

Importance of Indian Oral Tradition in Contemporary Age

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Abstract

Oral traditions have played a vital role in shaping the cultural identity of Indian culture throughout history. It is an indispensable part of the intangible cultural heritage of the Indian people. The oral tradition's core part emphasizes on spoken knowledge in the form of rhyme chant stories etc. In the era of oral tradition, people were performing their art in a dramatic way to express their cultural, folk tales, traditions etc. The way they were expressing their art became iconic and helped to preserve their social values, culture, and further passes from one generation to another generation. Such types of traditions were passed down through generations, preserving not only the language but also the values, beliefs, and social structures of societies. By the means of oral form of communication, people were communicating so beautifully as it seems to be nightingale singing in her own melody. People were expressing their feelings, emotions, culture in the form of stories, rhymes, poems, drama- including all types of genre, in different known languages. This amalgamation makes their cultural heritage more beautiful, bright, and colorful in a fantastic form so it can't resist passing culture from one generation to another. This paper helps to influence people for their development and betterment in literature, in our cultural values, our heritage and languages. It's also examined and give analysis of past writers those who have experienced oral traditions. This analysis gives us opportunity to explore oral tradition in today's livelihood.

Keywords- Oral tradition, values, knowledge, heritage, teaching, culture, awareness.

Introduction

Oral traditions have played a vital role in shaping the cultural identity of Indian culture throughout history. For maintaining mankind in today's world, oral tradition places or create impact on the importance of communication, information, morality, values before any kind of return text, manuscript etc. These oral traditions create a historical movement for betterment of people in today's world. The history gives us references that how oral traditions, knowledge, collections, information, memories of their people's livelihood. The powerful technique of oral traditions give reference using vocal cord, melody, notes of music to influence people for a long period of time. Now in today's world, the significance of oral traditions seems to be more impactful rather than written traditions. Now oral communication becomes common and primary way of communication.

The oral tradition helps people to increase their skills in vocabulary, grammars, phrases, idiom, construction of sentences. These skills further uplift and people started making bhajan, kirtan, pandwani, powada, and other oral songs to pray Gods and Goddess. Oral tradition is the most ancient way of communication before BCE. The oral tradition helps to describe new things or giving information of something new in such a manner which helps people to remain it in their whole life and it also seems to be more powerful and brings more spirituality to people that it can't be resisted for passing it on one generation to another generation.

Main Text

The primary form of oral traditions literature greatly impacts creating values, morals, discipline etc. The literature studies give capability or help to improve skills of creating your own thought, proverb, grammar, formation of stories, poem and influence people to communicate with each other. This led to increase connecting people socially.

Oral traditions are important because they transmit collective wisdom, history, and culture across generations, provide a voice for marginalized communities, allow for emotional and holistic understanding of the past, preserve indigenous knowledge, and foster a strong sense of community and identity. These traditions were particularly important during the era when people were often forbidden to read and write. As a result, oral tradition became a vital tool for passing down stories, genealogies and cultural values.

Oral tradition gives people a way to know other people's thoughts, habits, myth, knowledge etc. by connecting them socially. The social conversation between people leads to generate new ideas, stories, myths, facts and increase communication skills. The literature studies help to serve oral tradition significance in more valuable context in today's livelihood

As a means of resisting the dilution of cultural manifestations in formerly colonized nations, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o stresses the importance of "decolonizing the mind" and the need to preserve indigenous oral traditions via a postcolonial perspective. In order to pass on information and mold cultures for future generations, he supports oral storytelling as a storytelling technique that is just as important and legitimate as any written book. Indian cognitive strengthen this topic to a greater extent that furnish primeval notions.

Exploring India's oral tradition -

India have diversified cultures, unity in different religion, continuously keep growing and developing as a world culture; it is to be honored for preserving these ancient oral tradition's culture and heritage. Especially, talking about India's oral tradition, culture, heritage, iconic places are still preserved and well maintained. which give demonstration and detail of oral traditions. From ancient times text and scriptures have been orally transmitted by storytellers. These oral transmissions have been allowed diverse communities to pass on their languages, customs, knowledge of their culture their religions moral and ethical teaching alive, contributing Indian society's moral foundation gives us impact on importance of morality, truth, belief, karma, oral tradition gives us depth of storytelling, folktale give us importance of moral values, belief, knowledge etc.

Powada-

It is an oral traditional Marathi ballad form originated in Maharashtra. Powada has play a vital role in preserving Maharashtra's culture, heritage and history. Powada it's a form of ballad which have been having history of more than seven and half century. It is originally form in Marathi language and it is sung 'to glorify' king's, heroes' and leaders' bravery, courage, fight in battle, great deeds, his humanity, behaviour etc. It seems that it was make only for the lionize Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and valorous Tanaji Mallusare; both are popular luminary in Maharashtra. Most of the ballads were giving the references of bravery and courage of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj as well as Tanaji Mallusare; such powade sung not to praise and to glorify their deeds in battlefield rather hidden purpose is also to motivate common people to fight for their freedom and for Hindutva.

It is oral and impacted medium to educate people by singing a song which cover mass of illiterate common persons. Now a days it changes its subjects; and powada is used as a tool to spread awareness in societal thinking. Shahir focusing on the pathetic condition of female in society, issues of female foeticide, issues of dowry and chaotic condition of society. These powada not only helps to educated and encourage people but also make positive changes in Maharashtra.

'Afzal Khan's Vadh ' is the finest example of Shivaji's powada which sketching put to death of Afzal Khan by Shivaji Raje. Some lines are as-

खान यडबडला इतक्यात महाराजानी पोटामधी पिस वाढकलला
वाघ न खांचा मारा केला
हेटरटरा फाडल पोटाला
हे तडा गेला खानाचा कोथळा
बाहिर आला जी र जी जी ...

(चित्रपट : मी शिवाजी राजे भोसले बोलतोय
गीत : शाहीर अदृन्यातदास)

Afzal Khan, who planned to kill Shivaji with hidden dagger during the encounter, was instead disembowelled by Shivaji using Waghnakha and killed Afzal Khan bravely.

Pandawani-

The Pandawani word itself originated from India which means Pandaw = five sons of Prince Pandu of Hastinapur and Vani = oral or speech form. The Pandwani tells us about the stories, real life incidents of his family especially his second son of Kunti Putra Bhima. Bhima was known to be a strongest person in Mahabharata. Pandwa's folk tales was prominent all over India and it get different name according to different states of India. But pandawani

word mainly use in state of Chhattisgarh to express Pandwa's stories with the help of musical devices like ektara and tambura.

Kirtan and Bhajan –

Kirtan and Bhajan both are spiritual and devotional songs sung to praise God or in other words we can say it "Bhakti Geets". This oral tradition shows worshippers' love and faith towards God which has been present since BCE and these traditions pass from one generation to another in the form of singing. This is our culture and heritage which we must be commemorated. Musical instruments like cymbals, tabala, harmonium, dhol etc. are used to make it more spiritual and to involve more worshippers in the ocean of bhakti. Sometimes devotees give clapped on the beats of bhajan and its shows they immersed in devotion. Not only in Hindu religion we get the evidences of bhajan but also in Buddhism, Judaism, Jainism we have its references. Generally, bhajans of Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, Lord Vishnu, Lord Mahadev and Goddesses are frequently sung and popular. The bhajan provide spiritual upliftment to devotees and also those people who were feeling anxiety, depression, overthinking, negative thoughts, conflict in relation etc. The bhajan is sung all over India in different languages, also in dialects according to different states languages get differ such as: Maharashtra – Marathi, Punjab- Punjabi, West Bengal- Bengali, Karnataka- Kannada, Andhra Pradesh- Tamil, Gujarat- Gujarati etc.

Kirtan is also an apart of oral tradition. Just like as bhajan it is also devotional and spiritual songs and perform mainly with khanjiri or dafti or tambura in the hands of kirtankar (a person who sings God's song or kirtan). Kirtan is related to devotional and spiritual song but some said we're used to perform it and educated illiterate people and poor people like Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj, Saint Gadge Baba, Namdeo, Tukaram Maharaj and other popular saints. The kirtan has history from the Vedic period. It covers all types of religions, mythological, social subject. The Saints and yogis perform kirtan to change the society from the jealous people of society, chaos of the society, illiteracy, and create a spiritual upliftment for the common people. The kirtan give upliftment to humanity to have belief, faith towards Gods and Goddesses for betterment of their lives. Most of yogi, saint perform kirtan to bring peace, calmness in life. The kirtan is narrated by groups of yogis, saint, singer and even it can be performed solo which gives theater like sense and manifestation. The style of kirtan has reached in several parts of India. The kirtan mainly perform during festivals, celebrating birth of Gods and Goddesses, performing rituals, holy ceremony, religious ceremony. The kirtan can be performed in day-to-day life for chanting God and Goddess's names. It also can be performing either dusk or dawn.

We take an example of Sant Gadge Baba's kirtan, one of the best kirtan

मंदिरासमोर लुटली इज्जत,
हा बघत बसला पोरीला,
रक्षण करतो म्हणाला,
अन् स्वतःच गेला चोरीला,
हातात असुन धारदार शास,
कधी चोरामागे धावला नाही..
कुठं राहतो कुणांस ठाऊक,
अजुनपर्यंत धावला नाही...

(“देव” – संत गाडगे बाबा यांची कविता)

From the above lines of kirtan, Sant Gadge baba wanted to hold the mirror of reality towards the society to reflect on their blind faith in God. When a girl is being molested and ill-treated in front of the temple God only sits there and watching her. He calls himself a protector but He flees off Himself, as if being stolen. Even though, He has honed arms, he never ran behind thief to prevent theft. Here Sant Gadge Baba stated that we should not be dependent on God as a defender He will come and save us. Actually, he wanted poor, illiterate and victimise people to fight against injustice and for their rights they have to take weapons in their hands and make society safe and protective. Later that Sant Gadge Baba asked question to common people and ill-literate, where is God's identity still I can't recognize him.

Conclusion –

People face different challenges to preserving oral traditions alive in today's world. The most important part of preserving and maintaining oral traditions are used to their culture, folk tales, traditions applying or using it in day-to-day life. This gives opportunity for getting their knowledge from holy places, schools and all ages group people, it helped them to communicate more firmly. The oral traditions place the impactfully role in the cultural festivals, occasions, folk tales, drama for enhancing creativity and expressing their thoughts and moral values to today's people for their survival.

Also, we need to form a stronger team with the collaboration of a different people from the different interdisciplinary studies like a linguistic, literature studies, history. Because such people have an experience and well known to oral traditions, culture, folktales and this enables us to recognize oral tradition in the today's world or life.

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