CULTURE

Culture in simple terms is the way of life of groups of people, meaning the way they do things, but culture has diverse ways of explaining it as it is under constant change and it must adapt to environmental changes. According to Kluckhohn (1945), culture is the “historically-created design for living, explicit and implicit, rational, irrational and non-rational, which may exist at any given time as a potential guide for the behavior of men”. Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. Culture is derived from the latin word “colere”, which means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation.

Culture is divided into two aspects, namely; material culture and non-material culture.

**Material culture** refers to the physical objects, resources, and spaces that people use to define their culture. These include homes, neighborhoods, cities, schools, churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, offices, factories and plants, tools, means of production, goods and products, stores, etc.

Material culture as a study is based upon the obvious fact that the existence of a man-made object is concrete evidence of the presence of a human intelligence operating at the time of fabrication. The underlying premise is that objects made or modified by man reflect, consciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of the individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them and, by extension, the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged.

**Non-material culture** refers to the non-physical ideas that people have about their culture, including beliefs, values, rules, norms, morals, language, organizations and institutions.

In other words, it refers to ways of using material cultures. To put it differently, it refers to ways of using material objects and customs, beliefs, philosophies, governments and patterns of communication.

No matter how distinct a culture is, it must definitely have a relativistic view on above outlined universals which are enamored further by other elements of cultures. These elements are; language, norms, sanctions and values.

*Language* is an abstract system of word meanings and symbols for all aspects of culture. It includes speech, written characters, numerals, symbols, gestures and expression of non-verbal communication.

*Norms,* the second element, can be described as established standards of behavior maintained by a society. It includes such standards or rules as ‘respect your elders’, etc

*Sanctions* which are penalties and rewards for conduct concerning societal norms. While positive sanctions can lead to appreciation, a medal or chieftaincy title etc, a negative sanction can include banishment, a fine, etc.

*Values,* the last, are regarded as the collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable and proper­- or bad, undesirable and improper in a culture. They indicate what people in a culture prefer as well as what they find important amd morally right or wrong.

Culture plays a very big role in the lives of people. It affects the people’s everyday living and the society they live in. It helps the people behave and interact with each other, it helps build relationships with others and help them understand other people around them. Culture in a particular community entails of how they talk, how they dress, how they greet, how they cook, how they value things and people and what they believe and cherish. Culture provides important social and economic benefits. It enhances our quality of life and increases overall well-being for both individuals and communities. It teaches us to think for others and not only ourselves. Culture influences man’s attitude, its dealings with fellow men as well as the environment. This means that culture puts a control on and influences man’s drives and interactions.

Culture being the complex whole of a society has characteristics that are common amongst all the different types of culture all over the world .These characteristics are that all cultures are learned, shared, symbolic, integrative, dynamic and adaptive. Culture is being learned because when we are new to an environment we tend to learn the things and values in the environment to be safe and secure. In the course of learning it, it is a lot being shared to the people in the environment. It is symbolic because symbols help people understand things quickly around them. It is integrative and adaptive because culture is receptive to new ideas and changes around it. It is dynamic because culture is ever changing to accommodate the adapted and integrated changes without losing all its important features.

Culture has problems arise because there are different types of culture all over the world. Take for instance, the African culture may experience the American culture and find it wrong just because it is different from what they know and understand. Culture is not meant to be the same around the world because it is very broad and diverse. People are meant to understand other cultures apart from theirs to help curb discrimination and disunity around the world.

In conclusion, culture is a really good effect on the world because it brings out the good in a society and helps people stay safe and united. Culture is the identity in different places and without it, there will be no society.