

Culture as a Foundational Dimension of Education: An Analytical Study of Culture-Based Education (CBE)

Abir Mondal
Research Scholar
Department of Education (CIE), University of Delhi

ORCID

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9580-472X>

e-mail- abir1294@gmail.com

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Abstract-

The word culture is now understood as the sum total of integrated learned behavior patterns and customs transmitted through social learning in human societies. The relationship between Culture and Education is complex and intense. Culture paves the way for education, while education acts as the reproductive organ of culture by performing the crucial functions of preservation, transmission, and promotion/modification of the cultural heritage. Culture also profoundly influences all elements of the education system, including its aims, curriculum structure, teaching methods (like Socialized Methods), and the concept of discipline. Conversely, education is vital in shaping personality and eliminating the cultural lag—the difference between fast-paced material culture and lagging non-material culture. Ultimately, the educational system must transmit culture while simultaneously preparing young minds for adjustment to necessary changes.

Main Discussion

1. Introduction

Originally, the word ‘culture’ means “*the cultivation of the soul or mind*” (Sharma & Kulshreshtha 69). It also signifies man’s moral, spiritual and intellectual achievement. Culture is the stock, in trade of group. It is a medium through which individual develops and matures. The word ‘culture’ was first appeared in Europe to connote a process of cultivation and improvement, in agriculture (Sharma & Kulshreshtha 70). A very important component of Social Change is Culture and Education. The relationship between Culture and Education is very complex and intense. Analyzing this, Giorgetti et al. described their relationship “as a ‘chicken or the egg’ character” (1). So we

can say Culture and education are inseparable and yet complementary with multiple points of interaction. Culture paves the way for education while education is responsible for flavouring the cultural values in life. Therefore, both have to be interwoven in various ways. A sense of pride in our culture has to manifest itself through all the stages of an individual's growth.

Now the question arises that what is Culture? Culture can be described in various aspects. In simple word, Culture is the center of society. If we try to understand intensely we can say Culture is a fundamental concept in anthropology and sociology, encircling the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human societies. That means we can say the culture can be acquired through social learning i.e. social interactions and seniors' teachings about their culture. In anthropological context Culture is used in different senses, but in general it is used to indicate social behavior, customs, beliefs, norms and intellectual dominance. Culture is a combined term for socially transmitted behavior patterns. According to E.A. Hoebel, "Culture is the sum total of integrated learned behaviour patterns which are characteristics of the members of a society and which are therefore not the result of biological inheritance" (as cited in Shah 3). So in remarks we can mention Culture as customs, ideas, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

But why Culture is basic component Education? Let's discuss about that. Primary education is where it all starts and the child begins to respect the importance of a value based life as he and he sees things and events happening, and the behaviour of others, around. Culture is the main aspect of any society that teaches him to live with a mutual corporation with each other. Culture is the social behaviour of any society which has its own trends and values (Kia & Sitepu 121). Hopefully, I am able to give a general basic idea of Culture as a component of Education. But in this paper we will try to understand in-depth explanation of Culture as a basic component of Education.

2. Characteristics of Culture

Culture can be emphasized on various aspects which are as follows—

2.1.Culture is Social: Culture is a product of society which doesn't exist incoherently. It develops through social interaction. No person can acquire culture without association with others. Human becomes a human only among humans.

2.2.Culture is Continuous and Cumulative: Culture is a continuous process. In its historical growth it tends to become cumulative. Sociologist Linton called culture "the social heritage of man" (as cited in Sharma & Kulshreshtha 70). It becomes difficult for us to imagine, what society would be without culture.

2.3.Culture is Transmissive: Culture is transmissive because it is transmitted from one generation to another. Language is the mode of transmission of culture. Language in different forms makes it possible for the present generation to understand the achievement of earlier generation. Transmission of culture may take place by imitation as well as by instruction.

2.4.Culture is Dynamic: No culture ever remains constant, it keeps on changing. It is subject to slow, but constant change. It keeps on changing is responsive to the changing conditions of the physical world. That's why culture is dynamic.

2.5. Culture is Learnt: Culture is not inborn, it is acquired. Culture is often called learned ways of behavior. Unlearned behavior is not culture. But, handshakes, saying thanks or Hi/Hello and dressing sense, etc, are all cultural behavior.

2.6. Culture is Shared: Culture is not something that an individual alone can possess. Culture in sociological sense is shared. e.g., customs, traditions, beliefs, ideas and morale, etc, are all shared by people of a group or society.

2.7. Culture Varies from Society to Society: Every society has its own culture. It differs from society to society. It is unique. There elements like customs, traditions, morale, values and beliefs are not uniform everywhere. It varies from time to time as well.

3. Functions of Culture

The functions of Culture can be emphasized in different domains. Likewise,

3.1. Adaptation to the social environment: Culture establishes the patterns of social control, through which the individual is subjected to remain attached to that group. Culture includes customs, traditions, beliefs and all of these help an individual to adapt to his social environment. It must be conceived that all these elements undergo steady changes as there is change in social environment. The advantage in communicating the culture of the group to the child by the means of education is that he or she is thereby familiar with the traditions, customs, values and patterns of conduct existing in his group. Therefore this information enables him to adapt to social environment and thus achieve his socialization.

3.2. Adaptation to the natural environment: All over the world human beings live in a specific natural environment to which they adapt themselves because without this adaptation he cannot survive as an individual. The differences in natural environment of different communities pave the way for differences in their cultures. It is this mode of behavior that makes up culture.

3.3. Development of personality: Culture influences the physical, mental, moral, social, aesthetic and emotional aspects of individual. The personality of the individual is perceptible through his pattern of behavior. The behaviour of the individual is greatly influenced by the culture.

3.4. School as a Community: School is a social institution that has been established by the society for the function of conveying those ideas, beliefs, attitudes and dispositions that will make them valuable members of the society. The school is to be thought not as a place where conventional knowledge is transmitted as authoritative but as a place where experiments in life are carried on.

4. Culture and Education

An education system is the reproductive organ of every culture. Education includes both formal Education and informal transmission of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Individual members of a society grow old and die, while new members are born and grow old who accustomed their Culture. Thus a Culture is passed from generation to generation of a society. Yet a society's culture is a living entity which transcends all the society's individual members. A culture changes over time, but has a recognizable continuity of basic values that distinguishes it from other cultures. That continuity is provided by the educational system (Shah 141). For example if we look at Indian Culture in twenty first

century we can understand how it gradually evolves from the past over time but maintaining the raw essence of Indian values. But it's have an impact on education system in India.

In today's context, the rapidly changing life is full of busyness and competition in society. So it affects our societal values as well. We can analyze it on the educational perspective. In the field of holistic education, many students have to play the role of mature adults despite their incomplete experience; hoping to succeed in the competition. With a little failure, they become frustrated, avoid social life, or engage in antisocial behavior. Some of them became isolated from the mainstream of the society due to the embodied problems in the society. Although their numbers are negligible, they are an integral part of society (Pal 203).

If an educational system is altered, its transmission of culture will be distorted. The deliberate alteration of an educational system can be a very effective way to change a culture. Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. In technical sense education is the process by which society through school, colleges, universities and other institutions deliberately transmit its culture heritage, accumulated knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another. Education is act an instrument of cultural change as well social change. Curriculum writers and school administrators can have conferences, publish papers, and make decisions to change the curriculum, the teaching methods, or the administrative structures in order to guide the acquisition of student knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding culture, values into social change. That's why UNESCO said in General Conference at its 36th session in November, 2011,

"The process [Education] by which societies deliberately transmit their accumulated information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies and behaviours across generations. It involves communication designed to bring about learning" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 5).

Nevertheless, in a changing society, institutional education and conventional culture have in many cases enhanced the value of public life. For example, over the past decade, statistics show that (Pal 204):

- Literacy rates have increased and adult education has expanded;
- Increased political awareness of students in the educational environment;
- The right of students to study and practice any subject, regardless of social class;
- The level of government grants for the expansion of sports and leisure facilities for students has increased irrespective of the educational institution; and
- Thematic projects have been undertaken for the purpose of spreading health awareness among the students.

The 'influence of the age' has undoubtedly manifested itself in the behavior of the students, which is surprising somewhere in the field especially again (in the assessment of the previous generation) is reprehensible somewhere. All these collectively form the personality that develops in the process. Therefore, it is necessary to inculcate the importance of education and value-based living for a truly sustainable development of the rural sector. The maxims of *Gandhiji, Swamiji, Tagore, Arabindo, Vinoba Bhave* and many other social reformers, bordering one equitable living, rural empowerment, voluntary rural

reconstruction and transformation, and sustained rural development, have to be made as the central themes of the education system. Education founded on strong cultural values will help students understand and acknowledge the significance of culture and social change in the development context (Kia & Sitepu 124).

In the second decade of the twentieth century, the etiquette of British Indian society had a special influence on the environment of educational institutions, the behavior of teachers and the modernization of students. There is a difference between the norms of the present democratic social life and the industrialized and technologically based cultural practices with the social system and cultural practices of riverine agrarian India. Considering the importance of the subject, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* and *Dr. K. L. Shrimali*, the first two education ministers of independent India, took initiative to preserve the essence of Indian culture through basic teaching methods. The initiative gradually lost support for the plans of their successors. As a result, there is a lack of coherence in the thinking of students in the national education projects, especially at the ‘primary education’ level, in regional and national cultures, and the uninterrupted continuity of social thought and cultural adherence is disrupted from generation to generation. In addition, mixed social and cultural influences have dominated the lives of students at the secondary and higher secondary levels. Thus, it is important to pay close attention to the issue from the stage of socialization. In the classroom environment, gatherings and interactions of different family socialites and cultures take place in each classroom. The government of West Bengal has recently adopted a plan (under the auspices of UNICEF) to introduce students to the national culture in pre-secondary education (Pal 204).

5. Culture Based Education (CBE)

The basis of educational system of a society is its need and they are fulfilled by education. Culture has its impact on education. Culture Based Education (CBE) positively impacts students socio-emotional well being e.g., identity, self-efficacy, social relationship, etc. It also affects cultural affiliation, civic engagement and school motivation. Culture Based Education is also more likely to put cultural skills to use in their communities and report higher levels of trusting relationship with teacher and staff, underscoring a deeper sense of belonging at school. The strength of these connections is critical for producing engaged and successful learners, as they prepare for the future. The ultimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact that one of the major aims of education is to educate the child about his cultural heritage. In any human group, the various elements and parts of culture evolve after a thousand years of experience and these are handed down as a whole to the succeeding generations. Hence, every individual is born into a particular culture, which provides him definite pattern of behavior and values, which guides his conduct in different walks of life. Culture plays an important role in man's life in the adaptation to the natural environment, in the adaptation to the social environment and in the development of personality and socialization. Education as a part of culture has the twin functions of conservation and modification or renewal of the culture. Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. In its technical sense, “education is the process by which society, through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions

deliberately transmit its cultural heritage, its accumulated knowledge, values and skills from one generation to another” (as cited in Sharma & Kulshreshtha 72).

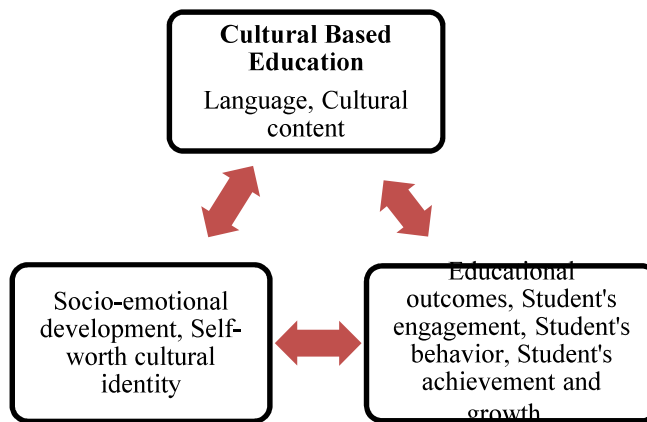


Figure 1: *Relationship between Culture Based Education and Its Outcome*

6. Influences of Education on Culture

How Education impacts on Culture as its basic component? The first and foremost responsibility of Education is to preserve, transmit and promote culture. Now the question arise how Education preserves, transmits and promotes culture? It is an important function of education to help in the preservation of culture or social heritage. Education, through its specialized agencies, tries to inculcate the traditions, customs, morals, values, arts etc. into the tender minds of pupils.

In addition to preservation of culture, it is a task of education to maintain the continuity of culture by handing down the existing cultural experiences, values, traditions, customs etc. from one generation to another through its various programmes and practices. The process of preservation includes the process of transmission as well. Transmission of culture from one generation to another is the best guarantee of its preservation. Without transmission, the nation’s survival may be the toughest task and the progress of mankind can be stifled. Society reels in utter chaos and confusion. The sociologist Ottaway said, “The function of education is to transmit the social values and ideals to the young and capable members of society” (as cited in Sharma & Kulshreshtha 71).

Besides preservation and transmission, another crucial function of education is to modify the existing culture in the light of changes visible in the needs and demands of the society. These changes are heightened owing to cross-cultural variables. Thus, new cultural patterns are formed by replacing and reorienting the old outmoded cultural forms to suit the changing needs of time and man. Therefore, society makes ostensible progress. This part of education is called progressive function of education. As such, education performs by constantly reorganizing and reconstructing human experiences for the promotion and enrichment of culture.

The next is how education influences the Cultural development and its continuity? The function of education is to bring about the needed and desirable changes in the cultural

ideals and values for the progress and continued development of society, without which social progress cannot take place. It is the core of society. Without culture a society is bound to decay and die sooner or later. Education upholds the continuity of culture through its diverse activities and programs.

Education shapes and moulds a person's personality and this personality impacts the culture. An individual's personality goes on developing when he or she continues to forge a web of relationship with other members of society. This form of interaction is made possible by education according to the behavioural patterns or culture of the existing society. Education employs diverse cultural patterns of thinking behaviors and cultural values, so that children are physically, mentally, socially and emotionally developed to maximum extent. Thus, education aims at developing the personality of the child. In simple words, culture is an informal agency of social control which helps in moulding and shaping the behaviour of the individuals in a desirable way.

Education has a role on removing the cultural lag. The concept of cultural lag is attributed to the famous sociologist Ogburn. What is Cultural Lag? When there is a difference between material culture and non-material culture, there emerges this lag concept. Material culture is at a fast pace due to the rapid strides in scientific researches, technology and innovations and people adopt the modern life styles whereas non-material culture consisting of ideals, values and norms lags behind creating a gulf between the two. Therefore, non-material culture lags behind the former. This situation is cultural lag which needs to be eliminated by education through its various programmes and myriad activities. Education is the only means to bridge this cultural lag by its activities and programs of development.

More over we can say that it is an admitted fact that generation after generation modifies the primordial and archaic cultural forms and adds new ones to the best advantage of their. This is possible through educational means and method. Education equips the individual to adjust one to the changing cultural forms and patterns for better and successful living. It is a dire necessity of the civilization that unity of mankind is to be restored. It is to be made possible through education which assists in diffusion of culture in an effective manner. Education should treat human culture as a whole like a full-blossom flower whose different petals represent different groups. Education, further, helps in disseminating the modern cultural values like co-operation, unity, mutual understanding, brotherhood of men, love and appreciation for others etc. to the mankind for its enduring survival.

7. Influences of Culture on Education

As mentioned above, culture and education have give and take relationship. Both are compliment to each other in various aspects. The following are some of the influences of culture on education. The aims and ideals of education are mostly determined by the values and patterns of society. Secondly, Curriculum is structured according to the culture of society. It is framed according to the ideals and needs of the society to realize the cultural values (Sharma & Kulshreshtha 74).

Method of teaching and culture are intimately connected to each other. The changing cultural patterns of a society exert powerful influence upon the method of teaching also. Socialized Method like Project Method, seminar, symposium, discussion, etc. are widely

used in the teaching-learning process because of the influence of culture. And discipline is also influenced by the cultural values. The present cultural patterns of thinking and living are directly linked to our concept of discipline. The concept of repressive discipline of ancient and Middle Ages has been replaced by the modern values of life.

Like this, Textbooks are also written according to the formulated curriculum. Only these books are welcomed which promotes and fosters cultural ideals and values are welcomed. Most importantly, Teacher is crucial element of Education. He/she is one who has imbibed the cultural ideals and values of the society to achieve his mission successfully. Only such a teacher is able to infuse higher ideals and moral values in children. Another important element is School. It is a miniature of society. The total activities and programs of the school are organized according to the cultural ideals and values of the society. Hence, school is the center of promoting, molding, reforming and developing the cultural pattern of the society (Sharma & Kulshreshtha 74).

8. Conclusion

Culture is closely related to education, in which educational system of any society has a clear impact on its culture. In return Education plays an important role in transmission of culture; this is achieved when preservation is done from one generation to another as discussed earlier. Cultures can potentially have a great impact on education as well as social change which is of any character in society. The main function of the educational system is to transmit the cultural heritage to the new generations. But in a changing society, these keep on changing from generation to generation and the educational system in such a society must not only transmit the cultural heritage, but also aid in preparing the young minds for adjustment to any changes in them that may have occurred or are likely to occur in future. The culture can be developed through education. That is bringing the desirable change in both the cultural and values for the progress and development of the society. It provides proper opportunities for the satisfaction of our needs and desires. Our needs both biological and social are fulfilled in the cultural ways. It determines and guides various activities of man. Thus, culture is defined as the process through which human beings satisfy their wants. From the above discussions not only diverse, but also unequal, and is found in different societies throughout the world.

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