

# NEED TO STUDY INDIAN AGRICULTURAL CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## Abstract

Indian agriculture is an integral part of the nation's cultural heritage, shaping its identity, traditions, and daily routines. Beyond its economic significance, agriculture in India influences festivals, art, community dynamics, and the lives of millions. Acknowledging its deep cultural roots is crucial; it's not just about numbers but a way of life and a connection to the land that has sustained generations. Recognizing this cultural dimension not only enriches discussions but also fosters appreciation for the intricate bond between people, land, and food, preserving the holistic nature of agriculture.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Indian agriculture is indeed much more than just an economic activity; it's deeply ingrained in the country's culture, history, and way of life. Agriculture has been the backbone of India's civilization for centuries, shaping its social fabric, traditions, and even religious practices. Here are some key aspects that highlight how Indian agriculture is intertwined with its culture. Indian agriculture is more than just a means of economic sustenance; it's a cultural heritage that has shaped the nation's identity, traditions, and way of life. Its influence is seen in festivals, art forms, community dynamics, and the everyday practices of millions of people across the country. When discussing agriculture, it's crucial to go beyond the facts and figures and delve into the rich cultural aspects that are deeply intertwined with this industry. Agriculture isn't just a matter of numbers; it's a way of life, a heritage, and a connection to the land that has shaped communities and families for generations. Recognizing and acknowledging the cultural dimension of agriculture not only adds depth to conversations but also fosters a greater appreciation for the intricate relationship between people, land, and food. It's an essential aspect of understanding and preserving the holistic nature of agriculture in our world.

## II. DYNAMICS OF CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Cultural sensitivity is an essential skill that involves being aware of and respectful towards the cultural differences that exist between individuals and groups. It goes beyond recognizing different traditions, languages, and behaviours; it also includes understanding how these differences can influence communication and interactions. Here are a few key points that highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity in effective communication:

- 1. Avoiding Misunderstandings:** Different cultures can interpret words and gestures differently. What might be considered polite or acceptable in one culture could be offensive in another. By being culturally sensitive, you can avoid using words or phrases that might inadvertently cause confusion or offense.
- 2. Building Relationships:** Cultural sensitivity fosters better relationships by showing respect for the diverse backgrounds of others. People are more likely to trust and engage with those who make an effort to understand their cultural perspectives.
- 3. Enhancing Communication:** Effective communication involves more than just language. It encompasses non-verbal cues, tones, and context. Being culturally sensitive helps you pick up on these nuances and adapt your communication style accordingly.
- 4. Overcoming Stereotypes:** Cultural sensitivity encourages you to see individuals as unique, rather than pigeonholing them based on stereotypes. This enables more genuine and meaningful interactions.
- 5. Conflict Resolution:** Misunderstandings rooted in cultural differences can lead to conflicts. By being culturally sensitive, you can preemptively address potential conflicts and navigate disagreements more diplomatically.

6. **Global Collaboration:** In our increasingly interconnected world, cultural sensitivity is crucial for successful collaboration across borders. It helps individuals work together smoothly, respecting each other's values and practices.
7. **Professional Growth:** Many workplaces today are diverse, and cultural sensitivity is an asset for effective teamwork and leadership. It's an important skill for both personal and professional growth.

Remember that cultural sensitivity isn't about knowing everything about every culture, but rather about being open-minded, curious, and willing to learn. It's a continuous process of self-awareness and education that helps create a more inclusive and harmonious environment for all.

### III.EFFECTIVENESS OF CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Background knowledge of one's own culture and the culture of others is crucial in effective communication for several reasons:

1. Contextual Understanding
2. Non-Verbal Communication
3. Respect and Sensitivity
4. Effective Expression
5. Conflict Resolution
6. Building Relationships
7. Cross-Cultural Collaboration
8. Adaptation and Flexibility
9. Avoiding Stereotypes
10. Enhanced Learning

In essence, cultural awareness allows for more empathetic and effective communication by acknowledging the richness and complexity of human experience. It goes beyond linguistic proficiency to create meaningful connections and foster mutual understanding between individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

### IV.SIGNIFICANCE OF CULTURE IN COMMUNICATION

Culture plays a significant role in shaping how communication is perceived and practiced. Here are some key impacts of culture on effective communication:

1. Communication Styles and Norms
2. Language and Verbal Communication
3. Nonverbal Communication
4. Context and Interpretation
5. Hierarchy and Power Dynamics
6. Social Norms and Etiquette
7. Conflict Resolution
8. Cultural Sensitivity
9. Perception of Time

## 10. Social Identity and Identity Expression

### V. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

Communication serves as a bridge between farmers, researchers, experts, policymakers, and markets, enhancing agricultural productivity, sustainability, and the overall well-being of farming communities. Proper communication channels can indeed address information asymmetry, promote updated practices, and improve resource management in agriculture. Considering all these elements holistically is indeed crucial for effective agricultural communication. By tailoring messages to the needs and preferences of the audience, choosing appropriate communication channels, and ensuring clarity and accuracy, agricultural communicators can enhance their outreach and impact.

The relationship between communication and culture is a very complex and intimate one. First, cultures are created through communication; that is, communication is the means of human interaction through which cultural characteristics— whether customs, roles, rules, rituals, laws, or other patterns—are created and shared. It is not so much that individuals set out to create a culture when they interact in relationships, groups, organizations, or societies, but rather that cultures are a natural by-product of social interaction. In a sense, cultures are the "residue" of social communication. Without communication and communication media, it would be impossible to preserve and pass along cultural characteristics from one place and time to another. One can say, therefore, that culture is created, shaped, transmitted, and learned through communication. *The reverse is also the case; that is, communication practices are largely created, shaped, and transmitted by culture.*

### VI. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Sustainable development is dependent on cultural sensitivity. One must be aware of the cultural diversities while communicating as culture shapes communication to a great extent. Conflicts in communication can be avoided if one understands that the world is much broader than their ethnocentric circle. When people communicate they should be culturally aware to understand better (Hirsch, 1987). To save the earth we need sustainable development at the global level. "At the global level the fate of the earth depends upon negotiation among representatives of government with different cultural assumptions and ways of communicating" (Tannen, 1985, p.203). We need to develop a cultural understanding of the people with whom we work and interact. (Vassilious et. al, 1972) contends that when people are exposed to different cultures they will learn to avoid stereotypes. (Tannen, 1985, p.211) remarks that stereotypes of ethnic groups partly develop from other culture impressions that people from other cultures have about the natives because they hold different meanings for both parties. (Bovoke, 2013) opined that globalization brings about a change in societies and puts culture ahead.

Cultural values differ among communities which greatly reflects in conversations. (Spir, 1956) argues that in every social behavior communication is either implicitly or explicitly reflected. (Hofstede, 2005, p.1) comments that "cultural differences are nuisance at best and often a disaster". UNESCO (1998, 1999) recognizes cultural diversity as an "essential factor of development" which is pivotal to all matters. Our ideas and biases are

culturally influenced which is implicit in our communication. (Trompenars and Hampden Turner, 1997) these cultural models point to the fact that people across cultures have difficulties in communicating as they are governed by certain values specific to their culture. Communicators with cultural sensitivity should take note of this fact.

That Cultural sensitivity is crucial to sustainability is also reemphasized by UNESCO. As per UNESCO development cannot happen in the absence of cultural sensitivity as culture is deeply ingrained in every person. So one cannot rule out culture while thinking of development. When social, cultural and economic development for people are conceived of we cannot rule out culture as these goals are dependent on culture and culture impacts people. As per the social construction of reality people make sense of their social world by assembling their knowledge. (Scheler, 1960) calls it sociology of knowledge. (Berger & Luckman 1966, p.15) contend that this “knowledge is concerned with the analysis of the social construct of reality”. (Young & Collin, 2004) present that social construction pays more attention to society than individuals. This influences people’s perception of good and bad. (Berger & Luckman, 1966) are of the view that the social and cultural world are created by people. (Pinker, 2002) also opines that people’s perception of reality is influenced by their cultural conditioning. (Gale, 2010) says meanings changes moment to moment as per context. (Grafinkel, 1967) explains this as commonsense action of people based on their practical consideration and judgment of what they feel as intelligible and accountable to others. (Keller, 2011) argues that people combine their sense of reality routinized interaction and the meanings they attach to objects, actions and events.

Cultural factor got a further boost at the international level at UNSO’s World conference on cultural [policies held in Mexico in 1982. It gave a broad definition of culture that characterize a society or social group. This development was done by J. Perez De Cuellar and it led to an important report ‘Diversity’s Landmark Report’ (UNESCO, 1985). Further during the world decade on culture and development (1988-1998) UNSCO campaigned the significance of cultures contribution to National and International development policies. The Stockholm conference also reaffirmed the relationship UNSCO (1998). The Florence conference emphasized ‘Cultural capital’ tool for sustainable development and economic growth (UNESCO, 1999). UN’s General Assembly adopted the 2005 world summit development outcome where cultural diversity was accepted as a major driving force to enrichment of human kind. Further the UN’s General Assembly’s resolution on culture and development adopted in 2011 and 2011 recognized culture as an important factor for growth and development. The UN system task force on post 2015 Development Agenda issued a report, ‘Realizing the future we want for all’(2012,p ii), with a direct change needed for a right based equitable process for global development”. These resolutions point to the symbolic role that culture has in development.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The UN’s has recognized the distinctiveness in culture and held its importance in development. The global body has championed this. It reiterated the fact that development cannot take place without taking culture into account as it forms the heart of human race. The action taken towards development will be meaningful and easily achievable by being

culturally sensitive. Being culturally sensitive and by consciously incorporating them while communication can bring down the barrier in cross cultural communication.

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