Journal Entries

Deshonna

Institution

# Chapter 1

## Question 1

Social problems and issues can be easily understood with the help of a holistic approach. Relationship between economic and political system is a good example of understanding social problems and issues.

## Question 2

Human groups are often recognized by following differing characteristics; biology, economical differences, traits, genetic, population, and race. Human groupings and their variations are linked to environmental factors. Environmental factors include mountainous land, flat land, dry and hot place, and many more. Environmental factors have a great impact on the characteristics of human groups.

## Question 3

Social problems of capitalism, economics, and sexism in different cultures can help when studying cultural practices in the United States. Cultural practices in United States are rooted in other cultures as people from different parts of the world came to United States to follow their American Dream. Cross-cultural perspective can be very helping in understanding the cultural practices of United States.

# Chapter 2

## Question 4

Some of the common attributes of American culture are social, political, relationships, religious beliefs, and history. These attributes are European based; this is because most European families had come to America to follow their American dream. These European families have helped in developing American culture. European influence is also reflected in expected traits of American cultural attributes.

## Question 5

In direct cultural norms and values are more effective on cultural attributes. The cultural norms and values are accepted by groups of people in the United States due to indirect influence. People have tendencies to accept cultural value without directly getting involved in cultural activities. Social norms and value are most important out of all others and have great impact in developing cultural background.

## Question 6

Cultural relativism which is weak in nature is more acceptable. People use culture as secondary sources to support their point or rights. A person’s practices, values, and beliefs are based on his culture. The criteria for judging a person should be set on the basis of his cultural background.

## Question 7

Every culture is spreading and has vastly reached due to globalization of the world. Even is this vast reach, world is homogenizing or adopting a monoculture. Homogenizing reduces the influence of ideas, customs, acceptance, and values. People are more tend to lean towards their own customs and values.

# Chapter 4

## Question 8

There can be a large gap in post-partum sex taboos due to low protein in the diet. For a child, primary source of protein in mother’s milk. The gap in post-partum sex taboos reduces with high protein diet. The short duration of post-partum sex occurs as a result of high protein diet.

## Question 9

The ethnographic approach focuses on the interaction of people with different cultural backgrounds. In Ethnographic approach, qualitative methods are used to understand the interactions and social practices. Research which is based on ethnographic approach has direct interaction with the cultures on the environment. An ethnographic approach is most effective due its way of getting information and presenting result.

# Chapter 6

## Question 10

Foraging is the most striking feature of Kung people of Kalahari. There has been face-to-face interaction between the people which is not found in Western lifestyle. These features lessen the differences between the wealth and status of the people of Kung.

## Question 11

The main difference between the foraging way of life and the modern lifestyle is the importance of healthcare. Modern health care complications require modern approach. Foraging a proper diet is not effective when practiced alone. In foraging way of life, people develop certain set of skills which are essential for their survival. In modern way of life, each problem is dealt by a person who has expertise in the field.

## Question 12

Jared Diamond has termed agriculture as the worst mistake because of its effect on health. According to Jared Diamond, there are many vulnerabilities in doing irrigation. Agriculture increases the risk of spreading chronic decease in the population. Larger the population, more farming will be needed and greater will be the risk spreading chronic diseases (Diamond, 1999). Political involvement and its influence on agriculture results in the division of classes and wealth.

## Question 13

Slash and burn techniques are used by people of Mekranoti for clearing land for farming. High-temperature results in increasing the number of microorganisms that are responsible for the burning and decomposition of the trees. Burned and decomposed trees are later formed into minerals. In subsistence strategy, people of Mekranoti burn the trees in rainy season to make their soil rich for agricultural purposes.

## Question 14

In mountainous areas, the terracing method is used for effective farming for reducing surface runoff and destruction. Terracing provides a microclimate for crops that requires specific environment. For example, a farmer can grow rice in a mountainous area by using method of terracing to provide excess water to the crop. Terracing is done by building same farming fields, clay canals, and drainage.

# Chapter 7

## Question 15

1862 Act of Homestead favors privatization of land against collective control on the land. This act reduces the usage of land for corruption and political gain. A farmer who owns a part of land was not able to expand its land which eventually results in slavery. The privatization of agricultural land reduces slavery and gave farmers a right to vote.

## Question 16

Discussion on page 156 is focused on the effect of good investment on the communal land. Investment can be made good by the careful utilization of resources. Some landowners are able to take advantage of resources after selling their land.

## Question 17

In most social situations, gifts are exchanged on the basis of their value. Most common of social situation in which gift-giving is generalized by balanced reciprocity are housewarming, birthdays, and weddings (Cronk, 1988). A person who is receiving gift has to return a gift of approximate same value in a similar social situation.

## Question 18

People of Miskito mostly relied on fishing as a source of their food. Miskito people have greatly consumed turtles and the region became known for its turtle consumption. Turtle meat is consumed as a food source and its shell is also used by the Miskito (Nietschmann, 1974). Turtle farming becomes a profitable business and many conflicts in the turtle industries result in destroying primary food source and the culture of the people of Miskito.

# References

Cronk, L. (1988). Strings attached. *On Human Nature*.

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