



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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REGION VII

Kagawasan Ave., Daro, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental



Understanding Culture, Society and Politics

Quarter 3 – Module 3: The Importance of Cultural Relativism in Attaining Cultural Understanding



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Understanding Culture, Society and Politics – Grade 11

Alternative Delivery Mode

Quarter 3 – Module 3: The Importance of Cultural Relativism in Attaining Cultural Understanding

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Introductory Message

This Self-Learning Module (SLM) is prepared so that you, our dear learners, can continue your studies and learn while at home. Activities, questions, directions, exercises, and discussions are carefully stated for you to understand each lesson.

Each SLM is composed of different parts. Each part shall guide you step-by-step as you discover and understand the lesson prepared for you.

Pre-tests are provided to measure your prior knowledge on lessons in each SLM. This will tell you if you need to proceed on completing this module or if you need to ask your facilitator or your teacher's assistance for better understanding of the lesson. At the end of each module, you need to answer the post-test to self-check your learning. Answer keys are provided for each activity and test. We trust that you will be honest in using these.

In addition to the material in the main text, Notes to the Teacher are also provided to our facilitators and parents for strategies and reminders on how they can best help you on your home-based learning.

Please use this module with care. Do not put unnecessary marks on any part of this SLM. Use a separate sheet of paper in answering the exercises and tests. And read the instructions carefully before performing each task.

If you have any questions in using this SLM or any difficulty in answering the tasks in this module, do not hesitate to consult your teacher or facilitator.

Thank you.



What I Need to Know

MELC:

Explain the importance of cultural relativism in attaining cultural understanding.

At the end of the module, you should be able to:

K: Define cultural relativism

S: Demonstrate a holistic understanding of culture and society

A: Value culture and express pride of place without being ethnocentric

This module allows the learner to know about cultural relativism and ethnocentrism. We live in a rapid world with various cultures and different people interacting with each other. This interaction can be positive or negative depending on the level of sensitivity and respect people have for other cultural groups.

It becomes natural for us to read the behavior of others in terms of our own standards. But, what may be right to you may be wrong to them and what may be wrong to you may be right to them. It is just a matter of respect and deeper understanding.



What I Know

Direction: Read each questions carefully write your answers in your notebook/paper.

1. What is Culture?
2. What is cultural relativism?
3. What is ethnocentrism?
4. How will you show respect to other's culture?
5. Is showing respect to other culture necessary? Why or why not?
6. Have you tried visiting other places and experienced culture shock?
7. How does cultural relativism help in understanding other's culture?
8. Do you consider your culture, beliefs and practices superior to other culture?
9. How important are your culture, beliefs and practices for you?
10. Have you ever experienced racism? In what form?



What's In

Task 1: Picture Analysis. Observe the picture. What problem is being emphasized in the following pictures? Write your answers in your notebook.



(Agbo 2018)



(Dayton 2020)



(JSY Blog 2019)

Task 2: Analyze the given line

“One has to abide by the ethical norms of the culture where one is located.”

Note: Answers may vary depending on the views of a student/teacher.

1. What do you see in the pictures?
2. Can you describe what the scenario is in the first picture? How about the second picture?

3. Have you experienced being judged or discriminated?
4. How will you show respect to persons who have different culture from you?



What is It

Cultural relativism is a principle that an individual person's beliefs and activities should be understood by others in terms of that individual's own culture.

It was established and accepted in anthropological research by Franz Boas in the first few decades of the 20th century and later popularized by his students.

It refers to not judging a culture to our own standards of what is right or wrong, strange or normal. Instead, we should try to understand cultural practices of other groups in its own cultural context. In other words, right and wrong are culture-specific. What is considered moral in other society may be considered immoral in another, and since no universal standard of morality exist, no one has the right to judge another society's customs to be correct or incorrect.

Ethnocentrism, in contrast to cultural relativism, is judging another culture solely by the values and standards of one's own culture.

According to William G. Sumner, ethnocentrism is defined as the "technical name for the view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it."

He further characterized it as often leading to pride, vanity, beliefs of one's own group's superiority and contempt of outsiders.

Ethnocentric individuals born into a particular culture that grow up absorbing the values and behavior of the culture will develop a worldview that considers their culture to be the norm (standard). They judge other group or culture specially with concern to language, behavior, custom religion etc.

The pictures below briefly describe the cultures that exist and are practiced and honored by some groups of people respectively. It couldn't be denied that the world suffers from cultural differences due to a lack of acceptance leading to discrimination and racism that greatly affects the well-being of an individual. Like for examples; these unique tribes particularly in Suri/Mursi, Ethiopia where their women's beauty is determined by how large their lip plate is; while the Kayan near Loikaw District, Kayah State, Myanmar, for them, wearing traditional brass coil neck rings has been a standard of beauty in their tribe. To sum it up, cultural relativism is the practice of viewing the beliefs, values and practices of a culture from its own viewpoint rather than being ethnocentric and viewing the beliefs, values and practices from your own viewpoint.



(Agbo 2018)



(Dayton 2020)

Another example is a racial discrimination of a black girl in school. She was judged by the color of her skin. During the exploration period, the discrimination against black and white was a major controversial issue. They believed that the darker a person is, the dirtier and impurer they are. That is what an ethnocentric person would say but a cultural relativist believes that there is no ugly women per se.



(JSY Blog 2019)

How Cultural Relativism Mitigates Ethnocentrism

It is widely believed in the field of sociology that ethnocentric behavior may be mitigated through the recognition and application of cultural relativism. A person can practice cultural relativism by recognizing that our culture shapes what we consider to be beautiful, ugly, appealing, disgusting, virtuous, funny, and abhorrent and that this should not be the basis for evaluating other culture. Cultural relativism shapes our understanding of different issues in the society as to why certain religion believe in this and other not, or how come this group eat this type of dish, wear this weird clothing, sing and dance along with music while others prefer not to. What we need is an open heart and unbiased and critical mind, exposure, education, and involvement in activities, programs supporting and recognizing the uniqueness and beauty of every culture for us to truly grasp what cultural relativism means.

<https://www.slideshare.net/victorsinangote/323989810-ucsphandouts><https://www.slideshare.net/victorsinangote/323989810-ucsphandouts>

Cultural relativism leads to the view that no culture is superior to another culture in terms of systems of morality, beliefs, values, law, politics, etc. We should not assume that all of our preferences are based on some objective moral standard. It's a good idea to keep an open mind when we encounter practices different from our own.



What's More

Task 4: Poster Making

Direction: Make a poster that shows understanding and respect for other's culture. Use short bond paper.

Output is graded according to this criteria:

Relevance to the topic	- 20 points
Originality	- 15 points
Attractiveness	- <u>15 points</u>
	50 points



What I Have Learned

Direction: Based on the activities and readings on this module, write the things you have learned about the importance of cultural relativism in attaining cultural understanding. Do this in your activity notebook.

I have learned that _____.

I have realized that _____.

I will apply _____.

Direction: Draw or look for pictures and paste it on a notebook/paper that best describe about ethnocentric and culturally relative behaviors manifested by millennials of today. For each behavior identify the causative factors that are highly involved on the aforementioned.

Example: Racial Discrimination – Prejudice/overt bias



Assessment

A. Multiple Choice

Instructions: Encircle the letter of the correct answer from the choices provided under each number. Read and understand the statements thoroughly.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of cultural relativism?
 - a. A cultural group's desire to pass on its values to the next generation
 - b. Refers to not judging a culture to our own standards of what is right or wrong
 - c. Measuring which culture are related to others
 - d. All of the above
2. What is ethnocentrism?
 - a. judging another culture solely by the values and standards of one's own culture.
 - b. judging another culture solely by the values and standards of another culture.
 - c. having no concept of right or wrong
 - d. both b and c
3. Which of the following sentences expresses cultural relativism?
 - a. an employee may refer to his client as a stupid if the client needed some time to understand whatever the employee is trying to tell him
 - b. addressing a conservative woman in a liberated place as weirdo
 - c. thinking that people who eats fried crickets are disgusting
 - d. none of the above
4. Which of the following is not a claim of a cultural relativist?
 - a. The moral code of a society determines what is right within that society
 - b. Different societies have different moral code
 - c. It is good to judge the conduct of other societies
 - d. There is no objective standard that can be used to judge one society as better than another

5. What does the picture show?



- a. Cultural relativism
- b. Ethnocentrism

- c. Both cultural relativism and ethnocentrism
- d. None of the above

B. Essay

1. Explain the saying "When in Rome, do as the Romans do".
2. Do you think it is important to show respect to other's culture? Why or why not?
3. Is there such thing as the best culture



Answer Key

Try This!

1. What is Culture?
Culture is defined as complex whole which encompasses beliefs, practices, values, attitudes, laws, norms, artifacts, symbols, knowledge, and everything that a person learns and shares as a member of a society.
2. What is cultural relativism?
Cultural Relativism - Is the principle that an individual person's beliefs and activities should be understood by others in terms of that individual's own culture.
3. What is ethnocentrism?
Ethnocentrism - Is judging another culture solely by the values and standards of one's own culture.

4. How will you show respect to other's culture?
*Answers may vary
5. Is showing respect to other culture necessary? Why or why not?
*Answers may vary
6. Have you tried visiting other places and experienced culture shock?
*Answers may vary
7. How does cultural relativism helps in understanding other's culture?
* Cultural relativism leads to the view that no culture is superior to another culture in terms of systems of morality, beliefs, values , law, politics, etc.. It helps keep an open mind when we encounter practices different from our own.
8. Do you consider your culture, beliefs and practices superior to other culture?
Answers may vary
9. How important are your culture, beliefs and practices for you?
Answers may vary
10. Have you ever experienced racism? In what form?
Answers may vary

Assess what you have learned:

A. Multiple Choice

1. B
2. A
3. D
4. C
5. B

B. Essay

1. Explain the saying "When in Rome, do as the Romans do".
-When in Rome , do as the Romans do" refers to the importance of adapting to the customs, cultures and practices of the people in that specific place in order to blend in and show respect.
2. Do you think it is important to show respect to other's culture? Why or why not?
Answers may vary
3. Is there such thing as the best culture?
Answers may vary

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