

# PUB 1270: Socio-Political Environment

## *Session 03*



**Department of Public Administration  
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura (2024)**

# Learning Outcomes

- Define culture
- Identify components, types and characteristics of culture
- Discuss the practical aspects of culture
- Discuss the implications of culture on managers

# Introduction

- It is one of the major elements of the social environment.
- Culture is the way of living
- There is a striking parallel between the biological evolution and the origin of culture.

# Culture: Definitions

Culture is that complex whole which includes **knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs,** and any other *capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*

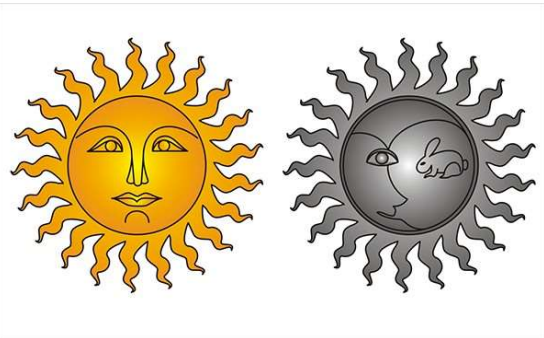
***E. B. Tylor***

Culture is an accumulation of thoughts, values, and objects, it is the *social heritage acquired by us from preceding generations through learning*, as distinguished from the biological heritage, which is passed on to us automatically through genes.

***Graham Wallas***



# Main Components of Culture



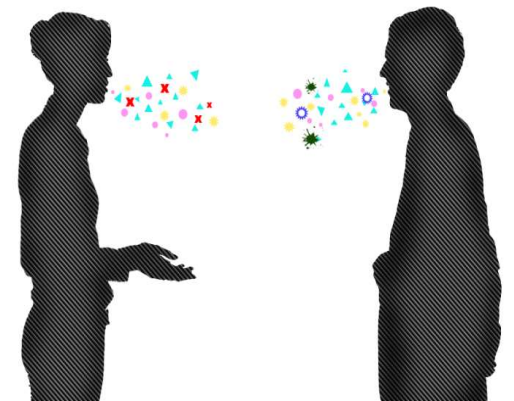
## Symbols

Anything that represents meaningfully something else.  
E.g.: gestures, images, sounds

## Language

System of verbal and written symbols to convey more complex meaning.

E.g.: Language using with teachers and friends/ Memo writing styles and Language used in Public and Private sector organizations/ Language using in University and internship organization)



# Main Components of Culture cont'd.



## Values

General ideas of what is right or wrong, desirable or undesirable in a particular culture.

E.g.: respect teachers, *caring for elderly people, sick people, beggars and animals*

## Norms

Established rules of behaviour or standards of conduct that say how people should behave in particular situations.

E.g.: *When the national anthem is sung, a man removes his hat and stands quietly. Give space for an ambulance on road, calm and quiet behaviour in a funeral house, dress code for an interview*



# Types of Culture



## Material Culture

Consists of *physical or tangible creations* that the members of the society make use and share.

E.g.: buildings, books, dresses, foods

## Non-material Culture

Consists of the *abstract or intangible human creations* of society that influence people's behaviour.

E.g.: language, beliefs, rituals, stories, music



# Types of Culture (cont'd.)

## **Dominant Culture**

It is the national culture that represents the group whose values, norms and outlooks are imposed on the society as a whole.

## **Sub Culture**

It is the set of distinctive components of culture that particular group in society uses to distinguish itself from the dominant culture.





# Characteristics of Culture

- Culture is learnt.
- Culture is social and shared.
- Culture is transmissive.
- Culture is continuous and cumulative.
- Culture is dynamic and adaptive.

# Culture in Practice



## Cultural Conflict

Occurs when different cultural values and beliefs get clashed



---

## Cultural Diffusion

Borrowing of cultural elements from one culture to another  
E.g.: father's day, mother's day

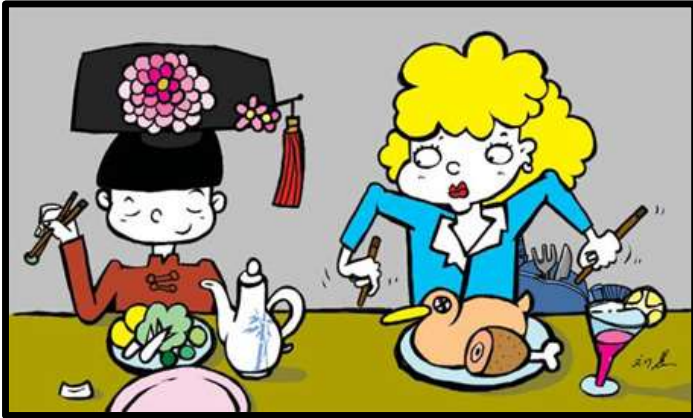
# Culture in Practice (cont'd.)



## Cultural Lag

Occurs when some components of the culture changes faster than the other components

---



## Cultural Shock

Disorientation that people feel when they encounter cultures radically different from their own view E.g. Introducing LGBT laws, eating of raw fish, squids etc

# Implications for Managers

- **Cultural understanding is important for Managers,**
  - To respect the different cultures of organization stakeholders and promote healthy relationships. (cultural diversity)
  - To understand and adopt to the prevailing organizational culture.





# Implications for Managers

- To launch different marketing strategies in different contexts.
- To design & implement orientation/training programmes to transmit the organizational culture to new employees.
- To communicate organization culture to customers and other stakeholders in numerous ways. (advertising, symbols, dress code, language)
- To avoid conflicts and pay respect to culture.
  - Organizational culture can impact the performance and well-being of employees.
  - To retain loyal employees and customers for the organization.
  - To introduce changes to the prevailing organization culture.

# Culture & Business – At glance

Business when the absence of cultural compassion....

Examples :

- **Pepsi failed in China** with the inability of understanding local language properly (they translated their slogan with the meaning of Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the death , so Chinese people were scared of buying)
- **Nova Cars did a similar mistake in Central and South America** (In Spanish Nova means 'it doesn't go')
- **Volkswagen** branded one of their version as 'Jetta', when launching it to the Italian market it was translated as 'Misfortune', so **they loss the market in Italy**
- **Wall- Mart completely failed in Germany** since they could not identify the local culture.