LDR 810-42: Cross-Cultural Dynamics (Fall 2024, Subterm B)

Assignment #4: Course Learning Journal

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Introduction

I will begin by sharing my understanding of what culture is. I agree with the findings of the CLRN team in 2024 regarding culture. In sociology, the term "culture" is widely used and understood, but it can often be misunderstood. In this article, we will explore the concept of culture, its significance, and its impact on human societies. At its core, culture encompasses the shared values, norms, and behaviors that a group of people possesses, learns, and transmits to others. It is a complex and dynamic system that shapes an individual’s identity, behavior, and worldview. Culture goes beyond just traditions, customs, and rituals; it is fundamentally a way of life. It is present in every moment and surrounds us constantly. I have come to believe that culture is ingrained in us—it's in our blood and part of our DNA. According to Lyn, cultural differences and conflict always surround us. We indeed fail to get along because of who we culturally are made up for. Lyn continues to argue that cultural sociologists aim to understand their role across all aspects of social life by examining meaning-making processes. In this crisp and accessible book, Lyn Spillman demonstrates many conceptual tools cultural sociologists use to explore how people make meaning. Drawing on vivid examples, she offers a compelling analytical framework within which to view the entire field of cultural sociology. She introduces a different angle of vision, with distinct but compatible approaches for explaining culture and its role in social life: analyzing symbolic forms, meaning-making in interaction, and organized production. Her book both offers a concise answer to the question of what cultural sociology is and provides an overview of the fundamental approaches in the field.

I agree with David C. Rose; in his book, he adds that a society’s culture can lock in beliefs and practices that inevitably produce persistent poverty and tyranny. But a society’s culture can also provide a foundation for maximizing general prosperity and freedom to produce mass flourishing. José M. Causadias also describes culture as a fluid concept without fixed boundaries, taking on different meanings depending on the context. To navigate this complexity, I propose a p-model for understanding culture as a system comprising people, places, and practices, each serving a purpose such as enacting, justifying, or resisting power.

In this framework, "people" refers to population dynamics, social relationships, and group cultures. "Places" encompass ecological dynamics, institutional influences, and cultural contexts. "Practices" involve participatory actions, community engagement, and the expression of culture in action. Lastly, "power" can be understood in terms of compelling compliance from others (power over people), controlling access to spaces (power in places), and directing behavior in desired ways (power-to-practice).

Personally, growth

In my growth journey, I’ve come to understand the profound impact of effective cross-cultural communication, as highlighted by Stella Aririguzoh. I’ve realized that how we package and deliver our messages can significantly influence how they are received by individuals from diverse backgrounds. This insight has taught me the importance of recognizing and respecting the cultural differences that exist between myself and others. As I reflect on my experiences, I see that miscommunication often stems from messages that are poorly designed or hard for the receiver to interpret. By becoming more aware of these potential pitfalls, I strive to develop my cross-cultural communication skills. I’ve learned that being culture-literate is not just about knowledge—it’s about creating an environment where open, respectful dialogue can thrive. By embracing and appreciating cultural differences, I’ve found that I can minimize misunderstandings and foster more meaningful connections with those around me. This growth has encouraged me to continuously work towards creating a positive communication atmosphere where everyone feels understood and valued, according to Lopez, I. et al. (2024).

Reflection Entry

Leaders set an example for their followers, and a leader needs to lead by example. I am committed to personal development by investing in myself to enhance my participation in quality, cross-cultural interdisciplinary missions within a global society. I will focus on the following areas of investment and growth, according to David:

1. Cultural intelligence is a skill I truly desire to apply in my leadership role. Drawing inspiration from David Livermore's insights, I recognize the importance of understanding and navigating cultural differences in today’s globalized environment. I want to develop my cultural intelligence (CQ) by focusing on the four key capabilities: cultural drive, knowledge, strategy, and action.
2. By enhancing my CQ, I aim to adapt my leadership style to better suit various cultural contexts, build meaningful relationships with colleagues from diverse backgrounds, and lead inclusive teams effectively. I see the value in fostering an environment where Communication and collaboration flourish, allowing everyone to feel valued regardless of their cultural background.
3. Embracing this skill resonates deeply with me, especially as I witness the benefits of diversity in the workplace. I believe that leading with cultural intelligence will enable me to harness the strengths of different cultures, driving innovation and achieving success within my organization. I’m committed to growing in this area and being a leader who

Conclusion

My takeaway and Conclusion from Researchers, Through the insights gained from the course and the findings of various researchers, I've come to appreciate that culture is not a static entity but a fluid and dynamic system influenced by a multitude of factors. This understanding challenges the conventional views we often hold about cultures being fixed or homogenous. José M. Causadias emphasizes the importance of context in shaping cultural meanings, reminding us that our perceptions of culture must be adaptable and sensitive to the environments we find ourselves in. This observation has profound implications for both interpersonal communication and organizational dynamics.

Lyn Spillman’s exploration of cultural sociology provides a valuable analytical framework that I plan to apply in my profession. Her discussion on the meaning-making processes inherent in cultural interactions has prompted me to think critically about the symbols and narratives that shape group identities. By recognizing these elements, I can better navigate the complexities of cultural differences in my professional interactions. From Stella Aririguzoh, I learned that effective cross-cultural communication goes beyond mere awareness of differences—it requires active engagement and an openness to understanding diverse perspectives. The emphasis on creating an environment conducive to respectful dialogue is crucial for minimizing misunderstandings and fostering collaboration in multicultural settings.

In conclusion, this course has significantly expanded my knowledge and appreciation of cross-cultural dynamics, equipping me with the skills to apply these insights in my professional field. The interplay of people, places, practices, and power highlights the complexity of cultural interactions, reinforcing the necessity of being culturally literate. I am inspired to continue cultivating my understanding of culture and its implications, as it is integral not only to my professional growth but also to my overall educational and personal journey. By embracing this learning, I am better prepared to contribute positively within my community and beyond and have learned that I could use the learning objectives as learned from the City Vision University (CVI) 2021 book by David Livermore, my master's degree program's final project on cross-cultural strategic plan assessment and organizational growth. We will need to reflect on the past to reshape the future Gyasi, J. F., et al (2021) The following considerations would be taken into account:

1. Objective Clarity: We may need to clearly define the goals of the training program to ensure that participants understand the desired outcomes and can align their efforts accordingly.
2. Needs Assessment: We may need to conduct a thorough needs assessment to identify the specific skills and knowledge gaps that the training intends to address, tailoring content to meet the audience's demands.
3. Learning Styles: We may need to acknowledge the diversity of learning styles among participants. Incorporate various instructional methods—such as visual aids, interactive activities, and hands-on practice—to facilitate effective learning for all.
4. Curriculum Development: We will develop a structured curriculum that logically progresses through the content, ensuring each module builds on the previous one and reinforces key concepts.
5. Feedback Mechanisms: We will implement systems for obtaining feedback from participants both during and after the training sessions. This will help assess the effectiveness of the training and identify areas for improvement.
6. Evaluation and Assessment: We will need to include methods for evaluating participant performance and retention of knowledge. Consider pre-and post-training assessments to measure learning outcomes and the impact of the training programs
7. Sustainability of Learning: Designing follow-up activities or resources to support participants in applying what they have learned in real-world contexts, thereby enhancing the sustainability of the training outcomes, will be paramount
8. Facilitator Expertise: We will need to ensure that trainers possess both subject matter expertise and effective pedagogical skills, enabling them to engage participants and facilitate meaningful discussions.
9. Cultural Sensitivity: It will be crucial to be aware of and sensitive to the cultural backgrounds of participants, adjusting content and delivery methods to accommodate diverse perspectives and experiences
10. Continuous Improvement: It would be important to establish a framework for the continual assessment and enhancement of training programs, incorporating research, technologies, and methodologies to stay relevant in an ever-evolving educational landscape.

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