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As Duncan Mitchell has pointed out, “ a sub-culture is generally taken to mean a section of a national culture “. Culture is not a uniform pattern that impresses alike upon all who are exposed to it.

It is important to keep in mind that a person’s exposure is not to “ culture in genera/” but to the cultures of the particular groups in which he lives. It is so because in large societies, each person’s groups are multiple. For example, we are members of Indian society and, therefore, share in Indian culture.

But we are also members of smaller population segment within the larger society. Regional groups, religious groups, nationality groups, racial groups, occupational groups, class groups, caste groups, urban groups, rural groups, etc., represent such population segments. Each such group has a culture of its own. Such a culture is known as “ sub-culture”. These sub-cultures are parts of a national culture. According to Sutherland, Woodward and Maxwell, the main sub-cultures are – regional sub-culture, ethnic or nationality sub-cultures, urban and rural sub-cultures, class sub-culture, occupational sub-culture, and the religious sub-culture. Sub-Cultures within Sub-Cultures: We have not only sub-cultures in our society, but we can identify sub-cultures within subcultures.

Caste, for example, as a sub-culture has many small sub-cultures within itself in the form of sub-castes. Similarly, a district as a regional sub-culture may have many Thaluk sub-cultures, and so on. Thus, in a very restricted sense, each family may stand as an example of a small sub-culture. The Sub-Cultural Influence: The sub-cultures exercise a great influence upon the individual members.

Not all of the children in the same society confront the same culture because of the many sub-cultures that every complex society contains. Greater the complexity of the society larger will be the number of such sub-cultures.

Each sub-culture may have its own folkways, customs, etiquettes, mores, beliefs, practices, rites, rituals, ceremonies, dress styles, conversational styles, entertainment means, and so on. Thus they exert a wide influence upon the members. As Sutherland, Woodward and Maxwell have pointed out that “ any one person experiences his several sub-cultures as a unit”.

Example: A lower class Brahmin of Karnataka is not actually a member of three separate sub-cultures: lower class, Brahmin, and Karnataka. But he is a Karnataka- Lower-Class-Brahmin.

He lives in a group of persons like himself and his personality has upon it the stamp of their common “ Karnataka-Lower-Class Brahmin Sub-Culture’ . So it is with each person: his sub-cultural exposure is an integrated one. This fact does not undermine the importance of the various sub-cultures. But it only stresses the unified and integrated way in which a particular person meets the sub-cultural influences.

This influence contributes to an important difference in his personality.