



TABOOS AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE

Jahangir Hossain¹ and Karunamay Mandal²

¹Part Time Teacher, Mankar College.

²Student.

ABSTRACT

A taboo is a prohibition against a particular activity, usually rooted in a cultural or moral belief. Objects, people and places may also be described as taboo, meaning that they are forbidden or that specific rules surround them. Many cultures have taboos surrounding the handling of the dead, spoiled food and other activities which could be dangerous, and it is possible that what started out as practical advice turned into a taboo as a society evolved. Likewise many cultures have complex rules about how to behave around royalty which undoubtedly stemmed from concerned rulers who wanted to considerably and strengthen their power. Some cultural taboos in this particular area include avoiding shaking hands with a person of the opposite sex because it is deemed rude at here.



KEYWORDS: cultural importance , particular activity , society evolved.

INTRODUCTION

Here might also avoid stepping over or touching any books or papers with your feet. This considered an insult to the goddess of learning. Here a cultural taboo may include touching someone with someone left hand. Here talking about menstruation in front of male or unknown is seems to be a taboo topic. When a black cat crosses one's path, something will happen if one crosses the line where the cat passed. To undo this either wait for someone who didn't know about the black cat to cross the path or think of another route. Do not ever leave home without consulting an astrologer. Rahu and Ketu, two ominous planets, are waiting to ruin things for you. Wait for the shubhMahurat based on Hindu calendar. This also holds true for weddings, naming ceremonies, housewarming rites and everything in life. Consult a horoscope before getting your children married. Go ahead only if the advantages match perfectly. Lemon and chillies are hanged in front of shop or vehicles for protect from evil eye, it's a superstition An eclipse occurs when Rahu and Ketu swallow the sun and people avoid eating anything. Here at Nanoor Block, people think that solar eclipses are associated with war, violent events and disasters. No one make puja or enter temples. They believed that at that time ausaras are worshipped. Pregnant women are advised to stay indoors. It is considered inauspicious to give birth during the event. Solar eclipses also cause miscarriages for which avoid venturing outside. Same case happens during lunar eclipse. It is believed that at that time sun rays become toxic and a birth must be taken. Some people are fearprotect from evil wearing ring with various structured stones given by tantric or ojha or baba. Charak festival, which is celebrated on the last day of the Bengali calendar year on April 14 and Bengali 30th Chaitro, on Thursday, was observed at several villages of Nanoor CD Block. The festival dedicated to Hindu deities Shiva and here all the performers' show-off Shakti is marked by a strict penance with extreme physical pains and stresses. This puja is being performed for the welfare of people. In the festival, people are hanged with hooks; sleep on thousands of nails, buried under mud and walk over fire, they dancing with dead body of child or head of a skeleton of human. The festivities in rural areas are

marked by local fairs. The people of South Nanoor like Baliswar, Belai, Bandar, Charkalgram, Masra, Muitin, and Pakurhans are practices this Utsav because of their welfare and more over it's found that the poor people attached with it more. Here one rumour is spread in the society basically among other communities that the participator of Gajon-CharakUtsav, who uses the dead body or a head of a skeleton of human that they collect it from *kobor* with illegal way to express their scarification to their god. Tattoo is an art on human body. At Nanoor block for Muslims, it's a forbidden art. The majority of Muslim people consider permanent tattoos against prophetic tradition, based on a saying hadith of the prophet Muhammad. But here controversy permanent tattoos are forbidden in Sunni Islam on the other hand permissible in Shia Islam. Actually at Nanoor block all the Muslim are Sunni believed in god and prophet is the dispatching. According to the book "*SahihBukhari*", "The Prophet (SAWS) forbade...mutilation (or maiming) of bodies." SeveralSunniMuslims believed thattattooing is a sin because it involves changing the creation of God (Surah 4, verse 117-120). Now question is why tattooing in human body is forbidden for Sunni Muslim. Due to "*Sharia*" (or Islamic Law), the majority of Sunni Muslims hold that tattooing is religiously forbidden (along with most other forms of 'permanent' physical modification). This view arises from references in the Prophetic Hadith which denounce those who attempt to beatify that which was already perfected. The human being is seen as having been ennobled by god, the human form viewed as created beatify, such that the act of tattooing would be a form of mutilation.

- a) Tattooing is considered "mutilating" the body, changing Allah's creation
- b) It inflicts unnecessary pain, and introduces the possibility of inflection.
- c) It covers the natural body and is therefore a form of "deception".
- d) Non-believers often beautify themselves this way, so it is '*imitating the Kaffeer*'

It is clear that for women to wear jewellery (thus it's acceptable for women to pierce the ears) is permissible at the society of Islam at Nanoor Block. Elective procedures are allowed when done for medical benefit (braces, rihinoplasty, etc.) and as long as it is not permanent, one may beatify the body (tanning, coloured contacts, etc.) but damaging the body permanently for a vain reason is considered "*haram*" at NanoorBlock.The presence of a permanent tattoo does not invalidate one's '*wuju*', as the tattoo is under the skin and does not prevent water from reaching the skin.Non-permanent tattoos (i.e. Henna stains, stick-on tattoos, etc.) are universally permittedby all scholars in Islam, provided they do not contain inappropriate images.All actions prior to Islam are forgiven once a person has embraced Islam. Therefore, if one had a tattoo before becoming a Muslim, It is not necessary to have removed.Laser removal of tattoos is an option but may not be successful in all cases.At present time when the society makes forward and gets modernizedbut some social taboos are still there. Childless couples face a lot of pressure in our society and Nanoor is not exceptional to it. Since bearing a child in many ways denotes a woman coming of age, a woman often has to go through a lot of mental torture if she is infertile. If any couple remain childless they can't be involved in any auspicious social occasion, festivals or puja. In such situation women are tortured in various ways by their husbands, family members or neighbour. Such crucial incident is taboo.Sex Education is the most contentious issues discussed almost every day but still not embraced with open arms, because it is considered immoral to discuss about it in the traditional life of this area Nanoor Block. Now a day at the present situation sex education considered as taboo to the parents of child. The researcher found that among both communities sex education is irrelevant because they are worried about to discuss in school with this topic as they thing that this deteriorated their child so it is taboo for them but actually this education is good for the child for their future benefit. It's necessary to abolish this type of taboo thinking.

A much debated topic, sex education has not yet got the deserved status. The Supreme Courte on 16th November, 2007 decided that sex education in schools cannot be brought under the ambit of fundamental rights by making it a part of the right to education. "We can't make it a fundamental right" a bench comprising Justice Ruma Pal and Justice A R Lakshmanan said while dealing with a public interest litigation, which had suggested making sex education in school compulsory.



Plate : Jarawa Tribe, Andamans

Source: <https://www.indiatimes.com/culture/who-we-are/7-weird-indian-tribal-traditions-thatll-make-you-go-wtf-232282.html>



Plate :Chenchus, Andhra Pradesh

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Plate:Taboo of Charak festival



Plate: Gajan festival

The lack of sex education has led and will lead to minor rapes, teenage pregnancies, high risk behaviour, and absence of knowledge leading to transmitted diseases. So, sex education at school level is most needed to avoid the problems related to sex.

Nanoor is a rural based assembly constituency at Birbhum District and have a number of varieties orthodox or religious people lived here. With modernisation becoming a way of life, topics like sex and relationships is not taboo for some agers as well as same sex about discussing it. But it is taboo for parents to take about. At school premises or in general discussing about relationship with their kids generally teenagers would not accept or permit them to join that type of issue oriented class or learn. Sex is taboo for parents even the sex talk can make parents nervous. So they try to change topic if it comes ever up. For example that even now a day if any advertisement, related with sex consciousness programmed in TV, it makes us very much uncomfortable. The peoples who lived a traditional way of life at rural area because they taught from their elders that it is not permissible to talk about this things openly because of social shyness. It is thought that the discussion of this matter makes divert the teenager to do several bad habit or things. Here the society disapproves of “making out”, “kissing a guy/girl”, “having sex” unless you are married at this society. A question now arises that this practice with the claim that sex as basic need for living beings as food shelter, clothing, love, care, and freedom then why it becomes a taboo. Our society and tradition say that “sex is for procreation not for recreation”. Here The Researcher discusses about the sex or sex before marriage that both society dominating by Hindu and Muslim are not need that their children involve with this nasty work because they fear to lose their prestigious or honour from both the children and parents so they think that it’s good to avoid their child from this nasty work. Among the Muslims it’s a very illegal work from the religious point of view and this nasty work are known to the community people is “Jinah”. On the other hand the main problem for Hindu caste is that the intra-caste marriage. Now a day the children are involved with the modern life, they use several social site and talk with their friends. Media or entertainment channel also influenced the teenager about it.

Parents are not needed that his son or daughter can’t involve with the nasty work with other caste. So the parents are involves to learn their children from the inter caste love or arrange marriage. Its necessity among parents to discuss about that subject with their teen children to protect from various sex related diseases or unwanted pregnancy or such on. So without knowing the inner necessity of this matter and protect their children from it unnecessarily are taboo. The Researcher found that in both the Hindu and Muslim community people respect their own prayer hall. Among the Muslim, mosque is the most respected place and among the Hindu, temple is the most respected place whether he is educated or uneducated it’s not matter because our society is based on religious faith and beliefs. It’s good that all are respect their own worships but when this become so arrogant and make conflict among themselves for temple and mosque

then this particular context become taboo. Beside it's also a social taboo to disrespect the holy place among the community people. If both Muslim and Hindu disrespect each other's holy place then it makes conflict among each other. Therefore a distance is made among the community people and tolerance society can't build. Lots of sacred place also remain in the villages around *Neem, Aswathu, Tetul, BatoBrikkho*, etc. and several structured stone, *MajarSarifa* also were considered sacred for both the community peoples. Belief and faith is remaining for both communities upon several sacred places. It may be blind belief or others but they would not make disrespect on these. All are obeyed their rules related to their worships and maximum peoples are maintained it anyhow. It's not accepted in both the community to disrespect the holy place or sacred place because faith is very sensitive for them. So here make conflict for the sacred place is taboo in this society and also disrespect.

It's found that both the community people are respecting their own holy books of their own religion where their beliefs and faith is attached. The Holy Book Quran is sacred among the Muslim peoples and more over all the peoples recite it from childhood. So a spiritual attachment is made by the Muslim peoples. In every household have minimum a Quran Sharif. Multiple Copies of Quran and hadith are kept in masjid. Every day at the time of Romjan after '*Fajar*' recitation of Quran Sharif takes place. When a person dies then Quran Sharif also recited by a respected aged person who nurtures the religious matter more than others or by an *Mam Sahib* (who takes care of Masjid). So a spiritual attachment grows because all time they relate it with their life and naturally respect comes for this holy book. At the same way among the Hindu peoples lots of books like Gita, Veda, Mahabharata, Ramayana, and Upanishada, etc. are remain holy. These books are recited by the peoples of Hindu community and uses on several occasions. So there makes respect on it and a spiritual attachment takes place. These books elaborate the mythical incidents and spiritual matter. Naturally it's becomes spiritual books for the Hindu people. This book is also recited by the Brahman at the time of '*SradhoOnusthan*' (Death Ceremony). It's natural that both communities make respect on their holy books because it gives them the path of livelihood. So disrespect on it may become a minor taboo for the community people but if the community people misunderstood the main things which said by the books and make conflict on this that their holy book is better than others. This cheap mind-set also makes intolerant society and it's also a taboo for the society. *Upanayana* or Primal Ceremony is a sacred occasion among Brahmins. It is marked the acceptance of a student by a *guru* (teacher) and an individual's entrance to a school in Hinduism. The sacred thread (*yajnopavita*) is received by the boy during this ceremony that he continues wearing across his chest after his entire life. Upanayana was an elaborate ceremony, which included rituals involving the family, the child. It's thought that this ceremony is celebrated as it's the 2nd birth for the Brahmins. It is found that here in Hindu traditions; a human being is born at least twice-once at physical birth and second at intellectual birth through teacher's care. The first is marked through the *Jatakarma* Sanskara ritual; The second is marked through *Upanayanam* or *Vidyarambha rite of passage*. This ceremony is celebrating for four days. It's only for male at the age before adulthood and the year of age must be odd. It is celebrate on maintaining the *Tithi*. For whom the primal ceremony conducts he is stay in a dark room and not too enters sunlight at that time. He can eat only fruits. At the 4th day he came out from that room and make a special types of ritual that he beg to the entire village as food donations and that day a lots of peoples eat to their house by the purpose of celebration of this rituals. This sacred rituals for Brahmins if not celebrating then it's bad for his family among the community and its not accepting to their particular community. If several rituals like that is not practicing well then it's become taboo for their society that they destroy the rules which must be needed to maintain. Sometime it's found to exclude them from several celebration or rituals that break the rules. So this type orthodox thinking on rituals to maintain is also a taboo because it break the flexibility of society and intolerant.



Plate: nature of sacred thread rapping with tree.



Plate :Jeju people respect this taboo



Plate: Sacred red cloth is wrapped as a symbol of auspicious religion



Plate : Sacred wood to made the JagannathRath



Plate: Nature of sacred termite knob



Plate : Hindu arati

Our society has several rituals on several occasions and it does vary community and caste wise. Every community has several unique rituals and norms. These norms if not practicing by peoples then those family or individual exclude from society. In our society after birth and death several rituals are practiced in both the communities. In Hindu community after birth *Annoprashanno* are celebrate and similarly after death ceremony is practiced with eating full of veg with no washing the body and wearing only a white dhoti by male member of the family of death person. Female members are also practiced these rituals. This is known to all as "*ShradhoAnusthan*". Similarly among Muslim its seen that when a child is born then his name is taken by the Imam Sahib with slaughtering a goat or cow and the meat is distributing the whole village and this practicing is known *Akikah*(when name is took for new born child) and when any one died in Islam then before day of 40th *Cahram*(death ceremony) is practicing. This belief or rituals is for well-being is practicing in both community and who can't practicing it then the society cant accepting that if no specific reason behind it. Here the researcher found that if anybody not played rules of the rituals then other people see them with orthodox view. If it is so orthodoxy to play these rituals then it's also taboo for the societies because there may other reason are had. So this type of orthodox thinking on practicing the rituals on birth and death ceremony is totally taboo.

Fasting is sometime very much necessary for health benefit. Every religion has said us to celebrate fasting. It's is seen that Hindu peoples are celebrate fasting in various occasions for wellbeing. At the time of *Shiba-Ratri* women are fasting for good life-partner. It's also seen in the Muslim religion at the time of Ramjan month. It's a very sensitive period for all Rojdar (who practicing Romjan). All Rojdar practicing this with full of spiritual attainment, clean way of life, full of love, and egoless, if it's not happened then the aim of Roja (Fasting) is not fulfilling. At this very sensitive time when someone practice Fasting then it's not good to see that someone eating in-front of a fasting people. So its taboo that's why generally not to eat in front of fasting peoples. But it's happen reverse when a people eat in front of people and without knowing the reason someone abusing him or her. It's may be health issue that's why he eat or unknowingly eaten by him so this type of orthodoxy also taboo for a society.

Boli-pratha is such a type of ritual which mutually interrelates with Hindu Culture from the ancient time. Though there have no base by the Hindu Sastra originally, it's nothing but the misinterpretation by the peoples. There no indication in any book that you must immolate the poor sacrificial beast but this happens crucially in some festivals of Hindu community.

It's found that in Nanoor block there many villages where this crucial ritual happens in the name of faith or belief for their goodness. At the time of dharma puja and kalipuja there are some villages where peoples are celebrating these rituals. The *Chandidashad* also belief in Boli-pratha and at the time Charak puja this rituals are happening at Nanoor and beside nearby village from Nanoor named Rayan where at the time of *Dharapuja* infantbuffalo was immolating.

This ritual is not supporting by a number of peoples in the society of Nanoor. They say that sacrifice is not on the poor infant beast. In every religion said that human being must be sacrifice by own. It's happen by the eliminating their own ego and cruelty. That's why they not accepting these cruel ritual by the name of religion to deteriorate the self. It's said in religion that you must sacrifice your own evil deeds but with the misinterpretation in the name of religion they immolating the poor animals. This kind of thinking is also taboo.

At the time of Maharam many peoples are torturing their own body with *khanjar* or blade with the name of Hussain and Hasan but it is found that the Islam can't say to play those unscientific practices. They do *Matam* and torturing their body with Zanjeer. You celebrate it with doing fasting on that day so it's a taboo for many. It's true that the torturing body with knife makes septic on body so it is good to not to celebrate with the knife on that vary occasion. These types of torturing are taboo for society.

Sacrifice for religious or social causes is one of hurting the human body for the name of god or others is taboo because to alive own self is the provisional duty for every human. Being too alive in this world is written in every religious book. In every religion have several festivals and sometimes people misuse his body for various superstition. At this type of superstition as alike at the time of Maharam for the name of Hussein the Muslim human being hurt his body with swords or in local language '*Khanjory Mara*' and some time they walked on fire. On the other hand in Charok puja festival the teenagers for future life good they pierced or drilled the rod or perek into his face or cheek and some time they feel faint and admitting them into the hospital. This are highly says taboo. This are discuss in below;

At the time of Maharam at Nanoor block a few number of Muslim peoples are organise Maharam festival with mike dhol and stick play and also walk on the fire to the name of Hussein, who had died for the thirst of water during the war of '*Karbala*' and people think that the sacrifice of his body to dedicate their pain on the name of Hussain and Hasan. But it is absolutely forbidden for Muslim and to celebrate with doing Roza and Namaz but few are not maintained this type of rule so they sacrifice their body with doing Matam and torturing body. These types of fire walking are showed at village Bandar, Sakbah, Sian, Sakulipur etc. Incest marriage is being a taboo for Hindu community because of shyness. But its scientifically true about incest marriage that there may be occurred several genetic problem because of same blood group. On the other hand in Muslim community it is not matter about incest marriage but the Quran also said that before marriage its duty to confirmed about their health and several disease because its hamper later. It's good for the community people for their health matter.

Aghori is a type of man who have no signal of life because they still though mile. They believe in Maa Kali, wear no clothes, or only the rags and death shrouds of corpses. Their begging bowls out to be a skull. Their hair is unkempt. They are not even liked by many Hindu practitioners. Now a day these are driven to endangered cultures and traditions. The Aghori as "an intense sect of sadhu infamous for overcoming all things taboo" and it's also explain that a sadhu renounces his earthly life, all his worldly attachments, leaves home and family, and takes on the lifestyle of an ascetic. As part of this renunciation, they also leave behind their clothes, food and shelter, and live on the generosity of others". They are more metaphysical and reflect the spiritual lifestyle. They believed that they are for social improvement and my way of living is that of a spiritual gypsy.

Crime and unlawful work is being taboo. At Nanoor, Birbhum is political conflict is common. As this area is engage with illiterate peoples that are why many are engaged in political conflict and several unlawful work and crime like murder, robbery, cheatingbaj etc. At Nanoor block a number of people are punished by jail bird. Some unlawful event that suchpurganohattakando, papuriganohattakando, the MLA murder are occurred here. A few villages are Papuri, Suchpur, Pilkhundi, Vatiar, Thupsora, Sheyala, Khujutipara, Hurmur etc. engaging with this unlawful work. It's said that the Muslim community are more involve with unlawful work because of less education. Its means taboo among the good peoples to engage with this unlawful work. At Nanoor block to intoxicate drug in front of parents and other senior people is being a taboo and a few of peoples are drug addict by biri, cigar, ganja, heroen etc. there was two types of taboo. If a junior addict with biri cigar in front of their parents or guardians then it considered taboo. Other type is anybody addict with

drinks, ganja, heroin is consider taboo and society called that type people is 'Matal' (full addiction with drugs). On the other hand to tipple with drink is also a taboo. Because here people are very cultural in sense and maximum people are not want disobey their parents or other neighbours. Alcohol and narcotics are, therefore, forbidden and will not enter the household of a traditional Hindu and Muslim family.

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