

Chinese culture

Business



The Chinese culture is among the world's oldest cultures. With China being the most populous country in the world, traditions and customs vary significantly between cities, towns and provinces. The most critical components of the Chinese culture include music, visual arts, cuisine, martial arts, music, and literature among so many other things (Yu, Zhong, & Xiaoling, n. d). Classical Chinese was the ancient written Chinese language.

Though, for thousands of years, the language got considerable use, it was reserved for intellectuals and scholars, who formed the upper noble class of the society (shi da fu). Calligraphy got later commercialized. Millions of citizens were still illiterate, even after the 20th century. Only after the May 4th Movement, the push for written vernacular Chinese language started. At this point, the common citizens got a chance to read, as the phonology and linguistics of that language model were of the standard spoken language.

The beliefs of traditional Chinese health lies on the adoption of a holistic view, the view emphasize highly on the importance of environmental factors in increasing the risk of spreading diseases (McNamara, 2002). The environmental factors influence the balance of the body's contrary and complementary forces, yin and yang. Imbalance in these two forces, leads to illness. Traditional remedial practices were used to restore the balance of these forces. Illness can be perceived as a state of disharmony between the natural, social environment and the individual. It is the moral duty of the household members to care for their sick member.

Curative and caring processes are relevant to health maintenance. In the traditional Chinese culture, medication is seen as an unnecessary and

aversive act. Mostly, if the symptoms are not obvious, medication may never be taken. Minor side effects of many antibiotics have contributed to the reckless non adherence to medication. Over-the-counter purchase of antibiotics is a common practice in the society.

Parents assume their children are affected by the same illnesses due to occurrence of similar symptoms. This makes them give their children shared antibiotics, and they call for the doctor only if there is no improvement. Apart from the above traditional beliefs, there are those who blame their ill situations or even misfortunes on supernatural forces or acts of witches and sorcerers. These types of people will always seek medication from their religion and such practices. It is certain that all cultures have health beliefs that all try to explain the causes of illness and its treatment.

The way patients perceive and relate patient education to their cultures significantly affects their reception of information supplied and their willingness to use such information. In most industrialized societies, scientific phenomenon causes diseases. As a result, they advocate medical treatments and use technology to treat and diagnose diseases. In the Chinese societies, the interests of the family are at times viewed as more important than those of individual family members. For these reasons, individual behaviors reflect on the family and thus some behaviors may be viewed to bring shame on the family. As a result, Chinese patients may find it difficult to discuss any symptoms of mental illnesses or even depression (McNamara, 2002).

The cultures emphasize family loyalty and foremost devotions to traditions, while giving less on individual feelings. Western and Traditional Chinese

Medicine (TCM) are two practices done together in China. It is one of the countries, where there is integration of traditional medicine within the health care delivery system. TCM used to be practiced as ambulatory care until the 1950s, when hospitals integrated services in their care delivery system. It is in this same period that TCM academic training in the universities became formalized. According to the Chinese customs, health may be explained as a balance between yang and yin (two forms of energy that are opposite, yet they complement each other).

The two forces are a manifestation of everything in nature; one must be present for the other to exist. When the body is healthy, it may be seen as a situation, where the balance is in a constant change. Yin and yang experience shifts in a natural manner. Health problems may experience, when consistent alteration of the balances happens, and one dominates the other (Shelin, 2001). Among the things that have influenced the Chinese culture are religious philosophies.

The three most influential religions have been Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism. There are many practical as well theoretical differences between these philosophies. The distinctions can be well manifested in the Chinese culture. Taoist philosophy believes that progress and success can be achieved as a result of living and working in harmony, in line with nature. Confucianism had substantial influence on government and family life. The value of parents and children towards each other originates as a borrowing from Confucianism.

Buddhism brought the belief in rebirth, which instilled the virtues of perseverance and patience in difficulties (Humphreys, 1980). Greetings are a formal thing in China. The young should always greet the old with the oldest being greeted first. The most common types of greeting are the handshake. It is common for the young to bow a bit when greeting an elderly person. In the Chinese societies, burial of the dead ought to be taken particularly seriously.

Burial customs and funeral rites have significantly been influenced by the age of the deceased member of the society. It is, according to the Chinese customs, that an elder should never show respect to a younger person. For example, if the dead is a young unmarried man, his body should not be brought home and must remain in the funeral parlor; this is because he had no children to whom he could perform such rites. If an infant dies, no funeral rites can be performed either as the old cannot show respect to the young ones. Funeral rites for an elder must, however, follow a certain form. Funeral ceremonies may last for over 49 days with the first seven days as the most important.

If the family is poor, the period may be shortened to from 3 to 7 days.

Cemeteries are located on hillsides as a way of improving Geomantic omen (Fengshui) (Shelin, 2001). Culture is something that will live forever.

However, industrialization influences the form, in which one generation passes it to the other. It is also apparent that some cultures are scientifically not fit in a person's well being.