Socio-cultural Aspects of Behaviour

Abdul-Monaf Al-Jadiry, *MD; FRCPsych*

Professor of Psychiatry

The Sociocultural Approach

.
- People live together in social groups, and they tend to share common experiences and come to develop common ways of thinking and acting.

- For many years, researchers have been attempting to explain behavior, memory, and cognition in biological terms.

The Sociocultural Approach

.

- Researchers are now using a **dual approach** to understand what makes and shapes a person's reality and identity.

- Researchers are taking the **social background**, language, beliefs, and other cultural and social influences into consideration.

The Sociocultural Approach

- The **sociocultural approach** provides researchers and psychologists with a more informed view and understanding of the **motivations** which cause a person to behave in a particular way.

- The approach provides a wider understanding of how people **acquire cognitive abilities** at an early age.

The Sociocultural Approach

- The **sociocultural approach** emphasizes the influence of the **society** on our **learning** process.

- **Sociocultural factors** such as language, art, social norms and social structures can play a significant role in the development of our **cognitive abilities**.

- The **sociocultural approach** looks at how a person's experiences, influences and culture help shape why they act the way they do.

Key Components of the Sociocultural Approach

1. **Learning** is a crucial part of passing down culture ideas from parents to children. .

2. **Language** is crucial to children's mental development.

3. The developmental progress of a child can not be considered without also taking into consideration the **child's upbringing and social context**.

4. Children are capable of creating their own knowledge through **experience and cultural tools.**

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **Social relationships, both quantity and quality, affects:**

  - ➢ **Health behavior, both**

    - ✓ **Mental health**

    - ✓ **Physical health**

  - ➢ **Mortality risk**

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **Social relationships** have short-and long-term effects on health, for better and for worse.

- **Social isolation** results in psychological and physiological disintegration and even death.

- **Health promotion** rests on the shoulders not only of individuals but also of their families and communities.

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **Evidence indicates that interventions that incorporate ways to promote social support and develop family and community strengths and abilities are important when considering prevention and treatment of disease and disability.**

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **Social relationships** affect health through
  .
  - ➤ behavioral,
  - ➤ psychosocial, and
  - ➤ physiological pathways.
- **Social relationships** shape health outcomes throughout the life course.

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **Costs and benefits of social relationships are not distributed equally in the population.**

  ➢**Individuals with the lowest level of involvement in social relationships are more likely to die than those with greater involvement.**

  ➢**Social ties reduce mortality risk among adults with medical disorders.**

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **Low quantity and quality of social ties linked to development and progress of:**
  - ➢ **Cardiovascular disease**
  - ➢ **Recurrent myocardial infarction**
  - ➢ **Atherosclerosis**
  - ➢ **Autonomic dysregulation**
  - ➢ **High blood pressure**
  - ➢ **Cancer**
  - ➢ **Delayed recovery from cancer**
  - ➢ **Slower wound healing**
  - ➢ **Immunological disorders**

The role of social relations in health and disease

- **People who are isolated are at increased mortality risk from a number of causes.**

- **Recent studies indicate that social support is particularly related to survival post myocardial infarction.**

- **For social support to be health promoting, it must provide both a sense of belonging and intimacy and must help people to be more competent and self-efficacious.**

Sociology

- **Sociology** **is** **the** **academic** **study** **of** **social** **behavior, its origins, development, organization, and institutions.**

- **It is also defined as the systematic study of society and human social action.**

Sociology

- **Sociology is the scientific study of society, including:**

    ➢ **its structure,**

    ➢ **the way it operates**

    ➢ **how it is changing,**

    ➢ **the influence of society on the experience and behavior of the individuals within it.**

Social Psychology

- **Social psychology is a branch of psychology concerned with the way feelings, beliefs, thoughts, intentions and goals are constructed and how these factors, in turn, influence interactions with others.**

Social psychology

- **Social psychology** seeks to develop a body of knowledge about social order, social disorder and social change.

- **Social psychology** explain human behavior as a result of the interaction of mental states and social situations.

- **Social psychology** deals with the factors that lead us to behave in a given way in the presence of others, and look at the conditions under which certain behavior/actions and feelings occur.

Socio-cultural factors & Behavior

- **Sociocultural factors are the forces within cultures and societies that affect the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals.**

- **Such factors include:**

Attitudes	**Cultural identity**
Child rearing practice	**Culture changes**
Cross-cultural differences	**Discrimination**
Cultural deprivation	**Ethnic identity**

Socio-cultural factors & Behavior

- Ethnic values

- Religious practices

- Face (sociological concept)

- Family structure

- Kinship structure

- Power

- Race

- Racial & ethnic group

- Regional differences

- Religious beliefs

Sociology

- **Sociology focuses on**

  - ➤ **social stratification,**

  - ➤ **social class,**

  - ➤ **social mobility,**

  - ➤ **religion,**

  - ➤ **law,**

  - ➤ **Sexuality,**

  - ➤ **deviance.**

Sociology

- **Sociology has gradually expanded its focus to further subjects, such as health, medical, military and penal institutions, education and the role of social activity in the development of scientific knowledge.**

- **The sociology of health and illness focuses on the social effects of, and public attitudes toward illnesses, diseases, mental health and disabilities.**

Society

- **Society is derived from the Latin word "societas", which in turn was derived from the noun *'socius'* (comrade, friend).**

- **Society, is a group of people involved with each other through persistent relations, or a large social grouping sharing the same geographical or social territory, subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations.**

Society

- **Human societies are characterized by patterns of social relationships between individuals who share a distinctive culture and institutions.**

- **A society can enable its members to benefit in ways that would not otherwise be possible on an individual basis.**

Society

- **A society can also consist of like-minded people governed by their own norms and values within a dominant, larger society. This is referred to as a sub-culture.**

- **A society may be illustrated as an economic, social, or industrial infrastructure, made up of a varied collection of individuals.**

Society

- **Members of a society may be from different ethnic groups.**

- **A society can be a particular:**

  - ➤**ethnic group, such as the Saxons;**

  - ➤**nation state, such as Bhutan; or**

  - ➤**a broader cultural group, such as a Western society.**

Community

- **Community has two distinct meanings:**

1) **Community can refer to a usually small, Social unit of any size that shares common values.**

2) **The term can also refer to the national or international community.**

- **In human communities, intent, belief, resources, needs, preferences, risks, and a number of other conditions may be present and common, affecting the identity of the participants and their degree of cohesiveness.**

Culture

- **Culture is defined as the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization.**

- **These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group.**

Social stratification

- **Social stratification**: **ranking of individuals, groups, or segments of the population distinguished according to social characteristics considered by the culture important.**

- **Social stratification may be based on:**

  ➢**Social class**

  ➢**Gender**

  ➢**Ethnicity**

Social Class

- **Social class refers to people having the same social, economic, or educational status with broadly similar styles of living and some shared perceptions of their common condition.**

- **Social class is closely related to occupation.**

- **Households, wives, and children's social class is assigned according to the occupation of the household.**

Gender

- **Gender** refers to differences in social characteristics assigned to males and females.

- **Gender Role** refers to roles in society assigned to men and women.

- **Gender Stereotypes** are perceived ideas about appropriate styles of behavior for men (aggressive, active) and women (passive, compliant).

Race, Ethnicity

- **Race** refers to groups of people who have differences and similarities in biological characteristics or traits.

- **Ethnicity** denotes **membership of a social group** with a common set of norms, values and beliefs expressed in a common **language, religion, dress, diet and other symbols and** some sense of a **common origin or homeland.**

Racism

- **Racism is generally defined as actions, practices, or beliefs that consider the human species to be divided into races with shared traits, abilities, or qualities, such as personality, intellect, morality, or other cultural behavioral characteristics.**

- **Races can be ranked as inherently superior or inferior to others, or that members of different races should be treated differently.**

Racism

- **Racism and racial discrimination are often used to describe discrimination on an ethnic or cultural basis, independent of whether these differences are described as racial**

- **The Stratification system based on <u>race</u> and <u>ethnicity</u> disadvantages minorities, and is expressed as:**
  - ➤ **<u>racial prejudice,</u>**
  - ➤ **<u>Discrimination,</u>**
  - ➤ **<u>Racism.</u>**

Thank You

Attitude

- **Attitude refers to evaluation of things.**

- **The things can be concrete objects like cars or ideas like marxicism.**

- **Attitudes have:**

  - ➢ **an affective component**

  - ➢ **a cognitive component**

  - ➢ **a behavioral component**

- **Self-monitoring acts to keep our attitudes in line with our behavior.**

Attitudes

- **The link between Attitudes & Behavior is weak because of:**
  - ➢ **Presence of other cognitions**
  - ➢ **Social pressure**
  - ➢ **Forgetting attitude at time of acting**

- **Attitude change can occur through**:
  - ➢ **Self-monitoring**
  - ➢ **Experience**
  - ➢ **persuasion**
  - ➢ **Cognitive Dissonance**

Cognitive Dissonance
(*Festinger, 1957)*

- **Attitudes are influenced by Cognitive Dissonance**

- **Cognitive Dissonance   is a state of discomfort and tension which arises when we realize that two or more of our cognitions are inconsistent with each other.**

- **People seek to reduce Cognitive Dissonance.**

Attitude Measurement

- **Attitudes are measurable**

- **Scales for measurement of attitudes include:**

  ➢ **Thurston scales** ("agree X disagree" response on presented statements).

  ➢ **Likert scales** ("strongly agree – agree – undecided – disagree – strongly disagree" responses with presented statements).

  ➢ **Semantic differential scale** (rating on bipolar 7-point scales e.g. strong-weak; good-bad).

Attribution Theory

- **A theory about the way people decide on the motives of others, and of themselves.**

- **or the processes by which individuals explain the causes of behavior and events.**

- **Attribution may be caused by:**

    - **the Situations are in (Situational Attribution)**

    - **the personality (Constitutional, Dispositional Attribution)**

- **Judgment of behavior of people** is based on:

    - **Consensus**

    - **Distinctiveness**

    - **Consistency**

Impression Formation

- People often form **impressions** of others from irrelevant or unimportant material.

- **Impression management**: people tend to control the impressions others form about them.

- **Stereotypes** refer to **generalizations** based on such large categories of people.

- **Generalizations** are almost certain to be wrong

- **Impressions** can sometimes become "self-fulfilling prophecies.

Social Attraction

Social attraction **towards other people is an almost a universal feature of mankind:**

- **Proximity**

- **Exposure**

- **Physical attraction**

- **Holding similar views**

- **Self-disclosure**

Leadership

- **Leadership is the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the achievement of a common task.**

- **No set of characteristics which make a person a leader.**

- **Qualities demanded of a leader depend on the situation.**

- **Combination of individual's qualities and the particular situation makes someone an effective leader.**

Leadership

- **Leadership is strongly related to "power":**

  ➢ **Legitimate power** (power flowing from a particular role or job)

  ➢ **Reward power** (control over the rewarding of others e.g., having a lot of money)

  ➢ **Expert power** (is attained by the manager due to his or her own talents such as skills, knowledge, abilities, or previous experience.)

Conformity

- **Conformity is the tendency to agree with others in a group.**

- **Conformity is determined by:**

- **Need for social approval**

- **Informational influence (tendency to validate our understanding of the world against that of others)**

- **Obedience**

- **Social pressure**

- **Cohesive group**

Group effect on Behaviour

- **Social facilitation**

- The mere presence of others may improve performance on simple well-learned tasks.

- **Social inhibition**

- Presence of others inhibits learning complex tasks.

- Groups are often thought of as making "lowest common denominator" decisions of being devoted to compromise.

Risky shift

- **Risky shift refers to the phenomenon where a group makes a decision that carries inherently higher risk than a decision that each of the individuals would have made on their own.**

- **Once a group of people start a discussion on a topic, their positions and opinions become polarized and more extreme. Those in the middle, the moderates, are either pushed to one extreme or the other or become silenced.**

Eye contact

- **Eye contact occurs when two people look at each other's eyes at the same time.**

- **Eye contact is a form of "non-verbal communication" and is thought to have a large influence on "social behavior".**

- **The act is a meaningful and important sign of confidence and social communication.**

- **Different cultures have different rules of eye contact and these can lead to erroneous misunderstandings, with religious and social differences often altering its meaning greatly.**

Intra-group & Inter-group Behaviour

- **People join the group to get:**
  - ➤ **Social reward**
  - ➤ **Prestige**
  - ➤ **Achieve things**
  - ➤ **Forced to join**
- **Group cohesiveness is tendency for members to want to remain as group members**
- **The more rewarding the group the more cohesive it tends to be.**
- **Group cohesiveness tends to be reinforced when the group is competing against other groups.**

Group Cohesiveness

- **Group cohesiveness is often matched by an increase in positive cognitions about one's own group and negative cognitions towards other groups perceived as rivals.**

- **Under some circumstances, negative cognitions. about the out-group can run to outright hostility.**

- **Identification to a group identifies non-members (the out-group). This have negative consequences and it can produce prejudice.**

Prejudice

- **Prejudice is mainly based on stereotypes about out-group members.**

- **Prejudice may be reduced when members of two ethnic groups are of equal socioeconomic status.**

- **Prejudice may be reduced by getting members of different groups to work co-operatively together on tasks.**

Altruism (Helping others)

- **Altruism refers to behavior of people to help others while not receiving a gain themselves.**

- **Altruism boosts self-esteem by complying with a social norm that values helping others.**

- **Altruism may result from Empathy (our ability to identify with other people and their sufferings).**

- **Altruism reflects "reciprocity" (refers to responding to a positive action with another positive action, rewarding kind actions).**

The Self (the "I")

- **Self-concept**

A subjective idea about who are we.

- **Self-recognition**

The ability to recognize our-selves as being distinguishable from others.

The Self (the "I")

- **Self-image**

The sort of person we think we are (good or bad).

- **Self-esteem**

How favorably or unfavorably we evaluate ourselves as influenced by our early upbringing and social comparisons.

Values and Norms

- **Values refer to collective belief about what is right, good and desirable that has developed within a social group.**

- **Norms refer to expected ways of behaving in specific situations which reflect the values of the group.**

- **Values and norms help to regulate individual's behavior by defining certain goals and the means of attaining them.**

- **Individuals learn values and norms through the process of socialization.**

Anomie

- Anomie refers to a state of "normlessness" or lack of the usual ethical standards in an individual or group.

- Anomie is a "condition in which society provides little moral guidance to individuals".

- It is the breakdown of social bonds between an individual and the community.

- Delinquency, crime, and suicide are often reactions to anomie

Anomie

- **Anomie** is associated with considerable psychological distress:

  ➤ **Acute anomie** is caused by sudden change or crisis (migration, bereavement, redundancy) which places the individual in an unfamiliar situation.

  ➤ **Chronic anomie** refers to circumstances where the rules of a social group have become unclear to individuals or do not provide means of meeting aspirations (long term unemployment or homelessness).

Socialization

Socialization is the process by which individuals learn values and norms:

- **Primary socialization**
  - **Is the informal process through which children learn to be competent members of their particular social groups (ethnic, religious, class).**
  - **largely takes place in the family.**

- **Secondary socialization:**

  --Is a more formal process through which individuals learn the norms associated with particular roles in society.

Social Role

- **Social Role: is the pattern of behavior associated with a particular position or status in society (teacher, client, daughter).**

- **It can be described in terms of:**

➤ **behavior towards others (obligations) expected of the individual occupying the position, and**

➤ **the behavior from others (rights) expected in return.**

Role Conflict

- **Conflict among the roles begins because of the human desire to reach success, and because of the pressure put on an individual by two imposing and incompatible demands competing against each other.**

- **The effects of role conflict are related to individual personality characteristics and interpersonal relations.**

- **Role conflict may create considerable anxiety and a sense of inadequacy and failure in never living up to expectations.**

Deviance & Stigma

- **Deviant behavior** is a behavior which contravenes the norms and values of the group and leads to social disapproval and may be stigmatizing.

- **Stigma** refers to an attribute of an individual which makes possessor as unacceptable, inferior and spoils identity.

Deviance & Stigma

- **Deviant behavior** is a behavior which contravenes the norms and values of the group and leads to social disapproval and may be stigmatizing.

- **Stigma** refers to an attribute of an individual which makes possessor as unacceptable, inferior and spoils identity.

Social Control

- **Once deviance has been identified, mechanisms of social control are called upon to correct at and to stop from spreading, these may involve sanctions.**

- **Sanctions are designated to maintain and enforce the norms and values of a social group**

- **Through the process of socialization and the mechanisms of social control, the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of the individual are shaped and patterned according to the values, norms and roles of the social group.**

Social Structure

- **Social structure refers to the broad arrangement of social groups within a society.**

- **Social structure is the organized pattern of social relationships and social institutions that together compose society.**

- **Social class is one example of social structure.**

- **Social class as a social structure, it guides and shapes human behavior at all levels, no matter how overtly visible or invisible it is at any given time.**

Household & Family

- **Household is a domestic unit consisting of the members of a family who live together along with nonrelatives such as servants.**

- **Defined in terms of residence**

- **Family defined in terms of kinship, marriage or parenthood**
  - ➢**Nuclear family: refers to parents and children**
  - ➢**Extended family: includes other people related by blood or marriage**

Social Integration

- **Social integration refers to the cohesion within a social group or community created by ties between individuals involving reciprocal responsibilities and mutual obligations.**

- **Main integrating factors in society include:**
  - ➤ **Marriage**
  - ➤ **Employment**
  - ➤ **Religious affiliations**
  - ➤ **Voluntary or political organizations**

Thank You