Freshman Anthropology

(Anth1012)

Outline of the Module (Anth1012)

Chapter One: Introducing Anthropology and its Subject Matter
Chapter Two: Sub-Fields of Anthropology
Chapter Three: Human Culture & Ties that Connect Society
Chapter Four: Marginalized, Minorities & Vulnerable Groups
Chapter Five: Inter-Ethnic Relations, Identity & Multiculturalism
Chapter Six: Customary and Local Governance & Peace Making

CHAPTER ONE

Introducing Anthropology and its Subject Matter

Contents of the Unit

- Definitions of anthropology,
- A brief overview of its historical development,
- Subject matter and scope of anthropology.
- The relations of anthropology with other disciplines
- the relevance of the discipline
- Its practical application, and
- Its contribution to understand human affairs

1.1 Definition, Scope and Subject Matter of Anthropology

1.1.1. Defining Anthropology

- The word anthropology is derived from the Greek words, '*anthropos*', meaning 'human beings' or 'humankind' and '*logia*', which can be translated as 'the study of' or 'knowledge of'.
- So, anthropology is the *systematic study of humankind* (Scupin and DeCorse, 2012).

- however, we need to define anthropology in more appropriate and revealing terms

> ***Anthropology is the scientific study of human beings as social organisms, interacting with each other in their environment. It can be defined as the study of human nature, human society, and their behavior; their interactions with each other, and with the material environment*** (Srange, 2009).

Defining Anthropology . . .

- It is important to note that we humans have **two essential characteristics**:-**biological** and **cultural**; where our interaction and adaptation with the material environment involves interplay between culture and biology (Kottak, 2007).

- In this regard, ***anthropology study humans, both biologically and culturally***, in whatever form, time period, or region of the world they might be found (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2010).

- Thus, ***it is the systematic exploration of human biological and cultural diversity, across time and space.*** It should further be noted that the discipline is interested in the origin, and development of humans and their contemporary variations, across the world

Defining Anthropology . . .

Anthropology can also be outlined as a science which:

I. Investigates the **strategies for living** that are learned and shared by people as members of human social groups;

II. Examines the **characteristics that human beings share as members of one species** (homo sapiens) and the diverse ways that people live in different environments;

III. Analyses **the products of social groups** -material objects (material cultures) and non-material creations (religion/beliefs, social values, institutions, practices, etc).

- In more appropriate terms, we can define anthropology as the holistic and comparative study of humanity (Kottak, 2007). It explores human biology, society, and culture and considers their interrelations.

- In effect, anthropology tries to understand and represent the realities of particular cultural and sub-cultural worldviews, encapsulating their key features and underlying principles, comparing cross-culturally, in order to make sense of human behavior (Srange, 2009).

Defining Anthropology . . .

As a matter of simplicity and bravity, anthropology primarily offers **two kinds of insight**.

- **First**, *the discipline produces knowledge about the actual biological and cultural variations in the world*;

- **Second**, *anthropology offers methods and theoretical perspectives* enabling the practitioner to explore, compare, understand and solve these varied expre

Thus,

- "***Anthropology is philosophy with people in***". (Tim Ingold 2003), At the deepest level, it raises philosophical and scientific questions about humanity that it tries to respond to by exploring human lives under different conditions.

- It questions, for instance: ***What is meant to be human****? How and why do human groups differ, both biologically and culturally?*

1.1.2. A Brief History of Anthropology

- Anthropology is a fairly recent discipline.

- Though it was **given its present shape, during the twentieth century**, anthropology has important forerunners in the historiography, geography, travel writing, philosophy and jurisprudence of earlier times (Erikson, 2001).

- Despite the complexity, tracking the evolution and development of the discipline, we can state beyond doubt that anthropology, considered as the science of humanity, **originated** in the region we commonly, but inaccurately call '**the West**'; notably in four 'Western' countries: France, Great Britain, the USA and, Germany (Ingold, 2003)

A Brief History . . .

- The present **academic anthropology** has its roots in the works and ideas of the great ancient and medieval philosophers and social thinkers.

- These thinkers were interested in the ***nature, origin and destiny of man, variation and cultural diversity, and the morality and ethics of human relationships***

- In Europe, scholarly interest in cultural variation and human nature re-emerged in the later years, as a consequence of the new intellectual freedom of the Renaissance and, perhaps even more importantly, increasing European explorations and conquests of distant lands (Ingold, 1986).

- In spite of these deep-going historical continuities, anthropology as a science only appeared at a later stage.

- The discipline is a product, not merely of a series of singular thoughts

A Brief History . . .

By the end of the 18th century, several of the **theoretical questions** that still raised by anthropologists had already been defined:

- ***universalism*** versus ***relativism*** (*what is common to humanity; what is culturally specific*),
- ***ethnocentrism*** versus ***cultural relativism*** (*moral judgements versus neutral descriptions of other peoples*), and
- ***culture*** versus ***nature*** (Barnard, 2004)

- Generally speaking, ***it was only during the 19th century that anthropology was born as an academic discipline***, out of the intellectual atmosphere of Enlightenment.

  (**Enlightenment:** *which is the 18th century social and philosophical movement*) that emphasized human progress and the poser of reason, and based on the Darwinian theory of evolution (Ingold, 2003)

- By the **late 1870s**, anthropology was beginning to emerge as a **profession**.
- A major impetus for its growth was the expansion of western colonial powers and their consequent desire to better understand the peoples living under colonial domination (Ingold, 2003).

A Brief History . . .

- Anthropologists of the **early 1900s** emphasized the study of social and cultural differences among human groups.
- Here, many of the peoples of non-western world and their social and cultural features were studied in detail and documented (Kottak, 2007). This approach is called **ethnography**.

- By the **mid-1900**, anthropologists **attempted to discover universal human patterns** and the common bio-psychological traits that bind all human beings (Kottak, 2007).
- This approach is called **ethnology**. Ethnology aims at the comparative understanding and analysis of different human groups across time and space

A Brief History . . .

- In spite of the philosophical and scholarly efforts of the preceding centuries and other theoretical developments, and methodological refinements, however, **it was during the 20th century that anthropology attained its present shape** (Eriksen, 2001)

- Its emergence as the discipline known today, is associated with **four outstanding scholars,** working in three countries, in the early decades of the 20th century:

  Franz Boas *(1858-1942) in the USA;* ***A.R. Radcliffe-Brown*** *(1881-1955), and* ***Bronislaw Malinowski*** *(1884-1942), in the UK; and* ***Marcel Mauss*** *(1872-1950) in France* (Barnard, 2004).

- They may considered as the **founding fathers of anthropology.**

▣ **In Ethiopia,** professional anthropologists have been studying culture and society on a more intensive level only since the late **1950**s.

▣ Almost inevitably, the initial emphasis was on **ethnography**, the description of specific customs, cultures and ways of life.

1.1.3. Scope and Subject Matter of Anthropology

- The subject of anthropology covers the **past**, the **present** and even the **future**.
- In terms of the **spatial dimension**, anthropology studies from Arctic to Desert, from Megapolis to hunting gathering areas.
- The discipline covers all aspects of human ways of life experiences and existence, as humans live in a social group.
- As one of the foremost anthropologists of the twentieth century, **Claude Lévi-Strauss**, has expressed it: '***Anthropology has humanity as its object of research, but unlike the other human sciences, it tries to grasp its object through its most diverse manifestations***'.
- In other words, anthropology studies humanity with its all aspects of existence, and in its all means of differences (diversity) and similarities (commonality). Where every human being lives, there is always anthropology.

1.2. Unique (Basic) Features of Anthropology

1. **Broad scope**. Anthropology has a **broad scope**. It is interested in all human beings, whether contemporary or past.

> No people, place or time is too remote to escape the anthropologist's notice. No dimension of human kind, from genetic makeup to art styles, is outside the anthropologist's attention (Bailey and Peoples, 2012).

2. Unique Approaches

- The main difference between anthropology and other disciplines is not so much of the *kinds of subjects* it examine as the *approaches* it takes to studying human life (Bailey and Peoples, 2012).
- In its approach, anthropology is ***holistic***, ***relativistic***, and ***comparative*** that it follows these unique approaches and perspectives as a **guiding principle** in studying human life.

Unique Features. . .

I. **Holistic Approach**:

- is an approach in anthropology that it attempt to study a culture or society by looking at all parts of the system and how those parts are interrelated (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2010).
- The approach assumes that no single aspect of a culture or society can be understood unless its relationships to other aspects of the system are explored.

II. **Relativistic Approach**:

- this approach is highly appreciated in anthropological studies.

- It inculcates the notion that ***any part of a culture such as an idea, a thing, or a behavior pattern must be viewed in its proper cultural context*** rather than from the viewpoint of other cultures (Bailey and Peoples, 2012).

- Hence, ***anthropology tries to study and explain a certain belief, practice or institution or a group of people in its own context.***

- It **does not make value judgment**, i.e., it does not hold the position that a given belief or practice is “good” or “bad”.

Unique Features . .

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III. Comparative Approach:

- Anthropology is a comparative science that offers a unique, cross-cultural perspective; constantly comparing the customs of one society with those of others (Kottak, 2007).
- It helps to understand differences and similarities among human beings across time and place.
- Cross-cultural research in anthropology demonstrates that culturally constituted knowledge is not as general as we might think (Kottak, 2007).
- They compare different social and cultural groups and, by examining their differences and similarities, they able to tackle broader questions about human beings and the patterns of behaviour that they share (Srange, 2009).
- Thus, general theoretical ideas or assumptions about human societies or cultures must be investigated from a comparative perspective.

IV. Insider (Emic) and Outsider (ETIC)Perspectives

- Another important feature that distinguishes anthropology from other disciplines is its emphasis on the **perspective of an insider**, when examining other culture.
- Anthropology has made a distinction between the ***emic*** perspective and the ***etic*** perspective.
- **Emic perspective** refers to an insider view, which seeks to describe culture or social behaviour in terms of the categories,
  concepts, and perceptions of the people being studied.
- **Etic Perspective**, the later refers to an outsider view, in which anthropologists use their own categories and concepts to describe the culture under analysis (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2010).

Unique Features . .

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v. Anthropology is highly dependent on **qualitative research** to understand the **meaning** behind any human activity (Bailey and Peoples, 2012).

- It is largely **qualitative,** recognizing that most of human behavior, people lives, culture and social practices are not readily measurable.
- It aims to be **'in-depth',** getting under the surface of social life to make its underlying dynamics visible (Srange, 2009).

- ***Ethnographic fieldwork, participant observation, in-depth and key informant interviews*** and ***focus-group discussion*** are qualitative research instruments to explore change and continuities in human societies (Kottak, 2007).
- **Ethnographic fieldwork** is the *hallmarks of anthropology* and it is a way of seeing under the surface of a given social and cultural world (Srange, 2009)
- A focus more on the **local** than the macro-social processes has

1.3. Misconceptions about Anthropology

Due to **lack of appropriate awareness** about the nature, scope and subject matter of the discipline, different misconceptions are held about anthropology. The common misconception are:

- Considering as it is limited to the study of ‘’**primitive societies**’’ or *limited to the study of rural areas and rural people*

  Anthropology is a complex, wide-ranging, and ever changing field (Spencer and Barnard, 2002). It studies not only rural areas and rural people, but urban areas and urban life. (***Urban Anthropology***)

- It is also wrongly misconceived that anthropology is the **study/analysis of fossil evidences** of the proto-humans like that of ***Lucy/Dinkeneshe***

- It is also misconceived that the purpose of anthropology is to study in order to keep and preserve communities far from development and obsolete cultural practices in museums.

  Rather, anthropologists’ duties are to **support those communities' capacity to empower themselves in development processes.** They assist **peoples' initiatives** instead of **imposed policies**

1.4. The Relationship between Anthropology and Other Disciplines

- Due to its broad interest on humanity, anthropology cut across with other sciences, humanities and the physical sciences, which in one way or another deal with people and study certain aspects of human society (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2010).

- Anthropology encompass many of the subjects that consider their exclusive subject area including the human past, human social life and patterns of social relationships, systems of governance, law, material life and means of making a living, religion, language, and forms of creative expression including art, narratives, music, and dance (Bailey and Peoples, 2012).

- However, ***anthropology has its distinctive characteristics that distinguish it from other disciplines*** in the sciences and humanities.

1.5. Contributions of Anthropology

Anthropology, with its holistic, cross-cultural perspective, has contributed in a number of important ways to the scientific understanding of humanity.

I. Anthropology has carved out for itself the task of **examining all aspects of humanity**, for all periods of time and for all parts of the globe. It provides us a window to look into the human world from a broader perspective.

II. the anthropological perspective, with its emphasis on the **comparative study of cultures**, should lead us to the conclusion that **our culture is just one way of life among many** found in the world. Through the process of contrasting and comparing, we gain a fuller understanding of other cultures.

III. With its **holistic** and **comparative** approaches, thus, anthropology serves us a **corrective tool** to deterministic thinking (Bailey and Peoples, 2012). Its broad, comparative perspective ***counterbalances oversimplified explanations, concerning all of humanity based on evidence obtained from a particular cultural*** world.

IV. Another contribution of anthropology is that it helps us better understand and appreciate ourselves or our own ways of life.

V. Anthropology with its emphasis on **people's own perspectives(Emic**) helps us to understand the ***logic and justification behind group behavior*** and cultural practices

VI. Anthropology also creates an expanding **global awareness** and an appreciation for cultures other than our own.

VII. Through its **distinctive methodology** of extended fieldwork, intensive, participant observation research, anthropology offers a unique perspective on how local cultural groups are engaging with the process of globalization

Contributions . . .

VIII. Anthropologists are more likely to **see what is actually occurring on the ground** and ***how the local people are responding to the globalization process*** (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2010).

IX. Because of its **relativistic approach**, it helps us to be more sensitive to and ***appreciative of cultural diversity*** and variability. It helps us fight against prejudice and discriminations. It helps us fight against **ethnocentrism.**

X. Accordingly, because of its relativistic, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary nature, anthropology ***helps us acquire skills crucial for living and working in the twenty-first century***

XI. Anthropology cultivates **critical thinking skills** and helps us **develop broad perspective**.

XII. Anthropology may offer more **pragmatic applications**. ***Knowledge*** gleaned from the discipline ***may enable practitioners and policy makers to find practical solutions*** for dealing with issues of cultural and ethnic diversity, and multiculturalism and solving various societal problems.

XIII. Anthropology is used as an **important tool for development**. Paying attention to local conditions is crucial to solve community problems.

XIV. Anthropology recognizes the advantages of consulting local people ***to design a culturally appropriate and socially sensitive change***, and ***protect local people from harmful policies*** and projects that threaten them

UNIT TWO
SUB-FIELDS OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Contents of the Unit

- This Unit deals with definitions of the four main branches of anthropology.
- Physical anthropology in some detail focusing on the following issues:
  - paleo-anthropological perspectives on human origins, perspectives on racial types,
  - human physical variations, and
  - the history of racial types

1. Archaeological Anthropology

- Archaeology studies the ways of lives of past peoples by excavating and analyzing the material culture/physical remains (*artefacts, features* and *eco-facts*) they left behind.
- Archaeologists study artifacts to get clues about values, beliefs, and norms; in general, about the cultures of societies that existed in the past.

Artefacts

are *material remains made and used by the past peoples* and *that can be removed from the site* . Eg. Tools, ornaments, arrowheads, coins, and fragments of pottery

Features

are *like artifacts, are made or modified by past people, but they cannot be readily carried away from the site*. Eg. house foundations, ancient buildings, fireplaces, steles, and postholes

Eco-facts

are *non- artefactual, organic and environmental remains* such as soil, animal bones, and plant remains that were not made or altered by humans

Archaeology has also its own subfields or areas of specialties. The most important ones include -***Prehistoric Archaeology***, ***Historical Archaeology & ethno-archaeology*****.**

- **Prehistoric archaeology:** investigates human prehistory and prehistoric cultures. It focuses on entire period between 6,000 years ago and the time of the first stone tools (the first artifacts), around 2.5 million years ago.

- **Historic archaeologists:** help to reconstruct the cultures of people who used writing and about whom historical documents have been written.

- **Ethno-archaeologists** study material culture of current societies (e.g., pottery products) to understand the cultures (life styles) of past societies.

.2. Linguistic Anthropology

- Generally focuses on the evolution of languages by studying contemporary human languages as well as those of the past.
- It studies how language is used within a society, and how the human brain acquires and uses languages.
- It tries to understand languages variation in their structures, units, and grammatical formations.
- linguistic anthropology studies human language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice. It also studies the social and cultural contexts of languages.

Linguistic Anthropology is divided into four distinct branches or areas of research. These are: ***Structural or Descriptive Linguistics***, ***Historical Linguistics, Ethno-Linguistics,*** and ***Socio-linguistics***.

- ***Structural /Descriptive* Linguistics:-** studies the structure of linguistic patterns. It examines sound systems, grammatical systems, and the meanings attached to words in specific languages to understand the structure and set of rules of given language.

- **Ethno-linguistics (*cultural linguistics*):-** examines the relationship between language and culture. In any language, certain cultural aspects that are emphasized are reflected in the vocabulary.

- **Historical linguistics:-** deals with the emergence of language in general and how specific languages have diverged over time.

- **Socio-linguistics:-** investigates linguistic variation within a given language. No language is a homogeneous system in which everyone speaks just like everyone else. One reason for variation is geography, as in regional dialects and accents.

.3. Sociocultural Anthropology

- Socio-cultural anthropology studies contemporary societies and cultures throughout the world.

- Sociocultural anthropology describes, analyzes, interprets, and explains social, cultural and material life of contemporary human societies.

- It studies the social (human relations), symbolic or nonmaterial (religious, language, and any other symbols) and material (all man-made objects) lives of living peoples

Socio-cultural anthropologists engage in two aspects of study: ***Ethnography*** (based on field work) and ***Ethnology*** (based on cross-cultural comparison).

Ethnography

- provides a comprehensive account of a particular community, society, or culture.
- It describes the features of specific cultures in as much detail as possible including local behavior, beliefs, customs, social life, economic activities, politics, and religion.
- These detailed descriptions (ethnographies) are the result of extensive field studies (usually a year or two, in duration) in which the anthropologist observes, talks to, and lives with the people he or she studies.

Ethnology

- is the comparative study of contemporary cultures and societies, wherever they may be found.
- It examines, interprets, analyzes, and compares the results of ethnography the data gathered in different societies.
- It uses such data to compare and contrast and to make generalizations about society and culture.
- Ethnologists seek to understand both why people today and in the recent past differ in terms of ideas and behavior patterns and what all cultures in the world have in common with one another.

Ethnography	Ethnology
Requires field work to collect data	Uses data collected by a series of researchers
Often descriptive	Usually synthetic
Group/community specific	Comparative/cross-cultural

To properly address emerging questions related to culture and societies, it has been sub-divided into many other specialized fields as:

Anthropology of Art, Medical Anthropology, Urban Anthropology, Economic Anthropology, Political Anthropology, Development Anthropology, Anthropology of Religion, Demographic Anthropology, Ecological Anthropology, Psychological Anthropology, Ethnomusicology, etc.

4. Physical/Biological Anthropology

- Physical anthropology is a branch of anthropology that focuses on the biological aspects of human beings.
- It has sub-fields such as *biological anthropology*, *forensic anthropology*, *primatology*, *paleoanthropology*, *population genetics*, and *human ecology*.
- Physical anthropology is essentially concerned with two broad areas of research: ***human evolution*** and **modern human variation/genetics.**

Human evolution is the study of the gradual processes of simple forms into more differentiated structures in hominid. It is interested in reconstructing the evolutionary record of the human species using fossils/bones

Modern human variation/Human genetics concerns to investigate how and why the physical traits of contemporary human populations vary throughout the world. It focuses to examine the genetic materials of an organism such as DNA and RNA

2.4.1. Evolutionary and Paleo-anthropological perspectives on human origin

- Comprehensive theories of evolution concerning the evolution of life were
  developed only during the 19thcentury.
- Anthropologists today rely on scientific views of evolution in order to explain
  human origins.
- **Evolution** ***refers to a process and gradual change in specie over time***. In fact, evolution is used to describe the **cumulative effects** of three independent facts.

  Replication: The fact that life forms have offspring;
  Variation: The fact that each offspring is slightly different from its parents, and
  Selection: The fact that not all offspring survive, and those that do tend to be the ones best suited to their environment.

- Importantly, these attributes of evolution can be observed in nature every day. They are:

human origin . . .

- The scientific explanation of human origin and the concept of evolution are attributed to a series of discoveries of early modern period and the works of handful of scientists in the physical/natural sciences.

- One of the prominent persons in this regard is Charles Darwin (1809-1882), a British Naturalist of the period.
- Charles Darwin is known for his theory of **natural selection** in the evolution of species and the idea of **survival of the fittest**.

- Today, anthropologists have accumulated a huge amount of data, much of it based on studies of DNA,

- In doing so, anthropologists study humanity as a biological phenomenon by raising questions such as: What species are we

2.4.2 Anthropological perspectives on racial types and human physical variation

- People come in many colors and shapes. Why is this? How did these variations come about, and what do they mean for humanity as a species?
- The answer comes from the study of human biology by physical anthropologists.
- Like all living things with sensory input, humans have to classify their perceptions into some kind of order: Some people have darker skin, so they‘re in the —darker skin category.
- humans have spent some time putting people of different colors, body shapes, and so on into different categories sometimes called races.

- Biologically speaking, a **race** is a group of organisms of the same species that share similar physical (and genetic) attributes and specific geographic regions.

Adaptation can be understood as a process (behavioral and/or biological) that increases the likelihood of survival for an organism.

- In humans, adaptations include complex behavior, such as making tools. These behaviors aren't passed on genetically but rather culturally.

- Some of these bodily adaptations are pretty easily visible, and some are only visible when you look very closely at the genes.

- **Skin color**—one of the most visible human characteristics is a good example of adaptation to a particular environment. The darkest skin appears in populations originating in tropical zones, such as Africa and Asia.

- The lightest skin is traditionally found in northern Europe because over time, natural selection favored darker skins in areas that received extensive and more intensive sunlight, because individuals with lighter skin in these areas were more prone to skin cancers.

- **Biological adaptations aren't instantaneous.** They take place over the span of generations, so an African moving to Europe won't evolve lighter skin, nor will a European travelling to Africa evolve darker skin (except for some tanning).

- Another example of biological adaptation in human beings is the difference of stature between arctic (such as Inuit) and East African (such as Maasai) people.

- In biology, ***Bergmann's rule*** indicates that in colder regions, warm-blooded animals will have **stockier bodies** than their counterparts from warmer regions, because stockier bodies are more efficient at retaining body heat.

- In the cold Polar Regions, the **Inuit (people living in the arctic)** have a short and stocky build; the Maasai of East Africa have taller and more slender bodies that don't have to retain so much heat-they actually have to dump excess heat in their hot environment.

- *Body stature in these cases is an adaptation to the geographical conditions of hot African and the cold Arctic.*

2.4.3. Human Races: the History of Racial Typing

- Egyptians were the first people to classify human beings into races. In 1350 BC you can see records of them classifying humans by skin color. They classified themselves as **red-skinned** and people of of south Egypt as **black skinned**.

- By the 16th century, during the Age of Discovery, Europeans voyaging around the world were encountering many previously unknown peoples and developing **racial classifications of their own.**

- Racial classifications were made on the basis of **skin color** since skin color was easily noticeable.

- Additionally, these unknown people weren't Christian and didn't share European culture and values, so the Europeans labeled them **Savages**. *In fact, they thought they could use racial type as an indicator of just how Savage a person was.*

- The less European-looking, of course, the more Savage. Today, this notion is considered to be racist.

- By the mid-1800s, naturalists began using a method of describing the shape of the head called the ***cephalic index***, a ratio measurement of the length and width of the head.

- ***Dolichocephalic*** peoples had long and narrow heads (like most northern Europeans), and ***Brachycephalic*** peoples tended to have broad heads — like many southern Europeans.

- Not surprisingly, this classification scheme and others like it led to many arguments about which peoples were superior to the others.

- In the 19th and early 20th centuries some people advocated for state regulation of marriages, family size, and whether to allow an individual to reproduce.

- This practice became known as ***eugenics***, and the Nazis took it to a terrible extreme during World War II.

- In Germany, the Nazi party began to systematically kill those members of society that it considered inferior. Using **eugenics** as the basis for its acts, the Nazi party killed millions of Jewish people, Gypsies and others were considered inferior in an attempt to create a ***master race***.

- **‘Master race’** is the belief of groups who consider their race as superior race, which categorically wrong.

2.4.5. What Anthropologists can say about Human Races?

Do human races exist?

- Yes there is race differences among fellow human beings. *Homo sapiens* does feature ***geographically based differences within the species***. However, you must consider two very important points.

- **First**, these genetic differences don't mean a lot, biologically. Because all healthy humans can mate and have healthy offspring. Moreover we all homo sapiens

- Rather than talking about races, physical anthropologists more commonly talk about **ancestry,** a more general term of tracing one's genetic background.

- **Second**, most of human ***behavior isn't biologically determined*** or filtered in through the natural environment ***most of it is culturally learned***. An infant from Japan can be raised in the Kalahari of Southern Africa and won't automatically remove his shoes when going into a home unless his culture specifically teaches him to do so

2.5. Human socio-cultural and biological diversity and similarities:

What is to be human?

- Anthropology helps human beings to look into themselves by searching for answers to questions that challenge us.

- Some of the questions central to humanity and anthropology are:
  - ?*What are the commonalities among humans worldwide?*
  - ?*What are the variations among humans worldwide,*
  - ?*Why do these commonalties and variations exist in the first place?*
  - ?*How does humanity change through time? …etc*

- In order to address these questions, we should rely on key anthropological concepts of **comparative approach** (cultural relativism) and **evolution**.

What is to be human? . . .

- **Comparative approach**, which is also known as cultural relativism, entails that cultures shouldn't be compared to one another for the sake of saying one is better than the other.
- Instead cultures should be compared in order to understand how and why they differ and share commonalties with each other.

- **Evolution** us to address our distant origin, current stage of growth, forms of adaptation, and predict future direction of development.
- By studying evolution, the change of species through time, anthropologists treat humanity as one of the biological species in the animal kingdom

- In this respect, human biology and culture have evolved over millions of years and they will continue to evolve together.
- Human biology affects human culture; and similarly, human culture affects human biology.
- This is why anthropologists use the term ***bio-cultural to describe the dual nature of human evolution***: both biological and cultural dimensions.

- **thus, Human beings are described as a bio-cultural animal.**

Humanity from the anthropological perspective

- **Humanity** is the most common term we to use to refer to human beings.
- **Humanity** stands for the human species, a group of life forms with the following characteristics:

  - **Bipedalism (walking on two legs);**
  - **Relatively small teeth for primates of our size**
  - **Relatively large brains for primates of our size;**
  - **Using modern language to communicate ideas; and**
  - **Using complex sets of ideas called culture to survive**

- **Humanity** is a general term that doesn't specify whether you're talking about males, females, adults, or children; it simply means our species- *Homo sapiens sapiens*- at large.

CHAPTER THREE
Human Culture and Ties that Connect

Contents of the Unit:

- The nature, meaning, aspects and elements of the central and prominent anthropological concept, culture: as both a defining and differentiating aspect of societies.

- Concepts such as family, marriage and kinship with their manifestations, classifications and dimensions are also discussed under this unit.

3.1. Conceptualizing Culture: What Culture is and What Culture isn’t

- The concept culture is one of the most contested and widely used notions in anthropology and sociology… “It is used with various meanings in common sense.

- The term culture makes the backbone of sociocultural anthropology and sociology and other related disciplines such as cultural geography and social psychology” (Zerihun, 2005).

- Anthropologists have not been totally precise, or totally consistent , in their usages of this crucial concept.

- Some **representative attempts at definition** reveal different facets of culture:

Conceptualizing Culture . . .

- A pioneering and widely used definition of culture was provided by the British anthropologist Edward B. Tylor (1832-1917). He defined culture as "***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"(Tylor, 1871).

- Bronislaw Malinowski has defined culture **"*as cumulative creation of man*".**
He regarded culture as the handiwork of man and the medium through which he achieves his ends" (Encyclopedia of social sciences, 1931).

- **The sum total** of knowledge, attitudes and habitual behavior patterns shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society (Linton, 1940).
- Clyde Kluckhohn (1949) defined culture as a ***way of thinking, feeling, believing***. It is the group's knowledge stored up (in memories of men; in books and objects) for future use.

3.2 Characteristic Features of Culture

- the concept of culture was developed out of the need for an objective term to characterize the similarities and wide differences among human societies (Oke, 1991).
- For the better understanding of the concept, it is necessary for us to know its main features.

A. Culture Is Shared and learned

- Culture is an attribute not of individuals as such but of individuals as members of groups.
- Culture is not an individual possession; rather it is shared by a group of people.

- For a thing, idea, or behavior pattern to qualify as being "**cultural**" it must have a shared meaning by at least two people within a society.

- Culture is not transmitted genetically; rather it is acquired through the process of social interaction and learning among human groups.

- **Enculturation** is specifically defined as the process by which an individual learns the rules and values of one's culture.

Characteristic Features . . .

B. Culture is Symbolic

- Symbolic thought is unique and crucial to humans and to cultural learning.
- It is the human ability to give a thing or event an arbitrary meaning and grasp and appreciate that meaning (Zerihun, 2005).

C. Culture Is All-Encompassing

- Culture encompasses all aspects, which affect people in their everyday lives.
- Culture comprises countless material and non-material aspects of human lives.
- Thus, when we talk about a particular people's culture, we are referring to all of its manmade objects, ideas, activities whether those of traditional, old time things of the past or those created lately.
- Culture is the sum total of human creation: intellectual, technical, artistic, physical, and moral;

Characteristic Features . . .

D. Culture is Integrated

- culture are not simply a random assortment of customs. In other words, cultures are not haphazard collections of customs and beliefs.
- Instead, culture should be thought as of integrated wholes, the parts of which, to some degree, are interconnected with one another.
- When we view cultures as integrated systems, we can begin to see how particular culture traits fit into the whole system and, consequently, how they tend to make sense within that context.

E. Culture Can Be Adaptive and Maladaptive

- People adapt themselves to the environment using culture. The ability to adapt themselves to practically any ecological condition, unlike other animals.
- Sometimes, adaptive behavior that offers short-term benefits to particular subgroups or individuals may harm the environment and threaten the group's long-term survival.

F. Culture Is Dynamic

- There are no cultures that remain completely static year after year. **Culture is changing constantly** as new ideas and new techniques are added as time passes modifying or changing the old ways.

3.3. Aspects/Elements of Culture

- Culture includes within itself elements that make up the essence of a society or a social group.
- Two of the most important aspects of culture are material and nonmaterial culture.

Material culture:- Material culture consist of man-made objects such as tools, implements, furniture, automobiles, buildings, dams, roads, bridges, and in fact, the physical substance which has been changed and used by man.

Non – Material culture:- It is something internal and intrinsically valuable, reflects the inward nature of man. Some of the aspects of non- material culture listed as follows:

Aspects of Culture. . .

Even though the specifics of individual culture vary widely, all cultures have four common nonmaterial cultural components: **symbols**, **language**, **value** and **norms**. These components contribute to both harmony and strife in a society (kendall, 2005)

Symbols

- A symbol is anything that meaningfully represents something else which people use to communicate with others.
- It is something verbal or nonverbal, within a particular language or culture that comes to stand for something else. There would be no obvious, natural, or necessary

Language

- Language, specifically defined as a system of verbal and in many cases written symbols with rules about how those symbols can be strung together to convey more complex meanings. it is a key element of culture.
- Culture encompasses language, and through language, culture is communicated and transmitted

Aspects of Culture. . .

Values

- Values are collective /shared ideas as to what is right or wrong, good or bad, desirable or not desirable, ethical or unethical, moral or immoral in a particular culture.
- Values do not dictate which behaviors are appropriate and which ones are not, but they provide us with the criteria by which we evaluate people, objects and events.
- Values typically come in pairs of positive and negative values, such as being brave or cowardly, hardworking or lazy.

Norms

- They are derived from value. Values provide ideals or beliefs about behavior, but do not state explicitly how we should behave.
- Norms on the other hand, **do have specific behavioral expectations**. ***Norms are established rules of behavior or standard of conduct***. For every norm, there is a specific guiding value.
- Norms are detailed and specific social rules for specific situations. They tell us how to do (something), what to do, what not to do, when to do it, why to do it, etc.
- Norms are enforced by sanctions

Aspects of Culture. . .

Based on their **level of importance** social norms are divided into two. These are mores and folkways

A. Folkway:

Folkways are **norms that are not strictly enforced**, such as not leaving your seat for an elderly people inside a bus/taxi. They may result in a person getting a bad look.

B. Mores:

Mores are **much stronger norms** than are folkways. Mores are norms that are believed to be essential to core values and we insist on conformity.

- A person who steals, rapes, and kills has violated some of society's most important mores. People who violate mores are usually severely punished, although punishment for the violation of mores varies from society to society.

3.4. Cultural Unity and Variations: Universality, Generality & Particularity of Culture

In studying human diversity in time and space, anthropologists distinguish among the universal, the generalized, and the particular.

1. Universality

Universals are cultural traits that span across all cultures. Most are biological that distinguish us from other species – long period of infant dependency, year-round sexuality, complex brain that enables use of symbols and use of languages and tools.

2. Generality

Generalities are cultural traits that occur in many societies but not in all societies. e.g., farming, nuclear family, strict control over women's virginity, etc.

3. Particularity

Particularities are unique to certain cultural tradition. It is a culture trait not widespread. Cultural particulars include the specific practices that distinguish cultures form one another.

3.5. Evaluating Cultural Differences: Ethnocentrism, Cultural Relativism and Human Rights

A. Ethnocentrism:

- Ethnocentrism is the tendency to view one's own culture as superior to others and basis in judging the behavior and beliefs of people raised in other cultures.

- Ethnocentrism results in prejudices about people from other cultures and the rejection of their "alien ways." Our ethnocentrism can prevent us from understanding and appreciating another culture.

Results of Ethnocentrism

- Results in prejudices about people from other cultures and the rejection of their "alien ways of life
- ethnocentrism can prevent us from understanding and appreciating another culture
- ethnocentrism can prevent open communication and result in misunderstanding and mistrust
- The positive aspect of ethnocentrism has to do with the protection that it can provide for a culture.
- It can help maintain the separation and uniqueness of cultures.

B. Cultural Relativism:

- The concept of cultural relativism states that cultures differ, so that the meaning of cultural trait, act, or idea emanates only within its cultural setting.

- Cultural relativism suspends judgment and views about the behavior of people from the perspective of their own culture. Every society has its own culture, which is more or less unique and not superior or inferior to some other culture.

- Cultural relativists suggest culture has to be studied in terms of its own meanings and values and the need to **respect** every culture.

Respect for cultural differences involves:

- Appreciating cultural diversity;
- Accepting and respecting other cultures;
- Trying to understand every culture and its elements in terms of its own context and logic;
- Knowing that a person's own culture is only one among many; and
- Recognizing that what is immoral, ethical, acceptable, etc, in one culture may not be so in another culture.

C. Human Rights

- The idea of **human rights** challenges cultural relativism by invoking a realm of justice and morality beyond and superior to the laws and customs of particular countries, cultures, and religions.

- Human right conventions are highly objective where there is lots of rules that everybody despite their cultural or religious norms should have to follow.

- Disrespecting those rules may result punishment in the form of detention in jail. So every rule works for all while cultural relativism believe norms and practices of every culture may not work for all but they are right only for themselves.

- However, anthropologists do not ignore international standards of justice and morality.

3.6 Culture Change

- Culture has changed over time. Some of the shared behaviors and ideas that were common at one time are modified or replaced at another time.
- Culture change can occur as a result of the following Mechanisms:

1. **Diffusion:** The process by which cultural elements are borrowed from another society and incorporated into the culture of the recipient group is called **diffusion.**

There are three ways that culture can diffuse to new areas and people

- Diffusion is ***direct*** when two cultures trade with, intermarry among, or wage war on one another.
- Diffusion is ***forced*** when one culture subjugates another and imposes its customs on the dominated group
- Diffusion is ***indirect*** when items or traits move from group A to group C via group B without any firsthand contact between A and C. In this case, group B might consist of traders or merchants who take products from a variety of places to new markets.

2. Acculturation

- Is the exchange of cultural features that results when groups have continuous firsthand contact.
- The cultures of either or both groups may be changed by this contact. This usually happens in situations of trade or colonialism.

3.Invention

- the process by which humans innovate, creatively finding solutions to problems is a third mechanism of cultural change.
- Faced with comparable problems and challenges, people in different societies have innovated and changed in similar ways, which is one reason cultural generalities exist.
- One example is the Condominium houses that eliminated a traditional housing with compound and backyards.

4. Globalization

The term globalization encompasses a series of processes, including diffusion and acculturation, working to promote change in a world in which nations and people are increasingly interlinked and mutually dependent.

3.7. Ties That Connect: Marriage, Family and Kinship

MARRIAGE

- Marriage is a permanent legal union between a man and a woman. It is an important institution without which the society could never be sustained.

- Anthropologists have debated whether or not families and the institutions of marriage are universals. *One interesting case is that the Nayar of Southern India, did not have marriage in the conventional sense of the term.*

Rules of Marriage

- Societies also have rules that state whom one **can and cannot marry**.
- The most common form of prohibition is mating with certain type of kin that are defined by the society as being inappropriate sexual partners.

- The prohibition on mating with certain categories of relatives known as **incest taboos**. The most **universal form of incest taboo** involves mating between members of the immediate (nuclear) family: mother-sons, father-daughters, and brother-sisters.

Types of Marriage

A) Exogamy:

This is the rule by which a man is not allowed to marry someone from his own social group. Such prohibited union is designated as incest. Incest is often considered as sin.

B) Endogamy

- A rule of endogamy requires individuals to marry within their own group and forbids them to marry outside it.
- Religious groups such as the Amish, Mormons, Catholics, and Jews have rules of endogamy, though these are often violated when marriage take place outside the group. Castes in India and Nepal are also endogamous.

C) Preferential Cousin Marriage:

is practiced in one form or another in most of the major regions of the world. Kinship systems based on lineages distinguish between two different types of first cousins, these are:

Cross Cousins:

- are children of siblings of the opposite sex- that is one's mother's brothers' children and one's father's sisters' children.
- The most common form of preferential cousin marriage is between cross cousins because it functions to strengthen and maintain ties between kin groups.

Parallel Cousins:

- When marriage takes place between the children of the siblings of the same sex, it is called **parallel cousin marriage**.
- In which the children of siblings of the same sex, namely the children of one's mother's sister and one's father brother.

D) The Levirate and Sororate

- **Levirate marriage** is a type of marriage in which the brother of a deceased man is obliged to **marry his brother's widow**.
- Levirate marriage has been practiced by societies with a strong clan structure in which exogamous marriage (i.e. marriage outside the clan) was forbidden.

The sororate, which comes into play when a wife dies, is the practice of a widower’s marrying the sister (or some close female relative) of his deceased wife.

In the event that the deceased spouse has no sibling, the family of the deceased is under a general obligation to supply some equivalent relative as a substitute.

NUMBER OF SPOUSES

Societies have rules regulating whom one may/may not marry; they have rules specifying how many mates a person may/should have.

- ***Monogamy***: the marriage of one man to one woman at a time.
- **Polygamy** i.e. marriage of a man or woman with two or more mates. Polygamy can be of two types:

- ***Polygyny***: the marriage of a man to two or more women at a time.
- ***Polyandy:*** the marriage of a woman to two or more men at a time.

- **Sororal polygyny:** Marriage of a man with two or more sisters at a time is called sororal polygyny.
- **non- sororal polygyny:** When the co-wives are not sisters

3.7.1.4. Economic Consideration of Marriage

Beside the social aspect of marriage there is always economic considerations. These transactions, which may take place either before or after the marriage can be divided into three categories: **Bride Price, Bride Service & Dowry**

1. **Bride Price**
   - It is also known as **bride-wealth**, is the compensation given upon marriage by the family of the groom to the family of the bride.
   - In Africa it was estimated that 82% of the societies require the payment of bride price.
   - Bride price has been seen:- as security or insurance for the good treatment of the wife: as mechanism to stabilize marriage by reducing the possibility of divorce:

2. Bride Service:

When the groom works for his wife’s family, this is known as **bride service**.

3. Dowry:

A dowry involves a transfer of goods or money in the opposite direction, from the bride's family to the groom’s family.

4. Reciprocal Exchange:

- Reciprocal exchange is found in approximately 6 percent of the societies listed in Murdock’s Ethnographic Atlas, more prominently in the pacific region and among traditional Native Americans.
- It involves the roughly equal exchange of gifts between the families of both the bride and the groom.
- Such a custom was practiced by the traditional Vugusu people of western Kenya, who exchanged a large variety of items between a sizable numbers of people from both families.

Post-Marital Residence

Where the newly married couple lives after the marriage ritual is governed by cultural rules, which are referred to as **post-marital residence rule.**

- **Patrilocal Residence**: the married couple lives with or near the relatives of the husband's father.
- **Matrilocal Residence**: the married couple lives with or near the relatives of the wife.
- **Avunculocal Residence**: The married couple lives with or near the husband's mother's brother.
- **Ambilocal/Bilocal Residence**: The married couple has a choice of living with relatives of the wife or relatives of the husband.
- **Neolocal Residence**: The Married couple forms an independent place of residence away from the relatives of either spouse.

FAMILY

- Family is the basis of human society. It is the most important primary social group unit in society. The family, as an institution, is universal.
- Anthropologists have identified **two fundamentally different types of family** structure-the nuclear family and the extended family.

A. Nuclear family:

- This is also known as the conjugal family or family of procreation.
- Nuclear families are comprised of married partners and their offspring.
- This is common in industrial societies, but it is not the most common type of family in the world, although the practice is spreading through modern development.

A. Extended family:

- The extended family is the most common type of family in the world.
- Extended families include at least three generations: grandparents, married offspring, and grandchildren.

3.7.2.1. Functions of Marriage and Family

1. **Biological Function**: The institution of marriage and family serves biological (sexual and reproductive) function.

2. **Economic Function**: Marriage brings economic co-operation between men and women and ensure survival of individuals in a society.

3. **Social Function**: The institution of marriage brings with it the creation and perpetuation of the family, the form of person to person relations and linking once kin group to another kin group.

4. **Educational and Socialization Function**: The burden of socialization (via processes of enculturation and education) of new born infants fall primarily upon the family.

3.7.3. Kinship

- Kinship is social relations based on culturally recognized ties of descent and marriage.
- It is the method of reckoning relationship.
- It is a feature of all human societies. The reason for this universality is to some extent biological.
- while biology provides the basis for kinship, the ways in which people define and use kinship are determined by sociocultural considerations, not biological ones.
- kinship is defined as ***the network in which people are related to one another through blood, marriage and other ties*.**

Kinship . . .

- Kinship can be created through **three ways**: **blood**, **marriage**, and through **adoption/fostering** / good- parenthood.

- The relationship based on **blood** ties is called "***consanguineous kinship",*** and the relatives of this kind are called 'consanguineous kin'.

- The desire for reproduction gives rise to another kind of binding relationship. "This kind of bond, which arises out of a socially or legally defined marital relationship, is called ***affinal relationship***", and the relatives so related are called 'affinal kin'. And,

- The other one is through **adoption**. This is called the principle of ***fictitious kinship***

Descent

- Descent refers to the social recognition of the biological relationship that exists between the individuals.
- The rule of descent refers to a set of principles by which an individual traces his descent.
- A descent group is a permanent social unit whose members claim common ancestry.

1. Patrilineal Descent

When descent is traced solely through the male line, it is called **patrilineal descent**. A man's sons and daughters all belong to the same descent group by birth, but it only the sons who continue the affiliation. Succession and inheritance pass through the male line.

2. Matrilineal Descent

When the descent is traced solely through the female line, it is called **matrilineal descent**. At birth, children of both sexes belong to mother's descent group, but later only females acquire the succession and inheritance.

3. Cognatic Descent

- In some society's individuals are free to show their genealogical links either through men or women.
- There is no fixed rule to trace the succession and inheritance; any combination of lineal link is possible in such societies.

3.8. Culture area and cultural contact

- culture areas refers to a cluster of related cultures occupying a certain geographical region.
- Ethiopia has different culture area in relation to **mode of subsistence**.
- These are **plough culture**, ***Enset* culture**, and **pastoral society's culture area**.

A. Plough culture area

- Plough culture area represents those parts of the country where ***agriculture is the basic mode of subsistence***.

- Most of **highland** and **central parts of the country** are considered to be a plough culture area

- The area often called plough culture has been a subject of anthropological inquires over the past seven decades starting from the 1950s.

B. Enset Culture Area

- *Enset* culture area, on the other hand, covers a vast region in the southern part of the country.
- *Enset* cultivating regions of the present day SNNPRS such as the Guraghe, Sidama and Gedeo areas constitute *enset* culture area.
- In this region, *enset* serves as a staple diet to the people who make use the plant in a **wide variety of forms** for a living.

C. Pastoral Culture Area

- Pastoral culture area is found in the low land areas covering a large section of the Afar in the northwest, Somali in the southeast and Borena of southern of Ethiopia.
- Ainhabitants of the pastoral culture area rely significantly on their herds and cattle for a living.
- Mobility of people and herds is a major characteristic feature of the people occupying the pastoral culture area.

Unit Four
Marginalized, Minorities, and Vulnerable Groups

Contents of the Unit

- Concepts related to marginalization
- Gender-based vulnerability and marginalization (girls and women)
- Age-based vulnerability and marginalization (children and older persons)
- Marginalization of minority occupational groups
- Marginalization of religious and ethnic minorities
- Inclusiveness and the human rights approach

Definition of concepts

Marginalization

- is defined as a treatment of a person or social group as minor, insignificant or peripheral.

- Marginalization involves exclusion of certain groups from social interactions, marriage relations, sharing food and drinks, and working and living together.

Who are mostly marginalized?

- There are marginalized social groups in every society and culture. **Women, children, older people** and **people with disabilities** are among marginalized groups across the world.

Vulnerability

- Vulnerability refers to the state of being exposed to physical or emotional injuries.
- Vulnerable groups are people exposed to possibilities of attack, harms or mistreatment. Children, aged people and people with disabilities are some of the vulnerable groups

Minority groups

- The phrase ‘minority group’ refers to a small group of people within a community, region, or country.
- In most cases, minority groups are different from the majority population in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, and language.

For example, black Americans are minorities in the United States of America. Christians could be minorities in a Muslim majority country. Muslims can be minorities in a predominantly Hindu society.

Hence, minority groups can be **ethnic minorities**, **religious minorities**, or **racial minorities** in a given community, region of country. There are different forms of marginalization.

1. Gender-Based Marginalization

- Gender inequality involves discrimination on a group of people based on their gender.

- Gender inequality mainly arises from socio-cultural norms.
- The manifestations of gender inequality varies from culture to culture. **Girls and women face negative discrimination in societies across the world.**

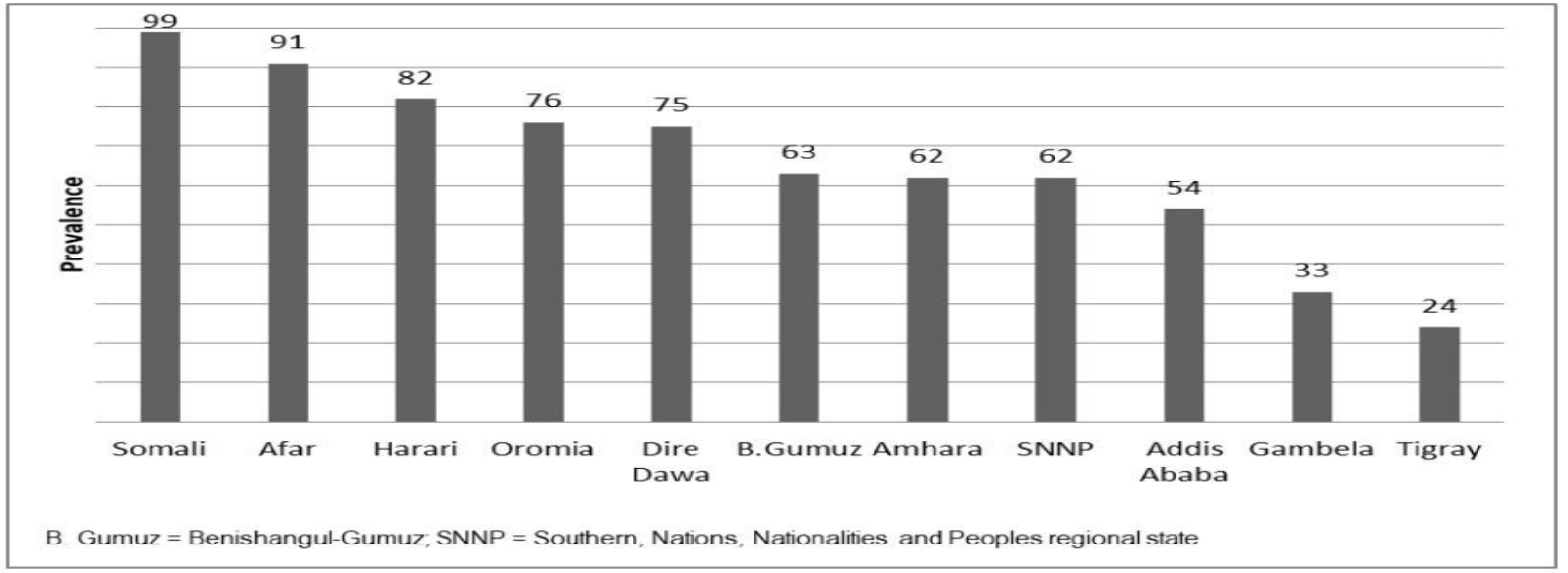
- GD involves exclusion of girls and women from a wide range of opportunities and social services. Gender disparities in education is a good example.

- Beyond education, there are also some customary practices that affect the health and wellbeing of girls and women.
- These practices collectively are called **harmful traditional practices (HTPs).** We will discuss two examples: **early/child marriage** and **female circumcision**, also called female genital cutting/mutilation.

Female Genital Cutting

- Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) is regarded as a form of gender-based violence. According to sources, more than 200 million women and girls alive today have undergone FGM/C.
- Moreover, more than 3 million girls are at risk of FGM/C every year (Shell-Duncan, Naik, & Feldman-Jacobs 2016). FGM/C is practiced in 28 countries in Africa.
- FGM/C among women aged 15-49 years in some African countries was very high. It was 98% in Somalia, 93% in Djibouti, 87% in Egypt and Sudan, and 83% in Eritrea, Nigeria (25%), Senegal (24%), and Kenya (21%)

Figure: Prevalence of FGM/C among women aged 15-49 years in Ethiopia by region



Source: CSA & ICF 2016

Key drivers of FGM/C

1. Belief in impurity

- FGM/C-related marginalization is enforced by norms and taboos (strongly cherished social norms) embedded in indigenous belief systems.
- The concept taboo is defined as ‘a ritually sanctioned prohibition against contact with things, a person or an activity’. Things or persons subject to taboo are regarded as sacred or impure.
- A recent ethnographic study reveals that taboos are the major drivers of FGM/C in some cultural settings in southern Ethiopia.
- In some societies uncut/uncircumcised women are considered impure.

- As a result, marriage and casual sexual contact with an uncut woman is regarded as breaking of taboo. Breaking such taboos, according indigenous beliefs, would have two major implications:

1) it pollutes the transgressor (in this case the man who married uncut girl/woman); and

2) the **pollution would be followed by misfortunes**. According to the local belief, a man who marries an uncut woman would be exposed to misfortunes such as health problems, infertility, and diminishing farm yield and family wealth (Getaneh 2016)

2. Discouraging promiscuity

- It refers to a person **who has a lot of different sexual partners** or sexual relationships.
- In societies where FGM/C is a social norm, there is a belief that uncircumcised girls have high or extraordinary sexual desire.
- As the result, uncut girls/women are **considered as promiscuous**.
- According to such beliefs, uncut women, including uncut married women, would have sexual relationship with multiple partners.
- This, in turn, would affect marriage stability and increases the rate of divorce. In many cultures, FGM/C is practiced to reduce the sexual desire of girls and women

3. Preserving virginity

- In many Ethiopian cultures, social norms prohibit premarital sex and pregnancy.
- The value attached to virginity is very strong in order to discourage premarital sex.

4. Fear of ill-manner

- There is a wide spread belief that uncircumcised girls would be disobedient, powerful and ill-mannered.
- Hence, FGM/C is practiced as a means of moderating the behavior of girls and women.

5. Social sanctions

- Social sanctions are used to control the behavior of members of a given society or community.
- Avoiding FGM/C is considered as violation of social norms in FGM/C practicing societies.
- Hence, parents and girls abandoning FGM/C will be punished through social sanctions including isolation from the community.

Negative impacts of FGM/C

- FGM/C is considered as violation of the rights of girls and women.
- The practice also has negative implications for the health, social and psychological wellbeing of girls and women.
- The following are some of the negative impacts of the practice: severe bleeding during and after the practice, different forms of infections,
  pain during sexual intercourse, and complications during child delivery.
- The practice could also lead to emotional disorder and psychological trauma.

4.3. Marginalized Occupational Groups

- According to anthropological findings, there are occupational marginalized groups in many parts of Ethiopia.
- The following are marginalized occupational groups in our country: **tanners**, **potters**, **weavers** and **ironsmiths**.
- These craft-workers have different names in different parts of the country. Craft-workers such as potters and tanners are considered as **impure and excluded from social interactions**, **ownership of economic resources** (e.g., land), **and participation in associations and celebrations**.
- Iron-smiths are among occupational groups marginalized in many cultural setting in Ethiopia. Iron-smiths make and repair irons without using machines. They contribute a lot especially in rural areas.
- Despite their contribution, both iron smith and craft workers are marginalized and considered to be ***EVILS***.

Types and manifestations of marginalization of craft-workers

Types of Marginalization	Manifestations of Marginalization
Spatial marginalization	poor land, around steep slopes. • They are segregated at market places (they sell their goods at the outskirts of markets). • When they walk along the road, they are expected to give way for others and walk on the lower side of the road.
Economic marginalization	▪ Craft-workers are excluded from certain economic activities including production and exchanges. In some cultures they are not allowed to cultivate crops ▪ They have a limited access to land and land ownership.
Social marginalization	▪ Craft-workers are excluded from intermarriage, they do not share burial places with others; they are excluded from membership of associations such as iddirs. ▪ When marginalized groups are allowed to participate in social events, they must sit on the floor separately-sometimes outside the house or near the
Cultural marginalization	Cultural marginalization is manifested in negative stereotyping such as the following: • Occupational minorities are labelled as impure and polluting; they are accused of eating animals that have died without being slaughtered; • Occupational minorities are also considered unreliable, lacking morality, respect and shame.

2. Age-Based Vulnerability

Age-based vulnerability is susceptibility of people, especially children and older people, to different forms of attack, physical injuries and emotional harms.

Children: Discrimination/Vulnerability

- Children are among vulnerable groups exposed to harm because of their age. Both boys and girls are exposed to some harm and abuse in the hands of older people.
- However, girls are exposed to double marginalization and discrimination because of their gender.
- Children are marginalized from family discussion, from collective feedings and provision of responsibilities. Some of the Age –Based discriminations are;

Early/child marriage:

- Early marriage refers to marriage which involves girls below the age of 18.
- The prevalence of early marriage is declining in Ethiopia and other African countries.
- However, it is still widely practiced in different regions of Ethiopia.

Early marriage has the following major harmful consequences:

- Early marriage inhibits girls' personal development; it hinders girls' chance to education and future professional development.
- Early marriage exposes young girls to sexual abuse by their older husbands.
- Early marriage leads to early pregnancies, which increases risks of diseases and complications during delivery, fistula, and death of the mother or child.
- It puts lots of burden on the shoulder of the girl

Factors encouraging early marriage:

- Social norms and economic factors are the two major drivers of the practice

Marginalization of Older Persons

- Age- based marginalization highly affects older people. The phrase ‘older people’ refers to adults with **the age of 60 and above.**
- Older people are respected in Ethiopian cultures. Older persons have been considered as custodians of tradition, culture, and history.
- However since recent times, older people are facing various problems as a result of **modernization**, **globalization**, and **urbanization**.
- Generally, **Ageism** is a widely observed social problem both in Ethiopia and across the world.
- **Ageism** refer to stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people based on their age.

3. Religious and Ethnic Minorities

- Religious and ethnic minority groups also face different forms of marginalization.
- There are several examples of marginalization and discrimination targeting religious and ethnic minorities in the world.

Let us mention two examples.

- **The Jewish people** suffered from discrimination and persecution in different parts of the world. They were targets of extermination in Germany and other Western European countries because of their religion and racial identity.

- **Muslim Rohingyas** are among the most marginalized and persecuted people in the world. In recent years, more than half-a-million Rohingyas fled from their homes in Nyanmar to neighboring countries such as Bangladesh.

- These are among the widely known examples of discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities.
- However, the problem is not limited to specific areas, regions or countries. Although the level of the problem varies in different contexts

4.6. Human right approaches and inclusiveness:

Anthropological perspectives

- All forms of marginalization and discrimination against vulnerable and minority groups contradict the principles of human rights.
- The major human rights conventions denounce discrimination against women, children, people with disability, older people and other minority and vulnerable groups, forced marriage, child marriage, and female genital mutilation/cutting.

- Anthropology appreciates cultural diversity and commonality, relativism.
- relativism is about the importance of understanding the values, norms, customs and practices of a particular culture in its own context.

- This ***does not mean that we need to appreciate every custom and practice***.
- ***Anthropologists do not support/appreciate customary practices that violate the rights and wellbeing of individuals and groups.***

Unit Five

Identity, Inter-Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism in Ethiopia

Contents of the Unit

- Concepts, such as ethnicity, ethnic identity, ethnic group, multiculturalism, ethnic boundaries, nation building and influential theories of ethnicity.

- The influential theoretical positions including Primordial, Instrumental and Constructivist are addressed and will be augmented by empirical cases.

5.1. Identity, Ethnicity and Race: *Identification and Social Categorization*

Ethnicity: *What's in a name?*

- After the end of the **second world war**, words like "**ethnicity**", "**ethnic groups**" "**ethnic conflict**" and "nationalism" have become quite common terms in the media and among the wider public.

- During the 1980s and early 1990s, we have witnessed an explosion in the **growth of scholarly publications on ethnicity, ethnic phenomenon and nationalism** across different disciplines, within social sciences.

- social theorists **predicted that ethnicity and nationalism would decrease** in importance and eventually vanish as a result of modernization, industrialization and individualism. This never came about.

- On the contrary, ethnicity and nationalism have grown in **political importance** in the world, particularly since the ***Second World War***. Hence, it is better to see the historical background of the concept

Ethnicity – A Short Historical Overview

- The academic and popular use of the term ‘ethnicity’ is fairly, modern. Here, the term “**ethnicity**” is relatively new, first appearing in the **Oxford English Dictionary in 1953.**

- The word ***ethnic*** is derived from the Greek term ‘***ethnos***’ (which in turn, derived from the Latin word ‘*ethnikos*’), which literally means ***“a group of people bound together by the same manners, customs or other distinctive features”.***

- Contrary to its literal meaning however, ancient Greeks were using the term ‘*ethnos*’ in practice to refer to *non-Hellenic*, people who are non-Greek and considered as second-class peoples.

- In **early England**, it used to refer to someone who was *neither Christian* nor *Jewish* (to refer to heathen or pagan).

hort Historical . . .

- In its modern sense, it was only after the end of II World War that the term widely adopted and begins to use. Before World War II, while the **term "tribe" was the term of choice for "pre-modern" societies and the term "race" was used to refer modern societies.**

- Due to the close link between the term "race" and Nazi ideology, after the end of II WW, the **term "ethnic" gradually replaced "race"**.

- The **North American tradition** adopted 'ethnic' as a substitute for ***minority groups*** within a larger society of the nation-state (referring to the Jews, Italians, Irish and other people considered inferior to the British descent).

- The **European tradition** regularly opted to use '**ethnic group**' as a synonym for ***nationhood.***

hort Historical . . .

- Furthermore, the collapse of the colonial world in the 1950s and 1960s has brought even more confusion on questions of '*race*', '*culture*' and '*ethnicity*'.

- **What is obvious from this short history of the term is the fact that 'ethnicity' contains a multiplicity of meanings**. Such a plasticity and ambiguity of the concept allows for deep m**isunderstandings as well as political misuses**.

- In other words, ethnicity is "**vague, elusive and expansive**". Hence, in the following section attempts will be made to conceptualize ethnicity and its related concepts.

5.3. Conceptualizing Ethnicity –*What's it?*

- Max Weber granted ethnicity much attention. Max Weber, in his work entitled "***Economy and Society***", first published in 1922 (1978:385-98), provided the early and influential sociological conceptions of ethnicity and ethnic group.

- According to Weber, an ***"ethnic group" is based on the belief in common descent shared by its members, extending beyond kinship, political solidarity vis-a-vis other groups, and common customs, language, religion, values, morality, and etiquette.***

- Perhaps the most significant part of Weber's argument is that: "*ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere.*

onceptualizing . . .

Clifford Geertz has elegantly defined *ethnicity as the 'world of personal identity collectively ratified and publicly expressed' and 'socially ratified personal identity'.*

In spite of the difference in scholarly views of ethnicity among anthropologists, the **'basic social anthropological model of ethnicity'** can be summarized as follows:

- ***Ethnicity is a matter of cultural differentiation*** *- although, to reiterate the main theme of social identity, identification always involves a dialectical interplay between similarity and difference.*

- ***Ethnicity is centrally a matter of shared meanings*** *- what we conventionally call 'culture' - but is also produced and reproduced during interaction.*

- ***Ethnicity is no more fixed or unchanging*** *than the way of life of which it is an aspect, or the situations in which it is produced and reproduced*

- ***Ethnicity, as an identification****, is collective and individual, externalized in social interaction and the categorization of others*

Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Identity

Ethnic Group

According to Weber,

> *an* ***'ethnic group' is based on the belief in common descent shared by its members, extending beyond kinship, political solidarity vis-a-vis other groups, and common customs, language, religion, values and morality.***

By considering the various definitions provided to define ethnicity, **Hutchinson and Smith's (1996)** identified **six main features that the definition of an ethnic group, predominantly consists**. This includes;

thnic group . . .

1. *A common proper name, to identify and express the "essence" of the community;*
2. *A myth of common ancestry that includes the idea of common origin in time and place and that gives an ethnic group a sense of fictive kinship;*
3. ***Shared historical memories**, or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events, and their commemoration;*
4. ***One or more elements of common culture**, which need not be specified but normally, include religion, customs, and language;*
5. ***A link with a homeland**, not necessarily its physical occupation by the ethnic group, only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with diaspora peoples; and*
6. ***A sense of solidarity** on the part of at least some sections of the ethnic's population*

Ethnic Identity

- Typically, ***ethnic identity is an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group***.
- An individual can choose to associate with a group if the choices are available (i.e., a person is of **mixed ethnic** or racial heritage).

- **Affiliation** can be influenced by **racial**, **natal**, **symbolic**, and **cultural** factors.
  - **Racial factors** involve the use of physiognomic and physical characteristics,
  - **Natal factors** refer to "homeland" (ancestral home) or origins of individuals, their parents and kin, and
  - **Symbolic factors** include those factors that typify or exemplify an ethnic group (e.g., holidays, foods, clothing, artifacts, etc.).

thnic Identity . . .

- On the individual level, ***ethnicity is a social-psychological process, which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity.***

- Hence ethnic identity can be defined as ***a manner in which persons, on account of their ethnic origin, locate themselves psychologically in relation to one or more social systems, and perceive others in relation to those systems.***

- **Ethnic origin** is meant that a person has been socialized in an ethnic group or that his or her ancestors, real or symbolic, have been members of the group.

- Individuals locate themselves in one or another community internally by states of mind and feelings, such as self-definitions or feelings of closeness, and externally by behavior appropriate to these states of mind and feelings.

Ethnic identity has **objective** and **subjective** aspects or we can distinguish **external** and **internal** aspects of ethnic identity.

External aspects refer to observable behavior, both cultural and social, such as **(1),** speaking an ethnic **language**, practicing ethnic traditions,

(**2),** participation in ethnic personal networks, such as family and friendships,

(3), participation in ethnic institutional organizations, such as churches, schools, enterprises, media

(4), participation in ethnic voluntary associations, such as clubs, 'societies,' youth organizations and

(5) participation in functions sponsored by ethnic organizations such as picnics, concerts, public lectures, rallies, dances.

The internal aspects of ethnic identity refer to images, ideas, attitudes, and feelings. These, of course, are interconnected with the external behavior.

5.4. Theories of Ethnicity: *Primordialism, Instrumentalism and Social Constructivism*

5.4.1. The Primordial Model of Ethnicity

- The *Primordialist* approach is the oldest in anthropological literature. It was popular until the mid-1970s. The roots of *Primordialist* thinking can be traced back to the German Romantic philosophers, especially J.G. Herder.

- Indeed, Primordialism is an "**objectivist or essentialist theory**" which argues, that "***ultimately there is some real, tangible, foundation for ethnic identification.***"

- An anthropologist, Clifford Geertz (1973: 255-310), who systematized the primordial model **articulated ethnicity as a natural phenomenon with its foundations in primordial ties** - deriving mainly from kinship, locality and culture

To concluded, 'primordialism' makes ***two distinct claims***.

- **Firstly**, ethnicity and **secondly**, ethnic attachment is ***"natural and innate"*, which would never change over time, and secondly, it is "*ancient and perennial*"** .

- By this, **ethnicity is an ascribed status and ethnic membership is fixed, permanent and primarily ascribed through birth**.

5.4.2. Instrumentalist (Situational) Theory of Ethnicity

- The instrumentalist theorists view **ethnicity as situationally defined, depending on rational calculations of advantage and stimulated by political mobilization**.

- Given this, Banks (1996) explained the instrumentalist understandings of ethnicity as *an **instrument of group mobilization for political and economic ends***. **By this, ethnicity is something that can be changed, constructed or even manipulated to gain specific political and/or economic ends.**

- Proponents of this perspective (e.g., Abner Cohen, Paul Brass and Ted Gurr) advocate that in the contexts of modern states, **leaders (political elites)** use and **manipulate perceptions of ethnic identity to further their own ends** and stay in power.

- Abner Cohen (1974), one of the leading advocator of this perspective, in contrast to Barth, "*placed [a] greater emphasis on the **ethnic group as a collectively organized strategy for the protection of economic and political interests***"

5.4.3. Social Constructivist Theory of Ethnicity

- The basic notion in this approach is that **ethnicity is something that is being negotiated and constructed in everyday living.** It regards ethnicity as a process, which continues to unfold.

- It has much to do with the exigencies of everyday survival (***ethnicity is constructed in the process of feeding, clothing, sending to school and conversing with children and others*).**

- F. Barth is the leading figure of this approach. Barth viewed ethnic identity as an "***individualistic strategy***" in which individuals move from one identity to another to "advance their personal economic and political interests, or to minimize their losses"

- In general, **constructivists conceive ethnicity as situational, flexible and variable**

Multiculturalism: Definition and Theories

Multiculturalism *can be defined as the way in which a given society engages with cultural diversity. The underlying assumption is that members of very different cultures can coexist peacefully and multiculturalism articulates the view that society is strengthened through preserving, respecting, and even encouraging cultural diversity.*

- Multiculturalism is the manner in which a society ***deals with cultural diversity***, both at the national and community level.
- Multiculturalism presupposes that society in **general benefits** from increased diversity through the **harmonious coexistence of different cultures.**
- Multiculturalism can take place all over the nation or it can take place within communities of nation

- Multiculturalism can be conceptualized by one of two theories: the "**melting pot**" theory or the "**salad bowl**" theory.

Theories of Multiculturalism:

There are two theories or models to conceptualize multiculturalism. These theories are used to understand how different cultures are integrated into a single society and best defined by the metaphors (symbols) commonly used to describe them.

The Melting Pot Theory

- This theory assumes that different immigrant groups will be inclined to **"melt together,"** leaving their own individual cultures and subsequently will be fully assimilated into the predominant society and its culture.

- This particularly used to describe the assimilation of immigrants into countries like the United States, UK, France

    - ***What is the strength of this theory ? and***
    - ***What is the criticism on this theory ?***

The Salad Bowl Theory

- This is more of a liberal theory of multiculturalism in comparison to the melting pot theory.
- The salad bowl theory illustrates a heterogeneous society in which people coexist by retaining at least some of the distinctiveness aspects of their traditional culture.
- According to the assertion of salad bowl theory it is not necessary for people to abandon their cultural heritage in order to be considered members of the dominant society.
- On contrary, there is argument that the cultural differences encouraged by the salad bowl model can divide a society and result in chauvinism and discrimination.

Unit Six

Customary and Local Governance Systems and Peace Making

Content of the Unit:

- Indigenous and local governance
- Institutions of intra and inter-ethnic conflict resolution
- Structures of indigenous justice systems
- Strengths and limitations of indigenous conflict resolution institutions
- Women’s role in conflict resolution and peacemaking
- Legal pluralism: interaction between customary and state legal systems

5.1 Indigenous and local governance

- Indigenous systems of governance have been used to maintain social order across Ethiopian regions.
- The role of indigenous governance was indispensable before the advent of the modern state system.
- Understanding of indigenous systems of governance helps us know our cultures in a better way. It will also help us enhance inter-cultural understanding and smooth relationships among different ethnic/cultural groups.

➢ We have outlined some examples of indigenous systems of governance to start discussions.

The Oromo Gada

- The *Gadaa* system is 'an age grading institution of the Oromo that has a complex system of administration, law making and dispute settlement.
- The *Gadaa* is a highly celebrated institution of governance and dispute settlement among the Oromo people. *Gadaa* is widely mentioned as an egalitarian (democratic) system of governance.

- In the Gadaa system, political power is transferred from one generation set (*Luuba*) to another every eight years. Gaada officials such as the *Abba Gaada* and *Abba Seera*(father of law) serve for eight years and leave their position to the new generation of *Gadaa* officials.

- The *Gaada* system involves a continuous process of law making and revision. The law making process has rooms for wider participation of the people.

- *Gumi gaayo*, a law making assembly of the Borana Oromo, is a good example. *Gumi gaayo* is held every eight years to revising, adapting, making and publicizing the customary law (*seera*) and custom (*aadaa*) of the Oromo.

- Generally, the Gaada is an indigenous system of governance, conflict resolution, and peacemaking. The indigenous system of governance among the Oromo also include institutions of conflict resolution such as the *Jaarsa Biyyaa* (literally: elders of the soil/land) institution. We will discuss the role of the *Jaarsa Buyyaa* in settling conflicts and restoring peace in the next section of this chapter.

The Gedeo Baalle

- The Gedeo of southern Ethiopia have an indigenous system of governance called *Baalle*.
- The *Baalle* and the *Gaada* system of the Oromo have some similarities. For example, both have grading system and exercise periodic transfer of power (i.e., every eight years).
- The role of religion is high in the two indigenous systems of governance. Moreover, the customary law of the Gedeo is called *Seera*. The Ya'a, the general assembly, is the highest body of the Gedeo indigenous system of governance.
- The Baalle is a complex system which has three administrative hierarchies: Abba Gada, Roga (traditional leader next the *Abba Gada*), and two levels of council of elders known as Hulla Hayyicha and *Songo Hayyicha.*
- The *Abba Gada* is the leader of the *Baalle*. The *Baalle* system has a body of laws called *Seera*. Conflicts are resolved by the *Songo hayyicha* at village level.
- When disputes are not settled at the village level, cases can be referred to first to the Hulla Hayyicha and finally to the *Abba Gada*.
- In general, the Gedeo system of governance has the following major institutions: the *ya'a* (general assembly), the *Seera* (customary law), the Abba Gada, *and* council of elders.

Dere Woga of the Gamo

- The Gamo are among Omotic peoples of southern Ethiopia. Unlike their neighboring people such as Wolayta and Dawro, the Gamo did not have a centralized political system.

- The Gamo people were organized into several local administrations locally known as *deres*.
- According to anthropological findings, there are more than 40 *deres* across the Gamo highlands. Each *dere* had its own *ka'o* (king) and *halaqa* (elected leader).

- The indigenous system of governance embraces the *dere woga* (customary law) and the *dubusha* assemblies. T

- he highest body of the indigenous governance is the *dere dubusha*, a general assembly that is responsible to make and revise customary laws, resolve major disputes that cannot be solved at the lower levels.

The *dubushas* assembly has three hierarchies:

1) the *dere dubusha* (at the top),
2) sub-*dere dubusha* (at the middle), and
3) *guta*/neighborhood *dubusha* (at the village level).

- Minor cases and disputes are resolved by the *dere cima*, council of elders. Like the Oromo Gada and the Gedeo Baalle, the indigenous governance of the Gamo is embedded in the Gamo belief system.

- It is believed that telling a lie and hiding the truth are considered as violation of taboo, which would lead to spiritual pollution and then misfortunes including lack of fertility, illness, and death of human beings and livestock.

6.2 Indigenous institutions of conflict resolution and peacemaking

- There are different indigenous institutions of conflict resolution and peacemaking across regions and cultures in Ethiopia.
- More than 80 ethnic and cultural groups live together in Ethiopia. Each ethnic group has its own institutions of conflict resolution and peace making.
- Regardless of cross cultural diversity, most ethnic/cultural groups in Ethiopia have similar conflict resolution institutions.
- The basic ones are
  - customary (most of the time unwritten) laws,
  - customary courts, and
  - council of elders.
- The role of notable elders is essential in all cultural settings in Ethiopia.

6.2.1. Intra-ethnic conflict resolution institutions

- Conflicts and disputes may occur within the same ethnic group or between individuals or groups of different ethnic groups.
- Intra-ethnic conflict resolution institutions address conflicts between individuals and groups (e.g., clans) within the same ethnic group.
- Peoples across Ethiopian regions have intra-ethnic institutions and mechanisms of conflict resolution and peacemaking.
- These institutions are parts of indigenous systems of governance.
- In this section we will discuss the major features of intra-ethnic institutions of conflict resolution

Components of customary justice systems

In Ethiopia, with some exceptions, customary justice institutions include three major components. The three components are 1) customary laws, 2) council of elders, and 3) customary courts or assemblies.

1. Customary law:

- *it* refers to a body of rules, norms, and a set of moral values that serve as a wider framework for human conduct and social interactions.
- The Sera of the Sidama, the dere woga of the Gamo, the Seera Addaa of the Oromo; Gordena Sera of Kestane Gurage are examples of customary laws. In most cases, customary laws are available orally.

2. Council of elders:

- It is the second important institution of customary justice systems.
- The council of elders embraces highly respected and well-experienced community members who have a detail knowledge of the customary laws.

- Members of the elder's council are also known for their personal qualities such as truthfulness and experience in settling conflicts.

- Elders often serve their communities on voluntary basis without any payment. The number of the elders varies based on the nature of the case.

- The institution of council of elders has different names in various ethnic groups: *Yehager Shimagile* (Amhara), *Jaarsaa Biyyaa* (Oromo), Hayyicha (Gedeo), Guurtii (Somali), *Dere Cima* (Gamo), *Deira Cimma* (Wolayita), and *Cimuma* (Burji).

3. Customary courts:

- are public assemblies that serve two major purposes:

(a) hearing, discussing and settling disputes, and

(b) revising, adapting, and making laws.

Major characteristic features of customary justice systems

According to study findings customary justice systems have several commonalities and differences across Ethiopian cultures

Common features

- High involvement of elders at different stages of conflict resolution and peacemaking process.
- Preference and respect for elders known for their qualities including experience in dispute resolution; knowledge of customary laws, procedures, norms and values of the society; impartiality, respect for rules and people; the ability of listening and speaking politely; honesty and tolerance.
- Indigenous dispute resolution practices focus on restoring social relationships, harmony, and peaceful coexistence.

Differences

- In some cultural settings, conflict resolution mechanisms involve several hierarchies and complicated procedures;
- The compositions and responsibilities of council of elders also vary from society to society.

CASE- The three structures of Gamo customary justice system

- **The Dere Woga:** It is a comprehensive body of rules and procedures that govern a wide range of issues including inheritance, property ownership, marriage and divorce, conflict resolution and gender division of labor.

- **The Dere Cima:** Literally, *dere cima* means elders of the land/country. It includes notable and respected elders experienced in resolving disputes.

- **Dubusha:** it is customary courts. *Dere dubusha,* the biggest customary court in a given Gamo community, has two major functions: (a) hearing, discussing and resolving disputes, and (b) revising and making laws.

In most Gamo communities, the structure of the customary courts has three levels*: Guta dubusha,* at the village level; sub-dere *dubusha,* at the *kebele* level; and *dere dubusha* at the higher level.

Strengths and limitations of customary justice systems/institutions

Strengths of customary justice institutions

- Incur limited cost in terms of time and resources/money; elders do not request payment for their services; fines and compensation are relatively small;
- Conflict resolution process are held in public spaces in the community; different parties (victims, offenders and community members) participate in the process; decisions are communicated in public;
- Decisions are easily enforced through community-based sanctions including social exclusion; compliance ensured through blessings and the threat of curses;
- Customary systems aimed at restoring community cohesion, social relations, collective spirit and social solidarity
- Rely on respect for elders, the tradition of forgiveness, transferring compensations, embedded in indigenous beliefs

Limitations of customary justice institutions

- **Limitations related to protecting and safeguarding women's rights**. Indigenous justice institutions are dominated by men.

For example, the council of elders are not open to elderly women. Women are excluded from participation at customary courts and assemblies with a few exceptions.

- **Indigenous institutions of dispute resolution and peacemaking are effective to resolve dispute and restore peace within the same ethnic group**. Their potential in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts and restoring long-lasting peace is very limited.

6.2.2 Inter-ethnic conflict resolution institutions

As noted above, one of the weaknesses of indigenous institution of peacemaking is their limitation in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts.

However, there are some example of inter-ethnic conflict resolution institutions in some parts of Ethiopia.

Abbo Gereb:-

- is one of the indigenous institutions that address inter-ethnic conflicts. It is a dispute resolution institution in Rayya and Wajirat district, Southern Tigray.
- Abbo Gereb, literally means the father of the river Gerewo. Abbo Gereb serves to settle disputes between individuals or groups from highland Tigray and lowland Afar.
- Conflict between the two groups often arise because of dispute over grazing land or water resources, particularly in dry season.
- When conflict arises between parties from two ethnic groups, notable elders from Tigray and Afar come together to resolve the dispute and restore peaceful relations.
- Most of the elders involved in inter-ethnic conflict resolutions are bilingual: speaking Tigrigna and Afar.

6.4. Women's role in conflict resolution and peacemaking

- Ethiopian women participate in the process of dispute settlement in exceptional cases.
- For example, in some cultures, women participate in dispute settlement processes when cases are related to marriage and women's issues.

- Despite this weaknesses, women are not completely excluded for indigenous systems of governance, conflict resolution, and peacemaking activities.

- In some societies, women use their own institutions to exercise power, protect their rights, and actively participate in peacemaking activities.

- This does not mean that women are completely excluded from conflict resolution and peacemaking activities.

Here are some examples of women's involvement in peacekeeping process

1. The Sidama Women's Peacemaking Sticks

- Sidama women have two instruments of power: the Yakka and the ***Siqqo***. The ***Yakka*** is women's association or unity group. The Siqqo is a stick that symbolizes peace and women honor. The Siqqo and the Yakka are closely associated.
- Sidama women stand for their customary rights. They do this, for example, when a woman is beaten up by her husband or a pregnant woman is mistreated. For example, if a man prohibits his wife from *Yakka* participation, the women group impose a fine on him. The fine could be an ox.

- If a woman is ill- treated by her husband, the *Yakka* leader (known as *Qaritte*) mobilizes the *Yakka* and leads them to the house of the man.

- If he is found guilty, the man would be forced to slaughter a sheep and give part of it to the Yakka.

2. Don Kachel: Agnuak women peacemaking institution

- Agnuak women have a peacemaking institution known as Don Kachel. Literally, DonKachel means ‘let us all live in peace’.
- It involves a peace-making movement initiated by Jaye, a group of wise and elderly Agnuak women. The Jaye start a peace-making movement based on information gathered through women’s networking. The Jaye gather information about potential conflicts from different sources, including gossips spread in the community.
- When there is a conflict, the Jaye call the disputing parties for a meeting to settle the dispute.
- After examining the arguments of the two parties, the Jaye give their verdict. The party that caused the conflict request for forgiveness in public and pay some compensation. A sheep or goat is slaughtered after the conflict resolved.
- The practice of Don Kachel is currently being adopted by other ethnic groups including the Nuer, Mejenger, Opo, and Komo.

3. Women's institution of reconciliation: Raya-Azebo, Tigray

- Elderly and highly respected women in a village in Raya-Azebo, Tigray established a reconciliation institution called the Debarte.
- The Debarte plays an important role in avoiding harms associated with the culture of revenge. A man may kill another man in a fight.
- The incident would trigger the feeling of revenge among male relatives of the murdered man. In such a tense situation, the wife of the killer requests for the Debarte intervention.
- The Debarte quickly start their intervention to stop the act of revenge. The Debarte instruct the murderer's wife to gathering her female relatives together and go to the home of the killed person.
- The the women reach to the home of the killed person they cry loudly and beg the relatives of the murdered person to give up revenge and consider forgiveness.
- After persuading the victim's relatives to give up revenge, the Debarte give the way for elders who start the peace-making process.

6.5 Legal pluralism:

Interrelations between customary, religious and state legal systems

- Legal pluralism refers to the existence of two or more legal or justice systems in a given society or country.
- Legal pluralism indicates the co-existence of multiple legal systems working side-by-side in the same society. Legal pluralism is evident in the Ethiopian context.
- Multiple legal institutions, including customary laws and courts, state laws and courts, and religious laws and courts (e.g., the Sharia Law) work side-by-side in most parts of the country.
- The FDRE Constitution provides ample space for religious and customary laws and courts to address personal and family cases.
- Especially in rural and places where the formal justice inistitutions are absent the customary laws and their courts fill the void and fulfil justice.
- In some regions like Afar and Somale the religions and customary legal systems dominate the formal system.

Unit Seven

Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Contents of the Unit:

Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS)

- Conceptualizations of IKS
- Significances of IKS.
- Major domains of IKS and shows how they are connected to each other.
- Challenges associated with the decline and erosion of IK and
- Protection and promoting relevant IKS.

7.1. Definitions of Concepts

7.1.1 Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

- Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) is called after different but closely related names, which include: ‘**folk knowledge**', **'local knowledge**', '**non-formal** knowledge', **'cultural knowledge**', **'indigenous technical knowledge**', **'traditional ecological knowledge**', and **'traditional knowledge**'.

- All these terms are essentially similar but they differ in scope, domains and features of IK that they focus on.

- For instance, while ‘cultural knowledge’ is more general and broader in scope, ‘traditional ecological knowledge’ is more specific as it focuses on a single domain of IK, that is, ecology or the environment.

- On the other hand, such terms as indigenous, folk and local suggest ‘originality’ or uniqueness of knowledge to a particular culture or people living in a particularly geographic area. That is, IK emerge and develop within a particular community (culture) and living in a particular place (geographic context)

igenous Knowledge Systems . . .

- IK emerge and develop within a particular community (culture) and living in a particular place (geographic context)

- IKS is defined as technical insight of **wisdom gained and developed by people in a particular locality through years of careful observation and experimentation with the phenomena around them.**

- IKS is **embodied in culture and is described as an integrated pattern of human knowledge, beliefs and behavior.**

- The World Bank (1998) refers to IK as a large body of *knowledge and skills* which is developed outside the formal system

- Indigenous knowledge is also defined as the knowledge that people in a given community have time, and that continues to develop. It is based on experience, often tested over centuries of use, adapted to local culture and environment, dynamic and changing (International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, IIRR, 1996).

- It consists of **language, ideas, beliefs, customs, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, artifacts, rituals, ceremonies, folklores and gender.**

igenous Knowledge Systems . . .

- In Sum, indigenous knowledge constitutes the body of context-evolved cultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and practices transmitted from one generation to the other.

- Indigenous knowledge is perceived as having developed over time as a *dynamic response to the challenges of survival* and development in a specific context (e.g., Lewontin, 1991).

- Socio-cultural values are central to our actions and practices (both collective and everyday personal behaviour) and they may include:

  - **Socio-economic Values**: Values related to intergenerational relationships, gender equality, tolerance for diversity, interpersonal relationships and respectfulness, hospitality, reciprocity, and interdependence, values for productivity, wealth, and hard work
  - **Moral Values** –collective codes of conduct regarding *truthfulness*, mutual help; helping the needy
  - **Environmental values**: respect and concern for natural environments-forest, sacred lands, sacred trees
  - **Political values:** egalitarianism, respect for laws, fairness, equality, rights and duty

5.2. Features of Indigenous Knowledge

Ellen and Harris (1996) identified the following special features of indigenous knowledge that distinguish it broadly from other knowledge. As to them IK is:

A. Local (not universal)

- It is set of experiences rooted in a particular community
- IK is context- based grounded in a particular culture and associated with a certain geographic area

B. Tacit knowledge,

- that is, not explicit or codified.
- The tacit nature of IK suggest that people may develop and carry knowledge and transfer it between generations using practices, myths, rituals and symbols but may not be able to articulate them terms equivalent to scientific categories or in foreign words that fit a particular academic jargon or category.

C. Transmitted orally, or through imitation and demonstration.

D. Experiential or **empirical** rather than theoretical knowledge.

E. Learned through repetition, which is a defining characteristic of tradition even when new knowledge is added.

F. Constantly changing, that is, IK is not static. Rather IK is dynamic in its nature.

Indigenous People

In sum, despite the **lack of an authoritative / formal universal definition** for the concept of indigenous peoples, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) sets outs **distinguishing features** as a guide for the identification of indigenous peoples across the globe. This includes the**:**

- **Self- identification** as Indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member;
- **Historical continuity** with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies;
- **Strong link to territories** and surrounding natural resources;
- **Distinct** social, economic or political systems;
- **Distinct language,** culture and beliefs;
- Formation of **non-dominant groups** of society; and
- Resolve to **maintain** and reproduce their **ancestral environments** and systems as distinctive peoples and communities

5.2 Significance of Indigenous Knowledge

- The knowledge of local people is an **enabling component of development.** In this regard; a large percentage of the earth's genetic diversity has been maintained and managed through farmer's IKS.

- Indigenous **knowledge system enables people to develop strategies for handling household and communal activities.** For example in Ethiopia *Debo* and *Jige* are important uniting forces in communal activities.

- Over the years, IKS authorities (elders) make local rules to **protect important resources such as useful plants, water bodies, stone terracing** e.t.c.

- IK is an **important part of the lives of the poor**. Help them how to survive the hard life with very few resources at hand

- **provide effective alternatives to Western know-how.** IK offers local people and their development workers further options in designing new projects or addressing specific problems and wider disasters
- However, **not all IK are helpful and positive**. Example: female circumcision

Indigenous Knowledge and Development

- IK is **relevant to development process** such as agriculture, animal husbandry, traditional medicine, saving and credit, community development, poverty alleviation, and peaceful coexistence

- Indigenous knowledge may help ***identify cost-effective and sustainable mechanisms*** for poverty alleviation that are locally manageable.

- It **increases and enhances livelihood options**, revitalize agriculture, increase food security, improve health.

- Indigenous knowledge, along with western- based knowledge, helps create development solutions that are culturally acceptable by the community.
- For long time, Indigenous knowledge system was ignored from being part of development interventions.

- Due to this ignorance, developments have been failed to fulfil the demands of the people as long as they mostly violate the culture and social settings of the people.

Social scientists in general, and socio-cultural anthropologist in particular, have responsibilities to study IKS and help communities and 'outside experts' make decisions:

(1) ***Whether a particular domain of indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge systems are compatible and complementary*** and when to use indigenous knowledge, along with or combined with western- based knowledge to be able to create development solutions that are culturally acceptable to the community;

(2) ***When to use indigenous knowledge systems as alternative to western knowledge*** systems provided that they are more accessible, less costly and more compatible with a society's our socio-economic cultural and ecological contexts;

(3) ***When communities use indigenous knowledge as a tool of survival (self-reliance)*** when they don't have access to or control over western knowledge system
due economic or politico-legal reasons.

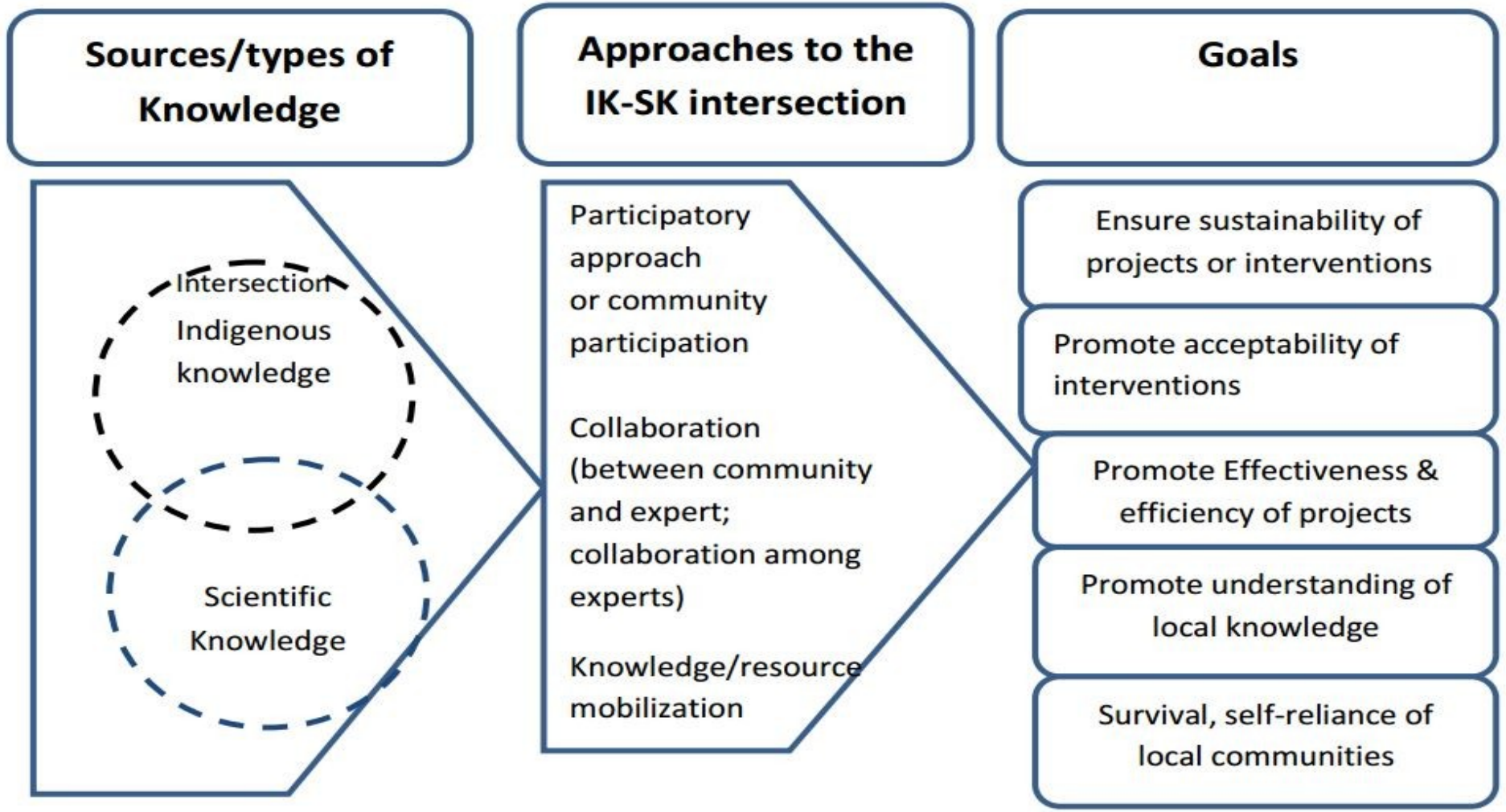


Figure 1: IK-LK interaction and its significances

7.4. Domains of Indigenous Knowledge

- Indigenous Knowledge Systems consist of a number of domains or slots.
- In what follows we outline some of the major domains of IK.

Agriculture (livelihoods and food security):
Indigenous knowledge related to agriculture and livelihood activates also includes knowledge and practices about farming techniques, soil categories and soil fertility.

Indigenous/Traditional Medicine and Healing Practices:

- Traditional Medicine and healing practices deal with both physical and emotional ailments
- Traditional medicine and healing practices include treating wounds and bone setting, preparation and administration of different types of mainly plant-based medicine

Ecological/environment-related IKS:

- This constitutes an important domain as it is particularly related to many other fundamental domains of IKS.
- Indigenous knowledge of the ecosystem, which signifies the interrelationships or interactions among the different elements of the physical and biological environment-, is fundamental for such other domains related to agriculture, climate and weather patterns, and traditional medicinal practices

Social organizational of mutual support:

- Indigenous knowledge systems enable people to develop strategies for handling household and communal activities
- Indigenous practices equivalent to such modern concepts as cooperation, social protection, social security and social insurance have been developed employed by local communities

7.4. Challenges facing IK and the need for the preservation of IK

Globalization:

- This refers to economic, socio-cultural and political interconnection of the world.
- Intense modernization and cultural homogenization (westernization) are leading to loss of IKS and useful traditions in the least developed parts of the world.

Expansion of modern education:

- Modern education is a means of improvement for human life and well-being.
- Unless it is designed or customized to the need of particular socio-cultural contexts, the needs of local communities may be altered and or lost when supplanted or displaced by modern knowledge.

Development approaches:

- The development pursued by states and development partners in the developing countries often follow the modernization approach.
- Attempts are not only often made to adopt modern knowledge and technologies uncritically but also to assume them as superior to local knowledge and technologies.

Rapid population growth in the developing countries:

- Population puts pressure on the natural environment as more and more people search for more land to cultivate, The result could be deforestation and environmental degradations.