

**Culture and Trans-Border Cooperation in the Age of Globalization****Dr. Prasanta Sahoo**

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**Abstract**

Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks on WTC and the growing economic interdependence argues for the cultural cooperation among nations. The concepts like Globalization, economic interdependence, international community, the World Government and World Civilization have inspired us to bring peace, harmony and love among different communities and nation-states. Only culture and cooperation among cultures can bring peace, stability and development in the world. Trans-border cultural cooperation refers to promote the exchange of ideas, skills, arts and information across national boundaries. Thus it is very much right to say that 'culture builds bridges across the borders'. It has become the most important way to avoid the military and non-military conflicts among states. Globalization, however, compels cultures to be integrated for the sake of human civilization. UNESCO has been given the central role among the United Nations agencies for the promotion of Trans-Border Cultural Cooperation.

**Keywords:** Culture, Trans-Border Cooperation, Globalization

**Introduction**

Addressing delegates of UNESCO, Mr. Clement Attlee, former Prime Minister of Great Britain once said "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed" (Unesco 2015). History has already experienced of so many devastated wars, terrorist, insurgency and separatist movements. The concepts like Globalization, economic interdependence, international community, the World Government and World Civilization have inspired us to bring peace, harmony and love among different

communities and nation-states. It is the culture and cooperation among national cultures can bring peace, stability and development in the world. According to Joseph Nye, cultural attraction and the harmonization of cultures is much more powerful than the stick of nuclear, (Nye 1990).

Cooperation among trans-national cultures is a powerful means to create positive atmosphere for international peace, friendship and goodwill across boundaries. This cooperation aims at fostering understanding and appreciation of different cultures among the people of the world and common traits in them underlying their apparent diversities and incongruities (Adler and Graham 1989). The feeling of all cultures together can make common heritage of mankind and can stop domination of one culture upon another. The misunderstanding of superior and inferior in cultures often creates misunderstanding and brings unnecessary tensions, conflicts and wars among nations (Kagan 1998). Healthy contact among nations is highly required for the cultural cooperation to become effective. It can be realized through expansion of awareness, sharing of knowledge and diffusion of people living in different parts of the world (Keohane and Nye 2000).

### **Defining Cultural Cooperation**

Cultural cooperation or cultural integration is generally a psychological understanding (Bain 1939). Trans-border cultural cooperation refers to promote the exchange of ideas, skills, arts and information across national boundaries. Exchange of students and scholars, technical assistance programmes, and informational sharing programmes through mass media are the broad areas to be included. Nowadays, the cross-border cultural cooperation has become more significant for creating healthy atmosphere for bi-lateral and multi-lateral relations among nations (Laves 1968). Cultural cooperation can help in the maintaining of peace and in the development of conditions essential for creation and sustenance of a peaceful community. Interdependence in fields of culture, knowledge and technology can also be realized through UN effort (Elginga 1996).

Thus, it is very much right to say that 'culture builds bridges across the borders'. It has become the most important way to avoid the military and non-military conflicts among states. It embraces a narrower sense, which is concerned with the intellect and the arts, and a broader sense, which extends to a way of life.

### **Globalization and Cultural Cooperation**

Globalization compels cultures to be integrated for the sake of human civilization. It has been argued that 'there is nothing in war and conflict, other than disaster'. The time has come to think beyond the national borders to make progress of the human civilization. Diversity of culture has to be vanished and only can be used to make positive progress like 'unity in

diversity'. People must love culture beyond the ideology (Miyoshi 1993). The world human civilization can only be possible through the integration of cultures beyond national borders. 'The zone of conflict must be changed into the zone of peace through promoting the culture of non-violence and brotherhood and universal fraternity (Mohan 2004).

The world is a multi-cultural and multi-religious place where people are heirs to cultures, informed, inspired and guided by four major religions—Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and Christianity (Teichmann 2005).

### **UNESCO and International Cultural Cooperation**

UNESCO has been given the central role among the United Nations agencies for the promotion of Trans-Border Cultural Cooperation. The sudden departure of colonial rulers and fast emerged new independent states in the Third World created big difficulties in nation-building process. It was then realized to develop the cultural cooperation among nations as the most important means to deal with the developmental problems (Adams 2000). UNESCO advocates that it is the man, as the cornerstone of peace building among nations and human kind. This spirit can clearly evident in 12 Articles of UNESCO's Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation.

Since 1975, four important agreements has been signed among nations relating to culture and cultural cooperation, are very important milestones in this regard. Those are: The Staton Report of 1975, International Information Education and Cultural Recommendations for the Future, USA (Center for Strategic and International Studies 1975); The Rigaud Report of 1979 on external Cultural Relations, France (Poirrier 2003); and The Report by the Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS) of 1977, UK (James 1986); and 4. The Report on Foreign Cultural Policy of the Commission of Inquiry of the Germany Bundestag of 1975, Germany (Foreign Cultural Policy 1978).

### **Cultural Cooperation at National, Regional and Global Level**

#### **Cultural Integration at National and Regional Levels**

Cultural cooperation among nations must be mean to respect for the sovereign equality of states and they shall refrain from even a semblance of intervention. Each nation has uniqueness all its own. The sky and the soil, the racial strain, and climatic individuality lend a special personality to a nation. The process of cultural cooperation among different ethnic groups and communities might have involved several stages of interrelationship among people in this multi-cultural and multi-ethnic world. Contact among each other is considered as the first stage. The conquest of one culture of another is the second and compromise among different ethnic groups is the next stage followed by the stage of coalescence (Schmitter 1970).

### **Cultural Integration at Global Level**

Nowadays cultures at the global level have shown a greater degree of positiveness for integration. There are also disparities in the understanding of the concept of cultural cooperation among nations. However, most of the states realizing to integrate their cultures with cultures beyond their national boundaries. This is a clear indication of the cultural cooperation at the global level (Featherstone 1991). The UNESCO has been contributing its best towards international cultural cooperation. It has been initiating different programmes like scientific and educational exchanges, promoting of arts, cultures and protecting heritage sites and the participation of several nations in these kinds of programmes (Have 2006).

### **Difficulties Facing Nations**

Countries, both developed and developing, are facing several difficulties in the way of making international cultural cooperation among them. In spite of the UNESCO strong effort for the cultural cooperation its reports indicate lack of funds to implement all of its promises (Mundy 1999). The disparities in the political and economic conditions of the developed and developing countries are creating obstacle for each other. Problems like constitutional difficulties, poverty and deadly diseases forcing countries to avoid development through cultural cooperation. As a result, differences of castes, communalism and religious fanaticism is growing high which developing dangerous trends of national as well as international disintegration that affecting the peaceful and healthy social harmony among people in different parts of the world.

### **Cultural Crisis in Developing Societies**

The crisis of cultural cooperation among developing countries is affecting severely the development process in the world. There are several difficulties these countries facing to keep cultural values. Fragmentation in the development of society, individual and knowledge and the concept of development through peaceful coexistence and cooperation among nation-states are some important factors (Rogoff 2003). The grave negligence of the arranging resources and lack in proper planning and action along with no institutional support are some important reasons of the crisis of culture in developing societies. Government's unwillingness towards cultural development and the inefficient management are two other factors making the whole issue worsen (Vitell, Nwachukwu and Barnes 1993).

### **Advantages of Trans-Border Cultural Cooperation**

#### **Cultural Cooperation as a Vehicle of World Peace**

Cultural cooperation an atmosphere can be created for promoting world peace. The cooperation can bring the realization among countries to help each other in difficult times and assist each other to promote political and economic development. It encourages the nations to exchange

skills, ideas, technologies and experiences. Culture teaches countries not to involve in war with each other and pursue a foreign policy based on collaboration and mutual assistance (DeRivera 2004).

### **Supporter of Conventional Diplomacy**

Culture has always very significant effect on the foreign policy strategy. The foreign policy process is subordinate to larger cultural dynamics. Sometimes cultural relations achieve a topical and dramatic effect in breaking down barriers between countries. Cultural programmes can create a more constructive basis for political and economic relations among countries (Muller and Seligson 1994).

### **Promote International Understanding**

Cultural cooperation helps forming understanding in international relations. Understanding is both a head and heart in linking between feeling and making friendship. Misunderstanding and ideological strictness is a major barrier to understanding among nations. So it is believed through the cultural cooperation a very good understanding can be made among nation-states.

### **Lubricant for Trade**

The European Union has been proved that cultural cooperation is the main lubricant for cross-border trade among nations. There are several evidences of cultural exchanges among European and American countries through export of books and arts. These are undoubtedly furthered by cultural relations. Nowadays tourism has become a growing industry both in developed and developing world. The great cultural heritages and the assistance extended by the UNESCO are the main reason of the growth of this industry. Culture has become as an 'invisible export' (Singh 2007).

### **International Cooperation for Peaceful Coexistence**

Cooperation between nations has become a prime necessity for peaceful coexistence between nations. Cultural cooperation can change the mindset of the leaders of the economically affluent nations to extend assistance to developing nations. A politically, economically and academically backward country exerts social tensions and conflict which can spread and violet the entire world. It can also help to reduce the ideological and the political tensions among nations (Garrett 1992).

### **Differences among Developing Nations**

#### **Communicational Distance**

According to Anthony Smith, since long time the debate of setting up of common information agency has been going on both in UNESCO and in the International Telecommunication Union. The only job of the agency is to collect and disseminate the information and spread it to other

parts of the world. According to Juan J. Valenzuela-Fuenzalida, Third World has made several attempts to build a common information sharing centre. Common research institutions are highly required for conducting joint researches and provided valuable suggestions to policy makers. This mission needs some high quality of technologies to disseminate information (Smith 1980).

### **Ideological Diversity and Political Distances**

Interaction between developing countries is highly essential which requires the creation of a basic ideological consensus that takes into account the political diversity. Those diversities are issues like dealing with survival and security, sharing of common resources, and issues relating to altruism. There are three interrelated factors create political distance between developing countries—the present of capability, diversity of ideology, and special ties with specific industrialized countries. The group as whole is ill-prepared to deal with such an ideological diversity (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1995).

### **Restoring Cooperation**

Now the question is how to reduce those differences and make good relationships? For example European countries have built up good relationships beyond their ideological and political differences.

### **Cross-Border Cooperation in Difficulties**

The area of remarkable accomplishment has been in voluntary action to meet crisis in human need. The assistances extended by nations in disaster relief, self-help in destitute communities, aid to refugees and rehabilitation in war-devastated countries transformed the deeply rooted philanthropic tradition into a pattern of shared responsibility. Joint projects and mutual researches by government and private agencies and assistance extended by both national and international institutions have justified the essence of the trans-national cultural cooperation (Trim 2004).

### **Culture and Economic Development**

Global interdependence has become the way of functioning for nation-states. Instantaneous communication, supersonic travel, interlocking economies, trans-national corporate activities, and the many levels of multi-national political interface all contribute to this fact. These elements have a clear effect on people and on cultural relations and spiritual values throughout the world. The concepts of development and modernization influenced both the developing and developed countries in the like manner (Harris, Hunter and Lewis 2004).

### **Impact of Culture on Energy Policies**

The full significance of energy policies for individuals as well as societies must be assessed with



reference to cultural assumptions, beliefs and values. It is argued that the relationship of energy and culture involves a constant interplay between common values referred to as “life-style” and energy-related technologies. Social and cultural differences may be especially apparent in the transfer of energy-related technology and energy policy from developed countries to non-western cultures.

### **Cultural Relations and Cultural Diplomacy**

These two terms are often used differently though they are synonymous and interlinked. Cultural diplomacy is a term used to describe the exchange of ideas, information, art, lifestyles, value systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of culture among “collectives” to foster mutual understanding. Cultural diplomacy has also two different levels of meaning. The first-order meaning applies to the agreements, whether bilateral or multilateral, which are made between governments to permit, facilitate or prescribe cultural exchanges. The purpose of cultural relations has several advantages (Finn 2003).

### **Culture as a Strategy for National Security**

Soft power is a term used in international relations theory as a strategy of national security. It implies to describe the ability of a political body, such as a state, to indirectly influence the behavior or interests of other political bodies through cultural or ideological means. According to Joseph Nye, Soft Power represents the third and the best way of getting the outcomes. The resources from which soft power behavior is derived are culture, values and foreign policies (Nye 1990).

### **Culture Can Promote for Liberal Border Policy**

Globalization argues that growing economic integration and interdependence lead to more open borders and more harmonious cross-border relations. But the modern border management strategies have reduced the benefits of the socio-cultural, economic and other benefits of open and liberal border (Andreas 2003). There is a close relation among socio-cultural and economic interdependence with border management and national security of a nation-state. Therefore, it has correctly argued by Raja Mohan that “the zone of conflict must be changed to the zone of peace friendship and cooperation”.

### **Conclusion**

As Shakespear said “good wine needs no bush” is as true of culture as of anything else. A nation that has a culture rich in its diversity, profound in its moral and ethical values, effective in the lives of the people need have no qualms about it being ignored. Just as the spirit of man is invincible, his culture is also indestructible. The different cultures of the world form the common heritage of mankind which can guide all the states to the path of peace, friendship

and understanding through the trans-border cultural cooperation. Culture, cultural cooperation or culture of cooperation, it has been argued above, play a key role in the lives of the inhabitants of this world. Exchange in education, science, technology, the arts, literature and human skills—to other kinds of interactions to promote better relations and understanding among nations would appear to arise from the nature of culture. Cultural interchanges brings the insights and perspectives of the participating cultures to one another and thus help to modify and narrow monocultural views to produce alternative and more flexible approaches and responses to human problems. As UNESCO suggests, the wide diffusion of culture and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual assistance and cooperation.

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