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NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S TRADITIONAL GAMES OF WESTERN ODISHA: AN OVERVIEW

Rajendra Bhue

Lecture-in -English, B.N.M.A College Paliabindha, Bhadrak

Abstract: *Non-formal educations are based on culture and tradition .The folklore of western Odisha is full of non-formal educations. 'Folklore is the reflection of society .Folklore includes folksongs, riddles, proverbs, folktales , folk saying, folk arts and crafts, folk beliefs, folk games etc. We can get non-formal education from folklore. Through the folklore people can know their environment and acquire life skills among other things'. Folk game is a branch of folklore .Women traditional games are full of non-formal educations. Through the games women can know how to exist in the society. In ancient period or fifty years ago when there was no formal education system ,women learnt their livelihood from folklores . Women could know the social rules and regulations, their duty as girls, what should be done as girl etc through traditional games from girlhood time .The Humobauli, Tumarghare go ken ken pasara, Bahadia sanden, Gho gho rani, Kajalatika sindura tika, Paen bolo bolo, Mudi luken, Jhuri bika, Chhilolai, Chhurchhur chhurki , Kundhi kanchi, Putli biha ,Bar kania , Uthgo venei khetke ja, kit kit, kaud khel, gutka, kasadi, chhaka, chaulia, gadabachha, mud dhandi etc women traditional games of western Odisha provide much more knowledge to girls to exist in the society. In Ancient time the village street where these games were played was like a training centre. These traditional games are different from the popular western games, these games have not any rigid rules and do not require special equipments. The study investigates existence and performance of women traditional games and its educational value in the society.*

Key words: *women traditional games, non-formal education, women- livelihood social rules and regulations ,training centre.*

Introduction and background

Generally we can find two type of education system one is formal education system and another is non- formal education system. Non-formal education system otherwise known as Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) or local knowledge or traditional knowledge and formal education is known as Western Knowledge Systems (WKS). In the view of Greiner (1998) non-formal education system is the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of men and women indigenous to a particular geographic area. It can be summed up as a way of life of a people since it refers to knowledge, know-how and practices developed and maintained by people with long histories of close interaction with their natural environment (Soni, 2007). On the other hand Western knowledge or formal education system is supported by written documents, rules and regulations ,time bound and technological infrastructure and skilled or trained person (teacher). Non-Formal education is transmitted orally from one generation to another . It does not need any time bound, rules and regulations and particular place It is based on the local decision-making in agriculture, problems of life, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management and a host of other activities in rural communities. Like most indigenous communities, Western part of Odisha where maximum women are illiterate/ uneducated or semi-educated, has traditional songs, stories, legends, games, dance, culture, arts and crafts dreams, methods and practices as the various modes of Indigenous knowledge transmission. Warren (1991) says that Indigenous knowledge system touches on the socialization of the young, food production, processing and preservation as well as natural resources management. This shows a holistic approach to life and a close interaction between the indigenous people and their environment .Urbanisation , formal- education , science and technological advancement have given impact on the folk game of Western Odisha . Due to rapidly changing of natural environments, fast pacing economic, political and cultural changes on a global scale women folk-games are at risk. This non- formal education incorporates the socialization of the

youth, they acquire knowledge and skills on food production, processing and preservation, natural resource management, marriage, relationships, leaders and conflict management among others. This paper seeks to focus on the fading women's traditional games of western Odisha and its role in transmission of traditional knowledge in its various forms to the young generations. It shows the impact of Formal education on non-formal education systems. This study aims to focus on the value of women's traditional games of western Odisha in day to day life. From non-formal education system women can learn how to cook, how to behave, how to solve the problems, how to exist in the society etc. Traditional games of women give an impact to the younger generations to socialized in the appropriate norms, values and societal expectations. But formal education has disrupted the practical everyday life. The study brings out whether the traditional games of women was only means for traditional knowledge? Do they were trained through traditional game or any other means? Did their traditional knowledge help them in their future life?

John Beams first took interest in Odia folklore, his collection of folklore is based on mantra, tantra and superstitions. He encouraged to Fakir Mohan Senapati towards folklore. Chakradhar Mahapatra collected folk songs of Odisha and published a book entitled 'Utakalara Gaunli Gita'. Laxminarayan Sahu collected tribal folklore. Nilamani vidyaratna, Aparna Panda, Vabagrahi Mishra have studied on folklore of Odisha. Dr Dwarika Prasad Nayak, Kunjabihari Dhal have worked on folklore of western Odisha they have focused on the general folklore of the region. Anjali Padhi have worked on folklore of western Odisha. She focuses on gender issue and women folklore. Dr Mahendra Mishra, Dr. Anand Mahanda have done vivid study on folklore of Western Odisha. Dr. Sanjay Ku. Bag has collected around 110 traditional games during his field work and done PhD on Traditional Sports of Western Odisha. Sambalpur University also focuses on folklore study, now scholars are giving interest towards folklore study. The study adopted collecting, analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data. An attempt has been made for analyzing some traditional women games of Western Odisha. I have collected primary data from different person of the region and secondary data from books and library.

Some Women's Traditional Games of Western Odisha –

Bahadia sanden- (Give me a daughter-in law)- Bahadia sanden is a famous game of girls . Two teams of girls face each other, there is no any team leader ,all members have equal weight .The first team is called 'magtar'/bridegroom team and the second team is called data/ bride team . On the evening of October to may (except rainy season) girls play this game happily .First team asks for a bride for their son and respect the other team members as their sister-in –law. But second team refuses to give their daughter and request to wait till the daughter will learn domestic work . The first team than assures that they will teach the bride every things ,again the second team says their daughter have not acquire knowledge about family .In this way the game is continued by describing all the household done by women ,the groups face each other by dancing in a rhythmic way slightly bending for ward moving one-step ahead and one step back. The song is like this-

Team-1(Bride groom Team) Baha gute dia sanden bahagute dia (Give me a daughter-in law of my friend)

Team-2- (Bride Team) Vatrandhi ni janle ken demu jhia sanden ken demu jhia (we do not give our daughter as she does not know how to cook)

Team-1 Vatrandha sikhei nemu baha gute dia sanden baha gute dia (We will teach her cooking ,give me a daughter-in-law).

Team -2-Paen ani ni janle ken demu jhia sanden ken demu jhia (We do not give our daughter as she does not know how to bring water).....

From this game girls can know about their duty and responsibility , social system after marriage they can utilize their knowledge in their marital family .It is a proper field for them to acquire knowledge about socialization.

Ken ken sajo debugo dada –(What you will give me brother as my bride gift)This game is based on team system ,two teams of girls face each other ,one team acts as sister and another team acts as brother . The sister team asks to brother team for bridal gift and brother team in replay says the names of domestic items which will be useful for them . The love and affection of brother and sister is eternal .Brother sacrifices for his sister . According to the tradition of the region brother is the safeguard of

sister and when the sister is going to marry ,brother has to present some valuable and fundamental things, that help his sister to make a house as she has to settle newly there .The game is like that-
Sister team –ken ken sajo debu go dada jhumkuta ? (What households items you will give me oh my brother?)

Brother team- khuri gute demi re buhen dam dhari tha .(Don't worry oh my sister I will give you a bowl for your domestic use).

Repeatedly the sister team asks for gift and the brother team answers to give the household items . Both team face each other by singing the song with slow stepping to and fro and this way the game is going on .From this game women can know about house hold duty and social reality .From childhood time girls know that one day they have to leave their parental house and settle in a new house. They know the relation between brother and sister. Here women show their right from their brothers. Also they can know the names of domestic items and its use.

Kundhi kachi- This game is most popular and liking game of girls. It is the mock trial of socialization we may say . Girls act here as mother, father, guest, host , dancer, singer, speaker and many more, whatever they see in their locality they want to follow that . Like mother they cook, take care of children, husband, welcome the guests , and go to other house as a guest , collect wood, bring water, they imitate their mother, they act as teacher also .From that they learn the reality of life ,they face the problems and find out the solution , They arrange the marriage of their son and daughter .It is the mock trial for them .On the game they create a mini family and society . Children also make house in the game putli biha/barkania where they imitate the adult roles of father, mother and children. Here they practise what they see from their elders , searching for food, preparing and preserving it, resolving disputes and even worshipping, These traditional games are a way of ensuring the continued existence of its customs, traditions and culture.

Tumar ghare go ken ken pasara- (What you have keep in your shop) It is the game of marketing / business related game . Some girls act as customer and some act as business men . The customers ask for needy items and the sellers give that on exchange of money . If the customers do not

give money ,they offer themselves to work in the shop but the shopkeepers refuse to keep them, for that an argument starts among them .I have given the example in below-

Customer team –Tumar khare go ken ken pasara? (What you have keep in your shop?)

Shopkeeper team –Amar ghare go alu pasara .(We have potatoes in our shop).

Customer team- Amku nia go alu dia go . (Take us and give your potatoes).

Shopkeeper team- Ame ken karmu parahar jhia ke?(What shall we do with your daughter).

Customer team –Mata mata re tentuli jhanta re ,(We will bite you with tamarind sticks).

Shopkeeper team–Chinta china re chirchiri kanta re .(We also re-attack you with a thorny stick).

From this games girls know about buying and selling , business mater .It is a game of joking and laughing . From this game girls can know the name and usefulness of different vegetables and grocery items, which is given important in today's primary school. In the game they learn many more but that works are done very difficultly by skilled person in school now a day .

Humo-humo/ humo bauli is the best game of girls . The girls, unmarried women and newly married women divide themselves into two groups on mutual understanding ,there is no group leader each group stand face to face and with slow stepping they face opposite group with a humo sang .Humo song is a song of commentation , information, problems solution, revolution against gender inequality and based on social reality of life .Girls. It is also a team game. Take for example-

Team-1 Amar adu paen gala baulire amar adu paen gala(Water flowed from here oh my friend)

Tumar dalar lukku uhulei nela (It flowed away to your team)

Maya gachha chhinei nela baulire..(The guava tree saved you)

Team-2 Kanvhi kanchi kanchi baulire kanchi kanchi kanchi(Coconut bowl ,coconut bowl ,coconut bowl oh my friend)

Amar talipada ne aebe nachi (Don't come to our street for dancing)

Gudilale demu khanchi baulire...(We will bit you near temple)

Team-1 Bilei mudare jata baulire bilei mudare jata (The hair of cat's head oh my friend)

Juhara juhara chandali pata (I bow my head on your feet on Chandali pat goddess)

Patha asu jhata jhata baulire (Bless me for good education)

Team-2 Tala patra khara khara baulire talapatra khara khara(The palm leaf is ready for writing oh my friend)

Gita na janile udhara kara (If you don't know song tell us)

Lekhi nemu chara chara baulire (We will write you quickly)

We can find many more humo songs of this region from where women express their day to day life. Their suffering ,pain ,difficulty as wells history ,and geography ,culture and tradition all are reflected on the songs. From humo bauli game girls can know caring ,sharing .Through this game they can express love, emotion ,agony ,suffering ,problems etc. They get both mental and physical relaxation from this game , It is a game of mental exercise ,it encourages creativity power among the girls.

Uth go venei khet ke ja- (Wake up brother-in-law and go to the field) It is a game of both mental and physical exercise .In this game a group of girls adopt a technique to find out the girl who gives the task (panchahada/ itkel mitkel/das kude).They follow the instruction of the leader .The leader gives the task to do and cross the limitation line ,the participants follow the instruction of leader ,who does mistake and if the leader marks and touches her, she becomes the leader . This game encourages both physical and mental exercise of girls ,From this game they learn co-operation, unity, caring and sharing, and their would be responsibility as house wives .

Kajala tika sindura tika- (Using Cosmetics)A group of girls make a circle ,one girl acts as sister-in law, the girls who make circle act as daughters they keep their sister-in-law in the circle and protect her, and another one girl acts as mother -in -law ,she asks to her daughters where is the sister-in -law ? In reply they say that she is busy in bathing ,sometime they reply she is busy in watering, field work etc The mother-in law argues why she does late . She blames her daughter-in law is neglecting in her duty and becomes angry with her, when she looks her then chases her with stick. Daughters try to protect their sister-in -law from their mother. It is a game of activeness. From this game girls know about their duty. It is the trail centre for them.

Paen bolo bolo –(Supplying Water to crops) This game is based on agriculture, it is the mock trail of cultivation . Girls sit in a circle they straight their legs ,their legs become the cannel of the cultivated land and they become the plant, one of them watering each of the cannel ,on the time of watering ants

attack her ,monkey comes to eat the crops so she makes them out etc. The farmer girl cultivates the land collects the crops ,protects from monkey etc.

Gutka, kaud, gadbacha, mud dhandi, kasadi, chaulia , chhilolai, chhur chhur chhurki, bar kania, putlibiha, chhaka, kit kit, chae madani , agriare agria madi bas, luk lukani ,kham khamlo ,jhuri bika ,chor pulis and many more games of women carry traditional knowledge .

Conclusion-

These games provided primary socialization. Through the games they learnt a lot about adult roles, social skills like sharing, solving problems, practical skills like constructing a hut, preparing and preserving food among others. All this was learnt during childhood but today, with the coming of Western knowledge systems, information communication technology and globalization girls no longer have time for the traditional games . These games were meant to earn and sharpen the knowledge, encourage creativity and physical as well as mental exercise .Also these games helped them to learn about positive attributes, morality, socialization, virtues and values like; hard working, smartness, obedience among others. Now in the modern age people think about education in playing and learning method but the girls of western Odisha had been doing that five decade before . The games were just a platform for learning. Maximum of these games do not need any equipment (economical effort) and are based on team work so the participants know the value of unity which is the basic principle of Indian democracy. Government should take steps to preserve these games.

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