



THE CONCEPT OF PEACE AND VALUES IN SANTALI CULTURE: A STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERNIZATION

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ABSTRACT

Huge numbers of studies have been done throughout the decades on Santali culture. It is evident that they are peace loving race having their own age old traditional culture full of their values. In spite of following a rigid socio-cultural structure, norm and attitude, they could not stay aloof from the overwhelming impact of modernization. A considerable amount of changes has taken place in every sphere of their life. Their values sometimes changes and in few cases totally shattered and their peaceful life facing challenges as well.

The aim of the paper is not only to identify the element of peace and vales in Santali culture but also to find out changes in them that has been taking place due to modernization.



KEY WORD: Culture, Tradition, Values, Peace, Modernization.

INTRODUCTION:-

There is no doubt that culture; values and peace are closely related things and people of different culture have their own cultural values to live a peaceful life. In order to perceive the values of a particular culture and explore the secret of their peaceful life, it is very important to clarify the concepts as well as the relation among them.

To begin with culture, one may incorporate all the attributes and activities of individual and its group or society within it. In an old definition of culture Tylor (1871) said, "Culture, or civilization, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." According to Cultural Anthropology-The Human Challenge (13th Edition 2013), culture is defined as "a society's shared and socially transmitted ideas, values and perceptions, which are used to make sense of experience and generate behavior and are reflected in that behavior."

It is clear that values are important part of every culture nurtured by the members of a society. Now we need to know what 'value' actually denotes. Generally, value has been taken to mean moral ideas, general conceptions or orientations towards the world or sometimes simply interests, attitudes, preferences, needs, sentiments and dispositions. But sociologists use this term in a more precise sense to mean "the generalized end which has the connotations of rightness, goodness or inherent desirability". They define what is important worthwhile and worth striving for. Sometimes, values have been interpreted to mean "such standards by means of which the ends of action are selected". Thus, values are collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad, undesirable, and improper in a culture.

The most important concept is peace which is also very desired as well as the demand of the time. It is considered to be “both a philosophy and a process involving skills, including listening, problem solving, co-operation and conflict resolution.” The importance of peace is now on every sphere of existence. Peace in individual mind and peace in universe is equally essential now for safe and sustainable development.

When our main concern is tribal cultural values in general and Santali in particular we must be aware that they have their own age old traditional culture full of values and they are peace loving race. A number of studies have been done on their cultural values. But the main concern of this study is to re-evaluate their values in the light of modernization and its impact on their peaceful life. It is obviously an overwhelming concept started spreading its impact throughout the decades in this subcontinent. But it started spreading its impact quite slowly on the Santals for their own rigid nature, natural situations and many other reasons. The incidents like frequent migration, huge interaction with different cultures, rapid deforestation and urbanizations, political upheavals and empowerment, drastic changes in jobs and economic situations, inevitable temptation of modern gadgets, government and nongovernmental initiatives for tribal developments are very recent phenomena and have brought a rapid change in their life. It is the high time to re-evaluate their cultural values and peaceful life situations in the changing scenario.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

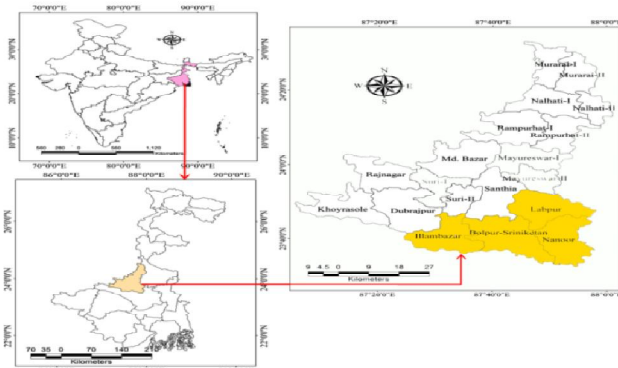
- To find out different values in Santali Culture.
- To assess the changes taking place in the values of the Santals due to Modernization.
- To examine whether Santali peaceful life is under threat or they are feeling better due to changes taking place for modernization.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Secondary information about different values of santals has been collected from research papers, journals, books etc.

Primary data has been collected from both the rural and urban areas of Southern part of Birbhum district in West Bengal. It mainly consists of four Blocks namely Bolpur, Nanur, Labpur and Ilambazar. For value evaluation 2 rural and 2 urban areas are taken from each block and 50 persons at the age group of 18 to 60 are selected for the test. Stratified Random sampling is followed here. For opinion about the peace situation same sample is taken. For focus group interview 5 respected and well educated persons from each village are taken of the aforesaid area.

To know the opinion of how peace situation affected due to modernization, the data is collected from the same sample through face to face interview. The tools are designed in English and Bengali as English is difficult for most of the population. To communicate with the respondents a Santali teacher assisted a lot. After the data collection it is analyzed through and interpreted.



Location map of the study area

A value ranking test developed by Dwivedi (1979) is used after proper modification and standardization to assess value performances of the subjects. The test measures performances in seven value areas such as Theoretical, political, economic, social, aesthetic, religious and moral. There are eight items in each area. The scale consisted of 56 items. The minimum and maximum score consisted of 56 items. The minimum and maximum scores one could obtain for each value area ranged between 8 and 56. A higher score indicative of higher value pattern in the concerned area and vice-versa is maintained. The test has high reliability and the scale is converted into interview schedule before administered it.

Focus group interview is also conducted to assess the changes taken place in the values of santals and their causes.

CULTURE, VALUES AND THE SANTALS:

Table-1

Name of the value	Related Culture	Acquired habits from the culture	Necessary traits of the value	Finding of the researchers
Theoretical values	Manual labour, less skill, traditional, superstitious, orthodox.	Food habit, dress, festivals, Traditional occupations.	Critical and rational approach to problems	"Santals seems to be deficient in scientific zeal and aptitude" (P.R.Sinha). "it appears that the sandals are reality evading and their thinking and approach to life are often inadequate in the modern sense on account of their inherent traditionality, superstition, and orthodoxy."(Majumdar 1961).
Political values	Shy, submissive non interfering, loyal	Khut(family lineage), dhumkuria(youth dormitory), rajabasa (gram panchayet), kulhi durup (santal form of panchayet)	Dynamic, Extrovert, free mixing, interactive, Aggressive	The Santals are placed on the fringe of the Indian social structure. Despite the best effort of the national agencies they are still segregated and politically deprived people. (Kothari 1970)
Economic values			Utility, practicality, standard of living	Banarjee and Sarkar (1964) have observed that the sandals are indifferent towards the use of modern technology and thus the development of low economic value among the sandals is perhaps rooted in their traditionalistic view points and lack of will to change.
Social values	Mary making, hunting and fishing, protecting members from dangers, sports	Simple, cooperative, dedicated, honest, laborious, vigorous, sportive,	Honesty, commitment, respect, politeness, environment awareness	To the sandals service for society is an act of great virtue. The principle of equality, fraternity and social justice- the compartments of ideal society is highly valued by the santals.(D.P. Sinha)

		fellow feelings		
Aesthetic values	Art and crafts, designing households, dances and songs	Symmetrical thoughts, graceful, peace loving	Grace, harmony, balance, appreciation , tranquility	Singh et al (1987) has found that there is no dearth of aesthetic aptitudes among the santals.
Religious values	Festivals, celebrations, mirages,	Superstitious, virtuous, simple, rigid,	Virtue, trust, gratitude, acceptance, Simplicity	The santal parents are more religious and very particular about the need of their children to learn religious ways, principles, and values.(D. P. Sinha 1979)
Moral Values	Life style, work culture, responsibility towards the family and clans,	Frank, open, gentle, faith in principals of honesty, dutiful	Innocence, Honour, honesty, responsibility, friendly, cooperative, loyalty	Roy choudhary(1961) observed the sandals maintain a high standard of morality. They are conscientious and the rate of crimes of any sort in their society is negligible. Pandey(1985) conservatives are having high moral values. The santals on account of being relatively more conservatives and orthodox may therefore have high moral values.

The table is mainly based on secondary data with a value analysis technique.

FINDINGS OF THE VALUE RANKING TEST:

Table-2

Name of the value	Score of in rural sample		urban sample	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Theoretical values	18.41	4.1	29.66	5.11
Political values	19.11	5.12	27.53	5.23
Economic values	11.41	4.99	25.76	5.16
Social values	39.25	5.13	24.63	5.12
Aesthetic values	35.41	5.31	27.71	5.33
Religious values	28.15	5.32	22.05	5.17
Moral Values	31.63	5.26	23.83	4.53

From the result of the test taken (table-2) in both rural and urban areas it is quite clear that there is a considerable different in their score as well as response. From the focus group interview and the test interview the researcher has found some causes.

In urban area the trend of modernization is high and their tendency in social, moral and religious values are lower than the rural santals. From focus group interview it become evident that the santals migrated to urban areas are reluctant to the rules and regulations of the society, not following religious customs and activities properly. Even young generations are ashamed to speak in their languages. All this things are happening due to the influence of mobile, T.V, modern life style, and greed to live comfortably.

It can also be noted that among the santals of urban area the political consciousness is increased and they started showing interest in business and economy. The rural santals are still shy, and submissive. From focus group interview it become clear that though rural santals are not much interested in national politics, they have much unities and fellow feelings. They have strong patriotic feelings but business is not their first preference, they rather like art and crafts. Regarding moral degradation the focus groups are of same

opinion that it is the result of contamination. As migrations among santals are common for different reason, they face different awkward situations like cheating, insult, misbehave etc. which make their mind harder and faded their simplicity.

Table-3 Perception of the respondents regarding impact of modernization on peace situation

Perceptions	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I have a peaceful life now a days	10	5%	80	40%	100	50%	10	5%	200	100%
I think that modernization has changed the life a lot.	25	12.5%	110	55%	60	30%	5	2.5%	200	100%
I think peace affected as cultural values are affected by modernization.	75	37.5%	80	40	45	22.5%	0	0%	200	100%
I think society should be totally modernized to bring peace.	10	5%	20	10%	75	37.5%	95	47.5%	200	100%
I think tradition should be maintained to keep peace in society.	90	45%	105	102.5%	5	2.5%	0	0%	200	100%
I think modernization must be rejected totally to bring complete peace in society.	15	7.5%	60	30%	110	55%	15	7.5%	200	100%
I think modernization has no relation with peace in society.	20	10%	70	35%	65	32.5%	45	22.5%	200	100%

In table-3 the data represents the responses regarding impact of modernization on the peaceful life of the Santals. The first query which was asked from the respondents was about their peaceful life and the responses were as follows: majority of the respondents i.e. 55% disagree with the statement. It suggests that they are not happy with their present life. But it is also notable that 45% showed their likeness towards it. The questioner was prepared in such a way that we can have causes of their responses. From their responses it becomes clear that santals are peace loving people, but educated santals are not happy now a day. They are not getting all facilities from the govt. and elder sandals become irritated by frequent interferences of the 'others'. They are even worried whether they can maintain the brick house given to them by the govt. Second issue was set regarding the impact of modernization to know their consciousness and feelings about it. From their responses it is quite clear that most of them are aware of the changes taking place due to modernization but still a considerable percent (32.5%) are not ignorant about it. Obviously education is a factor behind it but their traditional rigidity is also a cause coming out from their interview. Next statement was related to their 'cultural values' and its impact on their peaceful life. From the responses it is clear that they are very conscious about their own "culture" and protective towards it. A few of them do not believe that modernization is affecting their cultural values. Their response to total

modernized society is interesting one. Most of them do not think so but a small percent of them (15%) wants total modernization and it is found that they are not well educated. During enumeration and data collection it was investigated why do dislike modernization as a whole; they argued that they love their traditional values and modern society creates disturbance and conflicts with their cultural traits. In one point they are mostly united that tradition should be maintained to keep peace in society. A few contradiction came out may be considered as their ignorance. When they are asked to discard modernization totally many of them disagreed (62.5%) and it become evident that most of the educated santals are on the side of modernization. The last statement was also framed to know their concept of modernization and its relation with peace. Again from their response it becomes clear that they are well aware about the relation between modernization and peace. The note taking activity helped a lot to investigate that how their ways of life has been changed. They argued that only a few years back the situation was totally different, people had a lot of time for each other but now everyone is busy with their own matters and social cohesiveness has nearly vanquished.

CONCLUSION

We can conclude from the above results that the santal life is going under transition and is becoming modernized because their value system has been strongly affected and altered due to the modern world. The technological advancement has fed people with new culture traits, diffusing alien features into the societies. Traditional and cultural traits are considered a sign of recognition and identity of any nation and this very core has been permanently replaced by the western world. The result is very fearful as they started losing their own values as well as peace. It is not that modernization should not take place among the santal life but they should progress positively maintaining their own values and obviously keeping peace intact

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