

Cultural change among the tribes especially tribes of Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Tribes of Madhya Pradesh have preserved their culture and tradition despite outside cultural influence. Dominated by tribal communities, this state of central India is rich in culture. The amalgamation of the varied tradition of the different groups has made the culture of the state vibrant and multi-dimensional. Be it music and dance or art and craft, the state has all. The tribes of Madhya Pradesh live in the primitive stage and far away from the main stream of the development. Mostly, they live in the forests and are fully dependent on the forest products, herbs, wood, etc. for their livelihood. The tribal population of Madhya Pradesh has carried on the practice of farming and cultivation. In order to supplement their income, some of these tribal groups become laborers in factories, industries etc. Most of the time their culture reflected as a source of their income. In this paper we are discussing about tribal culture of south, south-eastern and west part of Madhya Pradesh because their culture is a source of income for them.

Keywords: Culture, income, tribes of M.P., dances, art, occupation

Introduction

Major Tribes of Madhya Pradesh

About one-fifth of the people in Madhya Pradesh are officially classified as members of Scheduled Tribes (a category embracing indigenous peoples who fall outside the predominant Indian social hierarchy). Among the most prominent of these tribes are the Bhil, Baiga, Gond, Korku, Kol, Kamar, and Maria. Non-Scheduled peoples, who hold a higher status within the Indian social system, make up most of the remaining four-fifths of the state's population.

The south and the south-eastern parts of the state of Madhya Pradesh have the largest concentration of the tribal population. It further stretches out to the western part of the state including Jhabua, Dhar, Barwani and Khargone district. The major tribes of Madhya Pradesh are as follows:

Agariya Tribes

The history of the origin of this Agariya tribal community is quite interesting. The name has been derived from the Hindu god of fire, namely Lord Agni. "A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people". (Mahatma Gandhi)

Culture and sustenance

It is believed that Agariya's were the first who founded iron ore and start making use of it. Agariya's are mainly blacksmiths by profession and earn their sustenance by preparing agricultural instruments like axes, sickles, ploughshares, Mattocks, etc and other articles made of iron. The Agariya's of Madhya Pradesh are very skilled in making Wooden Mask as toys for children. They use to give these tools to Gond's and Bega's and get Grain, Cash & Cloths in return. Agariya tribal people follow their traditional occupation Iron smelting. Dancing is a very significant part of Agariya's tradition; they use to perform various dances like Karma, Saila, Sua Hardili, Bilma, and Dadariya. Women of Bediya tribe performed Rai Nritya/ Bedni Dance. Rai Nritya, also known as Bedni Dance, is a

popular folk dance of Madhya Pradesh. This dance is also means of earning for them.

Bharia Tribes

This is one of the most ancient tribes which has resided mainly in the forest areas. These tribal groups are reckoned as scheduled tribes. The people of this tribal community are known for their usage of medicinal plants to treat different kinds of diseases.

Culture of Bharia Tribe

The cultural Multiplicity of the Bharia Tribe, Lord of the soil, has been prominently reflected in all its socio-cultural elements such as festivals, songs, and dances. Their societal structure is nuclear and about 78 percent of the Bharia households have nuclear families. Their tribal language is known as Bharia. The Bharia tribal community lives in beautiful houses built by their own hands. Most of these people pay the least attention to education and learning. The literacy rate of the Bharia Tribe is hence very low. They have a number of exogamous groups. The nuptial rituals of this tribe also have typical quality. The marriage proposal always first comes from the boy's side. Bharia people also follow several birth and funeral rites. They have a Panchayat for the maintenance of law and order in their community. At present, however, due to the practices of laborers in factories, industries, etc, we can see the differences in their culture.

Binjhar Tribes

The cultural Multiplicity of the Bharia Tribe, Lord of the soil, has this is another tribal group of the state of Madhya Pradesh. The people of this group are adept at making jewelry from cane, grass, or beads.

Cultural vitality itself a source of earning.

Festivals, dance, music form an integral part of these tribal communities, thus ennobling it to a great extent. Their desi

art, shrines, and statuettes have got popularity in the whole of the Indian subcontinent. These tribes too have developed faith for religion and spiritualism. To appease the divine gods, these tribes carry on various rituals and customs. These tribes have enormous faith in their village gods and goddesses of the local origin. Fairs and festivals are an integral part of the culture of these tribes

The dresses of this tribal community are quite exquisite and beautiful. Tribal females are quite fond of jewelry, which is very exotic. The maximum of this jewelry is handcrafted. These include necklaces prepared from cane, grass, or beads. Silver ornaments are in vogue. Various materials like tiny pieces of wood, glass, and peacock feathers, copper are used for making jewelry. Also, diverse kinds of wildflowers and leaves are used to embellish the long hair of these tribal females. In the village areas, some tribe females wear chains, which are made up of one-rupee coins.

The major occupation of these tribes is cultivation. Some of the tribes have taken up handicrafts as their occupation. The artists prepare handicraft items from bamboo, wood, and a variety of metals. For selling in the fairs, these tribes also made beautiful baskets, statues, mats, wall hangings, face masks. Tribal community is also acknowledged for its terracotta work.

Melodious music and dance are a vital part of this tribal community. The dance and music of people are of numerous varieties. The whole of the region quite often bounces and reverberates with the beats of the drum of this tribal community. The culture of the tribal community is considered to be enriched without exotic culinary dishes that the tribal communities prepare. To add to these, these tribes have also developed an addiction to alcohols that are made locally. Some of the people of this tribal community are also fond of various fishes. Some Government institutions and local fairs provide the stage to these tribes for selling their handmade jewelry art craft. This is one of the sources of income for them.

Gond Tribes

This tribe stands first in terms of population not only in the state but also among the other major tribes of India. They are mainly found in the Vindhya hills and Satpura mountain range. Gond tribal people mostly live in the jungle and hills. The Gond inhabitants are working in agricultural fields and hunting. They collect wild fruits and herbs from the jungle for their livelihood.

Culture itself livelihood

Gond tribes acquired the knowledge of making medicine from several herbs and plants, which also down the years, have been passed on to the next generation. In fact till today due to the absence of health amenities of the modern times, this Gond tribal community follows the customary medicinal system. Utilization of the plants and herbs are made in order to cure several diseases.

The main occupation of the Gondis is agriculture. Shifting cultivation is a popular practice among the tribes. Apart from these, some of the Gondi people are engaged in fishing, collecting minor forest produce, hunting, devising metal goods in cottage industries and other prime areas of the Gond society etc. The Gondis basically practice Hinduism along with the worship of various gods and spirits belonging to the customary Gond religion. Most of the Gond people are mainly farmers. Along with agriculture,

they also herd cattle for their livelihood. Some of them have risen to the status of landowners and laborers. Vegetables are grown in kitchen gardens or collected from Forests. Gond people grow their own tobacco for smoking and they make liquor out of Mahua tree.

Bhil Tribes

This is third largest tribes in India and second one in Madhya Pradesh. The habitat of Bhil tribes is found mostly in Dhar district, Jhabua district and West Nimar district. Bhils are said to be a group of hunters and warriors.

Culture itself is a tool of occupation

The Bhil Tribe has a unique, rich indigenous Culture with their traditional Folk Dance

and art. The Ghoomar Dance, which is a traditional folk dance symbolizing womanhood, is one of the popular aspects of Bhil culture. Another entertaining aspect is the Swang, which consists of storytelling combined with dancing and music with an abundance of drinking.

The art done of the people of Bhil Tribe are also marvelous and are characterized by the use of multi-colored dots as in-filling. Bhuri Bai, an Indian Bhil artist was the first Bhil artist to paint using readymade colors and paper. There are other well-known Bhil artists like Lado Bai, Sher Singh, Ram Singh and Dubu Bariya. These artists are not only serving in so many institutes like Rastriya Manav Sangrahalaya, an Institute of national importance and Bharat Bhawan Bhopal, but also spread their art and craft in international level also. They also earn name and fame with handsome amount by their culture.

Presently, the community of the Bhil Tribe is settled farmers with agriculture and animal husbandry being their primary occupation. They cultivate their food in their own lands and their main foods are Maize, Onion, Garlic and chili, while Wheat and Rice are used for special occasions and festivals.

The Baneshwar fair is the main festival celebrated among the Bhils. This fair is held during the period of Shivaratri in the months of January or February. The fair is dedicated to Baneshwar Mahadev also known as Lord Shiva and is actually the combination of two fairs, which are held in reverence of Lord Shiva and the other one that commenced after the setting up of the Vishnu temple by Jankunwari. The Hindu festivals of Holi and Dushhera are the other major festivals celebrated among the Bhil Tribes in India.

Damaria Tribes Damaria tribe has got an enriched heritage of cultural embellishment as highlighted in wedding rites, dwellings, clothes, etc. This tribal group shares a close affinity with the Rajputs and exhibit brilliance in art and craft.

Kawar Tribes

One of the known tribes in this state is the Kawar tribe and they are thought to have descended from the family line of the Kaurave rulers. Kawar tribal community is quite significant amongst the tribal communities.

Culture of Kawar Tribe

As far as an occupation is concerned, the Kawar tribes have adapted to the occupation of cultivation and farming. Just like many other tribal communities, education and academics have always taken back seats. However, it is quite interesting to mention that in spite of their lack of

educational opportunities, the Kavar tribes are no less important in their culture and tradition. In other, the culture of these Kavar tribes is quite ennobled and exuberant. Some of the anthropologists even have traced out the origin of these Kavar tribes, which is quite significant. The popular legend that is popular in the whole of the state of Madhya Pradesh, narrates that these Kavar tribes have descended from the family line of the Kaurava kings of the Mahabharat.

In order to carry on conversation amongst themselves, maximum of these Kavar tribal community, converse with each other in the wonderful language which is known as Kawari. This language of the Kawari tribes belongs to the famous Indo-Aryan language family. There are quite a number of people of Indian Territory who believe that it is a dialect of Halbi.

Kolam Tribes

A multitude of Kolam trib, also identified as Kolamboli, Kulme and Kolmi, has settled down in every corner of the state of Madhya Pradesh. As per their past history, these Kolam tribes even worked as priests in the 12th Century. They are engaged in food collection, farming, etc. in order to meet their regular need.

Majhi

This tribe makes boat in order to sustain their livelihood. They have got identifiable Mongoloid features and are the practitioners of Tantrik religion.

Sanja

It is a type of cultural practice. It has three components. One, Group of younger girls perform particular type of songs. Second make some kind of motif with the help of leaves, soil, cow dug, colorful flowers. These motifs reflect relations, merrymaking, activities of day to day life. We can see these activities in Southern East region of Madhya Prad

Culture and Occupations

Majhi tribes have got rich heritage with their unique culture, clothing and language inhabiting in Madhya Pradesh. This tribal people are said to be the indigenous group of Nepal. The rivers of Nepal have a great impact in the lives of this tribal group. Majority of these Majhi have adapted to several occupations. The chief conventional occupation of the Majhi tribes is boat making. The people of this group are engaged in the transporting people from one bank to another. Even these Majhi tribes take up to fishing as occupation to meet the needs of the day to day living. The Majhis also tried their hands in trading and business. Especially the Majhi females sell several goods like Merch and Jand including mats made of patter in the local markets. The products of the Majhi tribes are so exquisite that they have got high demands in the markets of the region as well as that of the whole of the country. After conducting several surveys on the lives of these Majhi tribal communities, inferred that much of the tradition and ancient customs have been obliterated and at the same time incorporated new trends and practices. So much so, that now a day's these Majhi tribes also have taken up professions as cultivator, laborer etc. Majhi tribes are bit oriented to religion and spiritualism. Majority of Majhi tribes practice the Tantrik religion. They have established all their local goddesses and gods at the bottom of a tree near a river and follow animism

as their conventional religious practice and custom. Moreover, community has got a plethora of deities of the local origin. The principal God of the tribe is Gharbhimsen and worship a number of gods and goddesses like Gaidu, Jaurekhee, Ardev, Jangali, Setidevi, Goresiddhi, Shikari and Lord Shiva. As an integral part of the worship of these local deities, total flowers are widely used. Festivals are part and parcel of the society of the Majhi tribes. The major festival of this tribe is koshi pooja and other festivals are saune sangranti and marigshire purnima. Dresses are quite exquisite. Majhi females are also fond of jewelleryes.. This Majhi tribal community has abstained from education and learning is quite apt from the literacy rate. For example, Majhi can only count up minor literacy rate. Only a handful of the Majhi tribal community are there who have been employed in offices like police, army etc.

Saharia Tribes

This tribe inhabits in Shivpuri district and Morena distric. Saharia tribes mainly worships of Goddess Durga. Mouth-watering dishes, multihued festivals as well as variety of religious exercises are what enable the ritual and culture of these Saharia tribes. The society of this tribe is divided in several sub groups.

Culture and Occupations

It is only natural; these Saharia tribes have taken up numerous occupations. Cultivation is the chief occupation. The Saharia cultivators take up the "slash and burn" way of cultivation along the hill slopes. This has enabled them into tremendous conflict with the Forestry Department. Their chief crops are gourds, millet, sorghum, and wild rice. During the beginning of 1900 and onwards, many of these Saharia tribes have transmigrated to several areas and took provisional wage-paying jobs on tea plantations or as road builders. Many remained in their new locations and became farmers or field workers. Shamans are religious leaders who use to heal the sick by magic, converse with the spirits, and manage events. There are also heritable positions, which consist of village heads, deputy heads, pyre lighters, and also priests of the village deity. Public outlook and conversation are the chief forms of social control. The house settlements are quite wonderful to look at. In general, these Saharia villages comprises of numerous quarters, better known as long longs. Each long long is dwelt by one patrilineage. What is also important is to note that the line of decent can be easily traceable from the man's side of a family. It is called birinda. Numerous houses, which belong to some of the close relatives, might be brought together on one terrace. So much so, that these Saharia can prolong the conversations even over the dividing walls. The houses have built roofs with thatches and are made up of stone smashed with red mud. During the autumn season, the villages are predominately abandoned; these Saharia tribes proceed to highly strewn "baby houses" in order to watch their crops against wild animals. These Saharia tribes have developed tastes mainly for non- vegetarian dishes. Mainly these Saharia tribes savor maximum of the animals. Palm wine is a well-liked beverage. These Saharia tribes arrange all of their food by churning it vigorously. At the meeting point of the mountains, these Saharia tribes create their markets where these tribes carry on the activities of buying and selling on the villages. These Saharia exchange forest products like millet for clothes, iron axe heads, plow tips,

salt, chilies, jewelry etc. This Saharia tribal community has got orientation towards religion and spiritualism. The Saharia put into practice their conventional tribal religions. Till date, these Saharia tribes carry on the practice of offering animals like buffalo as mark of offerings. However, these Saharia tribes are also conscious of certain ideals of the Hindu religion and make use of them in shaping their individual identity. Since maximum of these Saharia tribes have still refrained from pursuing education, on certain erudite matters these Saharia tribes depend in the knowledge on the 'shaman'. The popular belief is that the spirits of the dead causes all kinds of sickness and also deaths.

Banjara tribe

The Banjaras are usually nomadic people who keep moving from one village to another. The household items of the Banjaras include aluminum pots and pans, earthen pots and knives made of iron. They make mat, basket, broom tray from the grass available in the forest. They use Lathi, Bhala, Bher, Khanti and axe as their weapon for various uses. The Banjaras are singing prayer songs on various occasions like that of the birth of a child. They also use instruments like Dol and Tablas to accompany their songs. Along with singing they also perform dance sequences in the courtyard of the houses of the new born child's parents. This state has the highest flavors of culture and tradition. Influenced by tribal culture, the different socio-cultural activities portray the lifestyle as well as the rich tradition of the place. The varied cultural activities of the state even help in bringing out the actual spirit of the people of Madhya Pradesh.

The varied forms of art and crafts of Madhya Pradesh even contribute to the rich culture and income of the state. Apart from adding a unique charm, handicrafts of this state of central India reflect the painstaking craftsmanship of the place. Chanderi and Maheshwari silk saris are some of the noteworthy crafts of the state. Bastar, Bilaspur, Bhopal, Bundelkhand, Gondwana, Indore, Khajuraho, Malwa, Mandla, Gwalior, Jhabua, Raigarh, Shahdol and Ujjain are some of the prominent centers of the state's art and crafts. Some of the major forms of Madhya Pradesh handicrafts are as follows:

- Bamboo and Cane Work
- Block Printing
- Doll Making
- Floor Coverings like carpets and durries
- Folk Paintings
- Iron Craft
- Jute Works
- Metal Craft
- Ornament Creation
- Peppier Mache
- Stone Carving
- Stuffed Toys
- Terracotta
- Textile Weaving
- Woodcraft
- Zari Embroidery

These art & craft are identification and culture of particular tribe and always in a demand. I will discuss in next paper about them. 'Malav darati gahan gambhir, dug-dug roti pug-pug neer'(5) means Malwa region is full of abundance. There is no scarcity at all. This is the picture of past but

when we talk about present 'our Malwa is now entangled in the desolate culture of Khawu Ujaru Sanskriti' Like other countries. As define by write. Malwa culture is still persist.

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