



## TEACHING OF CULTURAL VALUES THROUGH THE CARTOON FILMS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*During the past it was responsibility of the ' parents, grandfather and grandmother to teach moral values and culture to the children in the family. They used to tell the legends and stories from 'The Ramayana' and 'The Mahabharata'. Now a days this role is replaced by the most valuable audio-visual aid i.e. Television. Children mostly like watching cartoons and animated films or serials. The role of cartoon films is considered as significant as the elders in developing their mind towards culture. They do not watch cartoons only from the point of entertainment but as a medium to nurture cultural values. Therefore, a cartoon film like 'Chhota Bheem' remains a way of not only an entertainment but of education of culture and ideological messages. Key Words- cartoon films, children culture, moral values, ideological message.*



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### INTRODUCTION

Children, younger's and the elders are the ingredients not only of the family structure but also of the society. We look at the children as the pillars of the country because the positive and constructive feature of the country is dependent on the children. They are called the valuable assets of their parents as well as the society. They are the tools to lead the culture further effectively. So the children are part and parcel of cultural institutions as the skin of the palm. Culture is the sound base of an individual personality and well-established society. Without culture the life of the person and society comes to an end.

### Culture and different mediums

In the past role of parents, teachers and relatives was considered as poignant in the process of learning and teaching culture and moral codes of the society in joint family system, where more than 10 members of the family live together homogenously. Their needs were limited. They were not self-centered. There was interaction regarding any work or family activity among them. Their approach towards each other was as the soul member of the family. Even the grandfather or grandmother had been bestowed the responsibility of teaching culture and moral values to the children by telling them stories which have cultural or moral base. Bennett believes that children must hear moral stories in order to develop good values and moral literacy. (1995) In the present time there is growth and development of science and technology in all spheres of life. Resultantly the disintegration of the joint family system began. Everyone started thinking about his own family and children. Due to this, television has taken over the role of storytelling. The role of grandfather, grandmother and the relatives is replaced by the television. Television is one of the significant mediums to preserve culture. Children are more fascinated and hypnotized by the television programmes and animated programmes like cartoon films. On their return to home from school, throwing their sack they put on the television to watch

their favourite cartoon films. 'Chhota Bheem' 'Tom and Jerry' and 'Micky Mouse' are the programmes which are enjoyed by the children. As per the survey done by Ernst and Young's newsletter 'Newsreel' 'animated content typically makes it easier for broadcasters to capture the attention of children by building and imaginary world of them. (2012)

Generally stories of the past events are narrated to the children to develop their mind and positive approach towards their life. As the time changes the stories on present events are also narrated to explain useful values and morals. An active role of television is largely witnessed in teaching how to interact with others, solve individual difficulties appearing in the life as impediments and making friends of different surroundings. Despite this they also learn decision making skills and plans for the future best. Therefore television does not remain a part of entertainment but mirror to the children which reflects socio-cultural activities of the family and the society. The children can develop imaginative and creative power of the mind and become more efficient learners through watching television.

The area of children's entertainment has been enhanced fastly during the post modern period. Cartoon channel was the only source of children's entertainment in few years ago. The new channels such as Khushi T.V, Hungmma, and spacatoon are recently launched which are mainly dedicated to the children's community. These channels are prepared basically for the children of below six. In 2010 B.B.C. also started C Beebies channel which at great height satisfy the children's need of entertainment. The new channel, sonic has been landed on the port of entertainment in the year 2011 for the children who run between ten to seventeen years. India is the country where people belonging to different regional languages live together. Their children had language barrier in understanding T.V serials. So the demand for the programmes in Hindi and regional languages is fulfilled by the television channels.



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Children's television channels like Cartoon Network India, Disney India, and Pogo channels give various types of programmes which explain interesting things about gender equality. They provide programmes such as live action series, animated series, short series, and short films for children of different age groups. In all these three channels are dominated by male characters and a whole plot of the film moves around them. It is not true to say that they provide the children stories which are full of only fantasy. The television channels give the children an ideological thought about what it means a girl or a boy, a woman or a man. The children can get their world-view because of the environmental impacts. The television makes them to know and be aware of significant images and distant views. In this regard Gotz says 'children deeply incorporate these images into their inner pictures, especially where the representation of gender is concerned. (2005)

### Plot of 'Chhota Bheem'

Animated film series 'Chhota Bheem' can be reviewed from cultural and moral values. In this film Bheem, a nine year old boy in the imaginary city of Dholakpur shows adventures which consists of one hundred twenty episodes. The story of the film is narrated not only in the regional languages like Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Telgu, Bengali and Kannada but also in the international language, English. The complete plot of the film series moves around the main character of Bheem his chums and their competition with Kalia and his friends. He is presented by the director as the brave, strong and intelligent. Kalia Pahelwan, an eleven year old rough fellow is shown as Bheem's competitor. He feels very jealous on learning Bheem's popularity. Kalia and his friends Dholu and Bholu are always busy in preparing a plot to defeat Bheem. But their attempts are in vain. Bheem is loved by all the children because all the time he appears to help them and tries to get them free from the critical situations. So he becomes a public figure. Some wicked persons like evil demon Kirmada, Kichhak and Mangal Singh are defeated by Bheem. He is praised not only Dholakpur people but also by Raja

Indravarma for his victory and is expected to marry princess Indumati in coming days. Bheem is presented as a hero and heir of Dholakpur throne.

### Definitions of culture

Dictionary meaning of culture is training of the mind; refinement of taste. Indians look at the culture as integral, spiritual and moral. From Radha Krishnan's point of view 'Culture is a living entity without Moksha or self realization as its goal'. (Bande, 2012:189) According to Mahatma Gandhi "culture is true Civilization" Civilization, he said, "is the mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty". (1912:189) Culture teaches a way how to respect each other. There is no question of superiority and inferiority of culture. Their aim is same. Nobody claims that particular kind of culture is perfect one or has approached to its goal. Every culture is trying to approach towards the door of perfection. If somebody wants to protect his culture it does not mean that he hates other's culture. One culture respects other cultures and permeates to grow and spread in its own way. It is interesting to identify that how the cultural values are depicted in 'Chhota Bheem' by its producer and director.

### Cultural and moral values in 'Chhota Bheem'

The children effectively learn many things through observation and listening. Listening to moral stories is an important part of moral education. A child acquires an idea about how vital it is to live with good qualities and get a better comprehension of moral life by reading or listening moral stories'. (Narvaez 2002) There is keen relationship between observation and observer's action. The observer's response to what he observes is his action. The process of observation speaks more than the words. It makes the observer to make his impression about what he observes. It is his individual activity which prepares his own ability of thinking. The protagonist in 'Chhota Bheem' gives a valuable lesson to the children about how to solve a difficult situation when they are unfortunately caught into it. Honesty and friendship are the significant aspects of human life.



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According to Rinku and et al 'Chhota Bheem' teaches the value of honesty and importance of friendship. (Rinku and Arvind, 2016:30)

There are forty episodes in the cartoon film and the title song of this film has fifty-four shots which are chained one after another. The twelve out of them show events of good behaviour such as helping people, claiming greater importance of responsibility, protection of friends and others. The producer of the film is shown very much attached to positive values of present time by showing kindness to the people as well as animals. While doing so characters are portrayed with some distinguished features like generosity, tolerance and responsibility. Though the film depicts moral values it also leads children to a world of fantasy. The film makers are conscious about the fact that if a film only teaches culture and moral values sometimes it compels the children to feel bore and monotonous. So it is shown that the protagonist gets power and strength by eating 'laddoos' The scene may mislead the children but it is necessary to make them to realize that such scenes are presented before the eyes of the audience only for entertainment. The purpose of teaching moral values through entertainment is properly served.

The film is made interesting by presenting incidents like fighting, bullying and gender discrimination. The protagonist Bheem attempts to protect friends and people by fighting against villains and animals. Due to muscle power Bheem is able to solve problems. Such scenes may leave impact on the children's mind that might be right. It makes them to realize that one must need strength to overtake the critical situation. They also compel to understand that it is obligatory to them to become stout and sturdy while facing the problem. While watching such scenes it is also important to realize that fighting is not the only way of solving problems. The correct way of communication is also a way which leads one to solve critical situation. There is no need to become very aggressive when they face simple problem in their routine life. Apparently, children try to imitate the same way and they find in

danger. This behaviour is against Gandhiji's principle of 'ahimsa'. The producer's purpose is to bring positive values out of negative scenes. The way of direct teaching of culture, way of life, moral values and attitude does not leave effective impact on the mind of the children. The children can learn more through observation than reading and listening. Therefore the producer of film has to use a device like fantasy in short scenes.

## CONCLUSION

As the year passes on methods of teaching and learning of any subject change. This change has to be warmly welcomed finding that there is no more substitute to it. It is very difficult for the one to trample the same path to serve the purpose which sometimes has possibility of failure. So the physical learning of culture and moral values from the lips of parents, teachers and relatives has been ceased. The direct method of learning does not find more effect in the modern time. Through such religious films the children can realize what is right and wrong. They can learn to take side of the truth which can contribute lot their character building. On watching cartoon films they are able to differentiate between traditional as well as modern ways of learning. The children can be aware of the new technology of learning. This film may be considered as edutainment. Watching the protagonist Bheem they understand the importance of physical strength. One can hope that children can take due care of their health. The attitude of cooperative nature may be developed by observing Bheem's efforts of protecting people from the clutches of villain and animals. This film can be taken as information of history (Fairy tales, Folk tales). Modern technology is used as the effective method because of learning impact on the mind of children is forever.

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