

Course Name (Course Number):

Introduction to Sociology (SOC 210)

This course includes the scientific study of human society, culture, and social interactions. Topics include socialization, research methods, diversity and inequality, cooperation and conflict, social change, social institutions, and organizations. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of sociological concepts as they apply to the interplay among individuals, groups, and societies. This course has been approved to satisfy the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement general education core requirement in social/behavioral sciences. **(3 credit hours, 3 contact hours)**

No prerequisites, no co-requisites, no entry test requirements. The ability to comprehend college-level reading and express through written assignments is imperative for success in the course.

Activity and Author Name:

Examining Cultural and Institutional Linkages in Nigeria, created by Rachel L. Austin, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (correspondence: rachellaustin21@abtech.edu)

Activity Description:

Cultural universals are best described as concepts, social constructs, or patterns of behavior that are common to ALL human cultures; meaning every society in existence exhibits some form of the universal. Some examples of other cultural universals include: gift-giving, marriage, bodily adornment, incest taboo, and rules of hygiene. That said, how a cultural universal is expressed varies widely according to the given society. For instance, some form of bodily adornment is exhibited in every culture and society, but how this is accomplished varies widely. Some societies adorn their bodies with tattoos and body piercings; others adorn their body with scarification or elaborate costume. Social institutions can be described as large-scale patterned behaviors or ideas of a society that heavily structure and influence the everyday lives of individuals in the given culture. Some commonly cited social institutions are: Family, Religion, Government, Education, and the Mass Media. "Religion" is also a cultural universal, as are many aspects of it, such as funeral rites. This activity will expose students to how the cultural universal and social institution of RELIGION and is exhibited in NIGERIA. Specifically, the cultural universals that will be examined are funerals& end-of-life rituals/rites.

Objectives:

This activity is constructed to help students demonstrate understanding of key sociological terms and concepts; specifically, how cultural universals related to the social institution of religion are exhibited in a particular country.

The larger goals of these modules are to help students develop a sociological perspective and knowledge pertaining to....

- a. The world that exists outside of America
- b. The examination of social phenomena from another's perspective
- c. How cultures appear very different, but in many ways, are quite similar
- d. The social patterns that exist within various cultures
- e. How the everyday, lived experiences and larger culture of a society are patterned and influenced by the social structure and constraints within that given society.

Global Learning Outcome(s):

Global Learning Outcome 2 is specifically addressed in *this* activity. Other outcomes are achieved through related activities that can be used in successive order, as standalone activities, or as a cumulative project.

Global Learning Outcome 1:

Students will identify the demographic profile of a particular country, including standing on various measures of human development.

- a. *Level of learning:* IDENTIFICATION/KNOWLEDGE
- b. *Recommended prerequisite knowledge/Assign this activity AFTER having taught:* METHODS

Global Learning Outcome 2:

Students will examine how specific cultural universals related to the social institutions of family, religion, and the criminal justice system are conceptualized and expressed in a particular country.

- a. *Level of learning:* IDENTIFICATION/KNOWLEDGE
- b. *Recommended prerequisite knowledge/Assign this activity AFTER having taught:* CULTURE

Global Learning Outcome 3:

Students will interpret the norms that are reinforced by specific cultural universals related to the social institutions of family, religion, and the criminal justice system.

- a. *Level of learning:* INTERPRETATION
- b. *Recommended prerequisite knowledge/Assign this activity AFTER having taught:* CULTURE

Global Learning Outcome 4:

Students will justify how variations in the expression of cultural universals are influenced by the larger social structure.

- a. *Level of learning:* EVALUATION/JUSTIFICATION/ANALYSIS
- b. *Recommended prerequisite knowledge/Assign this activity AFTER having taught:* All previously mentioned prerequisites AND social INSTITUTIONS.

Time:

50-60 minutes, but expandable

Materials:

1. Internet access (preferably computer-based but may be able to access some resources using mobile device).
2. Assignment worksheet (attached as APPENDIX A).
3. Resource material on web (information provided below)

Procedure:

1. Student will research various practices, rituals, and norms related to end-of-life/funerals in Nigeria through a variety of resources.
2. Students will compile & describe these data using a developed “profile” worksheet (attached as APPENDIX A).
3. The complete “profile” can be used as a stand-alone assignment or later used as part of a larger project examining cultural universals and norms related to various social institutions as seen across the world.

Resources:

1. Owen-Davies, J. (1991, April 21). Superstition keeps death business alive: Nigeria: burial traditions can be costly in the heavily Christian south of the country, where dying is sometimes seen as a cause for celebration. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1991-04-21/news/mn-849_1_burial-traditions
2. Nwaubani Lagos, A. T. (2013, May 23). Igbo burials: How Nigeria will bid farewell to Achebe - BBC News. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22610497>
3. BBC World News: Africa. (2016, February 11). Nigeria country profile - BBC News. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13949550>
4. Nwogu, M., Ubani, M., Ogbonnaya, O., & Obeta, O. (2014, December 20). Elaborate Nature Of Funerals In Igboland | Nigerian News from Leadership News. Retrieved from <http://leadership.ng/features/396437/elaborate-nature-funerals-igboland>
5. Nwoye, C. M. A. (2011). Igbo cultural and religious worldview: An insider's perspective. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 3(9), 304-317. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1660789098?accountid=8387>
6. Daniel, J. S. (2004). Burials and belonging in Nigeria: Rural-urban relations and social inequality in a contemporary African ritual. *American Anthropologist*, 106(3), 569-579. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/198121994?accountid=8387>
7. Open-source *Dictionary of Sociology* to be used for any terms included in this assignment that are not understood:

Bell, K. (n.d.). Open Education Sociology Dictionary: Free online sociology dictionary. Retrieved from <http://sociologydictionary.org/>

Assessment:

See APPENDIX B for answer key/possible answers for the *Funeral Rites/End-of-Life Profile*.

APPENDIX A

FUNERAL RITES/END-OF-LIFE PROFILE

Student(s):

Country
profiled:

Date:

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- This assignment will help you research and compile various aspects of funeral rites in Nigerian culture.
 - Complete the profile for this assignment using the information found at the following web addresses. You don't need to use ALL of the resources, but you should aim to use several or look for patterns across resources to help inform your answers:
 1. http://articles.latimes.com/1991-04-21/news/mn-849_1_burial-traditions
 2. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22610497>
 3. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13949550>
 4. <http://leadership.ng/features/396437/elaborate-nature-funerals-igboland>
 5. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1660789098?accountid=8387>
 6. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/198121994?accountid=8387>
 - Some of these resources are media reports of funerals held for public figures, but the reports also contain a wealth of information pertaining to funeral rites and end-of-life practices in Nigeria in general. You will need to review and these resources and look for information pertaining to the culture-at-large to complete this worksheet.

BELIEFS

How do end-of-life rituals relate to religion in this culture?

Resource used to locate information:

How is death conceptualized in this culture?

Resource used to locate information:

How is the "spirit" conceptualized in this culture?

Resource used to locate information:

NORMS

Who is typically involved in end-of-life rituals? (Family, friends, religious leaders, etc.)

Resource used to locate information:

What is involved in a typical “funeral”? (Ceremony type, length, general format, who attends, etc)

Resource used to locate information:

How do funerals vary depending on who dies?

Resource used to locate information:

PRACTICES

What practices or procedures are commonly followed at the end-of life?

Resource used to locate information:

What resources or support are commonly used by Nigerians to cope with a death or news of impending death? (Social support and access to agency/community resources)

Resource used to locate information:

What are the commonly used methods of body disposal? (Incineration, burial, etc)

Resource used to locate information:

RITUALS

What rituals are involved in preparing/carrying out a funeral?

Resource used to locate information:

Where are end-of-life rituals/funerals held? (Churches, homes, outdoors, etc.)

Resource used to locate information:

APPENDIX B

FUNERAL RITES/END-OF-LIFE PROFILE- ANSWER KEY

Student(s):

Country
profiled:

Date:

-
- This assignment will help you research and compile various aspects of funeral rites in Nigerian culture.
 - **Complete the profile** for this assignment using the information found at the following web addresses. You don't need to use ALL of the resources, but you should aim to use several or look for patterns across resources to help inform your answers:
 1. http://articles.latimes.com/1991-04-21/news/mn-849_1_burial-traditions
 2. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22610497>
 3. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13949550>
 4. <http://leadership.ng/features/396437/elaborate-nature-funerals-igboland>
 5. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1660789098?accountid=8387>
 6. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/198121994?accountid=8387>
 - Some of these resources are media reports of funerals held for public figures, but the reports also contain a wealth of information pertaining to funeral rites and end-of-life practices in Nigeria in general. You will need to review and these resources and look for information pertaining to the culture-at-large to complete this worksheet.

Answers will vary depending on specific requirements of the instructor (level of detail, number of sources to use, and amount of time given), but here are some examples of how answers found in Source 1 and 2 might look (answers bolded):

THEOLOGICAL BELIEFS

How do end-of-life rituals relate to religion in this culture?

In Northern areas there is more of a Muslim population and funerals are simple, not costly, no casket, body is wrapped in a shroud.

In Southern areas where only 15% Muslim, funeral costs are high and rites are elaborate.

Catholic and Anglican churches impose time limits on when a funeral will be held for someone deceased

Christians less likely to engage in traditional funeral rites

Sometimes church-goers blend traditional funeral rites with Christian rituals and traditions (such as Christian prayer)

Resource used to locate information:

Source # 1

Source # 2

Source # 2

<p>How is death conceptualized in this culture?</p> <p>Death seen as celebration/achievement</p> <p>According to Igbo culture, death is considered a transition to a “new world”</p>	<p><i>Resource used to locate information:</i></p> <p><i>Source # 1</i></p> <p><i>Source # 2</i></p>
<p>How is the “spirit” conceptualized in this culture?</p> <p>Spirit seen as rewarding family for the more they spend on funerals</p>	<p><i>Resource used to locate information:</i></p> <p><i>Source # 1</i></p>

NORMS

<p>Who is typically involved in end-of-life rituals? (Family, friends, religious leaders, etc.)</p> <p>Funerals are seen as a celebration</p> <p>Slaughtered Cows</p> <p>Cabarets</p> <p>“Parties”</p>	<p><i>Resource used to locate information:</i></p> <p><i>Source # 1</i></p>
<p>What is involved in a typical “funeral”? (Ceremony type, length, general format, who attends, etc)</p> <p>Expensive</p> <p>Ornate caskets</p> <p>Parade procession/dancing on the way to the burial</p> <p>Guests travel from afar and are entertained in a field- different tents for different people attending (based on how they knew the deceased)</p> <p>Funeral often delayed several months, sometimes two funerals in two different locations and can last days or weeks.</p>	<p><i>Resource used to locate information:</i></p> <p><i>Source # 1</i></p> <p><i>Source # 2</i></p> <p><i>Source # 2</i></p>
<p>How do funerals vary depending on who dies?</p> <p>Prestige of death if over 60</p> <p>"If he was nothing while he was alive, this is a last chance to give him something. Even if he was the worst devil, he now becomes a sacred being."</p>	<p><i>Resource used to locate information:</i></p> <p><i>Source # 1</i></p> <p><i>Source # 1</i></p>

PRACTICES

<p>What practices or procedures are commonly followed at the end-of life?</p> <p>“Informing the deceased's mother's family should be a special event. The first group to be informed is the deceased's immediate family. Afterwards, the extended family is told. Then the entire community is summoned to an "ikpo oku". The news is broken while presenting them with alcohol and livestock. Only after the "ikpo oku" are public displays of mourning permitted to commence.”</p> <p>“As part of the official mourning activities for my grandfather, his five wives gathered in his back yard daily - weeping, wailing and flaying their bodies on the floor - from 05:00 to 06:00.This continued until the day he was buried, when the women's heads were shaved clean.The final group to be informed is the deceased's mother's family. They are then given a date to visit the immediate family and learn exactly how the death occurred. Lavish entertainment is provided at the occasion. The number of yams, goats and cows the mother's family demands to take home with them is dependent on the deceased's status in his community. This elaborate procedure for passing on the news of death helps prevent murder; it ensures that no-one leaves this world without the exact circumstances being ascertained.”</p> <p>Those who do not give traditional funeral to deceased family members will not be eligible for certain titles or positions of status in the community.</p>	<p>Resource used to locate information:</p> <p>Source # 2</p> <p>Source # 2</p> <p>Source # 2</p>
<p>What resources or support are commonly used by Nigerians to cope with a death or news of impending death? (Social support and access to agency/community resources)</p> <p>Loans often taken for funeral expenses.</p> <p>Often special (lower) rates for the poor or those dead under a certain age (15 years)</p> <p>Men often save and buy their own coffin prior to death so as not to burden family.</p> <p>10% monthly tithe to (Christian) church is typical, in part to pay towards funeral costs</p>	<p>Resource used to locate information:</p> <p>Source # 1</p>
<p>What are the commonly used methods of body disposal? (Incineration, burial, etc)</p> <p>Burial in the home of the family.</p>	<p>Resource used to locate information:</p> <p>Source # 2</p>

RITUALS

<p>Where are end-of-life rituals/funerals held? (Churches, homes, outdoors, etc.)</p> <p>In Igbo culture, men must be buried in ancestral village, women in husband's ancestral village</p> <p>Churches, then process to burial site (parade-style, following the hearse by walking with the hearse in the street)</p>	<p>Resource used to locate information:</p> <p>Source # 2</p>
<p>What rituals are involved in preparing/carrying out a funeral?</p> <p>If celebration upon death does not occur, spirit doesn't take "proper" place with ancestors</p> <p>Towering masked clown structure erected for special deaths or high-status</p>	<p>Resource used to locate information:</p> <p>Source # 2</p> <p>Source # 2</p>

people

Each group of in-laws brings their own dance troupe to entertain

Each age group takes a tour of the village as part of funeral activities, and ends with a night-time celebration

"ino uno akwa" rite, when my grandfather's favourite meals were prepared and set before her from dawn to dusk. By consuming the meals, in silence, she was believed to have been ensuring that her father would never lack a steady food supply in the new world."

Source # 2

Source # 2

Source # 2

Source # 2