Chapter 29

The Ethics Driven Spatial Management in Multiculturalism through ICTs

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ABSTRACT

The new inclusive social dynamics is refocusing the intricacies of formation of social structures. The process of globalization is unifying various cultures leading to the creation of Multiculturalists society. As a corollary to this various ethnic groups are expanding their boundaries to form the larger social structures. The concept of spatial management relates to the management of spaces of various ethnocultural formations into single social unit. This merging can be facilitated by building up mutual trust and respect for each other, which in turn can be reinforced by communicating with the help of Information and Communication Technologies. Hence the role of ICT in enhancing the process of unification is crucial as it pierces through the tightened boundaries of ethnic groups to develop the newer identities. This unveiled dimension is explored in this article, which focuses on the use of the technology in social reconfiguration.

INTRODUCTION

The social relevance of Information and Communication Technologies in reducing the value-gaps prevalent in different ethnically configured societies is the less explored research area, which needs attention from academia. The divisive tones set by the strict adherences to respective sets of ethnicity are leading to alienation causing turbulent undercurrents. The concept of ‘universal whole’ has been thrashed out in the recent writings on moral philosophy as the important component of constructing Universal Ethics (see Rachels, 1995; Fleishacker, 1999; Goertzel, 2004). The man-machine interface to build values is yet to find a place in academics. The role of ICT is very distinct in achieving the goal of constructing the Universal ethics and can be identified at three levels, first preparing Database of philosophical, professional and personal values on the basis of
doctrines perpetuated from time to time; second applying Data mining to excavate the needed ethical patterns and third converting excavated ethics into adaptable value packages. Hence in the times when ethics are eroded despite the Data material available on web nets, reflect the inability of scribbled doctrines to reduce the gap of philosophy and practicing ethics. The ICT interventions can help in locating areas of feasibility amongst various ethnic groups to convert differences into productive alliances due to pervasive nature of such technologies.

The Multiculturalism often conceived as an applied ideology of racial, cultural and ethnic diversity within the demographics of specified place, surfaced in 1970s did provide some normative solutions for accepting the coexistence of various communities in a particular society. It had been adopted as the official policy in many Western nations. This is most debatable discourse, which came under criticism by questioning certain fundamentals and impacts of such policy. (Blainey 1984; Cliteur,1999; Ellian 2002). It is clear that inclusion is not possible within some parochial forms of liberalism (Modood 2007).

The social structures are constellation of various cultures aligned to form the ethical axis with which a particular social identity is associated. However the proliferation of technology in every sphere is building up renewed systems with much larger perspectives congregate to form a universal ethical axis. It will be interesting to explore the possibilities of transforming the communities where people hold on to captivity of their belief systems so much so that they refuse to respond to any movement of evolving a ‘universal ethics’, because they never evinced any inclination to merging process. It will be pertinent to see the effects of the two simultaneous processes one of retaining individual societal identities and another of merging individual identities into a ‘universal whole’ in the process of societal restructuring at the global level. The major efforts are needed to evolve a conceptual framework of unifying different ethnic value patterns through effective spatial management by providing respectful spaces to communities within the integrated socio-ethical frames. Two means of evolving universal ethics are religious faith and rational thought (Gellner 1992; Ahmed 1992). As autonomous moral agents we have personal responsibility to constantly question the veracity of our own beliefs. The cultural diversity that now surrounds us helps us in this process, by equipping us to obtain an insiders’ feel for world views other than our own (Sheikh,2000). James H. Svara, posits three ways to resolve the ethical dilemmas first, duty ethics or deontology, applies rules to achieve justice; second utilitarianism focuses upon the greatest good for greatest number and third virtue ethics argues that the moral sense should guide the ethical choices (Svara, 1997). The deliberations regarding unification have been brought out in many forums but convertibility of these into practical domains through ICT has not been in focus. This presentation is an addition to visualize ethics as the tool of cohesion with the help of technology.

The technological dimension thus remains at the pinnacle of this analysis, as it is the essential tool of unifying various cultures by perforating the tight boundaries via circulating messages with more humane contents. The unwieldy system will become non-existent either due to not responding or if there is slow pace of response to the humane purpose. In spatial management all three P’s are important viz., pace, perspective, and projection. The trajectory of social formation at world level is needed to design future. The genesis of future knowledge society lies in evolving a new social matrix based on symbiotic relationship between various ethnic communities to occupy space within integrated whole. This in turn requires perfecting the human minds to nurture relationships beyond the self-driven interests.

The social structures replicate the peoples’ psyche in the form of bonding that gives the society a definitive shape and also the fluidity to keep the pace with changes through adaptations. The