

## KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY: ITS SYMBIOTIC RELATIONS

M. Kala

Department of History, Government College for Women (A), Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu

### ABSTRACT

*The term "cultural diversity" refers to the fact that human societies already contain a wide variety of cultures and customs. It alludes to the qualities that people rely on to validate their own worth in the eyes of others. Differences in these categories can be attributed to factors such as race, gender, age, values, cultural norms, language, dress, food, beliefs, traditions, and so on. It's something to be observed as a natural phenomenon, not something that's uniquely present in human society. In turn, this will help people open up to one another and appreciate diversity for what it is: a normal part of life. It will make it possible for people to use those strengths to create a more just and prosperous society. Respect for multiculturalism, as well as its acceptance and positive effects on society as a whole, will be strengthened by the spread of knowledge in a knowledge society. Within the scope of this paper, we explore these facets in greater detail.*

**Keywords :** Diversity, knowledge, attributes, development, equitable

### Introduction

Culture, diversity, and knowledge society are all terms with multiple meanings. It's possible that these terms defy consensus when it comes to their meaning and definition. The depth and breadth of the terms and their implications for human society have, however, led to a plethora of different understandings. Human society is profoundly impacted by the interplay between cultural diversity and the knowledge society. A knowledge society is a society in which the primary driver of economic growth and development is the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge. In a knowledge society, the focus is on creating and using knowledge to generate economic and social benefits, rather than relying solely on traditional factors of production such as natural resources and physical capital.

Cultural diversity is an important aspect of a knowledge society, as it provides a rich source of ideas, perspectives, and experiences that can inform and enrich the creation and dissemination of knowledge. A diverse range of cultural perspectives can help to challenge assumptions and broaden understanding, leading to more innovative solutions and approaches. However, cultural diversity can also present challenges in a knowledge society. Different cultural values, norms, and practices may clash, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts. It is important for a knowledge society to recognize and respect cultural

diversity, while also promoting dialogue and understanding to address differences and work towards shared goals. In a knowledge society, cultural diversity can be leveraged as a strength, as individuals and organizations can draw upon a range of cultural perspectives to inform their work and decision-making. This can lead to greater innovation, creativity, and problem-solving ability, as diverse teams are better able to consider a range of perspectives and identify new opportunities. Overall, cultural diversity plays an important role in a knowledge society, providing a source of new ideas and perspectives, while also presenting challenges that must be addressed through dialogue and understanding.

The relationship between a knowledge society and cultural diversity is symbiotic, meaning that they have a mutually beneficial relationship that supports and strengthens each other. A knowledge society relies on the creation and dissemination of knowledge as the primary driver of economic and social growth. Cultural diversity provides a range of perspectives and experiences that can enrich the creation and application of knowledge. For example, a diverse team of experts from different cultural backgrounds can bring different perspectives and ideas to a project, leading to a more comprehensive and innovative approach. At the same time, cultural diversity is enriched by a knowledge society. As societies become more knowledge-based,

they tend to be more open and inclusive, which can promote cultural exchange and cross-cultural understanding. This, in turn, can help to preserve and promote cultural diversity by allowing different cultures to learn from each other and adapt to changing circumstances.

Furthermore, a knowledge society can provide opportunities for individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to contribute to and benefit from economic and social growth. By promoting education and skills development, a knowledge society can help to bridge the gap between cultural and socioeconomic disparities, providing greater opportunities for all members of society. The relationship between a knowledge society and cultural diversity is symbiotic, as they support and strengthen each other. A knowledge society relies on cultural diversity to enrich the creation and application of knowledge, while cultural diversity is enriched by the opportunities and inclusivity provided by a knowledge society.

### **Knowledge Society**

Depending on context, "knowledge society" can mean many different things. In the hands of social scientists, it became a useful tool for defining and understanding our transition to a post-industrial society. It's also a goal (normative) that countries, states, and businesses should work towards. The term "knowledge society" is also frequently used as a metaphor (rather than a concept) to cover a wide range of studies. It's most commonly used to describe a culture where information and knowledge production, distribution, and consumption constitute the primary means of economic growth. In this type of society, knowledge assets are far more important than things like land, labour output, or even financial capital. Human capital is considered to be society's most valuable asset and source of innovation and economic growth. When compared to an information society, a knowledge-based society is distinct. To create a knowledge society, people tried to figure out how to turn data into useful tools for people to use in their daily lives. Raw data is all that the information society produces and disseminates. Information gathering and sharing is an ancient human practise. However, in this context, the

term "knowledge society" does not mean a society heavily reliant on data creation and dissemination via ICTs.

However, the modern concept of a "knowledge society" hinges on the exponential growth in data creation and information dissemination made possible by advances in computing. UNESCO defines knowledge societies as those that are able to effectively gather, analyse, synthesise, disseminate, and apply information for the benefit of humankind. Freedom of expression, universal access to information and knowledge, respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, and high-quality education for all form the cornerstones of knowledge societies that are just and fair for all members of society. The internet and other forms of new media must be considered alongside more traditional channels when applying the principle of free speech. It's the foundation on which knowledge-based societies are built. The mission of UNESCO is to encourage the unrestricted exchange of information and cultural expression through the media of the written and visual arts. As a fundamental right crucial to the functioning of a democratic society, the protection of the press and the freedom to speak one's mind is an issue that must be actively pursued. The only way for human society to benefit from creativity, innovation, criticism, and questioning is through the freedom to express those ideas. The foundation of a knowledge society is not a single, universal theory or framework to which all societies must adhere. The freedom to express oneself is integral to the vision of knowledge societies as plural, variable, and open to choice. Second, everyone has the right to an education of sufficient calibre. It's crucial for ensuring that all societies have access to the resources they need to grow and prosper and achieve social harmony. Intent on making significant changes to society as a whole. The potential for expanding students' access to quality education is enormous thanks to advancements in information and communication technology (ICT). It makes feasible the massive-scale collection, storage, and dissemination of previously impossible amounts of information. Third, it's important to recognise the value of linguistic and cultural diversity. The goal is to encourage the use of

diverse languages and cultural perspectives in all forms of media, including news, documentaries, and instructional materials.

The fourth principle, namely universal access to information and knowledge, particularly information in the public domain, is necessary for greater participation in development processes. For the sake of society as a whole, information should be freely accessible from anywhere and to anyone who seeks it. This will encourage learning new things and aid progress in many ways.

### **Cultural Diversity**

There has been debate over what exactly constitutes "culture" for quite some time, and various definitions are in common use. According to one definition, a person's culture is the sum of their accumulated skills, knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and other aspects of social life. For the purposes of this article, "heritage" will be understood to mean the language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviours, and material objects that are passed down from one generation to the next. This term is used to describe a social group or community whose members have had similar life experiences that have informed their worldviews. In this sense, groups such as race, nationality, origin, gender, socioeconomic status, and religious affiliation are as natural to us as breathing. It could also refer to a community we integrate into. By changing our location, our socioeconomic status, or our physical or mental abilities, we can learn about and adapt to new cultures. Taking a more holistic view of culture helps us see that we are all members of numerous cultural groups. Ideas, lifestyles, practises, and other factors are also transferred across borders, in addition to people. The spread of people and goods between communities led to a rise in cultural variety. The term "diversity" is used to describe the presence of a wide variety of cultural practises, beliefs, and norms that coexist. There will always be a wide range of cultural practises and beliefs among human communities. It's inevitable as civilization develops and human society diversifies. Different kinds of diversity travel with people from place to place. It alludes to the qualities that people rely on to validate their own worth

in the eyes of others. In common parlance, "culturally diverse" and "multicultural" are often used interchangeably. The term "multiculturalism" refers to a set of attitudes and practises that promotes equality and empowerment for all members of a given community by welcoming and appreciating its many cultural and linguistic minorities. Dr. Caleb Rosado, a sociologist, defined multiculturalism in terms of seven interrelated actions:

- Recognition of the abundant diversity of cultures
- Respect for the differences
- Acknowledging the validity of different cultural expressions and contributions
- Valuing what other cultures offer
- Encouraging the contribution of diverse groups
- Empowering people to strengthen themselves and others to achieve their maximum potential by being critical of their own biases
- Celebrating rather than just tolerating the differences in order to bring about unity through diversity.

### **Cultural Diversity Vis-A-Vis Knowledge Society**

Diversity, in all its manifestations, is a valuable asset. It provides the world and its inhabitants with form and structure. Culture is what moulds us, both in terms of our personalities and the ways in which we act as a society. "Culture" is how we live our lives. Differences in culture contribute to progress. It expands people's freedom of choice. Growth can be seen not only in terms of material prosperity, but also as an improvement in one's mental, emotional, moral, and spiritual well-being; this is one of the foundations of development. Among UNESCO's four tenets for creating a fair knowledge society is respect for cultural diversity. It has to do with acknowledging the value of differences in language and culture. The objective is to encourage the use of diverse languages and cultures in all forms of media, including but not limited to news, documentaries, and instructional materials. The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity was approved in 2001 by the General Conference of UNESCO. Because of this

Declaration (the first of its kind in the international community), cultural diversity is now recognised as a global treasure. Also emphasised is the need for and value of cultural variety within the human race. Some important content are:

- The Declaration supports the notion that cultural expression varies depending on location and time. The identities of the groups and societies that make up humanity are manifestations of this diversity. Cultural diversity is as important to humanity as biological diversity because it fosters communication, new ideas, and original thought. Therefore, it is a shared human legacy that deserves our affirmation and protection for the sake of the present and the future. (Article 1)
- The Declaration stresses the need for a shift in perspective from cultural diversity to cultural pluralism. "in our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied, and dynamic cultural identities and their willingness to live together," it reads. Guarantees of social harmony, civil society's vitality, and stability can be found in policies that encourage the full participation of all citizens. By this definition, cultural pluralism gives cultural diversity a voice in public policy. Cultural pluralism, even apart from a democratic framework, is beneficial to the dissemination of ideas and the growth of creative capacities that underpin public life. (Article 2)
- Thirdly, the declaration delineates cultural diversity as a factor in development "Cultural diversity widens the range of options open to everyone; it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence." (Article 3)
- Finally cultural diversity presupposes the respect for human rights. "The defence of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative inseparable from respect for human dignity. It implies a commitment to human rights and fundamental freedom in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and those of indigenous people. No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, not to limit their scope". (Article 4)

Communities and societies can be made more accepting of cultural diversity and multiculturalism by encouraging dialogue and deliberation on the topic in a variety of settings, such as lectures, symposia, and regional, national, and international forums/organizations. There is a wealth of information contained here. As a result, people from various communities and societies will have a better foundation upon which to build a mutual understanding, which in turn will open up opportunities for collaboration and the discovery of new methods for boosting societal output.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between a knowledge society and cultural diversity is complex, but ultimately symbiotic. A knowledge society benefits from cultural diversity by drawing on a range of perspectives and experiences to enrich the creation and application of knowledge. Cultural diversity, in turn, is enriched by the opportunities and inclusivity provided by a knowledge society, which can promote cross-cultural exchange and understanding. To fully realize the benefits of this symbiotic relationship, it is important for societies to recognize and respect cultural diversity, while also promoting dialogue and understanding to address differences and work towards shared goals. By leveraging the strengths of both a knowledge society and cultural diversity, we can create more innovative, inclusive, and prosperous societies that benefit all members of society. In a post-industrial world, the knowledge society offers hope for a more peaceful and prosperous future. In light of dwindling supplies of natural resources and mounting concerns about the state of the planet. It will always be crucial to people's ability to stay alive. Cultural diversity and its mutual relationship as a mutually reinforcing factor will be of paramount importance in the dialogue for a knowledge society.



### References

1. Hollingshead, A. B. (1973). Medical sociology: a brief review. *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly. Health and Society*, 531-542.
2. Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. *Review of research in education*, 19, 3-49.
3. Castelfranchi, C. (2007). Six critical remarks on science and the construction of the knowledge society. *Journal of Science Communication*, 6(4), C03.
4. Rosado, C. (1996). What makes a school multicultural. *Letöltés: www. edc hange. org/multicultural/papers/celeb/multicultural .html* [2003.09. 02.].
5. Gates, D. P. (1969). Sociology in small US liberal arts colleges. *The American Sociologist*, 324-330.
6. Simpkins, O. N. (1952). SUTHERLAND, WOODWARD, and MAXWELL. *Introductory Sociology* (Book Review). *Social Forces*, 31(1), 375.
7. Schaefer, R. T. (2002). *Sociology: A Brief Introduction 4th Edition* New York.
8. De Long, D. (1997). Building the knowledge-based organization: How culture drives knowledge behaviors. *Centers for Business Innovation-Working Paper*, 1-29.
9. King, J. E. (1995). Culture-centered knowledge: Black studies, curriculum transformation, and social action.
10. King, W. R. (2007). A research agenda for the relationships between culture and knowledge management. *Knowledge and process management*, 14(3), 226-236.
11. Lucas, L. M. (2006). The role of culture on knowledge transfer: the case of the multinational corporation. *The learning organization*.
12. Wang, D., Su, Z., & Yang, D. (2011). Organizational culture and knowledge creation capability. *Journal of knowledge management*.