

ISSN 2395-5015

ISSN 2395-5015

Dṛsti ▪ (The Vision of Truth) ▪ A Peer Reviewed Annual Research Journal of Philosophy



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(The Vision of Truth)

A Peer Reviewed Annual Research Journal of Philosophy

No. 13 November, 2024



Editor : Dr. Karabi Goswami

Department of Philosophy

(in collaboration with IQAC)

NARANGI ANCHALIK MAHAVIDYALAYA

D rsti

THE VISION OF TRUTH

Peer-Reviewed Annual Research Journal of Philosophy

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Department of Philosophy
NARANGI ANCHALIK MAHAVIDYALAYA
Narengi, Guwahati-781 171

D r sti (The Vision of Truth), A Journal of Philosophy, is an Annual Journal, published by Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya Philosophical Forum, Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya (in collaboration with IQAC), Guwahati-71.

(E-mail : nam.philosophicalforum@gmail.com)

ISSN : 2395-5015

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Printed by **Joya Press**, Kanwachal Road, Silpukhuri, Guwahati-781003

Editor's Note

Dṛṣṭi (The Vision of Truth) continues its journey as a peer-reviewed research journal of philosophy under the auspices of the Department of Philosophy, Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya. With this thirteenth volume, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering philosophical inquiry and expanding intellectual horizons.

True philosophical inquiry strives to integrate insights from diverse domains into a unified worldview. The current issue comprises of twenty-seven papers that traverse a rich spectrum of themes, beginning with classical and interpretive philosophical studies of Patanjali's Yoga, Varna Dharma and Chaturashrama Dharma and their relevance to modern life, dialectical unity in Plato's dialogues, and Dewey's Pragmatic approach to social reform, along with Buddhist perspective on the effect of meditation on mindfulness and happiness. Environmental and ecological themes feature prominently, with contributions on Sankaradeva's literature and the environment, the relevance of Buddhism in ecological conservation.

Philosophies of the contemporary Indian thinkers examined through papers like "Exploration of the Philosophical Truth as Multilayered: A Mohantian Approach", "Social Reconstruction: M.K. Gandhi and M.N. Roy," "Gandhi's Educational Philosophy and Its Significance for Holistic Development," and "Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's Educational Philosophy and Its Impact on National Education Policy" "A Critical Study of Bhupen Hazarika's Contribution to Education and Research through Humanistic lens"-while contemporary pedagogical challenges are addressed in studies of mathematics teaching in both digital and traditional classrooms in Guwahati and Kamrup Metro districts.

Explorations of Socio-cultural philosophies and traditions reflected in the papers like the philosophies behind the Langkhoon Misewa festival of the Tiwa community, Hill Tiwa tribe's socio-cultural-philosophical challenges, the hidden aspects of Mayong's "dark magic" tradition and the "Religious Condition of Medieval Assam with special reference to Ūāktism and Tāntism". The collection also includes conceptual analyses of human rights, the social significance of medicinal animals and folk medicine in Assam, and ethical perspectives on the dowry system and gender inequality. Further, papers enrich the issue with explorations of feminist philosophy through Mary Wollstonecraft, existential analyses in Dostoevsky's Brothers Karamazov, and cultural diffusion in Delhi's Monastery Market.

This volume represents a concerted effort to weave these diverse strands into a coherent tapestry of reflection, critique, and inquiry, offering fresh perspectives to scholars and readers alike.

On behalf of the editorial board, I extend my deepest gratitude to all contributors for their insightful research. I also thank our esteemed review board members-Dr. Sibnath Sarma, Dr. Manisha Baruah, Dr. Laxmikanta Padhi, Dr. Geetesh Nriban, Dr. Latika Hazarika, Dr. Mantu Kumar Das, Dr. Sashi Mohan Das and Dr. Bhaskar Bhattacharyya-for their invaluable guidance. My heartfelt appreciation goes to our Principal Dr. Lukendra Kakati sir and every member of the editorial board for their unwavering support, in the unveiling of Dristi 2024.

Karabi Goswami

Department of Philosophy
Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya

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EXPLORATION OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL TRUTH AS MULTI-LAYERED: A MOHANTIAN APPROACH

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Abstract:

The quest for the ultimate philosophical truth has been a chief concern in the history of philosophy, with various theories proposing different notions what this truth may entail. Some theories advocate a single ultimate truth that encompasses reality, serving as a unifying principle. Conversely, there are theories that account for the presence of multiple philosophical truths. Diversities again being there in the acceptance of different truths by different thinkers to be the ultimate one.

Jitendra Nath Mohanty, however, attempts neither to reduce one notion to the other, nor does he seek to combine all of them into a single one. His method of approaching philosophy instead takes into consideration philosophical truth as multi-layered. He accounts for the perspectival appearances of a particular object and acknowledges that all of those perspectives, if not entirely, then at least partially true. By inculcating this approach, a tendency of bridging the gap between two extreme positions can be observed in the realm of his philosophy. According to him, the task of philosophy is to consider a phenomenon in the totality of the various perspectives from which a phenomenon may be studied. Philosophical truth must therefore be multi-levelled. It has to reconcile the reports of the various perspectives granting each the truth and validity that are appropriate for it within its bounds.

In order to reconcile two divergent philosophical stances without combining them into one, this paper looks into how this multi-layered philosophical truth functions as a unique way of doing Philosophy in Mohantian discourse. Additionally, it explicates the

underlying principles of this idea by linking it to the Husserlian notion of overlapping noema. Furthermore, this study will examine the applicability of this very notion in the modern world.

Key-words: Truth, multi-layered, perspectival appearances, overlapping noema.

Introduction:

The question of what constitutes philosophical truth has been a topic of debate among philosophers from both the east and the west. Some theoretical frameworks embrace several philosophical truths where as others accept only one reality to be the ultimate accepting its sole truth. In the field of Indian Philosophy, Sankaracharya's non-dualism which acknowledges *Brahman* to be the absolute truth can be considered noteworthy, when it comes to a single philosophical truth. By declaring *Brahman* to be the ultimate reality, he recognizes the illusory nature of the world. Buddhism, on the other hand accepts that only change is the sole constant and it is the ultimate truth. There have been dualists and pluralists as well. The same scenario can be witnessed in the western realm of philosophy.

Jitendra Nath Mohanty, being an upholder of the perspectival theory of truth, has tried to shed a new light into the question of philosophical truth advocating for its various layers. This unique approach adapted by Mohanty is to some extent influenced by Jaina multi-valued logic and Husserlian concept of overlapping noema.

Objectives:

This paper focuses on the implementation of philosophical truth as multi-layered in his theory of consciousness as well as his endeavour to determine the identity of a person consisting of various layers of selfhood. The objective of this paper is also to look into how the Jaina idea of non-injury and Husserlian overlapping noema shaped his version of perspectival truth. It also takes into consideration the phenomenon of multi-layered philosophical truth as a means of combining two divergent philosophical stances without reducing one to the other.

Methodology:

The present paper is based on the secondary data collected from the secondary sources i.e. published literature of the subject concern.

Philosophical truth as Multi-layered:

Throughout his philosophical discourse, Mohanty is seen to be clear about his position. It is a version of phenomenology, where truths are tied to perspectives and they are multi-layered.

According to him, the task of philosophy is to consider a phenomenon in the totality of the various perspectives from which a phenomenon may be studied. "...a philosophical truth has to be multi-levelled. It has to reconcile the reports of the various perspectives, giving to each the truth and the validity due to it within its limits" (Mohanty, 2009). In his essay *Matter, Life, Mind* Unity of the World* he provides an example – the case of 'water', which can be considered as follows—

1. Water is a liquid which quenches human thirst.
2. Water is H₂O.
3. Water in the theory of liquid of quantum chemistry, statistical mechanics and so on.
4. Water in quantum mechanics.

All these (1)- (4) have to be true. The ultimate physical theory cannot negate the lower-level truths, but must let each level's truth to be what it is. Philosophy has to make room not only for all scientific perspectives – including the psychological, biological and social sciences, but also all levels of experience: individual – introspective, moral, aesthetic and spiritual (Mohanty, 2009). In Mohanty's view, a scientific truth is a fact. A philosophical truth is not a fact, but a theory grounding the possibility of facts of different orders.

Implementation of Multi-layered Truth in the Concept of Consciousness:

Mohanty in his essay 'Matter, Life, Mind* Unity of the World' from his book *Lectures on Consciousness and Interpretation* speaks of four orders of reality, each with its specific categorical structure: inorganic matter, organic matter, subjective consciousness and consciousness which is sharable. Each order of reality is based on the preceding order, but it has its own extra emergent quality, such that it cannot be reduced to the preceding order without residues. According to Mohanty, the lower categories are the partial aspects of the higher. These categories contribute to and build upon the higher ones. For instance, our bodily functions are essential for our conscious experiences. But the higher contains something 'new', an emergent property founded upon but not reducible to the lower. So, there are discontinuities and leaps. Though time and process serve as the main connecting link, however different levels exhibit distinct temporal characteristics. For example, the time of physical reality involving objective time which is measurable and consistent; the time of biological changes including biological rhythms, growth and adaption; the time of inner consciousness which is subjective and influenced by perception and experience; and the time of societal and historical changes that are shaped by collective events and memory are importantly different. He again talks about the different forms of unity. The micro-physical systems, the molecules and chemical compounds and the macro-physical compounds are different levels of material reality. Here the parts determine the whole. At the organic level, the whole determines the parts. Again, in the category of consciousness, three levels can be found –

1. Personal consciousness expressed in love and hate, personal responsibility, accountability, praise and guilt, conscious act, will and self-consciousness.
2. Objective spirit exemplified in history and historical life of a community, and
3. The timeless realm of ideas and thought.

Under (1) falls the central category of 'person' and the 'unity of consciousness'.

Under (2) falls categories of language, law, morals, form of production, artistic styles, scientific world views, mythologies and religions. Under (3) falls the forms of spirit which lives on in stable forms surviving their conscious productions: literature, architecture, art works, ideas and theories. They need recognition by a conscious spirit (Mohanty, 2009).

This broad sketch drawn by Mohanty regarding the stratified and complicated unity of the world does not fall for any narrow physicalism as he is against any reductionist approach. When viewed alone, none of these categories can portray a complete picture of the world. His uniqueness lies in granting an element of truth to each of the categories. In his view, any explanation should allow each layer to retain its own essential nature.

Mohanty again reminds us that when it comes to consciousness, any treatise on consciousness has to accommodate types of perspectives – psychological, biological, and social amongst others, and this does not imply that any one perspective replaces the others. Further, one has to have room for individual experiences like introspective, moral, aesthetic and spiritual. He seeks not unity of reduction, but unity of categorical structure, while offering multiple pictures of consciousness. Treating consciousness as a mere awareness and reducing it to a neuron, is to simplify it to the extent of distortion. He considers consciousness to be both mundane as well as transcendental. It is an integral part of the world and at the same time provides our only access to the world. As mundane, it is a stratum within nature and as transcendental, it is not anything which is beyond the world, but is rather that which grounds the possibility of the world (Mohanty, 2009). He, again, argues against any reduction of one to another. The methodological approach followed by him permits him to grant each level of consciousness a grain of truth.

One generally says that consciousness is subjective and it is contrasted with anything that is objective, like material objects. Indian tradition talks about pure consciousness, consciousness without content. Whereas the German philosophical tradition held the opposite view, namely the consciousness is objective. When Hegel used the word Geist or Spirit, he was referring to the consciousness that pervades a large group or community. Mohanty, however recognizes intentionality as a significant characteristic of consciousness and thus accounts for consciousness as having contents. The contents of consciousness according to Mohanty, are not subjective at a certain level, but at another level this individual consciousness mingles with the consciousness of others, which forms the consciousness of the community. The thoughts of a community, its shared beliefs cannot be excluded from the use of the word 'consciousness'; they are after all,

the beliefs, hopes and desires of a group of people (Mohanty, 2009). Consciousness in all of its dimensions has perspectival truth which accommodates the perspective of theorists who considers it to be subjective along with the point of view depicting it as objective and so forth.

Implementation of Multi-layered Truth in the Concept of Person:

The phenomenon of philosophical truth as having various layers can be seen in his attempt to arrive at the identity of a person. In the essay 'Layers of Selfhood' from one of his renowned work *The Self and Its Other*, he deals with the question, what makes me a person? In his venture to determine the sort of entity a person is, instead of relying on any favoured metaphysical belief like physicalism or idealism, he takes recourse to another methodological guideline which permits one to direct attend oneself as a person. Following this methodology, he finds that a person is a being with a very complex structure consisting in layers of selfhood. While unfolding these layers, it comes to the light that a person is a subject, a self and also an ego. "The subject as I shall understand it, is the source of intentional acts such as perceiving, believing, thinking, imagining, also hoping, desiring, loving and hating. All intentional acts have a subject pole and an object pole, that from which they issue forth, and that towards which they are directed respectively. By the subject I mean this subject pole. That which is characterized by intentionality, I will call subjective" (Mohanty, 2000). Mohanty identifies subjective neither with consciousness, nor with mental. According to him, in an important sense, the body is also subjective. Again, the person as an ego is idea of her interior mental life in its solitude, cut off from any involvement in the world and society. "It presupposes putting into effect what Husserl called the *epoché*— all my experiences in their built-in intentionalities remain as they are, save and except the natural, taking for granted that I along with my experiences am a part of the world" (Mohanty, 2000). Suspending the naïve belief in the world, one finds oneself as an ongoing temporal flow of experiences, though not in the physical time, but in inner lived time. "The identity of a mind, of a consciousness, is passively self-constituting by Humean associations, Lockean memory, Husserlian passive synthesis" (Mohanty, 2000). Furthermore, the self is understood by Mohanty as the ego clothed with the garments of society. It lives, acts and grows in the real time and history. Professor Mohanty, while accounting for these various aspects of a person's being, also holds that a person is more than any of these. The identity of a person, however is not pre-given, but has to be continually re-established. It is never closed like a Leibnitzian monad, it is rather continually in question, to be restored by the person. He says, "Nor I am my body in the sense in which the physicalist understands the 'body'. Nor I am a sheer social construct as it is fashionable to hold today. And yet there is an element of truth in each of these positions" (Mohanty, 2000). While reflecting on his notion of the identity of a person in Mohantian discourse, it is discerned that the truth regarding the identity of a person is perspectival. A person can be a subject having characterized by intentionality. She can be a historically developed social self and even an isolated ego. All of these stances are considered

true from a particular standpoint, but none of them by itself provides the absolute truth regarding the identity of the person.

Multi-layered Truth as a Reconciling Notion between two Opposing Standpoints:

Professor Mohanty, being an ardent advocate of multi-valued truth, has acknowledged his indebtedness to the Jainas in some of his articles. Jainism introduced a dimension to metaphysical discussion. The Jaina idea of non-injury applies to philosophical thinking requires that one does not reject outright the point of view of the other without first recognizing the element of truth in it; it is based on the belief that every point of view is partly true, partly false and partly indescribable. According to Mohanty, Jaina philosophers are the only ones who holds that since reality has infinite aspects, metaphysics has to be *anekānta* or non-absolutistic. Interestingly, reality having these infinite aspects, cannot be summarily described under any of them. So, Jainism developed a method of describing reality from different perspectives, and of synthesizing these seemingly inconsistent attributes. The logical aspect of this theory is called *syādvāda* (Mohanty, 2000). Mohanty considers the Jaina non-one-sided doctrine as a model for philosophical liberalism because of its willingness to accommodate all possible standpoints and to assign to each an element of truth while rejecting the claim of any to be absolutely true. Though this many-sided reality of Jainism is opposed by thinkers like Shankara and Buddhists, Mohanty regards this position to be one of the finest achievements of the Indian mind (Mohanty, 2000).

In his article, *Philosophy as Reflection on Experience*, Mohanty writes, “Being steeped in history my reflection presupposes and proceeds on the foundation of sedimented thoughts of other philosophers who either have preceded me in time or, though my contemporaries, have been able to exercise some significant influence on me” (Mohanty, 1975). Consequently, his approach to account for philosophical truth as multi-layered can be seen to be partly inspired by Jainism and partly by Husserlian notion of overlapping content. Husserl in his *Ideas* focusing on the idea that to be conscious of an object is not just to be conscious of something under one description or way of viewing it, but it is also to be conscious of the object as an identity of its own, one that is simultaneously given through discrete noematic perspectives or experiences, but is also more than what any one of these experiences presents it as being. Husserl also maintains that the intention of an object *via* a certain noema at one moment involves, not only intending the object as it is currently experienced, but also contains a third element consisting of pointing references to a “horizon” of further possible determinations of the object, to further noemata or ways of being directed to one and the same object that are either motivated by or consistent with the way in which the current intention presents that object (Spear, 2011). An implication can be made simply from this is that while cognizing (specifically perceiving) an object, different perspectives may be involved in the content of the object thought of, but these

are not totally discrepant, rather while some of them are overlapping, some of them may include one within the other. To put into Mohanty's word "the different perspectives on a thing are not mutually exclusive, but share some content with each other" (Mohanty, 2000). Having a striking affinity to Husserl, Mohanty also holds that a perceptual object is complex and has its field or background. In his words, "experience is ...incurably characterized by intentionality, is always of something...the objects of experience are given not as self-contained unities but always within a field of horizon which again points beyond itself to larger and larger horizons" (Mohanty, 1975).

According to Mohanty, again, consciousness being intentional is meaning-conferring and object-constituting. "...the object is never denied, but in its raw unadulterated form it is never given, it is just a bare 'that' – a correlate of experience. Examination shows that the so-called pure given is given is already interpreted. Consciousness involves noesis-noema correlation, that is, experience and the way in which its object is presented to it. This implies that the presented object always has a meaning. Consciousness is also perspectival. Each description of the object is true from its own perspective. Within any of the different types of consciousness – naïve perceptual consciousness, scientific consciousness, or religious – a person is a realist" (Mohanty, 2009).

This unique way of accommodating grains of truth to different perspectives leads him to appreciate the element of truth present in the philosophical position of the opponent. Mohanty feels that many Indian philosophers did this when presenting a *pûrvapakca*. He mentions Ramanuja's statement of Shankara's position in his *mahâ-pûrvapakca* as an instance in point. This was for him an application of the so-called principle of charity in interpretation. He views the world in this particular way.

By inculcating this methodological approach, Mohanty attempts to bridge the gap between two opposing viewpoints in the field of philosophy. By applying the Jaina idea of non-injury and the notion of overlapping noema an inclination to reconcile absolutism and relativism or identity and difference is discernible in his philosophical discourse. While discussing identity, he takes into account the non-dualism of Shankara and in regards to difference, considers the theory of impermanence of Buddhism highlighting the incomplete nature of the truth where one theory entirely rejects the other. He then suggests the notion of perspectival truth to be a preferable alternative. Mohanty again writes, "there is an inner connection between relativism and absolutism- relativism is but an absolutism of each of many worlds. Each world allows each to be relative, to have its own domain. Absolutism, likewise, takes each world to be relative, that is, to have its validity relative to its standpoint, only the world is the non-relative truth" (Mohanty, 2000).

Furthermore, this phenomenon of truth having multiple layers leads him to build a bridge between idealism and realism. In his words, "For whatever description one gives of the

real (its reality, existence, thinghood or everything else) surfaces within the intentional content, as a constitutive sense and so points conceptually, to intentional experience of some sort. It is in this sense then the world is the correlate of consciousness. Consciousness both belongs to the world and presents the world. As belonging to the world, it is mundane; as presenting the world it is transcendental” (Mohanty, 2002). The reality of the world is not denied. But we still have an idealism, as the world qua world is made possible by the structures of our inter-subjective and historically developing intentional experience. In other words, Mohanty does not deny the existence of external objects, yet he holds that they are meaningless without the reference to an interpreting constituting consciousness (Mohanty, 2009).

Conclusion:

The Mohantian approach of accommodating a truth aspect to multiple perspectives may result in certain complexities as well. A decision-making process may occasionally encounter a number of crucial situations if each point of view is given a modicum of truth rather than being presented with the whole truth or falsity. Moreover, perspectival truth seems to disallow all-comprehensive truth. There arise then a question, can such truth be not known due to human limitation or is it that such a truth does not exist at all? As an answer to this question, can be mentioned these lines written by him, “... a material object per se, that is, apart from its many perspectival appearances is for me nothing. But I also believe that through these perspectives the same identical object is known, that is, presents itself to a subject. Perhaps I would say that only one’s consciousness is presented to oneself without perspectival appearances that is per se. In this sense, it is the only thing that is absolutely known” (Mohanty, 2009). However, it is interesting to note that if this notion of truth is put into practice, then the very approach will have only a perspectival truth. Nevertheless, this unique attitude of looking into philosophical truth having multiple layers can be considered as a preferable alternative. Because having considered a single philosophical truth as thesis and multiple truths as anti- thesis, a need for synthesis which tries to accommodate all cannot be overlooked. Mohanty has made an immense effort to synthesize these two without rejecting any of them as refutation of any of the standpoints may leave the truth incomplete. It can be added that implementing this strategy in the walks of our lives may help us mitigate conflicts to some extent. Thus, while engaging in conversations, disputes can be allayed if we learn to consider the element of truth that underlies the opinion of the other. Undeniably, complexities will be there if it becomes difficult to determine something as entirely true or false. But there are many circumstances, where it is crucial to be understanding than to be precisely correct. However, being a finite human being, it is not possible for us to know all the perspectives on a thing, as Jainas hold. So, we cannot outright deny the point of the other without analysing them first. As a concluding remark, it can be stated without exaggeration that to lessen inter-personal conflicts, to diminish the hatred prevailing

the modern world and to considerably improve the understanding of the Other, an adoption of the idea of perspectival truth is commendable.

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VARNA DHARMA AND CHATURASHRAMA DHARMA: THEIR RELEVANCE TO MODERN LIFE

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Abstract:

The concepts of Varna Dharma and Chaturashrama Dharma was the key concepts of ancient Indian social and philosophical thought, offering a comprehensive framework for both societal organization and individual development. Varna Dharma denotes the division of society into four groups (Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra) based on duties and responsibilities, emphasizing social harmony and interdependence. Chaturashrama Dharma, on the other hand, prescribes the four stages of life (Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa), guiding individuals in fulfilling their material, familial, and spiritual obligations.

The study of these doctrines is essential to understand the ethical, cultural, and philosophical foundations of ancient Indian civilization. While they offer timeless lessons in moral responsibility, personal growth, and the pursuit of righteousness (Dharma), they also provide valuable insights into the balance between individual and collective welfare. Furthermore, a critical examination highlights the potential distortions that led to social inequalities, such as the rigid caste system, inviting a reinterpretation of these principles in the context of modern society.

This paper explores the historical significance, philosophical depth, and contemporary relevance of Varna Dharma and Chaturashrama Dharma, emphasizing their enduring role in fostering ethical living, societal harmony, and holistic human development.

Key-words: Varna Dharma, Chaturashrama Dharma, ethical value, social harmony, holistic growth, caste system, ultimate goal, etc.

1.0. Introduction:

There are two significant concepts of traditional Indian social structure: *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashrama Dharma*. These concepts have been traditionally propagated and elaborated through texts like the *Rigveda*, the *Manusmriti*, the *Puranas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Gita*, forming the foundation of India's social and spiritual philosophy over centuries. The structure of Indian society developed based on the *Varna* system. The word *Varna* is derived from the Sanskrit root *vri* (वृ), which means "to encompass or cover." In another sense, the term *Varna* signifies the freedom of an individual to choose a profession according to their will. The Indian social structure mentions four *Varnas*: *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas*, and *Shudras*. This division of *Varnas* was not based on birth but rather on one's actions and duties. At that time, this *Varna* system was essential for building a well-functioning and healthy society. However, over time, these concepts evolved, and the system became based on birth rather than actions. As a result, various complexities arose within society. The *Varna* system was initially designed to ensure the smooth functioning of society, emphasizing duties (*dharma*) over privileges. Classical texts like the *Bhagavad Gita* stress that *Varna* is determined by qualities (*guna*) and actions (*karma*), not by birth. The system degenerated into the rigid caste system, leading to social divisions and discrimination.

Like the *Varna* system, the *Chaturashrama Dharma* is also an important social structure in traditional Indian society, through which an individual can achieve the ultimate goal of life. The *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, the carriers of Indian culture, outline human life as a span of one hundred years divided into four stages of twenty years each. They provide guidance for each stage, emphasizing the fulfillment of one's duties, moral responsibilities, and righteous conduct. *Chaturashram Dharma*, or the four stages of life in Hindu philosophy, comprises *Brahmacharya* (student life), *Grihastha* (householder life), *Vanaprastha* (retired life), and *Sannyasa* (renounced life). These stages provide a structured framework for living a balanced and purposeful life. Each stage emphasizes specific duties and responsibilities, ensuring individual growth while contributing to society's welfare. In daily life, this concept reminds individuals to focus on education during youth, fulfill family and societal obligations in adulthood, gradually detach from material pursuits in later years, and ultimately seek spiritual liberation. By following *Chaturashram Dharma*, one can achieve harmony between personal aspirations and social responsibilities, leading to a fulfilled and meaningful life.

The concepts of *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashrama Dharma* are central to the traditional Hindu social and spiritual framework, and they are interrelated as part of the larger *Dharma* system. The *Varna Dharma* focuses on one's societal role based on *Varna*, while *Chaturashrama Dharma* addresses the spiritual journey through different life stages. Together, they create a balance between worldly duties and spiritual pursuits.

An individual's *ashrama* determines how they fulfill their *Varna Dharma*. For instance, a Brahmin in the *Brahmacharya* stage focuses on learning scriptures, while in the *Grihastha* stage,

they perform rituals and teach others. In essence, *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashrama Dharma* form a unified system where the social order (*Varna*) and individual spiritual progress (*ashrama*) are interconnected to uphold dharma, ensuring the well-being of society and the individual. While *Varna Dharma* emphasizes the collective good of society, *Chaturashrama Dharma* prioritizes individual spiritual evolution. Both systems harmonize personal and societal growth. A duty within *Varna Dharma* evolves according to the *ashrama*. For example, a *Kshatriya* in the *Grihastha* stage governs the kingdom. The same *Kshatriya* in the *Vanaprastha* stage might guide others spiritually or administratively from a distance.

1.2. **Need of the Study:**

The study of *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashrama Dharma*, core concepts of ancient Indian philosophy and societal organization, holds significant value both historically and in understanding human development. Both concepts emphasize the interdependence of individual and society. *Varna Dharma* stresses social responsibility, while *Chaturashrama Dharma* focuses on personal growth and contribution to society across life stages. These doctrines are central to understanding Hindu philosophy, practices, and culture. They shape rituals, traditions, and customs that continue to influence Indian society. *Varna Dharma* teaches the importance of performing one's duties without attachment, aligning with the principles of the *Bhagavad Gita*. *Chaturashrama Dharma* emphasizes the holistic development of a person, integrating material success, family responsibilities, and spiritual growth.

1.3. **Aim and Objective of the Study:**

The main aim and objective of this paper is to explore the principle of *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashrama Dharma* and to analyze their relevance and applicability in ethical and individual challenges in modern life.

1.4. **Methodology:**

The paper is basically secondary data-based and descriptive exploratory in nature and examining the ethical and spiritual dimensions of *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashrama Dharma*. The paper explores how these ancient principles can be adopted to modern life. Reviewing secondary sources such as academic papers, books, journals, and the internet. And comparing various interpretations of these doctrines to present a holistic understanding. These methods ensure a comprehensive and balanced exploration of the subject. Combining textual analysis, historical context, and philosophical value.

1.5. Discussion of the objective:

1.5.1. *Varna Dharma* and its Relevance to Modern Life

The ancient Vedic system known as *Varna Dharma* describes the various purposes, roles, and phases of life. Based on people's innate skills and traits, it separates society into four categories, or *Varnas*. Every group has responsibilities, and it's critical that everyone balances and achieves all of life's objectives. One thing is certain regardless of the *Varna's* meaning: it symbolized the partition of society into distinct groups. Consequently, *Varna* and *Dharma* were used to describe the delegation of duties to different groups of people. According to the *Varna* system, a man must fulfill his responsibilities. The **Brahmins** include scholars, teachers, and priests. They are responsible for learning and sharing knowledge and for performing religious rituals. They are known for their peaceful and wise nature. The *Kshatriyas* are warriors, rulers, and protectors of society. They organize and manage society's affairs, fight in wars, and defend the country. They are known for their strength and leadership qualities. The *Vaishyas* are responsible for the economy. They work in trade, farming, and business and are involved in creating and managing wealth. They help ensure the well-being of society by producing and distributing goods. The *Shudras* are workers who provide services to the other three *Varnas*. They perform manual labor, such as farming, mining, and other crafts, to support society's needs.

Each group has its own unique role and is expected to fulfill its responsibilities to keep society in balance. The traditional caste system, based on birth and *Varna* (social class), is considered outdated and harmful in today's world. However, the core ideas of **Dharma** (duty) and **Svadharma** (one's own duty) from *Varna Dharma* can still be relevant in modern life. These ideas can help people live ethically, contribute based on their skills, and promote social harmony without supporting discrimination or rigid hierarchies.

The concept of *Varna Dharma* forms a crucial aspect of ancient Indian ethical frameworks. The concept of *Dharma* encourages people to live ethically, fulfill their responsibilities, and act with integrity, no matter their profession or social background. The four *Varnas* are associated with specific duties (dharma), fostering social harmony and individual moral responsibility. For instance, Brahmins were entrusted with spiritual guidance, while *Kshatriyas* were expected to protect and govern with justice. This division was initially intended to ensure that individuals contributed to society based on their aptitude and ability, rather than birth. However, over time, rigid interpretations led to social hierarchies and inequalities. Modern ethical perspectives challenge such rigidity but appreciate the original emphasis on duty and cooperation. For example, Mahatma Gandhi often referred to the *Varna system's* ethical ideals in promoting non-violence (*ahimsa*) and selfless service while rejecting its later discriminatory aspects (*varna-vyavastha*). Through critical reflection, the ethical essence of *Varna Dharma* continues to inspire discussions on responsibility and justice in societal frameworks/.

Dr. Radhakrishnan (1948) highlights that the original essence of *Varna Dharma* was rooted in the ethical distribution of societal responsibilities based on individual capabilities, rather than birth. This framework, when applied without discrimination, could serve as a foundation for maintaining social order and ensuring individual contributions to collective welfare. It emphasizes the importance of duties (*dharma*) over privileges, which aligns with contemporary ideas of justice and accountability in societal roles. Critics argue that while the theoretical basis of *Varna Dharma* promotes harmony and ethical living, its historical implementation often deviated from these ideals, leading to rigid caste hierarchies and social injustice. If understood as a way to contribute based on skills and abilities, *Varna* can help promote social harmony by recognizing the importance of different roles in society. The *Svadharma* focuses on fulfilling one's own duty, promoting self-improvement and personal accountability, and encouraging people to contribute to society based on their unique abilities. The idea of contributing based on one's natural talents, rather than birth, can be valuable in modern society. It encourages people to pursue their strengths and make meaningful contributions.

The rigid caste system based on birth is widely rejected because of its discriminatory practices. The core principles of *Varna Dharma* should not be associated with this outdated system. Figures like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1946) have strongly criticized the system for perpetuating discrimination, particularly against marginalized communities like the Dalits. They contend that any ethical merit of *Varna Dharma* is overshadowed by its exploitative misuse over centuries. When applying *Varna Dharma* today, it should focus on individual talent and equality rather than inherited social status. Everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their skills and improve their lives. Many reformers have worked to reinterpret *Varna Dharma* in a way that promotes social justice, equality, and fairness.

In summary, while the caste system is harmful, the principles of *Dharma* and *Svadharma* can still guide ethical living, personal responsibility, and social harmony in a way that supports skill-based contributions and equality in present society.

1.5.2. ***Chaturashrama Dharma* and its Relevance to Modern Life**

Chaturashrama Dharma is a framework for organizing the spiritual, social, and personal growth of an individual in accordance with *Sanatana Dharma*. The four stages (*Ashramas*) are designed to help individuals live a balanced and meaningful life. Here's a brief overview of each stage: ***Brahmacharya (Student Stage)*** and emphasis on *Dharma* or Righteous Path): This stage lasts from birth to around 25 years of age. It is the period of learning, education, and self-discipline. During this phase, individuals focus on acquiring knowledge, both material and spiritual, and develop a strong foundation in self-control and ethical behavior. It is a time for learning from teachers (*gurus*) and practicing celibacy, purity, and devotion. ***Grihastha Ashrama (Householder Stage)*** and emphasis on *Dharma*, *Artha* (Achievement), and *Kama* (Desire)):

This phase spans from about 25 to 50 years of age. In this stage, individuals marry, raise families, and fulfill their societal duties. It is a time for productive work, raising children, and supporting the family and community. The *Grihastha Ashrama* is considered crucial because it sustains the economy, supports social welfare, and contributes to the well-being of the world through family and charitable actions. ***Vanaprastha Ashrama (Forest Dweller/Retirement Stage)*** and emphasis on *Dharma* and renunciation, *Artha*, and *Kama*): This stage generally occurs from ages 50 to 75. As individuals enter this phase, they begin to retreat from worldly attachments and responsibilities, slowly transitioning from an active social life to a more contemplative one. They may hand over their duties to the younger generation and retreat to a more peaceful, solitary lifestyle, often seeking spiritual growth and deeper reflection. ***Sannyasa Ashrama (Renunciation Stage)*** and to attain liberation and emphasis on *Dharma* and *Moksha* (Salvation): This final stage begins around 75 years of age and extends to the end of life. The focus here is on complete renunciation of material life and worldly attachments, dedicating oneself entirely to spiritual pursuits. Individuals in this stage typically seek liberation (*moksha*) and the ultimate realization of the Self, often through meditation, prayer, and detachment from the material world.

Together, these stages of life are meant to ensure a harmonious and purposeful existence, guiding individuals towards spiritual maturity and the fulfillment of their *dharma* (duty) in the world. Timely emphasis on *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha* in right combination is essential for a meaningful human life—the *Chaturashrama* system ensures this.

In the modern world, people are increasingly focused only on *Artha* and *Kama*. This is causing serious imbalance in human life, and the result is that civilization is increasingly heading towards collapse. So, the *Chaturashrama Dharma* system should be used to correct the imbalance caused by hedonistic and materialistic modern civilization. These stages outline a framework for leading a balanced and meaningful life, focusing on personal development, societal responsibilities, and spiritual growth.

In a fast-paced modern world, *Chaturashrama Dharma* offers a structured approach to life, encouraging individuals to focus on education and personal growth in youth, contribute to society through work and family in adulthood, and prepare for spiritual pursuits in later life. This progression helps in maintaining a sense of purpose throughout one's life. The emphasis on the *Grihastha* stage highlights the importance of balancing professional and personal responsibilities, a challenge for many in today's society. It underscores the need for fulfilling social obligations while pursuing individual ambitions. The *Vanaprastha* and *Sannyasa* stages promote detachment from materialism and focus on inner peace and spiritual fulfillment. This is highly relevant in modern times, where consumerism often leads to stress and dissatisfaction.

By guiding individuals to gradually transition from active participation in worldly affairs to introspection and spirituality, *Chaturashrama* provides a framework for mental peace, addressing

issues like midlife crises and the fear of aging. Each stage encourages responsibility toward oneself, family, and society. For instance, the *Grihastha* stage involves supporting family and contributing to societal development, fostering values of community and altruism.

Chaturasrama Dharma is not merely a traditional framework but a timeless guide for leading a balanced and meaningful life. Its relevance lies in its ability to address the challenges of modern society, offering solutions for personal growth, social harmony, and spiritual fulfillment. By revisiting and adapting its principles, individuals can lead more purposeful and harmonious lives.

1.6. **Conclusion:**

In the current consumerist society, traditional knowledge, philosophy, values, and spirituality hold little significance. Failing to understand the importance of traditional society norms like *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturasharma Dharma*, people consider materialism or physical possessions as means to attain happiness, thereby losing mental peace. The knowledge of tradition and culture provides humans with pure knowledge about life and the world. The ethical value of *Varna Dharma* and *Chaturashram Dharma*, an essential part of human life, helps discern right from wrong and fosters virtuous behavior. The traditional knowledge is not merely spiritual study; it delves deeply into knowledge and conduct. It is intricately connected with science.

Although, according to *Chaturashrama Dharma*, humans may not live for one hundred years in the present time, the different stages of life are not meaningless. If we compare our lives to the four *ashramas* (stages) of *Brahmacharya*, we see that the first twenty-five years are extremely important. If life is not built during this period, the rest of it is filled with unrest. During this phase, a student's primary focus should be on learning, as this is their penance. The *Grihastha* (householder) *ashrama* is intended for building a family. If a student enters into household responsibilities prematurely, it is natural for their life to become disorganized later on. One should perform the duties designated for each stage of life at the appropriate time. The first twenty-five years should be dedicated to education and self-building, only after which one should enter the *Grihastha* stage. For the responsibilities of family life, the next twenty-five years are sufficient, as within this period, one can fulfill desires like raising children and establishing a family.

In the current context, if we merge the *Vanaprastha* and *Sannyasa ashramas*, we can let go of worldly attachments and dedicate ourselves selflessly to social and community work. The traditional concept is not meaningless; we can give it a modern perspective and use it to guide our lives in a disciplined and meaningful way.

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PHILOSOPHIES BEHIND THE LANGKHOON MISEWA: THE TRADITIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE TIWA COMMUNITY OF ASSAM

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Abstract:

The North East region of India is diverse. The festivals and other traditional practices of the Northeast highlighted the region's rich indigenous culture with folk songs, folk dances, food, and crafts. Festivals, dances, and rituals are the major and important sources of human civilization and social life. To make the human world more active, enjoyable, and vibrant the role and importance of festivals are indispensable. A folk festival celebrates the traditional folk crafts and music. Tiwa is one of the major ethnic tribes of North East India and resides in the states of Assam and Meghalaya. They were earlier known as Lalungs. They observe many traditional festivals and Langkhoon festival or misewa is one of the major traditional festivals where there is a close affinity towards the nature. They are strongly attached to nature. They by performing the misewa wants to satisfy the Deities there by offering gratitude and appeal Him to preserve the Nature for mankind. Since it is one of the major agricultural-based festivals which is performed by Hajo wali and Dati wali Tiwa, attempt is made to focus the importance of nature worship, gratitude to nature as well as preserving aspect of nature.

Key-words: Tiwa , Langkhoon , Hajowali , Datiwali, Shamadi

Objective of the Study:

The study mainly focuses on exploring this traditional festival of the community and besides this attempt is made to highlight their traditional folk rituals and beliefs relating to nature and it wants to highlight the philosophies behind celebrations of the misewa.

Methodology:

To undertake the study both primary and secondary are collected from different published and unpublished articles and magazines. Besides this interviews are conducted amongst scholars as well as literary individuals.

Introduction:

The Tiwa otherwise known as Lalung are one of the major ethnic groups of Assam. This person is a unique and culturally rich indigenous people of North East India. This Community has its independent language, religion, customs, rituals, culture, colourful dances, social institutions, and festivals. There are various traditional festivals of this community and out of such festivals Sogra, Yangli, Muinary Kanthi, Borot, Jongkhong, Gusai Uliwa ,Jongkhong, Langkhon, Wansuwa are the major festivals of this Tiwa Tribe. Their Festivals are mainly related to farming and harvesting like the other festivals celebrated by the indigenous people of this region. The lifestyle, tradition, and culture of this community illumined with the help of the festivals of this community. This community has been scattered in the various districts of Assam like Nagaon, Morigaon, West, and East Karbi Anglong, Kamrup, Dhemaji, Titabor, and also some parts of the adjacent state that is Meghalaya. As per their place inhabitant are divided into Hajowali those who reside in hill areas, Tholwali who reside in plain areas and Datiwali are who reside in foot hill areas. According to Tiwa traditional belief festivals and other holy activities start from the day of the wends day since they believe that wends day is the holy day for them. They started their festival by performing prayer and worship to their respective Deities as per their prevalent customs, traditions along with colourful dance and music. The term Langkhon means in their dialectic decorated bamboo sticks. It is observed with similar features to other traditional Misewa of this community where the portfolio bearer of Shamadi (bachelor dormitory) plays a major role (Thakur,1985)

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Methodology:

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Background of the Festival:

Langkhon misewa is an important traditional festival of the Tiwa community of Assam. The term Langkhon means in their dialectic decorated bamboo sticks. It is also observed with similar features like other misewa of this community. This festival is not observed uniformly by all Tiwa people, it is celebrated by only a few foids of their community. The hill village particularly Amsai Pinug and Bormarjong of the Amri Block of West Karbi Anglong observed this yearly other villages of the hill areas celebrated this festival every 2 or 3 or 5 years of interval. In some hill areas this festival is still being celebrated but in the palin Tiwa areas celebration of this festival has dried up. However, the dance related to this festival is still prevalent in plain areas.

Myth Relating to the Misewa:

There are variousfolk tales or myth related to the origin of this festival amongst the various clan or units or khel of the Tiwa community. One such folk tale of Amoni khel or clan has been stated by one of the informants as follows the main God of the Amoni unit or clan namely 'Brha ramsai' could not find any kind of sacrifices, thereby lot of men died due to the outbreak of shortage of foods and various ill-omen occurred amongst the people of Amoni unit. As a result of this despite hard work, they could not manage food and other essential things. And all the natural calamities outbreak in the area and the situation became horrible, even they couldn't manage food even after begging. And their God 'Brha ramsai' became happy by observing all the circumstances of these people. One day 'Brharamsai' in a dream saw a man namely 'Sogralublai' of 'Hogan clan that if they celebrated 'Langknon' puja and offered him sacrifice then all the outbreaks would be finished. But in that situation, it was difficult for them to celebrate the puja since it required a lot of rice and wine, and they have to meet all such requirements. Then God 'Brharamsai' told them it need not require rice for wine, he suggested that he would be satisfied or pleased if they prepared the wine in the skull of a bottle guard with the leaves of gross berry. In this way the clan of Amoni satisfied the God 'Bruharamsai' and then onwards they observed this festival and felt proud to observe or celebrate the festival. They believed that this Festival which they got it from God Burharamsai was grace and in the particular place of Korkhia, khala lamaya of Silchang which they expressed through songs follows

Silchang korkhia maru khala lamaya
Khumrai kojane ju
Thiblai layane juan

Huwana na Hiya sogralublai
Por manane Hogna hiya (Pator, 2009).

The meaning of the above song is that in the place of Silchang karkhia and maru khala lamaya and the 'Sogralublai' of 'Hogan' gets the Festival from the Deity Bruharamsai.

Materials Required for the Celebration of the Festival:

Various materials are to be required during the time of the festival such as Zu-lau, betel nut, khram, Thurang, pangchi, bamboo sticks, firewood, thatching grass, bamboo, special kind of wild leaf and banana leaf, etc.

Preparation for the Festival:

The preparation for this festival is done mainly for two to three days but, the main function of this is a one-day program. Wednesday is said to be the preferred day to perform any festival of the community, but this festival begins on Monday. Before the celebration of this festival, all the portfolio bearers of Shamadi meet at the residence of Lara and discuss the plan and program for the celebration and Loro gives them Zu and betel nut. Then they went out to the top of the hill to collect bamboo to make Langkhoon. Then they select a bamboo and clean the area. And offered Zu and betel nuts and leaves and chanted some mantras in the name of God Salaja Raja collected a special bamboo Bijuli bamboo (Supposed to be the daughter of Salja Raja) and also pray Him to grow the earth full of bamboo. The humans used at the time of offering can be stated as follows

Julai Kubai Fidang Aba Bijul Rawan
Mai Lau Kubai Fidang Aba Salja Raja
Ne Saj Bijul Kawarig Lana
Ne Tij Mahadi Kauarig Lana
Teb Zu lau Jana Teb Mai Lau Jana
Sa Sangdolo Ne ,Sa Sangmajani
Sa Sa Burhane Sa Mathane Oo (Senapoti,1974).

Moreover, they also prayed to the Deity of creator and preserver, Sari Bhai Sari Kora, Maha Maya, Baro yana Devota, Athoro Gun Dew at the time of collecting the Bamboo as follows

Hani Sana Dew Prabhu Sari Bhai
Bighani Sana Dew Oma Mahamaya
Nem Niyame Ganthi rame Lang Gai

Nel rokome Juri Rame Lang Gai
Luko Hani Tari O' Atharo Guno Deo
Mathi Thana Nai Deai
Dabol Thana Nau Deai (Senapoti,1974).

After such ritualistic activities, they collect Eighteen numbers of bamboo for the festival and store it in the courtyard of Shamadi which brings a festive environment to the village. The panthai sing songs full of bursting joy. Then the next day, the panthai cleans the Shamadi, the place of worship where the Langkhoon festival was celebrated and in this way the misewa comes to end.

Celebration of the Festival:

The festival is celebrated in the month Kati or Ahin and in some areas it is celebrated in the month of Magh or Puh as per the Assamese calendar it generally starts on Monday and it ends on Thursday and like other festivals, the panthai khel plays all important functions of the festival. The panthai of the village begin to collect the essential materials of the festival like grass, wood, bamboo, specific wild leaf, and banana leaf and while collecting these essential materials they use an action which their packed routine from the morning. They carry the materials to the courtyard of Shamadi along with branches of moder trees in order to prepare malbari to worship the Deity Mahadeo. The panthai then start to do their work as per their tradition. The panthai group prepared the bamboo by drawing some lines on it and in between the nodes of bamboo like flowers scraped the thin outer layer removed by pulling with a sharp implement like knife across the bamboo which is called Langkhoon. Like Langkhoon they prepare malbari from the collected branches of the moder tree which they color black with charcoal and yellow, decorated, and give a shape of bird on the top of the malbari. In the next they keep the prepared Langkhoon in the court yard of Shamadi squarely four to five lines and then proceeded to the residence of Dewri and offer him Zu-lau with betel nut and leaf to beg him the musical instruments. The Dewri then accepts the proposal and permits to use such musical instruments.

The next day morning, the panthai group moves around the village with the malbari in their hand. While moving around the village they make a clamorous procession and start to strike the roof, wall, and gates of the villages with malabari and Langkhoon. It is done as per their belief to scare and move the evil forces from their respective villages. Then they keep the malbari in a special place which is a distance from the village after that panthai return to the Shamadi and starts to dance and sing. The portfolio bearer collects a pair of hen and Zu-lau from each family of the villagers and takes them to the sacred place. The portfolio bearer and the elder of the village make a heap of earth to worship. They arrange to pray and worship with the twenty fold of banana leaves out of which one-fold banana to Deity Saribhai, one

fold to Deity Bagh dew, another fold to Deity Bata dew, fivefold to Deity Bamundew, and other Deties, all the worship is made by Loro.

They use the following hymns at the time of worshiping in the name of Sari Bhai , Etharo Gun Dew, Baro gun Dew, and Mahamaya Ranochandi to remove or overcome the hurdles, obstacles

Kaja Maya Fiyaga Uthar Sigai Lang
Khajam Maya Fiyaga Dekhon Sigai Lang
Oba Mathane Giri Oba Baro Gon Dew
Oba Shari Bhai Oba Eatharo Gon Dew
Des Tarakhai Raja Tara Khai
Matheu Tara kha Dabol Tara Khai
O' Mahamaya O'o Ranochandi Dew'(Senapoti,1974)

They then keep some rice, betel nut, and leaf over the fold of the banana leaf and chanted hymn to their respective Deties and also sacrifice hen which is brought from a villager. The blood is poured on the fold of banana leaf and some are also poured on Zu-lau. They also sprinkled some liquid rice powder amongst the attendees which is considered as sign of fortune. Again thy keep a bundle of thatching grass on each fold of banana leaf by which they build a platform of the split of bamboo in the roof of the house. Then they prepare a meal with rice powder and chicken and offer it to the Deity and also taken it by the attendee. After the ritualistic activities the panthai group starts to dance and sing with their traditional musical instruments like khram , pangchi, thurang in a joyful manner with the theLangkhood in their hand till end of dark. The panthai group then move to the village and dances from the courtyard of Shamadi and to the residences of Shangmaji , Shangdoli till the mid night. In the proceeding to the village the panthai are offered snacks, rice powder, and Zu and then they keep the Lagkhood which is away from the village where the malbari are kept. Keeping the malbari in the sacred place they use the following song

Ebae Dase Fara Suni Sikai Lang
Ea be Raje Fara Bigini Sikai Lang
Rawe Farat Lit Nahai Liba
Khana ne Farat Sagar Nahai Libo
Afot Sikai Lang Bifot Bujai Lang
Khalag Sikai Lang Khulik Go Sikai Lang
O'o Ma Bijuli Knowari
O'o Ma Salaja Mahidi Ooi (Senapoti,1974).

The meaning of such a song that Hey God keep away the evil force from our areas, O' the Bijuli Knowari daughter of Salaja Raja and Salaja Raja from today throw and drive all the

hindrances, evil forces and ill omen from our areas. They through the song also appeal to the concerned deities to preserve nature for future generations and also praise the deity. In this way, they by singing and dancing keep all the musical materials in the residence of Dewri and return to their homes and in this way, the festivals comes to an end.

Conclusion:

The traditional festival of Tiwa has various importance in the social and religious life of the community. The study shows they have systematic traditional rules and regulations for conducting traditional festivals and other rites, and ceremonies. This festival helps us to understand and learn about the religious and social life of this community relating to nature. The appeasement and nature-centric prayer to deities is one of the major aspects of Tiwa people. It also shows their respect toward land, nature, and elders. The festival shows that every individual as well as a family active participation in the traditional practices. This community festival of the Tiwa brings social cohesion and religious identity into a moral community. Besides this, they tried to preserve their age-old religious customs and practices for the next generation as also the traditional attires, customs, songs, dance, and various other typical musical instruments and one of the highlighting features of the festival is the prayer to Deity for the wellbeing and prosperity not only their people but also people at large.

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Notes:

- Informant Maheswor Pator aged about 70 of Amsoi village who was the president of the Tiwa Mothanlai Tokhra .
- Bruha Ramsai: One of the traditional Deity
- Pator, M. (2009). Tiwa Xakolar Kaitaman Liko Utsav aru Loko Kahani Tiwa Sanaskritir Rehrup. An Outline of Tiwa Culture ,History ,Language etc. Guwahati: Hill View Publication p. 197

Hajo wali: The term used for those section of Tiwa people who dwell in the hill areas

Tholo wali: The term used for theTiwa people who dwell in the plain areas

Dati Wali: The term used for the Tiwa people who dwell in the foot hill areas

Shamadi: It is the bachelor dormitory of this community

Zu-lau: Local wine in the skull of bottle guard

Loro: Main Priest of the traditional village of the Tiwa Community

Dewri: One of the portfolio of the Shamadi or bachelor dormitory of Tiwa

Panthai: The term used to mean young Tiwa people.

Mal Dew: It is also one kind of Deity of Tiwa people

Salaja Raja: As per Tiwa belief it is one kind of Deity who is supposed to be the owner of the bamboo

Bijuli Bamboo: It is a special kind of bamboo which is used to frame musical instruments like Thurang , Pangchi etc

Shangmaji, Shangdoli: Portfolio bearer of the Shamadi

Foids: It is a term used to mean the cluster of clans

Sri bhai: One of the Deity of the Tiwa People

Amsai pinug: It is one of the major traditional village of Tiwa People of West Karbi Anglong district of Assam

Barmarjong: It is another major traditional village of Tiwa People of West Karbi angling Distract of Assam



SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION: M.K. GANDHI AND M. N. ROY

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Abstract:

M. K. Gandhi and M. N. Roy were the two prominent personalities in Indian politics. Both Roy and Gandhi were Nationalist, however their political views were different. In spite of their ideological differences, both the philosopher were very much concerned with the common people of India and the social conditions of India during their time. Gandhi's recommendation for social reconstruction are- Sorvodaya, swaraj, trusteeship, basic education etc., while Roy's recommendation for social reconstruction is philosophical revolution, in which he has given much importance on reason, morality, freedom and education. Gandhi wanted to uproot traditional Indian society rather than transform it. Therefore, giving much importance on village based economy, he rejected industrialisation and western civilisation. However Roy was not against industrialisation and western civilisation and deeply appreciated science and technology as a tool of development. He believed that social reconstruction based on traditional social unit with existing customs, values, behavioural patterns and forms of organisation, in the long run restrain social progress. Though both had a similar set of ideological assumptions about the moral nature of men, and the possibility of creating a perfect social order of spiritually free men, yet their approaches towards social reconstruction were different. In this paper an attempt has been made to give a summarised presentation on Gandhi and Roy's ideologies and a comparative analysis of their views on social reconstruction.

Key-words: Social reconstruction, man, morality, revolution, education

Introduction:

Edward Shils writes 'an ideology is the product of man's need for imposing intellectual order on the world. The need for ideology is an intensification of the need for a cognitive and moral of the universe....' (Ray S.N.,ed, 2003, p.107) M. K. Gandhi and M. N. Roy were the two prominent personalities in Indian politics, preach two different ideologies- Gandhism and Radical Humanism that are the humanistic philosophies. Both as a humanistic philosopher had a similar set of ideological assumptions about the moral nature of men, and the possibility of creating a perfect social order of spiritually free men. Although, all they are humanistic philosophers yet their methods of working and their interpretation of human development are different from one another. Gandhi's recommendation for social reconstruction are- Sorvodaya, swaraj, trusteeship, basic education etc., while Roy's recommendation for social reconstruction is philosophical revolution, in which he has given much importance on reason, morality, freedom and education.

Objective:

This paper attempts to focus on a summarised presentation on Gandhi and Roy's ideologies and a comparative analysis of their views on social reconstruction.

Methodology:

The present paper is based on the secondary data collected from the secondary sources i.e. published literature of the subject concern.

Gandhian view of social reconstruction:

M. K. Gandhi born in an orthodox Vaishnava family, grew in a mixed but balanced set-up. He was initiated into religious and moral traditions, and yet was sufficiently open to the changing needs of the time. After completing his study when he went to South Africa to work, the bitter experiences of various acts of discrimination committed by the people due to class, changed his mind set. He tried there to conquer evil by love, through passive resistance. So after returning to India he had taken decision to work for social reform of India. Gandhiji has been called a "moral revolutionary" as morality is the basic principle of his life. He wants to establish 'Ramrajya' or the kingdom of God in our country through certain rigid moral disciplines. He thought that for political and social betterment of mankind, moral regeneration is essential. Gandhi wanted to uproot traditional Indian society rather than transform it. Therefore, giving much importance on village based economy, he rejected industrialisation and western civilisation.

As man is a constituent part of society, so reorganisation of society is possible only by the remarking of man himself, which is possible only by self-purification. Mahatma Gandhi finds that self-purification as well as reconstruction of society will be impossible unless the evils

like communal differences, social injustice to backward classes, want of self-sufficiency, proper education and fearlessness are not uprooted from the Indian nation. So he dedicated his whole life to the constructive work for the nation. Gandhi's recommendation for social reconstruction are- bread-labour, swaraj, trusteeship, Sorvodaya, basic education etc.

Gandhiji's concept of bread- labour is one of the device to introduce social equality among people. Inspired by various sources like- Tolstoy's writing, Gita, Bible, and Ruskin's '*Unto This Last*', he introduce this concept, according to which every human being must work either physical or mental in order to live in the world. Gandhiji says "Every healthy individual must labour enough for his food, and his intellectual faculties must exercise not in order to obtain a living or amass a fortune, but only in service of mankind." (Gandhi, 1961, p.214) He thought that if this principle is observed everywhere, all men would be equal, and none would starve. Man has no right to accept anything more than the bare necessities of life. Therefore, it should be man's duty to direct his bread labour not only for personal benefit, but also for the general good of the society. Such bread labour is regarded as social service. However, bread labour can be socially beneficial only when individuals take it voluntarily.

Another recommendation that Gandhi makes in order to prevent social inequality is about quality of wages, which provides the basis of the economic structure of society. Gandhi thought that people getting higher wages consider themselves superior, but to him all kinds of work are equally sacred and necessary for society. So he recommended that every worker should get equal wages. This doctrine takes us on to consider the relationship between labour and capital and to Gandhi labour is superior to capital. In this point his views resemble to Marx view of capital and labour. (Lal, 1992, p.143) But unlike Marx he would not overthrow of the capitalists by force and also the class struggle of Marx. So he introduced the doctrine of the Trusteeship of the rich. He believed that every man necessarily possesses essential goodness among themselves, even the rich people or so called capitalist. So Gandhi believed that the wealth in their possession should be utilised for the good of the poor. This doctrine is based on morality and love. If the rich people should be made to realise that the capital in their hands is fruit of the labour of the poor, then the capitalist would function only as *trustees* for the poor. They would then keep all surplus wealth in trust and this would guarantee both economic solidity and economic equality. Trusteeship is nothing but a sincere working out of the Gandhi's doctrine of non- possession. To Gandhi this realisation made possible through a loving process, the merit of non-possession. Therefore, to Gandhi, the economic basis of society must be moral one, based on love and trust, which would naturally prevent economic exploitation.

Again, Gandhi feels that the growth of a moral society is prevented by an over- emphasis on industrialisation. So he was against industrialisation. He thought that too much industrialisation creates exploitation and social inequalities. The smaller countries are exploited for producing raw-materials and stronger countries get involved in repeated wars just in order to maintain

industrial superiority. Even in national level, it creates many kinds of unrest and disruptions, creates a gap between capital and labour, and also creates unemployment problem. His strongest reason against too much of industrialisation is that it poisons the very spirit of man and makes life mechanical and artificial.

Gandhi's main concern is Indian society. During his time India was under British rule. Therefore, he was concerned about the political freedom of India without which he thought that full development of society cannot be possible. The word that Gandhi prefers to use for political freedom is *swaraj*, which traditionally means own government or self –rule, Gandhi adds more to it. He says, “The *swaraj* of my dream is poor man's *swaraj*. The necessities of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by princes and monied man.” (Young India , 26-3-31) This concept also includes no race or religious distinction, and its ultimate aim is realisation of spiritual freedom. Thus his concept of *Swaraj* is based on social equality. He thought that *swaraj* is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority. Individuals have to be trained and educated in such a manner that the ideal is reached conveniently. However the goal of education should be moral education that would be able to bring out the element of goodness essentially present in every man. Connected to this concept Gandhi recommended *decentralisation* as a necessary political measure. He recommended *village republic* as the ideal form of decentralised political and social system. Thus his idea of the ideal state is the idea of village republic i.e. self-contained villages. Every village should be self-contained at least with respect to daily necessities of life , like food, clothing, basic education, health, sanitation and similar other things.

In conceiving this form of socio-political setup Gandhi is moved by the considerations of *Sorvodaya*, i.e. etymologically means ‘betterment of all’. This concept of Gandhi is similar to that Utilitarianism that believes in the greatest happiness of the greatest number. However, Gandhian concept of *Sorvodaya* is much more comprehensive and altruistic than Utilitarianism. Based on ‘love’, it proceeds on the faith that a *sovdoyi* will also be prepared for maximum possible self-sacrifice for the good of others. *Sorvodaya* is based on the belief that there is an essential unity behind everything. Thus for social reconstruction Gandhi gives much importance on man and inner possibilities. That is why he defines education as “ By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man- body, mind and spirit” (Harijan, 31st July 1937).

M.N. Roy's view of social reconstruction:

M. N Roy (originally Narendranath Bhattacharya) was born into a Bengali Brahmin family in a village outside Calcutta. He left India as a terrorist revolutionary for an adventurous career in the Communist international movement twenty-eight years later. However these initial twenty-eight years in Bengal were decisive for the shaping of his personality and thought. M. N Roy's quest for an adequate ideology began during his youth in Bengal. Started his active life as

an ardent nationalist, then as a communist Roy actively involved in Indian Political Freedom movement. After realizing that party politics is futile, Roy turns his life into a new phase i.e., as a Radical Humanist, concentrating on social reconstruction. In this last phase of his thought, Roy has come closure to the fulfilment of his needs, to realisation of his identity through the construction of an ideology. Roy's method of bringing about socio-political change is the method of 'revolution', which means radical reconstruction of society.

Roy introduces his philosophy to meet the crisis of his time and to recognize the society according to need. Revolution to him is a romantic idea, which means radical reconstruction of society. Any effort for a reorganization of society must begin from the unit of society – from the root, i. e., from man. Such an effort to develop a new philosophy of revolution, based on the entire stock of human heritage, and to elaborate the theory and formulate the principles of the practice of political action and economic reconstruction is called by Roy Radicalism. Radicalism thinks in terms neither of nation nor of class. Its concern is man and conceives freedom as freedom of the individual. Therefore, it can also be called New Humanism. It is new, as it is enriched, reinforced and elaborated by scientific knowledge and social experience gained during the centuries of modern civilization.

New Humanism of Roy boldly says that, "since man is rational, he can also be moral by himself." Roy(1999),, p. 148) The only way to make man moral, is to make him conscious of his own rationality and social responsibility. A man with a sense of social responsibility cannot be immoral, because his own conscience will keep him on the path of morality. Roy says "only moral man can constitute a moral society, only rational man can constitute rational society". (Roy, 1999,p.148) Thus according to Radical Humanism of Roy, reason has also a social role. Roy holds that the individual being the starting point of New Humanism, its practice must necessarily starts from the action and behaviour of individuals and when a hundred of them will be guided by the same ideal and will be engaged in the same practice, there will be co-operation among them. A humanist movement will develop among such groups of Humanists. They will not entertain and pursue a distant ideal of a better society, but they will create, and constitute by themselves, the epitome of the rational and ethical society, that New Humanism visualizes. However, he also maintains that he does know how long it will take to change the world by creating moral society. He says, "The shortest way of changing society will be to change myself and become a moral human being". (Roy,p.p.150-151) According to Roy, theory of revolution for any social change should be based on human nature. As by nature man is rational and moral, so revolution should be based on it. In order to bring about revolution only man's freedom is to be awakened. As by nature, man is rational and educable, so this can be done by educating people.(Tarkunde. V.M, ed, 1985,p.190)

Radical Humanism presupposes economic re organization of society to eliminate the possibility of exploitation of man-by-man. Because Roy thought that for unfolding man's

intellectual and other finer human attributes, individual as a member of society has to satisfy material necessities. So the foundation of society will be based on, such an economic reorganization that will guarantee a progressively rising standard of living. The economy of such social order will be based on production for use and distribution with reference to human needs, and the economic life of society must be progressively freed from the paralyzing and corrupting control of vested interests. Therefore, he has proposed to establish a new society through his philosophy, which being founded on reason and knowledge will necessarily be planned. "But it will be planning with freedom of the individual as its main objective. The new society will be democratic-politically, economically as well as culturally." (Roy.M.N. 1990, p.p.47-48) The economy of the new society as Roy has proposed will be co- operative which will consist of a network of consumer's and producer's co- operatives, and the economic activities of the society shall be conducted and co- ordinated by the people, through these institutions. Again, this co- operative economy shall take full advantage of modern science and technology and effect equitable distribution of social surplus through universal social utility services. The culture of the new society will grow in an atmosphere of individual freedom and morality and the function of the state will provide maximum scope and incentive for all forms of creative endeavour. So, the primary task of his humanist movement will be "to bring about a cultural renaissance by propagating the philosophy of New Humanism and through its application to political, economic and other social problems". (Roy.M.N. (1990), p.p.75-76)

In this context, Roy realizes the need of education, because education of the citizen is the condition for such a reorganization of society. So, the main task of radical humanists will be to educate the people in the democratic value of freedom, equality, rationalism, co-operation and self-imposed discipline, and to set up appropriate institutions based on these values .(Tarkunde. V.M,1992, p.4)

Radical Humanism of M. N. Roy holds that social progress is largely due to this co-operative spirit of man and not due to any struggle whether between individual or between classes. The individualism of Roy thus may be called co-operative individualism. This co-operative individualism must be differentiated from the atomized individualism of the liberals and the collectivism of communists. The social world with its political system and economic order is however, wholly created by man for the promotion of its welfare. And the welfare of society is the sum total of the welfare enjoyed individually by its members. Therefore, to Roy State, which is the political organization of society and all other institutions and organization of society are created by man for promoting his own freedom. (Bhattacharya. G.P.,1961, p.23)

Regarding the relation between individual and society, Roy's main concern is Indian society, in which majority of people are illiterate, so they are not conscious politically and also about their position in society. May be that is why Roy gives much importance on education, for reconstruction of society.

Comparison:

Both Gandhi and Roy was Nationalist. To Roy himself there are some similarities and also some vital differences in between his ideology of Radicalism and Gandhi's ideology. (Roy,1990, p.18)

The core of Gandhism, its fundamental urge, is its hostility to industrialism and modern world. Gandhi was against western civilization. In the preface to the third edition of his book 'Indian Home Rule' he confessed- "I am not aiming at destroying railways or hospitals, though I would certainly welcome their natural destruction. Neither railways nor hospitals are a test of a high and pure civilization... It requires a higher simplicity and renunciation than people are today prepared for" (Ray S.N, *ed.*, 1988,p.p. 347-348). To Gandhi, India's progress, political freedom etc. all is possible if India would discard modern civilization. His quarrel was not with the British government but with the 'Western Civilization'. M.N. Roy disagreed with M.K. Gandhi. He claimed that the ideals of Gandhi's philosophy are practically untenable in the present situation. Gandhi's criticism of modern civilization, that is, capitalist society, is correct, but the remedy he prescribes is not only wrong but also impossible. Because, the remedy prescribed by Gandhi is 'If India adopted the doctrine of love as an active part of her religion and introduced it in her politics, swaraj would descend upon India from heaven.' To Roy one need not be a sentimental humanitarian, nor a religious fanatic in order to denounce the present order of society in the countries where capitalism rules.

Roy differed from Gandhi, as for Roy, freedom, equality and democracy are impossible if we reject modern technology. These are also impossible without a high level of education and to Roy, education is an expensive matter, which a non-industrial society cannot afford. Criticizing orthodox nationalism, in his book, 'Fragments of a Prisoner's Diary' Roy mentioned, "give freedom to the women as in Europe and America, but don't let them abandon the ideal of Indian womanhood, don't let them to contaminated by the 'abuse' of that freedom, as is the case with the west, abolish the caste system, but guard against the promiscuity of western society; encourage capitalism, but avoid the greediness of western materialism; get rid of religions superstitions and have a rationalist view of life, but don't accept experimental science as only source of human knowledge." (Roy,1950 p.p.74-78) The western civilization is not altogether rejected; it is only asked to place itself under the purifying influence of India. Roy claimed that they have no courage to break with the old and embrace the new.

Gandhi wanted to uproot traditional Indian society rather than transform it. He tried to revitalize village as the basic social unit. For this reason, he criticized the socialists for their advocacy of industrialization, which Gandhi equated with the introduction of large-scale machinery and its attendant disruption of India's traditional village based economy. But like the Russian Marxist, Roy felt, "any attempt at social reconstruction based on traditional social units-with their underlying system of customs, values, behavioural patterns and forms of organization

was doomed ultimately to failure and in the short run could only succeed in restraining social progress.” (Haithcox, 1971, p.254) Thus, he disagreed with Gandhi and not appreciated Gandhi's appeal 'return to village' to the Indian people and his revolutionary potentiality.

Gandhi's theory of 'trusteeship' for the welfare of the society was different from Roy's view. Gandhi held that his object is to reach the heart of landlord and convert them so that they might hold all their private property 'in trust' for their tenants and 'use it primarily for their welfare'. Gandhi's ultimate aim was 'the co-operation and co-ordination of capital and labour and of the landlord and tenant'. The wealthy persons accept it because it makes them appear virtuous and also at the same time protected their ill-gotten gains. This occasional donation to public cause, “strengthen their position... giving it moral sanction”. Jai Prakash Narayan also characterized it as a mixture of time economic analysis good intentions and ineffective moralizing. (Haithcox, 1971, p.p.120-121) To M.N. Roy, this is the association of capitalist class with puritanical morality. He did not agree with Gandhiji's policy of social reform. He thought that Gandhian ideas on society and reforms would make the Indian people a backward nation in the world. Unlike Gandhi, M. N. Roy has given much importance on middle class and rational ethics. Radicalism of M.N. Roy did not accept this type of puritanical morality. To Roy this concept is a utopia that 'spiritualizes' capitalism. It is as Roy called 'ethical capitalism'. Roy maintained that it is not a part of the 'spiritual genius' of India to abolish capitalism, it is only to 'moralise' or humanize it. (Roy,1950, p.p.74-78) Roy's Radicalism did not strive to deny the world the benefit of technology or knowledge. Again, Radicalism had not tie to Capitalist or pre-capitalist social form as Gandhism in its alternative version appeared to be. Roy's ideology is “to open the windows, to let all the winds of the world blow over the land, the art, the literature, the science, the technology of the world, to let people know them and enjoy them and profit from them”. (Roy,1990, p.21-22)

Gandhi as a simple person believes on simple style of living. He was against industrial development, which uses science and technology for heavy production. “Gandhi's path of utopia was straight and narrow and life in his 'Ramrajya' was to be simple, homogeneous and rather austere. Like Rousseau and Tolstoy, he saw in science and technology forces, which not only made life complicated and alien to itself but also led to concern tradition of power and exploitation.”(Ray, ed,1995, p.258) However, Roy deeply appreciates science and technology as a tool of development for the benefit of the people.

As a humanist philosopher, man is the centre of all their philosophy. Roy believes Protagoras dictum 'man is the measure of everything' and Gandhi believes in 'soul force' of man. However, their approaches are different. Different from communism both Roy and Gandhi give much importance on individual freedom and morality for social development. For Gandhi a perfect society can be existed only the perfection of its members. Similarly, Roy maintains that a moral man can constitute a moral society. Gandhi's ideal of moral freedom

which he called swaraj, is based on love or soul force. Man for Gandhi is both an individual reality and a communal reality and it is love that binds men into a community. He thus replaces the politics of the sword by morality of the soul power, compulsion by freedom, dictation by inspiration co-ercion by self-correction and governance from without any governance from within. Gandhi believes in the efficiency of non-violence for the socio economic and spiritual salvation of the individual. (Patil,*ed*, 1989,p.III)

Roy at the beginning of his revolutionary life believes in violent revolution, but towards the end of his life when he establishes Radical Humanist Movement, he approaches, more on the individual human morality, that based on the revolutionary of man. To Roy all men are rational and therefore moral. Thus, man is potentially moral. Therefore Roy also gives more importance on the potentiality of man which Gandhi called the potential divinity of man. To Gandhi, this inner goodness of human being can be cultivated. Roy also maintains that the inner rationality of man can be cultivated through education and training.

Thus, Gandhi and Roy give much importance on individual aspect. Roy deviating Gandhi concentrate on middle class. Gandhiji opposes the violent way and prefers non-violent way of non-co-operation or 'satyagraha'. He gives much on the 'masses' not the 'classes', but he does not minimize the importance of the individual action. He holds that reform should proceed at both ends. (Ray, 2003, p.150)

Gandhi believes in the co-ordination and co-operation between capitalist and labour. So to him 'by changing the heart of the capitalist we can convert them, so that they donate their private property 'in trust' for the welfare of society. However, Roy believes that the middle class attains a great height in intellectual and political considerations. As a part of society, middle class plays an aggressive role. Even to him the decay of capitalism economically ruins the middle classes, so they try to bring a new social order. Thus for Roy also class is essential for the progress of the society. However, he gives primary importance to individuals. He is against Gandhian way of revolution, and attaches more importance on philosophical revolution than any other revolution for social progress.

Conclusion:

Thus, the common pre-occupation of Gandhi and Roy emerges from a similar set of ideological assumptions about the moral nature of men, and the possibility of creating a perfect social order of spiritually free men. Even as the ideal political leader, they are like a "Karmayogin" type, above the lust for power and occupying a position of pure moral authority, to a theory of social organization which urges party-less politics, and highly decentralized system of government. However, there is much in Roy's thought that is not encompassed by Gandhi. Roy's aesthetic humanism, rationalism, and materialism distinguished him not from Gandhi but from any other tradition of thought in modern Indian.(Ray,*ed*,1995 p.249) In spite of their

ideological differences, both the philosopher were very much concerned with the common people of India and the social conditions of India during their time. So giving much importance on man and morality both the personalities give their solution for social reconstruction, considering the social condition of Indian masses.

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THE LITERATURE OF SANKARADEVA AND ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract:

Sankaradeva through the allegories of literature often points to the biotic communion between human beings and environment. He could anticipate many of the significant teachings of the modern environmental ethics. Sankaradeva always concerns with the intrinsic value to the natural environment including non-human units. He knows very well that the well-being of humanity is dependent on sustainable environment. The intimate between man and nature is frequently narrated to signify the immanence of the transcendental principle, the Super-nature. Sankaradeva could foresee the merits of environmental protection and the harmony of natural phenomena. He could recognize the intrinsic value in nature where man co-exists with the other. Eco awareness is revealed while Sankaradeva describes the natural beauty in his different skandhas like of Vrindavana, Rasa krira etc. He reminds people that nature is alive and that there are reasons and purposes in nature which man must understand. Sankaradeva uses descriptive language while he narrates the beauty of natural phenomena. Environment may be viewed as an emerging property of man-nature relation. A reciprocal transformation of human by natural and a natural by human. Sankaradeva tried to explore separate from natural environment. The whole set of elements which form the frame work, the surroundings and the living conditions of man and society is environment. The philosophy of Sankaradeva accommodates nature in its full dignity.

Key-words: Environment, Ethics, Value, humanity, fraternity

Introduction:

The noble Vaisnavite Guru Sankaradeva in 14th century dearly loved the environment and preached that–One Tree equates Ten Sons. ‘Centuries before Wordsworth Sankaradeva had been a unique poet of nature. He has given the very basis of a more satisfactory and ecologically conscious moral philosophy to the people of North-East India flourished during the medieval period. The saint is opposed the theistic anthropocentric emphasis, Sankaradeva explored the value of human life in environment. His lives and deeds clearly prove that Sankaradeva was a significant ethical thinker and social reformer. His solution of the problem of environment is based on his own practical experience. Kindness, truthfulness, patience, humility, charity etc. are accepted as moral virtues by Sankaradeva According to the great saint, a virtuous man is very much afflicted when he witnesses the sufferings of the living beings. Sankaradeva extends his helping hands towards all according to his capacities. The virtuous men are the great forgivers and have control over their minds and they harm nobody. Even a virtuous man is highly kind hearted and he never injures either man or the environment.

Objectives:

The main objectives of this paper are–

1. To throw light on the consciousness and concern towards natural environment as reflected in the works of Sankaradeva.
2. To explore how Sankaradeva preaches his spiritualism through the environmental perspective.

Methodology:

To this study analytical method has been used in order to analyse the environmental consciousness of Sankaradeva.

This study is based on the primary as well as secondary data, periodicals, journals, books, magazines etc

Environmental Consciousness in the Literature of Sankaradeva:

Sankaradeva’s religious philosophy through his literature accommodates Natural Environment in its full dignity. He explores environment as a medium to throw the religious ideas to the common people. The strong bond between man and environment becomes instrumental to deliver the Super-Nature directly to the heart of man. The illustrations taken from environment served a very important function of melting away the abstract ideas to concrete experiences.

Sankaradeva has recognised a basic truth of environment. The environmental equilibrium can be automatically maintained by maintaining the equilibrium between man and environment. The environmental consciousness of Sankaradeva explored in his literary works. He was always

alert that the integrity, stability and beauty of biotic community is well preserved. Sankaradeva explains in Prahlada-charitra as—

Bhramara-rajē gave harigēet
Jata-pakhi tate diya citta
Nakare arawa thake nichuke
Kṛṣṇa charitra sune utsuke.
Jateka sundari padmini mane
Hasa-lasakari darasave gawa
Nadi-nadaache visesa sarovara
Sphatika nirmala jala dekhi

i.e. bumble bees are singing psalms/hymns to God Krishna. The birds are intently listening in rapt attention to the praise of Krishna and all the women including Padmini gleefully enjoying the music. The lakes and river with its clear crystalline water is a sight to behold.

Sankaradeva explores human value in environment. He believes that environment helped man in his spiritual pursuits. To understand the almighty, natural illustrations are indispensable. Even, he took the help of life-saving herbal plants as people are acquainted with its utility to realize the importance of 'Harinam'. We found in his Kirtana-ghosa as—

Namara mahima najani
Ana prayascitta bihai/
Mṛtasanjivani najaniya vaidye
Ana ausadhaka diyai//
Pramadata thaki jitu haribolye
Siyu saba dukhya tare
Jena mahausodhi najani bhunjile
Tara garva roga hare

(V-202)

(As the hermits did not know magnificence of nama - kirtan, they talked or prescribed other rituals. Likewise, as the vaidyas did not know about mṛtasanjivani, they prescribed other)

According to Sankaradeva, every soul can become God by performing virtuous deeds. Environment may be viewed as an emerging property of man-nature relation. It is a reciprocal transformation of human by natural and of natural by human. Man and environment are so integrated. To think of man as separate from natural environment is very difficult. Sankaradeva's philosophy is spiritual and melioristic which is noted for its suggestivity, profundity and humanistic appeal. The doctrine of ahimsa or non-violence is the pivotal point in the teachings of Sankaradeva. He recognized ahimsa or non-violence as one of the great ethical virtues which he means active love and mercy towards all creations. He said that all living beings are nothing but part and parcel of God and hence they are sacred. So, they are not to be hurt or killed either in the name of religion or for the sake of our own self.

The relation between environment and spirituality explained by Sankaradeva as the relation of fire and sparks. He applies the analogy to explain the relation of Iswara and jiva, just as spark is a part of the fire, similarly the jiva is a part of the Lord. Nature is also the part of the Lord. Nature is alive like other jivas. The religious philosophy of the Saint is guided by the basic rule—

All living beings should be treated equal

(Kirtanaghosa-v-1820)

All the creatures are parts of God. They are deluded by ignorance which can be cancelled only with God's grace. His philosophy of environment explored in his writings as—

Yata jiva jangamas kita patangama
 Aga naga jaga teri kaya

(Bargeet-8)

Yata lata taru trna kahako nedekhe bhinna
 Harira sarira buli mane

(Niminavasiddhasamvada 67)

According to Sankaradeva, the ethical values are— mercy, forgiveness, non –violence love etc. which are necessary in each and every relationships. His environmental ethics treated the king and slaves, man and nature as equal which is a new idea for a society. He uses some moral words like good-bad, is-ought, right-wrong etc. in different verses in his literary works as—

Sakalo pranika dekhibe ka atma sama

(V-1825)

i.e to see all creatures as good as one self.

Each and every living creature embodies as atman or soul. As soul is the parts of God, all the creatures are parts and parcels of God. So, all the creatures, high and low are to be respected like God Himself. Sankaradeva writes in Kirtanaghosa as-

Kukkura srgala gardavaro atmaram
 Jania sabako pari kariba pranam

(V-1823)

(We should respect all the creatures, dogs, foxes, asses, as god residing in the souls.) Sankradeva expresses in the Kirtanaghosa as—

Tomarese ansa am jata jiva jaka
 Tomar mayaye prabhu bandhile amaka

(P-444)

O Lord, all of us is your parts and you have bound us with your illusive power or maya.

Sankaradeva beautifully described the value of human worldly existence through nature. Our life is nothing. He talks of the meaningless of earthly existence through the relation of man and nature. Like—

Bijuli chamak jena–jibana athira
Padma patrara jena ja lanuhithira

(Gajendra upakhyana-164)

i.e. the saint said about the meaningless ness of earthly existence of all living things not only human beings, by describing that life's restlessness can be seen when we see the lightning or when we see the water moves on lotus leaf.

All religions usually incorporate a code of morality which is called the ethical dimension of religion.. In the religious philosophy of Sankaradeva this ethical dimension plays a vital role. During the medieval period Sankaradeva has given to the people of North-East-India the very basis of amore satisfactory and ecologically conscious moral philosophy He is opposed to the theistic anthropocentric emphasis. Sankaradeva admits the application of modern idioms and concepts. The versatility and dynamicity of his religious philosophy upholds the modern ecocentric and bio centric thinking. In his thought we do not find any discrimination between man and nature. There is a biotic communion between man and nature. Sankaradeva explains beautifully this inter-relationship in his Kirtanaghosha as—

Charusaru bara nirmala jalaSugandhi
Padma sobhe utpala//
Acheraja hansa samuhe ranji
Lilaye mrinala bhunjoi ubhanji
Pare parijat Malaya bava
Catake tyejesulalita rava
Vramargane gave harigeet
Vaisnava gana suni anandita//

(Kirtana-ghosha-v-147-148)

i.e. beauteous lakes contained transparent water, fragrant lotus, shining lilies are blooming there. Flocks of swans are playing on the water sportingly uprooting lotus-roots and eating there. On bank blooms parijata , blows fragrant breeze, catakas are singing song so sweet to ears. Black bees are there singing Hari's song. On hearing, the vaisnava derive pleasure.

Since the days of inception of Planet Earth, it can be said that the relation between men and Nature has been always a close knitted bonding. It must be said that men and nature must co- relate with each other for either of them to sustain on the face of the planet. The environmental ethics is the discipline that studies the moral relationship of human being to the nature along with its sentient and non-sentient features and objects. It is that part of applied ethics which examines the moral basis of our responsibility to the nature. We should love and honour the earth since it has blessed us with life governs our survival. The challenge of environmental ethics is the conservation of life on earth. The religious philosophy of Sankaradeva has recognized a basic truth of environmental ethics. His philosophical thoughts

Accommodate Nature in its full dignity. Even Sankaradeva explores nature as a medium to throw the religious ideas to the common people. The strong bond between man and nature becomes instrumental to deliver the Super-Nature directly to the heart of man. The illustrations taken from nature served a very important function of melting away the abstract ideas to concrete experiences. He explains the nature as—

Nadi nada ase savisesa sarovara/
Sphatika nirmala jala dekhi manohara//
Vidyadhari save tate name karai snana/
Pakhale sarira bavai sugandhita ghrana//

Kirtana-ghosa-v-477

i.e. there are innumerable rivers and special lakes, the crystal clear water there is pleasant to look, female singers of Heaven dip there to bathe, and their washing of bodies makes the air perfumed.

Again, Sankaradeva identifies the resourcefulness of nature when he mentions the natural bounties in his Kirtana-ghosa as—

Sala tala tamala mandara parijata/
Campaka asoka ano puspa asamkhyata//
Ama jama lebu jara jamira khajuri/
Velanarikala tala tambula pakadi//
Agaru candana Padma sarala sonaru/
Ana jata tarut rna savekalpataru//
Chaya rituekakale vasanta udaya/

Bhramare gunjare kuli pancama puraya// (V-479-480)

i.e. trees like tamala mandara exist there, Innumerable flowers like parijata, campaka, asoka and others. Fruits trees-ama, jama, lebu, jara, jamira, khajuri. Besides, there are bela, narikala, tala, tambula, pakadi. There are also agaru, candana, Padma, sarala, sonaru, all trees and plants are wished fulfilling. kalpataru. Through all six season does the spring prevail, black-bees hum, cuckoos sing in five tunes all detail.

The religious philosophy of Sankaradeva explores how natures facilitate the existence and progress of mankind on this earth. Nature purifies the human mind. He writes as—

Bahaya Malaya vayu amodita mana/
Nrtya gita karai taiteapesvaragana//
Hari guna gita gavai gandharvva kinnare/
Papa dura hauka hari bola nirantare//

(Kirtana-ghosa-V-481)

i.e. Fragrant breeze blows and makes the mind pleased, heavenly damsels there dance and sing a tease, gandharvas and kinnaras sing songs of Hari's virtues, chant Hari ceaselessly and drive away sins.

Here, Sankaradeva showed the interlinked between man and environment through the Super power of Krishnabhakti. Krishnabhakti is the mrita sanjivani for human to attain liberation or mukti. Bhakti is the way to mukti as explained by Sankaradeva in his religious philosophy. He said as when you are in peril, you call on God. All your sins are forgiven. It is like eating herbal medicines without knowing that it will cure your diseases. Again Sankaradeva super- imposed the beautiful objects of nature are on God to make it more credible as Super Nature with whom man ever aspires to hold communion. He vividly displayed the inter active relationship between man and nature which inspired Sankaradeva to described the beauty of lord Krishna as—

Padmapatra sama ayata lochona
Bhruva-yuge karai kanti
Nasa tila phoola adharar atul
Dasana mukutara panti (Ajamilopakhyan-178)
Pava nava Padma kosa
(Ajamilopakhyan-180)

i.e,eyes like lotus petals make the face more beautiful, the sesame flower-like- nose, red lips and teeth like row of pearls, the feet are like new lotus buds, are the description of Lord Krishna.

Thus, Sankaradeva beautifully explained that man is a part of beautiful environment. . He had a pantheistic vision in which every being and objects were a temporary manifestation of common substance created by God. The ethical standpoint of Sankaradeva's environmental philosophy is similar to the ideals of the Gita's niskama karma.

Findings and Conclusion:

Sankaradeva explores in his literature beautifully that the environment is the total of all the physical things that surrounded human beings. The Saint Sankaradeva opposed the ritualistic activities like immolation of animal and sacrificial rites, as a result of Sankaradeva the humanistic ideology predominance. So sacrifice of animal before minor god and goddess in the names of religion is contrary to religion and humanism. The real virtuous people have the introspection of seeing God in every creature and such people never sacrifice animal.

Sankaradeva lays emphasize in the intrinsic value of nature. He glorified the human being as well as the nature in their own position with their own distinctive dignities. He propagates the qualities of Nirguna krsna through the beautiful nature. Sankaradeva never forgets that man is a part of nature and there is no difference between man and nature. In his religious philosophy the eco-centric thinking that nature has provided us with all the resources for leading a beautiful life we should respect her and nurture her prevails. Human beings must live in this earth being a part of it like any other creation of nature, Sankaradeva always stressed on the purity of human mind. He said throughout his writings and teachings that one can see the Lord within himself. His ethics stresses on the duty for others.

In modern times, the degradation of environment demands the application of environmental ethics. The crisis of eco-centric thinking has posited a threat to the existence of humanity. Sankaradeva advices man to keep away from greed, falsehood, desire, anger etc. and to live on purity, non-violence and self-discipline such disciplined life of the individual promotes social peace to a great extent. Due to moral disturbances and anxieties man may commits acts that may be harmful for the nature. He advices the necessity of self- control—atman-suddhi. The self-control is the best ethical code of Sankaradeva, which is more valuable and relevant for the present scenario..

Thus, Sankaradeva's view on Nature and spirituality in his magnum opus Kirtanaghosa adopts a secular view which stresses upon these formation of the individual first. The places of pilgrimage cannot wash away sins. We should clean our heart first. He was deeply concerned with the inculcation of the moral and spiritual values among the masses and a good inter relation between man and the beautiful nature.

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A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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Abstract:

Human right is an important modern day concept which has gained wide coverage during the last few decades. These are the rights that are based on human nature. Being human requires having human rights. Human rights are of human nature in the sense that they are a permanent and fundamental characteristic of human nature. Human rights are based on a person's moral claims rather than their physical and mental attributes. Only human rights are referred to as a moral demand because they are valid entitlements. Traditional philosopher's idea of natural rights gave rise to the concept of human rights. The objective of this paper is to make a conceptual analysis of the term human rights. The study is based on secondary source of information which is obtained from books, journals and other published documents. The study is descriptive and analytic in character.

Key words: Human, Rights, claim, Natural, Universal.

Introduction:

Human right is a contemporary subject of international importance in the legal, political and philosophical circles. It has gained wide coverage during the last few decades and has acquired an official status in the international discourse. Human rights are some moral norms which every human being has by virtue of being human. Every normal mature person with average intelligence knows or is aware that he has some rights. An ordinary person may not use the term 'human right' but it cannot be denied that he makes some sort of protest when an individual or a group denies him a right. Thus one may know that one has rights without knowing that these are human rights. Human rights are the foundation for a peaceful, just and inclusive society. These are the basic rights of human being which are inherent in all human beings. These rights are essential for human because they are consonant with their freedom and dignity and conducive to physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social welfare.

Objective, Materials & Method:

The present paper is an attempt to make a conceptual investigation of the term "human rights" that aims to understand the meaning and validity of human rights. The study is based on secondary source of information which is collected from books, journals and other published documents. The study is descriptive and analytic in nature.

Discussion & Findings:

Human rights are the rights of human individuals. "Human" in human rights means the qualities or traits of human as a whole or pertaining to the genus Homo. To define 'right' in human right is to say that right is the claim that each individual human being has over the rest of the society. Right is justified claim. Claims are, again defined as a demand based on right. To speak conversely, having a right makes claiming more forceful. We cannot however say that rights and claims are the same thing, even though they are so related. Rights differ from claims in the following ways– 1) Claims may differ in degree. Some claims are stronger than others. But no one right is superior to another. 2) Except legal claim rights which are held against others, rights are fundamentally the rights to, while claim are primarily the rights against. For example, my right to life is not right against anyone. It is my right and by virtue of this it is normally permissible for me to sustain my life in the face of obstacles. These differences between rights and claims imply that rights cannot be claims but only grounds for claims.

Human rights is the idea that every person anywhere in the world, irrespective of citizenship, residence, race, class, caste or community has since these rights are their basic rights which others should respect. But the question is do these rights 'exist'? In what sense do they exist? The existence of human rights is not in any straightforward way empirical. 'Existence' of human rights does not mean having certain physical or mental attributes but having certain justified

moral requirement only. Human rights are called moral requirement because they are necessary needs and are justified entitlements or a claim.

If human rights are considered as a claim of individual human being on the rest of the society then questions naturally comes to our mind what makes the individual subject deserve to make such a claim? All people are either logical by nature or have the capacity to be so. They are capable of independent thought, debate and decision making. Man is free to make logical decisions since he is a rational being. Making a logical decision is what constitutes one's freedom. Reason allows human to exercise their freedom.

Human rights are rights which belong to human beings only. What is their relation to human being? Are they accidentally or contingently related to human beings? Or are they related to human being necessarily? They are not contingently related to human being because in that case they may not be possessed by all human being but by some human beings. If they are not contingently related to human being then they must be related to human being essentially. Human rights are necessary part of human nature in the sense that human rights exist in human being permanently as an essential property. It is a natural part of human being which is inevitable. They are called natural part of human beings because these rights are there in human being or caused in human being by 'human nature'. Generally 'nature' means the crucial, essential features of something what makes what it is. Human nature means something common and essential to all human beings. Human rights are grounded in an appeal to this human nature.

Human rights are considered as rights possessed by 'human being' only. Even if individual human beings are regarded as the locus of human right then again questions may arise who can be regarded as 'human'? Does the word 'human' encompass all human beings? Who can possess human rights? These are purely conceptual questions. Because these questions can be settled purely by reference to the concept of what 'human' mean. The meaning of the word 'human' is vague, because the life cycle of a Homo sapiens ranges from conception to death and decay. It is for this reason, there are profound controversy among the philosophers over the question how and when a human acquires and then loses human rights between these two periods. It is true that even before conception, the sperms and eggs which exist, contain some human genetic material. However, these sperms and eggs are not human being, because they contain only some incomplete sets of human genes. These are human cells only but not human. But after conception also, controversies may arise about the status of the developing fetus. From one point of view these fetus are different from human babies who have emerged from mother's body. Because, separate human life begins only after birth. Therefore, fetus cannot be considered as human. And if we admit this then abortion is quite acceptable since it reflects a women's right to control her own body. However, a little reflection will reveal that such a distinction is really arbitrary because a very premature baby is at much the same stage of development

whether inside or outside the womb. Therefore, it can be also considered as human. The conservative view holds that fetus is a human being from its conception and it has a moral status .Therefore, abortion means the destruction of human life and so it is morally wrong. For the human centric criteria of moral status also moral status is found to be based upon purely on biological features which it possessed genetically from the very moment of conception.

Again, looking from another point of view, we can say that only those humans who have acquired some specific qualities of human life are eligible for possession of human rights. These human qualities are usually identified from our capacity for intellectual, moral and spiritual development. However, if we go to assign human rights on the basis of these qualities of human life then some difficulties will arise because all human being do not possess these attributes. Some mentally ill patients who are unaware of their surroundings and who are not capable of rational thinking and the comatose patients who have no chance for recovery etc are such human. These humans may be called non-persons, while those persons who possess these qualities may be termed as person. This distinction between non persons and persons can be used to justify aborting fetuses, if human fetuses are not considered as person. And, the question as to whether all human beings (including children and mentally ill human) should possess human rights or not is greatly dependent upon what foundation one adopts for the possession of rights. Similarly, the existence of rights to life in abortion, infanticide and euthanasia etc. are also directly dependent upon the status one accords to undeveloped fetuses, mutant newborns and terminally comatose adults.

Given that there are human rights in the sense we have just described, what exactly are these rights which are supposed to be universally possessed by all human beings? There is of course, no absolute agreement. But there are certain rights that have been accepted by a large number of people at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Some basic human rights include—right to life, right to liberty, right to property, right to privacy, equal treatment before the law, freedom of speech, freedom of religious worship, freedom from torture, freedom from cruel and inhuman punishment, freedom from discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, religion or sex, freedom of movement and residence, right to adequate standard of living, right to education etc. These rights are not universally accepted by all societies, but they are accepted by many and are a starting place for a discussion of human rights.

Where from the idea of human rights come? What is the source of human rights? Human rights have their origin not in positive legal order but in 'natural law'. In other words, the idea of human rights may be said to be an evolution from the idea of natural rights of the traditional philosophers. There are a group of theorists who recognize no difference between human rights and natural rights. For them natural rights and human rights are different levels for the same kind of right. While there are other group of theorists who are less happy with that

simple conflation and while acknowledging the historical link between two sorts of rights, want to free human rights from some of the features traditionally associated with natural rights.

What may be the grounds for considering human rights as natural rights? 1) Human rights are natural rights in the sense that people are conceived as possessing these rights in their natural capacity as human beings rather than in their artificial capacity as citizens of particular states. 2) Like natural rights, people's possession of human rights also does not depend upon any formal legal recognition. 3) Both human rights and natural rights are centered on the idea of respect for persons. (Griffin, 2008, ch 3 ,p.61) 4) Human rights are natural rights because human rights declarations and conventions of human rights do not 'create' or 'give' rights to human beings. They simply recognize and announce the rights that human beings obviously have without any surprise.

However, considered from a different point of view human rights are not natural rights. Human rights differ from natural rights in the following ways. 1) Unlike the natural rights, human rights are not considered as expression of God's will. Rather, these rights belong to individuals by virtue of their humanity. 2) Natural rights are fixed and universally valid. But human rights may change. Some new rights may emerge. 3) Natural rights do not come from Government since they are natural. Government secures only human rights not natural rights. 4) Human rights follow from human nature but natural rights follow from natural law. 5) Human rights are the rights possessed by all human beings at all times and all places simply in virtue of their humanity. Natural rights (to give a more Lockean than Kantian account) are those rights that can be possessed by persons in a 'state of nature' (i.e. independent of any legal or political institution, recognition or enforcement) (Simmons, 1992, P.54).

Conclusion:

Thus, from this discussion we can come to the conclusion that human right are moral guarantees which people of all countries and cultures allegedly have simply because they are human. Human rights are not defined by a person's physical or mental characteristics, but rather by their moral claims. Because they are legitimate entitlements, only human rights are referred to as moral demands. Human rights are a permanent and fundamental attribute of human nature. They are an inherent and unavoidable aspect of human. The concept of human right evolved from the traditional philosopher's conception of natural rights. Human beings have human right by virtue of his human nature. Human rights are unique to human beings only because rational nature is unique to human beings only and therefore apply universally to all human beings. Human rights are exclusive to humans because only humans possess rational nature, which means that they are applicable to all people.

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GANDHIJ'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, was not only a political leader, but also a great religious analyst social reformer. He submitted several suggestions for the reform in the prevalent education which was bookish, theoretical, narrow and examination-oriented education. Gandhiji considered education as the birthright of man, and considered it as much necessary for any type of development of man whether physical or spiritual, as is mother's milk for the development of body of the child. This is the reason that he emphasized on providing compulsory and free general education for all children up to a certain age. He clearly opined that this education cannot be imparted by the medium of English; this can be given only by the medium of mother tongue. As it is, he considered English as the language which causes mental slavery. He wanted education to make man self-dependent and able to earn his livelihood, so he laid special emphasis on the education of handicrafts. Besides, he wanted to effect spiritual development of man, so he emphasized on directing the children to follow ekadash vrita by education. On the basis of this educational philosophy, Gandhiji determined the form of national education and named it as basic education. We present here the analysis of his educational thought.

Key-words: Gandhiji's Educational Philosophy, basic education, holistic development

Introduction:

Gandhiji's philosophy of education is not simply a philosophy of education that aims at the spiritual salvation of man, but is aware of the material dimensions of life. His educational philosophy deeply rooted in principles of moral integrity, social justice, and holistic development, continues to inspire educators and policymakers around the world. Gandhiji said, "By education I mean bringing out the best in the body, mind and spirit of the child and man." For Gandhiji, education is a means for the elevation not only of the individual but of the whole society. Gandhiji wanted to establish a social order based on socio-economic justice in which "There will be no beggars or beggars, neither tall nor short, neither millionaire entrepreneurs nor half-starving employees."

Gandhiji's main goal was that education should enhance the comprehensive development of the individual's personality along with some vocational training to meet the economic needs of members of society. Gandhiji believed that every man has an equal right to the necessities of life, but he also has a corresponding duty to do some manual work with his body. In order to cultivate these new values among the members of the society and satisfy their economic needs and make them self-sufficient, he emphasized crafts.

The main characteristics of Gandhi's educational thought were based on the values of Truth, non-violence, bread and work, non-stealing, non-possession, brahmacharya or chastity, swadeshi, untouchability, worship and prayer, fasting and service to humanity. Education does not mean for Gandhiji only knowledge of the letters, but it means the formation of character. Currently, both the state government and the Center are spending money on education where Gandhi's thought on education has a reflection. It can be women's education, adult education, religious education or vocational education.

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are mentioned below:

1. To explore the impact of Gandhian educational thought on the present generation.
2. To analyze the relevance of Gandhiji's education system for holistic development.

Methodology:

To reach the objective of this study, a comprehensive and historical approach has been used. For this, primary and secondary sources were used. Primary sources such as Mahatma Gandhi's collected works, Gandhi's speeches, and Gandhi's articles in different newspapers and magazines were used. In addition to the secondary sources available in the form of books, national and international magazines, magazines have been analyzed and evaluated in the research process.

Educational thought of Mahatma Gandhi:

Gandhiji has attempted to explore a system of education which is called basic education. This system of education conforms to his philosophy of life and values. According to Gandhian thought of education, the important features of basic education discussed below.

- **Complete Development:**

Gandhiji repeatedly emphasized that education should offer the child an opportunity for the all-round development of her personality. He said that “true education is that which brings out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of children.” During his lifetime, he severely criticized the current education system as a useless and pointless exercise for children.

- **Free and Compulsory Education for all:**

Gandhiji wanted basic education to be free and compulsory for all boys and girls between the ages of seven and fourteen. According to Gandhiji, “I firmly believe in the principle of free and compulsory primary education for India. According to Gandhiji, education should be free and compulsory for all boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 14. At the primary level, education must be provided in the mother tongue of the student. Free universal primary education should be provided for all children in the village. This will strengthen the backbone of a country. This concept was implemented in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

- **Occupation-focused Education:**

Local crafts were the medium or means of basic education. The craft was the main subject, through which the knowledge of the other subjects was communicated. The craft was the mediator between the child and the practical world. Gandhiji emphasized craft-focused education which was of great importance in the Indian scene. In the Indian scenario, crafts would make education self-sufficient, as it is not possible to educate all citizens and provide them with government jobs. Therefore, vocational-focused education would help provide employment opportunities to all citizens and make them self-sufficient. According to Gandhiji, the method of training the mind through the crafts of the people from the beginning would develop a disciplined mind. Such practical productive work in education would break down the existing barriers of discrimination between manual and intellectual workers. The scheme would increase productive capacity and also use their leisure profitably.

- **Emphasis on Mother tongue as a Medium of Instruction:**

Mahatma Gandhi always stressed on teaching through mother tongue. He believed that any knowledge can be better comprehended when taught through one's mother tongue. Like mother's milk, mother tongue is easily digestible for young learners. They can also express

themselves better through mother tongue. Hence instead of teaching through English language, Gandhiji strongly recommended for mother tongue as the medium of instruction in elementary level.

- **Development of Creativity and Critical Thinking:**

Gandhiji emphasized the principle of “learning by doing” which stimulates the individual's mind to think creatively and critically. His great emphasis on work culture for students from the earliest stage was to enable them to start producing while they were learning. So the main goal of his basic education was to use his head, heart and hand instead of just concentrating on reading or writing. According to Gandhiji, “By education I mean bringing out the best in the child and man: body, mind and spirit.” Literacy could not be the main objective of education.

- **Emphasis on Collaborative Learning:**

True education is a lifelong process that helps cultivate the spirit of cooperation, tolerance, collaboration, and a sense of responsibility. All these qualities are necessary for the development of the human personality that can create a nice balance between individuals and the social goal of education. Gandhiji always emphasized collaborative learning. Crafting helps a child gain collaborative learning skills and realize the value of honest work.

- **Emphasis on Moral Education:**

Cultivation of moral values in children in order to build strong character should be an important purpose of education. From early life children should be advised and guided in developing moral virtues like truthfulness, honesty, moral courage, self respect, strong-conviction, purity in personal life, self-restraint, service to the needy section of the society etc. the mere intellection development and academic achievement without these moral virtues are meaningless.

- **Emphasis on Character Building:**

Education is the most powerful weapon to build the genuine character of a student. The goal of education must be the formation of character. Character formation includes a student's moral, intellectual, and social behavior in all circumstances. A student should develop personality, compassion, kindness, impartiality, and a spirit of dedication by virtue of education.

- **Development of Self-Reliance and Patriotism:**

The main objective of basic education was to achieve a comprehensive development of children and create a sense of patriotism through the practice of crafts. Gandhiji wanted the basic education system to be self-sufficient with each child learning a trade or occupational skill

to earn a living. He wanted education to secure employment. He said: "My Nai Talim does not depend on money. Operating expenses must come from the educational process itself. Whatever the criticisms, I know that the only education is the one that is 'self-sufficient'. He also said: "Teachers earn what they take. It represents the art of living. Therefore, both the teacher and the student have to produce in the very act of teaching and learning. It enriches life from the beginning. It frees the nation from the job search."

- **Development of Faith in Truth and Non-Violence:**

A unique feature of Gandhiji's educational philosophy was the application of the principle of non-violence in the formation of the child as a future citizen of the world. The Basic Education scheme is imbued with the cardinal creed of non-violence and the idea of cooperative life. It is based on truth and non-violence. He thought that lying and violence lead to slavery and cannot have a place in education. His education scheme was intended to bring about an era from which "class and communal hatred is eliminated and exploitation avoided." Gandhiji commented: "We cannot, we will not think of exploitation and we have no alternative but this plan of education which is based on non-violence."

- **Social Services Awareness:**

Another important aspect of Gandhiji's educational philosophy is service and the development of social consciousness. Service includes love of country. "The end of all education should surely be service," said Gandhiji. Social awareness and responsibility can be developed through student participation in community service programs. Students must participate in different community services to develop responsibility and awareness of social services. Education must be based on the social good, well-being for all, and must elevate the human aspect.

- **Cleanliness and Untouchability:**

Students must be sensitized to the merits and demerits of cleanliness and the evils of untouchability. Gandhiji had opposed untouchability and the caste system from the beginning and had worked tirelessly to eradicate it. He was arguing that the Brahmins and the Untouchables were equal in his eyes. He was publicly rejecting the notion of high and low caste sentiment. At the age of twelve, Gandhiji did not agree with his mother's warnings not to touch an untouchable who used to clean the latrines in his house. He went to great lengths to break the centuries-old caste system and remove the mark of untouchability from Hinduism.

- **Child-centered Education:**

Gandhiji focuses on child-centered education. He believed that the child brings his own experience to school and they have to be reconstructed. There is plenty of room for the child

to display her creative abilities and develop originality. He wanted children to cultivate purity in thought, word, and deed along with the pursuit of knowledge. This concept is the central point of the modern educational system throughout the world.

- **Self-Discipline:**

Gandhiji believed that discipline should not be imposed from the outside. There must be self-discipline or an inner drive of the individual to obey the laws and regulations prescribed by the group, community or society. He wanted children to have enough freedom so that they could develop and grow. But they accept that discipline and training will be essential if they want to fully develop their powers. No school can function without discipline. He opposed corporal punishment. This concept is also relevant to the modern educational system.

Relevance of Gandhian thought of Education for Holistic Development

- **Work oriented:**

He was of the opinion that through education we should be able to bring out the best in the child's body, mind and spirit. He further said that literacy in itself is not education. According to him, education should be a kind of insurance against unemployment. For that he focused on crafts and education by industry.

If we look at the current scenario, we all feel that there is a need for this type of education because, if we look around us, we will see many unemployed and underemployed youth moving here and there. Therefore, a filling of dissatisfaction and depression grows in youth. For work, youth have to look to other countries. For example, in the Punjab state of India, there are about 80% of families whose members work abroad and send money to their families residing in India. So, the government has to take care of education so that it is work-oriented. In the national education policy of 2020, more importance was attached to the vocationalization of education, which we can say that we follow the idea of educational thought of Gandhi.

- **Character Building as a Goal:**

In his educational philosophy much importance was given to character building compared to literacy because character includes purity of soul, ideas, activities and non-violence. When we look at the headlines in the US, UK media, we realize that the frequency of violence occurring in schools in these countries is increasing day by day and educators in these countries are very concerned today. We also feel that the character of society is declining and needs to be raised. Today, even political parties are resorting to violence to raise their issues, which is a serious threat to democracy. After industrialization and rising cost of living, now men and women work to meet their daily needs. Sometimes they have to be late for their offices and on the way

from the office to home they are always frightened by the emergence of antisocial elements. These antisocial elements are the result of the impurity of the soul and ideas. Now a days, companies also require people who are honest, strong and helpful on the job. So here the need is to make the curriculum in the school according to Gandhi's views and teach them Bhagwat Geeta, Upanishad, spirituality, meditation so that later purity of souls and ideas can be achieved and they can advance in the path of non-violence and truth.

- **Social Development:**

According to Gandhi's thought, education should not be just to impart knowledge, but should focus on the social development of the child. The child must learn how to live in the society and obey the norms of the society. Now the world is going through a phase of social mobility. Because there is social unrest in the society and only responsible individuals can help maintain the harmony of the society, otherwise social unrest might occur. It could damage the democratic system that Gandhiji had always promoted. Discipline and responsibility cannot be imposed from the outside but must come from within. When you follow this in life, your life will be more beautiful and you will enjoy healthy relationships with your parents, sister, brother, wife, neighbours, friends, classmates, colleagues, junior, senior, etc.

- **Women's Education:**

Gandhiji was in favour of the education of women. Gandhiji strongly emphasized the emancipation of women. He opposed pardah, child marriage, untouchability, and the extreme oppression of Hindu widows and sati. The same has been recommended by the Kothari Commission and the New Education Policy. The Indian government is working in this direction and the situation of women's education is on a better platform as compared to earlier times. Nowadays, the government is trying to give reservations in jobs, politics, etc. for the betterment of women. In the 2020 National Education Policy, special importance was given to women.

NEP 2020 aims to address the issue of gender inequity in teacher recruitment in rural areas. The policy hopes to adopt new methods that ensure that merit and qualifications are taken into account and that woman teachers are provided with appropriate forums for recruitment.

- **Relevance of Nonviolence:**

Nonviolence is a key component of Gandhian educational thought, which was the great weapon used by Gandhiji during the Indian freedom movement against the British Raj. Gandhiji believed that nonviolence and tolerance require a high level of courage and patience. In a world that is moving through phases of warfare marked by violence and terrorism, there is a significant requirement of Gandhi's idea of nonviolence more and more today than in days gone by. The

International Day of Non-Violence is celebrated on October 2, the anniversary of the birth of the hero of the Indian Independence movement, Mahatma Gandhi. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in a resolution adopted on June 15, 2007, established the commemoration as an occasion to spread the message of non-violence through education and public awareness. The resolution reaffirms the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence and the desire to ensure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence.

- **Emphasis on Democratic Values:**

Gandhi's thought on education emphasized the development of democratic values in the child. According to Gandhi, an adequate development of civic sense and adjustment with the environment would make children worth citizens of the country.

Gandhiji's ideas on education seem to be very relevant in the current conditions of society. Gandhiji's vision of education is really relevant to the contemporary situation. The Kothari Commission reported: "The current education system designed to meet the needs of an imperial administration within the constraints set by a feudal and traditional society will require radical changes to meet the purposes of a modernizing democratic and socialist society. In fact, what is needed is a revaluation of education that in turn launches the long-awaited social, economic and cultural revolution".

- **Idea of Vasudhaiva kutumbkam:**

When the whole world is in tune with globalization, Gandhiji's goal of 'Vasudhaiva kutumbkam' can be realized by such a universal education scheme. In the Basic Education scheme no differentiation has been made between boys and girls. Not only that, he thought for universalization and internationalism where all countries will cooperate with each other.

Due to the ever-increasing development at the global level, despite the existence of independent nation-states, today we have before us an advanced state of interdependence.

This state will still go higher. It doesn't matter if it is considered a compulsion of the nations of the world, but moving forward together is inevitable now. Working together is necessary for all citizens of the world. In such a situation, the Mahatma's suggestions and opinions expressed by him from time to time, which are full of internationalism, prove their adaptability and significance. It will be better and beneficial if the nations of the world, having Gandhi's views and suggestions at the core, come forward to work in a state of harmony according to the demands of time and space instead of working in a state of compulsion. If you collectively create a conducive atmosphere, everyone in the world will do well.

At the beginning we discussed India's commitment to internationalism. Mahatma Gandhi had wanted India to stand for the establishment of a world order dedicated to peace and prosperity. He also wanted India to fulfil this gigantic task considering it to be her responsibility. It is possible

because India due to its unique values, exemplary culture and commitment to non-violence is capable of doing it. Therefore, India should step forward for the establishment of true and real internationalism, and in doing so should make itself an ideal for others in the world.

- **Adult Education:**

Gandhiji realized very early that it was by awakening and reorienting the adult mind that society could be organized on a new and healthy basis. The UNESCO seminar on adult education held in Mysore in November 1949 discussed the definition of adult education. After that, the following conclusion was reached: adult education means the minimum basic education of every adult over 18 years of age, but the benefit of this type of education could be modified and extended to adolescents under that age.

The central government approved the 'New India Literacy Programme' for fiscal years 2022-27 which will now cover all aspects of adult education in the country, in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. 'Adult Education' will now be called 'Education for All'. Age is not an impediment to education and the NEP 2020 policy has focused too much on it. The importance of education is known to all, and embarking on its path at any time is the right time. In life, one may not find opportunities to complete their basic education, but if the resources are available and you have a spark in yourself to be educated, then the educators show the lightened path.

- **Mother Tongue:**

Mahatma Gandhi was one of the greatest proponents of 'mother tongue' as a compulsory medium of instruction during primary education. Children learn better and faster in a language they can understand. Through the medium of mother tongue, they enjoy school more and increase self-esteem.

The National Education Policy, 2020 has advocated, that "wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language/ mother tongue/ local language/ regional language" for both public and private schools.

- **Cleanliness:**

Gandhiji put great emphasis on cleanliness or Swacchta, as he used to say, 'Swacchta Hin Seva'.

The recent Swacchta Bharat Abhiyaan, India's largest cleanup campaign, aims to fulfil Bapu's dream of cleansing India. However, there is more to this cleansing drive than physical cleansing and the need to place more emphasis on the internal cleansing of the individual. So along with clean roads, toilets for a clean India, we need a corruption free society with higher levels of transparency and accountability as well.

Conclusion:

From theoretical point of view the principles underlying basic education are very sound and highly relevant to modern Indian context. These principles are not only based on idealistic, naturalistic and pragmatic philosophy, but also the outcome of Gandhiji's experimentations with the values of life. Kothari commission of 1964-66 recognized it and pointed out that the theory and practice of basic education is unique. The National Education policy 2020 emphasizes on a holistic approach towards education by integrating physical education, vocational education along with academics in the classroom. Gandhi thought that vocational education was a significant aspect of education as it was capable of making an individual self-reliant and independent. He had the opinion that only this kind of education can be not only self-sustaining but also sustainable. His views on incorporating skills like handicraft and cattle rearing, though not totally relevant in the 21st Century represent his ideas which are now being replaced by contemporary alternatives like digital skills and technology. Gandhiji believes that literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means by which man and woman can be educated. Literacy itself is no education. I would therefore begin the child education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. As far as the current system of education in the nation is concerned, it lays undue importance on the format in which content is presented and the delivery of knowledge and curriculum.

Furthermore, by embracing Gandhian educational thought, NEP 2020 can bridge the gap between traditional wisdom and modern educational practices, creating a harmonious blend of timeless values and contemporary innovations. Ultimately, the integration of Gandhian principles into NEP 2020 can pave the way for a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable education system that honours India's rich cultural heritage while preparing students to thrive in an ever-changing global landscape.

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THE RELEVANCE OF BUDDHISM IN ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

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Abstract:

The Buddhist view of fundamental human nature and the ecosystem encourages deep ties between people and other living things that are in particular, the notion of personal identification has influenced and moulded people. Buddhist practises such as planting trees, creating gardens and parks, strictly forbidding the harming of living things in favour of the food web, promoting ecological preservation as well as awareness of eco-friendly environments, and making the best use of natural resources express their nature as they adhere to the principles of Ahimsa, or Nonviolence. These practises make Buddhists compassionate environmentalists who are tolerant of all living and nonliving things. Buddhism upholds ecological principles; it is prohibited to cut down trees, kill animals and birds, and contaminate water. Buddhism held that ethical consciousness, the human mind, the human body, the flora, the fauna, and the ecological system are all intricately connected, with human neglect serving as the primary cause of the destruction of the Earth's biodiversity and ecology. In the post-globalization era, where shopping malls are proliferating and the so-called "use and throw" culture of consumerism, brand-wars, etc. is mindlessly spreading like wild fire, unsustainable development at the cost of rampant environmental degradation and biodiversity loss has gained momentum. If deep-rooted changes in mindsets and lifestyles are not brought about by instilling the spiritual outlook about the way we lead our lives, superficial or shallow remedial measures in the form of laws or treaties will neither bring about perceptible changes nor stop the ongoing assault on the environment.

Key-word : Ecology, Biodiversity, Consumerism, Buddhism, Environment.

Introduction:

Buddhism and ecological conservation place a strong emphasis on preserving both the ecology and the environment. Buddhism demonstrates its adaptable approach to ecological preservation and adjusts to the views of the local population to promote environmental protection and ecological preservation. Mahatma Buddha founded Buddhism in India in the late 6th century B.C., and it later expanded to China, Burma, Japan, Tibet, and other nations. At today, Buddhism is the fourth-largest religion in the world with more than 376 million adherents. Buddhism is the most significant spiritual tradition, with nirvana—a perfect state of serenity in which a person is liberated from the material world and desires and has attained awakening—as its primary goal. Buddhism advises developing traits of kindness and nonviolence towards nature and all of its inhabitants. By leading a modest life and learning to appreciate the relationships between all living things, a human can coexist peacefully with nature and its inhabitants. Buddhists are capable of amusing themselves without obtaining anything, and they gain symbiotically without being coerced.

Humans must follow nature as their only and primary guidance since they cannot exist apart from it and its inhabitants because we are already a vital component of our world. Buddhism teaches about the natural cycle since nature has an ecosystem and the weather has an impact on plants, soil, animals, and the environment as well as the other way around. The ocean, the sky, and the air are interdependent and connected because everything in the cosmos has an impact on one another and because water and air are necessary for life. Maha Ghosananda, a Buddhist monk from Cambodia, said that when we respect the environment, nature will be kind to us. The sky will be kind to us when our hearts are good. The trees are like our mother and father; they take care of us, feed us, and provide us all we need, including fruit, leaves, branches, and trunks. They provide us with food and meet a lot of our requirements. We therefore propagate the Dharma (truth), which is the Buddha's Dharma, of guarding our surroundings and ourselves. The key tenets of Buddhism's interdependence and interrelatedness are a wonderful match for contemporary philosophy's view that humans and the environment are interdependent. Buddhism's ecological study of nature entails a thorough comprehension of the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living things.

Objective of the study:

The primary goals of the current research problem are to examine the fundamental causes of environmental degradation and determine whether Buddhism offers any workable solutions. Thus, the following objectives of the current investigation are:

1. To learn whether anthropocentrism expressed in materialism and consumerism is the root cause of vicious cycle of environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and unsustainable development.

2. To determine if a life lived in accordance with the noble eightfold path, a practical kind of spirituality in Buddhism, is the best approach to lessen our ecological impact and ensure a sustainable future.

Hypothesis:

Few places from the East where Buddhism is practised and where environmental deterioration or biodiversity loss is undetectable are examples of how the Buddha's teachings on following the Noble Eightfold Path and Buddhist Economics are environmentally benign and highly sustainable.

Methodology:

Since the current doctrinal research is a type of exploratory library-based research, the research approach mainly entails critical analysis of already-available secondary literature materials with regard to the research problem. The majority of the desk labour was gathering books and reference materials in hard copy and digital form. The soft copies contained web pages and pdf files (e-reprints) acquired from the internet, while the hard copies included books, reports, reprints of published research papers, pamphlets, etc. The literature that had been gathered had been referred to, critically examined, and the issues had been grasped from the aims and hypotheses of the study.

Analysis:

Since the beginning of time, humans and other living things have relied on nature for its natural resources because we are made of biotic and abiotic components including the earth, water, air, clouds, sunlight, and other components that are fundamental to nature. The survival of humans and all other living things depends critically on ecological conservation and environmental protection, so we must respect and safeguard the ecosystem.

Since human life is impossible without other living things and the world's natural resources, all living things are fully dependent on and tied to one another for survival. One of the Buddhist teachings provides a striking illustration of the link between a tree and humans: "The tree actually is the carrier of the flower and the fruit... The tree gives the shade to all persons who come near... The tree provides the same shade in all seasons. Hence, it argues that nature is completely unbiased and that humans must grow a symbiotic reverence for nature and all of its parts. The Petavatthu places a strong emphasis on morals and says that it is forbidden to destroy a tree's branches when sleeping or sitting in its shade. If he does, he is being a bad friend and a liar. According to the Aggaasutta, there is an ecological catastrophe in the cosmos as a result of man's egotistical desires and unwarranted overuse of natural resources, which harm both our ecology and the environment.

Also, they predicted that a shorter average lifespan for people would result from unethical human behaviour, ecological disruption, and environmental degradation, all of which are current problems. Although Buddhism employs the term Dhamma or Dhammat to firmly respect the Law of Nature, Buddhists are well aware of the importance of ecological preservation. Natural resources must be used sparingly by humans in order for them to be preserved indefinitely without running out. Buddhism frequently emphasised the responsible use of natural resources since it recognised that humans are unquestionably a part of Nature and have the right to a living. Buddhists believe that if people obey the Law of Nature, Nature and its environment will be safeguarded as well as conserved. There are four life principles in Buddhism. According to the Vyaggapajjasutta, two of them primarily educate about living in harmony with nature, managing resources effectively, and keeping them in a balanced state.

In the scripture known as the Sigalovdasutta, the Lord Buddha made the suggestion that humans should treat nature and its resources with the same respect as a bee treats a flower when collecting nectar from it. The Kulasutta further asserts that if we adhere to the idea of moderate consumption, our society would advance.

When a disciple of Lord Buddha named Nanda spoke to Athena King of Magadh about how the robes are used in the society, one of the three Pitakas, the Vinayapitaka, highlights the Buddhist concept for appropriate management and conservation of resources. The worn-out robes are utilised as bed sheets, after which they are transformed into old pillowcases, which are then transformed into carpets, and finally into doormats. Dusters are made from the old doormats. After being mixed with mud, they are finally used when they are about to completely decompose to build a well. Anyone would toss or would cause to waste urine, excreta, refuse, and food leftovers on greening grass or other clean environment is performing a forfeiture infraction, according to the Bhikkhunvibhanga of Pacittiyaṇṇikā. It continues, “One should train himself not to put urine, faeces, or spit into the river. As a result, future generations will make advantage of Buddhism’s futuristic perspectives on proper, systematic administration and sparing use of natural resources. Buddhism suggests several corrective actions that focus on developing moral qualities like compassion, kindness, contentment, self-control, and a harmonious relationship with nature. It severely condemns self-deprivation and self-indulgence. It also recommends living simply, taking care of one’s most basic needs, and promoting ecological balance by employing the fewest resources possible. The Buddhist doctrine of dependent co-arising kamma (activity) and associated vipaka (concept) powerfully depicts man’s interaction, interdependence, and oneness with nature and his ethical responsibility to protect it (result).

The Buddhist adheres to the Pancha Sila, or “Five Precepts,” philosophy. The First Precept urges abstaining from all forms of violence towards living things and encourages cultivating compassion and sympathy for plants and animals. Buddhists are advised to follow the path of loving kindness towards all living things and are forbidden from dealing in flesh. The

Karaniyametta Sutta promotes developing respect for all living things, regardless of their size, whether large or small, visible or invisible. Since our lives are valuable, we must teach others to value their lives and develop respect for all living things. The Nandivisala Jataka promotes treating animals including wild animals that can be domesticated for human use with respect and love. For instance, when Lord Buddha entered the forest in search of enlightenment, he used the power of lovingkindness to tame Parileyya and Nalagiri, two wild elephants. Buddhism holds that if a person develops compassion and respect for all living things, he or she can coexist peacefully with wild animals. Buddhism adheres to the idea of karma and rebirth because they think that because of the possibility of human reincarnation among animals in less than human conditions, they should act compassionately towards all other living things. According to the Jatakas text, which supports the notion that close kin may take animal rebirths, we should treat animals with sympathy and compassion. Buddhism holds that if we treat other living things with kindness and non-violence, we will benefit in the same way as if we dump used dishwater or leftover food into a pond, the fish will eat it and will benefit. Giving to living things is therefore a meritorious act that helps them in the cycle of rebirths and achieve Nibbana's ultimate goal. Buddhism urges a kind, non-violent attitude towards the plant kingdom and warns against hurting the trees that provide us with food and shelter since they are good for us. Thus, we ought to avoid treating them harshly. The monks were advised not to destroy the greenery by the monastic precepts. The ironwood, sala, fig, and pipal (*ficus religiosa*), which are particularly large trees cherished by Buddhism and known as vanaspati in Pali, which means "lords of the forests," are also referred to as "Buddhi trees."

Lord Buddha, who was closely linked to nature, created parks and gardens next to the Buddhist literature describes the gardens of Nalanda and Takshasila during the time of Lord Buddha as having monasteries and stupas. As the Buddha was born in Lumbini Vana, Kapilavasthu, beneath an Asoka tree, there are numerous references to him and his life in the Tripitakas, Attakathas, and Jatakas. He had a close contact with nature throughout his life. Since it is commonly known that Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment under the pipal (*ficus religiosa*) tree, the Buddhists regard the pipal tree with veneration. Together with the Malas in Pava, he also carried out his task in the sala grove of Sarnath. To be able to meditate without interruption from other people, Lord Buddha advised his followers to live in a natural environment. He spent his final moments in the wilderness there before moving on to Kusinagar for his Mahaparinirvana. Lord Buddha and his followers purging themselves of sensual pleasures in its companionship regarded Nature as a source of pleasure as well as aesthetic gratification.

Even though there are numerous examples of pollution awareness in Buddhist literature, environmental contamination was little in the time of Lord Buddha compared to the modern period. For instance, Vinaya Pittak precepts forbid Buddhist adherents from contaminating green grass and water with sputum, urine, or human waste as these were prevalent pollutants

during the Buddha's lifetime, and they had established laws to prevent this at the time. Buddhists highly supported maintaining cleanliness in one's own person as well as in one's community and environment because they were concerned about keeping water clean in rivers, pools, and wells. In order for the next generation to use the water in the same spirit of cleanliness, the Lord Buddha warned his followers to consume it without polluting it. But, since grass serves as animal feed, it is against human moral obligation to contaminate it. Moreover, clean grass has aesthetic benefits. The Lord Buddha severely denounced noise, and his view of noise pollution is quite clear in the Pali literature. He once barred several monks from the monastery because they were making noise, and he also loved seclusion and thought a quiet area was the best setting for cultivating the mind. In Buddhism, noise is not only regarded as a thorn but also as a distraction because it interfered with meditation. As silence increases the effectiveness of meditation, the Lord Buddha and his disciples picked isolation and quiet locations for both their residence and their meditation retreats. Buddhism held that ethical consciousness, the human mind, the human body, the flora, the fauna, and the ecological system are all intricately connected, with human neglect serving as the primary cause of the destruction of the Earth's biodiversity and ecology.

Conclusion:

In the post-globalization era, where shopping malls are proliferating and the so-called "use and throw" culture of consumerism, brand-wars, etc. is mindlessly spreading like wild fire, unsustainable development at the cost of rampant environmental degradation and biodiversity loss has gained momentum. If deep-rooted changes in mindsets and lifestyles are not brought about by instilling the spiritual outlook about the way we lead our lives, superficial or shallow remedial measures in the form of laws or treaties will neither bring about perceptible changes nor stop the ongoing assault on the environment. Buddhism teaches living a simple life, adhering to the eightfold path, and being aware of our thoughts and actions so that every citizen, regardless of their faith, religion, or caste, is a conservationist and, as a result, all of their deeds are environmentally benign. These teachings will bring about a sustainable outlook in all of our endeavours and spheres of our lives. To be clear, from a Buddhist standpoint, there is nothing wrong with economic development or money that has been morally and legally acquired by following the noble eightfold path, unless it fosters attachment and insatiable greed. On the contrary, it is quite welcome if it contributes to the eradication of pain, poverty, and diseases connected to poverty. Without giving it a second thought, every country in the globe needs this awakening, however self-centered it may seem, for both our own survival and the survival of our future generations. In both the Indian setting, where it began, and the rest of the globe, where it is now practised, Buddhism has much to offer in terms of environmental preservation and sustainable development.

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THE EFFECT OF MEDITATION ON MINDFULNESS AND HAPPINESS: A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

Meditation, also known as self-reflected thought first began as a central component of various religious practices and is the oldest known relaxation technique. Different forms and styles of meditation can be found in almost all cultures and religions. It plays a part in virtually all religions, although some do not use the word meditation to describe their particular meditative or contemplative practice. Meditation has been called the heartbeat of Buddhism. It is a primary means by which one shakes the hold of the three poisons of the mind-ignorance, greed, and anger. In Buddhist tradition meditation is the second part of the threefold path. Connected with meditation, is the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness is also an essential part of Buddhist practice. True happiness comes from mindfulness. It helps us to recognize the conditions of happiness. The Buddha as a practical physician was primarily concerned with the eradication of human suffering. He found out a cause and prescribed the medicine for the removal of the causes. This medicine was the Vipassana Meditation. The mind is the source of happiness and suffering. If someone trains the mind to be virtuous and positive, his or her conduct will automatically become more pleasant and wholesome. If some ones want to free themselves from all the problems, he or she must gain control of their mind. To cultivate those states of

mind that are conducive to peace and happiness, meditation is the ultimate solution. Through meditation, one person can develop mental equilibrium, mindfulness and calmness. Vipassana practice of Buddhism brings significant improvement in professional and personal relationships based on increased happiness. This paper explores the effect of meditation on mindfulness and happiness in the light of Buddhism. It highlights the different methods of meditation in Buddhism and its effects on society. This research paper also focuses on the mindfulness and happiness from Buddhist perspective.

Key-words: Buddhism, Meditation, Vipassana, Mindfulness, Happiness.

Introduction:

Meditation originated in Asia, dating back to 6th century B.C (Teeter, 2016). Meditation means the positive reinforcement of one's mind. It is the mental training for shaping and transforming our mind. This is done through the mind itself and not by external means. Meditation is an effective means for attitudinal change, management of stress and instilling qualities such as compassion, equanimity, integrity and efficiency in discharging one's duties and responsibilities. Meditation can give us a sense of calm, peace and balance that can benefit our emotional well-being and our overall health. Meditation is also known as self-reflected thought, first began as a central component of various religious practices and is the oldest known religious technique.

Buddhism is a non-theistic religion, also considered a philosophy and a moral discipline, originating in the region of modern day India in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE (Mark, 2020). Buddhism is a path of practice and spiritual development leading to insight into the true nature of reality. Buddhism is the world's fourth largest religion with over 520 million followers, or over 7% of the global population, known as Buddhists. It encompasses a variety of traditions, beliefs and spiritual practices largely based on original teachings attributed to the Buddha. The goal of Buddhism is a state of unconditional, lasting happiness known as enlightenment (Tonni, 2021). Buddha's way of life and his religious system comprises the doctrine and the discipline. Discipline implies moral excellence, taming of the tongue and the bodily actions and the code of conduct. This is generally known as training. The doctrine of Buddhism deals with man's mental training, taming of the mind. The doctrine teaches about meditation, the development of morality (Sila), mental concentration (Samadhi) and wisdom (Prajna). Buddhists Vipassana Meditation is the only way to achieve these three gems- Sila, Samadhi and Prajna of the Buddhist

teachings (Wasnik, 2020). This paper is all about meditation, its different methods and its effect on mindfulness and happiness from Buddhist perspective.

Data Source and Methodology:

This study is based on the secondary data collected from the different sources, viz. books, articles, internet, e-journals etc. The methodology of the study is analytic as well as descriptive.

Objectives of the Study:

This paper will attempt to study about the concept of meditation, and its methods from Buddhist perspective. It will also try to analyse, discuss and examine the effect of meditation on mindfulness and happiness.

Meditation:

Meditation is nothing but the art of training and awakening to our mind. It simply means a journey to awareness. It is a mental and physical course of action that a person uses to separate themselves from their thoughts, feelings and emotions in order to become fully aware. Though some religions do not use the word meditation to describe their particular meditative practices, yet meditation virtually plays a part in all religions. It does not always have a religious element. But it is a natural part of the human experience and is used as a therapy for good health and boosting the immune system. Meditation is the attainment of limitless modification of the mind, or the awakening of the blissfulness. It is also said to be the method of taming the malign and devil nature of the mind (Barui & Barui, 2021).

Buddhist meditation played a very important role in moulding human thought from the beginning period to till now. It is a form of mental concentration that leads ultimately to enlightenment and spiritual freedom. It occupies a central place in all forms of Buddhism, but has developed characteristic variations in different Buddhist traditions. In reality, all of our problems arise from our own mind. The Buddha taught that peaceful mind lead to peaceful speech and actions by body, as all our actions are performed by the mind. Problems arise when we adopt a negative state of mind in response to a difficult or unexpected situation. Therefore, the mind is the source of happiness and suffering and so, their origins cannot be found outside the mind. Untrained mind is responsible for all the troubles, disturbances and unhappiness in our life. If we train the mind to be virtuous and positive, our conduct will automatically become more pleasant and wholesome. If we want to free ourselves from all our problems, we must gain control of our mind. To cultivate those states of mind that are conducive to peace and happiness, meditation is the ultimate solution. The purpose of meditation practice is to help us to develop a clean mind to observe and help us to untie the knots inside (Wasnik, 2020).

In Buddhist tradition, meditation is the second part of the threefold path. These three virtues: Sila, Samadhi, and prajna are the basic teachings which when carefully cultivated raise man from lower to higher levels of mental life, lead us from darkness to light. There are many formulations of the Buddhist path to spiritual awakening but generally, the threefold path is the most basic one. The first part, according to Buddha, is ethics or Sila. It is the indispensable basis for spiritual development. Meditation or Samadhi is the second part. Acting ethically gives rise to a simpler life and a clear conscience, which are a sound basis for meditation practice. Meditation clarifies and concentrates the mind in preparation for the third training: developing wisdom or Prajna. The real aim of all Buddhist practice is to understand the true nature of our lives and experience. (BBC-Religions-Buddhism: Meditation, 2009). Meditation has been called “the heartbeat” of Buddhism. Meditation involves wisdom and compassion, the two central components of the path of enlightenment. It is a primary means by which one shakes the hold of the three poisons of the mind- ignorance, greed and anger.

Methods of meditation:

There are many methods of meditation- some involve chanting mantras, some involve concentration on a particular thing such as a candle or a flower. Meditation does not have to involve keeping still; walking meditation is a popular Zen way of doing it, and repetitive Buddhist movements using beads or prayer wheels are used in other faiths (BBC-Religions-Buddhism: Meditation, 2009). There are many techniques that are practiced to develop concentration of the mind. Right concentration is a mental discipline that aims to transform our mind. Concentration is one of the core practice of meditation. It is a foundational activity within the Buddhist thought and practices. According to Buddha, there are four stages of deeper concentration called Dhyana:

- The first stage of concentration is one in which mental hindrances and impure intentions disappear and a sense of bliss is achieved.
- In the second stage, activities of the mind come to an end and only bliss remains.
- In the third stage, bliss itself begins to disappear.
- In the final stage, all sensations including bliss disappear and are replaced by a total peace of mind, which Buddha described as a deeper sense of happiness. (Wasnik, 2020).

In order to achieve permanent happiness and freedom from all sufferings, we must first achieve thorough understanding of the mind. Meditation is not something to be practiced habitually. It is a fully awakened state of mind and not a morbid. Habit is mechanical and meditation is the total denial of mechanical activity. Buddhist meditation encompasses a variety of meditation techniques that aim to develop:

- Sati (mindfulness)
- Samadhi (Concentration)
- Vipassana (Insight)

- Abhijna (Super Mundane Power)
- Samatha (Tranquility)
- Metta (Kindness)
- Karuna (Compassion)
- Mudita (Sympathetic joy)
- Upekkha (Detachment) (Wasnik, 2020)

One who has attained these techniques and dwells in them is invulnerable to the ills of life. Meditation is a core component of Buddhism. Through meditation Buddhist cultivate mental sharpness and emotional resilience that help them better navigate challenges. Each meditation technique aims to move practitioners toward enlightenment, or a state of profound wisdom and freedom from suffering. (Mosunic, 2023).

Types of Meditation:

There are many techniques and practices in Buddhist meditation, each with unique characteristics and goals. Theravada Buddhist meditation practices fall into two broad categories: Samatha and Vipassana. Samatha literally means “to make skillful”, and has other renderings also, among which are “calming, tranquilizing, visualizing and achieving”. Vipassana means “insight”, or “abstract understanding”. (Anand, 2012)

Samatha Meditation:

The samatha meditation in Theravada is usually involved with the concepts of Kammammhana which literally stands for “place of work”. In this context, it is the place or object of concentration where the mind is at work. In samatha meditation, the mind is set at work concentrated on one particular entity. There are forty such classic objects used in samatha meditation, which are termed Kammammhana. By acquiring a Kammammhana and practicing samatha meditation, one would be able to attain certain elevated states of awareness and skill of the mind called Jhana. Practising samatha has Samadhi or concentration as its ultimate goal. In the Pali Canon discourses, the Buddha frequently instructs his disciples to practice Samadhi in order to establish jhana or full concentration. Samadhi can be developed from mindfulness developed with Kammammhana such as concentration on breathing (anapanasati), from visual objects, and repetition of phrases. The traditional list contains forty objects of meditation to be used for samatha meditation. Every object has a specific goal. Through this technique, one can concentrate on something singular, such as the breath, a mantra, to encourage a deep state of calm. Once one is able to achieve a high level of concentration through samatha meditation, he/she will be prepared for deeper states of meditation and other practices. (Anand, 2012). Samatha meditation makes a person skillful in concentration of mind. Once the mind is sufficiently concentrated, Vipassana allows one to see through the veil of ignorance.

Vipassana Meditation:

Vipassana is a Pali word meaning insight, seeing things as they really are. The term Vipassana has two components, namely vi and passana. Vi means minutely, inwardly and Passana means looking, observing, analyzing etc. Thus, Vipassana means observing things minutely as they really are. The Vipassana Meditation practice is the technique that encourages and develops concentration, clarity, emotional positivity and calm for seeing the true nature of reality. (Wasnik, 2020). Vipassana is involved in breaking the ten fetters that bind one to the ever interacting cycle of birth and death i.e. samsara. The Vipassana or the insight system of meditation may be considered as the decided factor for the realization of the Nirvana. Because the absolute deliverance from the root cause of sorrows cannot be ensured by the other system of meditation. To overcome the samsaric process one could develop Vipassana meditation. Silasutta of the Anguttara Nikaya mentions the use of Vipassana as follows; “If while walking, standing, sitting or reclining when awake a sensual thought, a thought of ill-will, or a violent thought arises in a monk and he does not tolerate it but abandons it, dispels it, eliminates it and abolishes it that monk who in such a manner ever and again shows earnest endeavor and moral shame is called energetic and resolute.” (Barui & Barui, 2021).

Vipassana is the simplest and most difficult form of meditation. It is the simplest because it tells us to do nothing except to be aware and watchful on breathing like a witness. It is also the most difficult because our mind is conditioned to do something with the expectation of the defined result. There is no dependence on books, theories or intellectual games in Vipassana. It is directly experiencing the truth of impermanence (annica), suffering (dukkha), and of the absence of self (anatta) through the practice of Vipassana. Training the mind through meditation enables us to control our mind regardless of external circumstances. Gradually, we develop mental equilibrium, mindfulness and calmness. (Wasnik, 2020)

Mindfulness:

Mindfulness is the process of developing insight while paying attention to any action. The practice of mindfulness is important in Buddhism. The Buddha said that mindfulness is a way to the end of suffering. It is a state of mind to be aware of what we are doing physically and mentally. The cultivation of mindfulness has roots in the teachings of Buddha. The best way to cultivate mindfulness in everyday life is to train in meditation. Meditation helps us to cultivate mindfulness with little effort. Buddha felt that it was imperative to cultivate right mindfulness in all aspects of life in order to see things as they really are.

Right mindfulness is the eight path of the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddha and it is essential for any Buddhist to practice mindfulness. It does not judge between likes and dislikes. The active ingredients of mindfulness meditation focus on increasing awareness of one's thoughts, emotions and actions. Mindfulness enables us to see sensations during Vipassana practice. Seeing sensations, we begin to see their impermanent nature at the experiential level. By doing meditation,

we are always with our self and we can enjoy every moment of our daily life. Mindfulness meditation is to make aware of connection and synergy between body and mind.

Mindfulness in Buddhism is a rigorous practice of maintaining a continuous, alert, and nonjudgmental awareness of thoughts, feelings, and sensations. With mindfulness, Buddhists aim to cultivate full presence in every activity. Being mindful can help lay the foundations for entering deeply focused states, which can be achieved through Samatha, as well as developing insight into the nature of existence, which can be cultivated through Vipassana.

Happiness:

All living beings desire happiness and recoil from suffering. For Buddha, the path to happiness starts from an understanding of the root cause of suffering. Happy will be he who knows how to bring an end to suffering. Happiness has different meanings within different contexts. The Buddha enumerated four types of happiness concerning different kinds of worldly happiness for ordinary householders. (Holmes, 2019)

- Ananya sukha: The happiness that comes from being free of debt is called ananya sukha. Many of us experience anxiety connected with being deeply in debt, but when such debts are finally paid off we feel happy.
- Atthi sukha: The happiness that comes from possessing wealth and property, even if we are not enjoying it yet is known as atthi sukha. When the value of our holdings is increasing, when we keep accumulating more and more money from different sources, this kind of sukha is the joy of possession.
- Bhoga sukha: Bhoga sukha is when the joy of possession evolves into the joy of enjoying possessions. When this happens, one's happiness increases.
- There is yet another happiness which comes from abstaining from deeds that go against the Buddha's instructions on the Noble Eightfold Path. This kind of happiness is even greater than the preceding three. (Holmes, 2019)

The Buddha gives much importance to mind because the mind is the source of both happiness and suffering. Happiness and misery are primarily due to our way of thinking. When the mind is influenced and motivated by powerful virtues, happy thoughts and no negativity, then even negative actions can bring about positive results. We seek happiness outside ourselves. We try to obtain better physical conditions, a better job, higher social status and so forth, but no matter how successful we are in improving our external situations. We still experience many problems and we never experience pure and everlasting happiness. Happiness is a state of mind and the real source of happiness lies in the mind only and not in external circumstances. Untrained mind is responsible for all our problems. To free ourselves from all our problems, we must gain control of our mind. In that case, meditation is the ultimate solution to cultivate those states of mind that are conducive to peace and happiness.

Effect of Meditation on Mindfulness and Happiness:

Buddhist tradition and meditation practices are often discussed within contemporary Western discussions of happiness. Mindfulness meditation practices derived from Buddhism, are becoming increasingly well known as powerful tools to enable individuals to reduce stress and to develop a state of equanimity that can help them deal with what life throws at them (Besser, 2021).

Mindfulness and Vipassana meditation are closely related aspects of Buddhist practice. Mindfulness involves maintaining a moment- to –moment awareness of our thoughts, bodily sensations, feelings, and the surrounding environment. Mindfulness is about experiencing the present moment with an attitude of openness and freshness to all and every experience. Through mindfulness, continuous attention can help stabilize the mind and prepare it for deeper analytical work. Vipassana builds on this foundation of mindfulness to develop deep insights into our experience. It involves a more active examination of the impermanence, suffering and non-self, aiming for a state of enlightenment. (Mosunic, 2023)

Buddhist meditation is not a one-size-fits all practice. It encompasses a variety of types of meditations, each with its unique focus and benefits, designed to cultivate different aspects of mindfulness and spiritual awakening. The Samatha meditation practice focuses on tranquility and concentration. It helps the practitioners to develop a single pointed focus that calms the mind and prepares it for deeper insight. Practices like Vipassana improve self-awareness and emotional regulation (Huxter, 2020). Training the mind through meditation enables us to control our mind and thereby to develop mental equilibrium, mindfulness and calmness. Mindfulness is part of a larger system of spiritual development outlined in the Noble Eightfold Path, which encompasses ethical conduct, mental discipline, and the cultivation of wisdom. The main goal was to attain deep insight into the nature of reality, leading to enlightenment. This was achieved through extensive meditation sessions, focusing on the four foundations of mindfulness and fully integrated into the monastic lifestyle, nurturing a continuous awareness in all daily activities. Meditation helps us to become more mindful. Staying in the present and being able to enjoy it to the fullest is one of the happiest experiences one can have. Meditating even for a few minutes per day over a period can help us reset our mind and look at life from a kinder, more loving perspective. (Uniyal, 2022)

Buddhist method of meditation or Dharma is designed to make us happier and more free. We talk about “practicing Dharma”, or “training in meditation”, which means that we are practicing or training in becoming happier and more free. “Practicing” or “training in” implies we already have the potential for happiness and freedom, otherwise we would have to say something like “adding happiness” instead. (Kadampa, 2015). According to the studies, meditation is one such technique that can help change the brain for better and promote feelings of wellness, satisfaction and happiness in general. Our mind and body are interconnected and to look after one is to look after the other. Meditation allows us to experience overall well-being and bliss. (Uniyal, 2022).

The main purpose of meditation is to access, recognize and enhance the positive qualities of mind. The more we meditate, the less we need to rely on external situations for our happiness and the more we can rely on the natural, positive qualities of mind-love, contentment, well-being and peace. Accessing our natural happiness and inner well-being is one of the greatest achievements that can be attained. To access this treasure we begin by focusing inwardly and for this we need training. Meditation is this training. As we meditate more, we gain confidence in our innate basic goodness and well-being. Meditation does not make us happy- it unlocks the “happy” that has always been there to discover (Rinpoche, n.d.).

Conclusion:

The Buddha taught that greed, hatred and delusion are the three poisons of the mind. Greed refers to our selfishness, attachment and grasping for happiness and satisfaction outside of ourselves. Hatred refers to our anger, our aversion and repulsion toward feelings. Delusion refers to our dullness, bewilderment, misconception i.e. our wrong views about reality. The poisons of greed, hatred and delusion are a by-product of ignorance-ignorance of reality. We invite suffering and unhappiness for ourselves and others because of these poisonous states of mind which are the principal causes of our suffering. We think that our suffering is caused by other people, by poor physical facilities or by society, relatives or by a friend, but in reality, it all comes from our own deluded and disturbed state of mind. The mind controls all our physical and verbal activities, therefore, whatever we do, the important thing is the motivation of the mind.

The Buddha as a practical physician was primarily concerned with the eradication of human suffering. He found out a cause and prescribed the medicine for the removal of the causes. This medicine was Vipassana Meditation. Vipassana is a sole way of ending of suffering in the present life. The Buddha is truly called the great physician for having given to the world the wonderful technique of Vipassana, by the practice of which one is liberated from all the ills of life. If we practice Vipassana properly, a change must come for better in our life. Vipassana can be practiced by one and all. It is a universal path to achieve peace, harmony and happiness.

Training the mind through meditation enables us to control our mind regardless of the external circumstances. Meditation is a method for making a healthy mind with virtues. The purpose of meditation is to cultivate those states of mind which are conducive to peace and happiness. Meditation can help to improve the performance in any field of activity. By practicing mindfulness of breathing, we become self-controlled and even more efficient in our activities. Meditation is known to enhance the flow of constructive thoughts and positive emotions. Apart from enhancing our happiness and improving our overall well-being, meditation also helps our memory to stay sharp and our concentration to remain steady. Now-a-days people are turning towards meditation for relieving the stress and strain in life. Meditation has numerous

benefits for our physical and mental well-being. It is safe and effective and does not cost anything. Once we learn how to meditate, we carry within us a readymade remedy of our sufferings that can be used at any time and in any place.

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RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF MEDIEVAL ASSAM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ÚÂKTISM AND TÂNTRISM

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Abstrac:

Assam has a long and rich religious history. Religion has always been the guiding force of Assamese society. The history of religion in Assam, however, shows not only upgradation but degradation too due to some external as well as internal factors. During the medieval period, Assam became the center of some illogical and unethical practices in the name of religion, and that situation continued up until Úankaradeva initiated Neo-Vaisnavism. Although Úaivism was the oldest religion of the entire northeastern region of India, in the course of time, some other religions like Vaisnavism, Buddhism, Úâktism, etc. flourished in the region. This paper will discuss how Úâktism and Tântrism grew in Assam and what practices people do in these paths.

Key-words: Medieval Assam, Religion, Úaivism, Vaisnavism, Úâktism and Tântrism,

Introduction:

According to Yoginî-tantra, “Kairâtaj dharma”¹ served as the foundation for religious beliefs in Assam, but over time, Indian cultural and religious beliefs began to have an impact. The migration of Aryans to this area paved the way for the blending of Aryan and non-Aryan traditions and beliefs, which allowed local folk customs and cultures to infiltrate Aryan tradition and vice versa. Hinduization of local deities began at this point, and as a result, local deities like Kâ-mei-khâ became Kâmâkhyâ, Budhî Gosòânî became Durgâ, and Budhâ Gosòâi became Úiva.² During the mediaeval era, the majority of religious practices, including Úaivism, Úâktism, Buddhism, and Vaisnavism, flourished in Assam as well as the Northeastern region of India. The existence of Æaivism, VaicGavism, and Úâktism is mentioned in the Yoginî-tantra³ and Kâlikâ-purâna.

Methodology:

The paper is prepared based on data collected from books, particularly a few religious texts like the Kâlikâ-purâna, Yoginî-tantra, and Bhâgavata-purâna, and some historical writings.

Objectives:

The paper is prepared with the objective to make a general perspective on the history of Úâktism and Tânrism in Assam and its way of practice along with its impact on the Assamese society.

The Discussion:

The religious life in medieval Assam preceding the rise of the Assamese Neo-Vaisnavite movement followed largely the traditions of the earlier period but at the same time showed a considerable deviation from them.⁴ According to S. L. Baruah, the renowned historian, “the Brâhmana were still the guardians of Hindu society, but instead of making religion a dynamic force in the lives of the common people, they made it a secret lore obfuscated by elaborate ceremonialism. Man, therefore, sought his consolation in magic, incantation, and all kinds of left-handed practice.”⁵ Another scholar, Dimbeswar Neog, said, “Besides Úaivism and Úâktism, Buddhism and Vaisnavism, many sub-religions such as totemism combined with primitive beliefs of the non-Aryan tribes were struggling either for supremacy or for their mere existence.”⁶ Úankaradeva, the great religious saint, scholar and social reformer understanding the danger of adulteration of spiritual beliefs and practices, replacement of morality by formality of religion, and impurity of personal life during that period, initiated the Neo-Vaisnavite movement as a remedy.

ÆÚaivism or Siva worship has been practiced in Kâmarûpa or Assam since very ancient times, where Úiva-Pârvatî is believed to reside.⁷ Examples are available to demonstrate its

presence in the Prâggyotisa-Kâmarûpa even in prehistoric times. Originally, a tribal god, Siva, continued to receive homage from both the Aryan and the tribal communities.⁸ Ūaivism was not only widely prevalent but also the dominant cult in this northeastern part of India before the Indian Bhakti movement reached. The famous hagiographer Râmânanda writes, “nupûje harika nakaraya hari-karma/ vairavaka pûje mâttra buli úrecmha dharma// kûrma-châgalara teja bahrâyâ âgata/prasâda buliyâ piye huyâ unmata//” (not worshipping Hari or performing Hari-karma; worship only Vairava, believing that to be the highest form of dharma, and offering the blood of tortoises and goats to that deity, drinking it as an offering in craziness).⁹

Buddhism existed in this land of Kâmarûpa even before the visit of Yuan Chwang.¹⁰ A feeble current of Buddhism had been flowing in ancient Kâmarûpa before the rule of king Bhâskarvarmâ of 7th century A.D., and that had a lasting impact on Assam.¹¹ According to A. Roy, Buddhism flourished in both Kâmarûpa and Srîhatta.¹² There are also traditions in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and Assam, according to which the mahâparinîrvâna of the Buddha took place in Western Assam in Ūualkuchî or somewhere near Hayagriva-Mâdhava temple at Hâjo.¹³ The temple is still a centre of pilgrimage for Buddhist. During the reign of the Pâla kings, Buddhism established a strong hold in Kâmarûpa. Later, the Tântic-Buddhism enjoyed royal patronage, and Kâmarûpa came out as one of the important Buddhist pîthas in Eastern India.¹⁴ Moreover, Sâdhanamâlâ¹⁵ (Vajrayâna scripture) mentions the names of four Buddhist pîthas such as Kâmâkhyâ, Ūrîhatta, PûrGagiri, and Oiyâna, of which the first two were in Kâmarûpa.

The prevalence of the faith is supported by the existing ruins of temples and icons of the Buddha laying in different parts of the region, like the temples in Hâjo, Singrî, and Tezpur.¹⁶ The widespread prevalence of the faith is also proved by voluminous the Tântic works of the period, dealing with magic and sorcery.

Sâktism and Tântism

Tantra and the Ūakta faith had their origins in Assam and Bengal.¹⁷ Tântism has been intimately associated with Kâmarûpa-Kâmâkyâ since early times. In reality, it was in Assam (Prâggyotispura) that the Tântic form of Hinduism originated.¹⁸ According to Kâlîkâ-purâna Kâmâkyâ was already there in Kâmarûpa before Naraka began to reside there (atra devî mahâbhâgâ yoganidrâ jagataprasûha kâmâkhyârûpama âsthâya sadâ tistati úobhanâ)¹⁹ and king Naraka himself became a devotee of Kâmâkyâ at the instance of his father Visnu.²⁰ Hinduization of local deities began at this point, and as a result, tribal deities like Kâmei-khâ became Kâmâkhyâ, Budhî Gosòâi became Dûrgâ, and Budhâ Gosòâi became Ūiva.²¹ Sanskritised goddess Kâmâkhyâ was originally a tribal diety, Kamakhi of the Bodo or Kamoi or Kamet of the Austrics.²² The Austric formation of the names Kâmâkhyâ and Kâmarûpa indicates that the deity was formerly a goddess of spirits or ghosts who was

worshipped in a cremation ground.²³ Another two tribal Goddesses, one called Marai, Hinduized as Manasâ, and another, Âi, the goddess of small pox, were Hinduized as Úîtalâ and worshiped all over Assam.

The Kâlikâ-pûrana points to the antiquity of the cult in connection with the worship of Kâmâkhyâ or Yoni pîtha of the Tântriks, where the genital organ of sati fell²⁴ but during the time of its composition, that is, the 10th-11th centuries, Saktism became the most potent form of faith in Kâmarûpa, and because of the vigorous prevalence of vâmâcâra, such popular rites as human sacrifices, úabarutsava were carried on.²⁵ Kâlîka-purâna states, “anyatra viralâ devî kâmarûpe grehe grehe”²⁶ (Rare elsewhere, the Devi is in every household of Kâmarûpa.)

The Devî is known as Mahâmâyâ, Yogamâyâ, Dûrgâ, Kâlî, and Kâtyâyanî, and she lives on pûjâ offered by the people.²⁷ The various forms of the Devi, such as Kâlî, Târâ, Ugratârâ, and Chinnamastâ, are said to be of Buddhist origin.²⁸ The worship of the tantric Buddhist goddess Ugratârâ was established in Kâmarûpa in the Ugratârâ temple during the time of the Pâla²⁹ rulers. In Yoginî-tantra, goddess Kâmâkhyâ appears as the Mother or as Bhâgavatî. The Devî-purânâ states that the Devî was worshipped in her different forms in centres like Kâmarûpa, Kâmâkhyâ, Bhottadesa, and other lands.³⁰ In the Tezpur-grant of Vanamâladeva and the Guvâkuci-grant of Indrapâla, there is a reference to the temple of Úrîkâmesvara-Mahâ-Gaurî.³¹ There are other references to Pârvatî (Gauhâtî Grant.v.14), Gaurî (ubi Grant.v.40), GaGgâ (Guwahati-Grant.vi), Girijâ (Khanâmukhi-Grant.v.11), and the like. In the Kâmâkhyâ temple on the Nilacala hill, a split stone was placed at the place of worship, considering it the ‘Yoni’ of the deity and a symbol of creative power.³² During the time of King Naranârâyana, the practice of worshipping the clay images of Devî Dûrgâ in Kâmarûpa was said to have been introduced.³³ Another form of Devî worship was virgin worship, in which a virgin girl is to be worshipped. Regarding virgin worship (kumârî pûjâ), Yoginî-tantra states, “kumârî pûjyate yatra sa deúah kcitipâvanah/” (the place where kumârî-pûjâ is performed is the purest place in the world)”³⁴

Tântrism gained its foothold in this land under the Pâla kings.³⁵ “Actually, this cult grew in “deliberate opposition to the orthodox Hindu rituals” and “the Brahmanical ordering of society” that suited the spiritual needs of the tribal people most effectively.³⁶ The king Indrapâla is mentioned as versed in the tântrik lore.³⁷ As it was opened to all, irrespective of caste or sex, it recognised equality of right to worship and attracted thereby innumerable votaries.³⁸ Moreover, the five basic rituals, namely, madya (wine), mâinsa (meat), matsya (fish), mudrâ (parched grain), and maithuna (sexual union)³⁹, attracted people. The Yoginî-tantra gives an account of mantras, sâdhana (evocation of the deity), pûjana (worship), puraskriyâ (preparatory rite), mudrâ, bali, homa, dhyâna (visualisation of the deity in forms), stotra (hymn), and kavaca (charm).⁴⁰ Different animals like buffalo, bull, ichneumon, antelope, sarabha, goat, duck, fish, pigeon, deer, tortoise,

pig, rhinoceros, lion, panther, iguana, crocodile, etc., were sacrificed to the Devî including one's own blood (pakhina kacchapâ grâhâ úchâgalâúcha barâhakâha/ mahico godhikâ úeco tathâ nabâbidhâ mṛgâha// châmaraha krsasâraúcha úaúaha panchânanastathâ/ mamsyâha swâgâttra rudhiroi úchâsmadhâ balayu matâha//.⁴¹

Human sacrifices were done at the temples of Bhairavî, Bâlâ Bhairavî, or Tripurâ Bhairavî.⁴² Another temple where human sacrifice seems to have been held is the Tâmrêúvarî temple near Úadiyâ.⁴³ Here the Cutîyâs worshipped a goddess called Kêcâikhâtî, whom some scholars have identified with the goddess Dikkaravâsinî of the Tantras.⁴⁴ They administered worship under their priest called Deurî, with animal and human sacrifices⁴⁵ and that twelve and double of that number of human beings were annually sacrificed before Kâmâkhyâ and Kêchâikhâtî, respectively, till it was stopped by Gaurinâth SiAha towards the end of the 18th century.⁴⁶ Karmachand, son of the commander of an invading Mughal army, named Satrajit, was sacrificed before Kâmâkhyâ.⁴⁷

It is stated in history that the Âhom king Gadâdhar Simha during his campaign against the Vaisnava Sattras, the false kevalîyâ bhakatas (celibate disciples) were punished in different ways, but some of them were offered up as sacrifice to idols.⁴⁸ The Âhom used to offer human sacrifice on the occasion of the coronation of their kings.⁴⁹ In the Tâmrêsvârî temple, human sacrifices were offered by the Cutîyâ, and tribes like Tippear, Kachârî, Koc, Jayantîâ, etc. also practiced human sacrifices.⁵⁰ Kâlîkâ-purâna, Yoginî-tantra, and some Vaisnavite biographers of the post-fifteenth century give a terrible picture of the times. Hagiographer Daityârî Thakur writes: “ei deúata pûrbakâle nâchile bhakati nâma dharma karma loke karila samprati nânâ deva pûjaya karaya balidâna hamúa châga pâra kâte sahasra pramâna”⁵¹ (In this state, Bhakati-Nâma-Dharma-Karma did not previously exist, but in more recent times, people began to practice it; they worshipped a variety of deities and offered sacrifices of duck, goat, and pigeon; there are thousands of proofs.)

In his book “The Red River and the Blue Hill”, Hem Barua notes about ‘Bhogî’. The ‘Bhogî’ were the victims, doomed to be sacrificed before the Goddess, allowed to do whatever they desired.⁵² Dr. Lila Gogoi, a renowned scholar, points out that the young boy chosen to be the sacrifice before Kâmâkhyâ was called ‘Bhogî’ and that he was given all enjoyment rights, including the freedom to engage in sexual pleasure with whoever he chose.⁵³

The Kathâ-guru-carit describes how a votary worshipped the Devi at the cost of all his belongings and then used to offer his own blood to the deity, as a result of which his body turned cotton white.⁵⁴

Bisva Sînha, the Koc king, in his childhood worshipped a clay image of Dûrgâ with the sacrifice of grass-hoppers.⁵⁵ It is also narrated how he put his fellow cowherds under his stick and sacrificed them with the help of the pieces of bamboo when they failed to catch dragonflies.⁵⁶

There is a mention in Guru-carit-kathâ that Mâdhavdeva, the dearest disciple of Ūaṅkaradeva, pledged to sacrifice a pair of he-goats on the occasion of the autumnal worship of Devî for the welfare of his mother.⁵⁷ The hot debate between Mâdhavdeva and Ūaṅkaradeva and the former's arguments in favour of the practice of sacrificial rites only confirm the strong presence of the worship of goddess Candî in Kâmarûpa. Mâdhavadeva argued that Dûrgâ was an incarnation of Prakṛti, the primordial source of the universe, and that those who, living in Kâmarûpa, worshipped Ambikâ, were entitled to endless happiness in the heavenly world⁵⁸. We also get references to "Astamira châga" (a goat to be sacrificed on the eighth day of Devi Paksa) in Mâdhava Kandali's writings and the mention of Bhabânî, (aye bhaginî toho satvare bhûcita huyâ: sakhîsava sahita bhavânîka mamha calaha:),⁵⁹ Devî,⁶⁰ Candi Ranacandî, Dûrgâ, Yogamâyâ in other books.

During the childhood of Saṅkaradeva, a stone image of Candi was the object of worship in his household⁶¹, and Mahendra Kandali's plan to teach ĒaEkara the Mantras for Dûrgâ or Candi worship (âru ekadinâ kadaliea bole dekâgiri durgâra rich âhnika sikhânia:)⁶² are two strong proof of dominance of Sâktism in his days. Again, Candivara, the great grandfather of Ūaṅkaradeva, being an ardent devotee of the Devî and an expert in that fold, king Durlabhanârâyana renamed him as devîdâsa (dûrgâka sâskhyâta kare pujâta:devîdâsa nâma di râjâ bole:).⁶³ The mention of the fact that Mâdhavdeva's elder brother residing at Bandukâ sacrificed ten goats⁶⁴ also indicates the strong grip of Sâktism in the north-eastern region of India. Thus, innumerable innocent lives were destroyed in the form of sacrifices to the deities.⁶⁵

Even during the days of Ūaṅkaradeva, when the intensity of Devî worship declined to a large extent, we find the description of Mahâmâyâ temple in one or two books written by Ūaṅkaradeva. The renowned scholar Maheswar Neog notes that even when, under the influence of the liberal Vaisnava faith, the people recited the name of Hari, they would install a 'ghata' as a symbol of the Devî in every household in Assam during Autumn, which is the period of Dûrga Pûjâ.⁶⁶ Vidyânanda, in Thâkura-carita⁶⁷ notes the practice of these religious beliefs in the Barnagar locality in Kâmarûpa.

Conclusion:

"Thus, it is clear that Sâktism had a prolonged hold over the minds of the people for ages together. All these prove the intensity of the impact of Tâṇtrik lore in the area. Whatever it was, Ūaṅkaradeva was forced to start a social reformation movement that was later known as the Neo-Vaisnavite movement due to the threat it posed to the socio-cultural fabric of the entire northeast region in particular as well as to humanism in general.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF YOGA IN MOULDING THE ADOLESCENT MIND

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Abstract:

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. Practicing yoga has a physical effect and also brings a balance between body, mind and soul. Yoga can be practiced at any age and it is suitable for people of all ages and requires no 'stunt skills'. But it should be made a way of life for young adolescents for developing a sound mind in a sound body. Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adulthood. At this juncture of life, students demands proper direction and guidance. The educational process, the parental care, the efforts of the teachers and the environmental conditions should be so designed to bring proper growths and development and channelization of their energies into proper direction. In this regard introduction of a systematic practice of yoga asanas will be ideal for their physical as well as mental growth and development. It can help young people in developing and integrating their cognitive, effective and psycho motored abilities. And thereby they can develop healthy social interaction with other and the environment.

Key-words: Yoga, Adolescence, Asanas, Health, Mind.

Introduction:

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. The word 'yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'yuj,' meaning 'to join' or 'to yoke' or 'to unite'. (<https://www.mea.gov.in>, 23rd Apr- 2015) If we see the Sanskrit meaning of yoga than one thing come to the mind that Yoga is the union of the body and mind. It is the union of soul with the Supreme soul, body with the nature, human to human and so on. According to world health organization "Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". The complete definition of health is found in yoga. Moreover, yoga adds another aspect of health that is spirituality. Thus yoga is not simple science; it is a holistic science which includes body, mind and spirit together. As we all know adolescent period of an individual's life is confronted with many traumas and turmoils. This tender age starts at around 12 years of age and continues till 19 years. In this stage, they may indulge in various unpleasant activities as they are very much confused with the changes that are both hormonal and physical. It is a very crucial period of one's life. The growth achieved, the experiences gained, responsibilities felt and the relationships developed at this stage determine the complete future of an individual. Like infancy the adolescence is the period of too much restlessness and disturbance or as Stanley Hall regards it "A period of great stress and strain, storm and strive". In such a stage yoga can act as a guide for young adolescent.

Objective:

The main objective of this paper is to find out the importance of yoga for the young adolescence for their physical and mental wellbeing.

Methodology:

The study is descriptive in nature and analytical method is followed to write this research paper which is based on the secondary sources of data collected from different books and journals.

Yoga and Adolescence:

To investigate the role of yoga in adolescent life, it is necessary to first understand what yoga is. It is said in the second chapter of Bhagavad Gita that "YogahKarmasuKausalam" which means yoga is skill in action. Yoga asanas, Pranayamas and meditations are skill in action through which one can transform himself physically, mentally, and spiritually. It is not a theory rather a practical science which acts in our body mind and spirit. It upgrades us in different aspects. In kathaupanishad, yoga described as a spiritual journey wherein the senses are brought fully under control along with the mind and intellect. All the definition of yoga shows that it gives importance

on body, mind and spirit together. Yoga helps in the development of physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspect of men. Guru Ravi Shankar defined yoga as wealth, in the sense that it brings absolute comfort. A violence-free society, disease-free body, stress-free mind, inhibition-free intellect, trauma-free memory, and a sorrow-free soul is the birthright of every individual. Yoga is not only theory but also it is an action. It can be said that this definition of yoga is the complete philosophy of yoga. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has explained yoga in a broader sense. If we explain the asthomargs(eight steps of yoga) of Patanjali like- Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratihara, Dharana, Dhyna and Samadhi than we will see that the first two margs of yoga that is yama and niyama is a moral teachings of yoga. It uplifts a man morally and abstained from doing some immoral things. Asana helps us to develop our physical body, Parnayama helps to activate our inner self that is prana or vital energy and Meditation helps to control our mind. In the same way, other steps of Patanjali yoga help us in different aspects.

Most people seek to have a sound body that does not trouble them. They feel that they are healthy if they are not suffering from illness, pain, not aware of the imbalances that exist in their bodies and minds that ultimately will lead to disease. Yoga has a threefold impact on health. It keeps healthy people healthy, it inhibits the development of diseases, and it aids recovery from ill health. Health begins with firmness in body, deepens to emotional stability, then leads to intellectual clarity, wisdom, and finally the unveiling of the soul. Indeed health can be categorized in many ways. There is physical health, which we are all familiar with, but there is also moral health, mental health, intellectual health, and even the health of our consciousness, health of our conscience, and ultimately divine health.

There are different types of yoga. The aim of all the yogas are same. Karma yoga, Bhakti yoga, Jnana yoga, Raja yoga, Patanjali yoga, Hatha yoga, Buddhist yoga, Jaina yoga, Sufi Yoga etc. The basic aim of all the yoga is to know the reality or to attain highest good that is liberation or sat- Chit-Anand. It is a Sanskrit term that describes the nature of reality as it is conceptualized in Hindu and yogic philosophy. In Kathoupanishad, yoga is described as a spiritual journey wherein the senses are bought fully under control along with the mind and intellect. The same definition found in Chandogya Upanishad. In Maitrayani Upanishad the description of yoga is in line with the definition given by Patanjali. Even in LingaPurana also mentioned yoga is the process of preventing the modifications of the mind (Yoga nis and rodhbriteshyachittashya dwijasattamah:1\8\3).

On the other hand adolescence is a stage with specific needs and rights relating to health and development. It is also a time to develop awareness and skills, learn to control feelings and relationships, and gains qualities and skills. At this stage they live in a very confused state as they become bewildered with the changes that are taking place in their physical and mental health. They suffer from stress, hyper tension, unnecessary thinking etc. In such a stage they cannot make **balance themselves**. Yoga is such a holistic science which help adolescence to grow in

every sides-physically, mentally, socially and also spiritually. If we analyses Patanjali's definition of yoga then one thing comes to mind that yoga helps in controlling unstable mind of adolescences. According to Maharishi Patanjali, the traditional founder of yoga philosophy, the word yoga is used to mean not just union but the concentrated continuous effort to attain enlightenment or Samadhi. Here the effort means controlling your senses. "ChittavrittiNirodhaha" (Yogasutra 1\2). Adolescent's minds are very unstable and flexible. So, to stabilize the unstable mind yoga helps to a great extent. Moreover, ashtomargs or eight steps of yoga of Patanjali help in different aspects of the adolescents to grow. Yamas and Niyamas helps to develop their moral character, asanas or postures develop their physical health, Pranayamas help to grow their mental health, Pratihara, Dharana and Dhyna helps to control their mind, and Samadhi is highest stage which helps to attain salvation or highest good of life.

Here are some of the positive outcomes of yoga for the young adolescents—

1. **Physical development and changes:** Physical development is mainly concerned with the development of body from anatomical and physiological point of view. It means that all organs and systems of our body should be properly developed without any disease. During adolescence the physical growth and development reaches to its peak and the human body finds its final shape. Yoga builds physical strength from core. It freshens up our lungs activate our mind and provides a healthy balance to the body. It helps children in improving coordination balance strength and flexibility. Certain yoga poses also help in detoxifying the body and improve the immune system as well, which eventually help children to stay away from diseases. Yoga is particularly suited to provide noncompetitive gentle ways for youth to engage in physical activity. Yogic practices like asanas and pranayamas play a great role in physical development.
2. **Emotional development:** adolescence is heightening of all emotions like anxiety, fear, love, and anger etc. because of these psychophysical changes they can be very emotional, confused and self-conscious. By practicing yoga they will be able to have a better understanding of their emotions. Yoga will enable them to connect with their deeper layers and understand more fully what they are feeling. Yoga encourages self-love and self-acceptance. This benefit is especially powerful for teens struggling with body image. It calms a troubled mind and the mind works in coordination with the body. A regular yoga practice improves mood and changes how stress anxiety and fatigue are perceived. Yogic practices are effective for development of emotional dimension related to our feelings, attitudes and emotions. There are two kinds of emotions – positive and negative. For example love, kindness is positive emotions while anger and fear negative emotions. Yoga plays a crucial role in the development of positive emotions. It brings emotional stability. Yogicpractices such as yama and niyama,asana,pranayama,pratyahara and meditation help in emotional management.

3. **Social development:** adolescence is the period of increased social relationships and contacts. Now he wants to mold his behavior according to the norms of the society. He wants to be recognized and appreciated. In this sphere yoga can serve as a great support for improved social adjustment. The practice of yoga is calming down the mind and the body as well as enhancing social adjustment. Yogic practices not only reduces the stress among individuals but also strengthen the positive aspects of human personality. Yoga helps individuals to understand what is happening in their bodies and how that effects, what they are feeling and thinking. And this increased self, awareness helps them make decisions and take actions that benefit themselves and those around them. Yoga helps in the betterment of our relationships with our friends,parents,teachers and others.
4. **Intellectual development:** Adolescence is the period of maximum growth and development with regard to mental functioning. Intellectual development is related to the development of our mental abilities and processes such as critical thinking, memory,perception,decisionmaking,imagination,creativityetc. Intelligent reaches its peak during this period. The brain functions of attention, cognition processing of sensory information and visual perception are honed with yogic practices. Regular yogic practices increases blood feed to the brain. This helps in soothing mind and enhances concentration. Yoga proves to be very helpful to improve the memory function of the children. It helps to improve attention span and focus of the children. Yoga teaches them how to correctly cope with stress, manage the same and stay productive.
5. **Moral and Ethical development:** With the development of social and civic sense the children during this period learn to behave according to the norms of the society. Also the group sense makes them follow some moral and ethical code. Yoga is universal and it does not bind a person to specific cultural believes leading to prejudice, but guides to independently and directly experience the truth on a personal level. Yoga enables an individual to establish a relationship with the Divine as per his/her psychological tendency. It will help one to know their mind body emotions and actions better. Yoga is a practice that help individual to rejuvenate and modify themselves continuously. The goal of yoga is to calm the mind, ensure better coordination of mind and body so that we live a healthy life and experience spiritual growth. Yama and Niyama help to develop our moral values while pranayama and meditation help us to realize our true self.

Conclusion:

Yoga plays a vital role in the psycho-physical development of human life. The goal of yoga is to calm the mind, ensure better co-ordination of mind and body so that we live a healthy life and experience spiritual growth. Regular practice of yoga helps to relieve stress. Lower anxiety levels, decrease depression, improves sleep quality and enhance quality of life.

As we all know students are the future of our country. The development of our country depends on the physical, moral, spiritual and intellectual development of the student community and it can be attained through the practice of yoga. Hence, yoga should be popularized among the young youths so that they can alleviate their physical, mental and emotional health.

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THE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY'S *THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV* WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CHARACTERS OF DMITRI, IVAN AND ALEXEI KARAMAZOV

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Abstract:

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* is a study which deeply reconstructs a complex and multifaceted theology of suffering as a form of anti-theodicy. It reflects upon a theological and philosophical contribution to the debate over humanity's practical relationship to suffering and vulnerability. Further, it reflects upon the contrasting perspectives of Dmitri, Ivan and Alexei who embody distinct approaches to understanding and coping with suffering. Ivan's rational and nihilistic view is juxtaposed with Alexei's compassionate and faith-driven outlook, revealing the paradoxical nature of suffering as both a destructive and redemptive force. By examining the brother's experiences, interactions and philosophical debates, this study aims to illuminate the ways in which Dostoevsky's novel offers a profound exploration of the human condition, one that acknowledges the inevitability of suffering while also suggesting paths towards healing, forgiveness and transcendence.

Key-words: Anti-theodicy, Humanity, Experience, Suffering, Theology.

Introduction:

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* is an eastern philosophy which is a religious and philosophical contribution to the debate over humanity's practical relationship to suffering and its own vulnerability. Eastern Philosophy is rational, that regards humanity's defining feature as its capacity to use reason as a means of liberating itself from vulnerability. The relationship is practical in so far as the questions with which Dostoevsky struggles all relate to human agency.

The novel's three main protagonist – the brothers Ivan, Dmitri and Alexei Karamazov, represent three different ways of engaging with suffering as a practical problem. Ivan Karamazov challenges God in s refusal which is radical and sincere , to accept that there can be any meaning in undeserved suffering. Ivan revolts against both omnipotent Creator and morality and he positions himself as a proponent of anti-theodicy. Ivan's nihilism is a radical rejection of Christianity morality which in fact is a normative attitude but he is unable to live in his nihilistic world. Dmitri's theological insight involves accepting the necessity of one's own suffering as a way of becoming reconciled with God and the rest of humanity. Alexei represents Dostoevsky's embodiment of the gospel and a Christian theology of suffering. He reconciles himself with God who lacks the power to save humanity from suffering

Objectives:

1. Reflection on Theological and philosophical contribution to the debate over humanity's practical relationship to suffering and its own vulnerability.
2. Establishing the novel as a reconstruction a theology of suffering as a way of reflecting upon its potential and limitations.

Research Methodology:

The present paper is based on both primary and secondary data collected by using the original work of the author and secondary sources like Journals, Newspapers, Articles, Books and from published literature of the novel concerned.

Discussion:

The Brothers Karamazov and the Exploration of Suffering

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* is a novel deeply concerned with the human condition, particularly suffering and its implications for faith, morality, and redemption. Through the complex portrayals of Ivan, Dmitri, and Alexei Karamazov, Dostoevsky presents a profound meditation on the paradoxical nature of suffering, exploring whether it serves as a destructive force or a redemptive one. Each of the three brothers embodies a different philosophical and theological approach to suffering, making the novel not just a work of fiction but a philosophical and theological inquiry into the essence of human existence.

Dostoevsky's writings represent a major source of inspiration for Eastern philosophy. Philosophers, for most part articulate their questions clearly and define their positions with increasing precision, authors deal with fictional protagonists and strive for complexity rather than clarity. When philosophers or theologians claim to identify a message in a literary work, they are proposing a particular reading that they then elaborate using their own tools. The upshot for the present context is that differing interpretations of Dostoevsky's philosophical and theological legacy can be entirely valid: literary representation is never reducible to merely philosophical and theological ideas that both author and reader wish to test in the guise of fiction.

The Brothers Karamazov is a novel about the meaning of Resurrection and its existential relation to death and self-sacrifice. The novel thus engages with the central issues in Christian theology. Dostoevsky came from a fraction of the Russian nobility that was schooled in European culture but that also struggled with feelings of guilt at the appalling state of misery and servitude in which most Russians lived. Minutes before being executed by firing squad, Dostoevsky and his socialist comrades received a reprieve from the Tsar and were sent instead to prison camp. Although this mock execution cast a long shadow upon Dostoevsky's writings after his return from Siberia, an even greater impression was left by his reading of the gospels during his year of imprisonment.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24)

Dostoevsky begins *The Brothers Karamazov* with these verses from the Gospel of St. John. Again in the final scene of the novel, Alexei tells to some children about their deceased friend telling them, "half-laughing, half in ecstasy", Alexei laughs even as he urges the children to remember how profoundly they loved and grieved for their dead friend, it is depth of feeling what Alexei wants the children to take with them from their childhood. Here, the novelist Dostoevsky is establishing a theme, at the beginning of the story we are introduced to the old monk Zosima, who describes both Ivan Karamazov's happiness and his misfortune as an inability to take his own existential doubt seriously. The novel presents various practical approaches to suffering and death in how the brothers, just like their doubles, not only meditate on but also live with these damned questions

Ivan Karamazov: The Rejection of Theodicy and the Revolt Against God

Ivan Karamazov, the intellectual and philosophical skeptic, represents the novel's most forceful challenge to religious faith. He is Fyodor Karamazov's son by his second wife, different from his brothers by his talent and education. He represents the challenges posed by nihilism on Christianity and particularly what he regarded as Christian morality. His struggle revolves around the question of how a just God can allow innocent suffering, particularly that of children. In his famous conversation with Alexei, Ivan presents horrifying examples of cruelty and injustice,

arguing that no future divine justice can ever justify or compensate for the agony of an innocent child. His rebellion against God is not simply atheistic; rather, it is a moral and existential revolt against a world governed by suffering.

Ivan's nihilism is not merely theoretical but deeply personal. Unlike a traditional atheist who outright denies God's existence, Ivan acknowledges the possibility of God but refuses to accept Him due to the moral contradictions inherent in the idea of divine justice. This is best encapsulated in his declaration that he "returns his ticket" to heaven. In doing so, Ivan embodies a form of anti-theodicy, which denies that suffering can ever be justified, even by divine will. His existential crisis leads him to propose a radical worldview in which "everything is permitted" in the absence of moral absolutes.

However, Ivan's intellectual rejection of morality ultimately leads to his own psychological disintegration. He cannot truly live by the nihilistic principles he articulates. His encounter with Smerdyakov, who acts on Ivan's logical conclusions by murdering Fyodor Karamazov, forces Ivan to confront the real-world consequences of his philosophical stance. The idea that morality is a human construct collapses under the weight of its own implications. Unable to reconcile his reason with his conscience, Ivan descends into madness. His trajectory demonstrates that while suffering and injustice may call divine morality into question, rejecting moral structures entirely leads to an existential void that the human psyche cannot endure. The interesting fact about Ivan in *The Brother Karamazov* is that he decided to live in a world without meaning, where 'everything would be permitted' and where egoism should be acknowledged as both a sensible and necessary 'moral law of nature.' It is seen Ivan is unable to live in accordance with the logic of egoism and nihilism. The novelist makes an important experiment that life has no larger meaning but that Ivan nonetheless admits that he loves life.

The novel *The Brothers Karamazov* is a novel about practical reason – how we should live in a world full of suffering, not how we should understand that world. It also talks about the implications of Christian faith for the positions adopted by people in practice, and for this reason Ivan and his brother's struggle with the insight granted by reason into the meaningless of life becomes a struggle over Christianity's image of God. It falls upon Ivan to fight the battle in relation to the closely proximate issue of theodicy. Ivan is regarded as the most interesting character. Ivan's struggle is revolting within the framework of Christianity's traditional image of God. Ivan's protest is a protest not a revolution because he has neither the strength nor the willpower to create a new world. Ivan cries to God, - rejection the fact that suffering of the weak can be compensated., refuses to follow the demands of morality, does not challenge God's autocracy, his relationship with God is honest like the desperate protesters. Ivan's character can be read as a revolt against Christian theodicy from within the framework of theodicy's fundamental structure. Readers of Dostoevsky, particularly philosophers, often regard Ivan Karmazov as the novel's most interesting character

Dmitri Karamazov: Passion, Guilt, and the Path to Redemption

Dmitri, the eldest Karamazov brother, represents another approach to suffering—one rooted in passion, guilt, and the possibility of redemption. His character is deeply flawed, prone to excess and emotional volatility. Unlike Ivan, who grapples with suffering on an intellectual level, Dmitri experiences suffering viscerally, through his personal struggles with desire, jealousy, and violence. His love for Grushenka and his rivalry with his father fuel his reckless behaviour, culminating in his wrongful conviction for Fyodor Karamazov's murder.

Dmitri's response to suffering differs from Ivan's in that he seeks meaning in it rather than rejecting it outright. Though he initially considers escaping his fate, he ultimately contemplates embracing his suffering as a path to redemption. This idea aligns with a Christian theology of suffering, in which suffering serves as a means of spiritual purification. Dmitri's recognition of his own moral failures—his acknowledgment that, even if he did not kill his father, he harboured the desire to do so—demonstrates a profound self-awareness that sets him apart from Ivan.

His willingness to endure suffering as atonement for his sins echoes the Christian notion of redemptive suffering. However, Dostoevsky presents this redemption as incomplete; Dmitri continues to waver between acceptance and escape. His dream of fleeing to America suggests that, unlike Christ, he lacks the absolute commitment to suffering as a transformative experience. Yet, even in his ambivalence, Dmitri's character suggests that suffering can be a pathway to moral and spiritual renewal, provided one embraces it with sincerity.

Alexei Karamazov: Faith, Compassion, and the Affirmation of Life

Alexei, the youngest Karamazov brother, embodies Dostoevsky's answer to the problem of suffering. He represents faith, compassion, and the transformative power of love. Unlike Ivan, who intellectualizes suffering, and Dmitri, who experiences it emotionally, Alexei lives through suffering with a spirit of humility and acceptance. He follows the teachings of the elder Zosima, who advocates for a theology centered on love, forgiveness, and the interconnectedness of all human beings.

Alexei's response to suffering is not passive resignation but an active engagement with the pain of others. He seeks to alleviate suffering wherever he finds it, demonstrating that faith is not merely a belief system but a lived experience. His interaction with the children, particularly in the final scene of the novel, illustrates this principle. When he comforts the grieving children and reminds them to remember their deceased friend with love and joy, he offers a perspective on suffering that transcends despair. Rather than seeking an abstract justification for suffering, Alexei embraces the idea that love and solidarity can imbue suffering with meaning.

Dostoevsky presents Alexei as an alternative to Ivan's nihilism and Dmitri's struggle for redemption. In doing so, he suggests that faith is not about rational proofs or theological debates

but about the lived experience of love and compassion. Alexei's unwavering belief in the goodness of life, despite its suffering, aligns with Christian existentialism, which posits that meaning is not inherent but created through acts of love and faith.

Suffering as a Central Theme: Destruction or Redemption?

Through the contrasting perspectives of Ivan, Dmitri, and Alexei, *The Brothers Karamazov* explores the paradoxical nature of suffering. Ivan's experience demonstrates how suffering, when approached purely through reason, leads to despair and nihilism. Dmitri's journey illustrates the tension between suffering as a burden and as a means of redemption. Alexei, in contrast, embodies the idea that suffering, when met with faith and love, can become a source of meaning and spiritual transformation.

Dostoevsky does not provide a single, definitive answer to the problem of suffering. Instead, he presents multiple perspectives, allowing readers to engage with the question in a deeply personal way. However, the novel ultimately leans toward the view that suffering is an inescapable part of the human condition—one that can either lead to destruction, as in Ivan's case, or to spiritual renewal, as suggested by Alexei's faith.

Philosophical and Theological Implications:

Dostoevsky's engagement with suffering places him in dialogue with major philosophical and theological traditions. His exploration of theodicy echoes the debates of thinkers like Leibniz, who argued that God's creation represents the "best of all possible worlds," and Dostoevsky challenges this notion through Ivan's moral outrage. Similarly, his depiction of suffering as redemptive aligns with Christian existentialists like Kierkegaard, who emphasized the necessity of faith in the face of suffering.

Moreover, Dostoevsky's insights extend beyond Christianity. His exploration of suffering resonates with Buddhist philosophy, which sees suffering as an inherent part of existence and offers a path to transcendence through compassion and detachment. The novel also engages with existentialist thought, foreshadowing the concerns of philosophers like Camus, who questioned whether one can find meaning in a world characterized by suffering and absurdity.

Conclusion:

The Brothers Karamazov is a novel that wrestles with one of humanity's most enduring questions: the meaning of suffering? Through the distinct perspectives of Ivan, Dmitri, and Alexei, Dostoevsky presents a multifaceted exploration of this issue, offering no easy answers but inviting deep reflection. Ivan's intellectual rebellion, Dmitri's struggle for redemption, and Alexei's unwavering faith each provide different pathways for understanding suffering's role in human life.

Ultimately, Dostoevsky suggests that suffering is both an unavoidable and essential aspect of existence. While it can lead to despair and nihilism, it also holds the potential for transformation and redemption. In a world where suffering is inevitable, the novel asks its readers to consider not just why suffering exists, but how we choose to respond to it. In doing so, *The Brothers Karamazov* remains one of the most profound and enduring explorations of the human soul, faith, and the quest for meaning in a world fraught with pain.

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DEWEY'S PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO SOCIAL REFORM

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Abstract:

John Dewey's pragmatic approach to social reform offers a transformative perspective on how society can address social issues through democratic values, education, and collective action. Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism emphasizes the importance of experience, experimentation, and problem-solving in shaping social change. Rather than advocating for top-down reforms, Dewey believed that social progress arises from the active participation of individuals working collaboratively to address real-world challenges. His vision of democracy extends beyond political processes, proposing a dynamic, ongoing experience where citizens engage in meaningful dialogue, critical thinking, and social responsibility. Dewey's educational philosophy, which emphasizes experiential learning, student-centered pedagogy, and community engagement, plays a crucial role in fostering a democratic society capable of addressing contemporary social problems. This abstract explores Dewey's philosophical foundations of social reform, examining his views on the role of education in shaping democratic citizens, promoting social justice, and creating a more equitable society. Through Dewey's pragmatic approach, social reform becomes an inclusive, adaptive, and experiential process, deeply rooted in the lived experiences of individuals and communities.

Key-word : Pragmatism, Social Reform, Education, Social Justice.

1. **Introduction:**

John Dewey, one of the most influential philosophers and educators of the 20th century, is widely recognized for his contributions to educational theory and social philosophy. His pragmatic approach to social reform emphasizes the importance of experience, practical problem-solving, and the active participation of individuals in societal change. Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism rejects abstract, theoretical solutions to social issues, instead advocating for real-world engagement, experimentation, and collective action as the foundations of social progress. At the heart of Dewey's approach to social reform is his belief in the power of education. He viewed education not merely as a means of transmitting knowledge, but as a transformative process that empowers individuals to participate in the democratic process, engage with the community, and contribute to social change. Dewey argued that true democracy is a way of life, a continuous process of shared experiences, dialogue, and mutual respect among citizens, which can only be realized through active involvement in both personal and public spheres.

This article explores Dewey's pragmatic approach to social reform, examining how his educational philosophy and commitment to democracy shaped his views on societal change. By focusing on the importance of democratic values, experiential learning, and active participation, Dewey's ideas continue to influence contemporary discussions on social justice, equality, and community empowerment. Through this lens, social reform is seen not as a distant ideal but as an ongoing, practical process that involves the cooperation of all members of society in addressing pressing social issues.

2. **The Concept of Pragmatism:**

Pragmatism, as articulated by Dewey, is a philosophy that views knowledge and truth as tools for solving practical problems. Unlike traditional philosophies that prioritize abstract, unchanging truths, pragmatism emphasizes the importance of experience, experimentation, and adaptability in the quest for knowledge. Dewey, along with other pragmatists like William James and Charles Sanders Peirce, argued that truth is not fixed but evolves through human experience and interaction with the world. This concept of truth as dynamic and evolving laid the groundwork for Dewey's social philosophy, which emphasized change and reform based on the needs and experiences of individuals within society.

For Dewey, social reform was not about imposing an idealized version of society but about addressing the immediate needs and conditions of people in a practical, experiential manner. His approach was deeply democratic, seeking to create a society that was participatory and inclusive, allowing individuals to engage in collective problem-solving and to contribute to the improvement of their communities.

3. **Democracy and Social Reform:**

One of Dewey's most significant contributions to social reform is his concept of democracy. Unlike the conventional understanding of democracy as merely a political system of voting and representation, Dewey saw democracy as a way of life. For Dewey, democracy was a process—an ongoing experience of mutual respect, communication, and collaboration among individuals. He argued that the aim of social reform should be to create a democratic society in which individuals actively participate in decision-making processes, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

In his book *Democracy and Education* (1916), Dewey proposed that education plays a critical role in nurturing democratic citizenship. He argued that for democracy to thrive, individuals must be equipped with the skills of critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. These skills could be cultivated through a progressive education system that focuses on experiential learning, where students are encouraged to engage with real-world problems and work together to find solutions. This view of education as a tool for social reform shaped Dewey's belief that social change could be achieved through the cultivation of democratic values and practices at all levels of society.

4. **Education as a Tool for Social Reform:**

Dewey's educational philosophy was intricately linked to his vision of social reform. He believed that the education system should not simply transmit knowledge but should foster the development of individuals who are capable of participating fully in democratic life. According to Dewey, education should focus on the needs, interests, and experiences of students, allowing them to connect academic learning with practical, real-world issues.

In Dewey's view, the classroom should be a microcosm of the democratic society he envisioned. Instead of a rigid, teacher-centered model of education, Dewey advocated for a student-centered approach that encourages dialogue, collaboration, and active engagement with the material. This model would enable students to not only gain knowledge but also develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to address the social issues they would face in adulthood.

Dewey also emphasized the importance of social contexts in learning. He argued that students should learn about society through active participation in their communities, with real-world projects and service learning as key components of the curriculum. This would help students understand the challenges faced by their communities and equip them with the tools needed to contribute to social change.

5. **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To Examine Dewey's Philosophical Foundations of Pragmatism in Social Reform.
2. To Analyze the Role of Education in Dewey's Vision of Social Reform.
3. To Assess the Practical Implications of Dewey's Social Reform Approach in Contemporary Society.

6. **Methodology:**

The methodology for studying John Dewey's pragmatic approach to social reform will primarily involve qualitative analysis, combining a comprehensive literature review, thematic analysis, and historical contextualization. The study will examine Dewey's key works on pragmatism, education, and democracy, identifying core themes such as democratic participation, social responsibility, and experiential learning. Additionally, the research will place Dewey's ideas within their historical context to understand their emergence as responses to social challenges of his time. Through a comparative analysis, the study will also explore how Dewey's approach contrasts with other philosophical models of social reform. Case studies will be used to assess the practical application of Dewey's philosophy in contemporary contexts, offering insights into its relevance for addressing modern social issues.

7. **Analysis the objective-1: To Examine Dewey's Philosophical Foundations of Pragmatism in Social Reform:**

The objective of examining Dewey's philosophical foundations of pragmatism in social reform focuses on understanding how Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism provides a framework for societal transformation. Dewey's pragmatism rejects static, theoretical truths in favor of ideas and solutions that evolve through human experience and practical application. His view is that knowledge is not an isolated entity but a dynamic process that emerges from human interaction with the world, and as such, it must be continuously tested and adapted to changing social contexts.

In terms of social reform, Dewey's pragmatism underscores the importance of democratic participation, community engagement, and the experiential learning process. He argued that societal change could be best achieved through the active involvement of individuals in solving communal problems, with each member contributing their unique experiences and perspectives to shape the reform process. Dewey's philosophy calls for an inclusive society where individuals are not passive recipients of reform but active agents in the creation of solutions that address social injustices and inequalities.

Additionally, Dewey's pragmatism advocates for education as a central tool for fostering social change. He viewed education not simply as a means of transmitting knowledge, but as an ongoing, collaborative process that prepares individuals to engage critically and constructively

with societal issues. The examination of Dewey's philosophical foundations of pragmatism reveals how his ideas prioritize social responsibility, adaptability, and collective problem-solving in pursuit of a more democratic and just society.

8. Analysis the objective-2: To Analyze the Role of Education in Dewey's Vision of Social Reform:

The objective of analysing the role of education in Dewey's vision of social reform centers on understanding how Dewey viewed education not just as a process of transmitting knowledge but as a fundamental tool for social transformation. For Dewey, education is the means by which individuals develop the necessary skills and attitudes to participate actively in democratic life and contribute to social change. He argued that education should cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to collaborate, all of which are essential for addressing societal issues. By promoting experiential learning, where students engage with real-world problems, Dewey's educational philosophy fosters a sense of social responsibility and equips individuals to be active agents in the reform process.

Dewey believed that the traditional education system, with its emphasis on rote learning and passive reception of knowledge, failed to prepare students for the complexities of democratic participation and social engagement. Instead, he proposed a more interactive, student-centered approach that encouraged active inquiry, problem-solving, and dialogue. This approach was designed to help students understand their roles in society and recognize the importance of working collectively for the common good.

Furthermore, Dewey's belief in the interconnection between education and democracy highlights the idea that schools should be microcosms of the democratic society Dewey envisioned. In such a system, students would not only learn academic content but also experience the values of democracy through participatory practices, promoting respect for diversity, social justice, and cooperation. Dewey's model of education as a tool for social reform also stresses the importance of community engagement and social action, suggesting that learning should extend beyond the classroom into real-life experiences that contribute to societal progress.

9. Analysis the objective-3: To Assess the Practical Implications of Dewey's Social Reform Approach in Contemporary Society:

The objective of assessing the practical implications of Dewey's social reform approach in contemporary society seeks to evaluate how Dewey's philosophical ideas can be applied to address the social challenges of the 21st century. Dewey's social reform approach, grounded in pragmatic philosophy, emphasizes active democratic participation, experiential learning, and collective problem-solving. His vision of social reform requires citizens to engage actively in shaping their communities and address societal issues through collaborative efforts. In today's

context, this objective involves assessing how Dewey's principles can be practically implemented in modern education systems, political processes, and social movements.

One significant implication of Dewey's approach in contemporary society is the importance of education as a tool for social transformation. Dewey's educational philosophy, which emphasizes learning through real-life experiences and fostering critical thinking, aligns with the need for education systems that prepare individuals to tackle complex societal issues such as inequality, climate change, and economic disparities.

Dewey's focus on democratic engagement suggests that education should go beyond the classroom to encourage active participation in social and political life, nurturing individuals who are not only informed but also socially responsible and capable of working collectively to drive change.

Furthermore, Dewey's emphasis on democratic participation and community involvement resonates with contemporary movements advocating for social justice, equality, and human rights. Dewey envisioned a society where people engage in open dialogue, debate, and collective decision-making to resolve social conflicts and foster mutual respect. In today's globalized world, Dewey's ideas provide a framework for promoting inclusivity, respect for diversity, and a commitment to social equity. His approach encourages the formation of community-based solutions to contemporary challenges, ensuring that individuals are active participants in shaping policies that affect their lives.

Another practical implication is Dewey's belief in experimentation and adaptability. In the context of contemporary society, where rapid technological advancements and global challenges are constantly reshaping the world, Dewey's call for an adaptive, experimental approach to social reform remains relevant. Dewey advocated for a society that continuously learns from its mistakes, experiments with new solutions, and remains open to change. This mindset is crucial in addressing the dynamic and complex nature of contemporary social issues, such as environmental sustainability, economic justice, and public health crises. The practical implications of Dewey's social reform approach in contemporary society are significant. His emphasis on education as a means of fostering democratic participation, his advocacy for community-based solutions, and his belief in experimentation and adaptability offer valuable insights into how modern societies can address their most pressing challenges. By embracing Dewey's philosophy, contemporary society can create a more equitable, participatory, and socially responsible framework for addressing complex social issues.

10. **Conclusion:**

John Dewey's pragmatic approach to social reform offers a powerful and relevant framework for addressing contemporary societal challenges. His emphasis on experiential learning, democratic participation, and collective problem-solving provides practical tools for

fostering social change in a rapidly evolving world. Dewey's belief in education as a transformative force is central to his vision of a just society, where individuals are not merely recipients of knowledge but active participants in shaping the future of their communities. By exploring Dewey's philosophical foundations and his commitment to a democratic way of life, it becomes clear that his approach to social reform transcends political and economic boundaries. It highlights the importance of community engagement, inclusivity, and adaptability in tackling issues such as inequality, education reform, and environmental sustainability. Dewey's model of social reform remains relevant today, offering a blueprint for addressing modern challenges through cooperative efforts, continuous learning, and the active involvement of citizens.

Ultimately, Dewey's pragmatic approach calls for a society where social change is not imposed from above but emerges through the collaborative, experiential engagement of its members. In this vision, social reform becomes an ongoing, dynamic process that fosters a more equitable, democratic, and participatory society, where every individual contributes to the betterment of the collective. As such, Dewey's philosophy continues to inspire and guide efforts toward social justice and reform in the contemporary world.

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ATTITUDE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING MATHEMATICS IN DIGITAL AND TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM: A STUDY IN GUWAHATI CITY

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Abstract:

Attitude is vital aspect of secondary education. It is need of the hour to have its thorough understanding for the enhancement of students' academic achievement and success in mathematics. Mathematics is an interdisciplinary instrument and language used to tackle perplexing problems in a variety of disciplines. The purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers' attitude towards teaching Mathematics. Data were collected from 180 teachers (Govt.=60, Pvt.=120) selected from various Government (SEBA) and Private (SEBA & CBSE) schools of Guwahati city using survey method with the help of a validated 5point Likart scale questionnaire. Gathered data were analyzed with the help of SPSS and interpreted using Mann Whitney U Test. The study found no significance difference between the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of both Government school and Private school. The study recommended that digital classroom facilities are urgently required in most of the schools, especially Government schools within the domain of study area.

Keywords: Attitude, Teachers, Digital and Traditional classroom, Government and Private school

Introduction:

A predisposition or tendency to respond positively, adversely, or neutrally to a specific direction or situation is known as attitude. Attitude is made up of various types of judgement. The character of teacher's attitudes has an impact on his entire personality and the development of his knowledge. Attitude always plays a multidimensional role and it is described mathematically as having three components: cognitive (beliefs), affective (emotions), and cognitive (behavioural) (Syeda, F., 2016). Mathematical attitudes play an important part in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. It has an impact on pupils' overall performance, self-esteem, motivation, and anxiety in the topic. The ability and willingness of students to learn how to learn with technology is determined by their attitude toward learning. Attitude refers to a person's manner of thinking, acting, and behaving, and it has significant ramifications for students."An attitude is a mental and neutral state of readiness organised through experience, exerting a direction or dynamic impact upon the individual's behaviour to all objects and situations with which it is related," according to Allport (1935). Mathematics is an interdisciplinary instrument and language used to tackle perplexing problems in a variety of disciplines. It is crucial in speeding a country's social, economic, and technical development. All vital knowledge and development in science and technology are built on the foundation of mathematics. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM, 2000) has indicated "Technology can have a crucial role in teaching and learning mathematics; it both influences the mathematics that is taught and enhances students' learning." Technology helps to keep pace with the latest developments with the help of various tools that teachers can use in and outside of the classroom to improve the students' learning. Teachers always want to improve students' performance and technology can help to execute their aim. Abe and Gbenro (2014) pointed out that mathematics plays a multidimensional role in science and technology due to its application. It has been serving as a pillar in the formulation of modern science since the very beginning. Mathematics is the only language in the development of science and technology that has changed the lives of students in technologically advanced societies. ICT has recently become popular in a large number of government and private sector schools, because of its potential in facilitating administration duties regarding from data storage to knowledge management. The use of ICT in mathematics education assists students in developing critical and scientific thinking.

Teachers must develop new teaching tactics that are substantially different from those used in regular classrooms since traditional classroom practises are no longer effective. Instead of being simple producers of knowledge, teachers should take on the role of facilitators of students' learning, creators of effective classroom settings, and guides in the proper direction in today's classroom. They must assure that their pupils are engaged in learning and that they are providing effective education using a variety of instructional methods and pedagogical

approaches helped by technology. They should take an active role in their own education and seek out professional development in order to better their own performance and that of their students. According to the National Policy Statement on Education (1968), the most essential component determining the quality of education and its contribution to national development is the teacher. As a result, teachers must be given respect in society. Teachers are more than just teachers; they are also organisers, controllers, and motivators."A new teacher is put at the epicentre of educational transformation," according to the International Commission for the Development of Education (UNESCO, 1990). The teacher of the new millennium must be able to instil in his or her students' fundamental competencies and attitudes such as creativity, receptivity to change and innovation, knowledge versatility, adaptability to changing situations, discerning capacity, critical attitude, problem identification, and solution. The attitudes of teachers, as well as their readiness to accept technology, will be critical to the success of student learning with computer technology (Teo, 2006).

Teachers' Attitude Towards the Use of ICT

Information and communication technology (ICT) in education is currently at a very promising stage. Literacy in ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is a current technology in the kingdom of education. ICT is a necessary tool in the modern classroom since it improves the efficiency of the teaching and learning process and allows material to be accessible and shared instantaneously. Teachers must be well-equipped with the knowledge they require in order to successfully convey knowledge to students. The primary question is whether or not teachers have the necessary ICT skills. According to certain research, teachers do not obtain the requisite degree of knowledge. Rosnaini and Mohd Arif (2010) found that only a small percentage of teachers were proficient in fundamental ICT. The majority of them only had a basic understanding of ICT or none at all. This example clearly demonstrates that improving teacher ICT knowledge is critical to the success of ICT programmes in schools (Moganashwari and Parilah, 2013).

Objectives:

- (1) To study the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Government school.
- (2) To study the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Private school.

Hypotheses:

H₀₁ There is no significant difference between the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Government school.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference between the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Private school.

Methodology:

Research Methodology is a overall strategy to systematically solve the research project. It is a science of techniques that should followed for collecting and analysing the data.

Method of research:

Attitude of teachers cannot be determined by historical and experimental method. This study is descriptive in nature. So, the researcher adopted descriptive survey method for this study.

Research tool:

A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire were administrated among the teachers of digital and traditional classroom for gathering the information regarding the attitude of teachers towards teaching mathematics.

Reliability and validity:

In the present study, internal consistency reliability measures were used to determine the internal consistency of the items in the questionnaire to gauge its reliability by using Cronbach's alpha test. Cronbach's alpha co-efficient was found as 0.81. Validity may be measured with the help of index of reliability which is found as 0.90.

Sample size:

The sample of the present study consisted of 180 teachers (Govt.=60, Pvt.=120) selected from various Government (SEBA) and Private (SEBA & CBSE) schools of Guwahati city where digital classroom exists or not.

Sampling method:

Multistage sampling technique is used.

Analysis and Discussion:

The data are classified and then analysed systematically and synthesized in such a way that the proposed hypothesis may be accepted or rejected. The collected data is interpreted by using statistical calculations with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 1: One sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality test for teachers' attitude

Test of Normality			
	Kolmogorov-Smimov ^a		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Total_attitude	.083	180	.004
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction			

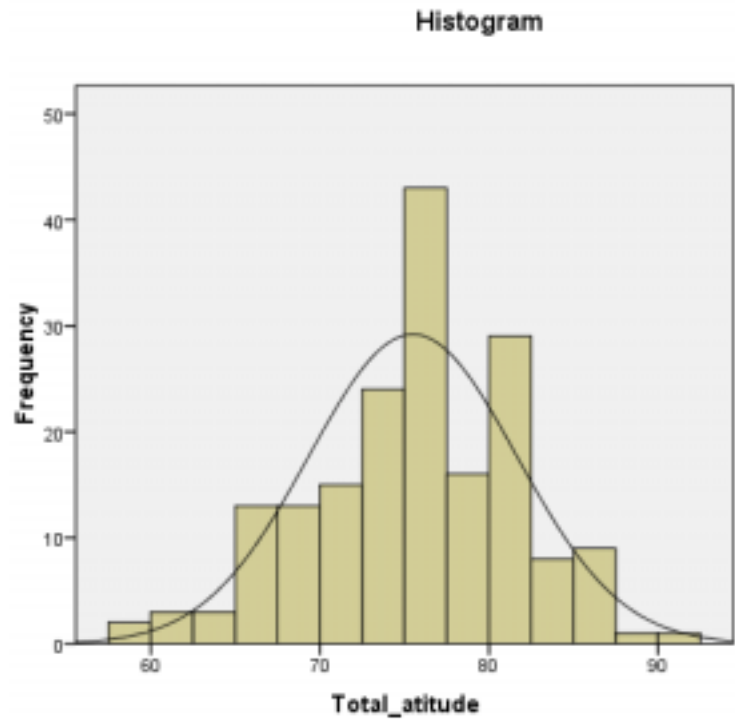


Figure 1: Teachers' attitude data presented as a histogram (created in SPSS)

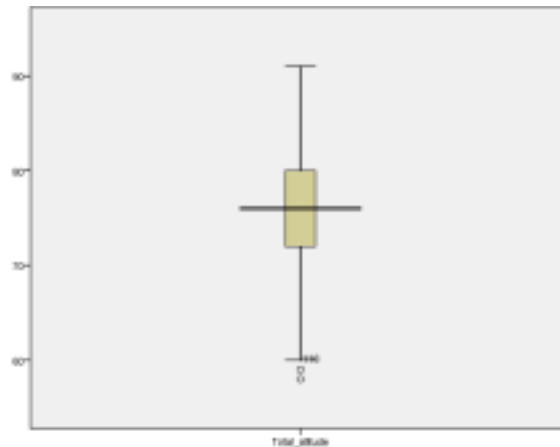


Figure 2: Boxplot of teachers' attitude (created in SPSS)

From the table 1, it is observed that the data found are not normally distributed ($p < .05$). Histogram in figure 1 and boxplot in figure 2 also confirms that the data is not normal which implies that resultant mean is not a representative value of our data. Therefore, non-parametric analysis is conducted which does not assume normality. The Man Whitney U test is used to compare two different groups.

Interpretation of hypothesis H_{01}

There is no significant difference between the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Government school.

Table 2: Distribution of sample of teachers in digital and traditional classroom of Government category

Government	Digital-Traditional			Total
		Digital	Traditional	
	Count	23	37	60
	% of Total	38.33%	61.67%	100%

Table 3: Mann-Whitney U Test comparing the ranks of teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in traditional and digital classroom of Government category

RANK				
	Digital-Traditional	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Total Attitude	Traditional	37	31.05	1149.00
	Digital	23	29.61	681.00
	Total	60		

The table 3 reveals the mean Rank of teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Government school. From the table, it is observed that for 37 observations in traditional category, the sum of Ranks is 1149.00 and this result in a mean rank of 31.05. Respectively for 23 observations in digital category, the sum of Ranks is 681.00 and this result in a mean Rank of 29.61. The table indicates that teachers of traditional category have the higher mean Rank than the digital category. The sum of Ranks in traditional category is also higher than the digital category.

Table 4: Test Statistics (a)for actual significance result

Test Statistics ^a	
	Total Attitude
Mann-Whitney U	405.000
Wilcoxon W	681.000
Z	-.313
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.755
a. Grouping Variable: Digital-Traditional	

The table 4 indicates the Mann-Whitney U test statistic value as 405.000. Wilcoxon W statistic quoted here represents the minimum of the two rank sums which is 681.000. Here the calculated Z-value is -.313 and the p-value, quoted next to Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) is .755 which is greater than .05. So, there is sufficient evidence to accept the null hypothesis.

Interpretation of hypothesis H₀₂

There is no significant difference between the teachers’ attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Private school.

Table 5: Distribution of sample of teachers in digital and traditional classroom of Private category

Private	Digital-Traditional			Digital
	Total	Digital	Traditional	
	Count	60	60	120
	% of Total	50.00%	50.00%	100%

Table 6: Mann-Whitney U Test comparing the ranks of teachers’ attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Private category

RANK				
Total Attitude	Digital-Traditional	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	Traditional	60	57.27	3436.00
	Digital	60	63.73	3824.00
	Total	120		

The table 6 reveals the mean Rank of teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of private school. From the table, it is observed that for 60 observations in traditional category, total sum of Ranks is 3436.00 and this result in a mean rank of 52.27. Respectively for 60 observations in digital category, the sum of Ranks is 3824.00 and this result in a mean Rank of 63.73. The table indicates that teachers of digital category have the higher mean Rank than the traditional category. The sum of Ranks in digital category is also higher than the traditional category.

Table 7: Test Statistics (a)for the actual significance result

Test Statistics ^a	
	Total Attitude
Mann-Whitney U	1606.000
Wilcoxon W	3436.00
Z	-1.020
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.308
a. Grouping Variable: Digital-Traditional	

The table 7 indicates the Mann-Whitney U test statistic value as 1606.000. Wilcoxon W statistic quoted here represents the minimum of the two rank sums which is 3436.000. Here the calculated Z-value is -1.020 and the p-value, quoted next to Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) is .308 which is greater than .05. So, there is sufficient evidence to accept the null hypothesis.

Findings:

- 1) There is no significance difference between the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Government school.
- 2) There is no significance difference between the teachers' attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom of Private school.

Conclusion:

Mathematics teachers always have parallel positive attitude towards teaching mathematics in digital and traditional classroom. No significance differences in teachers' attitudes were found

in digital and traditional classroom of Government and Private schools. Teachers of Government (SEBA) schools do not have sufficient knowledge to develop digital mathematics contents and they are not confident enough with the use of ICT in the classroom. But junior mathematics teachers have more favourable attitude towards the use of ICT than the other senior teachers in mathematics classroom.

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SOCIO-CULTURAL-PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES OF THE HILL TIWA TRIBE OF NORTHEAST INDIA

(A Study of Western Region of Hamren Sub-Division, KarbiAnglong District)

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Abstract:

The Tiwa people belonging to the Sino-Tibetan group among the non-Aryan groups of Northeast India are well known to all. They have been living in both the hilly and plain regions of Assam and the Northeast since ancient times. The Tiwa people residing in the plains of Assam have integrated elements of language, literature, and culture from other Aryan and non-Aryan groups, leading to a mixed cultural cohesion. On the other hand, the Tiwa people, scattered in the hilly regions of Assam and parts of Meghalaya, have experienced less cultural intermingling due to various reasons. As a result, the language, literature, religion, and culture of their migration period have been largely preserved among these hill tribes.

This research paper provides an overview of the society and culture of the hill Tiwa people in Ulukunchi, Umswai, and other areas of KarbiAnglong district in Assam. This partial field study sheds light on their social structure, traditional culture, and oral folk literature. With support from the government, the TiwaSahitya Sabha, and other well-wishers, their oral literature, which was at risk of extinction, has been recorded using the Roman script. However, external influences have inevitably found their way into their culture and literature due to interactions with other communities. Further in-depth study and research are necessary before making conclusive statements on these cultural changes.

At a time when globalization is impacting every part of the world, including small communities, the hill Tiwa tribe has not remained untouched. Moreover, since the British colonial period, religious conversions have led some Tiwas to abandon their indigenous faith. However, a recent trend suggests a reversal to this process in the region.

The new generation must actively respond to the government's recognition of tribal identities and the efforts of well-wishers to cultivate and revitalize their rich religious, cultural, and literary heritage.

Key-words: Hill Tiwa, Socio-Cultural Identity, Challenges.

Introduction:

The Tiwa tribe is one of the many ethnic groups in Northeast India. The Northeast region, comprising the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, and Mizoram, has been described as “a vast museum of language and ethnicity.”¹ Two distinct traditions exist across these seven states: one in the plains and the other in the hills. This study focuses on the Tiwa people residing in the hilly areas of the Hamren sub-division of KarbiAnglong district in Assam. The Tiwa are among the largest Boro tribes within the Tibeto-Burman language family, mainly of Mongoloid race. This ethnic group migrated to the northeastern region of India in the pre-historic period. As they settled in different areas, the region became a confluence of various Mongoloid tribes. Studies on their diaspora, lifestyle, customs, and religion began in the 18th century, gaining momentum during British colonial rule. Researches have revealed new insights and helped systematize knowledge of their preserved and hybrid cultures. It has also fostered awareness within these communities and introduced their traditions to non-tribal populations. In short, research has played a crucial role in bringing tribal cultural traditions to the global stage. The use of technology has further amplified the promotion and preservation of their cultural heritage.

Significance of the Study:

The study Socio-Cultural Context and Challenges of the Hill Tiwa Tribe of North East India is very essential. The Tiwa community of the western Karbi Anglong district reflects a unique socio-cultural identity within the broader Sino-Tibetan language group. Throughout history, different linguistic groups have migrated to India. Seeking food and security, these groups settled in various regions, bringing their customs with them. Over time, they nurtured their cultural traditions while interacting with other ethnic groups.

There is ample scope for studying the socio-cultural aspects, religious beliefs, language, and literature of the Tiwa people. Such research will provide valuable insights into the challenges they face and aid efforts to revitalize and preserve their ethnic identity in the face of rapid change.

Sources:

This study focuses on the Hamren sub-division of KarbiAnglong district. Data has been collected from various books and articles on the hill Tiwa people, as well as through direct engagement with community members. Both primary and secondary sources have been consulted.

Objectives of the Study:

Research on India's various ethnic groups has been a relatively recent development. British colonial efforts initiated discussions on tribal populations in India, particularly in the North East. These ethnic groups, existing outside Aryan cultural influences, have preserved their unique languages, oral traditions, religious beliefs, and social systems. However, cultural intermingling has brought unforeseen changes, challenging their traditional way of life. The Tiwa people (formerly known as Lalung) belong to the Mongoloid ethnic group and have migrated to different parts of the North East. Among them, those residing in the hills have made concerted efforts to preserve their cultural heritage.

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To provide a detailed account of the society and culture of the hill Tiwa people in the western region of Hamren sub-division, KarbiAnglong district.
2. To explore methods of preserving their original culture, which is at risk due to globalization and modernization.
3. To encourage future generations to study and research these rich cultural traditions, fostering awareness and preservation despite ongoing challenges.

Methodology of the Study:

This study is primarily uses analytical methods.

Discussion:

The Tiwa people are scattered across the hills and plains of Northeast India. Despite residing among neighboring ethnic groups, hill Tiwas have retained their distinct social structure and cultural traditions. The Tiwa society is based on clans, family structures, and traditional customs. The family is the primary social unit, following a matrilineal system. The Tiwa practice a joint family structure, where decisions are made collectively with the guidance of elders. There is a strong bond between different generations and between men and women. The Tiwa people

engage in agriculture, with men handling farming activities while women contribute by weaving, cutting, and raising livestock. “Panthai and Kharla” marriage system follow strict clan regulations; inter-clan marriages are prohibited. The maternal and paternal families have equal rights in the marriage relationship.

Social institutions such as Chamadi (Dekachang) and Nubar (Bar Ghar) play crucial roles in education and community organization. Chamadi serves as a training ground for young Tiwa men, while Nubar functions as a place of worship and communal gathering.

The Tiwa society is structured into clans, tribes, and gotras to ensure the smooth functioning of the community. Marriage within the same clan is strictly forbidden, meaning individuals cannot marry someone from the PanthaiKharla clan. The society of this tribe holds a distinct mindset. Notably, there is no division among them based on social hierarchy, caste, or status. They adhere to the advice and instructions of their elders when carrying out various social activities. Upon the death of a member, specific customs are followed according to the deceased's clan. Burial arrangements are made at designated sites.

Over time, the Tiwa people of the mountains adopted the names of clans or tribes, such as Amanchi, Khalar, and NagroMadar, as titles. Some of their clan groups include:

1. Machlui wali, Malang wali, Sagrawali, Agar wali, Tamlongwali, Samlongwali
2. Puma wali, Phamjongwali
3. Tilarwali, Kholarwali, Madar wali
4. Hukaiwali, Kholarwali, Mithiwali, Madarwali¹

The Tiwa people of the hills have two major social institutions—*Chamadi* or *Dekachang* and *Nubar* (Nabar) or *Bar Ghar*. Dekachang or Chamadi serves as the primary center for education and personality development among Tiwa youths. In Tiwa, ‘cha’ means son, ‘ma’ means mother, and ‘di’ means river or water, with ‘Chamadi’ symbolizing the mother river, the heart of the Tiwa community.²

The villagers follow strict rules for constructing *Chamadi*. A significant aspect of *Chamadi* is that women are strictly prohibited from entering in it. Among the three *khunakhutas* (main pillars) used in its construction, the Changmaji pillar is considered male, while the Changdalai and Suruma pillars symbolize female figures. The latter two are depicted with female breast symbol. The Tiwa people regard the main pillar of *Chamadi* as a representation of the Shiva Linga, with their principal deity being Faa Mahadeu. They believe this thuna pole or head linga protects those inside Chamadi from harm.

Like the hill Tiwa, many ethnic groups in Northeast India also have a traditional institution called *Dekachang* or *Changhar*. The *Chamadi* or *Dekachang* serves as a training ground for young men, preparing them for future social responsibilities.

The term ‘Nubar’ comes from ‘nu,’ meaning house, and ‘ba,’ meaning big. Each Tiwa clan has a Nubar or Bar Ghar, where they worship the clan deity. The Nubar consists of

various rooms, including the namazi (outer courtyard) and nu-krithi (inner courtyard). The nu-krithi is typically reserved for women, with men only entering under special circumstances. However, in the hills, the Tiwa people also use Nubar as family residences without specific restrictions.³ In front of the Nubar, there is a large courtyard called Khala, where auspicious ceremonies and chicken sacrifices take place.

Marriage customs in Tiwa society strictly prohibit marriage within the same clan, as it is considered a social offense. The child inherits the mother's clan. They also practice 'GabhiyaChapa' or *Gharjowai*, and a man has no rights to property acquired before marriage. The Tiwa people enjoy complete freedom in choosing their life partners. Child marriage does not exist among them, and widow remarriage, though not common, is permitted. They consider it inappropriate for a girl to become a daughter-in-law in her lover's family. Various marriage traditions exist in their society.

The hill Tiwa people celebrate several festivals with great enthusiasm, including Sagramichawa (Spring Festival), Songkong or Jungkong Festival, Magro or MuinariKasthiMisaawa Festival (held every five years), Langkhun Puja (to ward off evil spirits), Wansua or PithaguriKhunda Festival, and Yangli Puja (Lakshmi worship). These primarily agriculture-related festivals foster unity among the villagers.

Cultural Life of the Hill TiwaPeople:

As societies evolve, they develop agricultural practices, festivals, customs, religions, traditions, and beliefs, forming a distinct cultural identity. Archer Tailor defines 'folk culture' as the set of asseḍ down through generations without crediting a specific creator.⁴

The peaceful TiwaLalung people of the hills live in harmony with nature, gathering wood, bamboo, straw, and *ikra* for their homes. Their traditional two-storied houses are built on raised ground with foundations laid first. These homes include pujaghar or deoghar (prayer rooms) and lodging spaces, as well as separate pens for chickens and pigs. In a short distance from the house, they construct forest enclosures for cattle.

For generations, the Tiwa people have practiced Jhum cultivation, clearing and burning dry forests during Magh and Fagun months. Agriculture is central to their lives, and they work together joyfully. Primarily rice cultivators, they also grow potatoes, spinach, garlic, ginger, sesame, bananas, and other crops while supplementing their diet through hunting.

Rice is their staple food, and one of their culturally significant beverages is *ju*, a rice wine. They also ferment fruits like pineapple, watermelon, and corn juice to make wine.⁵ Their diet includes meat, fish, and traditional dishes such as rice cooked in bamboo (kak bamboo pot) and *kharisa*, along with various vegetables. Hill Tiwa women excel in weaving, spinning their own yarn to create colorful garments. They strictly follow customs related to birth and death and maintain folk beliefs and superstitions.

Thus, the Tiwa people of the mountains possess a rich cultural heritage. Given its vast diversity, discussing their social and cultural aspects in brief is not easy.

However, their traditional lifestyle is gradually changing. Time is dynamic, bringing new influences. Modern ideas have begun penetrating the ethnic groups of Assam and Northeast India. The Indian Constitution grants recognition of the tribal and legal benefits to these communities.⁶

Yet, changing attitudes towards language, religion, and culture have led to conflicts. To preserve indigenous heritage, deeper studies and discussions are needed. Research on Tiwa traditions should be shared globally by the new generation, making this study meaningful.

The Tiwa people of the western part of Hamren sub-division in KarbiAnglong district have consistently worked to preserve their culture but face significant challenges. They struggle with difficult life style and lag behind the plains people, especially in education. Access to quality healthcare is limited, and they remain economically disadvantaged compared to other tribes. A lack of scientific awareness and persistent superstitions slow down their progress.

The Tiwa language is rapidly declining across generations. The spread of English, facilitated by Christian missionary education, has contributed to this shift. Furthermore, with changes in marriage customs (such asgabhiarakha), the acceptance of brides from other tribes has led to the further linguistic decline. Religiously, many Tiwa people have abandoned their traditional beliefs in favor of Christianity. Low literacy rates and migration of the educated youth to the plains for employment have also hindered development. On top of these issues, globalization is rapidly impacting Tiwa society, culture, language, and literature, bringing both opportunities and threats.

Conclusion:

It is necessary to take action to preserve the rich society and culture of the Tiwa people of the Boro branch of the Sino-Tibetan group living in the hills of Assam. An examination of the challenges mentioned in the paper reveals that a reverse trend is currently taking place among the population of this region. Many teachers, social workers, writers, and literary figures have contributed their writings in this (hill Tiwa) language. The work on Tiwa-English and Tiwa-English-Assamese dictionaries is also nearly complete under the courtesy of ABILAC in North Guwahati.

The Tiwa speakers of the mountains have recognized the Roman script since the formation of the TiwaSahitya Sabha (MathanlaiTakhara) in 1981, which has successfully promoted the literature of the community. HarchingKhalar, a member of this tribe, has won the National Award, and Bobby Sharma Baruah'sSikaisal (School) recently received the Special Jury Mention Award at the Indian Film Festival. MaheshwarPatar, a teacher and writer who speaks the Tiwa language has been starred in the film. After 2001, when the Government of India recognized

tribes under Article VI of the Constitution, a reverse mentality has emerged among converts to Christianity.

In conclusion, it can be said that the nature of language and culture is changing. However, the new generation must come forward to ensure that change does not threaten ethnic culture but instead contributes to its development in new and enhanced forms.

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BRIDGING THE GAP: A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH TO TEACHING MATHEMATICS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF KAMRUP METRO DISTRICT, ASSAM

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Abstract:

This paper explores the efficacy of incorporating philosophical principles into mathematics education for elementary school students in Kamrup Metro district, Assam. We argue that integrating philosophical concepts like constructivism and problem-solving fosters deeper understanding, critical thinking, and engagement among young learners. This paper presents data collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student assessments, demonstrating the potential benefits and challenges of implementing a philosophy-infused mathematics curriculum. We also propose a framework for integrating specific philosophical approaches into elementary mathematics teaching within the unique socio-cultural context of Kamrup Metro.

Key-words: Mathematics education, elementary school, philosophy, constructivism, problem-solving, critical thinking.

1. **Introduction: The Need for a Philosophical Shift in Mathematics Education**

Mathematics, often perceived as a collection of abstract rules and formulas, can be transformed into a dynamic and engaging subject by adopting a philosophical approach to its teaching. Instead of merely memorizing procedures, students can explore the “why” behind the “how,” fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the subject. This is particularly relevant in the context of elementary education, where foundational concepts are laid.

For many elementary school students, mathematics is a subject often approached with trepidation and perceived as abstract, irrelevant, and disconnected from their everyday lives. Traditional mathematics teaching frequently emphasizes rote memorization of formulas and procedures, neglecting the underlying conceptual understanding and the beauty of mathematical reasoning. This approach, while potentially yielding short-term success in standardized tests, often results in a superficial grasp of mathematical concepts and a long-term aversion to the subject.

This problem is particularly pertinent in diverse educational contexts like Kamrup Metro, the largest metropolitan area in Assam, India. Despite its urban character, the educational landscape in Kamrup Metro is marked by significant disparities in resources, teacher training, and student backgrounds. Many schools struggle with overcrowded classrooms, limited access to technology, and a curriculum that may not always resonate with the local cultural context. In this environment, a purely procedural approach to mathematics education can further alienate students, particularly those from marginalized communities who may struggle to connect abstract mathematical concepts with their lived experiences.

This paper argues that a philosophical shift is necessary to transform mathematics education in elementary schools within Kamrup Metro. By embracing philosophical perspectives on learning and knowledge, teachers can move beyond rote memorization and foster a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts, cultivate critical thinking skills, and connect mathematics to students’ lives. This shift requires a re-evaluation of the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and the overall role of mathematics in education.

2. **The Philosophical Foundations of Mathematics Education:**

To understand the potential of a philosophical approach to teaching mathematics, it is crucial to examine some key philosophical perspectives that can inform pedagogical practices.

2.1 **Constructivism:**

Constructivism, a widely influential learning theory, posits that knowledge is not passively received but actively constructed by learners based on their prior experiences and interactions with the world. In the context of mathematics education, constructivism emphasizes that students do not simply absorb mathematical facts and procedures; instead, they actively build their own understanding through exploration, experimentation, and collaboration.

A constructivist approach to teaching mathematics involves several key principles:

- **Active Learning:** Students are actively engaged in manipulating objects, solving problems, and discussing ideas.
- **Prior Knowledge:** Teachers acknowledge and build upon students' existing knowledge and beliefs.
- **Social Interaction:** Collaborative activities and discussions are used to facilitate knowledge construction.
- **Problem-Solving:** Students are presented with challenging and open-ended problems that require them to apply their mathematical knowledge in creative ways.
- **Meaningful Contexts:** Mathematical concepts are presented in real-world contexts that are relevant to students' lives.

2.2 Pragmatism:

Pragmatism, a philosophical movement emphasizing practicality and experience, offers another valuable perspective on mathematics education. Pragmatists believe that the meaning of an idea lies in its practical consequences. In the context of mathematics, this suggests that students should understand the purpose and relevance of mathematical concepts in their everyday lives.

A pragmatic approach to teaching mathematics involves:

- **Real-World Applications:** Connecting mathematical concepts to real-world problems and applications.
- **Problem-Based Learning:** Using real-world problems as a starting point for learning mathematical concepts.
- **Hands-On Activities:** Engaging students in hands-on activities that demonstrate the practical applications of mathematics.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** Encouraging students to work together and communicate their understanding of mathematical concepts.
- **Focus on Problem-Solving Skills:** Emphasizing the development of problem-solving skills that can be applied to a variety of situations.

2.3 Critical Pedagogy:

Critical pedagogy, a philosophy rooted in social justice, challenges traditional power dynamics in education and encourages students to critically examine the world around them. In the context of mathematics education, critical pedagogy involves:

- **Questioning Assumptions:** Encouraging students to question the assumptions underlying mathematical concepts and procedures.

- **Connecting Mathematics to Social Issues:** Exploring the ways in which mathematics can be used to address social issues such as inequality, poverty, and environmental degradation.
- **Empowering Students:** Empowering students to use mathematics as a tool for social change.
- **Challenging the Status Quo:** Encouraging students to challenge the status quo and advocate for a more just and equitable society.
- **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy:** Incorporating students' cultural backgrounds and experiences into the curriculum.

3. The Kamrup Metro Context: Challenges and Opportunities

Kamrup Metro, Assam presents a unique context for implementing philosophical approaches to mathematics education. On one hand, its urban environment offers access to resources, technology, and diverse perspectives. On the other hand, the district faces significant challenges, including:

- **Socio-Economic Disparities:** Significant disparities exist in socio-economic backgrounds, leading to varying levels of preparedness for school.
- **Language Barriers:** Students from diverse linguistic backgrounds may face challenges in understanding instruction primarily delivered in Assamese or English.
- **Overcrowded Classrooms:** Many schools struggle with overcrowded classrooms, making it difficult for teachers to provide individualized attention.
- **Limited Resources:** Many schools lack adequate resources, including textbooks, manipulatives, and technology.
- **Teacher Training:** Insufficient training in modern pedagogical approaches hinders effective implementation.

4. Methodology:

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques.

- **Classroom Observations:** Observations were conducted in five elementary schools across Kamrup Metro, Assam. These schools represented a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds. The observations focused on teacher-student interactions, the use of teaching methodologies, and the level of student engagement.
- **Teacher Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten elementary school teachers to understand their perspectives on mathematics education, their experience with different teaching methodologies, and their openness to incorporating philosophical approaches.

- **Student Assessments:** Pre- and post-tests were administered to students in two experimental groups (integrating philosophical approaches) and two control groups (traditional teaching methods) to assess their understanding of specific mathematical concepts. Data was analyzed using paired t-tests to determine the statistical significance of any observed differences.

5. Data and Analysis:

5.1 Classroom Observation Data:

Observed classrooms using philosophical approaches showed a noticeable increase in student engagement and participation. Students were more likely to ask questions, collaborate on problem-solving, and express their understanding of mathematical concepts in their own words.

Table 1: Comparative Student Engagement (Observed Instances per Hour)

	Traditional	Philosophical
Asking Questions	2	7
Collaboration	1	5
Active Participation	3	9

5.2 Teacher Interview Data:

Teachers expressed a general interest in incorporating philosophical approaches into their teaching, but they also cited several challenges:

- **Lack of Training:** Many teachers felt inadequately trained to implement constructivist or problem-solving based methodologies.
- **Curriculum Constraints:** Teachers felt constrained by the existing curriculum and standardized testing requirements.
- **Limited Resources:** Some teachers lacked access to the necessary resources, such as manipulatives and real-world problem scenarios.

5.3 Student Assessment Data:

Student assessment data revealed a statistically significant improvement in the experimental groups compared to the control groups.

Table 2: Paired T-Test Results of Pre- and Post-Tests

Group	Mean Pre-Test Score	Mean Post-Test Score	T-Value	P-Value	Significance
Experimental	60	75	3.2	0.01	Significance
Control	62	68	1.5	0.15	Not Significance

6. **A Framework for Implementation in Kamrup Metro, Assam :**

Based on the data and analysis, we propose a framework for implementing a philosophy-infused mathematics curriculum in elementary schools of Kamrup Metro, Assam:

- **Teacher Training:** Provide comprehensive training to teachers on constructivist, problem-solving, and inquiry-based teaching methodologies. This training should be tailored to the local context and incorporate examples relevant to the students' experiences.
- **Curriculum Adaptation:** Adapt the existing curriculum to allow for more opportunities for exploration, problem-solving, and collaborative learning. This may involve reducing the emphasis on rote memorization and increasing the focus on conceptual understanding.
- **Resource Development:** Develop and provide access to resources that support philosophical approaches to mathematics education. This could include manipulatives, real-world problem scenarios, and technology-based learning tools.
- **Community Engagement:** Engage parents and the community in the learning process. This can involve workshops, parent-teacher meetings, and community-based projects that showcase the relevance of mathematics in everyday life.
- **Cultural Contextualization:** Adapt the teaching materials and methods to the local cultural context. This may involve incorporating local stories, traditions, and examples into the curriculum.

7. **Challenges, Limitations and Considerations:**

Implementing these strategies is not without its challenges.

- **Resistance to Change:** Some teachers may be resistant to adopting new pedagogical approaches, particularly if they are comfortable with traditional methods.
- **Time Constraints:** Implementing constructivist, pragmatic, and critical pedagogical approaches can be time-consuming.
- **Assessment:** Traditional assessment methods may not be well-suited for evaluating students' understanding of mathematical concepts in a holistic way.

- Lack of Resources: Many schools in Kamrup Metro lack the resources needed to fully implement these strategies.

This study has its limitations, including a small sample size and limited duration. Further research is needed to validate the findings and address the identified challenges.

To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to:

- Provide ongoing support and training for teachers.
- Create a culture of collaboration and experimentation among teachers.
- Develop alternative assessment methods that are aligned with the goals of philosophical approaches to mathematics education.
- Advocate for increased resources for schools in Kamrup Metro.

8. **Conclusion:**

This paper provides evidence that integrating philosophical approaches into mathematics education can enhance student learning, improve teacher efficacy, and contribute to a more holistic and meaningful curriculum in elementary schools of Kamrup Metro, Assam. While challenges exist, the potential benefits of this approach are significant. By embracing philosophical perspectives on learning and knowledge, teachers in elementary schools within Kamrup Metro can transform mathematics education from a memorization-based exercise into a meaningful and engaging experience. A constructivist approach allows students to actively build their own understanding of mathematical concepts, while a pragmatic approach connects mathematics to the real world and makes it relevant to their lives. Critical pedagogy empowers students to use mathematics as a tool for social change. By investing in teacher training, curriculum adaptation, resource development, and community engagement, we can create a more engaging and effective mathematics learning environment for all students.

By incorporating these philosophical perspectives into their teaching, educators can foster a lifelong love of mathematics in their students and equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the 21st century. This shift requires a commitment from teachers, administrators, policymakers, and the community as a whole. By working together, we can bridge the gap between abstract mathematical concepts and concrete student experiences, creating a more equitable and engaging mathematics education system for all students in Kamrup Metro, Assam. This, in turn, will contribute to a more prosperous and just society. A more philosophical approach to teaching mathematics will not just teach students *what* to solve, but *how* to think, enabling them to tackle complex problems far beyond the classroom. This is particularly crucial in a rapidly developing region like Kamrup Metro, where a mathematically literate and critical thinking population is essential for future progress.

9. **Future Research:**

Future research could focus on:

- A longitudinal study to assess the long-term impact of a philosophy-infused mathematics curriculum.
- A comparative study comparing the effectiveness of different philosophical approaches.
- A study exploring the role of technology in supporting philosophical approaches to mathematics education.
- A study investigating the impact of cultural contextualization on student learning.

By continuing to explore and refine these approaches, we can create a more equitable and effective mathematics education system for all students in Kamrup Metro and beyond.

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PHILOSOPHY OF SRIMANTA SANKARDEVA AS AN ENVIRONMENTALIST

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Abstract:

Today protecting nature is a major concern. Today our nature is adversely affected by the activities that human are doing to various parts of nature .Thousand years ago Sankardeva, the great social reformer of medieval Assam, tried to make people realize about the importance of nature. Sankardeva through his socio-religious activities and literary works expressed his views of nature. In most of his literary works, Sankardeva put messages of love and respecting all creatures of nature. Similarly Sankardeva's life philosophy reflected his ideas of nature. The religious beliefs and rituals of early Indian people were closely associated with nature and they worshiped tress, plants and rivers. Of course in the name of religion, they used to sacrifice birds, animals to different Gods and Goddess. In medieval Assam Sankardeva through his socio-religious activities, tried to explain the relationship between nature and human being. He also pointed out that it is the duty of every human being to protect nature for the welfare of the whole world. The objectives of this paper is to throw some light on the philosophy of Sankardeva about nature and how he showed his love and respect to nature and tried to make people conscious about the protection and preservation of nature.

Key-words: Nature, Messages, Religion, Belief, Protection.

Introduction:

Sankardeva (1449-1568) the preacher of the Neo-Vaishnavism, initiated changes in the socio-cultural structure of the medieval society of Assam. Prior to Sankardeva, people were drowning in superstitions, inhuman practices, dogmatic beliefs in the name of religion. At that time such type of socio-cultural degradation greatly crippled human society in every way and people did not want any change in the existing socio-religious fabric. In addition to people did injustice to nature in various ways. In the name of religion a major section of society used to sacrifice animals and birds to their Gods and Goddess. With the advent of Sankardeva, a new era started in the socio-cultural history of Assam. Throughout his life, Sankardeva tried hard to make people understand his ideals. He had deep respect and love to every creatures of nature and believed that nature presents a reflection of peace and unity to human being and could inspire people for a spiritual connection to God. He exhibited that nature was the creation of God and all living being of nature have inherent value. In medieval Assam Sankardeva through his wisdom showed to people the relationship between human being and nature and tried to make people realize that it is the responsibility of every human being to respect and protect every part of nature for the greater interest of the earth.

Objectives:

The objectives of this paper is to throw some light on the ideas of Sankardeva about nature and how he showed his love and respect to nature and his continuous perseverance for the protection and preservation of nature.

Methodology:

The method of this paper is descriptive and analytical. Information is collected from secondary sources like books, magazine, souvenir related to the topic.

Discussion on the theme:

Sankardeva was the great social reformer of medieval Assam. During his time religious prejudice and social unrest prevailed in various parts of India as well as in Assam. People followed different religious beliefs and used to offer sacrifices to their God and Goddess. Sankardeva initiated the Neo Vaishnavite movement popularly known as *Ek Sarana Nama Dharma* or *Mahapurusiya Dharma* to reform the existing socio religious structure of his time. Sankardeva in true sense was a humanist and all his ideas, principles were based on his humanist philosophy. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary humanism is a system of beliefs that concentrates on common human needs and seeks ways of solving human problems based on reason rather than on faith in God. Sankardeva's humanism was not limited to human beings alone. The entire living world of nature was the vast field of his humanism. Many Indian

poets and writers exhibited the concept of co-existence and interface of human being and nature in their literary works. Sankardeva who belonged to medieval Assam is exceptional among all those poets and writers. He was an animistic and he exhibited the nature from the animistic point of view.

Sankardeva's ideals were welfare, respect, love and affection to all creatures of nature. Non violence or ahimsa was one of the principles of his Neo-Vaishnavism or *Ek Sarana Nama Dharma*. Therefore harming or killing any living being of nature was totally prohibited in his Neo Vaishnavism. Once in 1522 at Dhuyahat, Sankardeva had his first debate with his great disciple Madhavdeva.¹ Previously Madhavdeva was a follower of Saktism. As he was a staunch Sakta, he wanted to sacrifice goats to mother Goddess Durga Devi. For the offering Madhavdeva asked his brother-in-law Gayapani to buy two goats. But Gayapani refused to do so and told Madhavdeva about Sankardeva's principle of non violence to all creatures of nature. The next day Madhavdeva came to Sankardeva's place to engage in debate with him as Sankardeva initiated Gayapani into the Bhakti cult for which Gayapani refused to bring goats (Sankardeva named Gayapani as Ramdas). Madhavdeva presented various verses of Hindu scriptures before Sankardeva to defend Saktism and the path of attachment or pravritti-marga (worldly activities). Sankardeva defended before Madhavdeva the path of detachment or nivritti-marga (the path of salvation). He also argued against killing animals and explained to Madhavdeva that God (Lord Krishna) can be attained through Naam Dharma. Sankardeva made Madhavdeva realize that animal killing in the name of religion is a great crime as all creatures of nature are the part of God. So worship of God offering His own part is pointless, instead it is the moral duty of each human being to love and respect all creations of God. This reflect Sankardeva's consciousness about natural world and how he strived to make people realize that animals are too part of God.

Sankardeva through his Neo-Vaishnavite movement ushered a new era of socio-cultural renaissance in Assam. Sankardeva strived to teach people the real worship of Supreme God. To build up moral character of people, Sankardeva endeavored to make people realize that God can be found by being kind to all beings. Doing well to all beings is the devotion to God and through the devotion man can be moral. In his teachings he emphasized on the oneness among the people and love and respect for all the creatures of nature. In his literary works, Sankardeva describes all resources of nature as a part of God. In his verses he painted nature or physical environment as the background to love the supreme God Krisna. In his work Kirtan Ghosa, Sankardeva said—

“ *Krisnar charan chintibeka hridayaka |*
Aasanta ishsara hari hamoste bhutata | |
*Hena jani pranika koriba xatakara | ”*²

By saying this Sankardeva emphasized on that Krisna the supreme God is everywhere in all creatures of nature. So it is the moral duty of people to do welfare to all creatures of nature

and people should have love and regards for all natural resources of nature. Sankardeva asked people to be merciful to all creatures of nature and consider all creatures as equal because the supreme God Lord Bisnu (Krisna) dwells in every being . So Sankardeva again said in Kirtan Ghosa—

*“ Kukura Chandala grddovaro aatmarama }
Jania sawaka pari kariba pranama | |
Samasta bhutata visnu budhi nohe jave |
Kaya vakya mane abhyasiba ahibhabe | |
Visnumay dekhe jitu samasta jagat |
Jivante mukuta hove acira kalat | |
Sakalo pranika dekhibaha aatmasama | |³*

Sankardeva's humanism reflected in his personality in different stages of his life through his different activities. From very childhood his activities showed his love and care for all creatures of nature. And his love for nature shows that Sankardeva was a true environmentalist or a nature lover. In childhood days sometimes Sankardeva with his friends searched little birds called *bata carai* and caught two-three the little birds in a cheerful way. But later he freed the birds without harming them. From a hagiography it can be cited here that –

*“ Kato bela sisugane same huya sari |
bane bane bata carai phuranta bicari | |
ana sisugane bata gotaka napanta |
dui cari anandate Sankare dharanta | |
bata meli diya pache grhaka asanta |⁴*

In those childhood days he caught different animals too like deer, peacock and freed them with care and love. Such type of actions of Sankardeva reflects his love and respect to all creatures of nature. Sankardeva not as a spiritual leader but as a human being was a great lover of natural world. Hundred years ago in the mid of 15th century Srimanta Sankardeva initiated tree plantation in Assam. He initiated tree plantation around his religious institutions Namghar and Satra. He himself collected saplings and planted them around his place. Accordind to a hagiography, Sankardeva planted one sapling at Bardova himself.⁵

Some popular literary works of Sankardeva reflects his love and respect to natural world and so those literary works can be explained from an environmentalist point of view. Sankardeva strived to teach people about the importance of man-nature relationship. In some of his writings, Sankardeva describes the beauty of nature. In *Dasama*, Sankardeva describes the features of autumn season. He depicts the autumn in terms of the blue sky, while clouds fly in the sky, calm nature, beautiful weather, and lotus blooming in the lakes, birds flying from afar and the starts shinning in the night sky. He pictures fishes in small ponds which are unaware of at hand death as water dries up and this he compares to people who engrossed in the material world.⁶ Thus

in most of his writings, Sankardeva focuses on the beauty of nature or the physical environment and the value of life of all creatures.

Sankardeva believes that all natural objects of the earth have souls. So in real sense he was an animistic. In the chapter ‘*Haramohan*’ in Kirtan, Sankardeva says—

“*Nomu nomu madhava bidhir bidhi data |*
Tumi jagatatar gati mati pita mata | |
Tumi parattama jagatar esho ika |
Ekus bostu nahike tumaka byttirek | |
Tumi kajya karana hamaste sarasara |
Subarna kundale jen nahike antara | |
Tumi posu pokshi hurahor taru trinya |
*Agyanata morhahabe dekhe bhinabhin | |*⁷

By saying this Sankardeva explains that Madhava the Bisnu (Krisna), you are the supreme God, the Lord of the Universe,. Nothing exists outside the supreme God. The supreme God is the birds, animals, gods and demons, the trees and the grass. People recognize God differently due to their ignorance. In this way, Sankardeva expresses that there is only one God and that everyone is equal in the world. He realized that once this teaching is established, every human being would be kind to every being of this earth.

In the third section of ‘*Harmahan*’, Sankardeva again describes the beauty of nature. He says—

“*Pase trinoyan dibya opaban*
Dekhilanta bidyaman |
Phal phool dhor jak mak kori
Ase jato brikyaman | |
Siris haoti tomal malati
Labanga bagi golal |
Karabir bok kanchana champak
*Phool bhore bhang dal | |*⁸

By describing the beauty of the flowers, Sankardeva highlights the impact of the spring season on the earth and he shows that the beauty of the nature is the gift of God. So Human should respect nature and enjoy its beauty.

In his scripture *Gunamala* too, Sankardeva describes many incidents of Supreme God Krisna’s life and through those descriptions he shows the close relation that exists between man and nature. He describes the loveliness and beauty of season and how the natural beauty of season arose devotional feeling or love to supreme God Krisna. Sankardeva also highlights the names of many indigenous trees and plants and their influence in day to day life of human being. Sankardeva believed in Pantheism and so he identified God with the Universe, with all

the resourses of the nature. In fact Sankardeva through his life action and literary works imparted to people the knowledge that nature or the whole physical environment and human being both are the creations of God and so it is the moral duty of each and every human being to protect the nature, enjoy the beauty of nature and through it Sankardeva preached people to regard the Universe as the manifestation of God.

Conclusion:

Sankardeva was a great social reformer and religious preacher. Along with that he was an environmentalist too. Hundered years ago Sankardeva taught people about the co-existence of human being and nature and about the moral duty of human being to protect and conserve all resources of physical environment. So Sankardeva emphasized on that God can be realized through the respect and love to all creatures of nature.

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THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE USE OF MEDICINAL ANIMALS, INSECTS IN TRADITIONAL FOLK MEDICINE OF ASSAM.

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Absract:

Folk medicine in Assam, India, refers to the traditional healing practices and remedies used by the indigenous communities of the region. These practices are deeply rooted in the state's rich cultural heritage and are influenced by its unique geography, climate, and biodiversity. Assam is rich in medicinal animals and insects, which have been used in traditional folk medicine for centuries. Despite their importance, these practices are being overlooked in modern times. To revive and highlight the social significance of traditional medical practices in Assam, research is urgently needed. This paper aims to explore the social significance of using medicinal animals and insects in traditional folk medicine of Assam, utilizing existing literature and field studies.

Key-words: Folk medicine, medicinal properties, social importance, cultural importance, economic importance.

Introduction:

From the dawn of humanity, humans and animals have relied on nature for sustenance and protection. Organisms have evolved strategies to combat adverse environmental conditions, including natural disasters and diseases. Humans, in particular, have developed resilience to these challenges. Throughout history, people have sought remedies for diseases, leading to the development of various rituals, spiritual practices, and medicinal uses of plants and animals.

1.1 Global Significance of Traditional Medicine:

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 75 to 80 percent of the world's population still relies on traditional medicine, highlighting its enduring importance in global healthcare.

This introduction sets the stage for exploring the significance of traditional medicine, particularly in the context of Assam, and its potential benefits for human health and well-being.

Research on the use of animals in traditional therapy has been conducted globally, with numerous studies highlighting the ancient practice of using wildlife and marine animals for healing purposes. Assam, with its rich tradition of natural medicine rooted in Indian Ayurvedic scriptures and its unique demoniac medicine, offers a fascinating context for exploration. As Dr. Naveen Chandra Sharma notes, "Folk medicine is also noteworthy among the three types or classes of medicines prevalent in the world." (Sharma, Naveen, 'Folk Culture in Modern Society', p. 53) He categorizes medicines into three classes: scientific, modern, and folk medicines. Interestingly, he points out that folk medicine, which was once considered scientific, has been discussed and recorded in terms of its nature, application, preservation, and more.

The significance of folk medicine in Assam's cultural heritage is further underscored by its potential contributions to modern healthcare. Traditional diagnoses and treatments are often recorded in ancient texts, such as the Vaidya Amar texts and proverbs. In ancient Assamese society, various animals and insects with medicinal properties were used to treat diseases in humans and animals. Examples of this can be found in elephant and horse diagnosis texts, such as the Hastividyarnava. As noted in the Hastividyarnava, "Feeding an elephant with large Puthi fish fried in ghee and mixed with jaggery for three days makes the elephant strong and rutted." (p. 204) This ancient text highlights the use of animals and insects in traditional medicine, demonstrating the rich cultural heritage of Assam's folk medicine practices.

Assam boasts a rich tradition of harnessing readily available organisms, such as beetles, insects, fish, and spiders, to heal diseases. However, the indiscriminate killing of rare animals driven by superstition and medicinal properties has severely impacted Assam's wildlife. To mitigate this issue, it is crucial to promote the responsible utilization of medicinal properties found in indigenous animals and insects, whether or not they are considered food sources. This paper

highlights the medicinal applications of four specific types of fish, showcasing their potential benefits and advocating for sustainable use.

1.2 **Research Methods and Resources:**

This paper employs an analytical approach to explore the use of traditional medicine in Assam. To gather reliable information, emphasis was placed on consulting.

Traditional Practitioners Bajs, Ojas, and experienced individuals providing medical services in rural Assam were approached to share their knowledge and experiences. Relevant books, research papers, magazines, newspapers, and online resources were consulted to gather accurate information on traditional medicine in Assam. By combining insights from traditional practitioners and existing literature, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of traditional medicine in Assam's rural communities.

1.3 **Objectives of the Study:**

Since ancient times, various ethnic groups in Assam have traditionally used the medicinal properties of these animals, and cured diseases. However, although scientific medicine has gained widespread popularity in modern society, folk medicine still has an influence in society. The main objective of this study is to analyze the social and cultural significance of traditional medicine and to promote folk medicine.

2. **Discussion and Findings:**

Assam, nestled in the heart of Northeast everaging India, boasts breathtaking natural beauty and unparalleled biodiversity. The state's unique combination of abundant rainfall, fertile soil, humidity, and favorable altitude creates an ideal environment for a vast array of flora and fauna to thrive. As Dr. Saroj Kakati aptly notes, "Assam's forests harbor an astonishing number of plant and animal species, rivaling any other region in the world."

The state's rich biodiversity has been a blessing for its indigenous communities, including the Boro, Rabha, Miching, Karbi, Khamati, Tai Hajong, and Lalung, among others. These ethnic groups have traditionally incorporated medicinal plants and animals into their diets, lnature's bounty to maintain their health and well-being.

2.1 **Social Importance**

The medicinal properties of animals have been traditionally used by various ethnic groups in Assam since ancient times. In the present modern society, folk medicine has gained widespread popularity and dissemination, but it still has an influence in folk society. Traditional medicine carries social and cultural significance. The Assamese people have been using medicinal plants from nature, animals and some substances to cure diseases. Plant bodies - trees, leaves, bark,

roots, flowers, fruits, oil, etc., animal flesh, skin, feces, urine, bones, heads, bodies of various insects, and bamboo made from them (such as barley bamboo, honey bamboo, Ui Haflu clay, etc.) Substances include lime, evening salt, mercury, gold, iron. According to various studies and reports, around 70-80% of the medicinal animals and insects in Assam are found in a beautiful land of nature. Assam has the highest biodiversity due to abundant rainfall, unique soil fertility, humidity and favorable altitude. In this context, the quote of Dr. Saroj Kakati is relevant - "There are as many species of plants and animals found in one square meter of the forests of Assam as there are anywhere else. Different ethnic groups of Assam like Boro, Rabha, Mishing, Karbi, Khamati, Tai Hajong, Lalung etc. use these medicinal plants and animals in their diets naturally. It's coming to be used in folk medicine of Assam are locally produced or sourced. The interviewee indicated natural areas such as local ponds, rivers and also mention that some people produce these medicinal fish in their home ponds only as food and sell them in the market and make a profit. These statements of the informants prove that such fish farming systems in Assam are meeting the demand for Assamese traditional medicine as well as socio-economic development of Assam.

Traditional folk medicine is less expensive, side effect-free and easily available than scientific medicine. These treatment methods are inexpensive and easily available as they are used to treat diseases by selecting the medicinal properties of various household foods, vegetables, fruits as well as meat, milk, eggs etc. from food listed animals. The side effects of various drugs in scientific medicine threaten the health of people. In such circumstances, side effect-free traditional medicine is recognized as an auspicious method of maintaining human health.

The use of animals, plants and mineral products as healing remedies in traditional medicine is accepted with full confidence and trust by the people. The famous English physician and anthropologist W.H.R Rivers said "Traditional medicine is a behavior accepted with belief and trust like other social customs, traditions. Traditional medicine also involves religion and magic." (Book title-'Medicine, Magic and Religion'. 1924, pg.49) His word emphasized the importance of understanding traditional medicine within its cultural context, recognizing that it is deeply rooted in the beliefs, values, and practices of a community.

The modern lifestyle has significantly the way people live, leading to a disconnection from nature. This separation has resulted in a surge of physical and mental illnesses, posing a substantial threat to building a healthy society. Traditional medicine often emphasizes a holistic approach to health, which includes a connection with nature. Use natural products: Herbs, plants, and animals are used to create medicines, promoting an understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), folk medicine, medicines used in folk societies are based on knowledge, skills and practices based on various social theories, beliefs and experiences.

2.2 Cultural Importance :

The knowledge of the medicinal application of animals, insects ,various plants, minerals used in traditional medicine in the folk society of Assam , it is a generational tradition. This tradition has nothing to do with modern scientific medicine. Folk medicine is the tradition of knowledge of experienced individuals. From the beginning of human life and society, folk medicine is based on the need to cure diseases, prevent diseases of animals as well as humans and moves forward with the aim of achieving the welfare of this society.

Traditional medicine is often deeply intertwined with the cultural identity and heritage of a community. It reflects the historical and cultural practices passed down through generations, serving as a living repository of a community's history and traditions.

Folk medicine is different from scientific medicine. Traditional medicine is used as a cultural part of folk society. In society, healing information is passed down from generation to generation. In folk societies, people learn and practice traditional medicine in the same way they practice or learn culture.

Traditional medicine practices often involve the community and family, strengthening social bonds. Healing rituals and practices can be communal events that reinforce social cohesion and collective identity.

2.3 Economic Importance:

People have to go far and wide to seek doctors for medical treatment. Communicating with a distant doctor also becomes expensive. A person with experience in traditional medicine such as a local physician (bej) , an uja etc. is a person in the community. Therefore, traditional healing methods do not have to go far in search of a doctor. This method provides people with accessible and inexpensive treatment methods.

Folk medicine provides livelihoods for traditional healers, herbalists, and practitioners who rely on the sale of animal and insect-based remedies. This is particularly important in rural and indigenous communities where modern healthcare may be inaccessible or unaffordable.

Many communities rely on the sale of animal and insect-based remedies in local markets. These products are often sold as powders, oils, or whole specimens and are integral to local economies.

Some animal and insect-based remedies are traded globally, contributing to export revenues. For example, products like deer antler velvet, snake venom, and honey (from bees) are highly valued in traditional medicine systems like Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Ayurveda.

Folk medicine is often tied to cultural heritage, and its preservation can attract cultural tourism, further supporting local economies.

Conclusion:

The use of medicinal animals and insects in traditional medicine is a significance aspects of Assamese culture and health care. Using accessible animals and insects in folk medicine of Assam can help preserve cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. It support cultural preservation and tourism. Traditional medicine is often more affordable than conventional western medicine, making healthcare more accessible to low income community. The economic benefited of using Assamese folk medicine making it an important aspect of economic development strategies. Using accessible animals and insects properties as medicine improve cost-effectiveness through affordable and reduced healthcare costs. Through job creation and sales of traditional medicine products generates employment and income.

Overall, Assamese traditional folk medicine offers a holistic approach to healthcare, promoting physical, mental, emotional and social well-being while preserving traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.

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DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND ITS IMPACT ON NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020

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Abstract:

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's contribution to education has been unique and irreplaceable. His philosophy and education go hand in hand. His educational thinking needs to be studied in the context of his view of life. Born in 1888 in Tamil Nadu, this great genius has occupied a prominent place in the realm of philosophy throughout the whole world. He believed that education must encompass a wider frontier where the human spirit may roam and wander, ask questions, have great dreams, search for deeper values of life and realise the spiritual reality. Despite of him being a great philosopher, he saw life from close quarters and saw it full. In the early days of his career, he began as a teacher to become an educationist of great eminence. He had first hand experience of educational institutions and their multifarious problems which he happened to study from different angles. As an educational philosopher, his contribution has been immense.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to throw light on the educational philosophy of Radhakrishnan and its impact on NEP 2020.

Key-words: Education, philosophy, impact, NEP 2020

Introduction:

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is the name that needs no introduction. A great philosopher, teacher, humanist, spiritualist, thinker, a man of principles, an educationist, the very first vice president and the second president of Republic of India, receiver of highest civilian award Bharat Ratna are a few outlines of his personality. He believed that spiritual consciousness is the only remedy of removing the turmoils pervading the world. He believed that evils, dissensions and cankers prevailing in the world might be removed only through religions if practised in the right spirit. Therefore, he regarded true religious experiences as the real basis of harmonious life. He visualised the concepts of knowledge, task, consciousness and development in his own way of thinking. He emphasized on the spiritual development of the human beings to express the innermost soul. In his view, without spirituality, proper allround development of human personality is not feasible. By spirituality, an individual could be enriched with positive and constructive approach and divinity in the personality.

Dr. Radhakrishnan explained religion, philosophy and science in his own way and said that these three are very closely related to each other. Science tried to solve the problems of human beings in its own way while religion and philosophy also have the same motive of solving problems of human beings in their own ways. He wanted that the intellectuals of different countries should work together for general, spiritual upliftment of the people in the same manner as they do for general scientific inventions. He believed that a critical scientific attitude was necessary to correct dogmatic claims of exclusivity.

He believed that no one can progress by ignoring his history, traditions, culture and civilization. One has to draw inspiration from the experiences of one's history for reconstructing new principles and rules with a view to protect the prestige and security of his land. He advocated a sound educational philosophy aimed at harmonious development of human personality with utmost emphasis on moral and spiritual education.

In present day society, we often see more and more people are imitating the western society as a result of which moral values and character of our youths are deteriorating day by day. In such conditions, the philosophical and educational views of DR. Radhakrishnan are very important and relevant.

Objective:

The main objective of this paper is to throw light on the educational thoughts of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and its impact on NEP 2020

Methodology:

The present paper is a descriptive one based on secondary sources. The data have been collected from different books and journals.

Educational Philosophy of Dr. Radhakrishnan:

Dr Radhakrishnan advocated a sound educational philosophy aimed at harmonious development of human personality with utmost emphasis on moral and spiritual education. He emphasized a holistic approach to education that blended western and eastern philosophies. His educational philosophy was deeply rooted in idealism, spiritualism and humanism. To him, "Education to be complete must be humane, it must include not only the training of the intellect but the refinement of the heart and the discipline of the spirit. No education can be regarded as complete if it neglects the heart and spirit.

He believed that education should be a means of moulding a person's life and character, not just a way to gain knowledge. He believed that character building was the primary aim of education as it involved practising virtue and goodness.

He was the chairman of the very first education commission of independent India, "The University Education Commission of 1948" and his educational thoughts were well reflected through the recommendations of this commission.

According to him, the aim of education should be to bring man nearer to God and for this one should study the different aspects of education. He felt that education could establish a classless society and ensure equality among men. He wanted a relationship between the reality and ideal for conquering the imperfect and for social development. He wanted that caste system should be abolished in the interest of all concerned. He was against the system of untouchability. He had opposed child marriage, but was in favour of widow marriage. He wanted nationalism to be replaced by internationalism.

Following are some of the aspects of his educational philosophy:

A) Aims of Education:

Dr. Radhakrishnan's some of the invaluable ideas of education are as follows:

- 1) **Education and spirituality:** According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, education should enable one to imbibe the attitude of simple living and high thinking. He wanted that education should develop universal brotherhood. He emphasized the importance of spiritual education. He thought that education which does not inculcate spiritual feelings in students, is not true. Without a spiritual bent of mind, the physical and intellectual development of a person remains incomplete. Education should aim at all sided development of men which consist of self realisation, civic responsibility, faith in democracy, non-violence, unity and feeling of brotherhood. Much importance should be given on character formation and development of values like fearlessness of mind, the strength of conscience and integrity of purpose.
- 2) **Education and scientific spirit:** Radhakrishnan believed that science and technology are critical aspects of philosophy. According to him, education should develop an enquiring mind which is full of curiosity and desire to investigate and create. Traditional stereotyped ideas should be replaced by development of imagination and skills. Students should

explore new avenues of thinking and devote themselves to scientific studies. Prejudice and conservatism in thinking should be avoided and prepare them to accept healthy new ideas which scientific studies have discovered.

- 3) **Education and democracy :** Radhakrishnan believed that education should help students to develop the values that make them responsible citizens. Each individual is free and should be allowed his freedom of thought, speech and action to a large extent within a social framework. The state should regard the freedom of the individual as important and provide education accordingly and education should give every individual a chance to improve his existing material and social conditions.
- 4) **Education and freedom:** According to Radhakrishnan , a free society is composed of free citizens. Freedom is not simply absence of external control. True freedom is an inward quality, a function of the mind and spirit. Issuence of freedom rests on the belief that man has the capacity to choose between good and evil, right and wrong and the education system must be able to make the individual capable of differentiating between good and bad.

B) **Curriculum:**

According of Dr. Radhakrishnan, the curriculum must be related to one's life. So, he emphasized on life centred education and for this curriculum must be based on critical understanding, nurturing the creativity and enhancing logical thinking. He recommended subjects like history, geography, general science, agriculture, natural sciences, political science, economics, ethics, literature and philosophy. For physical and social development, children must be involved in games, physical exercise, yoga and other activities. Plantation and social welfare activities should also be included in the curriculum.

C) **Method of teaching:**

Observation, experimentation and close association are some of the best methods of teaching as recommended by Dr. Radhakrishnan. He wanted that the students should come closer to the society and nature in order to understand the same in the true sense. Moral education should be imarted through actual examples by the teacher and medium of instructions must always be the mother tongue as it is spontaneous and very close to one's heart.

D) **Role of the teacher:**

To him, teacher is the mirror of the society and students are very much influenced by the personality of the teacher. Teachers are the backbone of any nation and play a crucial role in nurturing the intellectual and moral development of students. So, the teacher must be a man of knowledge and wisdom with good character and idealistic personality. They help in developing

responsible and ethical citizens. They should serve as the role models by demonstrating high moral character and integrity. They must create an environment that fosters curiosity and independent thought to promote critical thinking in them. They should help students appreciate their cultural heritage while preparing them for modern advancements. They should a inculcate a balance between values and scientific temperament.

E) Discipline:

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan believed in self-discipline. To him, as discipline is the personal matter of a person, it cannot be enforced. He advocated that good character results in discipline and hence, character building should be the prime aim of education.

F) Women education:

It was the belief of Dr. Radhakrishnan that the position of women in society is a true index of its cultural and spiritual level. According to him, education of women should be considered on a humanitarian plan rather than on a physiological basis. In his views, women are the most important element of the society and no society can progress satisfactory with backwardness of women. If women are uneducated, the society will remain uneducated.

Impact of Dr. Radhakrishnan's Educational Thoughts on National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

If we analyze the educational philosophy of Dr. Radhakrishnan, we will find that he advocated holistic education and self realisation as the basis of education whereas NEP 2020 also promotes a multi-disciplinary approach blending science, arts and vocational skills for well-rounded development.

Secondly, Dr. Radhakrishnan had given much importance on teaching of values and ethics. In NEP 2020 also, emphasis has been given on ethical reasoning, values and moral education from early schooling.

Dr. Radhakrishna was in favour of blending Indian tradition with modern knowledge and in NEP 2020, promotion of Indian languages, arts, yoga and traditional knowledge alongside STEM education has been given an important place.

Dr. Radhakrishnan described the teacher as the backbone of a nation and NEP 2020 also focusses on teacher training, autonomy and recognition reinforcing teachers as nation builders.

Dr. Radhakrishnan advocated research and innovation in higher education whereas NEP 2020 also focusses on interdisciplinary learning innovation hubs and research driven universities

Dr. Radhakrishnan always spoke and tried to bring inclusivity and social equality to our education system and now under NEP 2020 policies like education for girls, scholarships for marginalized students and access to digital learning are going to ensure equity.

Thus, it can be noticed that NEP 2020 modernizes DR. Radhakrishnan's vision by making education more flexible, holistic and inclusive.

Conclusion:

DR. Radhakrishnan's vision is more relevant than ever in today's evolving education system. The value-based goals of NEP 2020 are based on the educational philosophy of Dr. Radhakrishnan. These must be followed by the stakeholders of education system to improve the quality of present education. In his own words "we should develop the spirit of enquiry and dedication to the persuit of science and scholarship. We waste our years in college in trivialities and inanities. We are misled into participation in non-academic endeavours. We should instil into our youth zeal for the advancement of knowledge. We have enough material but it is not guided properly. We need education in character."

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MAHATMA GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE AND ITS RELEVANCE TODAY

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Abstract :

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, or Ahimsa, remains a transformative force in both personal and societal realms. Rooted in spiritual beliefs, it transcends mere ethical conduct, becoming an active and dynamic force integral to truth, love, and compassion. Gandhi conceptualized non-violence as a method for resolving conflicts, emphasizing that it was not a passive avoidance of harm but a proactive commitment to unity, dignity, and justice. His ideas, influenced by ancient Indian philosophy and religious teachings, extended beyond personal ethics into political and social action. Gandhi transformed non-violence into a tool for mass action, successfully using it in the Indian independence movement to challenge colonial rule, uplift marginalized communities, and promote communal harmony. He linked non-violence to truth (Satya) and believed it to be a necessary means for achieving justice and societal reform. Despite the modern challenges of technological warfare, misinformation, and political repression, Gandhi's teachings continue to inspire global movements for peace, social justice, and environmental sustainability. His legacy offers a framework for resolving contemporary conflicts, advocating for human dignity, and promoting sustainable living, proving the enduring relevance of his vision in today's world.

Key-words : Non-violence (Ahimsa), Truth (Satya), Justice, Compassion, Social reform, conflict resolvemnt.

Introduction :

Mahatma Gandhi was not a conventional philosopher but a leader who profoundly connected with the masses. His approach to nonviolence, truth, and self-reliance sparked a movement that united millions and continues to influence the world today. His leadership was grounded in empathy and understanding, empowering individuals to believe in their own strength and capacity for change. He was a social reformer, religious philosopher, and political thinker whose ideas were deeply rooted in spirituality. Gandhi believed in the concept of humanity as one universal family, and his vision for a peaceful world stemmed from the spiritual recognition of human unity. His political ideas, distinct from those of other thinkers, were founded on moral principles and inspired by his religious beliefs. He worked tirelessly to create a non-violent world by focusing on constructive efforts and socio-political reforms.

As a political philosopher, Gandhi sought to establish a peaceful and non-violent world. To achieve this vision, he outlined various constructive programs aimed at societal transformation. Through these efforts, Gandhi aspired to usher in a golden age, not only in Indian history but on the global stage.

Gandhi's political philosophy differed significantly from that of other political thinkers. He sought to introduce morality into politics, integrating his political ideas with his religious and metaphysical beliefs. He held that all humans are inherently one, with an essential goodness present in everyone. Non-violence, though not a new concept, was central to his philosophy. Gandhi described non-violence as being "as old as the hills" and an integral part of Indian civilization. He skillfully adapted the principle of non-violence for practical use in daily life, demonstrating its power and utility in socio-economic transformation and political liberation.

For Gandhi, the highest purpose of all human action was the realization of truth. Social, political, religious, and economic activities, he believed, should be oriented toward truth. This realization of truth, according to him, could only be achieved through acts of love and non-violence. Furthermore, Gandhi emphasized the necessity of selfless work in this pursuit. Truth, he argued, could not be discovered in the isolation of mountains or the solitude of forests but through active engagement with the world.

As one of the greatest leaders and thinkers, Gandhi transformed the individualistic principle of non-violence into a successful technique for mass action. While figures like Mahavira, Buddha, and Nagesena had conceived of Ahimsa as a personal principle of action and motivation, Gandhi elevated it to a social and political tool. He applied the ancient Indian concept of non-violence to the broader domains of social and political life, demonstrating its potential as a transformative force. For Gandhi, non-violence was not merely an ethical choice but the supreme principle necessary for the reformation of politics and society.

Meaning of Non-Violence

Non-violence, or Ahimsa, is a concept deeply embedded in ancient Indian philosophy. It means avoiding harm to all living beings through thoughts, words, and actions. Traditionally, Ahimsa was seen as avoiding physical harm or killing, a principle upheld by figures like Buddha and Mahavira. Gandhi, however, interpreted Ahimsa not just as abstaining from physical violence but as embodying love, compassion, and tolerance.

While he was influenced by Jainism, which advocates non-violence in its strictest form, Gandhi believed that killing could be justified under certain circumstances, especially in self-defense. For Gandhi, non-violence was not passive; it was an active force that required courage, strength, and sacrifice.

The core meaning of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (Ahimsa) is the principle of living without causing harm to any living being, rooted in truth (Satya) and love. Gandhi viewed non-violence not merely as a strategy but as a way of life that upholds the dignity of all individuals and seeks to resolve conflicts through understanding, empathy, and moral courage. For Gandhi, non-violence is an active force, requiring discipline, patience, and unwavering commitment to justice and truth.

In essence, Gandhi's non-violence is about transforming relationships, resolving conflicts without perpetuating cycles of harm, and creating a just and harmonious society. It emphasizes that true strength lies in restraint, and enduring change comes from moral authority rather than force.

Gandhi's views on Non-violence :

Non violence or ahimsa is one of the most profound and enduring concept advocated by Mahatma Gandhi. It is not merely the absence of physical violence but an overarching philosophy that seeks to overcome conflict, oppression and injustice through peaceful means. Gandhi not only theorized non- violence but also demonstrated his transformative power through his leadership in Indians freedom struggle. The concept of Non-violence or *Ahimsa* is one of the basic and important principles of Gandhian ethics. His concept of Non-violence is accepted as cardinal virtue in the individual as well as in social life. Gandhi was greatly influenced by Jainism as it is the Jaina religion which preached *Ahmisa* in the true sense of the term. He was also influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, but Jainas contribution was somewhat greater. The Jaina philosophy explains it as '*pranatipata viramana*'. Gandhi was also influenced by the ancient teaching '*Ahimsa Paramo Dharma*'.

According to Gandhi, non-violence is not mechanical. It is pure quality of heart. Non-violence is the greatest and most active force in the world. It is the superior force which surpasses all the forces.

Ahimsa is love; violence is hatred it leads to greater acts of violence. Gandhi said, "I am not a visionary, I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *Rishis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of brute".¹ The literal meaning of Ahimsa or non-violence is negative abstinence form *himsa* or violence. Ahimsa means causing pain to or killing any life out of anger or from a selfish purpose or with the intention of injuring it. The positive meaning is love, kindness, compassion charity, truth and fearlessness. Ahimsa does not simply mean non-killing or non-injury but is an attitude of mind that recognizes the unity and dignity of life. Non-violence ultimately is humanism. This conception of non-violence was based upon the corresponding integral view that Gandhi took of violence. He recognized that violence was the consequence of deep seated social imbalance and implicit violence. Then, non-violence implied equal opportunity for all, weak and strong for participation in a truly human society.

According to Gandhi Ahimsa is a law both as fact and as norm. As a positive law, it is the principle which regulates human life. Though most of the time man is unconscious of its working it is yet the cause of the survival of human race. Gandhi says it is a force more positive than electricity and more powerful than even ether. An individual who practices non-violence cannot but be a votary of truth. According to Gandhi non-violence is the greatest and most active force in the world. He used the word 'Non-violence' in order to bring out the true meaning of Ahimsa. Literally Ahimsa means non-killing. But to Gandhi Ahimsa means more than that. It is not something mechanical. It is the pure equality of heart Gandhi clarifies that Ahimsa does not express a negative force, but a force superior to all the forces put together Ahimsa in life exercise a force superior to all the forces of brutality.

Gandhi's concept of non-violence was very much an active force, rather than a passive one. In fact, Gandhi's whole life was a saga of active love. He believed that non-violence was the greatest force in the world. Gandhi concept of non-violence differed radically with other cases of non-violence practiced in India in its social implementation. To Gandhi non-violence was not a code of individual in their private lives. Gandhi's non violence was a social value.

Gandhi's concept of non-violence was not just the absence of physical violence but an overarching philosophy aimed at overcoming conflict and injustice peacefully. Non-violence, for Gandhi, was rooted in love, truth, and compassion. He believed that it was the most powerful force in the world, more potent than electricity or ether. Non-violence meant not only refraining from harming others but cultivating an attitude of respect, empathy, and kindness towards all living beings. His idea of non-violence was meant for everyone, not just saints or religious figures.

Gandhian Non-Violence: Positive and Negative Aspects

Gandhi's concept of non-violence had both positive and negative dimensions. On the negative side, it meant not inflicting harm on others through thought, word, or action. On the positive side, it involved love, compassion, and selfless service to others. Gandhi's non-violence was not a mere passive abstinence from harm but an active expression of love and goodwill towards all beings.

For Gandhi, the practice of non-violence was a way to foster unity and solidarity within society. It meant working towards social harmony, respecting human dignity, and advocating for the rights of the oppressed.

Non-Violence and Truth

For Gandhi, non-violence was inseparable from truth. He believed that truth could only be realized through non-violent means. In this sense, non-violence was a tool to attain the highest truth, and truth, in turn, was the ultimate law. While non-violence was a means, truth was the end goal.

According to Gandhi non-violence is the purest and direct method for the realization of truth. He discovered non-violence in his search for truth. Truth could be found differently by different person. To attain truth the best way was to realize that fact. Without Ahimsa it is not possible to seek and find truth. Ahimsa and truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible for to disentangle and separate them. They are like two side of a coin or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disk. But Ahimsa is simply a means whereas truth is the end. Truth is the highest law and Ahimsa is the highest duty. Truth is infinite and eternal. Gandhi was ready to sacrifice Ahimsa for truth but never truth at any cost conversely- 'Truth without non-violence is not truth but untruth'. Ahimsa is the virtue of the brave, not of cowards. Hence Gandhi referred violence is cowardliness. But non-violence is certainly an infinitely superior to violence, as it is extreme limit of forgiveness"²

Gandhi was the first man who transformed the concept of non violence from individual action to mass action. In practice of ahimsa it requires an inner strength. The love of God would turn into a love of humanity. Therefore faith in God is the most fundamental condition for the practice of ahimsa. Gandhi believed that ahimsa is the supreme principle for reformation of polities and society. He applied the ahimsa on socio-political thought.

Non-Violence in Practice

Gandhi's non-violence was not limited to personal conduct but extended to social and political actions. He transformed the concept of non-violence from an individual moral principle into a method for mass action. Gandhi's leadership in the Indian independence movement demonstrated how non-violence could be used effectively to challenge colonial rule. His strategy

included non-cooperation, civil disobedience, and peaceful protests, all grounded in non-violent principles.

In the social sphere, Gandhi applied non-violence to uplift the marginalized, abolish untouchability, and promote communal harmony. He also brought non-violence into the realm of economics by advocating for decentralization, self-reliance, and trusteeship—a system where resources are held in trust for the benefit of all. In education, Gandhi championed Nayee Taleem, an educational system that emphasized moral values, self-reliance, and non-violent principles.

The Relevance of Gandhian Non-Violence Today

Although Gandhi's ideas were developed over a century ago, they remain incredibly relevant in today's world. Modern society faces numerous challenges, such as ongoing conflicts, political repression, environmental degradation, and social inequality. Gandhi's principles of non-violence offer a path forward in addressing these global issues.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, or Ahimsa, remains a beacon of hope and a powerful strategy for addressing contemporary challenges in a world often marked by violence, division, and inequity. Non-violence, as conceptualized by Gandhi, is not merely the absence of physical aggression but a profound commitment to truth, empathy, and respect for all forms of life. Its principles offer valuable lessons and strategies for navigating the complex issues of the modern era.

Conflict Resolution and Peace-building: Gandhi's philosophy provides a practical framework for resolving conflicts peacefully. The civil rights movements led by figures like Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela, as well as peace-building efforts in regions such as Ukraine and the Middle East, demonstrate how non-violence can lead to reconciliation and justice. Gandhi's methods encourage dialogue, mutual respect, and non-violent resistance to oppression.

Social Justice Movements: Non-violent resistance has been a powerful tool for marginalized communities seeking justice and equality. From the Civil Rights Movement in the United States to contemporary movements for racial justice and climate action, non-violent protests continue to challenge systemic injustice and advocate for meaningful change.

Environmental Sustainability: Gandhi's emphasis on simplicity, self-reliance, and harmony with nature resonates with today's sustainability goals. His teachings urge humanity to live in balance with the earth, minimizing harm and exploitation of natural resources.

Governance and Civil Society: Non-violent methods remain vital in challenging authoritarianism, corruption, and human rights violations. The principles of non-violence empower communities to advocate for social, political, and economic change without resorting to violence.

Challenges in Applying Gandhian Non-Violence

Despite its timeless relevance, the application of Gandhian non-violence faces significant challenges today. In an era of technological advancements, misinformation, and state repression, it can be difficult to maintain the principles of truth and non-violence. The violent nature of modern warfare, the power of media propaganda, and the rise of authoritarian regimes make it harder to apply non-violent resistance in some contexts.

Nevertheless, the core message of Gandhi's philosophy of love, truth, and non-violence continues to inspire individuals and movements across the globe.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (Ahimsa) goes beyond being simply a moral or ethical principle; it evolves into a transformative force that affects both personal and societal realms. Gandhi viewed Ahimsa not as a passive act but as an active and dynamic force that demanded strength, courage, and a profound commitment to truth, love, and compassion. Rooted in his spiritual beliefs, his concept of non-violence offered a holistic approach to resolving conflict, grounded in respect for the inherent dignity and unity of all people.

For Gandhi, non-violence was essentially linked to truth (Satya) and political, social, and personal spheres. His philosophy provided a unique way to confront oppression and injustice, advocating for peace and the moral renewal of society. Gandhi transformed non-violence from a personal ethical principle into a powerful tool for mass action, using it effectively in the Indian independence movement to drive socio-political change. His ideas continue to inspire global movements focused on peace, justice, and environmental sustainability, proving the enduring relevance of his vision.

However, the application of Gandhian non-violence faces significant challenges in today's world, marked by technological warfare, misinformation, and political repression. Despite these obstacles, the fundamental values of Gandhi's philosophy i.e. truth, love, and compassion remain a strong and enduring framework for addressing the complex global issues of our time. Gandhi's vision of non-violence stands as a beacon of hope, advocating for peaceful conflict resolution, social justice, and sustainable living, offering a timeless model for individuals and societies striving to build a just and harmonious world.

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PATANJALI ASHTANGA YOGA AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN LIFE: A STUDY

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Abstract:

Yoga is one of the school of Indian Philosophy and also an important part of Indian tradition and Culture. Patanjali was a great sage who systematized the teachings of yoga into sutras known as yoga darsana, which is the philosophical system of yoga. It is a holistic science which included body, mind and spirit together. Though yoga has a 5000 years old history yet Maharishi Patanjali is called the father of Yoga as he compiled and refined various aspects of yoga systematically in his book “Yoga Sutra”. He advocated the eight folds path of yoga, popularly known as “Ashtanga Yoga” for all round development of human beings. There are called the ashtanga yoga of Patanjali which are— Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi. The practice of the eight fold path of yoga comes from section two called the Sadhana pada. In this chapter, sage Patanjali mentions this eight- fold path as “ashtanga yoga” in sutra 29 (aphorism 2.29). He created this path to stop sufferings and to reach self-realization and ultimate freedom. (Wikipedia). Ashtanga Yoga is essence yoga philosophy of Patanjali. Therefore, it is a matter of concern.

Key-words: Yoga, Patanjali Yoga, Ashtanga yoga, importance.

Introduction:

Sage Patanjali, a scholar of the Hindu belief system, elaborated the transcendental aspects of yoga theory in his book Yoga Sutra, and thus added to the priceless repertoire of knowledge that existed about spiritual awakening promised by yoga philosophy. The contemporary yoga tradition holds the yoga sutra of Patanjali to be one of the fundamental texts of classical yoga philosophy. Patanjali is called Maharishi (great saint) who made a form of yoga. Yoga, as Patanjali famously defines it, is the “restriction of the fluctuations of consciousness”. He defined yoga as ‘Chitta vritti nirodha’ which means control your uncontrolled mind. Yoga is not meant to be a religion or a dogma for any one culture. While yoga sprang from the soil of India, it is meant a universal path, a way open to all regardless of their birth and background. Patanjali used the expression sarvabhūma-universal-some 2500 years ago.

Methodology:

Analytical and descriptive method has been followed to write up this research paper. This research paper is written on the basis of secondary sources only. Sources are collected through different books, magazines, and writings etc.

Objectives:

The objective of this research work is to see the importance of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga and its utility in human life.

Discussion:

Patanjali yoga is the greatest yoga who gave importance on Ashtanga yoga or eight limbs of yoga. Patanjali's eight limbs of yoga are importance because they are a path to self-realization, spiritual growth, and well-being. They are comprehensive guide to yoga practice that can help one to achieve a harmonious balance between body, mind and spirit. These eight steps are- 1. External ethical discipline (yama), 2. Internal ethical observances (niyama), 3. Poses (asana), 4. Breathe control (pranayama), 5. Sensory control, withdrawal (pratyahara), 6. Concentration (Dharana), 7. Meditation (dhyana), and 8. Blissful absorption (Samadhi).

The yoga journey begins with the five moral commandments (yama). These five yamas are— 1. Ahimsa (non-violence), 2. Satya (truthfulness), 3. Asteya (non-stealing), 4. Brahmacharya (abstinence) and 5. Aparigraha (non-grasping). According to Patanjali each one is vital to spiritual development. Yama is a moral teaching which is important for a yogic life. These are the five steps to morally uplift or upgrade. The journey continuous with five steps of self-purification (niyama). These are relates to our inner world and senses of perception and help us to develop self-discipline.

Niyama is the second petals of Yoga which includes- 1. Saucha (cleanliness), 2. Santosha (contentment), 3. tapas (self-discipline), 4. svadhyaya (self-reflection), and 5. ishvarapranidhana (surrender to the higher power). These ethical percepts are always with us from the beginning to the end of the yoga journey, for the demonstration of one's spiritual lies in none other than how one walks among and interacts with one's fellow human beings.

After all, the goal of yoga may be the ultimate freedom but even before this is achieved, there is an incremental experience of greater freedom as we discover ever more self-control, sensitivity, and awareness that permit us to live the life. Yama and Niyama are two important aspects to upgrade ourselves physically, mentally, spiritually, socially and so on. Iyengar describes both the yama and Niyamas as the 'golden keys to unlock the spiritual gates', as they transform each action into one that originates from a deeper and more connected place within us.

The third petal of yoga is the practice of postures (yogasana), There are various asanas for maintains the strength and health of the body, without which little progress can be made, It also keeps our body in harmony with nature. We know that body affects mind and mind affects body. Asana helps to main inner and external health. Self- cultivation through asana is the broad gateway leading to the inner enclosures we need to explore. In other words, we are going to try to use asana to sculpt the mind. We must discover what each sheath of being longs for and nourish it according to its subtle appetites. We all possess some awareness of ethical behavior, but in order to pursue yama and niyama at deeper levels, we must cultivate the mind. We need contentment, tranquility, dispassion, and unselfishness, qualities that have to be earned. It is asana that teaches us the psychology of these virtues.

The fourth Patel of yoga concerns the breathing techniques or Pranayama. It is called the vita energy. It is an Indian ancient breathing system. The word pranayama is comprised of two roots: 'prana' plus 'ayama' prana means 'vital energy' or 'life force'. It is the force which exists in all things, whether animate or inanimate. Although closely related to the air we breathe, it is more subtle than air or oxygen. Therefore, pranayama should not be considered as more breathing exercises aimed at introducing extra oxygen in to the lungs. It involves controlling our breath in different styles and lengths. There are various techniques of breaths- it may slow breathe, fast breathe. Medium breathe, long breathe and short breathe. Pranayama is not performed by the power of will. The breath must be enticed or cajoled, like catching a horse in a field, not by chasing after it, but by standing still with an apple in one's hand. In this way, pranayama teaches humility and frees us from greed or hankering after the fruits of our actions. Nothing can be forced; receptivity is everything. There are various kinds of pranayama which acts in our body and mind separately. They are— Bhastrika pranayama, Kapal bati pranayama, Unulun bilum pranayama, Shitoli pranayama, Brumuri pranayama etc.

In the pranayama practices there are four important aspects of breathing which are utilized. They are:

1. Pooraka or inhalation.
2. Rechaka or Exhalation
3. Anter Kumbhaka or internal breath retention.
4. Bahir Kumbhaka or external breath retention.

The different practices of pranayama involve various techniques which utilize these four aspects of breathing. There is another mode of pranayama, which is called kevala kumbhaka or spontanous breathe retention. This is advance technique of pranayama which occur during high stage of meditation.

It is such a system which induces meditative states, reduce stress, and increase lung capacity. However, the psychological mechanisms by which these practices modulate the human nervous system still need to be unveiled. According to yogic philosophy, the human framework is comprised of five bodies or sheaths which account for the different aspects of human existence. These are five sheaths known 1. Annamaya kosha, 2. Monomaya kosha, 3. Pranamaya kosha, 4. Vijnanmaya kosha and 5. Anandamaya kosha. Although these five sheaths function together to form an integral whole, the practices of pranayama work with only pranamaya kosha. Pranamaya kosha is made up of five major ranas, which are collectively known as the pancha or five pranas: Prana, apana, samana, udana and vyana.

The breath is the most vital force of the body. It influences the activities of each and every cell and, most importantly, is intimately linked with the performance of the brain. In the science of pranayama, Swami sivananda writes, “ There is an intimate connection between the breath, nerve currents and control of the inner prana or vital forces. Prana becomes visible on the physical plane as motion and action, and on the mental plane as thought. Pranayama is the means by which a yogi tries to realize within his individual body the whole cosmic nature, and attempts to attain perfection by attaining all the powers of the universe” (Saraswati, Swami Satyananda, Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha, page-374)

The withdrawal of the senses in to the mind (pratyahara) is the fifth petal of yoga, also called the hinge of the inner and outer quest. Unfortunately, we misuse our senses, our memories, and our intelligence. We led the potential energies of all these flow outward and get scattered. Our mind is always tried to attach with the external objects and move here and there and our soul cannot be concentrated in a particular position or area. It is the way to control our mind. It serves as a foundation for meditation. The experience of pratyahara is the ability to disengage your mind by controlling our reaction to external disturbances.

By drawing our senses of perception inward, we are able to experience the control, silence, and quietness of the mind. This ability to still and gently silence the mind is essential, not only for meditation and the inward journey but also so that the intuitive intelligence can function usefully and in a worthwhile manner in the external manner.

The final three petals are— Concentration (dharana), Meditation (dhyana), and total absorption (Samadhi). These three are a crescendo, the yoga of final integration (samyama yoga)

Concentration (Dhahran) is the beginning stage of meditation. It is for concentration on a particular area. Suppose a student going to study. What he has to do first? Firstly he has to make his or her mood to study. Yoga is about how the will, working with intelligence and the self- reflexive consciousness, can free us from the inevitability of the wavering mind and outwardly directed senses. Our attention should be according to our own will. We have to know how to control our mind to do a certain things. It is a sustained flow of concentration leading to an exalted awareness. The ever-alert 'Will' adjust and refines, creating a totally self-controlling mechanisms. In this way, the practice of concentration is important to meditate. It is the beginning of meditation. There is a relation between concentration and meditation. It is like this," If you learn a little things, one day you may end up knowing a big things" (Iyenger, B.K.S, Light on Life, page-14).

Next we come to meditation (dhyana). It is the last second final stage. IN the speed of modern life, there is an unavoidable undertone of stress. This stress on mind builds up mental disturbances, such as anger and desire, which in turn build up emotional stress. In this situation our mind became unstable. In such a position meditation is not possible. Basically, true meditation in the yogic sense cannot be done by a person who is under stress or who has a weak body, weak lungs, hard muscles, collapsed spine, fluctuating mind, mental agitation, or timidity.

This process of relaxing the brain is achieved through Asana. We generally think of mind as being in our head. In asana our consciousness spreads throughout the body, eventually diffusing in every cell, creating a complete awareness. In this way stressful thought is drained away, and our mind focuses on the body, intelligence, and awareness as a whole. This allows the brain to be more receptive, and concentration becomes natural. How to keep the brain cells in a relaxed, receptive, and concentrate state is the art that yoga teaches. One thing we should remember that meditation is a part of yoga. It is not separate from other petals of yoga. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratihyaha, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, all these are the petals of yoga.

Lastly, the aim of yoga is Samadhi. It is the highest stage of yoga. The journey of yoga is to get Samadhi that is called salvation or mukti os mokshu. In Indian philosophy different schools have given different names of Samadhi. Some are called Salvation, some are called Mukti, Again some are called Moksha, etc. It is the somumbonum of life. It is the stage of Sat-Chit Anand. All most all the schools of Indian including Yoga Philosophy believed that our life is full of suffering because of the lack of knowledge. Therefore, it is said that ignorance is the root cause of suffering. If one can remove ignorance through right knowledge can be acquired Samadhi. This is the aim of yoga.

The sheaths of Being or Kosas which has been said in Upanishad. In Taittiriya Upanishad it said about five koshas exit together and are encased, or nested, within each other. Our physical body composes the outermost layer, while the innermost layer contains our bliss body, or soul. These five kosas are Annamaya kosa, Pranamaya kosa, Monomaya kosa, Vijjanmoya kosa and annanda maya kosa. It is said that our body is composed by all. Our body is depending on our eatable things, Structure of the body, mind is depend on what we take or eat. In the same way, pranamaya kosa is the vital energy which is related with prana or jibon. Monomaya kosa is mental stage that is very important part of health, Vijjanmoya kosa is intellectual life or rational life. This is important to lead a good life. Last one is Annandamaya kosa, that is the final stage which can be said Samadhi.

In Samadhi stage, the individual soul or self, with all its attributes, merges with the Divine self, with the Universal Spirit. Yogis realize that the divine is not more heavenward than inward and quest of the soul, seekers becomes seers. In this way, they experience the divine at the core of their being. Samadhi is usually described as a final freedom, freedom from the wheel of karmas, of cause and effect, action and reaction. Samadhi has nothing to do with perpetuating our moral self. Samadhi is an opportunity to encounter our imperishable self before the transient vehicle of body disappears, as in the cycle of nature, it surely must.

Conclusion:

Thus, in this way it comes to conclusion that yoga means eight petals of yoga which included all the body, mind and spirit together. All the margs or eight steps of yoga helps one to develop in different parts of the body in different ways. Yama and niyama uplifts moral characters. Asana develops physically body, Pranayama develops breathing systems, Pratihayara withdrawal senses from the external world, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi is develop inner self. It reduces stress and anxiety and control fluctuating mind. Ashtanga yoga also encourages mindfulness and develops the power of concentration. It also promotes personal growth and increase self awareness. It is seen that Patanjali Ashtanga yoga is the essence of yoga philosophy. Over all, through the practicing of Ashtanga yoga it is possible to build a strong nation that will lead the world towards peace, harmony and stability.

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PHILOSOPHY OF MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT AS A FEMINIST: Special Reference to ‘A Vindication of Rights Of Woman’

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Abstract:

Mary Wollstonecraft who was a British philosopher and women's rights advocate argues that women should receive rational education to establish her position in society. Wollstonecraft in her book *Vindication of rights of Women* which was published in 1792, sought to establish equality between men and women as both of them are human being and deserving the same fundamental rights. In 1791, the French National Assembly stated that women should only receive domestic education. As a strong reaction to this specific event she wrote her essay on rights of women. In one of her famous quote she mentioned that “no man chooses evil because it is evil; he only mistakes it for happiness, the good he seeks”. In her famous book ‘*A Vindication of Rights of Woman*’ she laid stress on women education equal to that of men which will enable them to be competent to live in the present society and can be able to live a noble and decent life. For her women should be educated so that she could train her children to become a good citizen. She put much stock in how women and girls’ access to education would cultivate a taste for virtue. In this paper I am going to discuss about her view on emancipation of women and her feminist philosophy with special reference to her great literary work.

Key-words: Feminism, woman, education, emancipation, status, equal right.

Introduction:

The concept of feminism believes that all genders have equal rights and opportunities. Feminist believe that men and women should have equal socio, economic and political freedoms. The feminist trend originally started at the end of the eighteenth century. It gained its peak time in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first wave of feminism that started in the late nineteenth century laid stress on women's emancipation both at political as well as social sphere, the feminist theory evolved into three schools of thought which can be divided into liberal feminism , socialist feminism and radical feminism (Gaubu) . The liberal feminists regarded as the main branch of feminism focuses on achieving gender equality through legal and political reform within the framework of liberal democracy rather than opting for radical transformations. It was against any kind of revolutionary transformation but, concentrated changes which were constitutionally valid. Mary Wollstonecraft who published her essay 'A Vindication of the Rights of Women' in 1792, sought to establish equality between men and women within the framework of liberal democracy. In this paper, I am going to discuss about her philosophy regarding emancipation of women and about her view on liberal feminism.

Methodology:

Paper is completely based on secondary data collected from different books, journals as well as internet sources.

Objectives:

The main objectives of this paper are to:

- 1) Discuss about feminism
- 2) Discuss about feminist philosophy of Wollstonecraft
- 3) Findings
- 4) Conclusion

Feminism:

The word 'feminism' derived from Latin word '**femina**' which means "woman". It was first used in connection with the issues of equality and woman's right movement. Its aim is to wither away gender stereotypes and improving status of woman in all aspects of life to give a better life to the fairer sex. From dragging women out from the four walls of their house it tries to give women right to vote, contest in the election, to hold public office, access equal pay for equal work with that of man, own property, receive same education with man, enter into contact, have equal rights in marriage.

The main aim of feminism is not to give special status to women but to establish political, economic, personal and social equality for both sexes. The supporters of feminism try to

wither away so called patriarchal society where women are dominated by men and wanted to establish a society where both men and women are treated equally in socio, political as well as economic and legal sphere. . It is against any kind of oppression and tries to establish a just and equitable society for everyone irrespective of their gender. It put an end to sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression. As earlier women were treated as weaker than men and they were deprived of various socio-economic and political rights so feminist began a socio-political movement to achieve gender equality for women. Therefore the movement is known as feminist movement and the concept is known as feminist concept

In the late 14th and early 15th century, the first feminist philosopher is France Christine De Pizan challenged prevailing status of women and encouraged women to impart education with men. Olympe de Ganges published “Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the female Citizen” in 1792 in England. This book argued that women are not only man’s equal but his partner (Brunell & Burkett, 2024).

In the following year Mary Wollstonecraft published ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Women’ in 1792. She demanded women and men should be given opportunities in education, work and politics. She was against the prevailing idea that women exist only to please. For her society is wasting its assets because it behave omen as the domestic help denying her all rights and behave her as a puppet in the hands of man. Wollstonecraft is often called as mother of feminism.

Wollstonecraft’s Philosophy as a Feminist:

Wollstonecraft wanted to educate women along with men so that both men and women can equally be able to govern the state. She argued that if women be not prepared by education to be on par with their male counterparts, she will be deprived of adequate knowledge and virtue (Wollstonecraft, 1792, pp. 3-4) for which future mothers should be properly educated. Women should not be denied civil and political rights because it will degrade their family too. For her, women should be educated which help them to educate their children as well as could become a good companion to their husbands rather than mere wives. She was very much against the patriarchal society where women are dominated by men. She believed that women are just as capable as that of men but due to the lack of proper education, lack of proper recognition of her rights and patriarchal mind-set of the society where she is treated as mother, housewives and labourers she is lacking behind men. She stipulated on freedom of women to enter business, pursue professional careers and if she wishes to she should have the power to enter political life too. She believed that women should have representatives instead of being arbitrarily governed without having any direct share at the deliberative body of the government.

Even Wollstonecraft herself dared to do something which no other women had done at that time .For example she pursue her career as a full time professional writer on a serious subject without a noble support.

She was very much critical about Rousseau's gender biased idea about education. In his academic novel, 'Emile' published in the year 1762, Rousseau mentioned that men are to be properly educated to make them competent enough to survive in civilized society. For Rousseau education of both men and women should be different. While men should be educated to perform his duty as a noble statesman, women should be educated to perform her duty of pleasing men and raising children, properly as well. However Wollstonecraft's view is that if women's duty is to please her men only then the society will not develop to the level as it should. In her work, 'Vindication of the Rights of Women', she stated that a housewife becomes like 'a blind horse in a mill' (Dadul D. D.). For her, lower-class, working women enjoyed more self-respect and dignity than middle class housewives who were only confined in the role of pleasing her husband and rearing children. She argued that since both men and women are human, being so both of them should enjoy equal rights and social status. Wollstonecraft said that Rousseau's education system for men should be equally applicable for women. If women are not properly educated then she will not be able to execute her role as an ideal mother which is very important to properly train her children to become a good citizen.

She accepted women are physically weaker than men but it does not mean that she may not be able to yield proper contribution in the society. They remain backward due to oppression and lack of proper training and education. She never demanded women's empowerment to dominate men or their husband; rather she wanted power for women over themselves. For her women should enjoy more respectable status in society than she enjoyed at that time. Women are raised in the world for marriage which make them no less than 'animals', because when they marry they act in obedience as such as children are expected to act (Wollstonecraft, 1792, p. 10). It is not possible for them to govern a family with judgement or take care of the poor babies whom they bring into the world (ibid). If women are imparted the same education as that of men, she will be able to enter the professions and have careers just as same as that of men (Dadul & Wollstonecraft)

In her book 'Vindication of Rights of Women', Wollstonecraft demanded equal rights for both men and women. She demanded equal rights for education, political, civil and also raised first for women suffrage which was denied at that time. She argued that society was wasting its valuable property by not imparting proper education to its women and treated them as 'convenient domestic slaves'. She was a powerful critique of the education system, which she argued that it confined women to a life of dependence and ignorance.

Findings:

Wollstonecraft writings had a significant influence on women's emancipation and improving her social status as equal human beings like that of man. Her works were unique which gave suggestion for ameliorating women's status to benefit all society. She dare to write

about the women's rights at a time when patriarchy prevail everywhere whether it is in personal or in social life.

Conclusion:

Though Wollstonecraft writing may not be able to bring about immediate reformation in uplifting the social status of women, yet her writing may influence many fellow thinkers to think about women's rights and improve social status. Though she agrees that gender difference is natural but she refused to believe that men are superior to women. She was the first writer to embrace the cause of women's rights and independence. From her writings we can conclude that the mission was to look for the principles of truth to reject the prevailing perception. She so clearly explain and justify about the rights of women in her book *The Vindication Of Rights of Woman* that even today the modern feminist follow her in their writings.

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A CRITICAL STUDY OF Dr. BHUPEN HAZARIKA'S CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION AND RESEARCH THROUGH A HUMANISTIC LENS

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Abstract:

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, renowned as a legendary figure in Indian music, was also an educator and researcher whose humanistic philosophy deeply influenced his contributions to education and research. This critical study explores how Dr. Hazarika's humanistic values shaped his work as an educationist and scholar, emphasizing his commitment to cultural preservation, social justice, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Through an analysis of his pedagogical approaches, research endeavours, and creative works, the study examines the integration of humanistic principles in his academic and artistic pursuits. Dr. Hazarika's engagement with education went beyond conventional teaching; he sought to create awareness about societal inequalities and foster empathy through the arts and literature. As a researcher, his work reflects a profound dedication to documenting the cultural diversity of Northeast India, highlighting its historical, linguistic, and musical heritage. By critically analyzing his methodologies and contributions, this study demonstrates how Dr. Hazarika merged scholarship with activism, offering a model for education and research rooted in human values.

1. **Introduction:**

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, often celebrated as the 'Bard of Brahmaputra,' was a multifaceted personality who left an indelible mark as a musician, poet, filmmaker, and social reformer. Beyond his celebrated artistic achievements, Dr. Hazarika was also a visionary educationist and researcher whose work exemplifies a deep humanistic ethos. His contributions to education and research reflect his unwavering commitment to social justice, cultural preservation, and the empowerment of marginalized communities, particularly in Northeast India.

Born in 1926 in Assam, His life was shaped by the socio-political dynamics of his time, including the Indian independence movement, the rise of regional identity, and the challenges of post-colonial nation-building. These influences are evident in his academic and creative pursuits, which consistently aimed to bridge gaps between diverse communities and advocate for equity and inclusion. Hazarika's academic journey, including his studies at Columbia University under renowned educationist Dr. John Dewey, further solidified his belief in the transformative power of education and the arts. This study delves into Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's humanistic perspective as an educationist and researcher.

The paper also examines Dr. Hazarika's contributions as a researcher, particularly his efforts to document and preserve the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of Northeast India. His research was not confined to theoretical frameworks; instead, it sought to empower communities by amplifying their voices and showcasing their unique identities.

By critically analyzing Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's work through a humanistic lens, this study aims to shed light on his enduring legacy as an educationist and scholar. It highlights the relevance of his ideas in addressing contemporary challenges in education, particularly in promoting inclusivity, intercultural understanding, and the integration of humanistic values in academia. Through this exploration, the study seeks to inspire educators and researchers to adopt a holistic and empathetic approach to their work, following the example of one of India's most iconic cultural figures.

2. **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To examine Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's humanistic philosophy and its influence on his contributions to education and research.
2. To evaluate Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's role in preserving and promoting the cultural and linguistic heritage of Northeast India through his scholarly work.
3. To explore the relevance of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's educational and research methodologies in addressing contemporary challenges in education and social reform.

3. **Methodology:**

The study employs a qualitative research methodology, combining descriptive and interpretative approaches to critically examine Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's contributions to education

and research through a humanistic lens. Primary sources such as Dr. Hazarika's literary works, songs, films, and interviews are analyzed alongside secondary sources, including scholarly articles, books, and archival materials. Thematic and content analysis techniques are used to identify recurring motifs in his works, such as cultural preservation, inclusivity, and social justice. A comparative framework highlights the relevance of his methodologies to contemporary educational and social challenges. The research ensures ethical rigor through proper acknowledgment of sources and respect for the cultural and intellectual heritage reflected in Dr. Hazarika's works, aiming to provide insights into the transformative potential of his humanistic philosophy.

4. Analyzing the Objective-1: To Examine Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Humanistic Philosophy and Its Influence on His Contributions to Education and Research:

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, a luminary in Indian cultural history, was deeply guided by humanistic principles that shaped his multifaceted career as a musician, educator, and researcher. His humanistic philosophy was rooted in empathy, social justice, and the interconnectedness of humanity, which found profound expression in his work. This objective seeks to analyze the essence of Hazarika's humanistic ideals and their impact on his contributions to education and research.

Understanding Humanistic Philosophy in Dr. Hazarika's Context

Humanism, as a philosophical approach, emphasizes the inherent dignity and value of every individual, advocating for equality, justice, and the betterment of society. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's life and works are a testament to these principles. He believed that education was not merely a means to acquire knowledge but a transformative tool for uplifting marginalized communities and fostering unity among diverse cultural groups.

Hazarika's Contributions to Education:

Hazarika's humanistic philosophy found expression in his educational endeavors. He was not confined to formal academic settings but used art, music, and literature as tools for mass education. His songs and writings were infused with themes of social justice, equality, and empowerment, making complex socio-political issues accessible to the masses.

For instance, his compositions often highlighted the struggles of marginalized groups, such as labourers, farmers, and tribal communities, fostering awareness and solidarity. Hazarika's educational vision went beyond traditional curricula, advocating for an interdisciplinary approach that integrated arts, culture, and history to provide a holistic understanding of society.

Influence on Research:

As a researcher, Dr. Hazarika's humanistic approach was evident in his focus on documenting and preserving the cultural and linguistic diversity of Northeast India. His work emphasized the need to recognize and respect the unique identities of various communities while fostering unity. His research was not limited to theoretical exploration but aimed to bring

about practical change by empowering marginalized voices and promoting cultural pride. Dr. Hazarika's research also reflected his belief in democratizing knowledge.

5. **Analyzing the Objective-2: To Evaluate Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Role in Preserving and Promoting the Cultural and Linguistic Heritage of Northeast India Through His Scholarly Work:**

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika stands as an iconic figure in India's cultural history, whose contributions went far beyond his fame as a musician and filmmaker. His scholarly endeavours reflect a deep commitment to preserving and promoting the cultural and linguistic heritage of Northeast India, a region characterized by its rich diversity. This objective seeks to evaluate Dr. Hazarika's multifaceted role as a preserver, promoter, and documenter of the region's heritage through his academic and creative pursuits.

Understanding Northeast India's Cultural and Linguistic Diversity:

Northeast India is home to a multitude of ethnic communities, each with distinct languages, traditions, and cultural practices. Historically, these communities have faced challenges such as socio-political marginalization, cultural homogenization, and limited representation in mainstream discourse. Recognizing these issues, Dr. Hazarika dedicated his scholarly and artistic efforts to preserving and celebrating the region's unique identity.

His understanding of the importance of cultural and linguistic heritage was rooted in his belief that identity is intrinsically linked to language, art, and tradition. Hazarika viewed the documentation and promotion of these aspects as essential for fostering pride and unity among the people of Northeast India.

Dr. Hazarika's Role as a Preserver of Heritage:

Dr. Hazarika's academic research and artistic works reveal a profound dedication to documenting the folk traditions, oral histories, and indigenous art forms of Northeast India. His scholarly contributions included efforts to study and archive the region's folk music, dance, and storytelling traditions.

Dr. Hazarika's songs, many of which are adaptations of folk melodies, played a pivotal role in preserving the region's cultural essence. For instance, his incorporation of Assamese Bihu songs, tribal chants, and regional dialects into mainstream music not only preserved these art forms but also brought them to a global audience. His ability to blend traditional elements with modern sensibilities ensured that the cultural heritage remained relevant and accessible to contemporary and future generations.

Promoter of Cultural Heritage:

Dr. Hazarika's role as a promoter of Northeast India's cultural and linguistic heritage was equally impactful. Through his films, music, and public engagements, he actively sought to raise awareness about the region's unique identity and challenges.

His films, such as *Shakuntala* and *Pratidhwani*, showcased the life, struggles, and aspirations of the people of Northeast India, emphasizing their cultural richness and resilience. By addressing themes of unity in diversity, social justice, and human dignity, Dr. Hazarika sought to foster a sense of pride among the people of the region while advocating for greater national and international recognition of their heritage.

6. **Analyzing the Objective-3: To Explore the Relevance of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Educational and Research Methodologies in Addressing Contemporary Challenges in Education and Social Reform:**

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's educational and research methodologies represent a synthesis of progressive ideals, cultural consciousness, and humanistic values. His work not only illuminated the socio-cultural fabric of Northeast India but also served as a guide for addressing pressing educational and societal issues. This objective aims to analyze the contemporary relevance of his methodologies in tackling challenges such as inclusivity in education, cultural preservation, and social justice reform.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Educational Philosophy:

Dr. Hazarika's educational philosophy was deeply rooted in his belief in the transformative power of knowledge and the arts. Influenced by his exposure to progressive thinkers like Dr. John Dewey during his studies at Columbia University, Dr. Hazarika adopted a learner-centered approach that emphasized experiential learning, critical thinking, and cultural sensitivity.

He viewed education as a tool for social empowerment and reform, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity and diversity. For Dr. Hazarika, education was not confined to formal classroom settings; it extended to the community, where storytelling, music, and cultural expressions played a vital role in imparting knowledge and fostering understanding.

Relevance to Contemporary Education:

- **Cultural Inclusivity in Education:** One of the major challenges in contemporary education is the integration of diverse cultural perspectives into curricula. Dr. Hazarika's approach of incorporating folk traditions, regional languages, and indigenous art forms into his educational and research endeavours offers a model for culturally inclusive education. His methodologies demonstrate how local knowledge systems can be preserved and celebrated while fostering a sense of identity and belonging among students.
- **Interdisciplinary Learning:** Dr. Hazarika's integration of the arts into education and research underscores the value of interdisciplinary learning. Contemporary education faces the challenge of overcoming rigid subject boundaries to foster holistic understanding. Dr. Hazarika's ability to blend music, literature, and history into educational contexts exemplifies how interdisciplinary approaches can enrich learning experiences and make education more engaging and impactful.

- **Empathy and Social Responsibility in Education:** Dr. Hazarika's humanistic philosophy underscores the need to cultivate empathy and social responsibility among learners. In addressing contemporary issues such as inequality, discrimination, and environmental degradation, education must go beyond academic excellence to nurture ethical and compassionate citizens. Hazarika's emphasis on human values, evident in his scholarly work and artistic contributions, provides a framework for education that prioritizes societal well-being alongside intellectual growth.

Dr. Hazarika's Research Methodologies:

Dr. Hazarika's research methodologies were characterized by their focus on cultural documentation, inclusivity, and activism. He believed that research should not merely generate knowledge but also drive social change. His work in documenting the folk traditions, oral histories, and socio-political struggles of Northeast India exemplifies a participatory and community-centered approach to research.

Relevance to Contemporary Social Reform:

- **Community-Centric Research:** Dr. Hazarika's participatory research methods offer valuable insights for addressing contemporary social reform challenges. His approach of engaging with communities, understanding their lived experiences, and amplifying their voices provides a model for socially responsible research. In an era where research often risks alienation from the communities it seeks to represent, Dr. Hazarika's methodologies emphasize collaboration and empowerment.
- **Advocacy Through Scholarship:** Dr. Hazarika used his research not only to document cultural and social realities but also to advocate for change. Contemporary researchers can draw inspiration from his ability to combine academic rigor with activism, addressing pressing societal issues such as inequality, cultural erasure, and social injustice.
- **Promoting Marginalized Voices:** In an increasingly interconnected world, the risk of marginalizing indigenous and regional narratives persists. Dr. Hazarika's commitment to preserving and promoting the voices of Northeast India's diverse communities highlights the importance of inclusivity in both research and policymaking. His methodologies demonstrate how research can serve as a platform for empowering underrepresented groups and fostering equitable development.

7. Conclusion:

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's contributions to education and research, viewed through a humanistic lens, reveal a profound commitment to social justice, cultural preservation, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. His humanistic philosophy, grounded in empathy, inclusivity, and social equity, informed his educational vision and research methodologies, shaping his unique approach to teaching, learning, and scholarly inquiry. Dr. Hazarika's integration of

arts, culture, and academic rigor fostered a more holistic understanding of society, where education was not merely about the acquisition of knowledge but also about the cultivation of human values, social responsibility, and cultural identity. Through his songs, films, writings, and public engagement, Dr. Hazarika played a pivotal role in preserving and promoting the cultural and linguistic heritage of Northeast India, while also challenging the socio-political marginalization of its people. His advocacy for the region's diversity and his efforts to amplify the voices of its communities remain a lasting legacy in the fields of education and social reform.

In the contemporary context, Dr. Hazarika's humanistic approach continues to be highly relevant. His methodologies, which blend academic inquiry with cultural and social activism, offer valuable insights for addressing modern challenges in education, such as fostering inclusivity, promoting intercultural dialogue, and encouraging critical thinking. By examining his work through a humanistic lens, this study underscores the importance of integrating human values into education and research, advocating for a more compassionate and socially aware approach to knowledge creation. Ultimately, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's legacy serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of education and research when they are guided by the principles of empathy, social justice, and cultural understanding. His work provides an enduring model for educators, researchers, and social reformers committed to creating a more equitable and inclusive world.

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PHILOSOPHICAL AND HIDDEN ASPECTS OF THE DARK “MAGIC CAPITAL OF INDIA—MAYONG”

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Abstract:

The mythology and history of Mayong Village dates back to centuries old, found on old manuscripts and scriptures. How the village got its name is still in suspense. There are many contradicting theories believed by people on how the name Mayong came into existence. According to some, Mayong came from an Indo-Aryan word called “Maya” which means illusion. Some villagers believe that Mayong came from the word “Miyong” meaning Elephant in Damasa language. According to this story, set on a hilly terrain, the village is believed to have been inhabited by elephants and hence the name Mayong came from the word Miyong. According to folklore, even the Mughals feared the magic territory of Mayong. Initiating from mythological scripture as mentioned in Mahabharata the name of Mayong is to be found in a book chronicling the 10 years of rule by Emperor Aurangzeb, in Alamgir Nama. Mayong seats as the perennial cradle for Black Magic since time immemorial with stories of witchcraft and wizardry transcending across generations. It continues to cast a shadow of fear owing to its unexplained events and bizarre occult practices performed in the past by villagers. Black magic in Mayong reaches the curious ears through narratives by the natives. With the reputation as abode of black magic, there are stories that sends a chill in the spine.

Key words: Mayong, mythology, village, magic, illusion

Introduction:

According to the locals, one of the most prominent practices followed in the past was human sacrifice or “Narbali”. This was practiced as a ritual to attain more black magic power while worshipping Goddess Shakti. The swords and traditional weapons found in excavation indicates a possible ritual of human sacrifice. The alarming stories and tales of taming ghosts and wild animals and using magic to gan on something or someone is enough to conjure fear amongst the common man. The countless stories of dark magic float across the village as fables, lining the history of the past. According to the local villagers the “Bez” or the witch Doctor is even able to free a person possessed by an evil spirit. These “Bez” or “Ojahs” have possessed the power of utilizing different “Mantra” in different situations and circumstances. There are Mantras like “Mohini Mantra “which is use to give love charms or mantras sedating a tiger. There are even Mantra in ancient Mayong when something is stolen in the village and the thief does not want to admit his guilt the “Bez” ,when called by the villagers used to chant mantras when the scene starts with an older man seated on a low wooden stool, the man seated on the stool is a suspected thief and chronic liar and as he try to get up ,the stool sticks to the buttock. And now the man has no other option except to confess and change his ways.

While visiting Mayong I met a man of about 55-60 years named Minaram Deka who on the part of an interview presented to us some of his magical tricks and talent that he learnt from his father .He plucked some leaves in front of our eyes from a tree and placed then in a banana leaf and started chanting some spells and as he was chanting the spells two “Kawai” fish suddenly slipped from the banana leaf and the leaves disappeared. This was followed by another man Harikanta Nath who acquired his magical powers from his uncle(khura). The man placed three glasses of water in a table and stated chanting some spells and suddenly in front of our eyes the water from the three glasses disappeared and again the man chanted some spells and took the glasses and slowly started pouring water from one glass to the other and again the three glasses were filled with water. This man also told us that he had seen his father possessing such magical powers in which one day out of challenge with some of his father’s friend ,his father had chanted some spells in a “gamucha”(towel) and placed the “gamucha” in the head of his friend and all of a sudden his friend turned into a fierceful tiger and started chasing people all through the village .All the local villagers out of fear in the early morning came out of their houses and requested the man to bring the friend back to the village and the man observed some rituals in the dark and remained in fasting for the whole day and chanted his spells again in the morning and all the villagers saw that the friend was sleeping in his house. Harikanta also informed us that had his father not chanted mantra and brought the friend back to human the friend would have been a tiger and stated attacking the villagers all through Mayong or merged himself with other tigers in the wild Sanctuary of dark dense forests forever. Therefore sorcery and magic is what Mayong is all about but slowly the art is dying a slow death. These powerful

mantras are today fading into oblivion. The sorcery is practiced to cast a shadow of intangible evil, rising the power of the dark through ritualistic ceremonies and chants. The word symbolizes the lure of darkness often performed with evil intentions of destroying someone to fulfill a selfish motive.

Magic has always fascinated people from across generations-the young and the old. Mayong is located in a picturesque setting of nature in the west of the district of Morigoan in Assam. The mighty Brahmaputra river flows along the outskirts of northern Mayong and the river Kolong lies on its west and the two beautiful rivulets namely Pakaria and Daipara lie in its east. The drive from Guwahati to Mayong is across dense forest and once entered these woods makes us feel a stange calm that sets into our souls makes us feel the magical vibes flowing through our body. In addition to Magic, Mayong has a large number of archaeological relics dating back to several hundred years lying scattered in different parts of the area. The longest stone inscription in Asia which is 3.85 metres in length is located at Mayong. In the heart of Mayong lies the Pobitara Wildlife Sanctuary that has the highest concentration of onehorned rhinoceros anywhere in the world. Mayong still practices the tradition of lineal King or Monarch. Though he does not use his powers of a King, he is considered to be a reverend figure in the society and his judgements are valued by the local people.

Though the people of Mayong have stopped their practice of Black magic, they still use magic to cure many ailments of the local people. Some of the magical rites are “Tez Rahowa Mantra” (to stop the oozing of blood),” Ushah Shuular Mantra” (to relieve the pain while breathing),” Bichar Shung Guchuwa Mantra” (to cure the hairy caterpillar bite) “Narengar Mantra” (to cure the abscess in the back bone) and many others are still practiced to help and cure people with ailments. One of the famous outstanding magical art that is very much prevalent in Mayong is curing of back pain by village witch doctors who utters a magical chant and uses a copper dish to track where the pain originates. The plate gets stuck to the body and the locals believe that this dish eats away the pain. The local witch doctor demonstrates the magical act and if the person is really suffering from a back pain, then the copper dish becomes hot like fire within seconds and its gets smashed automatically.

Magic of Mayong:

The magical powers of the Sorceres of Mayong have been known since ancient times and Assam was known to be the cradle of Black Magic. People earlier across India knew of the black magic practices prevailing in Assam and had passed down these tales across generations so that the generation of today were aware of these practices as well. And all of these were known to be here in Mayong—THE BLACK MAGIC CAPITAL OF INDIA. It is a well-known fact that the mighty Mughals could not conquer Assam and a majority of this credit it seems went to the sorcerers of Mayong who could make an entity army of men disappear. This can be traced to

Alamgir Nama of Mirza Muhammad Kazim that is a chronicle of the first 10 years of Emperor Aurangzeb's reign spoke of an invasion by Muhammad Shah in 1732 with one lakh horsemen said—"The whole army perished in the land of witchcraft and not a trace was left." These and various other findings reveal that Mayong was at one time —The Black Magic Capital of India. However today, most of the sorcerers of Black Magic who practices this art have been passed away. Only a few claim to have the powerless of magic and the young generation have no interest in these practices of magic. With gradual time the legendary art of magic of Mayong will die as well. Various theories have been stated as to how this place came to be known as Mayong. While some say that in Kachari language "Mairang" means rice and as Mayong is situated by the banks of the river Brahmaputra and floods every year fills the banks with porous silt thereby giving space for fertile soil for paddy cultivation so the farmers get a good amount of rice from the paddy seeds and the Kacharis used the term "Mairang" to describe this place from which Mayong can be derived. Another theory of epitomology of Mayong comes from the local inhabitants of Morigoan district the Tiwa people. In the local Tiwa language "Miyong" means Elephant, Mayong territory being very close to Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary was known for the population of Wild Elephants and so from the word "Miyong"—Mayong is said to have been derived. In another theory, among the believers of Goddess Durga, it is said that certain link of spirituality is linked to "Mahamaya" with the Mayong territory. Several temples dedicated to the Goddess can be found around here and Mayong is derieved from "Maa -R-Ongo (body part of the Goddess)" as it is a belief that Goddess Sati's organ fell in this area. But still the most popular theory states that Xuntia Singha the descendant of Ghatotkach left his territory and arrived at Mayong (Maibong). After settling down and marrying Princess "Phuleswari", Xuntia Singha ascended the throne and became King of Mayong territory. Hence after this, the territory that was referred to as Maibong came to be known as Mayong.

Objective of the study:

The main objective of the study is to bring into light the philosophical and hidden aspects underlying the black magic and magicians of Mayong.

Methodology:

The present study is a descriptive study. It is primarily based on the secondary data which was collected from different government publications, books, journals, universities and research institutions...

History of Maibong:

Black magic practice at Maibong was very prevalent during the 8th to 18th century in Maibong and even today after the accomplishment of the black magic craft, Mibong still

remains the Cradle and capital of the Black Magic witchcraft in India. Today the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) have their excavation sites near Raja Mayong and various details of Mayong's history are being chalked out from the excavation remains here. As per the earlier Kingdom of Mayong, certain Kings played roles in the area around Mayong. Arimatta and his son Jughal Balahu who were powerful Kings of lower Assam shifted their capital to Raha in Assam. Some years later Jungal Balahu was killed by his father in law with a bamboo spear at Kajalimukh near Mayong. During the region of the Ahom Kingdom of Assam and the time when the Mughals had come over to conquer Assam, to defend the Mughal army, the then Ahom King Swargadeo Pratap Singha set up 3 camps at Raha, Jagi and Kajoli. Recently a large number of stone bullets were discovered at Kajolimukh proving that this was the area near Mayong where the battle was fought. When it comes to the establishment in the 16th century and that Xuntia Singha was believed to be the first King of the territory of Mayong. And an important thing to note about Mayong is that the tradition of Monarchy is still continued here at Mayong. Though the place falls under the jurisdiction of the Goverment of Assam, The King of Mayong is still considered to be the revered figure in the local society even though he may not have any administrative powers over the Kingdom. People of Mayong consider the word of the King and the Kings courtyard is approached to settle trival disputes like land and territory. Descendants from the 1st King of Mayong the lineage continues and today the 40th King of Mayong is on the throne who is Tarini Kanta Singha. The 1st King is Mayong Xuntia Singha has ascended the throne as the earlier King did not have a son and so Xuntia Singha married the King's daughter by the name Phuleswari and later ascended the throne of the Mayong Kingdom in 1538 and the governance of Mayong was ruled by three Monarch namely Moniroma Singha, Mohit Singha and Sarat Chandra Singha.

The sorceres of Mayong were devout followers of Goddess Kamakhya who has been associated with the cult of Shakti and the Tantra from the ancient times of Assam which was then called as "Kamrupa"— the place where Lord Kamadeva regained his beauty after he was burnt to ashes by Lord Shiva at the Bhasmachal hills at the Umananda Island. The Kamakhya temple is believed to be the shine where the sorceres of Mayong attained their supernatural powers by performing specific puja rituals and offering animal and human sacrifices as they believed that this appeased the Goddess who is associated with the cult of Shakti.

The legacy of the Kamakhya temple continues even today and thought the practices of Black Magic have been abolished but some people in the villages still believe in the sorcerers and they approach them to cast a black magic spell on a person whom they envy to stop them from achieving success in life or the simple fact that the person has good looks. The black magic sorcerers of Mayong were earlier very fierce and it is said that they could cast a black magic spell and a person or whom the Mayong sorceres would cast a spell on was doomed to be ruined. And to help such people who were cursed by black magic sorcerers of Mayong, a

unique puja (ritual) was started to be performed at the Kamakhya temple shrine that allowed the “pujaris”(priest) and “shadhus” at the Kamakhya temple to remove this curse from the person and even today this puja(ritual) of black magic removal is done at the Kamakhya temple since times immemorial and even in this modern world where technology plays such an integral role in our lives ,there are some people who still believe in the powers of black magic of the sorcerers of Mayong village and this is because they have seen or heard their elders speaking of the powers of the sorcerers of Mayong village or even witnessed the powers of white magic of these sorcerers of Mayong who can cure people of severe pain by just touching the patient and using a bell metal plate and for such people it is not hard to believe that the process of black magic at Mayong still continues.

When it comes to the culture of Mayong than since ancient times Mayong has been home to lots of assimilation of the various cultures of Assam. Assam in itself is a kaleidoscope of various cultures as there are numerous tribes belonging to the state and hence their traditions and ancient cultural assimilations of various ethnic groups of Assam like Karbi, Bodo, Mising ,Sonowal Kachari, Tai, Rabha, etc. At Mayong village itself, the cultures of Tiwa people can be seen in their various traditional festivals that revolve around the agricultural practices like Bihu festival,Bhekuli Biya, Nowka Khanda Utsav, etc.Other puja ceremonies are Sitala Puja, Gorokhia Puja ,Tuloni Biya, etc. As Mayong celebrates many festivals ,one noteworthy among the unique festivals celebrated is the “Gohain Uliowa Utsav” that translates to the festival of bringing the Gods out together and this festival holds lineage with the royal family of Mayong and this festival was actually initiated by the 10th King of Mayong Sarasa Chandra Singha in 1668 AD.This festival is still celebrated at Mayong and its legacy continues for over 350 years now and it is a three day long festival celebration at Mayong that is celebrated in the 1st month of the Assamese calendar viz the 4th-6th Bohag. The King of Mayong personally attends this festival along with court members and various festivities and celebrations are organized by the people of Mayong all dressed in their traditional attires. The course of this festival includes the bathing of the Gods and taking out processions hold the Gods over the head and moving from one place to another across Mayong and the march culminates at the Rajgharia Namghar.

As Mayong is the land of Black Magic in India and it is bound for the place to have various temple shrine because the acts of Black Magic needed utmost devotion or “Sadhana” and also by putting their faith in the Gods and Goddesses including “Asuras”, the Black Magic sorcerers of Mayong were able to attain supernatural powers. The people of Mayong as per their ancient history believe Mayong to be the land of “Pancha Devata” that refers to five Gods and Goddesses namely :— Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesha, Parvati and Dinesh. Not only did the people of Mayong offer their prayers to these Gods and Goddesses before the start of an auspicious occasion but the temples and holy shrines were also used as Centres of study and practice of Black Magic and witchcrafts as well. Noteworthy temple shrines across Mayong –the land of

Black Magic are Ganesha temple at Hatimura, Ganesha tempe at Hatigarh, Vishnu temple at Kajolichauki, Shiva Than of Kachasila, Laxmi Mandir of Hatimura, etc. In addition there are various “Thans” around Mayong dedicated to Lord Shiva and Ganesha. Though not many books or literature have been documented about the black magic sorcerers of Mayong village in Assam but as per the local elderly people who still reside in Mayong village have tales to narrate from their past about the powers of these black magic sorcerers of Mayong who were so immensely trained in the powers of Sadhana and Tantra that they obtained from their supernatural powers to perform black magic deeds that could be powerful enough to kill a man or animal or even cause immense harm to the health of another human being by employing the powers of ghosts and evil spirits that they achieved using Tantra. Though there are no visible recorded proof but as per the local elderly of Mayong and also across Assam who heard about black magic powers of the sorcerers of Mayong could shoot invisible arrows on the victims to cause immense harm to their physical health or even kill the victims by uttering certain magical chants or “Mantras”. These black magic sorcerers of Mayong employed various acts like collecting the hair, piece of cloth worn by the victim, nails and they used to cast a magic spell on these belongings of the victim and bury these in the victim's house at a remote location in the wee hours of the night and this could cause the person's health to deteriorate immensely ultimately leading to the death of the victims. The black magic sorcerers of Mayong even used to create a puppet like object adorned with the cloth and shoes of the victim and place the effigy on human bones and prick the victim with black magic cast needles and the part of the body that would be pierced by the needles would start to cause immense problems to the victims in terms of heath. The various manuscripts on which these mantras were written (on Sachipat – bark of a special tree with a special ink and peacock feathers as felt tips) are found in the villages of Mayong along with few scriptures on display at the Mayong Museum of black magic. While few mantras were written and documented on these “Sachi pats” most of the powerful mantras were in oral forms recited by the black magic sorcerers and with their death these mantras too vanished from the scriptures of black magic of Mayong village. The magic spells that were chanted and cast upon enemies and victims by the black magic sorcerers of Mayong were known to be very powerful and the chants of black magic called as “incantations” were often dangerous that could end the lives of the victims or even bring sickness and grave injuries upon them. Few of these incantations that were spoken to by the black magic sorcerers of Mayong were like incantations to kill someone, bind someone, causing high fever, uncontrolled diarrhea and stomach upset for causing quarrels among people and loved ones, attacking someone, converting human to goat, arouse a person of sexual desires among a person of liking, etc. Some of these incantations practiced by the black magic sorcerers of Mayong were even much more powerful like the ones to allow the black magic sorcerer of Mayong to fly, increase their physical strength immensely and tame a wild tiger, act of becoming invisible and also to bring a

person back from the dead. Such were the powers of black magic sorcerers of Mayong village in Assam and their powers of black magic was started to be patronized by the Kings of Assam who had started to take a keen interest in the Kamakhya temple and its practices of Shakti and Tantra that were prevalent.

They converted to Hinduism and it was then they had admired the practices of the black magic sorcerers of Mayong and engaged sorcerers in war and is one instance these black magic sorcerers of Mayong were responsible for making an entire army of men of the Mughal army disappear that allowed the Ahoms to win over the Mughals. However with the progress of time the black magic sorcerers of Mayong who were utmost strong in their Sadhana had come to an end and they died and so did the practice of black magic. Earlier every fifth household in Mayong would have a sorcerer who would practice black magic but now only a small number of people are present who do not even practice black magic and there are “Bez”s who use the power of magic for the betterment of people. These are the last generation of “Bez”s of Mayong as the younger generation is no longer into the practice of black magic and in a few years the magic of Mayong will remain a history.

Today as the black magic practices of Mayong have been abolished, the sorcerers who has adopted a way of life of the new world and have reached to other forms of livelihood like agriculture, animal husbandry, government jobs, teachings etc still take their time to help people with their powers of magic. The sole purpose of the magic they use is for the good of humanity like to solve the problems of the daily life of the people and also to cure people of various bodily ailments and this magic powers of the sorcerers of Mayong that do not involve the invocation of the dark powers of black magic has now been recognized by the people from various parts of Assam and this part of the magic power is termed as white magic. The white magic rituals involve the performance of certain magic rituals like chanting of simple incantations or making self sacrifices to help cure oneself from the ailments of the human body. Today several homes across rural Mayong practice white magic and visitors from far and near come to these sorcerers to help to cure themselves of certain diseases and also to ask the soecerers to bless their fields for a bountiful harvest or to ask them to use their magic to make weather favourable so that people can have a good harvest of agriculture.

Assam is prone to heavy rains and sometimes the rains are so furious and devastrating floods causes damage to their crops and the rural people believe that the white magic sorcerers of Mayong can help to control the rains so that they do not loose their entire crop of the season and so to do this they ask the magic sorcerers to perform certain rituals to control the rainfall. The rural people have various ancient beliefs and they believe that the sorcerers of Mayong can help to keep the power of evil away from them. For example when a child is born, the people believe that the evil spirits might come to harm the child and so to keep at bay the sorcerers advice various ways to the people to keep evil away like— hanging a piece of torn fish net filled with

burnt mustard seeds and keep it hanging on the entrance of the house. Various people are advised spate rituals like some are advised to keep fish bones on top of their houses and some are advised to keep an iron knife under their beds and not only rural people, even people in towns and cities also keep an iron knife under the bed where they sleep as a protection against meloivalent dreams. Various other magical incantations are in the repertoire of these sorcerers of Mayong and they can cure various ailments like jaundice, snake bites, dog bites, back pain, evil spirits etc. This tradition of curing human body ailments by the sorcerers of Mayong still continues in the area around Mayong village and many local people rely on these sorcerers to cure their diseases instead of approaching the modern practionerers. The sorcerers knew the use of various herbs and plants that have medicinal uses and collect these from the jungles and prepare herbal supplements that they provide to the people who come to them seeking help and these provide satisfactory results if the patients follow the advice of the sorcerers. To name a few of these incantations of white magic are “Bukur bikh”, “haphani”, “typhoid”, “kesumuria”, “boga sab jua”, “Potor nari jhara mantra”, “muror bikhora mantra” etc.

The use of herbs and medicinal plants are prominent across these incantations and one example is when a person suffers from jaundice, the sorcerers use certain leaves and places them in mustard oil and water and this coupled with a special glass is provided to the patients to cure him of the disease in a few days. But to what is a wonder of magic trick that is unique to the sorcerers of Mayong is the use of incantations and a typical practice to cure the back pain in a person. The person suffering from the back pain is made to sit on a stool and the sorcerer places a bell metal plate on the back of the person just behind their neck and begins to recite the incantations called as the “Kokal bikh jara mantra”. The plate slides down the back of the person and it gets stuck at the point where the source of the pain lies and later detaches itself from the body of the patient automatically and this is when the sorcerer starts reciting the incantations over and over again takes a bunch of “Bih Dhekia” that is a medicinal plant and he hits the back with this bunch of leaves and the person gets cured of his back pain. This white magic is still practiced in Mayong that people from far and wide come to get them like this of their severe back pain.

With the establishment of various kingdoms across Assam over the years including the rule of the Kings of Mayong it would be noteworthy to mention that several monuments and architectures were built across the area and today after many years of the existence of the Kingdom of Mayong, one can say that various remnants of archaeological ruins and monuments can be found across the territory of Mayong. The proposed Mayong museum of Black magic also preserves these relics and remnants. The Mayong museum also displays area filled with the scriptures that were written on the barks of a special tree called as “Sanchi pat” and the black magic sorcerers of Mayong and with their death these incantations left the world and only a few have been written in the form of writing and are present at the Mayong Museum of black magic or at the houses of certain black magic sorcerers who were survived by their

families. Generally black magic practice required a lot of devotion and the sorcerers who used to practice black magic remained single and their life devoted only to the practice of black magic and worship of Goddess Kamakhya and so they had no time to transfer their knowledge to and so the various black magic incantations passed away along with their demise as well. The local people have been generous enough to donate the remnants of black magic scriptures to the visitors and to Mayong and these scriptures are placed in a well laid display showpiece that highlights the various black magic scriptures of Mayong. The story of taming a tiger using “Bagh Bandha Mantra” and black magic is depicted through a statue of tiger surrounded by Bez. The archaeological relics, tons of several terracotta items, weapons “hookahs” (smoking pipe) adorn the museum selves. There are display of huge swords considered to be the weapons of Narbali (human sacrifice). The hundreds of manuscripts written on palm leaves are written in Brajavali and Kaitheli scripts with magic spells and Mantras.

The Mayong museum of Black magic mesmerizes the visitors of a very old skull of the Asiatic Wild Water Buffalo kept on display at the very front. The next object of attraction is a model of black magic sorcerers of Mayong taming a wild tiger with the black magic and it speaks about the powers of the sorcerers of Mayong. All along the walls are various pictures that depict the black magic practices that are performed by the sorcerers of Mayong and also the various rituals that occur in the place along with the King of Mayong taking out a procession with the villagers of Mayong. This is followed by the display of racks that houses all the black magic scriptures of the sorcerers that are written on Sanchipat and these scriptures even though were written many hundred years back still feel like the ink has been put on the Sanchipat very recently speaking of the quality of things that were present earlier. This is followed by displaying various elephant bones followed by various archaeological excavations around Mayong all dating back several hundred years ago. The Mayong museum encapsulates and bewilders as to how black magic sorcerers were able to achieve feats that were never thought to be possible. The visitors can check out old coins, artificial jewellery, bone and shell bracelets, and metal rings with their own story. Live demonstrations of Tantra also added beauty to it. This Museum of Mayong is a treasure house of varied contributions from the local families. In fact it invites one to visualize and consider the reality and impact of witchcrafts.

The popularity of Black Magic (Kala Jadu) in Mayong village can be attributed to several compelling factors. KNOWN FOR ITS ASSOCIATION WITH BLACK MAGIC, Mayong has intrigued people for generations.

1. **Historical background:**

Mayong's history stretches back centuries, with tales of witchcraft and dark arts echoing through the ages. It is believed that the village has been a centre for black magic studies since ancient times. Over the years this factor has persisted contributing to Mayong's popularity.

2. **Cultural Influence:**

Stories of Kala Jadu (specialists) have been passed down through generations ,embedding the belief in supernatural powers deeply into the cultural fabric of the region.

3. **Mythological Stories:**

Mayong's connection to black magic is often rooted in mythological legends.Local stories speaks of powerful Kala Jadu experts who once inhabited the village ,possessing the ability to manipulate natural forces and commune with spirits .These tales have added the mystical powers of magic.

4. **Preservation of Dark Arts:**

Throughout history,Mayong has safeguarded ancient knowledge of black magic.Families within the village are said to hold secret manuscripts and artifacts related to occult practices .This preservation of dark arts has attributed people to delve into Mayong's mysterious secrets.

5. **Healing and Protection:**

There is a huge demand for Black magic rituals in Mayong village for healing health,ailments ,finance,carreer ,marriages,vengeance etc dipelling negative energies and providing protection against unkind forces has earned it a reputation as a sanctuary of solution for life.People reach the village seeking guidance ,peace,solutions and help intervention in time of problems and distress ,thus contributing to its widespread popularity.

The power of different types of Magic:

1. **Maha Kali Tantra Sadhana:**

The Maha Kali Tantra Sadhana is revered as one of the most potent forms of Tantric practice ,wherein devotees undergo rigorous disciplines to attain communion with the devine. This Sadhana involves the worship of Goddess Kali in her most primal form ,where devotees surrender themselves completely to her will.The rituals associated with Maha Kal Tantra Sadhana are veiled in secrecy and are passed down through oral traditions within selected lineages of black magic "tantra kriya" specialists.

2. **Maa Kamakhya Tantra Sadhana Kriya in Mayong:**

One of rhe fundamental tantric practices associated with Mayong Village is the Maa Kamakhya Tantra Kriya .This intricate ritual involves the invocation of divine energies through sacred mantras and yantras aimed at harnessing the primal forces of creation .For performing this Kriya the speialists delve deep into meditation and visualization techniques to unlock the hidden potential within themselves.

3. **Maha Baglamukhi Tantra Kriya:**

Another significant aspect of Black Magic in Mayong Village is the “Maha Bagalamukhi Tantra Kriya”. Goddess Bagalamukhi, an incarnation of Maa Kamakhya, is revered for her ability to suppress and subdue negative energies. The Tantra Kriya dedicated to her involves elaborate rituals and offerings to invoke her blessings for protection and victory over adversaries.

4. **Maa Kali Tantra Sadhana Kriya:**

Maa Kali, the fierce and formidable aspect of Goddess Shakti, finds her presence deeply entrenched in the Tantric practices of Mayong Village. The Maa Kali Tantra Sadhana Kriya is a profound ritual aimed at invoking the transformative power of Goddess Kali. Through intense meditation, mantra chanting and offerings practitioners seek to transcend their limitations and attain spiritual enlightenment.

Reasons for seeking black magic in Mayong as informed by the villagers:

People seek Black magic for several compelling reasons deeply rooted in spanning career, health, relationships, marriage, business finance, negotiations and many more. The profound spiritual practices and rituals performed by the Bez or sorcerers at Mayong are believed to hold the key to unlocking divine blessings and overcoming obstacles in various aspects of life.

1. **Career Advancement:**

In today's competitive world, individuals often face hurdles and challenges in their professional lives. Whether it's seeking promotion, landing a job, or overcoming workplace conflicts, people turn to popular Black magic to harness positive energies and attract favourable opportunities for career advancement.

2. **Health and Wellness:**

Health concerns can significantly impact one's quality of life and well-being. Seeking remedies for chronic illness, physical ailments, or emotional imbalances, people seek the intervention of Black Magic to invoke healing energies and restore vitality and balance to their bodies and minds.

3. **Relationship and Finance:**

Entrepreneurs and Business owners often encounter obstacles and setbacks in their endeavors. Whether it's overcoming financial hurdles, attracting lucrative opportunities, or ensuring the success of a venture, individuals seek the expertise of Black Magic to harness divine energies and propel their businesses towards prosperity and growth.

The sorcerers or Bez of Mayong lie in their ability to offer holistic solutions to life's endless challenges. Through sacred rituals, mantras and offerings, these specialists tap into the divine energies of the temple to address the diverse needs and aspirations of seekers, guiding them towards fulfillment, success and prosperity in all aspects of life. Mayong Villages has been famous for black magic for decades. The village has been in the forefront for its special powers to remove and black magic and Vashikaran kriya. This black magic puja is performed by tantric

and Aghoris who reside inside the Mayong Village. This puja involves rituals which help people who are suffering from problems related to black magic Kriya and Vashikaran Kriya.

The Mayong Village also holds puja for repelling dark spirits and ghosts. The puja conducted by these tantric help one to get rid of negative energies surrounding him.

Discovering some unknown facts of Black Magic in Mayong, Assam:

1. **Embracing the strong energy:**

Contrary to popular misconceptions, Black magic in Mayong is not solely associated with negative interventions. In fact, practitioners harness the potent energies of the divine Goddesses like Kamakhya, Bagalamukhi and Kali to bring about positive transformations in their lives. These rituals are often aimed at dispelling negative energies, overcoming obstacles and achieving spiritual growth.

2. **Preservation of Ancient Traditions:**

Mayong, serves as a centre of ancient Tantric traditions, where Black magic rituals have been meticulously preserved and passed down through generations. The temple's sanctity lies in its commitment to safeguarding these sacred practices, ensuring that the wisdom of the ancient sanctity continues to thrive in the modern world.

3. **Spiritual Empowerment:**

One of the lesser known aspects of Black Magic in Mayong is its roots in facilitating spiritual empowerment. Through dedicated Sadhanas (spiritual practices) devotees embark on a journey of self discovery and transcendence. These practices instill a sense of inner strength, resilience and connection to the divine, empowering individuals to navigate life's challenges with grace and wisdom.

4. **Real life problems solutions:**

Black Magic rituals in Mayong are often employed for solutions, healing and protection purposes. Devotees seek the blessings of the Goddesses to afflictions and spiritual disturbances. The rituals serve as a potent means of invoking divine intervention and restoring balance and harmony in one's life.

5. **Communion with the Divine:**

At the heart of the Black magic practices in Mayong, lies the profound desire for communion with the divine. Through meditation, starvation days and nights, mantra chanting and ritualistic offerings, devotees cultivate a deep sense of reverence and devotion towards the Goddesses. The sacred communion fosters a profound spiritual awakening, where seekers experience the presence of the divine in every aspect of their existence.

6. Transformation and Growth:

Black magic rituals in Mayong are not merely about seeking external favors but also about fostering inner transformation and growth. The intense Sadhanas undertaken by devotees facilitate a process of purification and evolution, wherein individuals shed their limiting beliefs and attachments to embrace their true essence. This journey of self-realization leads to profound personl growth and spiritual fulfillment.

7. Integration of Divine Feminine Energy:

Central to the practice of black magic in Mayong is the worship of the divine feminine energy embodied by Goddess Kamakhya, Bagalamukhi and Kali. These ppowerul Goddesses represent the primordial creative force that permeates the universe. By honouring and invoking the divine feminine, black magic specialists tap into a wellbeing of strength, intuition and compassion, thus nurturing a deeper connection with the divine.

8. Unveiling the Mystery of Mayong Black Magic:

The mysterious aura surrounding Black Magic in Mayong has often piqued the curiosity of seekers and scholars alike. While some perceive it as a pathway to spiritual empowerment and self-realization, other view it to get solutions to their real-life problems in different spheres.

Conclusions:

The Glory of Mayong as the most popular village for black magic Upon this earth and the genuine Tantriks, Aghori Tantrik and Vashikaran Tantriks live in Mayong. The mystery of Mayong is associated with snister tales of men disappearing into thin air, people transformed into animals, and ghosts and spirits magically tamed. Although this part of the world is rich in folklore and tales, the occult practices of Mayong aren't just whispered myths and legends. Mayong has been associated with magic since time immemorial. Along with farming and craftsmanship skills, the secrets of sorcery and black magic were also passed down to future generations. The "magicians" of Mayong are called Oja or Bez. The magic used by the bez for healing others is the good tantra or "Su Mantra", while the magic used for harming others is the evil tantra or "Ku mantra". The Bez is expected to be familiar with both mantras. The magicians of Mayong are mostly vegetarinian and it was once believed from the tales of the villagers that the magicians of Mayong generally never wore clothes except covering their lower parts with a piece of red cloth so that they can gain the power and will of the Gods and Goddesses. Nowadays, magic is mostly used for treating diseases in people. Despite its dark reputation, Mayong draws attraction fascinated by tales of witchcraft, human sacrifices and Kala Jadu. Local inhabitants fascinate visitors with stories of people vanishing into thin air, transforming into animals, or using spells to resolve issues. Alongside these mystic tales, Mayong also embraces

Ayurveda for healing various ailments adding to its intrigue. The origin of Mayong is subject to various interpretations, with some attributing it to the Maibong clan or the Goddess “Maa –er ongo”.

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EXPLORING CULTURAL DIFFUSION: A STUDY OF MONASTERY MARKET, CIVIL LINES, DELHI

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Abstract:

Cultural diffusion, the transmission of cultural elements across and between societies, plays an important role in creating socio-economic landscapes and promoting cultural integration through the transfer of ideas, beliefs, tradition, and trade and commerce. In this research Monastery Market in Delhi, a Tibetan refugee settlement, is taken as a case study of cultural diffusion. By conducting an examination of cultural interactions, adaptation of refugees, and material exchanges through informal economies, the study examines how this market has become a cultural and economic centre, illustrating the processes of relocation diffusion and expansion diffusion.

The study utilises a qualitative methodology, combining participant observation and semi-structured interviews with Tibetan retailers and Indian customers. The research captures their insights on cultural exchange and economic integration. Furthermore, a qualitative content analysis on Tibetan artefacts, traditional garments, and food items is carried out to examine their contribution to cultural diffusion. The results emphasize that the market enables cultural exchange via material culture, food, and social relations, profoundly influencing identities and cultural understanding over time.

Monastery Market acts as a bridge between the cultural spheres of the Tibetan refugee and the Indian populations. The research also demonstrates how the Tibetan heritage has been transmitted and blended into the overall cultural scene in Delhi through the process of cultural diffusion. Moreover, the market has also played a profound role in the process of identity formation of the Tibetan refugees through time, traversing both cultural maintenance and economic adaptation. However, arguments are present on issues of

authenticity and hybridization as adaptation to local consumer preferences has resulted in variant forms and modifications of genuine Tibetan products.

Although the market is culturally important, it is still held back by issues like poor product diversification and a lack of proper online presence. Overcoming these issues could make it even more prominent for cultural preservation and economic sustainability. The research adds to the discussions around meaningful ways for fostering cultural economies and cultural sustainability in the market. Monastery Market is a living example of cultural diffusion, illustrating how displaced communities maintain their heritage while adapting to new surroundings.

Keywords: Cultural, Diffusion, Tibetan, Refugee, Monastery, Market, Integration, Relocation, Identity Formation, Hybridization, Sustainability.

Introduction:

Cultural diffusion refers to the process of passing on of ideas, customs, and practices between societies, shaping contemporary cultures through interaction and exchange. According to the definition by Güliz Co'kun (2021), "Cultural diffusion is the spread of cultural elements due to interactions among people from different cultures." It serves as a foundation for learning about evolution of societies and change.

With the inbuilt interdependence of human civilizations, people's migration, trade, or conquest always leads to the introduction and inclusion of new elements of culture into host civilizations. Apart from facilitating foreign elements' acceptance, the process also initiates intricate interaction between adaptation, modification, and integration, leading to a unique cultural mosaic.

Diffusion of Culture is achieved by numerous channels such as trade, migration, communication, and media, and the cultures end up being synthesized. Analysing cultural diffusion from a geographical perspective offers a chance to comprehend the complex relationship between space, place, and cultural identity. A cultural market offers an ideal geographical setting for exploring cultural diffusion. Ethnic markets, also referred to as cultural markets or cultural bazaars, specialize in products and experiences of particular cultures or ethnicities. They present an extensive array of culturally representative products such as apparel, handicrafts, food, traditional crafts, and craft goods. They contribute meaningfully to the development of communities, cultural preservation, and cross-cultural discovery as well as understanding hybridized cultures.

This research analyses cultural diffusion in Delhi's Monastery Market, focusing on material exchange, economic networks, refugee identity, and social interactions to understand how Tibetan cultural elements integrate into the urban landscape of Delhi.

Objectives:

- Analyse the role of Monastery Market in facilitating cultural diffusion.
- Explore the specific types of cultural diffusion in the market and examine their philosophical implications.
- Recommend meaningful ways to enhance the market's economic sustainability and cultural significance.

Review of Related Literatures:

Cultural diffusion is achieved through material exchange, economic relations, and social practices. Different scholars have studied these processes in the case of refugee communities, markets, and diasporic spaces.

Brah (1996) develops the theory of diaspora space wherein cultural preservation blends with adaptation. She posits that displaced peoples do not merely assimilate into the host country but develop sites of intersection in identity. The model is followed in Monastery Market, in which Tibetan refugees maintain their tradition while integrating economically into the Delhi urban context.

Co^okun (2021) explains how markets serve as contact zones, where cultural exchange between communities takes place. Likewise, Le Hou  rou (2017) employs visual anthropology to examine how Tibetan enclaves preserve cultural identity through architecture, signage, and traditional dress. Monastery Market's monastery-like appearance solidifies its status as a Tibetan cultural icon.

Minowa & Belk (2022) discuss how gifts and souvenirs are cultural diffusion agents, based on historical examples where items such as musical instruments and handicrafts conveyed cultural significance. Tibetan handicrafts, prayer flags, and jewellery by Monastery Market play a similar purpose, exposing Tibetan culture to Indian and international customers.

Yaveroglu & Donthu (2002) uses Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions to analyse how cultural characteristics affect the diffusion of innovations. They find that societies with high uncertainty avoidance resist cultural assimilation. This is especially pertinent to Tibetan refugees, who struggle to integrate economically while preserving their culture.

Schr  r (2021) examines shared emotions among the Tibetan diaspora, highlighting how exile communities reproduce identity through economic and social practices. Monastery Market exists as both a commercial and cultural centre, where daily interactions sustain Tibetan identity and collective memory.

Artiles (2011) reflects on the socio-economic issues facing Tibetan refugees in India, which include statelessness and restricted formal opportunities. Paradoxically, Monastery Market is a success as an ethnic enclave, thus underscoring the contribution of informal economies in refugee adaptation and cultural resilience.

Balasubramaniam & Gupta (2020) discuss how Tibetan refugees in Delhi changed from displaced people to active economic actors in Majnu Ka Tila, which is a Tibetan market in Delhi. Their work reflects Monastery Market's transformation from a trade centre of exile to one of sustainable business. Likewise, Malik (2023) traces Tibetan adaptation in Majnu Ka Tila through economic survival with trade and hybridization of cultures. This accords with refugee communities' continuation of culture based on commerce, social networks, and unofficial business.

Together, these studies position Monastery Market as more than just a commercial space. It is a diasporic and cultural ecosystem, facilitating cultural diffusion, identity preservation, and economic resilience within Delhi's diverse urban fabric.

Methodology:

The research utilizes a qualitative methodology to obtain first-hand information regarding cultural diffusion at Monastery Market. Primary data was obtained through the following methods:

- Participant Observation: The researcher became an active participant in the market, systematically recording cultural exchanges, consumer behaviours, and relationships between customers and vendors.
- Semi-Structured Interviews: Seven Tibetan shop owners and ten Indian customers were interviewed, given the small size of the market and the few participants who gave consent. The interviews investigated their understanding of cultural exchange, economic integration, and how knowledge about Tibetan heritage influences consumer behaviour.
- Qualitative Content Analysis: Tibetan artifacts, traditional attire, and food items were analysed to determine their role in cultural transmission and adaptation.

Through the use of these methodologies, the research seeks to offer a more in-depth insight into Monastery Market's contribution to cultural diffusion.

About the Study Area:

The bustling Monastery Market is a little-known gem in Delhi, situated beneath the ISBT Shahdara Link Flyover, on the banks of Yamuna River, at Ladakh Budh Vihar Colony in Civil Lines, Central Delhi District. The market is at a precise location of 28°40'21.44" N latitude and 77°13'52.98" E longitude.

This thriving colony, aptly named the “Little Tibet,” was founded in 1963 and is governed by the Tibetan Refugee Market Association. The Tibetan refugees initially settled temporarily in Ladakh Budh Vihar. But as the number of people increased, the place became congested and unhygienic. Therefore, appropriate land on the banks of the Yamuna River was found for resettlement. Those who stayed behind in Ladakh Budh Vihar continued their living through the market, which later developed into a vibrant hub of Tibetan commerce and culture.

Although no official demographic information is available for the market, it is estimated to contain around 100 families and about 350 shops.

At the heart of the market lies the Ladakh Buddhist Vihara Monastery, providing a serene and peaceful environment that attracts devotees. Constructed in 1963, with the blessings of His Holiness the Great Kushok Bakula Rimpoche, the monastery was intended to disseminate Buddhist religious and cultural teachings. The monastery also serves as a symbol of Tibetan culture, adorned with Tibetan Chakras, which are believed to bring good luck and fortune when spun. Additionally, it functions as a shelter for patients visiting Delhi, with approximately 60 rooms allocated for this purpose.

The Monastery Market is easily accessible via local bus routes and the Kashmere Gate Metro Station, with autorickshaw services readily available.

In contrast to Majnu Ka Tila, another Tibetan cultural hub in Delhi, Monastery Market is relatively unexplored. The research in this study targets Monastery Market, as little research has been done on it, creating a gap in exploration.

Results and Discussions:

Monastery Market as a catalyst for Cultural Diffusion

Monastery Market plays an important function in facilitating cultural diffusion between the Indian community and the Tibetan refugee community. This happens via material culture, food, and social relations that collectively inform cultural perceptions and shape identities. Tibetan store owners operate in unregistered business frameworks there, frequently depending on personal networks rather than official banking systems, making it a crucial location for informal refugee economies.

Sited close to Buddhist Vihara, Monastery Market acts as a cultural link between Indian consumers and Tibetan refugees. Through the presence of Tibetan handicrafts like prayer flags and Buddhist statues, Tibetan art and religious culture is introduced to visitors. These handicrafts serve as concrete symbols of Tibetan culture and are sold to Indian locals and foreign tourists alike, so that they can interact with Tibetan culture.

The market itself is a lively place. Upon entering, visitors encounter narrow lanes lined with small complexes full of men's wear, from shirts, t-shirts, and pants to coats, jackets, and woollen sweaters. The market offers a wide variety of styles and products, including modern

accessories such as caps, watches, and shoes, as well as printed cotton and denim garments. Field observations estimate a daily footfall of 50 to 75 visitors during peak hours. Interviews suggest that men's apparel account for 40-50% of total sales. These products, generally available at budget-friendly prices, demonstrate the market's role in fostering international trade. A store owner shared insights on the source of their goods: *"Many of our clothes come from Kohima, but we also source jackets and shoes from Bangkok. Customers prefer these because they're different from what they find in regular Delhi markets."* This demonstrates local and international trade networks. This underscores the function of the market as a site of cultural amalgamation.

Beyond apparel, culinary offerings play a significant role in cultural diffusion within the market. Authentic Tibetan delicacies can be found at renowned eateries like Zomsa, where dishes such as thukpa, momo, and chowmein were identified as the most popular items, according to the shop owner. These Tibetan delicacies have become an integral part of Delhi's Street food culture, illustrating cultural exchange in action. Furthermore, a tea stall was seen inside the market, further an example of Tibetan food culture. Tibetan cuisine has been embraced by local tastes, demonstrating how cultural adaptation occurs while retaining core traditions. The production of hybridized foods, for instance, cheese, paneer momo and spicier thukpa, is a prime example of how food culture adapts with local influences blending Tibetan and Indian food traditions. The restaurants in the market are intercultural sites for conversation, where clients not only taste Tibetan cuisine but also interact with Tibetan culture and narratives.

Monastery Market also acts as an unintended cultural classroom. In the course of common interactions with restaurant owners and shopkeepers, visitors learn about the challenges, the history, and the culture of the Tibetan community. These interactions promote cross-cultural understanding, dissolve cultural stereotypes, and provide a platform where Indians and Tibetans learn from each other. Such social interactions are instrumental in concreting the relationship between the two societies, and the market becomes not only a commercial centre but also a dynamic cultural intersection.

Cultural Diffusion in the Market and its Philosophical Implications

In cultural diffusion, Monastery Market in Delhi is a peculiar example of relocation diffusion and, to a certain degree, expansion diffusion.

During a conversation with a shopkeeper, some history of the marketplace was disclosed. She said that the market emerged in the early 1960s following an influx of Tibetan refugees in India after China's occupation of Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama urged the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to allocate a place wherein the refugees could settle and continue their livelihood. Therefore, this area was made available to them. Businesses in the market have thrived since then, acting as a witness to the determination and strength of the Tibetan people. As the respondent explained:

“Our family migrated here in the 1960s, and since the allotment of this location to us, we have settled here to our satisfaction. It is home away from home now. I feel extremely pleased when I get a person to share these tales of how this place, this market, has transformed over the years.”

Hence, the market emerged as a result of relocation diffusion, with refugees carrying their cultural practices to Delhi and adapting them to the local culture. Relocation diffusion primarily refers to the diffusion of cultural practices when people move to other places and adapt their traditions to the host society. Over time, this process facilitated the spread of Tibetan culture, establishing the market as a hub not only for food but also for various other goods. The market's transformation and growing recognition illustrate how Tibetan culture has blended into Delhi's diverse landscape.

Additionally, Monastery Market represents expansion diffusion, wherein Tibetan cultural elements have spread beyond their original geographical boundaries. This is evident in the market's characteristics, such as: Tibetan-run shops, Name plates and hoardings in the Tibetan language, Availability of Tibetan food etc.

Philosophical Implications of Cultural Diffusion

- Identity Formation - From a philosophical standpoint, cultural dispersion at Monastery Market exemplifies the relationship between cultural preservation and adaptation. The market is a place where Tibetan identity is constantly renegotiated, mirroring the notion of the 'third space', a location where hybrid identities arise from intercultural exchanges. During the initial years of resettlement, the Tibetan community negotiated its identity constantly, striking a balance between cultural heritage and socio-economic exigencies. However, over time they have started asserting themselves as *“Tibetans of India.”* The marketplace has turned out to be an arena of strength, a form of maintaining heritage and culture. This is true of the developing character of cultural identities, where the latter do not remain inert but are remoulded based on interactions between heritage and host society
- Authenticity vs. Hybridization - This is a controversial issue among customers, as indicated by one group of respondents. Tibetan refugees have over time modified their products to meet local consumer demands, ensuring economic survival. Though they attempt to keep their cultural identity intact, most products they offer have been hybridized, raising issues of authenticity. Commercialization of Tibetan cultural commodities - handicrafts or food, as the case may be, has been criticized as diluting their authenticity. Many respondents complained of the loss of authenticity of Tibetan culture with its commodification within the market space.

Most of the respondents however perceived hybridization to be a process of natural growth, contending that adaptation was necessary in order to remain valid in the host society's socio-economic setting as well as for ensuring long term sustainability.

The popularity of the market and the general acceptance of Tibetan culture provide a classic example of how cultural diffusion takes place through the interaction of various cultures, enabling exchange of ideas, practices, and traditions.

Recommendations for Enhancing the Market's Potential

Though respondents have declared general satisfaction with existing market conditions, this study identifies several areas where targeted interventions would enhance economic sustainability as well as cultural exposure because while the market fosters self-sufficiency, limited formal recognition hinders its long-term growth.

- **Product Diversification** - Increasing the range of products from men's clothing to more traditional products for men, women, and children would increase the marketability. Adding handcrafted jewellery, home decor, and Tibetan fabrics could yield a more diversified customer base and increase its cultural heritage.
- **Food Expansion and Food Festivals** - More food enthusiasts may be attracted if Tibetan food options are supplemented with packaged Tibetan snacks, fusion dishes, and regional dishes. Collaboration with chefs and cultural experts to organize an annual Tibetan Food & Culture Festival would draw media attention and new visitors.
- **Cultural Workshops and Events** - Promoting traditional music concerts, Tibetan art exhibits, and interactive craft workshops would promote Tibetan heritage while resonating with a broader audience, including tourists and researchers. This would not only increase visitor engagement but also deepen cultural appreciation.
- **Online Promotion** – In the current age of digitalisation, social media can be a strong marketing tool for the market. Virtual tours, online cooking demonstrations, and cultural narratives could entice local and foreign visitors. Having a specific website or social media account featuring the history, importance, and products of the market would greatly enhance its exposure.
- **Improving Infrastructure** - Tourists can shop more comfortably if the fundamental infrastructure is improved, including seating areas, improved drainage, and improved lighting. Navigation boards and signs (in English, Hindi, and even Tibetan) can be improved to help first-time visitors navigate the market more easily.
- **Local Artisans' Incentives** - A more authentic cultural exchange can be made possible by encouraging Tibetan weavers and artisans to sell directly at the market and perform live demonstrations of their craft. Ancient craftsmanship can be re-established by providing young Tibetan entrepreneurs and artisans with financial incentives or subsidized stalls.
- **Strategic Partnerships** - Collaborations with cultural institutions, schools, and tourism boards may further enhance the market's reputation as a cultural destination. Cross-cultural exchange programs, lectures by academic scholars, and collaborative promotional

activities may emphasize the intermixture of Tibetan and Indian cultures, which would draw more attention to Tibetan heritage and the role of diaspora communities in India.

By implementing these recommendations, Monastery Market can further establish itself as a centre for cultural diffusion, economic sustainability, and intercultural engagement in Delhi's diverse urban landscape.

Conclusion:

The Monastery Market in Delhi serves as a prime example of the dynamic process of cultural diffusion, wherein Tibetan cultural practices have found a home of acceptance. What was originally set up as a refuge for Tibetan refugees has become a vibrant commercial centre, with a significant role to play in preserving and passing on Tibetan traditions. With time, the Tibetan diaspora, traditions, and goods of the market have blended harmoniously into the culture of Delhi, turning Monastery Market into a hub of transnational cultural exchange as well as economic resilience.

The market now has retained its position as not merely a place to shop, but as a cultural centre where locals and visitors alike can taste Tibetan traditions, enjoy Tibetan food, and practice cross-cultural exchange. The availability of Tibetan handicrafts, prayer flags, and traditional dress underscores the market's function as a site of ethnic preservation, and its food aspect has blended itself into Delhi Street food in a big way. As a cultural bridge between the Tibetan refugee community and the Indian public at large, the market encourages cultural exchange and mutual respect.

The Monastery Market however, also has its own share of drawbacks, such as limited product range, no digital presence, and lack of outreach. Overcoming these by offering more products, conducting cultural activities, and promoting itself through digital media could help the market become more visible and sustainable in the long run. Partnerships with tourism boards and cultural institutions would also help strengthen its position as a cultural hub in Delhi.

In the end, Monastery Market is a living case study of cultural diffusion, illustrating how displaced communities absorb into new urban settings while retaining their heritage. It illustrates the strength of cultural exchange in bringing people together, creating diversity, and promoting significant cross-cultural relationships. As the market continues to grow, it can become an example for ethnic marketplaces, balancing cultural preservation and economic development successfully. Through maintaining its long-term sustainability, Monastery Market will remain an integral part of the cultural fabric of Delhi for centuries to come.

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DIALECTICAL UNITY OF PLATO'S APOLOGY AND CRITO- AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract:

The initial writings of Plato include incidents and themes surrounding the ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, written in dialogue form. The Apology by Plato demonstrates the trial of Socrates and his defence in front of the Athenian citizens and jury. On the other hand, The Crito highlights Socrates' dialogue with his friend Crito after the pronouncement of the sentence for his execution. Both the dialogues albeit seems like different pieces of work, are connected and constitutes part of an integrated whole of ideas and philosophies. This paper intends to analyse into how both the distinct writings are dialectically united. Firstly, it looks into the methods of Socratic inquiry as highlighted by Plato, among which dialectics constitute an important method. Secondly, it briefly highlights the main elements of The Apology and The Crito. The pattern of these dialogues exemplifies the Socratic method of inquiry. Thirdly, it analyses how these two dialogues are bound by a 'dialectical unity', which implies synthesis of arguments and counter-arguments to produce an agreed upon decision, opinion, thought or philosophy. Lastly, it looks into the impact of these two writings of Plato on shaping the discourse of Political Philosophy and resultant culmination of ideas and theories.

Key-words: The Apology, The Crito, Dialectical Unity

Introduction:

"Thinking – the talking of the soul with itself." ~ Plato

Plato, often considered the father of Western Philosophy was the first to envisage 'Philosophy' as a distinct discipline with its own intellectual method. He produced writings that covered topics ranging from ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, political theory, science, art, mathematics etc. His ideas were shaped by the political developments in Athens and Sparta, intellectual issues raised by science, speculation like the sophistic movement, and the mathematical work of the Pythagoreans etc., of the fourth and fifth centuries.

However, the most profound intellectual influence on him was that of the ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates.¹ Early and medieval Platonic works centred around Socrates, the philosopher, while his later works were based upon an Athenian stranger. His works, mostly written in the dialogue form seeks to highlight the pattern of questioning, inquiry and investigation that was used by Socrates in order to seek answers on social reality, truth, justice, ethics, morality etc.

Objectives:

This paper intends to analyse into the methods of Socratic inquiry as highlighted by Plato. Secondly, it briefly highlights the main elements of The Apology and The Crito. Thirdly, it analyses how these two dialogues are bound by a 'dialectical unity', which implies synthesis of arguments and counter-arguments to produce an agreed upon decision, opinion, thought or philosophy. Lastly, it looks into the impact of these two writings of Plato on shaping the discourse of Political Philosophy and resultant culmination of ideas and theories.

Methodology:

The method adopted to study the topic facilitated the use of secondary sources. Information and data have been collected from books, articles, research papers and the internet.

1. Socratic Method of Inquiry

To investigate on questions of ethics, morality, truth, justice for instance, Socrates (as noted by Plato) employed certain methods like-

- (i) *Collection and division*, whereby, he broke problems into several questions and systematically found answers to each question to reach a conclusion. This is quite similar to the *inductive method* that is in use today as part of which general conclusions are drawn from specific observations.
- (ii) *Elenchus/elenchos* (in Greek) is another method which means *refutation*. Socrates sought to refute claims or positions held by people and further went for examination and investigation by himself. This is evident in The Apology where for instance, Socrates refuted the Oracle of Delphi² that declared Socrates to be the wisest man (Stephanus 20e-21a). He

moved on a mission to investigate on the wisdom of the Athenian citizens and also delved into self-examination.

- (iii) *Dialectical investigation* or *dialectics* is an important method. Conclusion or solution to a problem derived through unity of opposite arguments, i.e., arguments and counter-arguments. It is evident in the dialogues of Apology and Crito. This method echoes in G.W.F. Hegels concepts of thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

2. **The Apology – An Overview:**

The name 'The Apology' is derived from the Greek word '*apologia*', meaning defence or justification. It showcases the trial of Socrates in 399 BCE Athens and his subsequent defence. Socrates was accused of corrupting the youth and impiety, i.e., not believing in the gods of the city.

The accusations were levied on behalf of the citizens of Athens by *Meletus*, *Anytus* and *Lycon*. Socrates, as Plato writes considered the mentioned charges to have roots in the initial charges on him put forth by the poet *Aristophanes* in his satirical play, '*The Clouds*'. *Aristophanes* had portrayed Socrates as a natural scientist who examined things below and above the earth by sitting on a cloud, detached from social realities. His reputation was tainted by him as he claimed that Socrates made the 'worse arguments stronger' by engaging in circular arguments and had no concern for problems emanating in a society.

Socrates's approach towards ideas and social realities was unconventional, which was seen as a challenge by the orthodox and traditionally driven citizens that propelled them to act as moral police and bring about charges against him. Socrates defended himself in a skilful way. He first cited how he began on a journey to refute the Oracle of Delphi and search for the wisest man. He put forth the infamous 'Socratic irony'- 'The most philosophical man is the one who admits his ignorance and is able to point out ignorance of others.' After investigating the knowledge of almost all the Athenian citizens by engaging in dialectics and debates he came to the conclusion that he was the wisest man as everyone he investigated claimed to know something when they didn't- "*I am wiser than this man; it is likely that neither of us knows anything worthwhile, but he thinks he knows something when he does not, whereas when I do not know, neither do I think I know; so I am likely to be wiser than he to this small extent, that I do not think I know what I do not know.*"³

Through this he highlighted the reason for his unpopularity and the charges. He engaged in circular arguments and counter-arguments with some of his accusers like *Meletus* and tried to prove himself correct by pointing out problems in then Athenian system of education, governance, religious practices and so on. He pointed out the importance of self-examination and highlighted the lack of philosophical temperament in Athens- "*The unexamined life is not worth living.*"⁴ He questioned how far it was just to execute a man who sought to educate people on the right way of living? In spite of his efforts, he was declared guilty and was sentenced to death.

3. **The Crito- An Overview:**

The Crito showcases the dialogue between imprisoned Socrates and his friend Crito who visited him to convince to flee Athens and his death sentence. Crito argued that Socrates's death would be a loss to him and others and it would also give a wrong impression that Crito didn't want to save him. Crito assured Socrates that the escape plan was ready and feasible. It would be wrong for Socrates to give away his life and do what the enemies intended. Accepting the death sentence would be equivalent to displaying cowardice and he would also fail to raise and educate his sons.

Socrates, in this dialogue, however, takes a fundamentally different position. By engaging in similar patterns of dialectical conversation he convinces Crito that living well rather than living should be the priority. He takes the position of state, which in the Apology, he was criticising. He argues that an individual is part of the political system of State. Questioning it would be to question one's own existence. Non adherence to laws of the city would lead to collapse of the system. He questioned Crito if it was right or just to destroy a city and its state that had provided all the amenities required for his survival?

4. **Dialectcal Unity- Apology and Crito:**

Dialectical unity implies that unity can arise from the interplay of opposing elements, i.e., the unity of opposites. It refers to the concept in philosophy that, seemingly contradictory forces or ideas can coexist and interact within a whole system, creating a unified, coherent whole, despite their differences. For instance, simultaneous presence of dark and light in nature. The dialectical unity of Apology and Crito is found in their exploration of justice, the relationship of individual and society, the integrity of a philosopher and the authority of law.

Both the dialogues use the Socratic method of inquiry in coming at conclusions as pieces of work centre on *dialectical conversations*. In Apology, Socrates puts forth his or the philosopher's case amidst the Athenian citizens through a series of arguments and counter-arguments. While, in the Crito, he puts forth the city's case in front of Crito in the same manner.

The theme that unites them is on the question of *justice*. In Apology, Socrates questioned how far it was just to execute a man serving on God's will? He had portrayed himself as serving on divine command by claiming that he had a moral compass, a divine sign⁵ (*daimonion* in Greek) that guided him to search for the absolute truth propelling him to engage in investigations. Even in Crito he mentioned about his dream⁶ that indicated his death day, as a sign from the divine. He questioned Crito on whether it was just to disobey the laws of the city that had so far helped in nurturing Socrates as an individual since his birth. He stated that justice between an individual and the state was always unequal as state ought to be the master and individual, the slave. His positions on justice differed on both the dialogues but helps in the construction of a coherent idea of justice and *moral integrity*.

Both the dialogues unitedly provide the idea on the importance of *self-examination* and introspection. While in Apology Socrates criticised the Athenian citizens for their lack of it, demonstrating its significance, in Crito, he insisted Crito to examine the rightness and wrongness of the action of escaping the death sentence through introspection.

Tensions between individual autonomy, individual reason, knowledge on one hand and society, civic duty and civic faith on the other is imminent in both the dialogues. In Apology, individual reason and autonomy was portrayed as supreme by Socrates in his defence. He was against conventional wisdom and questioned civic faith with his rational knowledge. However, in Crito, Socrates viewed individual as an embedded self, i.e., as the microcosm of society. Individual morality implied not questioning the established norms and laws of state but obedience to them. Both the positions have put a valuable insight on the relationship of individual and the society.

Therefore, the Apology and the Crito are parts of a whole, situations of a broader story. Dialectics are found within them as well as between them. The arguments put forth by Socrates in the Apology is countered by him through counter-arguments in the Crito. This thesis and antithesis in Hegel's language gives rise to synthesis of ideas and philosophies in a wider context. Plato as the mask of Socrates has put forth different *means* for establishing points in both the dialogues, but, the *end* or the '*telos*', i.e., goal of the arguments and the counter-arguments is the same, which is to shape ideas, concepts, theories and philosophical discourses.

5. **Impact on Political Philosophy:**

The above-mentioned works of Plato do have an impact on the development of political philosophy specifically western political philosophy. It provides a valuable insight on the idea of *knowledge* as both emancipatory and restrictive. Socrates was on his journey to unveil the ultimate truth or reality and in that process acquired knowledge through questioning established codes of conduct which was not appreciated by the common masses of Athens. They, owing to their lack of knowledge and reason couldn't understand the depth of the ideas of Socrates and considered him to be a '*gadfly*' or social irritant, detrimental for Athenian society. Socrates, therefore suffered from the so called '*philosopher's dilemma*' and was eventually executed and uprooted from the society. Knowledge although enlightened him, also became the reason for his death.

The Apology is often seen as demonstrating the trial of democracy. It brings forth questions like to what extent a citizen can exercise freedom of thought and expression in a democracy? What are the limitations? How to maintain a balance between individual rights and the authority of the state? These philosophical questions continue to hover around contemporary political theory and practice. The roots of the present provisions of '*reasonable restrictions*' on

Right to Freedom in the Indian Constitution, provisions for hate speech etc, for instance, might have been traced from these.

These works also have raised questions on who has the right to govern? Who has the right to educate? What are the characteristic qualities that a ruler or the head of a government must have? Questions have also been raised on whether popular rule or democracy, considering its system of elections be rational? What is more important for a society, equal participation based on mediocrity or selective participation based on rational meritocracy?

The art of dialectics, as put forth in these works, is conversationalist, argumentative, critical thinking and self-examination oriented as opposed to didactic, oracular methods of teaching and inquiry. As a method of inquiry, it has acquired a position of great importance in philosophy.

Conclusion:

The *Apology* and the *Crito*, two of the early works of Plato have implicit ideas, concepts and propositions that have contributed towards shaping the discourses of philosophy, political theory, ethics and morality. Themes on justice, rights, reason, knowledge, virtue, pursuit of good life, moral integrity, duty of a citizen etc are highlighted that profoundly influences contemporary theories and ideas.

Although the *Apology* and the *Crito* is often read separately, they form parts of an integrated whole that explores Socrates' philosophical stance on justice, morality, laws, society, providing a deep reflection on his life and its ultimate end. These two works bounded by a dialectical unity picturises Socrates as a philosopher committed to lead a virtuous life based on rationality, knowledge, reason and principles even in the face of death!

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AN ETHICAL STUDY OF DOWRY SYSTEM AND GENDER INEQUALITY

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Abstract:

This article focuses on an ethical study of dowry system and gender inequality. Marriage is the essential part of every individual in a society. Marriage generally means a social institution in which two people ethically, socially and legally establish their decision that both will live together. One of the important part related with marriage in our society which is dowry. Dowry generally means some gift such as land money, jewellery, clothing etc. given to the daughter from her father at the time of marriage. Again, we can say that some essential goods given to the newly married couple from the bride's family. But in present time Dowry system create major problem in our society particularly girls and girl's family face dangerous problem for dowry. One of the dangerous problem created by dowry system which is namely gender inequality. Because we always see that when baby girls is born family's people do not happy because family's people know that her father's savings is most important for her marriage time because our society's dowry is most essential things. For the dowry system girls don't get same educational opportunities as much as boys. Girl's father's savings is most important for his girl child's dowry because dowry is the essential part of our society. Both dowry and higher education are most costly and for dowry system girls don't get higher education. In our society dowry system create violence against women because we always see bride burning and bride killing case in our society. For the dowry system girls always lose their life and many girls lose their self respect and the girl's family also loses their self respect because her family is unable to give dowry. So, we can say that in our society it is a burning problem.

This problem is not only for girls, this problem creates a major negative impact on a healthy and peaceful society.

Key words- Dowry, girl child, society, gender, violence, inequality.

Introduction:

Marriage is the essential part of our ethical society. Every human being can't be easily and happily live in one society without marriage because marriage is the ethical and social rules for every Society's people. Marriage generally means marriage is the social institution in which ethically, legally, socially two people establish their decision that both will live together. One of the important part related with marriage which means dowry. In every society dowry and marriage both are interconnected. Dowry generally means some gift such as land, Money jewellery, clothing etc. given to the daughter from her father at the time of marriage, or we can say that some gift provide by the bride's family to the bride and groom at the time of marriage. Some people regarded dowry as inherit right for the girls. Even in many societies people happily accepted dowry as the right for the groom and groom's side.

Historically this system was not practices by India. Dowry system was historically practices by many countries I, e Babylon, Europe, south Asia, China, England, Greece etc etc. In present time dowry system is practices by some countries I, e India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc. etc. Actually through the dowry system some essential good give to the newly married couple from bride's side so that happily and easily started their new life and bride so that do not face any problem in her new life. It is the love symbol to the bride from her father. According to the definition of dowry under section 2 of the dowry prohibition Act 1961 it is clear that dowry is a property which woman bring to her husband at the time of marriage. But in present time dowry system create unethical work to our society. Dowry system create violence against women. From the dowry system some women lose her self-respect and her family also lose their self-respect because her family unable to given dowry.

We commonly see dowry killing and bride burning case in our society. Dowry killing and bride burning has only one reason which is dowry when her husband want more goods and choice goods and her wife unable to bring these types of dowry to her husband then she commit suicide and lose her life by her husband and husband's family.

One of the dangerous problem create in our society from the dowry system which is gender inequality. We know that when baby girls is born then Society's many people and family's people un happy because society's people knows that her father savings is most important for her marriage time. So, it is the one type of gender inequality which is created by dowry.

Another one gender inequality created by dowry system which is unequal higher education. Female student don't get higher education which are get by the male student. Because her father

save money to dowry for her marriage time and for this reason her father unable to given higher education to their daughter because more money is need for dowry.

Finally, we can say dowry system is a notable reason for gender inequality and violence against women rights.

Objective of the study:

The main objective of the study is to tries to analyse. An ethical study of dowry system and gender inequality. This research paper tries to give solution from negative impact on dowry system and gender inequality.

Methodology:

The research will be focus on dowry system and gender inequality. Data will be collected from both primary and secondary source of information. The primary data will be collected through questioner and personal interview etc. The secondary data will be collected from various public source like internet, book, article etc.

Analysis:

Marriage is the social institution in which two people ethically, socially, legally establish their decision that both will live together. Marriage is a social binding. Marriage is the essential part of our ethical society to make a stable and peaceful society. One of the important part related with marriage in our society which is dowry. Dowry generally means some gift such as land, money, jewellery, clothing etc. given to the daughter from her father at the time of marriage. It is the love symbol from the father to his daughter at the time of marriage. But in Today's society dowry system create dangerous problem because dowry system create gender inequality which is dangerous problem to our society. When baby girls are born family's people are not happy because her father's savings is most important for her dowry and family's people and society's people think that new born baby girl will create financial burden on her father. Another one of the problem create from the dowry which is unequal education. For the dowry system girls don't get same education as much as son because her father save money for their daughter's dowry at the time of marriage and for the dowry more money is needed and for the higher education also have more money is needed which is impossible for one father and society generally focuses on dowry rather than higher education for the girls to her marriage. For this reason girls don't get equal education as much as sons. Another one of the problem is that the poor section of society's people send their daughter to earn money because for the dowry more money is needed and father unable to give dowry. Generally, Middle class and upper class family do send their daughter to school but do not encourage for career option. For the unequal education girls don't get equal job opportunities as much as boys. Girls can't be economically

independent. For the unequal education girls cannot be mentally strong and cannot take right decision in any situation. Another problem arises from the dowry system which is dowry death. We always see bride burning and bride killing case in our society. Many girls lose her life when girls unable to bring dowry to her husband at the time of marriage. For the dowry system many girls decide that she will live alone without marriage because she unable to bring dowry and her father also unable to give dowry which are the major issue for one ethical society. It makes a girls depressed and unsafe. For the dowry system more women lose their self-respect and family also lose their self-respect because their family is unable to give dowry. So, it is a burning problem. It is not a problem for girls only. It is a problem for our whole society and every person.

Conclusion:

Removing the dowry system is most important for a peaceful and ethical society because it is a more complex problem for a healthy society. This complex problem not only challenges for girls, this complex problem challenges to every Society's people because dowry system creates gender inequality which is dangerous problem to our society. Family's people know that girl's father's savings is most important for her marriage time because our society's dowry is most essential things. Society's and family's people think that new born baby girl will create financial burden on her father because her dowry is important for her marriage time. Another significant reason for removing dowry system from our society which is unequal education. For the dowry system Girls don't get equal higher education as much as boys. Both dowry and higher education are costly. Society's people focus on dowry rather than education for girl's marriage time. For the unequal education girls don't get job opportunities as much as boys. Girls can't be economically independent. For the unequal education girls cannot be mentally strong and cannot take right decision in any situation. These negative impacts are not only for girls. It creates challenges for every Society's people.

Another one of the significant reason removing dowry system from our society which is dowry system create violence against women because we always see bride burning and bride killing case for the dowry. Many girls commit suicide after marriage because she is unable to bring dowry for her husband at the time of marriage. Many Girls are mentally harassed and physically harassed by her husband and husband's family. These negative impact not only for girls it creates challenges to human Rights and human resource. So, removing dowry system is crucial for one peaceful and ethical society. Some of the way which are helpful in removing dowry system from our society which are given below-

One of the significant way which are helpful in removing dowry system from our society that is create awareness among the society's every people against dowry and inspire people to all walk of life to ensure that women do not face any violence for dowry. Another one of the

significant way to remove dowry system from our society which is equality for higher education. For the dowry practice in society parents save money for their daughter's at the time of marriage. So, all parents in the society should be made aware that their daughter will be happy and independent when she gets higher education. Lastly, one of the significant way to remove dowry practice from our society which is to create awareness among the younger generation against dowry practice that dowry practice is dangerous for the society. Many girls have lost their lives due to the practice of dowry and many girls will lose their lives if the practice of dowry continues. So, we can know that these are the way which are helpful to remove dowry system from our society.

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