

Essence of Traditional Knowledge
Dr.V.Vijayalakshmi
Associate Professor, SSL
Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai

Hello Learners, in this video let us discuss about the functions and elements of culture and significance of culture in Human life.

Functions of Culture

Culture-

1. Treasury of knowledge
2. Defines situation
3. Defines attitude, value and goals
4. Decides our career
5. Provides behavior pattern
6. Moulds personality

Elements of Culture – by H.M.Johnson

1. Cognitive Element: Possession of knowledge is also cognitive element. e.g., how to travel and transport
2. Beliefs: Tested empirical knowledge and untested beliefs. e.g., Passing the beliefs to the succeeding generation
3. Values and Norms: Denoted the measure of goodness and standards of behavior
4. Sign: Includes symbols. E.g.: Dove represents peace

Civilization

Etymology

Civilization is derived from Latin word ‘Civitas’ which means a city.

Introduction

- It is referred as device and instrument by which nature is controlled
- It includes technical, material equipment, apparatus of economy and political background. Eg. radio, school, currency

Meaning

It means having better ways of living and sometimes making nature bend to fulfil their needs. It also includes organizing societies into politically well-defined groups working collectively for improved conditions of life in matters of food, dress, communication, and so on.

Definition

Goldenweiser used the term civilization identically with culture to refer to all the human achievements. MacIver and page civilization is the whole apparatus of life.

Distinction between culture and civilization

- Civilization has a precise standard of measurement but not culture
Example for civilization: Banking system is better than barter system
Example for culture: work of Kalidas is better than Shakespeare- cannot be compared
- Civilization is always advancing but not culture
Example for civilization: Every technical achievement is the improvement of the past
Example for culture: In field of religious and spirituality the Gautham buddha is not reached by the followers
- The product of civilization is more easily communicated than the product of culture.
Example for civilization: Product of civilization – like Radio
Example for culture: Product of culture – poetic talent
- Civilization is borrowed without loss or change but not culture
Example for civilization: Product of civilization – technical devices
Example for culture: Product of culture – foreigner following Indian culture is difficult
- Civilization is external, but culture is internal
Example for civilization: material wealth of mankind
Example for culture: refers to intrinsic values

Culture and Heritage

Cultural development is a historical process. Our ancestors learnt many things from their predecessors. With the passage of time they also added to it from their own experience and gave up those which they did not consider useful.

- The culture inherited from our predecessors is called our cultural heritage. This heritage exists at various levels.
- Humanity as a whole has inherited a culture which may be called human cultural heritage
- A nation also includes a culture which may be termed as national cultural heritage. Cultural heritage includes all those aspects or values of culture transmitted to human beings by their ancestors from generation to generation. They are cherished, protected and maintained by them with unbroken continuity and they feel proud of it. A few examples would be helpful in clarifying the concept of heritage- Taj Mahal.

How important is this culture for the Human life

- Culture is **closely linked with life**, without culture, there would be no humans.
- Culture is made up of traditions, beliefs, and **way of life, from the most spiritual to the most material.**
- A fundamental element of culture is the issue of religious belief and its **symbolic expression.**
- Valuing religious identity and be aware of current efforts to make progress in terms of interfaith dialogue, which is actually an **intercultural dialogue.**
- The need for coexistence makes the **coexistence of cultures and beliefs necessary.**

- The three eternal and universal values of **truth, beauty and goodness** is closely **linked with culture**.
- It is **culture that brings us closer to truth through philosophy and religion**; it brings beauty in our lives through the arts and makes us **aesthetic beings**.
- It is culture that **makes us ethical beings** by bringing us closer to other human beings and teaching us the values of love, tolerance and peace.

Where all we can find the conservation and promotion of our Indian cultural heritage

- **The Ministry of Culture** operates plan scheme of Government of India for preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the country, besides developing creativity as a social force.
- **It has a network of six attached offices:**
 1. National Museum,
 2. National Gallery of Modern Art
 3. National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property
 4. National Library
 5. Central Reference Library

Anthropological Survey of India

It also has two subordinate offices:

1. Archaeological Survey of India
2. National Archives of India

There are thirty – three autonomous organizations under the Ministry of Culture, Viz. Museums, Academies, Memorials, Libraries, Buddhist & Tibetan Organisation, Science Cities, Zonal Cultural Center, etc. which in their own ways are preserving, promoting and disseminating India's vast cultural heritage.

Thank you Learners