

Master of Education (M.Ed.)

Title of the Course: S.Cul.1 (k): Culture, Cognition and Education

(Semester: I, II, III & IV)

Credits: 4

MM: 100 (External: 70 Internal: 30)

Contact Week 15

Introduction of the Course

This Course aims to build a more nuanced understanding of human mind as inherently social, cognition as a situated cultural practice, learning as a cultural way of meaning-making & knowledge construction, pedagogy as a process of social collaboration in a community of learners, assessment as a dynamic process, and transformative potential of school as a way of articulating voice and raising consciousness by supporting and nurturing all children irrespective of their social origins, economic position or cultural locatedness. It entails examining the bearing of this contextualist view of mind on educational inquiry, research and discourse, specifically the curricular and assessment practices as seen in the context of cultural meanings and experiences that diverse learners bring to the classroom.

Learning Outcomes

After completion of the course, students will be able to

1. Explore the conceptual understanding cultural context of cognition
2. Critical analysis of cognitive universalism and scientism as the 'mainstream' view.
3. Develop understanding of cognition as a situated practice by drawing upon the seminal works of contemporary cultural theorists
4. Explain the perspective of multicultural and multilingual Indian context
5. Critically examining the debates and dialectics that revolve around the developmental and cultural differences in the way children think and learn

Number of Units (4)

Weeks 15 = 60 hours

Unit I: Cultural Context of Cognition (3 weeks = 12 hours)

- Perspectives and Paradigm shifts in the conceptions of cognition by drawing upon critical discourse in cultural psychology, anthropology and linguistics with reference to cognition and Education
- Critique of cognitive universalism and scientism as the 'mainstream' view.



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Unit 2: Role of Culture in Psychic Diversity (4 weeks = 16 hours)

- Building a nuanced understanding of the contextualist view of mind with special reference to Vygotsky's Sociocultural-historical framework of human development.
- Understanding cognition as a situated practice by drawing upon the seminal works of contemporary cultural theorists like Cole, Lave, Scribner and Rogoff.
- Interface between socio-cultural, socio-lingual and psychological aspects of cognition
- Cultural-contextual perspective of cognition with particular reference to the multi-cultural and multilingual Indian context.

Unit 3: Children's Thinking, Learning and Schooling (4 weeks = 16 hours)

- Debates and dialectics that revolve around the developmental and cultural differences in the way children think and learn; Intuitive thinking and analytical thinking
- Examining specific aspects of children's thinking such as development of causality, concepts of time, space, mass and number; reasoning and problem solving; relationship between language and thought,

Unit 4: Social Perception and Cognition (4 weeks = 16 hours)

- Developing understanding of alternative frameworks within which children make-sense of their early understanding of scientific and mathematical concepts.
- Human socialization in schools, institutions, social movements diffuse, activate social cognition with reference to language development and processing , logical thinking, and cognitive apprenticeship.

Practicum/ Suggested Projects / Assignments (Any Two)

1. Students are expected to write two positional papers on the basis of their critical understanding of a select writings of Vygotsky and contemporary cultural theorists.
2. Undertake an individually designed project that links their conceptual understanding with school practices as they get enacted and experienced by learners; and some similar applicative assignments as specified in the Course rationale.
3. Research in Culture, cognition and Education: Past lessons and future Challenges in virtual world

Note: On the basis of the above, the teacher may design his/her own relevant projects/ assignments

Essential/ Recommended Readings



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- Bruner, J. S. (2006). In Search of Pedagogy, Volume I and II. NY: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Daniels, H., Lauder, H. and Porter, J. (2009) . Knowledge, Values and Educational Policy: A Critical Perspective. NY: Routledge
- John, R., Grindstaff, L. and Cheng Lo, M. (2015). Handbook of Cultural Sociology. NY: Routledge
- Kityama, S. and Cohen, D. (2007). Handbook of Cultural Psychology. New York: The Guilford Press
- Lachicotte, W. (2009) Identity, agency and social practice in H. Daniels et al (Eds), Educational Theories, Culture and Learning: A Critical Perspective, pp 223-236. NY: Routledge
- Leach, J. and Moon, B. (1999). Learners and Pedagogy. London: Sage Publications.
- Moll, L. C. (1992). Vygotsky and Education : Implications and Applications of Socio-historical Psychology. New York : Cambridge University Press.
- Olson, David R. and Torrance, Nancy (ed.). The Handbook of Education and Human Development : New models of learning, teaching and schooling, Blackwell : Cambridge, 1996.
- Robson, S. and Quinn, S.F. (Eds) (2015). The Routledge Handbook of Young Children's Thinking and Understanding. NY: Routledge
- Rogoff, B. (1981). Schooling and Development of Cognitive Skills. In H. C. Triandis, and A Heron (eds.), Handbook of Cross-cultural Psychology, Vol. IV. Boston : Allyn and Bacon.
- Saraswati, T. S. (ed.). Culture Socialisation and Human Development : Theory, Research and Application in India, Sage : New Delhi, 1999.
- Scribner, S. (1984). The Practice of Literacy : Where Mind and Society Meet. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 433.
- Serpell, R. (1993). Interface between socio-cultural and psychological aspects of cognition. In E. Forman, N. Minick, & A. Stone (Eds.), Contexts for Learning : Socio-cultural dynamics in Children's development. New York : Oxford University Press.
- Shore, B. (1996) Culture in Mind. New York: Oxford University Press
- Shweder, R. A. (1990). Cultural Psychology : What is it ? In J. W. Stigler, R. A. Shweder, & G. Herdt (Eds.), Cultural Psychology. Cambridge, U.K. : Cambridge University Press. Sinha,
- Durganand (1986). Psychology in a Third World Country : The Indian Experience.
- Sternberg R. J. and Wagner, R. K. (1994). Minds in Context : Interactionist Perspective on human intelligence. New York : Cambridge University Press.
- Tryphon, A. and Voneche, J. (1996). Piaget-Vygotsky: The Social Genesis of Thought. Sussex: Psychology Press.

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- Van Der Veer, R., & Valsiner, J. (1991). Understanding Vygotsky : A quest for synthesis. Oxford : Blackwell.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1991). Voice of the mind : A socio-cultural approach to mediated action. Cambridge University Press.

Teaching Learning Resources (Digital and others):

Nil

Teaching Learning Process

The course will be taught through interactive pedagogic methods such as classroom discussion, debates, film discussions, critical media analysis, collaborative learning tasks which enhance reading comprehension of core writings in the area and innovative projects. Reflective expression and learning will be encouraged.

Assessment Method

The assessment will be formative in nature and will factor in student participation. Individual and group tasks and assignments will be given. Summative evaluation will be done through end-semester examination.

Key words: Culture, Cognition, Education



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