

What aspects of Karnataka culture and heritage you are proud of and how can you leverage this for your own growth and success?

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The Western culture, with its philosophy of freedom and equality, has achieved technological and economic development while undergoing a gradual metamorphosis of people, cultures, and traditions. While Western culture's goal is achievement, the goal of Karnataka culture is to develop personal and social qualities.

Family Traditions:

Home is where one learns and practices family traditions. My work ethic, respect for others, and foresee other's needs have been the result of my mother's, "Well, in Kannada culture..." adage.

My parents always found great pleasure in serving our guests. Everyone at home would greet the guests by introducing themselves and enquiring about their wellbeing. I find this hospitality as the fundamental behavioral principle that is of greatest value in social life. This would help me take care of my guests as well as propagate Karnataka tradition.

I got confused when my mother said, "Purandara Dasaru." It took me quite sometime to understand why a plural designation would be given to a person. In Western society it seems natural to treat everyone equally and use their first names to address them. The greatness of Kannada culture lies in attaching respect to a person's name. This notation of respect makes me proud of my culture.

In industrialized countries there are many geriatric centers where elderly people are abandoned by their children or relatives. Let us look at my experiences in Karnataka:

1. A farmer with heavy debt brought his father into a hospital for a health check-up. He explained his financial plight, promised to pay after selling his crop, and requested the doctor not to tell his financial problem to his father.
2. My maternal uncle's maid works around the clock to support her old parents and her brother.

Living together and taking care of elders are hallmarks of Karnataka culture. The above examples have created an inerasable impact on my personal philosophy. As a result, I intend to take care of my parents.

Literary Works:

I am proud of our rich, impressive Kannada literature. The literary works that have made a great impact in developing my personality are:

1. The story of Punyakoti highlights the importance of honesty, honoring promises, and selflessness. This story serves as a resource to develop my personal principles.
2. The poem “*Jaya Bharat Jananiya Tanujate*” evokes patriotic feelings as the vivid pictures of Karnataka come to mind. These feelings ignite my desire to serve Kannada people and Karnataka.
3. Life lessons and experiences in Vachana literature guide me to lead an ethical life and achieve union with God. The philosophical statements and vachanas that have greatly influenced my character, behavior, and outlook are:

a. ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸ - All my pride, love, self-esteem, and aspirations merge into duty. Whenever I am not motivated, this statement reminds me of my duties and obligations.

b. The seven principles indicated in this vachana build a moral foundation for my life and success:

ಕಳಬೇಡ, ಕೊಂಬೇಡ, ಹುಸಿಯ ನುಡಿಯಲುಬೇಡ

ತನ್ನ ಬಣ್ಣಿಸಬೇಡ, ಇದಿರ ಹಳಿಯಲುಬೇಡ

ಮುನಿಯಬೇಡ, ಅನ್ಯರಿಗೆ ಅಸಹ್ಯ ಪಡಬೇಡ

ಇದೇ ಅಂತರಂಗ ಶುದ್ಧಿ, ಇದೇ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಶುದ್ಧಿ

ಇದೇ ನಮ್ಮ ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಮದೇವರನೊಲಿಸುವ ಪರಿ

c. The following vachana forms the basis for my communication and truthfulness:

ನುಡಿದರೆ ಮುತ್ತಿನ ಹಾರದಂತರಬೇಕು

ನುಡಿದರೆ ಮಾಣಿಕ್ಯದ ದೀಪ್ತಿಯಂತರಬೇಕು

ನುಡಿದರೆ ಸ್ವಟಿಕದ ಸಲಾಕೆಯಂತರಬೇಕು

ನುಡಿದರೆ ಲಿಂಗಮೆಚ್ಚಿ ಅಪುದಪುದನೆಬೇಕು

ನುಡಿಯೊಳಗಾಗಿ ನೆದೆಯದಿದ್ದವರ ಮೆಚ್ಚಿನಮ್ಮ ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಮದೇವ

4. The essence of Kannada proverbs guides me to lead a well-organized and ethical life. Some proverbs that I always remember are:

a. ಅಡಿಕೆಗೆ ಹೋದ ಮಾನ ಆನೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟರೂ ಬರೋಲ್ಲ

The reputation lost for a betel nut cannot be regained by donating an elephant

b. ಆಸೆಯೇ ದುಃಖಕ್ಕೆ ಮೂಲ

Source of sorrow is greed

c. ಹಾಸಿಗೆ ಇದ್ದಟ್ಟು ಕಾಲು ಬಾಚು

Live within one's means.

d. ಕೈ ಕೆಸಕಾದರೆ ಬಾಯಿ ಮೊಸರು

Hard work begets rewards.

Exemplary Personalities:

The path and success of a person are influenced by the personalities he/she considers as role models. On solving the problem of poverty in India, Gandhi's view was "Industrialize and Perish", whereas Vishweshwarayya's view was "Industrialize or Perish." Vishweshwarayya's brilliance, foresight, efficiency, integrity, love for people, administrative skills, contributions, and service to public serve as models for my life and professional success.

In addition to above people, I am impressed by the bravery, compassion, and leadership of Veera Rani Kittur Chennamma, and try to follow her dynamic qualities to succeed in my life.

Melodious Carnatic Music:

When I was younger, I was much more inclined toward western music. But as I continued my study of Carnatic music, I realized that Carnatic music has a deeper understanding of 'nodal' values and their interrelations, established by "Gamaka", the soul of Carnatic music. The most distinctive characteristic of Carnatic music is that it is purely melodic where as western music is harmonic. My interest in music has encouraged me to learn classical singing, violin, and saxophone. Though saxophone is not a Karnataka musical instrument, I wanted to apply it to Carnatic music as Shree Kadri Gopinath has done. In a cultural program, I have successfully played a vachana on saxophone. Music keeps me physically agile, mentally balanced, and supports my mathematical inquisitiveness.

Marvels of Architecture:

Elaborately carved ceiling panels at Aihole (Brahman design), motifs at Pattadakalla (Nagari principle), and magnificently excavated cave interiors at Badami are distinctive features of Chalukya architecture.

Elaborately decorated pillars, sculptures of huge animals, life-size Gods, humans, and mandapas depict unique features of Vijayanagar architecture.

The Hoysala temples at Belur, Halebidu and Somanathpur have a star shaped plan, bell shaped towers, and extensively carved entrances.

As a hobby, I find pleasure in understanding architectural concepts and artist's expressions. I would apply these architectural concepts to different fields.

Conclusion:

My values and beliefs acquired from Karnataka culture are deeply rooted in my heart, mind, body, and soul. Understanding cultural values through experience enables me to build self-esteem, confidence, self-worth, and self-growth. These characteristics help me to contribute to Karnataka culture.