

**RESEARCH PAPER****Culture as a Means of Promoting Learning: A Study****Banirupa Pradhan¹, Sanjeet Kumar Tiwari² and Jubraj Khamari¹**¹ Department of Education, Sambalpur University, Odisha² School of Education, MATS University, Raipur, ChhattisgarhCorresponding Author's Email: sanjeetstiwari@gmail.comReceived: 2nd May 2018, Revised: 16th June 2018, Accepted: 22nd June 2018**ABSTRACT**

Learning is a continuous and life long process. In every step of our life we learn. Learning promotes our life style, thinking, and behavioural norms and this learning to a large extent is influenced by culture. Culture is all that man learns as a member of a society such as knowledge, science, art, skill, customs which are welfare oriented and man cultivate these in his living through the process of learning. By learning we enrich our culture and from cultural heritage we learn. Learning is a dynamic process and it changes according to the situation and place. We learn to preserve our culture and transmit it to the new generation in a refined form by taking the learning from previous ones. Culture is nothing but the learning from society which is welfare oriented. Culture is the integration and proper coordination between language and literature, life style, behavioural norms and beliefs, customs and traditions, art, music and dance, sculpture, religion, philosophy, ideas, beliefs, values. By learning our own culture and respecting other culture also, we can enrich and promote our process of learning. When we make our individual culture to world culture then our learning towards culture is successful and this learning is also influenced and promoted by culture.

Key words: Culture, Learning, Society, promote, enrich, influence, welfare, skill, attribute

INTRODUCTION

Culture is a word for the way of life of a group of people i.e. the way they do things. Culture is the expression of our nature in our modes of living and of thinking, in our everyday intercourse in art, literature, in religion, in recreation and enjoyment. The culture of a society is a total way of life of the society. Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience or being taught. It is the process of acquiring of new or modifying, existing knowledge, behaviour, skills, values and preference. By learning we preserve our culture and by culture we enrich and promote our learning. Learning of a society is always influenced by culture. Before discussing about "Culture as a means of promoting learning", at first let's discuss about the meaning and definition of culture, different types of culture, nature and characteristic of culture, meaning and definition of learning and relationship between culture and learning. Because these are necessary concepts by the means of which we will able to know how culture promotes learning.

MEANING AND DEFINITION OF CULTURE

The meaning of culture has been taken in different forms in different disciplines. Etymologically, culture is derived from Latin term "cultura" which means to cultivate. So culture is what a person cultivates in his living through the process of education and environment governed by the society. The equivalent word of culture in Hindi is "Sanskriti" which means tasks done by due prudence. Indian culture is the outcome of "Sanskara" which means attributes.

According to anthropologist all that man learns as a member of a society such as knowledge, science, art, skill and custom etc.

We can classify the objects of the world in two broad classes- natural and manmade. Culture includes all that which are made and developed by man such as pottery, clothes, ornaments, houses, tools, arms, means of communication and transport, lifestyle, eating manners, behavioural norms, language, literature, art, skills, music, dance, religion, philosophy, ideas, beliefs and values. From all the achievements, those achievements which are welfare oriented are considered culture.

CULTURE AS DEFINED

Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of a society.

– E.B. Taylor

The culture of a society is a total way of life of the society.

– A.K.C. Ottaway

Culture is the expression of our nature in our modes of living and of thinking, in our everyday intercourse in art, literature, in religion, in recreation and enjoyment.

–Maclver

Culture is the total life of the people that goes on with these: what does the people in given society do, think, feel, believe, desire or fear?

–Rugg

Like this many other philosopher and sociologist give their helpful opinion about culture.

Thus, after reading all the definitions according to me if we think about human development, it becomes clear that man lived like an animal in ancient times. Gradually he developed his living style and food habits, behaviour and norms, custom, tradition, language and literature, beliefs and values etc. So that different cultures developed in different region of the world. Historians call it human civilisation and sociologists call it human culture. So that culture is a word for the way of life of a group of people. Culture is transmitted to the new generation by learning like genetics passed by heredity. Culture should be welfare oriented and sharing in nature.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CULTURE

According to Ellwood, culture has two aspects i.e. material and non-material.

1. Material Culture:

It includes all types of man-made objects which are developed by man for well-being and comfort such as clothing, ornaments, machine, tools, weapons, system of industry, manners of transport and communication.

2. Non-Material Culture:

It includes spiritual civilization and conceptual achievements such as art, dance, drama, poetry, music, customs, traditions, morality, laws and governance, philosophy, ideas and beliefs.

We can also divide culture in three types i.e. individual, communal and world.

1. Individual Culture:

Individual cultures are oriented around the self, being independent instead of identifying with a group or mentality.

2. Communal Culture:

Communal culture is that by means of which, people lives together, shares common interest, often having common values and beliefs. It is the culture of a society.

3. World Culture:

We are all a one world family. The world culture brought together a multitude of cultures from across the globe.

When the individual culture is converted to world culture, our learning towards culture became successful. Example- Ratha Yatra

MEANING AND DEFINITION OF LEARNING

Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience or being taught. It is the process of acquiring of new or modifying, existing knowledge, behaviour, skills, values and preference. Learning is not limited within the four walls of a classroom. We can learn from any source like society, nature, home, daily habits, custom, tradition etc. So, learning is a lifelong continuous process which makes us unique. By learning culture is preserved and transmitted to the new generation in a refined way.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND LEARNING

Culture is the identity of a society. It is the lifestyle, food habits, behavioural norms, art, skill, music, dance, language, literature, religion, idea and beliefs of a society. So it is natural that learning of any society is affected by its culture. From culture we learn brotherhood, fellow feeling, cleanliness, co-

operation, obligation, accountability, professionalism, gender equality etc. These learning are in some extent influenced by culture. When we make our individual culture to world culture, our learning towards culture became successful. For example, Lord Jagannath and Ratha Yatra. So, culture and learning influence and enrich each other in every aspects of life.

CULTURE PROMOTES LEARNING

Learning and culture promoted by each other and learning and culture are promoted by themselves also. My topic is "Culture is a means of promoting learning." So I will discuss how culture promotes learning. Culture promotes learning in many ways. In fact learning is promoted by culture in day to day life. Below, I have discussed some of them.

1. Culture Promotes Learning on Lifestyle:

By learning how to live and what the purpose of living is and what is the law of universe, our lifestyle become easier and we became a good person as well as a good citizen. For example, The Bhagabat Geeta of Hinduism teaches the victory over evils. It teaches what to do and what not to do, positive and negative impacts on life, ultimate happiness, how to enjoy problems etc. which makes our lifestyle easier and promote our learning as well.

2. Culture Improves the Learning for Brotherhood and Fellow Feeling:

Brotherhood is an association or community of people linked by a common interest, religion or trade. Fellow feeling is the sympathy and fellowship existing between people based on shared experience or feelings. By the means of universal brotherhood we bring together science, art and religion for the purpose of intellectual development as well as spiritual education.

By the means of fellow-feeling we became more tolerant and we learn mutual kindness and mutual respect. Festivals are a part of a culture in which people gather and celebrate together. From here, we learn to improve brotherhood and fellow feeling. For example, India is rich in cultural heritage. Indians observe thirteen festivals in twelve months and from every festival we learn. In most of the festivals like Holi, Christmas day, Youth Day, Eid ul fitr people celebrate and enjoy by gathering together. So, here we learn how to live with each other which develops brotherhood and fellow feeling among people by the means of culture.

3. Culture Develops the Learning about Global Tolerance and Sacrifices

Global tolerance means non-violence and understanding in society. One of the most important tools a child need in his/her social toolbox is tolerance. The world is composed of different people from different backgrounds who speak various languages and follow diverse custom and religion. Any child may be exposed to someone who identifies with a faith that is not the same as his own. So he/she should learn to accept others. So that not only he became morally strong but also in future he will have an economical advantage when he respect others. Culture preserves the learning of global tolerance and sacrifices.

Example: The crucifixion of Jesus teaches the tolerance, scarifies and stand for right and truth. The character Sita in Ramayan promotes learning by showing tolerance and sacrifices to the world.

4. Culture Promotes Learning of Kindness and Obligation:

Everybody can appreciate act of kindness. Kindness is something completely selfless that we do out of love and care. Research says being kind and obliged to others can actually make us genuinely happy in a number of different ways. It activates an area of brain called striatum. Culture enhances the learning of kindness and obligation. For example, Buddhism says "jibe daya" that means kindness to all animals. The main principle of Jainism is non violence. Indian culture says "Atithi Devo Bhaba" that means we should respect our guests like God. From Indian culture we learn respect elders, love for younger's. Hinduism says God is within everyone. So, we should respect everyone. The culture of India shows its obligation to nature also. So, we worship sun, moon, wind, tree, water, fire etc.

4. Culture Raises the Learning about Cleanliness:

Most of us have habits of throwing garbage here and there instead of putting it in a garbage box. The important of cleanliness in our lives can't be denied. Maintaining a clean environment is for the

health of humans, as their health completely depends on the atmosphere. A bad environment is mostly responsible for spoiling the health of the people around. Culture promotes our learning about cleanliness.

For example, Cleanliness can be learnt from Sindhu Civilisation. Also from western culture someone can learn cleanliness in a very well manner.

6. Culture Forwards the Learning of Co-Operation:

We should respect all irrespective of caste, colour and religion and we should co-operate each other in a society by which we can live happily. From culture we learn how to live with cooperation by which we enrich our learning process.

For example, In Dussehra especially Hindu Goddess Durga is worshiped. But we have seen both Hindu and Muslim celebrate and enjoy the festival.

7. Culture Nourishes the Learning of Right Mindfulness, Right Food Habits and Right Dealing with Feelings:

"If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path" is a well said quotation of Buddhism. Where we became more mindful and present in everything we do, say, think, we will eventually enter in a state of ultimate happiness. We should develop a good habit to dealing with our problems and feelings which we learn from our culture.

For example, in the religious book "Tripitaka" of Buddhism have some chapters about right mindfulness, right thoughts, right action, right speech, conquering over ego, fear, how to release feeling of hate, how to nourish the body with right food and how to be in present. In this way culture promotes learning.

8. Culture Encourages the Learning of Creativity, Skill and Beautiness:

Culture promotes learning of skill which is the ability to do something expertise. Having a life skill is essential part of being able to meet the challenge in everyday life. Culture influences creativity which is the use of imagination or original ideas to create something. Creativity is the way of living life that embraces originality and makes something or someone unique. Culture empowers beautiness which is a combination of qualities such as shape, colour and form that pleases the aesthetic senses, especially the sight. Konark temple and Tajmahal are some of the best example of integration of creativity, skill, beautiness and mathematics.

9. Culture Promotes Learning of Accountability:

We must answerable to what we do. However, generally important people are less answerable than commoners. We learn accountability from western culture. Sense of accountability is great in their culture and we must learn this attribute from their culture.

10. Culture Increases Learning of Professionalism:

We should not allow our personal feelings and problems dealing to our professional lives. We should change with time as everything in this world is changing with respect to time. We can learn these from western culture as well.

11. Culture Develops the Learning of Philosophical Creed:

People of different societies adopts different philosophical creed. Idealism, naturalism and pragmatism are different philosophies which are followed by people in different societies. They have developed their culture and philosophical creed by developing their learning process. For example, People support idealism lay emphasis on higher values and ideal life. People support naturalism support a materialistic culture which give importance to material prosperity and enjoyment.

12. Culture Promotes the Learning on Language and Literature and Unity in Society:

Language and literature are the basic of a society. Language spoken and literature studied decide the culture of people. Indian culture says that "language is mother." So we should respect every language. There is a widespread saying in India that in this country language changes in every 10 miles and people changes in the next 10 miles. There are roughly 6500 spoken language in the world. There are 22 major languages in India written in 13 different scripts. In past, classical language Sanskrit was the parameter of the Indian civilisation. If the language and literature used

by the people are not enriched, people remain backward. Language and literature are a part of our culture. Different region hold different culture and different mother tongue by the means of which they are united. The person who is stronger in his mother tongue can learn other language easily and can effectively exchange ideas, thoughts and beliefs

13. Culture Promotes Learning of Faith, Social Practices and Nature:

Religion is a part of culture. Religious beliefs possessed by people determine their culture. Mostly by the means of religious beliefs we learn aim of life, social ambitions, faith, social practices, nature and types of festival and function to be organised etc.

14. Culture Enhances the Learning of Scientific and Technological Factors:

The science is also a part of culture. Gradually we develop our science. By the means of scientific and technological factor we make the world to a small village and make our lifestyle easier. Today business can save money by using technology, at the medical level science and technology helping to treat more sick people, technology help farmers to make more harvest and more profit. Technology developed transport system. So, gradually we are learning these and we promote it to our next generation as our culture because these are welfare oriented and accepted by society.

15. Culture Assists Learning from Past:

We should learn from the past so that we don't repeat the same mistake again. We learn the custom, tradition and beliefs from the past and refined them then transmit it to our next generation. Ancient heritage of a country teaches customs, traditions and beliefs. For example, rich cultural heritage of India have a greater say on present cultural system pattern. Culture preserves our history also. So from different historical events we learn and enrich our knowledge.

For example, from world war, battle of Buxar, battle of Palasi we learn that war is not the ultimate solution. The thing which we can solve by sitting around the table, we should not fight for that. After the war the problems are solved by sitting around the table then why should not we do the same before the war.

16. Culture Promotes Learning of Nature of Society, Income and Occupation of People:

Geographical condition, nature of society, types of residence of people, income and occupation of people etc. determine culture of a country. People living in equatorial region do have a separate physical structure, working condition, dress pattern, occupation, living standard etc. with that of people living in Mediterranean region. By learning it we can understand the society better and enrich our learning.

17. Culture Helps the Learning on Gender Equality:

Both genders should have equal ease of access to resources and opportunities including economic participation and decision-making. The state of evaluating different behaviours, aspirations and needs should be equal regardless of gender.

Gender equality can be learnt nicely from western culture. From Vedic culture equality of gender can be learnt.

18. Culture Promotes Learning on Women Empowerment:

Women empowerment is the process in which women elaborate and recreate the things that they can be do and accomplish in a circumstance that they previously denied. The country which gives more respect to women is more developed. For example, in England Queen rules the nation and is more respected. So, England is considered as a developed nation. In Indian culture Goddess Durga is worshiped as the mother of the universe and the source of all energies.

19. Culture Supports Learning of Mathematics:

By learning mathematics, we not only solve the problems but also increase our creativity, make our life style easier and enrich our intellect. In "Hanuman Chalisa" of Hinduism there is a line "Yugo Sahasra Yojan Par Bhanu" that means distance of earth from sun is measured at that time. So Hanuman Chalisa is a culture and it develops our intellect by learning.

Zero is invented in India. Tajmahal is symmetric in nature and Konark temple is based on some mathematical measurements. So, culture enriches our learning by some beautiful mathematics.

20. Culture Encourages Learning of Science and Health:

Science is the means of which we understand the world in a better way and we can learn the truth. Health is a major part of our lifestyle. If we have a healthy body and healthy mind, we can do our work efficiently. Culture promotes learning of science and health. Ayurveda of India has a wider impact all over the world. Charaka and Sushruta is the first physician to present the concept of digestion, metabolism and immunity. Charaka is known for authoring the medical treatise, Charaka Samhita. Sushruta is known as the father of surgery. Sushruta Samhita is an ancient Sanskrit text on medicine and surgery. So, culture enriches our learning by its rich cultural heritage.

21. Culture Contributes for Learning of Peace:

Peace is the gateway to happiness. So Mother Teresa said "Peace begins with a smile." In today's global situation the issue of living together in peace and harmony is a challenge for all including education sector. Peace learning aims to develop social cohesion, justice, tolerance etc. We learn peace education from our cultures like statue of liberty.

22. Culture Helps Learning about Education:

Learning is the basic instinct possessed by all individuals and on other hand education is acquired by individuals. Learning is a broad concept and education is a subset of it. From any source what we learn is learning. What we teach to the child according to the need of society is education. By the means of education we will able to know the difference between right and wrong and make our learning meaningful. Culture promotes the aim of education, curriculum of education, teaching methods, discipline, teacher, student and school.

22. Culture Promotes Learning of Socio-economical Development:

When we will develop socially and economically, our individual culture became world culture and our learning towards culture become successful. So, by the means of culture we enhance our learning about society and economy.

For example, we know cloth is one of our culture. So, a man who makes Sambalpuri saree develops his skill and creativity. At the same time he provides job to people. So that he does economical development also. People from all over the world appreciate the saree and accept this culture. So here the individual culture became the world culture and our learning became successful. So, these are some points by which we will be able to know how culture promotes education.

IS CULTURE PROMOTES LEARNING IN A NEGATIVE WAY?

Let me answer this question with some examples. There was "Sati daha pratha" in ancient age in which the widow of the person was force to die in the funeral of her husband even though she is neither interested nor guilty. This tradition is against the basic principle of humanism and humanity violating the right of human being. So, this tradition is eliminated from society. Thus, it is not culture but blind belief. Believing the things or talks without knowing its truthfulness and its impact on society is blind belief. One thing we should remember that culture is always welfare oriented. Before some years widows were not involved in social main stream, they were restricted in many aspects like clothing, food habits, attaining functions etc. It is also against the basic principle of humanism. Widow remarriage act developed by Raja Ram Mohan Ray and gradually the widows are involved in social main stream. Women are not allowed in Shani Signapore temple. That tradition is refined and now day's women are allowed in that temple. Generally people don't involve transgender in social main stream. This is not our culture. Our culture says about Srikhandi of Mahabharata who is also involved in the war also. Gradually by some blind beliefs the culture was polluted. So, the culture is refined and in present day's transgender is also involved in social main stream. Like that child marriage, dowry system, animal scarifies are discarded from our culture.

Change is the unchangeable nature of society. So we should accept the things by processing it within our mind. So that we can learn what is good and what is bad. According to the need of the hour and welfare of society we should change our culture and transfer it to the new generation in a refined form. So, according to me culture never promotes society in a negative way but blind believes do.

CULTURE PROMOTES LEARNING IN PRESENT DAY SCHOOLING SYSTEM

We do prayer in school. Prayer is a culture by the means of which students learn spiritualism, dedication and concentration. By the means of National anthem a feeling of patriotism and loyalty towards our nation developed. In school different sports and games are included in curriculum. Sports and games are that culture by which students learn cooperation, unity and refreshment of body and mind. Uniforms teach students equality irrespective of cast, colour and religion. In school there is a relationship between teachers and students by which we can learn respect to elders and love for younger. There is also a relationship between students by which they learn fellow feeling, brotherhood and friendship.

CONCLUSION

Our learning is greatly influenced by culture. By the means of learning our culture is preserved and transmitted to the new generation by taking the learning from previous ones. Learning is a continuous lifelong process and this learning is influenced by culture in every step of life.

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