

CULTURE

- **Definition:** *The ways of thinking, the ways of acting, and the material objects that together form a people's way of life.*
- Society's entire way of life.
- Life found around the world differs in → language, forms of dress, preferred foods, musical tastes, family patterns, and beliefs about right and wrong.
- Differing societies examples;
 - In some societies;
 - Some people have many children some have few.
 - Some honor elderly & some glorify youth.
 - Some societies are peaceful other are warlike.
 - This amazing human capacity for so many different ways of life is a matter of human culture.
- Culture includes: *what we think, how we act, and what we own.*
- Culture is both our link to the past and our guide to the future.
- To understand Culture: 2 things are considered: *Thoughts and things (Non-material & Material Culture)*
- **Nonmaterial culture** is *the ideas created by members of a society.(intangible things)*
- **Material culture** is *the physical things created by members of a society.(tangible things)*
- Examples of all material and non-material culture...(example of cricket match)
- Culture shapes → not only what we do but also what we think and how we feel i.e. *HUMAN NATURE.*
- Material culture is the outgrowth of non-material culture.
- Received culture as a part of social heritage then reshape and introduce changes and pass to the succeeding generations.
- Traveler → uneasy because of cultural difference.
- This uneasiness is **culture shock**, *personal disorientation (confusion) when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life* → culture shock is most intense when we travel.
- No particular way of life is “natural”.
- Every other animal, from ants to zebras, behaves very much the same all around the world because behavior is guided by instincts, biological programming over which the species has no control.

- *Only humans rely on culture rather than instinct to create a way of life and ensure our survival.*

CULTURE, NATION, AND SOCIETY:

- *Culture*= shared way of life
- *Nation*= is a political entity, a territory with designated borders (Pakistan, India, USA)
- *Society*= organized interaction of people who typically live in a nation or some other specific territory.

ELEMENTS OF CULTURE:

- Cultures vary + they have some common elements i.e.
 - Symbols, Values, Language, Norms.

SYMBOLS:

- Symbol is *anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by people who share a culture.*
- Humans use their senses to experience the surrounding.
- We also try to give the world *meaning*.
- Humans transform elements of the world into symbols.
- E.g. whistle, word, colored wall, raised fist= share meaning.
- How you create and manipulate symbol that varies according to one's understanding of it and the meaning provided.
- Societies create new symbols all the time.
- One *reason*→ People create new symbols i.e. we develop new ways to communicate. Cyber Symbols→ E.g. texting/ short forms like gtg, tc used in text messages.
- Entering an unfamiliar culture also reminds us of the power of symbols.
- If you do not understand the symbols of culture→ person feels lost, isolated, not sure how to act and react etc.
- *Culture shock* is a two-way process;
 - Travelers *experience* culture shock when encountering people whose way of life is different. E.g. loving dogs in USA and roasting dogs in China. Cow(India, Pakistan).
 - On the other hand, a traveler may *inflict* culture shock on local people by acting in ways that offend them. E.g Asking for meat in an Indian restaurant.
- Symbolic meanings also vary within a single society. E.g. fur coat

LANGUAGE:

- Definition: *system of symbols that allows people to communicate with one another.*
- Key to the world of culture.
- Humans have created many alphabets to express the hundreds of languages we speak.
- Language not only allows communication but is also the key to *Cultural Transmission, the process by which one generation passes culture to the next. E.g. human genes.*
- Language shape Reality (different emotions and expressions in various cultures).
- **Sapir-Whorf thesis** the idea that people see and understand the world through the cultural lens of language
- ➡ Every society has transmitted culture by using speech. → a process → “oral cultural tradition.”
- Language skills may link us with the past, but they also spark the human imagination to connect symbols in new ways, creating an almost limitless range of future possibilities.

LANGUAGE SHAPE REALITY

- Experience the world differently → each language has its own distinctive symbols that serve as the building blocks of reality.
- Each language has words or expressions not found in any other symbolic system.

VALUES AND BELIEFS:

- **Values** are culturally defined standards that people use to decide what is desirable, good, and beautiful and that serve as broad guidelines for social living.
 - People who share a culture use values to make choices about how to live.
 - Values are broad principles that support beliefs.
- **Beliefs** specific ideas that people hold to be true.
- Values are ***abstract standards*** of goodness, and beliefs are particular matters that individuals consider true or false.

EMERGING VALUES:

- Values changes over time.

- E.g. past→ hard work. Now→ leisure activities, self-satisfaction, self-motivation etc

NORMS:

- *Rules and expectations by which a society guides the behavior of its members.*
- In everyday life, people respond to each other with *sanctions*, rewards or punishments that encourage conformity to cultural norms.

MORES AND FOLKWAYS:

- Basic rules of everyday life.
- Some norms are more important to our lives than others.
- Mores: *Norms that are widely observed and have great moral significance. E.g. taboos—without marriage live in relationship.*
 - Distinguish between right and wrong
 - If not followed→ invite a more serious response
- Folkways: *Norms for routine or casual interaction. E.g. appropriate greetings and proper dress.*
 - Draw a line between right and *rude*.
 - E.g. man who does not wear a tie to a formal dinner party may raise eyebrows for violating folkways.

SOCIAL CONTROL:

- *Attempts by society to regulate people's thoughts and behavior.*
- As we learn cultural norms, we gain the capacity to evaluate our own behavior.
- As we learn cultural norms→ we gain the capacity to evaluate our own behavior.
- only cultural creatures can experience shame and guilt.

IDEAL AND REAL CULTURE:

- Norms and values suggest→ how we *should* behave.
- IDEAL: includes the values and norms that a culture claims to have.
 - E.g. in business→ All employees involved or considered in decision making. Teamwork is always appreciated. Employee reward based on merit. Innovation encouraged
- REAL: includes the values and norms that are actually followed by a culture.

- E.g. in business→ are all employees involved or considered in decision making? Is teamwork appreciated? Is employee reward based on merit or favoritism? Is innovation encouraged? etc
- Ideal culture always differs from real culture.
- Culture's moral standards are important even if they are sometimes broken.

MATERIAL CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY:

- Physical objects, resources, and spaces that people use to define their culture e.g. cars, buildings, tools etc.
- Artifact- An object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest. E.g. Chinese= chopsticks etc.
- The material culture of a people may seem as *strange to outsiders* as their language, values, and norms.
- Material culture reflect underlying cultural values(We own more motor vehicles... Yanomamö...warlike→ weapons)
- Material culture also reflects a *society's technology*→ knowledge that people use to make a way of life in their surroundings.
- The more complex a society's technology is, the more its members are able (for better or worse) to shape the world for themselves.
- we attach great importance to science and praise sophisticated technology→ judge cultures with simpler technology → less advanced than our own. (life expectancy in yanomamo 40).
- Powerful and complex technology → \work-reducing devices and seemingly miraculous medical treatments,→it contributed to unhealthy levels of stress and obesity.
- created weapons capable→ of destroying everything that humankind has achieved.
- *Technology is not equally distributed within our population.*

❖ **New Information Technology and Culture**

- Postindustrial production is based on computers and other electronic devices that create,process,store,and apply information.
- Workers need → symbolic skills in place of the mechanical skills of the industrial age.

- *Symbolic skills* include the ability to speak, write ,compute, design, and create images in fields such as art, advertising,and entertainment.
- Generate more creative cultural ideas , images and products.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY:

- Diverse or different cultures existing in a country which reflects their background.
- Multicultural → US
- Monocultural → Japan

HIGH CULTURE AND POPULAR CULTURE:

- Cultural diversity also involves →social class.
- “culture”→ form of art→ classical literature,music, dance, and painting.
- Refer people “cultured”→ they appreciate the “finer things in life.”
- assuming that everyday culture is somehow less worthy.(ordinary people)
- Game, music, polo etc.. more ploished...
- These differences arise because many cultural patterns are readily available to only some members of a society.
- **high culture** → cultural patterns that distinguish a society’s elite.
- **popular culture** → designate cultural patterns that are widespread among a society’s population.

For example, there is no difference at all between a violin and a fiddle; however, we simply name the instrument a violin when it is used to produce classical music typically enjoyed by a person of higher position and we call it a fiddle when the musician plays country tunes appreciated by people with lower social standing.

SUBCULTURE refers to *cultural patterns that set apart some segment of a society’s population.*

- A cultural group within a larger culture, often having beliefs or interests at difference with those of the larger culture.
- Subculture refers to cultural patterns that set apart some segment of a society’s population.
- A cultural group within a larger culture, often having beliefs or interests at difference with those of the larger culture.
- Subcultures are a source not only of pleasing variety but also of tension and even violence.
- Subcultures involve not just “*difference*” but also “*hierarchy*”.

MULTICULTURALISM:

Multiculturalism is an educational effort to encourage an awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity → promoting equality of all cultural traditions.

COUNTERCULTURE:

- Cultural patterns that strongly oppose those widely accepted within a society.
- Cultural diversity also includes complete rejection of standard/ casual/ regular ideas or behavior.

CULTURAL CHANGE:

- Change in one part of a culture usually sparks changes in others.
- Cultural integration, *the close relationships among various elements of a cultural system.*
 - E.g today women → more into making career than their previous generation → late marriages or high divorce rate.

CULTURAL LAG:

- Some elements of culture change faster than others.
- *The fact that some cultural elements change more quickly than others, disrupting a cultural system.*
- Example: technology moves quickly, generating new elements of material culture (Genetics engineering → unethical and harmful Social consequences).

CAUSES OF CULTURAL CHANGE:

- Cultural changes are set in motion in three ways.
- 1-**Invention**, the process of creating new cultural elements. E.g telephone, internet, technology etc (material culture)
 - These elements of material culture have had an incredible impact on our way of life.
- 2- **Discovery**, a second cause of cultural change, involves recognizing and understanding more fully something already in existence → Scientific Research
 - Distant star or the foods of another culture or women's political leadership skills.
- 3- **Diffusion**, the spread of cultural traits from one society to another.
 - New information technology sends information around the globe in seconds, cultural diffusion has never been greater than it is today.
- Cultural change shows us that culture is always complex and always changing.

ETHNOCENTRISM AND CULTURAL RELATIVISM

- travelers → both excitement and distress.
- The Australians → light switches down to turn them on. North Americans → up
- The British drive → left side of the road. North Americans drive → right side.
- The Japanese name city blocks. North Americans name streets.
- Egyptians stand very close to others → in conversation. North Americans are used to maintaining several feet of “personal space.”
- It is no wonder that people everywhere exhibit **Ethnocentrism**, *the practice of judging another culture by the standards of one’s own culture*.
- The alternative to ethnocentrism is **cultural relativism**, *the practice of judging a culture by its own standards*.

Cultural relativism can be difficult for travelers to adopt. It requires not only openness to unfamiliar values and norms but also the ability to put aside cultural standards we have known all our lives. Even so, as people of the world come into increasing contact with one another, the importance of understanding other cultures becomes ever greater.

A GLOBAL CULTURE

- The global Economy: The flow of goods → International Food chains, Clothing brands etc.
- Global Communications: The flow of information → Virtual Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, Concerts etc.
- Global Migration: The flow of people → Transportation Technology especially Air travel.