

Influence of Traditional belief System on Ecological Sustainability: A Study in Rarh Bengal, West Bengal

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Abstract

A universal holistic method that draws from sacred or cultural benefits and beliefs to environmental safeguard is important if we aspire to produce to ourselves and future generations a chance to enjoy their lives in peace with nature. Thus, at a moment during ecological degradation and deforestation have been taking place at a frightening rate throughout the globe, in India, thousands of patches of natural vegetation dispersed throughout the country are maintained almost in the initial condition. Almost all the spiritual communities and tribal communities recognize some plants as sacred in origin, and crucial in religious functions. The indigenous folk all over the world have collected knowledge overtimes, which in conventional set up allows them to exist in equilibrium with their environment and this helps them to settle with the resources for their subsistence. So, high time has arrived when it is compulsory to step progressing to protect our mother earth from all individual exercises which deteriorate our environment. Only science and technology cannot be accused of this degradation of the environment. It should, therefore, be not only significant but also necessary for all to understand the fundamental postulates for ecological restoration and sustainable sustenance. Further, such a knowledge system which is believed as an Indigenous knowledge system (IKS) is handed down through oral tradition as well as through several sacred customs, cultural practices, and beliefs in which they survive embodied.

Key words: *Folklore, Environmental dimension, Environmental Sustainability, Santhal community, Totemic Belief*

Introduction:

The purpose of the environment in acquiring subsistence and sustainable development is imperative. A sustainable development commencing to more innumerable perfection requires environmental stewardship intends a sense of common concern to be spearheaded by human beings only. In this esteem, it can be declared that nature is worshipped in India since ancient times to build a friendly connection connecting it and other living beings. Man worship land, mountain, rivers, seas, plants, and trees, birds and animals. It is nothing but a regard to nature

that sustains and produces our nourishment. In this fascinating exploration of man's advancement, nature has shown to be the true associate of man; and relationships with nature were symbiotic and favorable. But with the progress of science and technology, the connection between humans and nature and man and other life molds in the environment got evolved from symbiotic to predatory as a man remained tilted towards the value of a height of fundamental resources^[6]. Thus, in today's society, we face a range of environmental problems, such as deforestation, global warming mitigation in biodiversity, etc. Our future improvement is confined and restrained by the increasing population, global climate change. Therefore, for the inevitable development of society, we must sustainably seek growth.

PURPOSE:

- I. The objective of this study was to provide the foundation of knowledge to draw and imagine folklore from an environmental aspect.
- II. The research examined the distinct genre of folklore and how it is recognized, estimated its viability in ecological sustainability and drew some suggestions for extension education.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- I. To highlight the folklore of the Rarh region,
- II. To find out how indigenous knowledge can be used to react to present environmental matters
- III. To know how the people of the study area conserve the environment through their folk approach,
- IV. To understand the intergenerational flow of traditional knowledge about the ecology and its influence on the people,
- V. To understand how folks of the Rarh area interpret nature and how nature performs an important role in their day to day life,

METHODOLOGY:

1. Sampling: To investigate the role of the Folklore in Ecological Sustainability an introductory survey was conducted in these areas. Information about this Folklore Approach has been obtained by interviewing the elderly folk of the villages, governmental and non-governmental offices, after obtaining prior knowledgeable consent, and literature sources (books and scientific journal articles). Data concerning Folklore and environmental awareness has also been accumulated from the encompassing indigenous communities.
2. Interview- The interviews have been dependant on a diverse level of persons relating to grassroots people who have traditional knowledge.

3. Observation: The various kind of folklore such as totem, taboos, belief system, customs, technologies, rituals and its practices of the people of Rarh Bengal have been witnessed in the selected study areas.
4. Documentation: Digital camera has been applied for documentation purposes.
5. Secondary Sources: The published books, journals are used for data collection.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- In the book of ‘The Cultural Cradle of Biodiversity’, P.S. Ramakrishnan outlines the Human-Nature connection through the ages where he has sought to highlight the folk practices and told to us to acquire from the past, accommodate the most reliable folk practices availing with them and slowly establish upon it for environment protection. In other words, he has observed that biodiversity should be preserved not only for the well being of the locals but also for the human society at large.
- Ivan Illich, a prominent scholar of radical education, clarifies that modern commercial development is “a method whereby earlier efficient peoples are disinherited of their traditional skills and are formed to rely on doctors for their well-being, instructors for their schooling, television for their entertainment and employers for their maintenance” (Giddens, 89:428). In an another word, instead of relying on their local endurance mechanisms, indigenous people are controlled to exotic modes of subsistence. Hence, informally collected information is marked down upon while the stress is put on formal means of information diffusion. Consequently, communications such as television and radio are provided more reliance than indigenous methods.
- The research of Mandisa Ngwane, a Geography instructor serves to relocate folklore investigations in mainstream education. She considers knowledge of plants and linked property of this knowledge with time, education, and gender. Ngwane claims that the growing detachment of people from their environment assumes the culture of oral communication of knowledge about the significance of trees to people. She is uniformly concerned about the untapped environmental knowledge that she declares is controlled by the elderly rural folk and is of possible value to the more growing generations, (EEASA & SADC REEP, 1999).
- The report about the Western districts i.e. Bankura, Birbhum, Purulia, Barddhaman and Paschim Medinipur districts are elaborately explained in the work “Barddhaman Zilla Sankha”, “Birbhum Zilla Sankha”, “Purulia Zilla Sankha”, “Medinipur Zila Sankha” and “Bankura Zilla Sankha” sequentially published by the Government of West Bengal (January 2004). “Bengal District Gazetteers: Birbhum”, “Bengal District Gazetteers: Midnapore”, “Bengal District Gazetteers: Bankura”, by L. S. S. O’Malley (1911) are amazing another significant book that produces immense information about the districts.

“Paschim Banger Sanskriti, Vol I-IV” by B. Ghosh (2010) is extremely helpful and enlightening and has reported information about the significant places of the districts.

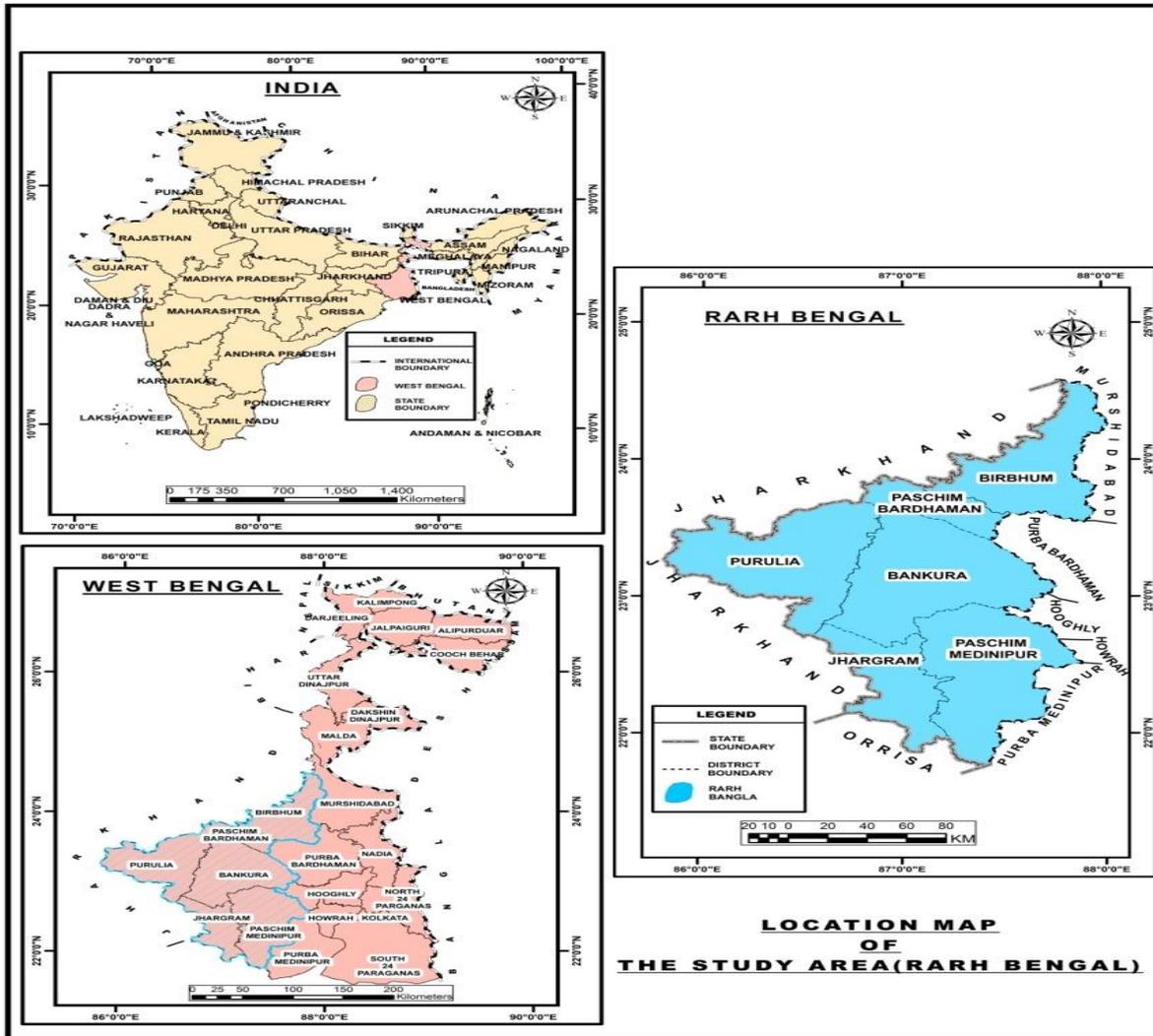
- In the piece of Sacred Groves: Myths, Beliefs, and Biodiversity Conservation—A Case Study from Western Himalaya, India, writers attempt to highlight the purpose of Legends, Faith, several practices on Biodiversity restoration. They estimate the performance of the sacred grove on Environmental conservation.
- In the book “Loko Biswas O Loko Sanskar”, the writer has made a significant effort on Folk Belief and superstition. He has provided a clear idea between Folk belief and superstition. He has accumulated various folk beliefs related to rain and cultivation.

Literature reveals that Folklore or traditional practices have predicaments consequences on environmental perspectives and can, therefore, act a reliable role in ecological conservation practices. Folklore in the form of stories, proverbs, verses, ballads, dances, and other music and song can be highly illuminative of man and environment association. Folklore clarifies some of the possible reasons for our current conflict towards both environmental as well as social conservation and it highlights the potentiality for a sustainable future.

Study Area:

The Rarh region is located in between the River Ganges in the east and the large Chota Nagpur Plateau on the west. This field mostly includes the lower Gangetic plains to the south of the Ganges and the west of one of its main distributaries: Bhagirathi-Hooghly River. The Rarh region (210 47' N to 240 35' N latitude and 85049' E to 88025' E longitude) is a geographical area situated South-western side of West Bengal which includes districts namely Birbhum, Paschim Bardhaman, Purulia, Bankura, Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram. Usually, the Rarh area may be separated into two sections: Northern Rarh and Southern Rarh. River Damodar is appearing as the barrier between these two sections. The Northern Rarh comprises parts of Murshidabad district, Birbhum district, Paschim Bardhaman, and Purba Bardhaman while the Southern Rarh comprises most of the districts namely Bankura, Haora, Purulia, Hugli, Paschim Medinipur, and Purba Medinipur.

Historically, a report in Digvijayaprakasha establishes Rarh as from the west of the Ganges in the south to the north of the Damodar River. Even though most advanced recorded documents separate Rarh as East Rarh and West Rarh, later reports commencing from the 9th and 10th century AD distributes it to Daksina Radha (Northern Rarh) and Uttara Radha (Southern Rarh). Nonetheless, as indicated from later records, this later separation (North/South) is not based on geographical extension but two political states. Southern Rarh added various huge settlements of the present areas of Hooghly, Howrah, and Burdwan in West Bengal, or significant parts of West Bengal lying between the rivers Ajay and Damodar. The Ajay River is normally considered as making the boundary between Northern and Southern Rarh.



What is folklore?

The folklore is the storehouse of unwritten literature that incorporates folk stories, myths, legends, mysteries, folk song narratives. It also includes folk art and folk dance. The word folklore is described by some scholars as to the knowledge of an assemblage of people. The traditional folklore shows that it is an oral culture. The idea of folklore developed in Europe midway in the nineteenth century. It suggested culture, antique customs and sustaining festivals, old ditties and songs, antiquated myths, fables and tales, and proverbs. Ascertain stories unusually reached the tests of general sense and practice, folklore also referred irrationality: beliefs in spirits, demons, and fairies; it led to a belief in signs, amulets, and charms. From the view of the suave literati, who invented the idea of folklore, these two properties of traditionality and irrationality could concern only to peasant or old societies. Hence they attached to folklore a

third quality: rurality. The country and the open area of the wilderness were folklore's breeding area. Man's tight connection with nature in villages and hunting groups was held the final beginning of his myth and poetry^[2]. As an outcome of the individual experience with nature, folklore itself was considered to be a natural feeling of man before city, commerce, civilization, and culture contaminated the purity of his life.

Folklore also reveals the purposes, values, and aims of people. The definitions taken collectively, explain how folklore heals in the oral exchange of knowledge in a non-literate society. It also produces a world where explanations that the world of reality refuses, are given and are to be discovered within stories wherein the weak control over the strong, where the darkness appears an avenger or where many other of the less favorable conditions of life are determined in ways that are not these of work a day world. Some details about a distinct genre of folklore are summarily described below.

Folklore plays many roles. Myths describe the world and present a foundation for rituals and beliefs. Stories are considered as a word-of-mouth record of group history. Proverbs decorate discussion with the pointed statement. Riddles assist by helping as a test of wits. From legends, folk draws all conceptions essential to their existence. Folklore considers both its common and social settings. From a great collection of myths are absorbed descriptions of material culture, spiritual belief, life cycle, etc. a folktale that includes features of an earlier phase in the records of the people.

Folk Belief as a tool of Environmental Sustainability:

Belief systems have a significant influence on environmental views and can, therefore, perform a significant role in ecological preservation practices. Looking into belief practices is effective in creating the combined unconscious of a society, that is, the underlying values of a culture: their difficulties, fears, goals, motives, and morals. People depend on biodiversity as a buffer against ecological disharmony. The value and protection of diverse animals, plants, sacred groves, etc by the ethnic people through the Folkloric approach rely on their cultural value. Rarh Bengal is known as extremely strong in plant biodiversity as well as in ethnic heterogeneity and has an indigenous knowledge. It is inhabited by the greatest amount of trees and they convey an elaborate life dependent on the forest. Plants are utilized in various ways either in worshipping or in the improvement of human life. In every human society, it is observed that worship is made with traditional customs for the improvement of human life^[2]. Maximum no. of tribal communities worships their deities from the moment of birth to mourning death. Tribal folklore is decorated with magico-religious beliefs. They believe that some gods and deities reside on the trees in the forest. If they do not show mark respect to them their full clan will be destroyed. Thus they preserve the plants which they consider sacred for social, cultural and spiritual

purposes. Their rituals, customs, and other social perspectives are intimately amalgamated with the encompassing vegetation conserved on the religious area.

The extra care manifested by the community has significantly committed to protecting the spiritual plants intact and in good form thereby keeping a full variety of biodiversity that is housed in it. There is a complex link between indigenous and biological diversity. All over the world, the indigenous people have protected the biodiversity with which they have a symbiotic relationship. It has been an indisputable fact that the knowledge of indigenous people is invaluable in the present-day context of natural diversity conservation and its sustainable utilization. Plants have a unique role in the spiritual and cultural traditions of every rural society. Various religious and supernatural beliefs and folklore help in the inhibition of the destruction of plants. There are certain instances of tree worship traditions in several parts of the world under all rituals and beliefs.

There is a continuous recognition all over the world that still there are so much to discover from the people who are rooted within the universe and whose sense of cooperation, honor, and exchange with their encompassing ecosystem not yet driven by market forces or by the conventional sense of individualism and instant knowledge under the contemporary flow of globalization^[5]. This presents us to some areas to create or rethink people's belief practice. Folk beliefs may be holy or secular, as a dimension of folk tradition in perception as well as spreading conservation to our natural resources or even natural diversities which are considered as the advantage concern on the global environmental agenda. Each culture has beliefs that were collected during the method which was encountered until they arrived at the monotheistic religion and were provided in their thoughts in the form of design thoughts and rituals-ceremonies. These beliefs were designated to various names and estimated by different disciplines. For instance, the beliefs and customs which were denominated as temporal, unreasoning, superstition by the theologians, remained assessed as public beliefs by the anthropologists, sociologists, and folklorists^[13]. While it became a question for the theologian to investigate, evaluate the received religion/bookish religion (Islam, Christianity) from different aspects, separate the spiritual and nonreligious, religiousness and temporal, unreasoning and irrationality; the folklorist or the anthropologist investigated and assessed the maintaining beliefs as well as the existing ones, the effect, and function of these ideas in the human life.

The beliefs which are received from the past, updated according to the requirements of the era and believed as "a new religion" are discussed here; however, as well as the received divine belief and extreme of its bookish provisions, the folklore deals with beliefs which associate with it from time to time and are usually encountered as belief and tradition in daily life^[10]. In a word, the beliefs which are provided in the common vision as an inheritance from the past do not take the kind of a new religion, in other words, the kind of a religion that is designated holy religion today, according to the requirements of the era. These may confer restructures, changes, diversifications according to geography, age, and society; nevertheless, people do not become a systematical religion. The diversification event of a difference in the divine religion almost does not exist. Because the perfect religion has a book and a prophet. Its

rules are inalterable; but, while spiritual terms, the holy book cannot be altered, there might be some diversifications in the practices, due to the interpretation variations.

Public beliefs are unreasoning; because relevant rules cannot be performed during their processes of understanding and practicing and their reasons cannot be questioned. For example, Right foot is used while exiting or entering the house.

The door threshold is not a place to sit on. Fingernails should not be cut at night. Why? The answer to this question may not usually be enough; because such a variety of practices and beliefs constitute a belief and ritual that are traditionally practiced, internalized from the person/persons around as a statement of practice. Here we should keep in mind that no matter magical or beginning, public beliefs are traditional^[12]. Because each belief and practice can become a tradition, as long as they are changed from generation to generation and remained alive. In this manner, belief and practice gain character, at the same time sacredness and consequently incontestability. The belief and practice of a person are the repetitions of what has already been done and supposed (the archetype in the common memory) by the person.

The sacred is linked to the spiritual, but it is not an equal thing. The incontestability of the view appears from its divinity and the event that it indicates a secret power that frightens people and some prohibitions. The fear in the subconsciousness “means appreciated, honored and immortal as the seeming sacred. In the public culture, the sacred is the supreme power and it indicates a purpose.

Some classes can seem or appear like superstition or folk belief, but we can classify them separately. What superstition and folk belief have in common, and how we might use them reciprocally, is: individually is a belief, method, or procedure based on known or unconscious assumptions; further, they share the kind “cause/sign, result” where something each causes or indicates different form.

This is one example where defining a class by how it’s structured can be valuable.

Folk Belief as a Means of Plant and Animal Conservation

- ✓ To kill a Pigeon by Pregnant Women is strictly prohibited.
- ✓ To kill Snake is strictly prohibited.
- ✓ If anybody destroys Bombax ceiba tree, blackboard tree, Banyan tree, she or he would die soon.
- ✓ If anybody cut the growing plant, the effects would be worse.
- ✓ The killing of the snake is not at all good.
- ✓ The Coconut tree has been taken as the clan of Brahmins, so the destruction of this plant is prohibited among the people of Rarh Bengal.
- ✓ If anyone Catch of Firefly insect, he or she would be suffered from Fever.
- ✓ The killing of Squirrel is the same as killing Brahmins.
- ✓ It is said to not to burn the leaves of trees.
- ✓ If anybody kills any Cat, he or she would have to pay the same amount of Gold of the weight of the Cat.

- ✓ Arrange the wedding of two frogs to please rain gods.
- ✓ There is a prohibition to harm the Banyan tree.
- ✓ The killing of wild Goose, Peacock, Cow is prohibited.
- ✓ The pregnant woman should not eat tortoise.
- ✓ The pregnant woman should not take betel leaves by tearing, if she does so, her baby would bear as a cripple.

Totemism

Apart from nature as a complex, the indigenous people have also gathered themselves with the creatures, plants in the order of 'Totem'. 'Totem' was their God, and they made atonement to please their totem for the interest. Thus the struggle for self-preservation became the kind of clan protection.

Totemic Belief

The presence of totemic belief also plays a meaningful role in supporting biodiversity. The totem is recognized to be the beginner of the tribe and every member is linked to him. It is suggested that there is some spiritual and mystic relationship among the member of the same totem and that the totem guards the social group in tough times, threatens the members about the coming danger and also predicts the future accident^[41]. Numerous tribes demand to have a strange or mischievous relationship with some physical object, namely plants, animals, etc. It is a number of material objects which a savage regards with superstitious regard, considering that there exists between him and each and every member of the clans an intimate and completely special relation.

The kinship between a person and his totem is mutually benevolent, the totem preserves the man and the man shows his reverence for the totem in numerous ways, by not killing it if it is an animal, and not cutting or gathering it if it is planted. A tribe discovers its root in an animal. Some tribes get their roots from some plants as well^[9]. Mystical animal from which a tribe discovers its root is its Totem⁹. This Totem is really divine for the tribe. Its figure is normally recorded on parts of the body of the people referring to that tribe. The tribe is not permitted to harm that animal except on particularly any special and divine occasions. If an animal of Totem dies, its cremation is taken out. Its skin is worn out on all major occasions and utilized with care.

It is assumed that totem animal guards the tribes in all tough circumstances and at all difficult times. It maintains in keeping the tribes in bonds of unity and bestows honor on the tribe as a whole. It helps in sustaining consciousness and brotherhood^[10]. A totem animal is regarded to be the apprentice of the life of the tribe.

The titles of some of the Rishis giving clan (gotra) names, such as Vata (Calf), Kashyapa (tortoise), Sunaka (dog), Gotham (Cow), Bharadwaja (a kind of bird), etc. The following totemic clans are also found among the tribes –

1. Hansda (Goose)
2. Lakra (Tiger),
3. Soren (Sol Fish)
4. Erget (Rat)
5. Kiro (Tiger)
6. Gidhi (Vulture)
7. Kerketa (Sparrow)
8. Khakha (Raven)
9. Aind (Eel Fish)
10. Kullu (Tortoise)

These totemic objects are regarded as sacred and killing or eating of the flesh is a taboo. Thus the natural objects of flora and fauna have spiritual, economic and cultural importance which are much connected to the lifestyle of those tribal people. Thus, it is discovered that many tribes assumed that their forefathers were either flora or fauna^[31]. So it is their duty and culture to conserve the nature and environment.

The Birhor Tribe, in the Rarh Bengal, presents the illustration of strongly formed patrilineal totemism. Among the Oraon of Rarh Bengal, 67 totems as derived from animals or plants have been recorded.

The Munda speaking tribal group developed strong totemism from their earlier proto totemic organization. Among the Mundas, the majority of the exogamous clans have an animal or plant totem. There are in vogue other kinds of totems such as rainbow, umbrella or basket as well.

The skin of the totem is considered to be sacred and is worn on special occasions. The figure of the totem is tattooed on the body^[81]. Mourning is observed on the occasion of the death of the animal of totem and the funeral is carried out with all its details. As the members of a totem group consider themselves to be bound by a blood relationship, they strictly observe the rule of exogamy. The killing, eating or burning of the object or animal of the totem is strictly a taboo. Thus, it is found that many tribes believed that their forefathers were either flora or fauna. So it is their duty and culture to conserve the nature and environment.

Taboos as a Means of Plant and Animal Conservation

Taboos are the unwritten, orally transmitted traditional and social rules that regulate human behavior. In Rarh Bengal, there are several plants, animals, and rivers that are considered sacred and hence no felling or exploitation is

being carried out. As a result of this consecration, different species of trees and animals that are economically important or threatened in other areas are preserved and can form a genetic reservoir and serve as a guide against the extinction of these species. For example, Jaherthan among the Santhal community is considered sacred, so the destruction of the trees completely restricted. Therefore, the religious belief serves as an instrument of protection of rare and threatened species. Religious beliefs, traditions, and culture are the products of logical internalization of human experience and learning. These practices help in managing resources well through religious or ritual representation.

Trees have a very special role in the ethos of the people in Rarh Bengal. Species of trees are worshipped as

(1) The manifestation of gods,

(2) Representatives of particular stars and planets, and

(3) Symbols of the natural elements (energy, water, land, and air), each of which has its own independent and rational meanings. According to villagers, these taboos need to be followed by all.

Consumption — population, technology, resources

The overall driver of human impact on Earth systems is the destruction of biophysical resources, and especially, the Earth's ecosystems. The total environmental impact of a community or of humankind as a whole depends both on population and impact per person, which in turn depends in complex ways on what resources are being used, whether or not those resources are renewable, and the scale of the human activity relative to the carrying capacity of the ecosystems involved. Careful resource management can be applied at many scales, from economic sectors like agriculture, manufacturing and industry, to work organizations, the consumption patterns of households and individuals and to the resource demands of individual goods and services.^{[14][15]}

One of the initial attempts to express human impact mathematically was developed in the '70s and is called the I PAT formula. This formulation attempts to explain human consumption in terms of three components: population numbers, levels of consumption (which it terms "affluence", although the usage is different), and impact per unit of resource use (which is termed "technology", because this impact depends on the technology used). The equation is expressed:

$$I = P \times A \times T$$

Where: I = Environmental impact, P = Population, A = Affluence, T = Technology

These include the following:

- I. Women are strictly prohibited from entering the sacred forest due to the belief that they are impure.
- II. Fetching/collection of fodder and fuelwood and the movement of women and Shudras (scheduled castes) have been strictly prohibited in this grove since the Mahabharata period.
- III. For a person who starts his journey, if a Cat comes across his way, then he has to stop the journey.
- IV. Anything that is made up of leather is prohibited in the temple and grove. Killing/hunting of animals and plucking/uprooting of plants are strictly forbidden in the SDGs.

The area is topographically and culturally very rich. People of this region inhabit from generation to generation in diverse ecological setup ^[21]. The people of this region have an inbuilt concern about nature and its importance in their customs and traditions. Indigenous and small-scale societies of Rarh Bengal often develop their representations of global change manifestations, attuned to local notions of value and ecological dynamics, and local systems for representing, monitoring, and understanding environmental change are often consistent with findings from instrumentally measured data. The traditional life system of the people of Rarh Bengal has a close and intricate relationship with nature. The folkloric approach can be ascertained in their attitude towards plants, animals and the earth. The knowledge of those people is useful for habitat preservation and ecology restoration and which has a great potential value for the present society as well for the future generation. Their rituals, taboos, belief, the totem can conserve the environment and restore ecological balance ^[11]. The existence of totemic belief also plays a significant role in maintaining biodiversity. Lots of customs and traditions are presents which protect the trees and animals from the destruction and preserve it for future generations. They worship the trees which they never cut. The totems also play a crucial role in not only protect the equilibrium of the biodiversity but also continue the wisdom and collective excellence related to forest and their protection of biodiversity.

A totem is a being, object, or symbol representing an animal or plant that serves as an emblem of a group of people, such as a family, clan, group, lineage, or tribe, reminding them of their ancestry (or mythic past). In kinship and descent, if the apical ancestor of a clan is nonhuman, it is called a totem. Normally this belief is accompanied by a totemic myth. They have been around for many years. In other words, the totem is a belief in a spiritual association between a clan/lineage/ moiety and a bird, animal or a natural phenomenon. The anthropologists of modern time look at totemism as a recurring way of conceptualizing relationships between

kinship groups and of the natural world. Several tribal groups believe that they are related to some plants and animals that are sacred to them. So they worship those birds/animals or trees and protect them. The Mundas have got the totem Soi meaning Sol fish, Nag (serpent), Hassa (goose), similarly the Santhals have the totem Murmu (a forest-based wild cow), Chande (a lizard), Boyar (a fish), similarly for a Ho Hansda (a wild goose), Bage (tiger), Jamuda (spring) and Tiyu (fox). During the common lineage festival known as Dharm puja, every lineage member has to undergo rituals of fast to worship his totem. Another very common practice is being seen among the tribes in Rarh Bengal i.e. they never kill a cat. Cat is treated as a sign of danger. This belief system protects the cat and indirectly maintains the ecosystem. In this way, ecological restoration is maintained by the folkloric approach.

Environmental dimension

Healthy ecosystems provide vital goods and services to humans and other organisms. There are two major ways of reducing negative human impact and enhancing ecosystem services:

a) Environmental management. This direct approach is based largely on information gained from earth science, environmental science and conservation biology.

However, this is management at the end of a long series of indirect causal factors that are initiated by human consumption, so a second approach is through demand management of human resource use.

b) Management of human consumption of resources, an indirect approach based largely on information gained from economics. Herman Daly has suggested three broad criteria for ecological sustainability: renewable resources should provide a sustainable yield (the rate of harvest should not exceed the rate of regeneration); for non-renewable resources there should be equivalent development of renewable substitutes; waste generation should not exceed the assimilative capacity of the environment.^[16]

Conclusion

Folk practices have over the ages played a remarkable role in solving numerous major social-ecological plights. People have relied on biodiversity as a buffer against environmental paradox, change. The use and protection of different plants, animals, sacred groves, etc by the ethnic people through the Folkloric approach of the Rarh region of West Bengal based on their cultural values. Thus; folk practices should be preserved for ecological sustainability and Ecological restoration.

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