Promoting Folk Education to the Development of Indian Cultural Heritage with Special Reference to National Education Policy 2020

Ms. Sumana Hazra

Junior Research Fellow, Department of Education, Vinaya Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

Prof. Shyamsundar Bairagya

Dept. of Education, Vinaya Bhavana, Visva Bharati

Email ID: shyamsundar.bairagya@visva-bharati.ac.in

Abstract:

This paper engraves folk education and portrays as keen as possible to promote the development of India's cultural heritage. History books start their journey by saying to children that if we don't know our past, we can't progress towards our future, which means we have to start our journey from the back, which is the origin of the future. The root means the core of our culture, civilization, and human life. Cultivation of the core culture of human civilization does mean our folk culture. Folk culture is an umbrella where so many tools, such as language, music, painting, literature, dance, lifestyle, sculpture and all, take their place. This paper shows the restoration and preservation of these components, which will surely help to develop Indian cultural heritage in line with NEP-2020.

Introduction:

In 1757, the British company won the Plassey Battle. In India this event marked the beginning of British rule. Over the next hundred years they gradually occupied more parts of India Not only that, they forcefully inject colonial culture into the place of native culture. Due to the over-emphasis of Western culture over native culture, the Indians couldn't overcome the hangover of colonial culture till now, even after the end of British rule. This is the most critical issue that occurred in the postcolonial era, simultaneously with the beginning of the disappearance of native culture. So, based on this problem, Indians have to promote folk education to develop India's cultural heritage.

Folk refers to *"the traditional art or culture of a community of a nation"*. Folk education means education which is representative of conventional education in society. For example, fairy tales, myths, fables, etc., pass orally from one generation to another. Oral tradition, often known as folklore or folk literature, describes knowledge and practices kept by communities without written languages. The *"Intangible Cultural Heritage"* (ICH) of humanity, which includes folk traditions, music, dance, songs, performing arts, rites and

rituals, paintings, theatre, and texts, is possibly the best representation of India. Several significant recommendations to retain the heritage intact of multilingualism and folk knowledge have been adopted by National Education Policy 2020. The Ministry of Culture runs several programs and schemes to provide financial assistance to individuals, groups, and cultural organizations involved in performing, literary arts including other forms of art, to conserve these components. Apart from the contributions specified above, a huge contribution of Indian literature is there regarding the preservation and dissemination of oral traditions and folklore.

Objective:

To find out how to promote folk education to develop Indian heritage culture concerning NEP 2020.

Methodology:

This paper is mainly based on data like Govt. documents, journals, research articles, etc.

Folk Education:

India is no doubt one of the world's most cultural, ethnical, and religiously diverse nations. So, different cultures have different ideologies. Folk education is also of various kinds in different regions of the country. Folk education comes from ancestors to generations through different folk cultures, beliefs, values, rituals, traditions, etc. In different states of India, numerous folk cultures carry folk ideologies. India has become culturally rich through these different folk cultures, which helps promote its cultural heritage. In India, there are various shades of folk media, such as folk dance, folk songs, street theatre, paintings, sculptures, etc.

The common factors of the different folk media are primarily portraits, the core picture of Indian society through different forms of presentation. Through these different Media, everybody can know and understand their core culture, which is being continued traditionally. The folk education, comes from various folk cultures, believes and values, plays a significant role in promoting our cultural heritage of India.

The Significance of Folk Education in Preserving Traditional Knowledge And Cultural Practices:

1. **Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge**: Folk education ensures the protection of endemic knowledge systems. Endemic knowledge refers to knowledge integrated into, and developed from a particular culture. It is knowledge that is specific to a given culture or society. It is not universal. Its lineage is traced and authenticated in a given generation or society. The same knowledge on various topics including farming, medicine, craft, entertainment, gender, food, storytelling and dance is acquired and gathered from the older people, transferred to the young generation from those who may have acquired it from their elders.

2. **Transmission of Cultural Values and Practices**: Folk education transmits cultural values, principles, procedures, beliefs, and norms through the elders to the next generation. This process is the means for understanding cultural cohesion, cultural identification, and the community's continuity.

3. **Social Cohesion and Inter-generational Bonding:** The inter-generational transmission of knowledge through folk education strengthens bonds between elders and youth; it involves collaboration and interaction among individuals of different age groups within the community and ensures the chronological transfer of wisdom and skills among the generations. This promotes social cohesion, harmony and mutual support systems.

4. **Sustainable Practices and Environmental Conservation**: Most traditional knowledge systems embedded in folk education assume sustainable practices in living with their environments. As a result,

many indigenous cultures develop sustainable agricultural techniques, ecological management practices, and conservation methods. By promoting these environmentally friendly approaches, folk education contributes to the preservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources.

5. **Adaptation and Innovation**: Folk education is largely based on traditions; it enables adaptation and innovation due to change in environmental, social, and economic aspects of life. Folk education promotes new creative cultural activities that align with the necessities of modern life.

Folk education provides protection against the deterioration of traditional knowledge and practices throughout the periods of modernity, globalization, and cultural homogenization. Communities can resist external pressures to preserve their fundamental cultural identities, unaffected by valuing and propagating local wisdom. Folk education contributes to the cultural vitality and sustainability of societies all over the world by acting as a dynamic and resilient means of maintaining, disseminating, and reviving traditional knowledge and artistic activities.

Indian Folk Tradition as Cultural Heritage:

Indian cultural heritage and folklore are irreplaceable resources that continue to shape the uniqueness and collective consciousness of the nation. It is very necessary to Preserving and celebrating these traditions for nurturing cultural pride, enriching the cultural background and promoting intergenerational connectivity of India.

Folk Dance:

Various types of folk dances exist in India, and they are unique in their style. They reflect their own folk cultures and beliefs. The heritage of this medium is now becoming an internationally acclaimed form of Indians. Each state has its intrinsic folk dance culture. For example:

> **FOLK CULTURES**
>
> ➢ FOLK DANCE
> ➢ FOLK MUSIC
> ➢ FOLKTALE
> ➢ FOLK STREET THEATER
> ➢ FOLK PAINTING & SCULPTURING
> ➢ FOLK PUPPETRY

- Chhau, Baul, Lathi, Fakir, Ranpa etc from WestBengal.

- Jata-Jatin, Bakho- Bakhain, Panwari from Bihar.

- Jhumar, Janani Jhumar, Mardana Jhumar, Paika, Phagua, Alkap, Karma Munda, Agni from Jharkhand. Etc

Folk Music:

Folk music originates from different popular traditional cultures. It mainly flows from one to another through orally. Each season contains different folk music indicating different rituals of different traditional cultures. Folk music inspires learners to think deeply and enhance their sense of human value. Uses of differentinstruments are an essential part of folk music. These instruments are not so costly; mainly, these are made with natural elements; for example – "Aktara" is made   with "bottle gourd" or "lau", "Flutes and Xylophones" are made of "bamboo", "bells and whistles" are made

> **THEMES OF FOLK MUSIC**
> ➢ DANCE
> ➢ RELIGIOUS, GLORY
> ➢ NATURE
> ➢ LOVE
> ➢ CEREMONY
> ➢ WAR

with clay, etc. So, by using different natural ingredients, our ancestors made different instruments and created music that enriched our Indian culture. It has no distinct written rules. The nature of folk songs is natural and fluent. It enhancesnational culture also.

India has many different kinds of folk songs, each with its own distinctive style. Radical folk music exists in every state.

For example:

- West-Bengal- Baul

- Odisha- Ghumura Geet

- Bihar- Sohrai etc.

Folktales:

Generally stories are legends or folktales, which have historical and religious background. These stories traditionally flow from ancestors to the next generations—different types of folktales like- animal tales, wonder tales, religious tales, realistic tales, etc.

TYPES OF FOLKTALES	STORIES ABOUT	EXAMPLES
RUPKATHA	• Love, Adventure, • Victory of Godover evil	• Nurjahan and Jahangir • Bikram Betal
UPAKATHA	• Relations among Animals, Birds and Human Beings	• Panchatantra
BRATAKATHA	• Rituals • Brata	• Jataka • Hitapadesh
RASAKATHA	• Humour and Entertainment	• Tenalirama • Akbar and Birbal

Folk Street Theatre:

Street theatre plays a sensitive role in society because society becomes awareof its current situation from this media. Street plays portray different societal, political, and cultural issues and try to draw people's attention. This third theatre basically takes place on the street so that the awareness can shift from street to home through passers-by.

THEMES OF STREET THEATER
- CHILD LABOUR
- DOWRY
- WOMEN'S RIGHTS
- ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
- COMMUNAL HARMONY
- HEALTH CARE

For example:

West-Bengal- Jatra,

Jharkhand, Orissa & West Bengal- Pala, Chhou etc.

Folk Painting And Sculpturing:

In different parts of India, ancient paintings and sculptures are regarded as an epitome of India's cultural heritage. The art history of India, archives different sculptures from the Indus Valley civilization and other paintings from the Stone Age, like Bhimbekta (cave paintings) in Madhya Pradesh, which are considered

evidence of 8000 B.C. human civilization. These sculptures and pictures are evidence of different mythological and religious facts. The nomadic tribes and ethnic groups tried to express their thoughts and ideas through these forms of art. The archaeological survey proves their enriched artistic consciousness and creative ability.

For example:

Bihar- Madhubani paintingOdisha- Patachitra Maharastra- Warli

Madhya Pradesh- Bhimbekta etc.

Folk Puppetry:

The concept of puppetry is very creative and a form of entertainment that gives a message to society. It also contains social, cultural and political facts and ultimately provides a moral and social message. Puppetry creates moral and social values among the audience. It also gives a very heart-warming feeling after the completion of the performance.

TYPES OF PUPPETS	MADE OF
String puppets	Strings
Rod puppets	Tall bamboo
Shadow puppet	Transparent screen, create shadow
Hand gloves puppet	Large flat screen, Palms and fingers

These Indian folk cultures are disappearing day by day due to postcolonial hangovers, trends towards Western culture, excessive use of technology, occidental   lifestyle, etc. For human civilization, cultural exchange plays an essential role in which two or more people of different cultural backgrounds share their feelings, ideas, rituals, etc. But over-emphasis upon a culture by another culture isnot good. If it happens, suppressed culture may be abolished gradually in the society.

Nowadays, the nuclear family is also a common factor because the new generationsare not growing under the shadow of grandparents, causing them to be deprived ofdifferent folk educations.

Folk education is a significant part and a unique identity of India's culture. From this education, everyone can acquire so many historical tales that reveal numerous evidence and stories about this era, but it has developed periodically. Every culture has its own style, gesture, posture, movement, and providing physical fitness in exercise and mental satisfaction. Folk Dance is a collaborative art because, they hold hands and follow a specific rhythm during the dance, which demonstrates the harmony and unity of the group. This harmony and unity are necessary to people in general. In India there are 28 states, and each state has different types of folk cultures. Sometimes, people can recognize or remember the state's name based on their folk culture.

Ways to Promote Folk Education

1. **Folk Story Books:** Increase the reading of folk story books and make them available on different websites and libraries simultaneously.

2. **Promoting Intergenerational Harmony:** Building an interconnection between the old and new generation and trying to keep them in a joint family more than a nuclear family.

3. **Engaging Youth:** Making more street theatres to address various societal and political issues, will draw attention from younger audience.

4. **Preserving Heritage:** Make different movies based on folk cultures.

5. **Unity in Diversity:** Organize cultural programs where different states can present their folk culture through performances like dance, songs, plays, etc.

6. **Digital Preservation of Folk Cultures:** Nowadays, social media has an essential role in human life, so by using this social media if, researchers (who are researching this platform) can post relevant pictures and videos of the different folk pictures, sculptures and also ethnic groups' lifestyle, it is also helpful to other to understand their folk cultures digitally. This should be preserved permanently on digital platforms.

7. **Fostering Values:** Implementation of different folk moral stories in school curriculum.

8. **Effective Teaching Learning Material**: Puppetry is an exciting way of telling stories. So, in the classroom, if a language or a history teacher uses a puppet as a TLM to explain the subject matter, the learners will take it effectively in place of rote learning.

Integrating and Preserving Folk Education for the Development of Indian Cultural Heritage in Line with National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

National Education Policy, 2020 of India, emphasizes preserving the country's linguistic and cultural diversity. The primary key components of the NEP 2020 recommendations are:

1. "All languages in India, and their associated arts and culture will be documented through a web-based platform/portal/wiki, in order to preserve endangered and all Indian languages and their associated rich local arts and culture."

*   The documentation of all languages spoken in India, particularly endangered ones, is emphasized by National Education Policy 2020. This acknowledges the essential connections between language and cultural heritage, encompassing not just the languages themselves but also the related arts and cultures.

*   National Education Policy 2020 proposes the creation of a digital platform, portal or wiki to facilitate the documentation. Many multimedia resources pertaining to Indian languages,

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF NEP 2020

1. Documentation Of Languages And Culture
    *   Web Based Platform/Portal/Wiki
    *   Community Involvement
    *   University And Research Collaboration
    *   Funding By The National Research Foundation (NRF)
2. Knowledge of India
    *   Indigenous knowledge
3. Revitalizing education curriculum
4. Role of indigenous sports-integrated learning in holistic education
5. "Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat": Explore India's diversity and heritage

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stories, dramas, poetry, folk music, dances, and other forms of cultural expression will be available for viewing in this virtual repository. These resources will include dictionaries, films, recordings, and more.

*   The National Education Policy 2020 takes the initiative to encourage participation across the country, particularly among elders who are frequently the conservator of cultural knowledge and language. People are encouraged to contribute relevant content to this digital platform in order to enhance the language and cultural resources available online.

- To enrich these digital platforms, universities and their research teams are collaborating with communities around the country as well as with each other. Through this collaboration, the documentation efforts are guaranteed to be comprehensive, meticulous, and considerate of local customs and knowledge.

- The NRF supports and encourages preservation efforts as well as related research initiatives in disciplines like history, archaeology, linguistics etc. This is a centralized funding mechanism which ensures financial support for initiatives aimed at preserving India's linguistic and cultural heritage.

2. *"....Indian Knowledge Systems, including tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional ways of learning, will be covered and included in mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, engineering, linguistics, literature, sports, games, as well as in governance, polity, conservation."*

- National Education Policy 2020 aims to provide students with a holistic understanding of India's journey from the past to the present. Indian Knowledge Systems, including tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional ways of learning, will be integrated into various subjects, including mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, engineering, linguistics, literature, sports, games, governance, polity, and conservation. This integration pursues to enrich the curriculum with diverse perspectives and visions from India's rich cultural heritage.

- Specialized courses will be offered in areas such as tribal ethno-medicinal practices, forest management, traditional (organic) crop cultivation, and natural farming, catering to the specific interests and needs of students. Competitions will be organized in schools, utilizing fun and indigenous games as platforms for learning various topics and subjects.

3. *"All curriculum and pedagogy, from the foundational stage onwards, will be redesigned to be strongly rooted in the Indian and local context and ethos in terms of culture, traditions, heritage, customs, language, philosophy, geography, ancient and contemporary knowledge, societal and scientific needs, indigenous and traditional ways of learning etc."*

- National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes reimagining curriculum and pedagogy to reflect the rich Indian culture, traditions, and local contexts. From the earliest stages of learning, students will engage with a curriculum deeply involved with India's heritage, customs, and linguistic diversity. This holistic approach integrates ancient wisdom with contemporary knowledge, addressing societal and scientific needs while honoring indigenous and traditional learning methods. By preparing education in India's cultural ethos, this initiative aims to nurture well-rounded individuals who are connected to their roots and equipped to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

4. *"...indigenous sports, in pedagogical practices to help in developing skills…"*

- National Education Policy 2020 incorporates sports in education, which goes beyond physical activity. It's a holistic approach that nurtures various skills essential for physical growth and success in life. By integrating physical activities, including indigenous sports in the classroom learning, students develop crucial attributes such as collaboration, self-discipline, and teamwork. Sports-integrated learning not only promotes fitness but also instills lifelong attitudes and skills aligned with the Fit India Movement. Recognizing the importance of holistic development, this pedagogical approach enhances both physical and psychological well-being while boosting cognitive abilities.

5. *"....the knowledge of the rich diversity of India should be imbibed first hand by learners."*

- National Education Policy 2020 is encouraging hands-on learning experiences. The policy emphasizes the importance of students directly immersing themselves in India's diverse culture. Through activities like educational tours to various regions, learners gain first-hand exposure to the country's rich heritage, traditions, and knowledge. This initiative not only enhances understanding and appreciation but also supports tourism. Under the 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat' initiative, educational institutions will facilitate visits to 100 carefully selected tourist destinations, enabling students to delve into the history, scientific contributions, traditions, and indigenous literature of these areas, thereby enriching their educational journey.

Overall, this initiative represents a concrete effort by the Indian Government to influence digital technology, community participation, and academic collaboration to document, preserve, and promote the rich languages and cultures, indigenous knowledge, modify the curriculum of education, indigenous sports and explore diversity and heritage of India that make up the fabric of Indian society.

Conclusion:

One of the essential components of any country's development is its unity of cultural diversity. It is a collection of shared beliefs, values, objectives, customs, etc. Creativity and culture are evident in nearly every aspect of life (social, cultural, political and economic). The diversity of India's cultures serves as a metaphor for the nation. Cultural diversity means appreciating that society comprises many different cultural and religious groups with different ideas, values, interests, skills, needs, lifestyles, and capabilities. It has been observed that different states have different folk cultures, beliefs, lifestyles, etc., and they participate in different ways from the ancient period over generations. Various traditional cultures in different states of India have a significant and vital role in human life, which is treated as folk education. To promote folk education, the traditional cultures consisting of folk dance, folk music, folk tales, puppetry, etc., are to be restored and preserved, and initiatives are to be taken for implementation of the same as per the guidelines prescribed in the National Education Policy (NEP) – 2020.

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