

The role of culture in human society



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Culture is the essential part of the human's society. Every person is spending his or her life within a certain cultural community. It frequently defines what kinds of person a man or woman is and what values will they have. Does the cultural environment have a direct effect on the values within a community for anthropology, psychology and sociology? Let us discuss this topic step by step.

To understand it better, we can at first define what the cultural environment is and what influence it has on people within it. The very nature of the cultural environment is cultural and social aspects. It could also be called “a social context” and sometimes “milieu”. It is a culture of a society or a group where a certain person is living or getting an education; it is institutions and people who interact with a certain human. By interaction we can mean not only different types of personal communication (like on a workplace, in class, with neighbors etc.); people could also communicate with each other by means of different communicational media (like phone, internet, newspapers, television etc). In spite of non – personal type of the communication, people whom a man or a woman meets in internet can have an influence on his or her values and point of view. Also television and other mass media form our perception of life and other people little by little. This type of interaction we can call one – way or anonymous. It does not always imply the equality of the social status. Thus, the concept of a social environment is wider than the concept of a social circle or a social class. Nevertheless, it is common that those people who have the same social environment start having a sense of solidarity. They easily help and trust each other; also they tend to create a social group. As a result, those people

will always have a similar way of thinking and similar patterns even if they make different conclusions.

It shows us that people depend on society and culture around them very much whether they recognize this fact or not. Let us briefly define what culture itself is. It is going to help us understand what kind of effect it has on the values within a community for anthropology, psychology and sociology.

There is plenty of information about culture and different consequences of it.

It is impossible to transmit a culture through genealogy. Culture is not something innate; culture is something that everybody should learn.

Different facets of it are interrelated; a culture is spread by those people within a group. Nowadays different cultures could easily exist within a country side by side (like it commonly happens in African countries).

According to Hoebel (1960), the definition of a culture is following: “ The integrated sum total of learned behavioral traits that are manifest and shared by members of society”. According Lawton (1975), culture includes “ age grading, religious rituals and athletic sport”. According to Frow (1995) there are “ traditional differences in task and doing business were breaking down and this meant that standardization rather than adaptation is becoming increasingly prevalent”. Probably, a culture is one of the most significant environmental variables that should be considered within a global marketing. Often a culture could not be freely overlooked; it often hiding from a view. Culture consists of some elements; they are language, aesthetics, religion, values and attitudes, education, social organization and material culture. It is necessary to discuss briefly every element of it.

Material culture includes communications, power, transportations and others. Language is the next aspect of culture. It is a reflection of the values and nature of a certain society group. It could be sub-cultural languages, for example, dialects; in some countries it could be two or even more languages. Aesthetics includes art, dancing, arts-music. It concerns good taste, beauty, form and color of it. Education, as it is easy to see, includes the transmission of ideas, attitudes, skills and training in certain disciplines as well. Moreover, education serves as a transmitter of cultural and social values. Sometimes a child was introduced to the cultural value by school or later by university. Religion gives the humans' behavior the best insight and as well it helps us to answer different questions, for example, why people behave in this way and not in another.

We can see that “ culture” is a complicate conception; it includes different aspects. What can we say about “ values” conception? What is commonly meant by “ values”? Shortly, by values a person may mean something that is really matter to him or her. It is beliefs and ideas somebody holds as special. Social and cultural environment forms one's values. Home, church school – there are just some places where people could study values that are common for everybody within their cultural environment. Teachers, friends, parents are forming our personal system of values from day to day. As a result we have personal values. Arts et al. (2003) summarized that they consist of something that we accepted from people around as and that part that came with our own life experience. It is too compulsory to accept everything a person is hearing around him or her; nevertheless, values of

cultural environment around us has its strong influence on our own system of values.

Now, when we recognize what “ values”, “ culture” and cultural environment” commonly mean we can examine the direct effect that the cultural environment has on the values within a community for anthropology, psychology and sociology.

Before discussing the influence of a cultural environment on a person according to anthropology let us briefly mention the definition of the science. Saying shortly anthropology is the inquiry of humanity. Its origins throw back in the social sciences, natural science and humanities. The term itself is taken from the ancient Greek language and has two parts: “ man” and “ study” or “ discourse”. The matters of anthropology are “ how do people behave”, ‘ what are their physical traits”, “ why we can see differences and variations between groups of people”, and finally “ who was the ancestor of the modern humans”. Anthropology is commonly divided in to four fields; they are cultural, or social, anthropology, linguistic anthropology, archaeology and biological, or physical, anthropology. We can see that anthropology itself is the science that studies social and cultural values, differences, origins, roots etc. Thus, it is important to talk about the influence of culture environment according to this certain science.

According to anthropology, a culture could be seated deeply; unprepared person could take some type of a culture like something senseless, strange and even cruel. Let us give an example. According to the Muslim culture a woman must cover her face with yashmak and hide herself from any alien.

Nilaweera & Wijetunga (2005) emphasized that this custom could appear strange and senseless to any person from Europe, United States or numeral other countries where people flaunt a woman's form openly. Here is another example of the opposite culture. In some African countries (like Congo, Kenya etc) women do not wear top cloths. Oyeshile (2004) explained this fact that according to their culture, their traditions and according to their hot climate they do not consider the top of the female body something that they should cover or hide. There are many other different examples of things and customs that are unacceptable and even criminal in one part of the world; at the same time at another part of it people consider it the culture and commonly do it.

Summarizing this short extract we can see that cultural environment have a direct effect on the values within a community for anthropology. Continue the two examples above, a woman from the African country where there is not common or compulsory to cover her body with upper wear have values that are different from the values that are precious for a woman from a Muslim country. If those women could try to explain themselves their culture, values and reasons why they are keeping those culture values they would hardly understand each other. It is common that Muslim people condemn women from Europe and America. For them even the most modest and restrained American female seems to be a woman without culture values because she shows certain part of her body

What can we say about the influence of the social environment on personal values for psychology? What is psychology? It is the science of the human's behavior and mind. This science is an attempt to understand humanity by <https://assignbuster.com/the-role-of-culture-in-human-society/>

exploring certain specific cases and by discovering some general principles as well. One of the main goals of psychology is to benefit the society. Scientists who involved in it we can divide in to some groups: cognitive scientists, social scientists and behavioral scientists. Among others, social behavior is among different subjects of psychology. The science of psychology explores following concepts: emotion, cognition, phenomenology, perception, attention, brain functioning, behavior, motivation, personality, unconscious mind and interpersonal relationships. As anthropology, the science of psychology is a social science and it has a strong connection with social environment. According to psychology, some type of behavior could be considered normal and other type could be considered abnormal. Commonly, humanity has the same nature. For example, murdering and cruelty is considered abnormal in every social group and community. Nevertheless, within some cultures the conception of cruelty may vary. Let us give an example. In American and European countries violation in any form is unacceptable even within a family. Thus people who keep doing it to others would consider psychologically abnormal. According to the culture of some eastern countries, especially countries with Muslim culture, a husband can beat his wife or punish her or in any other way if she does not satisfy him. What kind of misdeed could a wife do? She may cook a food that her husband does not like; she may say a word that her husband could consider unacceptable. People within the community with such culture are considered psychologically normal even if they commit violence every day. According to their culture cruelty is acceptable. A woman is expecting for it and she has no even right to complain. According to the example above we can see that psychological situation within a community could have a strong negative

effect on personal values of a human. A person can look at low values of members of the community around him or her and subconsciously this person could understate those values that he or she had before.

Psychologically people inclined to depend on society. That is why we can state that the cultural environment have a direct effect on the values within a community for psychology.

Sociology is the last science that we are going to discuss. It studies the society using different methods of critical analysis and empirical investigations. This science refines and develops knowledge about the activity of human society. One of the aims of sociology is to achieve the social welfare with the mean of the knowledge. Mancheno-Smoak et al. (2009) stated that the field of interests in sociology varies from the micro level of interaction and agency to the macro level of social structures and systems. It is a very broad conception that is focused traditionally on social class, religion, social stratification, social mobility, secularization, deviance and law. It includes all spheres of people's activity. It is interesting that sociology studies different types of interactions between people. We are living in the age of the world wide globalization when the whole planet is becoming one big house. Different cultural and social communities are not staying separate from each other like it was some hundreds years ago. People are moving, migrating and spreading their culture and different values among other societies.

Why can we state that according to sociology, the cultural environment have a direct effect on the values within a community? First reason is that people like to communicate with each other. It means that they getting some new

knowledge and values. Roniger (1995) declared that when representatives of different cultures are staying in contact for some time they will get used to new values. It will stop being new for them. New cultural values will become common and according to sociology people will start accepting it in their lives. In some time they would not remember that one or another culture or value was not imparted to them. And it is the second reason why the cultural environment has an effect on values of people for sociology. In other words, when people move from one place to another they create a new social group with mixed culture and values.

In conclusion of all factors and aspects that we discussed above we can see that anthropology, sociology and psychology are connected between each other. These three sciences are all about the human nature, culture and community. They are examining interactions and cooperation between different people; we can state that the cultural environment have a direct effect on the values within a community for anthropology, psychology and sociology because according to these sciences it is up to people's nature to take something new from others. According to religion, human society was created as one big family. Let us agree that this statement is right; thus, we need to accept that people within a social community have a direct effect on each other in the same way in which members within an ordinary family have.

Every science that we discussed has one main aim – to make our society better. We need to remember that it is up to everybody to help in achievement of this aim.