

## **socio-cultural perspective of behavior**

### **sociology**

- Is the scientific study of society – its **structure**, the way it **operates** and how it is **changing**, and of the **influence** of society on the experience and behavior of the individuals within it.
- Because people live together in **social groups**, they tend to share **common experiences** and come to develop **common ways of thinking and**

### **Socio-cultural Perspective of Behavior**

- A perspective describing people's behavior and mental processes as shaped in part by their social and/or cultural contact, including race, gender, and nationality."
- Sociocultural perspective theory applies to every sector of our daily lives.
- How we communicate, understand, relate and cope with one another is based on the social theory.
- Our spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, physiological being are all influenced by sociocultural perspective theory.
- Sociocultural factors are the larger scale forces within cultures and societies that affect the thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

### **Socio-cultural Factors affecting Behavior**

- Attitudes
- Child rearing practices
- Cross cultural difference
- Cultural deprivation
- Cultural identity
- Culture change
- Discrimination
- Ethnic identity
- Ethnic values
- Face (sociological concept)
- Family structure
- Kinship structure
- Power
- Race

- Racial and ethnic groups
- Regional differences
- Religious beliefs
- Religious practices
- Reputation
- Rituals
- Taboos

## Socialization

- Is the process by which individuals learn values and norms:
- **Primary socialization**
  - Is the informal process through which children learn to be competent members of their particular social groups (ethnic, religious, class).
  - largely takes place in the family.
- **Secondary socialization:**
  - The process of learning what is the appropriate behavior as a member of a smaller group within the larger society. A process through which individuals learn the norms associated with particular roles in society.

## Social processes

- mean the **various modes of interaction** between individuals or groups including **cooperation** and **conflict**, **social differentiation** and **integration**, **development**, **arrest** and **decay**.

## Society

- Society is a group of people who are involved with each other through persistent relations, or a large social grouping, share the same geographical or social territory, are subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations. share a distinctive **culture** and **institutions**.
- A **society** can enable its members to benefit in
- ways that would not otherwise be possible on an individual basis.
- A **society** may be illustrated as economic, social, or industrial infrastructure, made up of a varied collection of individuals.
- Small societies tend to be uniform, while complex societies, such as the United States, are multicultural.
- Members of a **society** may be from different ethnic groups.
- A **society** can be a particular:
  - \* Ethnic group, such as the Saxons;
  - \* A nation state, such as Cyprus; or

\* A broader cultural group, such as a Western society.

## Culture & Subculture

- Culture is defined as an expression of society through material things and beliefs.
- Culture encompasses ideology, values, religion and artistic works.
- Subcultures have values and norms distinct from the societal majority.
- A variety of **subcultures** can exist under one overriding culture.
- E.g., The United States has many subcultures, ranging from Wall Street financiers to Portuguese-American fishermen.

## Community

- **Community** has two distinct meanings:
  1. Refers to a usually **small, social unit** of any size that shares common values.
  2. Also refers to the **national community or international community**.
- In human communities, **intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, risks,** and a number of other conditions may be present and common, affecting the identity of the participants and their degree of cohesiveness.

## Community & Society

- A **community** is limited to a specific geographic location, but a **society** can be made up of people who live in different places.
- A **society** is made up of direct and indirect social connections between people, but a **community is made up of individuals who are more closely connected**.
- For example, people who live in a town represent a community, whereas everyone who lives in the state the town is located in makes up a society.

## Culture

- **Culture** is defined as the shared patterns of behaviors, interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of **socialization**.
- The shared patterns identify the members of a **culture group** while also distinguishing those of another group.

## Values and Norms

- **Values** refer to collective belief about what is right, good and desirable that has developed within a social group.
- **Norms** refer to expected ways of behaving in specific situations which reflect the values of the group.
- **Values and norms** help to regulate individual's behavior by defining certain goals and the means of attaining them.
- Individuals learn **values and norms** through the process of **socialization**.

## **Social Stratification**

- **Social stratification**: ranking of individuals, groups, or segments of the population distinguished according to social characteristics considered by the culture important.
- **Social stratification** may be based on:
  - Social class
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity

## **Social Class**

- **Social class** refers to people
  - having the same social, economic, or educational status.
  - sharing broadly similar types and levels of resources,
  - broadly similar styles of living and some shared perceptions of their common condition.
  - **Social class** is closely related to **occupation**.
  - Households, wives, and children social class is assigned according to the **occupation of the household**.

## **Gender**

- **Gender** refers to differences in social characteristics assigned to males and females
- **Gender Role** refers to roles in society assigned to men and women
- **Patriarchy** is a stratification system **based on gender**, which gives greater power and advantage to men
- **Gender Stereotypes** are perceived ideas about appropriate styles of behavior for men (aggressive, active) and women (passive, compliant).

## **Ethnicity**

- **Ethnicity** denotes membership of a social group with a **common set of norms, values and beliefs** expressed in a **common language, religion, dress, diet and other symbols** and some **sense of a common origin or homeland**.

## **Race & Racism**

- **Race** refers to biological characteristics.
- **Racism** is generally defined as actions, practices, or beliefs that consider the human species to be divided into races with shared traits, abilities, or qualities, such as personality, intellect, morality, or other cultural behavioral characteristics.
- **Races** can be ranked as inherently superior or inferior to others, or that members of different races should be treated differently.

## **Racial Discrimination**

- Racism and racial discrimination are often used to describe discrimination on an ethnic or cultural basis, independent of whether these differences are described as racial.
  - The Stratification system based on race and ethnicity disadvantages non-white minorities, and is expressed as: racial prejudice , discrimination, or Racism.
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## **Attitudes**

- **Attitude** refers to evaluation of others or things.
- **Attitude** is the way we think and feel about someone or something. [The things can be concrete objects like cars or ideas like marxicism].
- **Attitudes** have:
  - an affective component □ a cognitive component □ a behavioral component
- **Self-monitoring** acts to keep our attitudes in line with our behavior.

## **Attitude Measurement**

- **Attitudes** are measurable.
- **Scales for measurement of attitudes** include:
  - □ **Thurston scales** ("agree X disagree" response on presented statements)
  - □ **Likert scales** ("strongly agree – agree – undecided – disagree – strongly disagree" responses with presented statements)
  - □ **Semantic differential scale** (rating on bipolar 7-point scales e.g. strong-weak; good-bad)

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### Thurston scale

Agree	disagree	Statement	
		.People with AIDS are like my parents	
		Because AIDS is preventable, we should focus our resources on prevention instead .of curing	
		.People with AIDS deserve what they got	
		.Aids affects us all	
		People with AIDS should be treated just .like everybody else	
		.AIDS will never happen to me	

### Semantic Differential Scale Example

- Would you say our website is:

(7) Very Attractive

(6)

(5)

(4)

(3)

(2)

(1) Very Unattractive

### Attitudes

- ▪ The link between **Attitudes & Behaviour** is weak for the following reasons:
  - **Presence of other cognitions**
  - **Social pressure**
  - **Forgetting attitude at time of acting.**
- ▪ **Attitude change can occur through:**

- □ **Self-monitoring**
- **Experience**
- **persuasion**
- **Cognitive Dissonance.**

## **Cognitive Dissonance**

*(Festinger, 1957)*

- **Cognitive Dissonance** is a state of discomfort and tension which arises when we realize that two or more of our cognitions are inconsistent with each other.
- Attitudes are influenced by **Cognitive Dissonance**.
- People seek to reduce **Cognitive Dissonance**.

## **Attribution Theory**

- A theory about the way people decide on the motives of others, and of themselves.
- or the processes by which individuals explain the causes of behavior and events.
- **Attribution** may be caused by:
- the Situations are in (**Situational Attribution**)
- the personality (**Constitutional, Dispositional Attribution**)
- **Judgment of behavior of people (implicitly) is based on:**
- **Consensus**
- **Distinctiveness**
- **Consistency**

## **Impression Formation**

- People often form **impressions** of others from irrelevant or unimportant material.
- **Impression management:** people tend to control the impressions others form about them.
- **Impressions may be based on Stereotypes.**
- **Impressions can sometimes become "self-fulfilling prophecies".**
- **Stereotypes refer to generalizations based on such large categories of people.**
- **Generalizations are almost certain to be wrong.**

## Social Attraction

- **Social attraction** towards other people is an almost a universal feature of mankind influenced by the following factors:
- Proximity
- Exposure
- Physical attraction
- Holding similar views
- Self-disclosure

## Leadership

- A process of **social influence** in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the achievement of a common task.
- No set of characteristics which make a person a leader.
- Qualities demanded of a leader depend on the situation.
- Combination of individual's **qualities** and the particular **situation** makes someone an effective leader.
- **Leadership is strongly related to power:**
  - ☐ Legitimate power (power flowing from a particular role or job)
  - ☐ Reward power (control over the rewarding of others e.g., having money)
  - ☐ Expert power ( is attained by the manager due to his or her own talents such as skills, knowledge, abilities, or previous experience.)

## Conformity

- **Conformity** is the tendency to agree with others in a group.
- **Conformity is determined by:**
- Need for social approval
- [Informational influence (tendency to validate our understanding of the world against that of others)].
- Obedience
- Social pressure
- Cohesive group

## Group effect on Behavior

### Social facilitation



- Presence of others may improve performance on simple well-learned tasks.

### **Social inhibition**

- Presence of others inhibits learning complex tasks.
- Groups are often thought of as making lowest common “denominator” decisions of being devoted to compromise

### **Group effect on Behavior**

- **Risky shift** refers to the phenomenon where a group makes a **decision that carries inherently higher risk** than a decision that each of the individuals would have made on their own.
- Once a group of people start a discussion on a topic, their positions and opinions become polarized and more extreme. Those in the middle, the moderates, are either pushed to one extreme or the other or become silenced.

### **Eye contact**

- **Eye contact** occurs when two people look at each other's eyes at the same time.
- **Eye contact is a form of non-verbal communication and is thought to have a large influence on social behavior.**
- The act is a meaningful and **important sign of confidence and social communication.**
- Different cultures have different rules of eye contact and these can lead to erroneous misunderstandings, with religious and social differences often altering its meaning greatly.

### **Intra-group & Inter-group Behavior**

- People join the group to get,
  - Social reward
  - Prestige
  - Achieve things
- □ Forced to join.
  - The tendency for group members to want to remain as group members is called **Group cohesiveness.**
  - The more rewarding the group the more cohesive it tends to be.
- **Group cohesiveness** tends to be reinforced when the group is competing against other groups.

## Group Cohesiveness

- **Group cohesiveness** is often matched by an increase in **positive cognitions** about one's own group and negative cognitions towards other groups perceived as rivals.
- Under some circumstances, negative cognitions about the out-group can run to outright hostility.
- Identification to a group identifies non-members (the out-group). This have negative consequences and it can produce **prejudice**.

## Prejudice

- **Prejudice** is an **unfair feeling of dislike** for a person or group because of race, sex, religion, etc.
- It is mainly **based on stereotypes** about out-group members.
- **Prejudice** may be reduced when members of two ethnic groups are of equal socioeconomic status.
- **Prejudice** may be reduced by getting members of different groups to work co-operatively together on tasks.

## Altruism) Helping others)

- **Altruism** refers to behavior of people to help others while not receiving a gain themselves.
- **Altruism** boosts self-esteem by complying with a social norm that values helping others.
- **Altruism** may result from our ability to identify with other people and their sufferings. This is called "**Empathy**".
- **Altruism** reflects "**reciprocity**" [a situation or relationship in which two people or groups agree to do something similar for each other, to allow each other to have the same rights, etc. : a reciprocal arrangement or relationship].

## The Self (the "I")

- **Self-concept**  
A subjective idea about who are we.
- **Self-recognition**
- The ability to recognize our-selves as being distinguishable from others.
- **Self-image**

The sort of person we think we are (good or bad).

- **Self-esteem**

How favorably or unfavorably we evaluate ourselves as influenced by our early upbringing and social comparisons.

### **Anomie**

- **Anomie** refers to a **state of "normlessness"** or lack of the usual ethical standards in an individual or group.

- It is associated with considerable psychological distress:

- **Acute anomie** is caused by sudden change or crisis (migration, bereavement, redundancy) which places the individual in an unfamiliar situation.

- **Chronic anomie** refers to circumstances where the rules of a social group have become unclear to individuals or do not provide means of meeting aspirations (long term unemployment or homelessness).

### **Social Role**

- **Social Role:** is the **pattern of behavior associated with a particular position or status in society (teacher, client, daughter).**

- It can be described in terms of:

- behavior **towards others (obligations)** expected of the individual occupying the position and the behavior **from others (rights)** expected in return.

### **Role Conflict**

- **Conflict** among the roles begins because of the human desire to reach success, and because of the pressure put on an individual by **two imposing and incompatible demands competing against each other.**

- The effects of **role conflict** are related to individual **personality characteristics and interpersonal relations.**

- Role conflict may create considerable anxiety and a sense of inadequacy and failure in never living up to expectations.

### **Deviance & Stigma**

- **Deviant behavior** is a behavior which contravenes the norms and values of the group and leads to **social disapproval** and may be **stigmatizing.**

• **Stigma** refers to an attribute of an individual which makes possessor as unacceptable, inferior and spoils identity.

### **Social Control**

- ▪ Once **deviance** has been identified mechanisms of **social control** are called upon to correct at and to stop from spreading, these may involve **sanctions**.
- ▪ **Sanctions** are designated to maintain and enforce the norms and values of a social group.
- ▪ Through the process of **socialization** and the mechanisms of **social control**, the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of the individual are shaped and patterned according to the values, norms and roles of the social group.

### **Social Structure**

- **Social structure** refers to the broad arrangement of social groups within a society.
- **Social structure** is the organized pattern of social relationships and social institutions that together compose society.
- **Social class** is an example social structure, it **guides and shapes human behavior at all levels**, no matter how overtly visible or invisible it is at any given time.

### **Household & Family**

- **Household** is a domestic unit consisting of the members of a family who live together along with nonrelatives such as servants.
- • Defined in terms of **residence**.
- • **Family** defined in terms of **kinship, marriage or parenthood**
- **Nuclear family**: refers to parents and children
- **Extended family**: includes other people related by blood or marriage.

### **Social Integration**

- **Social integration** refers to the cohesion within a social group or community created by ties between individuals involving reciprocal responsibilities and mutual obligations
- **Main integrating factors** in society include:
- □ **Marriage**
- □ **Employment**
- □ **Religious affiliations**

☐ **Voluntary or political organizations**