

## Chapter 1 Summary

- Cross-cultural psychology is the critical and comparative study of cultural effects on human psychology. As a comparative field, cross-cultural psychology draws its conclusions from at least two samples that represent at least two cultural groups. The act of comparison requires a particular set of critical thinking skills.
- Cross-cultural psychology examines psychological diversity and the underlying reasons for such diversity. Using a comparative approach, cross-cultural psychology examines the links between cultural norms and behavior and the ways in which particular human activities are influenced by various cultural forces. Cross-cultural psychology establishes psychological universals, that is, phenomena common for people in several, many, or perhaps all cultures.
- Cultural psychology seeks to discover meaningful links between culture and psychology of individuals living in this culture.
- At least four types of knowledge about psychology can be recognized: scientific, popular (folk), ideological (value-based), and legal. It is critical for cross-cultural psychologists to treat all types of knowledge with sensitivity, understanding, and respect.
- No society is culturally homogeneous. There are no cultures that are either entirely similar or completely different. Within the same cultural cluster there can be significant variations, inconsistencies, and dissimilarities.
- Cross-cultural psychologists establish and conceptualize the main culture's features in terms of cultural dichotomies. Among such dichotomies are high- versus low-power distance, high- versus low-uncertainly avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and collectivism versus individualism.
- Evolutionary approach is a theoretical model that explores the ways in which biological factors affect human behavior and thus lay a natural foundation for human culture. The sociological approach focuses on broad social structures that influence society as a whole, and subsequently its individuals. There are particular social forces that shape the behavior of large social groups, and human beings develop and adjust their individual responses in accordance to the demands and pressures of larger social groups and institutions.
- According to an ecocultural approach to cross-cultural psychology, the individual cannot be separated from his or her environmental context. People constantly exchange messages with the environment, thus transforming it and themselves.
- According to a "culture mixtures" approach, researchers should switch their attention from traditional views on culture to new cultural mixtures, contact zones, interconnected systems, and multiple cultural identities.
- An "integrative" approach to cross-cultural psychology emphasizes human activity, a process of the individual's goal-directed interaction with the environment. Human motivation, emotion, thought, and reactions cannot be separated from human activity, which is (1) determined by individual, socioeconomic, environmental, political, and cultural conditions, and also (2) changes these conditions. Two factors, presence of and access to resources, largely determine type, scope, and direction of human activities.
- Indigenous theories are characterized by the use of conceptions and methodologies associated exclusively with the cultural group under investigation. Indigenous psychology is the scientific study of human behavior or the mind and is designed for a people and native, not transported from other regions.
- Ethnocentrism is the view that supports judgment about other ethnic, national, and cultural groups and events from the observer's own ethnic, national, or cultural group's outlook. Multiculturalism is a view that encourages recognition of equality for all cultural and national groups and promotes the idea that various cultural groups have the right to follow their own unique paths of development and have their own unique activities, values, and norms.

## Key Terms

**Access to Resources** The indicator of availability of material resources to a population.

**Activity** A process of the individual's goal-directed interaction with the environment.

**Availability of Resources** A measure indicating the presence of and access to resources essential for the individual's well-being.

**Collectivism** Behavior based on concerns for other people, traditions, and values they share together.

**Cross-Cultural Psychology** The critical and comparative study of cultural effects on human psychology.

**Cultural Psychology** The study that seeks to discover systematic relationships between culture and psychological variables.

**Culture** A set of attitudes, behaviors, and symbols shared by a group of people and usually communicated from one generation to the next.

**Ecological Context** The natural setting in which human organisms and the environment interact.

**Ethnicity** A cultural heritage shared by a category of people who also share a common ancestral origin, language, and religion.

**Ethnocentrism** The view that supports judgment about other ethnic, national, and cultural groups and events from the observer's own ethnic, national, or cultural group's outlook.

**Ideological (Value-Based) Knowledge** A stable set of beliefs about the world, the nature of good and evil, right and wrong, and the purpose of human life—all based on a certain organizing principal or central idea.

**Individualism** Complex behavior based on concern for oneself and one's immediate family or primary group as opposed to concern for other groups to which one belongs.

**Legal Knowledge** A type of knowledge encapsulated in the law and detailed in official rules and principles related to psychological functioning of individuals.

**Multiculturalism** The view that encourages recognition of equality for all cultural and national groups and promotes the idea that various cultural groups have the right to follow their own paths of development.

**Nation** A large group of people who constitute a legitimate, independent state and share a common geographic origin, history, and, frequently, language.

**Nontraditional Culture** The term used to describe cultures based largely on modern beliefs, rules, symbols, and principles, relatively open to other cultures, absorbing and dynamic, science-based and technology-driven, and relatively tolerant to social innovations.

**Popular (or Folk) Knowledge** Everyday assumptions ranging from commonly held beliefs to individual opinions about psychological phenomena.

**Power Distance** The extent to which the members of a society accept that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally.

**Race** A large group of people distinguished by certain similar and genetically transmitted physical characteristics.

**Religious Affiliation** A term indicating an individual's acceptance of knowledge, beliefs, and practices related to a particular faith.

**Scientific Knowledge** A type of knowledge accumulated as a result of scientific research on a wide range of psychological phenomena.

**Sociopolitical Context** The setting in which people participate in both global and local decisions; it includes various ideological issues, political structures, and presence or absence of political and social freedoms.

**Traditional Culture** The term used to describe cultures based largely on beliefs, rules, symbols, and principles established predominantly in the past, confined in local or regional boundaries, restricting and mostly intolerant to social innovations.

**Uncertainty Avoidance** The degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.

**Uncertainty Orientation** Common ways in which people handle uncertainty in their daily situations and lives in general.