nonphysical Objects

Concepts, values, mores and ideas, monogamy, democracy and worship, beliefs, family system ideas, language, political system, economic system, etc.

Material Culture—Physical Objects

Housing, fashion, diet, etc.

Cultural lag: The idea of cultural lag was developed by WF Ogborn (1950) in response to crude economic determination in which cultural, political and social phenomena change in direct and immediate response to changes in the economic basis of society.

Ogborn noted that changes in culture were not always or necessary with economic changes. A cultural lag exists when two or more social valuables which were once in some forms of agreement or mutual adjustment, become dissociated and maladjusted by their differential rate of change.

Ogburn cited a number of examples to explain the concept of cultural lag. He opines that people have changed their habitations and lifestyle but not the life they lead within them. The number of police force in a country remains constant whereas population of the country increasing rapidly. As a result police force lags behind the population growth and cultural lag appears, i.e. population (population increases), police force... lag (police force remain constant).

Cultural lag is the gap between material and nonmaterial culture which change at equal rates. It does not take place at one part and at the same time and in all parts of society. Cultural lag can be caused by different reasons. The technology, advancement of science, inventions and discoveries creating problems in adaptation. These influence the individuals to rapid social changes in the society.

Seven Social Institutions and Sociological Imagination

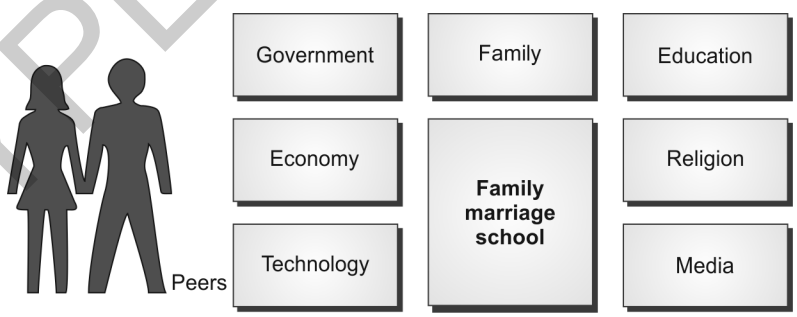

Fig. 3.1: Social institutions

DIVERSITY AND UNIFORMITY OF CULTURE

Cultural variations: Groups that rejects the major values, norms and behavior that is practiced by larger society.

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Response to variation: The tendency to view one's own culture and group as superior to all other cultures and groups. In our post-modern society is really diversity of race or gender, but diversity of ideas and values are more powerful.

- Our society has a remarkable uniformity on the matter of diversity. Diversity is value of many institutions.
- Diversity assumes without truth and mortality. It perceives which are valid for the person or group using them.
- Diversity rules out court questions value and quality. Diversity stands on culture, music, painting and moral systems.
- The phrase cultural diversity can be referred to have different cultures that respect each other's culture.
- The diversity requires uniformity among some groups.
- Sometimes it is also used to mean the variety of human societies or cultures in a specific region or world as a whole.

The cultural differences exist between people, such as language, dress and traditions, there are also significant variations in the way societies organize themselves, in their shared conception of morality and the ways that interact with their environment differed and marked from each other, and many of these differences persist to this day. It is common knowledge that we are living in a time of rapid profound social change. The age of transition has been regarded either as development which heralds the withering a way of small national cultures or as one which produces increasing tolerance of other cultures and leads to a flourishing of national cultures. Many social scientists have argued that nowadays people have experience of traditional knowledge to new type of culture. So the new concepts have been developed, some of the key words in our time being 'Post-industrial society', 'the media society', 'the information society', etc.

Uniformity of culture: All societies of the world have uniformity in many cultural characteristics but there is dramatic difference in the manners.

Language: Language is a symbol that allows people to communicate with one another'. Man is only creation on the earth that has language to contact and social interaction with a system of reaching to preserve its culture, and to convey it one to another and new generation with all the experiences and observation.

Dress: Dress is used in all societies of the world to save from the physical and weather conditions of coldness and heat.

Family System

Human life started from family. From cultural uniformity viewpoint family is the necessary part of all cultures of the world.

Religion

It is a system of beliefs and is the source of knowing and contacting supernatural force.

Customs

There are certain specific ways and reactions which is culture has for specific occasion of social life which create uniform behavior in the normal life of cultures.

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Social Norms

All cultures have a system of norms to keep control in a society for its stability and unity. Norms not only give a security to cultural life but also stability and unity.

Rituals and Ceremonies

Every culture arranges festivals and fairs to harmonize with the religion and culture, and to provide mental relaxation to the individuals of a society which not only keep cultural environment pleasant but also transfer values and traditions to next generation; which becomes a source of recognition of harmony and unity in a thrilling manner with culture.

Literature and arts: Literature and arts are recognized as a source of safety and promotion of culture. Such societies where there is no art or literature, spies and poetry and language are transmitted through verbal sources.

Cultural arts and skills like music, designing, poetry and handicrafts are included. No culture can claim to be a culture without art and literature.

Recreation: All cultures arrange recreation for the mental and physical growth and health of the individual of a society that not only keeps the social environment pleasant but also provides training for taking responsibilities of social life to be from boredom and inactivity.

Economic activities: Economic life of the individuals depends upon the fulfillment of their life needs as food, abode and dress as basic needs.

Diversity of Culture

There are number of differences in cultural life in spite of general uniformity to culture.

Ecological view: Anthropologist Marvin Harris explains this 'the ecological view suggests that climate, food and water supplies, and presence or absence threatened enemies influence to the the evolution of various cultural practices that help people adapt environment. Marvin Harris says how people produce food and other necessities explained the origin and development of cultural practices'.

Language

Anthropologists wonder about the differential manners and symbols through social interaction in spite of being Homo sapiens. Times play a wonderful role in the change of social demands and social interaction of people, speaking different languages. Language is the chief vehicle of communication. It is the example of nonmaterial culture.

Dress

To save individuals from physical and environmental weather conditions, the use of dress is there in all cultures. Since different cultures have been living in different weather conditions and physical environment, therefore, there is difference of dress. In additions customs and religious beliefs also affect the style of dress in terms of color and design.

Family system: According to anthropologists family structure is dependent on the economic sources like food and other biological need availability. It also depends on sources and size of the family, i.e. ancient nomadic tribe, societies and agrarian societies had an element of extended polygamy customs are varied in different cultures. In India and Pakistan, nikah and marriage feast are cultural traits; in India, bride and bridegroom go around the fire and bhojan distribution is customary.

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Religion: Religion is an integral part of culture because the support of supernatural forces to free from the danger from natural calamities. The religion is to get spiritual relief by setting up a connection with real creator in bringing a revolution in culture and its transmission.

Socialization

All cultures change through education to convey the culture to next generation and harmonize the individual of the society with the manner of culture. But these manners are different in different cultures.

According to Mead 'Cultural training teaches the individuals aggression or submission or competition and accommodation.'

Customs

Every culture has individual festivals and beliefs has a manner or way of celebrating religious rites. The people of subcontinent marriage is an important source recreation as a custom by collection of people in proposal or engagement mehndi, Nikah, marriage party, brides visit parents after marriage are inclusive. Drum beating, singing songs for people coming together at the occasion and collective prayer, etc. is observed.

Social norms are bound by values, traditions and beliefs of a culture and their way is different because of different structures and expectations of different cultures.

Ritual Ceremonies

Rituals and ceremonies are an important sources of transmission of cultures and providing relief to the society because the passion of participating in impression on the minds, the effect of culture. There are different festivals like Islamic Attachment Id, Mil-ad-nabi are observed. In India Holi, Diwali and Independence Day while in England Good Friday and Christmas and Easter are celebrated as rituals.

■ Literature and Arts

These are important source of keeping remembered the epic and romantic incidents, occurring in culture and also to transmit them to next generation. Art is an expression of pride and skill of individuals of a society but every culture has different experiences and observations.

CULTURE AND SOCIALIZATION

Culture is acquired by man through process of cultural socialization. Socialization is the process of learning folkways, mores, values, customs, norms and behavioral patterns of one's own culture.

Culture provides different roles through socialization. The cultural roles are transmitted from one generation to another. Culture molds the personality of individual. Culture differ from one society to another.

Ethnocentrism: When an individual feels great of his own culture than other cultures, it is known as ethnocentrism.

Culture has many subcultures like family, caste, religion, etc. The subculture leads to the individual differences in socialization.

Culture and family: Family is a fundamental social institution. In the primary level parents and family members provide attention towards the child by sharing love, affection to the safe environment. The child learns good virtues from family to give good future in the society.

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School

It is also important agency of socialization. The child learns good habits, discipline, social interaction with different children under the control of teachers. The child gets more opportunities in sharing of cultural beliefs and values. Cultural exchange also take place in the school.

Peer Group

In the mechanical life, people are more conscious to spend life with friends to get relief from stress. In the adolescent period the individual is more emotional by hormonal changes in human development. It is very difficult to share feeling with parents compared to friends.

Religion

The term religion is closely associated with supernatural power. Religious beliefs control the human behavior. Religion teaches good social skills like love, sacrifice, faith, etc. Culture influences the religious practice. Through the religious beliefs concepts are same to rituals and ceremonies based on the cultural aspect.

State: All citizens are expected to follow certain rules and regulations in the nation. The state follows the legislations for the welfare of the public to maintain harmony in the society. The planning and implementation of the legislations, laws are based on the cultural preferences and practices of the people. The legislations are different from one country to another. Culture has more influence on the nation or state.

All social agencies have influence on culture. Whenever an individual gets experience with the social agencies to adapt the culture.



Fig. 3.2: Indian cultural traditions and customs

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TRANSCULTURAL SOCIETY

Society is not only a group of people, it is a system of relationship that exists between the individual and groups. Transculturalism is defined as 'seeing oneself in the other.'

Transculture is in turn described as 'extending through all human culture or involving encompassing or combing elements of more than one culture.

Each society has its own cultural practices and preferences. Society consists of multicultural individuals and everybody shares the culture, adjusts with each other and adapts the new culture.

Transculturalism accepts the language and materiality continuously interact within an unstable historical conditions. Transculturalism illuminate's various grades of culture and the ways in groups interact and experience tension. Language shapes the modes of conduct in transculturalism.

Transcultural Society

Cultural traits invented or discovered in one society that the way of spread directly (persons or groups) or indirectly (radio, TV, etc.) to other societies.

CULTURE INFLUENCE ON HEALTH AND DISEASE

Health care providers are often unable to recognize, cultural differences between patient and provider and contribute to misunderstandings around chronic disease management, health status, disease severity and treatment regiments.

All cultures have systems of health beliefs to explain the causes of illness, how it can be cured or treated and who should be involved in the process. Some societies believe that illness is the result of supernatural phenomena and promote prayers or other spiritual interventions that counter the presumed disfavor of powerful forces. Cultural issues play a major role in patient compliance. Some group of people in the society are reluctant to accept a diagnoses of severe emotional illness or mental retardation because it severely reduces the chances of other members of the family getting married. Health is viewed as the result of harmonious balance between the poles of hot and cold that govern bodily functions. Many African-Americans participate in culture that centers on the importance of family and church. There is extended kinship with grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins or individuals who are not biologically related but who play an important role in the family system illness is viewed not as an alteration in a person's physiological state, but as an imbalance between the ill person and natural or supernatural forces.

Some religious communities are against family planning. It affects the women's health and also causes for over population.

The practice of purdah system among Muslim communities resulted in many health problems.

Many people in India believes that the diseases like smallpox, chickenpox are causes by curse of goddess. They are not interested to consult the doctor and do pray the goddess to recover.

Child marriages, denial of widow re-marriage to honor the traditionalism, contribute against the welfare of the people. These orthodox families not encouraging women education and employment and more importance to male births, etc. Cultural practices like consuming

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Tulsi water and Tulsi leaves for healthy being, following yoga also plays an important role in fitness and promoting health status. Surya Namaskar is also good habit for the wellbeing of the individual. It helps to absorb Vitamin D. Most of the Indian ladies are interested to apply turmeric powder on the auspicious occasions, it protects from infectious diseases. In Andhra Pradesh people take spicy foods which causes gastritis among them.

QUESTIONS

Essay Questions

1. Define culture and explain the characteristics of culture.
2. What is the role of culture in understanding health and illness of individuals?
3. What are the factors influencing cultural change and cultural lag?
4. Define culture and write the characteristics of urban and rural culture and explain the importance to nursing.

Short Notes

1. Explain the relationship of culture and health disorders.
2. Explain the importance of language for culture.
3. Define culture. Explain diversity uniformity of culture.
4. Explain the influence of culture on health and disease.
5. Explain the process of socialization.

Brief Questions

1. Define cultural lag.
2. Give two examples for material culture.
3. List out the components of culture.

Fill in the Blanks

1. The word culture is derived from the English word -------. (kulthra)
2. The Sanskrit word also explains the term as --------. (sanskar)
3. Culture is a product of --------. (society)
4. --------- is the process by which the individual learns to confirm the norms of group. (socialization)
5. Culture molds the ----- of the individual. (personality)
6. Culture is a ------ behavior. (learnt)
7. When an individual feels great of his own culture than other cultures, it is known as---------. (ethnocentrism)

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Principles of Sociology for Graduate Nurses

This new edition upholds the latest syllabus of graduate nursing students by Indian Nursing Council (INC). The entire book updated according to the current concepts of the society. The new community development programs, social welfare schemes are presented with suitable examples, charts and diagrams in this book.

All categories of nursing professionals and nursing students will be benefited by studying this book. It helps in preventing and rehabilitate steps to achieve the targets of Government of India. This book is not just theory-oriented but also deals in all aspects of practical knowledge. Now it is a challenge for nurses to take part in various health care schemes and implementation of the programs in all levels of rural and urban communities. Many books are available to acquire knowledge on society and major development schemes in health care but nursing students need up-to-date information in their career. This book may satisfy their academic needs and in understanding their course.

This book enables the nursing students for better understanding in the areas of community organization, major social problems by applying in their profession. The text is highlighted with latest data and diagrams connected to society and covering major topics on role of nurses in easy language.

PR Nalini is presently working as visiting professor in many Nursing Colleges, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, India. She has vast experience in understanding the group of people and awareness of development programs of society by serving in different organizations. She achieved a special prize on memory of 'Mamidipudi Venkamma' in 1981 from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India as merit in her studies of postgraduation. She is an active member in Family Counseling Programs under Women Police Station and also in District Psychology Association, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, India.



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