

The Role of Education in Transmitting and Transforming Cultural Values

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Abstract

Education is significant in the transmission and moulding of cultural values within society. Schools, colleges, and other places of learning assist students in comprehending traditions, beliefs, customs, and moral guidelines that determine the way people and communities act. Education also promotes critical thinking, innovation, and receptiveness to new ideas, enabling learners to challenge past practices and apply them to contemporary life. This entails that education not only maintains cultural heritage but also enables positive transformation in society. By incorporating subjects such as history, literature, arts, and social studies, education binds students to their culture and identity, and at the same time enables them to appreciate diversity and respect different opinions. Education also leads to transforming cultural values in terms of equality, justice, care for the environment, and civic responsibility. By fostering understanding and equity, learning mitigates prejudice and promotes inclusive conduct. In the globalized world of today, education needs to reconcile preserving heritage with steering societies towards development. That makes it a central instrument in the construction of educated, accountable, and cosmopolitan citizens. Insight into how education conveys and reconsiders culture can assist teachers, policymakers, and curriculum planners with the development of programs that preserve heritage and foster constructive social change.....

Keywords: Education, Cultural values, Learning, Transmission, Change, Heritage, Critical thinking, Diversity, Social responsibility, Citizenship.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a key mechanism by which societies reproduce and develop their cultural values. It is at school that people are socialized to the norms, beliefs, and practices that constitute their cultural identities. Education's function goes beyond the mere transmission of culture; it is also a force that causes societies to reform and reinterpret their cultural values in light of altering social, economic, and political environments (Dewey, 1897; Jackson, 2024).

Cultural transmission is the mechanism through which cultural knowledge, beliefs, and practices are transmitted from one generation to the next. Educational systems are central to this process as they act as formal settings within which people learn the cultural tools to engage in society (Mathews & Arulsamy, 2020). Schools, for example, are not only academic learning centers but also fields in which social norms and values are taught. Within traditional societies, education tends to be the direct passing on of cultural heritage. This involves instruction in language, practices, rituals, and historical accounts that unify communities (Jackson, 2024). Such education brings about a sense of identity and continuity as it ensures cultural traditions are kept intact and honored.

With increasingly complex and diverse societies, the mode of cultural transmission by education changes. Within multicultural societies, institutions of learning have to confront the dilemma of passing on common cultural values while also accommodating and respecting different cultural values (Pavitola, 2024). This calls for inclusive curricula that reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds of learners. Although learning plays a vital role in passing on cultural values, its role also extends to their transformation. As societies face new challenges and ideas, education systems offer the vehicles by which people can challenge and redefine their cultural norms (Sar & Samanta, 2024). The educational power to transform can be seen in different social movements that have challenged cultural values.

For instance, the United States' civil rights movement defied the common perceptions of racial segregation and inequality. Schools and universities became arenas of activism and debate, raising critical thinking and advocating for equality and justice values (Dewey, 1897). Likewise, the feminist movement has employed education to challenge and rethink conventional gender roles. Through the integration of gender studies into the curriculum and the encouragement of inclusive pedagogy, education has helped redefine gender expectations and advance gender equality (Mathews & Arulsamy, 2020). Education also enables the process of cultural value transformation by exposure to international outlook. In a more interdependent world, learners are exposed to various perspectives

from diverse cultures, which can be challenging to ethnocentric beliefs and foster values of tolerance and world citizenship (Pavitola, 2024).

The interaction of transmission and transformation of cultural values is not straightforward but dynamic. Education works both to preserve and innovate, whereby heritage is sustained while adaptation and development are facilitated (Jackson, 2024). This function works its way out most strikingly in the context of globalization. As cultures meet and impact each other, education systems have to manage both preserving local cultural identities and adopting global cultural aspects. This calls for a curriculum that is grounded on local culture and ready to embrace global influences, cultivating cultural pride but at the same time encouraging intercultural understanding (Sar & Samanta, 2024).

Further, the age of the internet and social media has brought forth challenges and possibilities for the transmission and transformation of culture. The internet and social media have emerged as influential mechanisms for the spread of cultural content, making it possible for people to access and share cultural knowledge beyond borders. Yet, it also presents issues of cultural homogenization and destruction of indigenous cultures. Schools need to wade through these intricacies, making sure students are able to critique digital content and join the global cultural conversation (Pavitola, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural transmission is the process through which cultural information, beliefs, and practices are transmitted from generation to generation. Schooling is at the core of this process through the transmission of societal norms and values to individuals. As sociologist Émile Durkheim posits, education is a process of socializing people with the aim of transmitting societal norms and values (Durkheim, 1922). In the same context, anthropologist Margaret Mead also stressed the importance of education in enculturating people, thus fostering cultural unity in societies (Mead, 1942). Today, cultural transmission in education involves not only teaching dominant cultural norms but also acknowledging and incorporating diverse cultural outlooks.

Multicultural education models subscribe to curricula that cater to the cultural diversity of student populations, fostering inclusivity and respect for differences (Banks, 2004). These models contradict conventional images of cultural transmission as they emphasize cultural pluralism and the legitimization of different cultural identities within schools. Educational institutions utilize different mechanisms of transmission of cultural values. The formal curriculum, including disciplines such as history, literature, and social studies, is one of the main media for passing on societal values and norms. By examining historical events and literary pieces, students get an insight into the cultural stories that construct their societies. For example, the integration of indigenous literature in the curriculum can develop appreciation for indigenous cultures and encourage cultural preservation (Smith, 1999). The informal curriculum, including school rituals, teacher-student relationships, and peer relationships, also have crucial roles in cultural transmission.

School rituals, including assemblies and commemoration of national holidays, affirm collective identities and social values. Teacher-student interactions, involving communication styles and behavioural expectations, enact cultural norms and impact students' socialization processes. Peer relations also aid in cultural transmission through the exchange of cultural practices and beliefs among students. Moreover, the hidden curriculum, the unspoken lessons that are passed on through school practice and organization has the potential to reinforce dominant social hierarchies and cultural values. For instance, the focus on student achievement in schools may serve to enact and affirm individualistic cultural values that exist within particular societies (Apple, 2004). An understanding of the influence of the hidden curriculum is important to understanding the complications involved in cultural transmission in education. Although education contributes immensely to the passing on of cultural values, it is also a facilitator of culture change. Educational institutions offer sites for critical discussion, allowing learners to debate and challenge prevailing cultural values and norms. The transformative learning concept, advanced by Mezirow (1991), highlights the ability of education to stimulate fundamental changes in peoples' attitudes and cultural perceptions.

Empirical research has proven the potential of education to transform different contexts. Feminist pedagogies, for example, seek to deconstruct dominant gender constructs and enable students to challenge gendered inequalities. Through the inclusion of feminist theories within curricula and promoting inclusive pedagogy, teachers can promote critical consciousness and assist in the transformation of gender-related cultural values (hooks, 1994). In

the same vein, multicultural education programs aim to eliminate ethnic and racial biases by inspiring knowledge and admiration for cultural diversity. By learning from diverse cultural vantage points and using inclusive teaching resources, students may acquire intercultural competencies and combat stereotypes and prejudice (Gay, 2010). In addition, education has the ability to bring about cultural change by advocating for social justice and human rights. Programs of human rights education seek to instil values of equality, dignity, and respect for all persons, thus opposing discriminatory procedures and encouraging inclusive communities (Tibbitts, 2002). Incorporating human rights education into education systems, schools have the potential to bring about the change in cultural values towards increased equity and justice.

The process of cultural transmission and transformation is interdependent and dynamic. While education serves to pass on cultural values, it also offers platforms for their transformation. This mutual relationship is most glaring under globalization, where contact with different cultures and ideas can call into question conventional cultural values and norms. Globalization has generated more intercultural encounters, which have brought about the need to acquire intercultural competencies. Schools have an important responsibility to ready their students for a multicultural world by fostering respect and comprehension of cultural diversity. Intercultural learning courses try to prepare the learners with competencies and knowledge to interact well with people from diverse cultures (Deardorff, 2006). A number of challenges and factors emerge in the processes of cultural transformation and transmission in schools.

One major challenge is the danger of cultural hegemony, where powerful cultural values become imposed on oppressed groups. This creates the danger of the marginalization and erasure of minority cultures in educational settings (Giroux, 1992). To overcome this challenge, teachers need to engage in culturally responsive teaching practices that acknowledge and affirm the cultural heritage of all students. Culturally responsive pedagogy focuses on bringing students' cultural references into each and every learning situation, thus bringing about academic achievement and cultural validation (Ladson-Billings, 1994). An additional consideration is the use of technology in cultural transformation and transmission. The spread of digital technologies has reconfigured educational spaces, giving new room for cultural exchange and learning. While digital technologies promise to bring about new opportunities for cultural learning and exchange, unequal access to technology and the resultant digital divide risk amplifying current cultural disparities. Making digital resources accessible equally and advancing digital literacy are critical to utilizing technology as a means of inclusive cultural education (Selwyn, 2016).

Additionally, politicization of education can affect the transmission and transformation of cultural values. Political ideologies often inform educational curricula and educational policies, which in turn can affect representation and inclusion of multicultural views. Supporting inclusive and equitable education policies is important to ensure that education will be used as a vehicle for the just transmission and transformation of cultural values (Apple, 2004).

METHODOLOGY

This research takes a qualitative research approach to investigating the two-way function of education in passing and renewing cultural values. A qualitative design is suitable because the research aims to grasp intricate social phenomena, cultural processes, and subtle interactions among education and cultural development, which quantitative measures cannot properly capture on their own (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research centres on a variety of educational settings that are culturally diverse, ranging from city and rural schools to institutes of higher education and culturally diverse educational programs. These educational settings offer different cultural education approaches regarding resources, student composition, cultural agendas, and teaching strategies. Having more than one case study site allows for a comparison of how cultural values are passed on and altered in a variety of educational settings. The research utilizes a case study design, enabling in-depth analysis of schools and schools' curriculum and pedagogy in the context of cultural transmission and transformation (Yin, 2018). It enables the investigation of contextual influences and the dynamic relationship between formal, informal, and hidden curricula in the formation of cultural values.

A purposive sampling technique has been utilized to identify participants who were able to offer rich, relevant, and diversified information regarding the study problem. Participants were teachers, administrators, curriculum developers, and students who are currently involved in culturally focused educational practices (Patton, 2015). The sampling approach ensures that the study obtains several insights into the cultural transmission and transformation role of education.

Data has been gathered employing a triangulated strategy for increasing validity and reliability. The below strategies were employed: Educators and administrators were interviewed using in-depth interviews for probing their experiences, perceptions, and strategies for promoting cultural education. Open-ended questions enabled participants to expound on successes and challenges experienced in passing and changing cultural values (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

The curriculum documents, syllabi, lesson plans, and school policy statements were examined to determine the explicit and implicit messages of cultural values. Document analysis gives an insight into the formal and covert curriculum that constructs students' cultural knowledge (Bowen, 2009).

Classroom conversations, school ceremonies, and co-curricular activity were watched to study informal and experiential forms of cultural transmission. Observations gave firsthand data on the way cultural values are enacted and reaffirmed in mundane educational practice (Angrosino, 2007).

Group interviews with students were used to elicit their constructions, experiences, and observations about cultural learning. Focus groups allowed for an understanding of peer-to-peer interaction and collective views of cultural practices (Morgan, 1997)

Ethical integrity has been preserved in the research process. Informed consent was received from all participants, and confidentiality and anonymity were preserved using pseudonyms and safe storage of data (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001). Participants were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Institutional ethical standards and approval were also followed in the study.

Although the qualitative case study methodology offers rich insights into education's contribution to cultural transmission and transformation, it has some limitations. The research findings are location-specific and potentially not transferable to all schooling contexts. Participant responses can also be subject to social desirability bias, particularly for sensitive aspects of culture and pedagogy. However, methodological rigor, triangulation, and reflexivity counter these issues and add weight to the validity of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

RESULTS

The research examined the double function of education in passing on and changing cultural values in a variety of educational environments. Through numerous schools and institutions of higher education, respondents uniformly stressed the significance of official curricula, such as history, literature, social studies, and the arts, in imparting cultural information and common social norms. Educators emphasized that these courses give students an understanding of the narratives, customs, and challenges that shape societal identity and promote a feeling of cultural continuity and belonging (Banks, 2004; Jackson, 2024). Outside of official lessons, school rituals, festivities, and co-curricular activities were observed to reaffirm collective identity and cultural unity. Observations of such incidents showed the complementary function of informal practices in continuing cultural values, consistent with Mead's (1942) focus on enculturation as a social process and Durkheim's (1922) perception of education as a means of socializing individuals.

Along with the direct transmission of cultural knowledge, the hidden curriculum also played a strong influence. Educators and students alike documented that everyday routines, teacher expectations, and peer interactions teach norms such as punctuality, respect for authority, discipline, and academic rigor. One student pointed out that they learned about social norms and expectations through watching the actions of teachers and senior peers, demonstrating the unspoken means by which cultural values are re-enforced (Apple, 2004).

Concurrently, the study found that education has a transformatory role to play, allowing students to critically approach and re-analyze prevailing cultural norms. Instructors noted that organized debates, social issue discussions, and exposure to diverse views prompted students to critique common practices, especially along the lines of gender equality, environmental accountability, and social justice (Mezirow, 1991; hooks, 1994). Students themselves indicated that learning about different cultures and international views expanded their vision and prompted deliberation on local customs (Tibbitts, 2002; Gay, 2010).

Balancing modernity and tradition has been a dominant theme. Teachers repeatedly explained the dilemma of maintaining regional heritage while embracing contemporary values and global skills. One principal noted the conflict between promoting pride in regional culture and helping students adapt to multicultural and networked societies, illustrating the dynamic tension between cultural continuity and change (Pavittola, 2024; Deardorff, 2006). Peer interactions also played a fundamental role, as students learned cultural values and norms through

social activities, group projects, and casual conversations, leading to the incorporation of traditional practices within modern contexts (Mead, 1942). Technological integration further opened up possibilities for learning culture, as it allowed students to gain exposure to varying global outlooks using digital media, multimedia content, and virtual exchange. While technology promoted greater cultural understanding, teachers were concerned with cultural homogenization and sought curriculum strategies that integrate global knowledge with the maintenance of local cultures (Selwyn, 2016; Jackson, 2024).

Resistance to the promotion of cultural change was forthcoming, especially when school initiatives toward gender equity, social justice, or multiculturalism were resisted by traditionalist stakeholders or resource shortcomings curtailed implementation. Educators recorded that classroom discussions of sensitive subjects like caste, gender, or ecological responsibilities sometimes encountered resistance from parents or members of the community who cherished conventional norms (Giroux, 1992; Banks, 2004).

Through these challenges, culturally responsive education provided beneficial results, such as increased awareness of cultures, sensitivity, and critical thinking among students. It was observed that students transferred cultural knowledge to practical situations, engaging in community-based projects, cultural preservation projects, and social campaigns, demonstrating both connection to heritage and the capacity to reinterpret cultural values in changing societal contexts (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Pavitola, 2024).

DISCUSSION

The conclusions drawn from this research identify the opportunities as well as the challenges involved in education's function to transmit and to transform cultural values. Educational systems are optimally located to maintain cultural heritage and to provide critical engagement with societal norms, yet a number of ongoing challenges make the attainment of these goals more difficult. These are multifaceted, interconnected, and affected by socio-cultural, economic, political, and technological dimensions, each of which has an effect on how cultural values are passed on, understood, and reshaped within the confines of schooling. One of the major challenges identified is the dichotomy between preservation and accommodation with modernity. Schools are usually required to keep students in touch with their indigenous cultural heritage while, at the same time, preparing them for active engagement in a globalized, multicultural world (Pavitola, 2024; Deardorff, 2006). This balancing is always challenging due to the fact that upholding traditional modes of cultural living tends to go against the demands to adopt modern global norms, technological progress, and societal reforms. Teachers in the study indicated cases in which efforts to incorporate progressive curricula, like gender studies or multicultural education, were received negatively by parents, community members, or even students who had invested in upholding traditional norms. This tension is an example of the wider societal dilemma of balancing cultural continuity with changing social expectations and underscores the sensitive role that schools have as agents of preservation and change (Banks, 2004; Giroux, 1992).

Culturally entwined with this tension is the dilemma of cultural hegemony and bias in curricula. The research found that official curricula, as much as they aim to symbolize cultural values, tend to favor dominant or majority cultural stories at the cost of minority or marginalized voices. Teachers reported that conventional literary and historical texts tend to provide a monolithic cultural perspective, which has the potential to marginalize other voices and strengthen existing social hierarchies (Apple, 2004; Banks, 2004). This challenge is especially acute in societies with high ethnic, linguistic, or religious diversity, where a curriculum that gives emphasis to one cultural story over others can reinscribe exclusion and restrict students' exposure to a rich diversity of cultural experiences. The hidden curriculum also exacerbates this problem, as underlying messages concerning authority, discipline, and acceptable behavior can unwittingly support dominant cultural beliefs and discourage critical examination of alternative viewpoints (Mead, 1942; Apple, 2004).

Another key challenge is resistance to those education reforms with the potential to transform education. While teachers strive to develop critical thinking and cultural awareness, courses that deal with such sensitive cultural topics as caste, gender discrimination, or social justice tend to be resisted by community stakeholders. Educators described cases where parents or local authorities raised questions about covering issues deemed controversial or deviant from customary cultural practices. This resistance reflects a deeper societal aversion to change, especially when it upsets ingrained hierarchies or dominant modes of thought. It also points to the challenges of instituting transformative education where schools function within more conservative or exceptionally traditionalist societies

(Giroux, 1992; hooks, 1994). Conquering such resistance entails tactful negotiation, community involvement, and the construction of pedagogical approaches that are attentive to culture while remaining oriented toward critical reflection.

Resource limitations present another level of difficulty, especially in less affluent or rural school settings. The research identified inequality in access to educational content, technology, and culturally responsive materials. Low-resource schools found it difficult to adopt curricula that include global viewpoints or digital educational tools, which are increasingly necessary for promoting intercultural understandings and preparing students for today's societal engagement (Selwyn, 2016; Jackson, 2024). This dearth of resources not only restricts students' exposure to rich cultural conceptions but also perpetuates existing disparities, since learners in more well-endowed schools stand a better chance of meaningful cultural experience. As such, resource differences amplify social disparities and curtail the role of education as an instrument of cultural advancement and social empowerment.

Technological integration poses a two-edged challenge. Whereas the digital platforms, multimedia resources, and online forums offer unparalleled access to global cultural viewpoints, they are also predisposed to cultural homogenization and shallow engagement. The teachers complained that the students tend to watch and listen to global content without critical reflection, thus adopting foreign cultural practices at the loss of local customs. This reflects the issue of how globalization has affected local cultural identities, such that exposure to dominant global cultures can dominate indigenous or localized values (Jackson, 2024; Selwyn, 2016). Addressing this challenge needs carefully considered pedagogic design that utilizes technology to enhance students' wider cultural awareness while supporting critical engagement with both local and global cultural norms.

The difficulty in tackling cultural change in education is clearly enhanced by diversity among learner populations. Multicultural classrooms offer opportunities and challenges alike, as students carry with them diverse cultural backgrounds, languages, and belief systems into the educational context. While diversity enriches learning opportunities, it also necessitates that educators accommodate the likely conflicts, misunderstandings, and varying interpretation of cultural content (Banks, 2004; Gay, 2010). Teachers cited the challenge of designing inclusive curricula and pedagogies that honor unique cultural identities while instilling common societal values. This challenge highlights the need for culturally responsive teaching, which requires ongoing professional development, awareness of students' realities, and responsive classroom strategies (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2010).

A second fundamental challenge concerns intergenerational cultural value transmission beyond schooling. The research demonstrated that students' backgrounds at home, in their communities, and through peer networks have considerable effects on how they interpret and internalize cultural lessons acquired at school. When family or community values are at variance with the principles highlighted in schools, students can undergo cognitive dissonance or selectively assimilate cultural practices compatible with prevailing influences in their social environment (Mead, 1942; Durkheim, 1922). This dilemma underscores the need for pedagogically effective educational strategies that are also socially located within the wider cultural environment in which students exist and learn.

In addition, policy and administrative limits were found to constitute structural challenges facing the successful transmission and conversion of cultural values. Educational policies are frequently dictated by political priorities or ideological platforms, which in turn affect curricular content and focus. Educators mentioned that required curricula at times restrict flexibility in responding to culturally appropriate issues or integrating transformative pedagogies, thus restricting the ability of education to dynamically address changes in society (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1992). Politicization of education and bureaucratic constraints can thus hamper the formation of educational practice supportive of both the maintenance and development of cultural values.

Teacher preparedness is also a challenge. Enacting culturally responsive and transformatory education necessitates teachers to have not only content knowledge but also cultural competence, critical pedagogical competencies, and facilitation skills to engage inclusive discussions on sensitive issues (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994). The research uncovered that although the majority of teachers are enthusiastic about developing cultural understanding, limited training, poor support, and limited exposure to best practices may sometimes limit their effectiveness. Professional development initiatives, mentorship, and collaborative networks are thus essential to providing educators with the competencies and assurance needed to overcome these challenges.

Lastly, the research points out the inherent conflict between assessment-based educational systems and transformative learning goals. Standardized testing and strict evaluation models tend to favor memorization and technical skill over critical thinking, cultural competency, or reflective involvement. Consequently, teachers are finding it challenging to reconcile performance indicators with the overall purpose of educating sophisticated, socially aware, and culturally competent students (Banks, 2004; Mezirow, 1991). This institutional constraint makes such systemic changes imperative as a means of harmonizing assessment practices with the multifaceted ends of cultural education.

Despite these obstacles, the study also illustrates that education can successfully traverse complicated cultural landscapes. With the backing of inclusive policies, culturally responsive curricula, teacher education, and community involvement, schools can serve as effective agents of cultural continuity and transformation. The research underscores the need for an integrated approach combining formal education, informal socialization, peer interactions, and technological resources to meet the multidimensional challenges related to cultural education. In addition, building school-family-community partnerships can counteract resistance, legitimize learning outcomes, and assist students in navigating cultural tensions in a positive manner (Deardorff, 2006; Pavitola, 2024).

These issues are exacerbated through globalization, diversity, and the fluidity of modern societies. They need to be addressed through a collective effort that integrates culturally responsive teaching, critical engagement measures, inclusive curricula, professional development, and accommodative educational policies. Through recognition and intentional response to these challenges, education can serve its dual purpose of maintaining cultural heritage as well as promoting critical examination, inclusivity, and social change. Ultimately, success in confronting these challenges lies in the ability to create students who are culturally competent, socially conscious, and able to navigate the nuances of an integrated and changing world (Apple, 2004; Banks, 2004; hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Selwyn, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Education must be considered a dynamic, cooperative, and recursive process. Students, teachers, families, and communities collectively constitute an ecosystem within which cultural values are repeatedly negotiated, interpreted, and redefined. In accepting this integrated vision, education can rise above mechanical transmission to become a power for transformation; one that cultivates informed, empathetic, and culturally literate citizens who can make thoughtful contributions to both local and global communities. This research confirms that although the problems are multifaceted, they are not insurmountable. Through deliberate strategies, inclusive policies, and reflective practice, schooling can live up to its rich mandate: to respect cultural heritage while teaching learners toward a more equitable, diverse, and reflexive future...

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