**EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

Culture is one of the most important concepts in social science. It is commonly used in psychology, political science and economics. Culture is a unique possession of man. It is one of the distinguishing traits of human society. Culture does not exist at the sub-human level. Only man is born and brought up in a cultural environment. Every man is born into society is the same as saying that every man is born into a culture. Culture is a very broad term that includes in itself all walks of life, modes of behaviour, philosophies and ethics, morals, manners, customs and traditions, our religious, political, economic and other types of activities.

**Derivative Meaning of Culture**

The word culture is derived from the Latin word “cultura” which means to till, or to cultivate which means to cultivate or cultivating the mind.

**Definitions:** Culture has been defined in a number of ways by various thinkers. These definitions are briefly given as under:

1. “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society”.

-E.B. Tylor

2. “The culture of a society means the total way of life of a society”. -Ottaway

3. Culture is the total behaviour pattern of the group conditioned in part by the physical environment, both natural and man-made, but primarily by the ideas, attitudes, values and habits which have been developed by the group to meet the needs. -F.J. Brown

From the above definitions, it can be concluded that culture is that which a man has acquired in social life. Culture is the outcome of social interaction. It can be best expressed as social heritage. Thus, we can say that culture is a system of learned behaviour shared by and transmitted among the members of a group. Man begins to learn it since his birth. By picking up the culture and by tapping the heritage of his past, man becomes distinctively human. Man has therefore been called the culture bearing animal.

**Dimensions of Culture**

Sociologists have classified the culture into two components Material and Non-Material.

**Material culture** refers to the physical objects, resources, and spaces that people use to define their culture. These include homes, neighborhoods, cities, schools, churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, offices, factories and plants, tools, means of production, goods and products, stores, and so forth. All of these physical aspects of a culture help to define its members' behaviors and perceptions. For example, technology is a vital aspect of material culture in today's United States. American students must learn to use computers to survive in college and business, in contrast to young adults in the Yanomamo society in the Amazon who must learn to build weapons and hunt.

**Non‐material culture** refers to the nonphysical ideas that people have about their culture, including beliefs, values, rules, norms, morals, language, organizations, and institutions. For instance, the non‐material cultural concept of *religion* consists of a set of ideas and beliefs about God, worship, morals, and ethics. These beliefs, then, determine how the culture responds to its religious topics, issues, and events.

When considering non‐material culture, sociologists refer to several processes that a culture uses to shape its members' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Four of the most important of these are symbols, language, values, and norms.

**Cognitive dimension-** cognition enables humans to think, remember, recognize and imagine. The most important aspect of the cognitive dimension of culture is beliefs-ideas about what is thought to be true. Actually beliefs may be true or false. For example, in Hindu community there is a belief that if cat will pass in front of the person at the time of leaving the home in the morning, whole days experience will be the worst one. There is a little reason to consider such belief as true, but for other beliefs, such as the belief that he human eye can distinguish over 7 million colors, there is factual evidence. Beliefs are important, however, because people accept them as being true and guide their activities on the basis of them.

**RELATIONSHIP OF CULTURE WITH EDUCATION:**

**Meaning of Culture:** Culture is one of the most important concepts in social science. It is commonly used in psychology, political science and economics. Culture is a unique possession of man. It is one of the distinguishing traits of human society. Culture does not exist at the sub-human level. Only man is born and brought up in a cultural environment. Every man is born into society is the same as saying that every man is born into a culture. Culture is a very broad term that includes in itself all walks of life, modes of behaviour, philosophies and ethics, morals, manners, customs and traditions, our religious, political, economic and other types of activities.

Education and culture are intimately and integrally connected. The cultural pattern of a society conditions its educational pattern. For example, if a society has a spiritual pattern of culture, then its educational procedures will emphasize the achievement of moral and eternal values of life. On the other hand, if the cultural pattern of a society is materialistic, then naturally its educational pattern will be shaped for the attainment of material values which promote pleasures of senses and material comforts. A society devoid of any culture will have no definite educational organization. Hence the culture of a country has a very powerful impact on its educational pattern. The ultimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact that one of the major aims education is to impact to the child his cultural heritage. In any human group, the various elements and parts of culture evolve after thousands of years of the experience, and these are handed down as a whole to the succeeding generations. Hence every individual is born into a particular culture which provide him definite patterns of behaviour and values which guide his conduct in different walks of life. He has thereby saved the necessity of making fresh experiments every time. Obviously, then, culture plays an important part in man‘s life in the adaptation to the natural environment, in the adaptation to the social environment, in the development of personality and socialization.

Every society has a culture or a method of operating which is unique to it. To live harmoniously in a given culture, its members must be aware of the various modes of conduct which are acceptable to that culture. It is through the process of education that children and new members are apprised of these facts. Also, in order to survive, the individual must become acquainted with the nature of these things in his environment with which he may have to cope. In very general terms then, it may be said that universally, the purpose of education is to inform the individual about the nature of his culture and the acceptable methods of coping with that culture. The implication, clearly, is that education should teach the students of a particular country how to look at the world and doing things according to the way of doing things of his own country.

**(i) Impact of Culture on Education** As mentioned above, culture and education have a give and take relationship. Both compliments and supplements each other in various aspects. The following are some of the influences of culture on education.

1. **The aims and ideals** of education are mostly determined by the values and patterns of society.

2. **Curriculum** is conditioned according to the culture of society. It is framed according to the ideals and needs of the society to realize the cultural values.

3. **Methods of teaching** and culture are intimately connected. The changing cultural patterns of a society exert powerful influence upon the methods of teaching also. The shift from the old teacher centered teaching to child centered education is an example. Socialized methods like project method, seminar, symposium, discussion, etc. are widely used in the teaching learning process because of the influence of culture.

4. **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.

5. **Text books** which are written according to the formulated curriculum and promote and foster cultural ideals and values are welcomed.

6. **Teacher** who has imbibed the cultural ideals and values of the society only can achieve his mission successfully. Only such teacher is able to infuse higher ideals and moral values in children.

7. **School** is a miniature of society. The total activities and programmes of the school are organized according to the cultural ideals and values of society. Hence school is the centre of promoting, moulding, reforming and developing the cultural patterns of the society.

**(ii) Influence of Education on Culture -**wherever there are human groups there is culture, i. e. a man-made part of environment and learned patterns of behaviour. Wherever there is culture, it is diffused and transmitted to succeeding generations by education. Since human beings live in groups, we might say that wherever there are human beings there is culture and education in various forms. School education is limited mainly to literate cultures. The role of education is much smaller in non-literate groups. Just as culture influences education, much is the same way education also exerts a powerful influence upon the culture of a country. Following are the various ways by which education influences the culture of country.

1. **Preservation of culture**: Each country believes and flaunts the superiority of its own culture over the rest. Hence it tries to preserve its culture in its original form. Education is the only means to complete this task. Thus education preserves the culture of the society.

2. **Transmission of culture**: 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. In the words of Ottaway, the famous sociologist, ―The function of education is to transmit the social values and ideals to the young and capable members of the society‖*.*

3. **Development of culture**: 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 will stratify and come to a naught. Education accultures individuals, modifies cultural processes by research and deeper investigations into all areas of human requirements.

4. **Continuity of culture**: Culture is the life blood 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 programmes. A society establishes schools to preserve and transmit its culture from generation to generation. It is found that some schools try to develop undesirable cultural chauvinism and superiority complexes among its children. Children should be motivated to learn more and more from cultural interaction among various cultures. Ideally education should help them to develop the qualities of tolerance and adjustment along with mutual give and take attitude. This cultural integration and cultural synthesis is the dire need of the world society in modern times. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says that one of the important aspects of Indian culture is its perennial nature. He observed; ―the more Indian culture changes, the more it remains the same. The power of Indian spirit has sustained us through difficult times. It is the intangibles that give a nation its character and vitality‖.

5. **Development of personality**: Education employs diverse cultural patterns of thinking, behaviour and items of cultural values so that children are physically, mentally, socially and emotionally developed to the maximum extent. Thus education aims at developing the personality of the child.

6. **Removing cultural lag**: Material culture develops at a fast pace due to scientific researches and innovations, whereas non-material culture consisting of ideals, values and norms lags behind creating a gulf between the two. Education is the only means to bridge this cultural lag by its activities and programmes of development.

7. **Attaining unity**: For the unity of mankind, there should be diffusion of culture of various groups in the world. The cultural isolation should go, and there should be no iron curtain between one culture and another. Dr. Zakir Hussain observes, ―The characteristic mark of an educated man should be a positive attitude towards the goals of culture, that is, towards the ultimate objective values. The attitude should be the cherished product of educational and institutional activity‖.

8. **Correction of cultural ills:** Education is corrective for the cultural ills. By explaining the dimensions of culture, education corrects egoism and false individuation. Educational enlightenment does not imply only aesthetic appreciation of art and beauty, it also means having kind and generous heart and soul. Culture liberates the mind. Literacy and moral education and education in arts constitutes real techniques for realization of the cultural values.

9. **Human culture as a whole:** Too much of emphasis on one‘s own culture will lead to disunity and lack of international understanding which is one of the tasks of education This is possible by bringing about diffusion of various cultures. Education should treat human culture as whole, ―like a flower with different petals, and each petal representing one cultural group‖. Education should strive for unity in diversity and not over-emphasize diversity.

10. **Function of school**: A school is the simplified environment to explain the present culture of the society and the school education makes the child imbibe the same and even makes its own contribution. The school (in its broader meaning) determines the quality of culture with a view to play the role of cultural construction-agent. Education, being the absorber and reflector of culture, is the best medium for the initiation of the rising generation into the cultural norms and process of the society. Due to the concerted efforts of the government and other agencies in the area of education people have come to realize the importance of education. More and more people are taking interest in education. Parents want to send their children to schools. Of late there is an enhanced demand for English education. More and more English medium schools International Schools, ICSE, CBSE, and State Board Schools are opened and they all get enough and more students. This is a clear indication of the trend in motion. This is the result of renewed demand for quality education. This has been accelerated by the impact of Globalization also. Co-education, now a days, receive better acceptance by the society. The intensity of resistance against sex education in schools now faces less opposition. All these can be considered as the positive results of education.

11. **Inter-cultural understanding**: Education can promote inter-cultural understanding among various cultures. To quote Dr. S. Radhakrisnan, ―the greatness of a nation is to be measured not by its material power and wealth but by the inter-cultural relationships of its people‖. Inter-cultural understanding refers to the development of that insight and attitude in the individuals who, rising above their own selfish and narrow interest, find out the really valuable items in all other cultures, besides their own. It is now realised by educational planners and educationists alike that we should provide such educational experiences and programmes which develop this understanding of other‘s culture and that development of such understanding will promote co-operation and through a process of give and take, a cultural synthesis will take place. Education will be able to achieve the goal of national culture so essential to national unity and national integration. Klausmeir says ―Inter cultural education is concerned with helping students to understand the differences and likeness of individuals who comprise our society and the world‖.

12. **Education of culture and for culture**: Culture enables a person to appreciate good ideas and art. It enlivens human interests and social efficiency. A cultured person is neither too assertive nor too dogmatic and aggressive. He does not manifest extremes of passions or violence of feelings or extravagance of language. Education plays a crucial role in the making of such persons.

**13. Realization of common culture by human beings**: Education is intimately bonded with the intellectual, emotional, cultural and social life of the human race. On the one hand it enables the individual to realize the qualities with which he is endowed and on the other hand it gives him the realization that all human beings share a common culture, which contributes to the common good. In the words of Addison, ―Education, when it works on a noble mind, draws out to view every latent virtue and perfection‖. Education derives its meaning and strength from the surrounding environment of things and men. So it cannot ignore the cultural values, which give meaning to the environment. Man learns from the circumstances in which he lives, the people he meets, the ideas he receives and the geographical situations and times of history. Education is the vital configuration of the societal system, shaping the personality of younger generation and their culture raising them for life and preparing them for the kind of society they live in and they should live in.

**14. Teacher as cultural reconstruction-agent**: A resourceful teacher with his discontentment of things as they are can evolve new models of culture in conformity with the emerging aspirations of the society, through formal and non-formal education. This will enable the young to develop adaptive capacities and adjust to changes in the society. In the ultimate analysis the teacher is the conservator and democratic mediator of culture. He is the architect of the culture-to-be by drawing upon the old cultural experiences and reconstructing new experiences thus producing innovations.

The above discussion substantiates the fact that education has tremendous influence on various aspects of culture. Development in education brings progressive change in the culture of a society. Education makes the learner uncomfortable in the obsolete and irrelevant prevailing system in the society and constantly strives to bring change for the better.