

Tribal people and forest resources (A case study on Adi (padam) tribe of Arunachal Pradesh)

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Abstract: Generally Tribal people are lived in geographically, socially isolated and they are economically marginalized communities. The main objective of the paper is to study the relationship between the tribal people and their relationship with forest. The analysis is based on both primary and secondary data available on the sources. Here the author tries to find out the ground reality of selected tribal's and their relation with forest resources and how much they depend on the forest base (commercial value). How they managed their life by using forest resources has been explained and the knowledge of ethno medicine, hunting, fishing, cultivation weaving etc. The author uses so many local dialects due to lack of authentic word in English.

Key words: Tribal, padam, Arunachal Pradesh, ethno medicine, weaving, hunting, fishing, cultivation etc.

Introduction

A large areas covered thickly with trees is called forest. Forest is a precious resource given by the nature. Forest resources are most important natural's resources which assured significant position in tribal people in the process of economic growth and for various purposes like hunting, fishing and collection of variety of item such as fire wood, vegetables, roots, fruits, medicine, meats and raw materials for different types of constructional purpose. The main occupations of this people are agriculture. Shifting cultivation is practiced where farmer tart variety of items like rice, maize, sweet potato, brinjal, ginger, mustard etc.

The important natural resources of the area are the different kinds of trees, wild animal, the river fish, etc. Among these all, the most important are the different types of bamboo, fruits, plants, medicinal plant, and trees etc. which are used for different purposes.

There are many tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, among them Adis(padam) is one of the major tribes of the state inhabiting in some part of west siang ,east siang, upper siang and lower Dibang valley district.

Thus like other tribes, the life of Adi (padam) people cannot live or thought without forest. Forest is their culture, religion and economy. The centuries of their interaction with their forest has helped them to evolve so many eco-friendly techniques of hunting, fishing, extraction of other resources for different purposes. The tribal inhabiting areas are mainly dominating by forest resources due to these people enjoy their life in fullest.

Literature review

1. **Journal, human ecology, vol.10,(sep-nov 199):** in this journal it is clearly mentioned regarding the need for conservation of indigenous medicinal knowledge and the herbs.
2. Dissertation work by **Ribe Laa, department of tribal studies (2000)** has stated about forest and economic life of tribal people.
3. **Dr. Tomo Riba (2003)** has mentioned clearly about the dwindling natural resources. Economic problem related to reduction of trees suggestion for reduction for pressure on forest in his book entitled “The tribal and their changing environment”.
4. **Hanley and Roberts** “Issues of environmental economics” mentioned about the economics of tropical deforestation which includes overview of tropical deforestation and land use trends, overview survey of cross country analysis of tropical deforestation etc.
5. **Journal of rural development, vol.22 (oct-dec 2003)** have mentioned regarding the people participation and social identity of tribal people.
6. **Seelay & Schithusen** “Man in forest” has talked about the eco-diversity and indigenous knowledge of forest, man’s relation with forest deification of trees and plant, forest and tribal economy.
7. **Journal “man & environment” vol. xxvi, no. 2 (June 2004)** has stated that women are considered primarily as manager and often preservers of natural resources and their involvement in socio-economic activities enables them to become aware of the ecological phenomena and also helps them to understand the relationship with tress, soil, water regulation, plant and microclimate.
8. **Jain “forest economy in forest”** in which it has highlights the area under forest in India, importance of forest, advantages of forest, forest development programmed.
9. **Journal “ethno forestry-its relevance in Arunachal Pradesh”, VOL.14, NO-1(1996)** has mentioned that Arunachal Pradesh people dependence their economy on the forests product- because economy of the states revolve around forests and forest based industries.
10. **Journal “ the Indian forester(found in 1875), vol.131, march 2005:** in this journal it has mentioned regarding role of Indian medicinal plant industry, export potential, banned medicinal plant for export, constraint of medicinal plant etc.

FOREST RESOURCES OF THE TRIBAL PEOPLE

The socio-economic life of the people of tribal area is very much linked with the forest. The local people are indirectly or directly depend upon the forest for various purposes like firewood, house, building materials, timber, food items, medicine and minor forest product.

The forest in this area possesses phenomenal range of biodiversity both in flora and fauna. The richness of life form i.e. the flora and fauna that occur in these forest present a panorama of

biodiversity with abundant number of plant species, terrestrial mammals, birds and large number of insects and reptiles.

FOREST RESOURCES OF ECONOMIC VALUE

There are various forest products in the area which have more or less economic value on which some tribal people dependent for livelihood such as:

PLANT SPECIES:-

- a. Timber:- timber species like silok or hillock(*terminalia myrio carpa*), kobho(*chacon, duavangga grandifora*), tapil(mekhai), belang(jack tree), liring(hingont) etc.
- b. Vegetables- green leaf like lorii, gam oying, ongin, obul, okobang, marshang, taking, nupuk, ogen, etc are abundantly found.
- c. Medicine-plant like namol-tangkol, tonglati, benge, genyak appir, epe rimang, mudurang ayin, ongin, omir appun, naming enying, eng asik an kani etc are different medicinal plant(name by tribal people).
- d. Fruit- fruits like lemon, orange, pineapple, litchi, pear, banana etc

ANIMAL SPECIES:-

- a. Meat- meat of wild animals like deer, bear, wild cat, squirrel, birds, fishes etc.

MATERIAL CULTURE

The tribal people have rich knowledge about their forest. they know what forest product should be used for specific purpose in specific period of time. For house construction the hard woods like hingoni, melehai, silock, eyum, and bamboo etc. are used and tokopata(local name) thatch etc are use in roofing and cane is used for tying.

They are very much expert in craft work in which they use bamboo and cane as raw materials. Some leaves (ekkam) are used for packing food items and also use in granary store. Bamboo is an indigenous plant which is used most of the primary activities in tribal culture. Without bamboo construction of house is not possible. As per as hunting and fishing is also concerned, bamboo is the main raw materials such as bow and arrow, trapping and also other tools and equipment.

The hunter preserves the skull and teeth of large mammals in one corner of house for memorial. In the ancient time Aconite is used in arrow head to kill big animals, riipik, marshang, sidiik, onger, ombey are used for poisoning fish in rivers. Domestication of animals like cow, pig, dog, poultry, goat, etc are important custom of the tribal people.

FOOD HABITS:

Due to forest area tribal people fulfill their food habits to large extents from the forest products. They have the knowledge of all the eatables thing of the forest wild vegetables like lorii, gam oying, ooti, okomamang, okobang, nupuk, ogen, paput,takang,obul, ongin are abundantly found in forest.wild fruit are also found like komker, dorge, bogori,lokyo, tabi-tarak, sumpa, lirang aaye, takuk,tadar, etc. meat of wild animals is desirable to all like deer,bear,wild pig, wild cat, etc are larger mammals and smallmammals like rats,monkey, squirrel etc are found. Birds like ,perik,pekung, ejokiro,byatbo, pegang, ngeteperi, pepit,bogoli, pak, pemi, tasik etc. fish like orpe, ngopee,beyop, talum, nareng, tasum, takey, ripii etc. snake like birem, bitpyor, biking, biying, etc are also found.

ETHNO MEDICINE

The tribal people have some knowledge about the herbal and medicinal plants which are used for curing minor illness. Among the well known are locally Namol-tangkol used for abdomen pain, Tonglati use for join pain,Benge use for gastric, Genyak appir used for urinal problem, Epe rimang usedfor stomach pain, mudurang anne(guava leaves) used for dysentery, ongin used for high pressure,omir apun used for gastric, Namnying eming and eng asik are used for prevent the bleeding by pasting it over the freshly out wounds, kani used for loose motion, stomach pain etc.

RITES AND RITUALS

The tribal people are worshiper of supernatural things both benevolent and malevolent spirits. Belief are integrated part in their day to day activities whether it cutting of jhum field, hunting, house, construction etc. they believe that every things in the forest is cared by deities. So before carrying out certain activities they perform certain ritual to please the deities.

FOREST BASED ECONOMY

Tribal economy is connected intimately with forests. The economic activities of man are greatly influence by forests. Because man gets food fuel, fiber, timber, dung, ants, tan materials and various other things from forests. Besides forest, indirectly climate, stream flow, soil conditions, especially in the area drainage basins and thus influence agriculture grating, recreation and wildlife.

The traditional economy of the tribal people was primarily based on food gathering, hunting and fishing, shifting cultivation and a small amount of trade by barter. Nowadays, however, they have also taken up wet rice cultivation, horticulture, trade and business, government services, industries and other profession.

- a. Agriculture.

- b. Hunting.
- c. Fishing.

FOREST AS A COMMERCIAL VALUE

A. TIMBER

The commercial local timber species are mainly Hollock, Tita sampa, sal, hingoni etc. which are in high demand in the market. Hillock and Tita Sampa are important for any furniture purpose as well as for any constructional purpose.

The forefathers of the tribal people were not had any knowledge of timber business. But today timber has become one of the commercial business value for tribal people because they have learned a lot about the technique as well as importance of timber.

B. FIRE WOOD:

Tribal people are totally depend on firewood. Firewood to be the major forest product and its demand is also high locally. The consumption of firewood by people is mainly limited to the dead trees, dropped branches etc.

C. BAMBOO AND LEAVES:

Bamboo is one of the main commercial purposes for the tribal people now days. Bamboos are mainly used for domestic purpose by local people in various ways for their house construction, trapping of fish and hunting. Bamboos are highly demand in the market because this bamboo became one of the businesses of tribal people.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

It is observed that the life of the people of the village is composed, on their forest. Thus the conservation of forest is the need. The protection and conservation of forest resources are not only desirable but are necessary for the maintenance of environmental and ecological balance.

In the early days, the entire requirements were fulfilled easily due to rich forest resources. Today's rapid increasing population lead to large reduction of forest resources in the area. The commercial felling in trees, hunting and trapping of wild animals and selling of their products, shifting cultivation, use of chemical poison and explosion, forest fire etc are the main cause for their worse situation of forest environment.

SUGGESTION

The followings are the few remedial measures on suggestion for conservation of forest.

1. To conserve forests is to protect the existing forest from merciless, reckless, cutting of tree by greedy Economic man.
2. To adopt scientific and judicious method of cutting trees. Illegal felling of trees should be discouraged and only mature and desired trees should be cut and unwanted trees of low economic value should be avoided.
3. Afforestation in place of deforestation commercial belling of trees and killing of animal should be for bid.
4. The people are encouraged to plant more trees for economic purposes, such as constructional materials, vegetables, fruits and nuts.
5. Improved methods of cultivation should be encouraged. Agriculture with biological fertilizer should be encouraged. However, chemical fertilizers should also supply to the farmers under subsidy and reduced rate.
6. The farmers should be given necessary training and advice for the permanent cultivation. Shifting cultivation should be discouraged for the betterment of the greater part of the society.
7. There should be proper implementation of forest laws.
8. Unnecessary setting of fire to should be discouraged.
9. Awareness campaign through posturing films and documents in the village should been encouraged.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that the tribal people are totally depended on forest for their daily needs. The forest is their part and partial of life. The entire economic lives of the villagers involve around agriculture which is their main occupation. They almost depend on shifting cultivation for their livelihood through wet-rice cultivation is also practiced. Paddy is their main crops. Every year they usually cultivate two on three plots, i.e. paddy field, mustard field and ginger. Ginger is the most valuable agricultural product by the people. Along with this these crops maize, brinjal, chilly and variety of vegetables are also cultivated. Fields are cultivated by themselves and also depend on labour and a kind of labour exchange is their families and persons.

Though their main stay is agriculture, they also depend on secondary occupation for their day today requirements, like hunting, fishing, weaving. Livestock rearing making crafts etc.

But today, this eco-harmony on friendship with forest is in hostile. They are clearing the forest more and more for shifting cultivation and other purposes. They do not care also finding

themselves difficult in collection of woods and bamboo for construction of big and durable houses. Rivers and jungles are no more adored with fish and animals.

In present rate of destruction of forest resources and other natural resources continues, a day would come to this place where these tribal of the study area will find themselves too late realize and would not leave anything for their next generation excepting depleted forests and marked hills.

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