



Culture & Emotion

[Yashpal Jogdand]

[HUL261]



What is Culture?

Warmup Activity: Consider Your Culture



- Imagine India through the eyes of a foreign tourist.
- What might they notice that would be different from where they live?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWi9Z37AEuQ>



Similarities & Differences Across Cultures

- Many distinctions between cultures are harder to see because they are psychological in nature.
- Just as culture can be seen in dress and food, it can also be seen in morality, identity, beliefs, and gender roles.
- Understanding cultural differences is important in today's globalised world.

What is Culture? Definitions

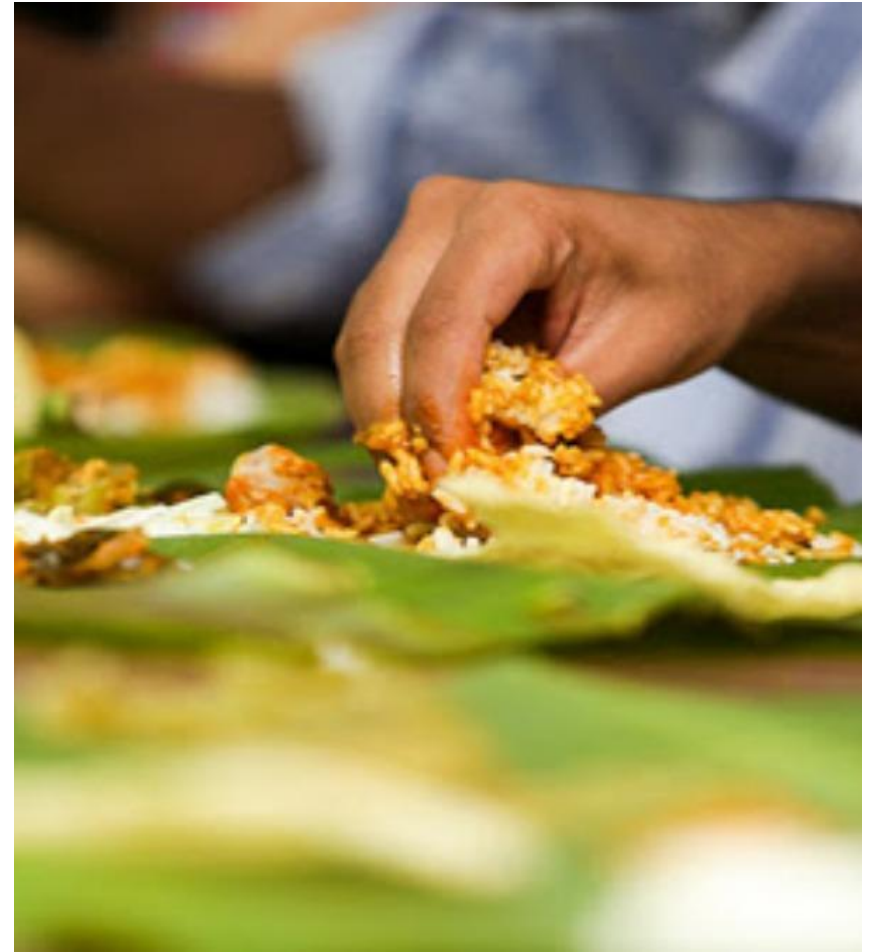


- Have you ever tried eating with chopsticks?
- Would you feel comfortable eating with chopsticks everyday?
- We all live by the collective understanding of the way the world works, shared by members of a group and passed down from one generation to the next. This is “culture”

What is Culture? Definitions



- Like the words “happiness” and “intelligence,” the word “culture” can be tricky to define.
- Culture is a word that suggests social patterns of shared meaning



“Culture” of The Yanomamö Tribe in South America



Yanomamö tribe live in large, circular houses called *yanos* or *shabonos*, some of which can hold up to 400 people.

- The Yanomamö or Yanomami practise an ancient communal way of life.
- Rituals, feasts and games are held in the main, central area. Each family has its own hearth where food is prepared and cooked during the day. At night, hammocks are slung near the fire which is stoked all night to keep people warm.
- It is a Yanomami custom that a hunter does not eat the meat he has killed. “He shares it out among friends and family. In return, he will be given meat by another hunter,”
- The Yanomami consider all people to be equal, and do not have a chief. Instead, all decisions are based on consensus after long discussions and debates.

What is Culture? Aspects



There are several features of culture that are central to understanding the uniqueness and diversity of the human mind

- **Versatile:** Culture can change and adapt
- **Shared:** Culture is the product of people sharing with one another
- **Cumulative:** Cultural knowledge is cumulative. That is, information is “stored.” This means that a culture’s collective learning grows across generations.
- **Patterns:** There are systematic and predictable ways of behavior or thinking across members of a culture.



■ In Canada, it is more common to bring a bottle of wine to host's home and for the gift to be opened right away. In India, by contrast, it is more common to bring sweets, and often the gift is set aside to be opened later.



The Self and Culture

Individualism and Collectivism



Harry Triandis, a cross-cultural psychologist, studied culture in terms of individualism and collectivism

- Individualist culture is a culture in which the goals of the individual take precedence over the goals of the group.
- Collectivist culture is a culture in which the goals of the group take precedence over the goals of the individual.
- Individualism and collectivism can further be divided into **vertical and horizontal dimensions** (Triandis, 1995).
- Essentially, these dimensions describe social status among members of a society. People in vertical societies differ in status, with some people being more highly respected or having more privileges, while in horizontal societies people are relatively equal in status and privileges.

Individualism and Collectivism..contd



	Individualist	Collectivist
Vertical	<p>People are unique; some distinguish themselves and enjoy higher status.</p> <p>Example: United States</p>	<p>People emphasize their connectedness and must do their duty; some enjoy higher status.</p> <p>Example: Japan</p>
Horizontal	<p>People are unique; most people have the same status.</p> <p>Example: Denmark</p>	<p>People emphasize their connectedness and work toward common goals; most people have the same status.</p> <p>Example: Israeli kibbutz</p>

Table 3: Individualist and collectivist cultures

- These dimensions are, of course, simplifications. Neither individualism nor collectivism is the “correct way to live.” Rather, they are two separate patterns with slightly different emphases.
- People from individualistic societies often have more social freedoms, while collectivistic societies often have better social safety nets.

The Self and Culture



The cultural patterns of individualism and collectivism are linked to an important psychological phenomenon: the way that people understand themselves.

Known as self-construal, this is the way people define the way they “fit” in relation to others

INDIVIDUALISM	COLLECTIVISM
The self is unique	The self is part of a group
The self is relatively stable across situations	The self is relatively fluid across situations
Personal goals and the opportunity to express one's self are important	Personal duties and group well-being are important
USA, Canada, Germany	Japan, Korea, Taiwan

Cultural Models of Self



- In a classic study ([Cousins, 1989](#)), American and Japanese students were administered the Twenty Statements Test, in which they were asked to complete the sentence stem, “I am _____,” twenty times.
- U.S. participants were more likely than Japanese participants to complete the stem with psychological attributes (e.g., friendly, cheerful);
- Japanese participants, on the other hand, were more likely to complete the stem with references to social roles and responsibilities (e.g., a daughter, a student)
- These different models of the self result in different principles for interacting with others.

Manford Kuhn's Twenty Statements Test

Fill in the blank with 20 different answers.

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

I am ... _____

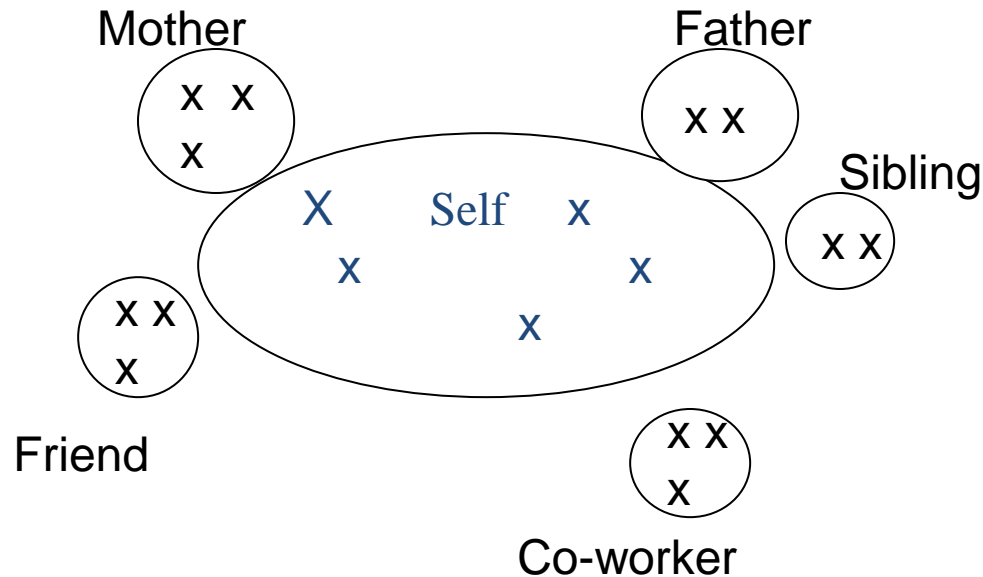
I am ... _____

Culture and the Self

(Markus & Kitayama, 1991)



Independent Self In individualistic cultures, people develop a self-concept as separate from or independent of others.

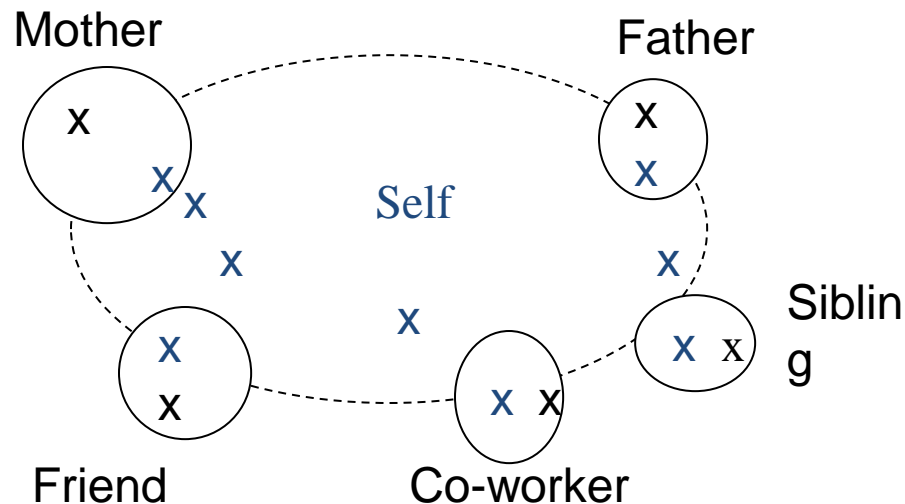


Culture and the Self - cont.



(Markus & Kitayama, 1991)

Interdependent Self In collectivist cultures, people develop a self-concept in terms of one's connections or relationships with others.





Culture and Emotion

Historical Background



Universalists

- All cultures share common primordial ancestor
- Emotions are the same

Constructivists

- Humans have adapted to different environments
- Emotions evolved too
- Cultural ideas and practices are all-encompassing

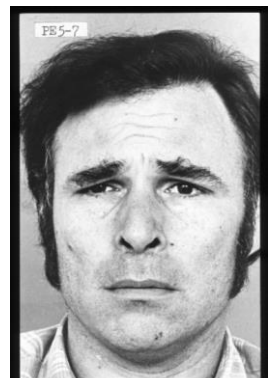
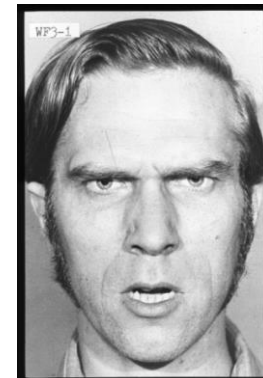


Historical Background



Studies by Paul Ekman (1970s)

- Ekman and Wallace Friesen devised a system to measure people's facial muscle activity, called the Facial Action Coding System (FACS; Ekman & Friesen, 1978).
- Matching emotions
- Some variability
- Cultural causes –
 - “Display rules”





Current research & theory

Current Research and Theory



North American

Smile: greater frequency,
greater intensity



East Asian

Smile: lower frequency,
lower intensity



Current Research and Theory



North American

Prefer more arousing leisure activities



East Asian

Prefer calmer leisure activities



Current Research and Theory



North American

- Feel good after positive event



East Asian

- “Mixed” feelings after positive event



Current Research and Theory



North American

- Emotional suppression leads to more depression

East Asian

- Emotional suppression not associated with depression



Current Research and Theory



- In Western cultures, anger arises when people's personal wants, needs, or values are attacked or frustrated ([Markus & Kitayama, 1994](#)).
- Angry Americans sometimes complain that they have been "treated unfairly." Simply put, anger—in the American sense—is the result of violations of the self.
- By contrast, Japanese are more likely to feel anger represents a lack of harmony between people. In this instance, anger is particularly unpleasant when it interferes with close relationships



Current Research and Theory - Similarities



**Similar physiological response
after positive & negative
events**



**Positive emotions after
positive events**



Etic & Emic Approach



**Emic = (m) = mono =
one**

- Accounts, descriptions and explanations used to understand a culture in its cultural context.
- It is an attempt to learn the concepts of a culture and see the world the way they do.

**Etic = (t) = two or
more**

- Comparing two more cultures in a cross-cultural approach
- Can be used as an attempt to find cross-cultural similarities in behavior or universal behaviors

Cultural Intelligence



- § The concept of cultural intelligence is the ability to understand why members of other cultures act in the ways they do.
- § Rather than dismissing foreign behaviors as weird, inferior, or immoral, people high in cultural intelligence can appreciate differences even if they do not necessarily share another culture's views or adopt its ways of doing things.
- § In a world that is increasingly connected by travel, technology, and business the ability to understand and appreciate the differences between cultures is more important than ever.



Sum up Activity



CAT: The Most Important Point



- What was the most important thing you learned during this class?
- What concepts you think caught your attention and imagination?
- Write down your answers in the chatbox.



End