

**B. A. Part - I - SOCIOLOGY**  
**Paper - I (Principles of Sociology)**

**Topic :** CULTURE  
(Concept and Characteristics)  
**College :** Magadh Mahila College, Patna  
(Department of Sociology)

**By : Dr. Archana Kumari**  
Email ID : archnakumari706@gmail.com  
Mob. No. : 9835638936

**CULTURE**

● **Learning Objectives**

- To understand the meaning of culture.
- To know about characteristics of culture.

● **Introduction :**

In simple words, culture means a way of life of Society. Cultures are rules and laws which are passed from one generation to the next generation. Sometimes an individual is described as “a highly cultured person”, meaning thereby that the person in question has certain features such as his speech, manner, and taste for literature, music or painting which distinguish him from others. Culture, in this sense, refers to certain personal characteristics of a individual. however, this is not the sense in which the word culture is used and understood in social sciences.

Culture is used in a special sense in anthropology and sociology . It refers to the sum of human beings, life ways, their behaviour beliefs, feelings, through, it connotes everything that is acquired by them as social beings. Culture has been defined in a number of ways.

Culutre  
↓  
Cultura(Latin word)

Word ‘culture’ comes from the Latin word ‘Culture’ which is related to culture worship. In its broadest sense, the term refers to the result of human interaction.

● **Meaning and Definition :**

Culture has been defined in a number of ways, but most simply, as the learned and shared the behaviour of a community of interacting human beings. In the other words we can say that culture is the mirror of human personality or society .

- **According to E.B. Tylor :** “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief , art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”

- **According to Robert Bierstedt** : “Culture is the complex whole that consists of everything we think, and do and have as a member society.
- **According to Lundberg and other** : “Culture may be defined as a system of socially acquired and transferred standard of judgment, belief and conduct as well as the symbolic and material product of the resulting conventional patterns of behaviour.”
- **Characteristics of Culture** : *Culture has various Characteristics. Some important characteristics are :*
  - (1) **Culture is a learned Behaviour** : Not all behaviour is learned, but most of it is learned, culture is not biological. We do not inherit it. Much of learning culture is unconscious. We learn culture from families, peers, institutions, and media.  
  
The process of learning culture is known as enculturation . While all humans have basic biological. needs such as food, sleep, and sex, the way we fulfill those needs varies cross - culturally.
  - (2) **Culture is Abstract** : Culture exists in the minds or habits of the members of society. Culture is the shared ways of doing and thinking. We cannot see culture as such we can only see human behaviour. This behaviour occurs in regular, patterned fashion and it is called culture.
  - (3) **Culture is shared** : Because we share culture with other members of our group, we are able to act in socially appropriate ways as well as predict how others will act. Despite the shared nature of culture, that doesn't mean that culture is homogenous. The multiple cultural worlds that exist in any society are discussed in detail below .
  - (4) **Culture is a way of life** : Culture means simply the way of life “ of a people or their design for a living.” Kluckhohn and Kelly define it in his sense,” A culture is a historically derived system of explicit and implicit designs for living, which tends to be shared by all or specially designed members of a group.”
  - (5) **Culture is Idealistic** : Culture embodies the ideals and norms of a group. It is sum total of the ideal patterns and norms of behaviour of a group. Culture consists of the intellectual, artistic and social ideals and institutions which the members of the society profess and to which they strive to confirm.
  - (6) **Culture is social not individual** : Culture means pattern of behaviour. The culture derived by means of systematic interaction of human and heritage of man.
  - (7) **Culture is total social heritage** : Heritage refers to inherent or tradition's . Culture is hereditary from generation to generation . it is total combination of traditional characteristics and linked with past.
  - (8) **Fulfill some needs** : Culture means pattern of behaviour. Objective of each and every behaviour has been fulfill some needs. The needs such as biological ethical and social needs.
  - (9) **Culture is Integrated system** : Culture has been derived from integration of social systems. The social systems including family system, religious system, educational system, and economic system, ecological and political system.

- (10) **Culture is dynamic** : This simply means that cultures interact and change. Because most cultures are in contact with other cultures they exchange ideas and symbols. All cultures change, otherwise, they would have problems adapting to changing environments. And because cultures are integrated, if one component in the system changes, it is likely that the entire system must adjust.
- (11) **Culture is adaptive** : The adoptive means adjustable. The culture can be change and adjust from time to time and place to place. Culture possesses adaptive capacity. If is not static. it undergoes changes.
- (12) **Varies from society to society** : Varies means differ. The culture is differ from society to society, which is influence by material and nonmaterial culture traits. For example Urban Society and Rural Society having different.
- (13) **Culture is transmissive** : Culture is transmissive as it is transmitted from one generation to another . language is the main vehicle of culture. Transmission of culture may take place by imitation as as by instruction.
- (14) **Culture is super - organic** : Culture is some times called super - organic. It implies that “culture” is somehow superior to “nature”. The word super - organic is useful when it implies that what may be quite a different phenomenon from a cultural point of view.
- For example** : A tree means different things to the botanist who studies it, the old woman who uses it for shade in the late summer afternoon, the farmer who picks its fruit and the motorist who collides with it.
- (15) **Culture is communicative** : Man makes and user symbol. He also possesses capacity, of symbolic communication. Culture is based on symbol andit communicates through different symbols.
- (16) **Culture is accumulative** : Culture is not created in one day or one year. Beliefs, art, morals, knowledge are gradually stored up and become part of culture.
- (17) **Culture helps in personality building** : Personality of child is determined by the culture in which they grows.

● **Conclusion :**

The reality is that culture is the environment of man. By living inthe culture, man has been able to acqyire all those abilities with the help of which the influence of natural conditions onhis life is continuously decreasing.