

## Cultural Education and Sustainability of Kashmiri Culture

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Kashmir like other states has a shared set of values, ideations, and symbols that constitute the core or overarching culture. This culture is shared by all the diverse cultural and ethnic groups. However, it is difficult to identify and describe the overarching culture in Kashmir because of its diversity and complexity. In view of the above the paper attempts to identify and describe the common overarching culture, and series of micro cultures of Kashmir to showcase the cultural diversity of Kashmir. The micro cultures of Kashmir share most of the core values of *Kashmiriyat*. But these values are often interpreted differently by them. In consideration of the culture diversity of Kashmir "Cultural Education" becomes essential and indispensable. The term Cultural Education may be considered *only as an idea or concept, or it may be regarded as part of educational reform movement, and a process*. However, the cultural education consists of knowledge, concepts, and values shared by group members through systems of communication. Culture also consists of the shared beliefs, symbols, and interpretations within a human group. Most social scientists today view culture as consisting primarily of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies. The essence of culture is not in its artifacts, tools or other tangible cultural elements but how the members of the group interpret, use, and perceive them. This paper will examine the complex relations of globalization, education, cultural identity, and sustainability of Kashmiris in Kashmir. It attempts to answer whether Kashmiris will be able to continue and sustain their culture in this era of rapid globalization and economic development? The paper



will explore this question and situate the discussion on Kashmir's history of dependency and the government's policy of assimilation, preferential treatment, and control. The paper will examine efforts for sustaining Kashmiri culture.

Despite improvement in people's life overall, vast areas of Kāshmiri regions are still beset by poverty. Many families could not afford to send their children to school. A telling contrast is that, while first-year enrollment in primary schools has reached 98 percent in most part of India, the ratio for Kashmir hovers around 50–70 percent. Access to quality primary and secondary education for Kashmiris would have a direct impact on the sustainability and development of Kashmiri culture. Cultural education and cultural sustainability are inherently connected to educational access, the quality of education, school finance, local economic development, and government policies. Many Kashmiri groups live in remote mountainous areas. A large number of people are still living at subsistence level. Thus, going to school is a luxury to many of them. Many girls are forced to drop out of school due to their family's financial difficulties. These students started in first grade, started to drop out in third grade, and, while several made it to junior high school, only one to two students finished senior high school. Kashmiri cultural sustainability has been linked with bilingual education in primary and secondary schools. However, persistent difficulties and dilemmas are hampering the efforts of offering bilingual education to Kashmiri children. Urdu is the most common language in Kashmir. Although many Kashmiris speak Urdu, some groups function only in their own language. Cultural relevance is essential to retain students in schools and increase their interest and motivation in learning. A common phenomenon among Kashmiri primary and secondary schools is that students feel isolated, have difficulty in understanding their teachers, and find it difficult to identify with the culture in the curriculum. The national curriculum

designed by NCERT talks about highways, museums, and other countries, while local songs, stories, medicinal knowledge, customs, people, economy, and geography are not included in the curriculum. Yearning to be connected with one's own culture does not mean that Kashmiri students do not want to learn the majority culture. In fact, they wish to be able to master both Urdu and their own language, to benefit from the advantage of both cultures.