



STUDY OF DORMITORIES AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION AMONG TRIBAL PEOPLE IN NORTHEAST INDIA

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Abstract

The tribal people in northeast India constitute a major part of Indian population. They have their own culture, tradition, language. Dormitory is one of the important social institutions that practiced by tribal people. This paper tries to focus on the different types of dormitories which are practiced by the tribal people in Northeast India. An attempt is made to study about the features, functions, and relevance of dormitory (youth house) in tribal culture. Dormitory helps to maintain the social order in tribal community. In present scenario though the relevance of dormitories quite decline but dormitory as a social institution is an integral part of tribal culture and society.

Keywords: Dormitory, tribal community, social institution, function, relevance.

INTRODUCTION

In simple word dormitory is a place where youth live together. Dormitory among primitive people is a form of association. It is a social institution where youth live together and develop community feelings among them. The age of youth who practice dormitories is different among tribe to tribe. Youth dormitories are a unique social institution which has an immense importance among tribal people. Dormitory is a community living space where youth able to learn about the quality of various skills such as art, crafting and also helps youth to choose their life partner. In north east India most of the tribes practice their dormitories which help to preserve their culture and language.

Based on membership there is three kind of dormitories these are,

1. Boys dormitories,
2. Girls dormitories,
3. Joint dormitories.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study covers:

1. To study dormitories in north-eastern tribal group.
2. This study tries to focus on the function, features and relevance of dormitories.
3. This paper tries to analyse the significance of dormitory as a social institution and causes of decline of youth house.

METHODOLOGY: This paper explains dormitories among tribal people. This paper based on descriptive research. The whole study in this paper is prepared through previously done researches. All the data and information collected from secondary sources e.g. - books, journals e-sources and other research articles.

TRIBAL PEOPLE: Tribe is a group of people who live together. Tribal people are termed as indigenous

people. Tribes are those people who have their common culture-tradition, language, a particular geographical area and they depend on their regional land for their livelihood. Thakkar Bappa used the term Adivasi to refer tribal people and later on Ambedkar also popularised the word to refer tribal people. According to 2011 census, In India tribal people constitute 8.6% of total population which are 706 schedule tribe, where number of schedule tribes in India is 10,42,81,034.

According to D.N. Majumdar, tribe as a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of function ruled by tribal officers hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes. (majumder, 1937)

As per 2011 census Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tribal population in India.

DORMITORIES IN NORTH EAST INDIA: India is a land of unity in diversity where various communities irrespective of their language, religion, ethnic identity are living together. All these community has their unique tradition, culture. Dormitory is one of the important socio cultural institutes practiced by tribal people.

DORMITORIES IN NAGA TRIBES: Naga is one of the largest tribes in northeast India. Naga people practice different kind of dormitories, one of the important one is Morung, which is known as differently among Naga people. Morung is known as bachelor's house. In Koynak Naga it is known as Baan for boys and Morung Ywo for girls, in Angami Naga it is known as Kechuki, Apuki in Sema Naga. Morung is an important social institution which brings unity among Naga tribe. Morung is an Assamese word which means house or hall where bachelor learn various skill like -custom tradition, warfare, art and culture, folkdance, song etc. In Naga tribe when children attain puberty between the age of 10 to 15 they used to stay in dormitory till they married.

KARBI TRIBE: Among Karbi tribe, bachelor dormitory is differently known as Terang Ahem, Terang Hangbar, Farla which are popularly known as "JIRKEDAM". Originally Jirkedam was practiced by male only but now female also practices Jirkedam.

Jirkedam has 10 office bearers with its leader known as Kleng-sarpo and deputy leader known as Klengdun. But now the existence of Jirkedam is dying gradually among Karbi tribe.

TIWA TRIBE: Tiwas are the one of the important tribal groups in northeast India. Youth dormitory practice by Tiwa people is Chamadi. Chambadi is mostly practiced by the hill Tiwa which constitute 15000 populations according to 2011 census. Chambadi is also practiced by bachelors who attain 10 to 12 years old and it continues till they get married. Panthaikhel, a managing community who looks after the works of the Chambadi. It is a social institute where people learn various skills and their traditional way of life.

DIMASA KACHARI: In Assam Dimasa kachari is another hill tribe. Dormitory is practiced by this tribe for boys is known as Nodrang. Youth performs various functions like harvesting the paddy without charging any remuneration.

SINGPHO: Singpho in Arunachal Pradesh practice pinta-khek girl's dormitory. It is a separate room for the girls when they attains puberty.

MIZO TRIBE: Dormitory among Mizo tribe is known as Zawalbuk. The word Zawalbuk means community residence. When a bachelor attains the age of 15 they used to stay in this dormitory system. In this residential house youth received various kinds of training such as art of singing, dancing, tribal life of warfare and wrestling etc. The leader of the Zawalbuk is known as Val Upa.

HMAR TRIBE: Hmar is one of the important tribes in north Cachar district of Assam. Youth dormitory among Hmar tribe is known as Budonzwl which is practiced by both girls and boys. For boys it is known as hangseuki and for girl's it is known as leuseuki. Budonzwl was continuing until the youth get married. Once youth get married membership of their dormitory is ceased.

GARO TRIBE: The youth dormitory among Garo is known as Nokpante. Noke means house and Pante means bachelor, which means house of the bachelor. Nokpante is practiced by adolescent young men where a house is built for the bachelor to live separately from their parents.

MARING COMMUNITY: Youth dormitory of Maring community in Manipur for boys known as Karilangrkhong and for girls known as Nangakangrkhong. The leader of the rkhong is known as khangshellak which divided into two parts for girls it is known as Nangaka Upa and for boys known as Kartlang Upa.

SIGNIFICANCE OF YOUTH DORMITORY:

Importance of youth dormitories is given below:

1. Dormitories help to create community feelings. It creates a sense of cooperation, interdependence among the youth.
2. Through the dormitory system tribal people preserve their own tradition, culture which they have been practicing from ancient time.
3. It enhances a sense of security among the youth. It gives training for warfare and wrestling among youth.
4. Dormitory separates youth from their parents through which their dependency upon their parents gradually disappears and youth becomes mature.
5. It helps to develop the skill of the youth for e.g. crafting, paintings, and arts like singing, dancing etc. which help them to settle their future occupation.
6. It is an important social institution which maintains social structure in society.

Decline of youth dormitory in present scenario:

Dormitory plays an important role in tribal society. But the strength of this social institution gradually decline.

1. The growth of various educational institutions such as role of schools, colleges become as a barrier before the functioning of the dormitory. Most of the school going children do not want to attend dormitories.
2. Urban way of life has also impacted for the decline of dormitory.
3. Spread of other religious activities has changed the cultural aspect of every tribe.

4. Ecological factors are also responsible for the decline of dormitory because to make buildings there requires some resources which can be acquired from the nature and it will give bad impact on environment.

RELEVANCE OF YOUTH DORMITORY:

In north east India so many tribes practice this kind of social institution but in recent time use of this social institution gradually disappears. But dormitories have its own relevance in society where it unites people socially, economically and culturally. Dormitory plays an influential role in the society. It helps youth to develop their various kinds of skills and also trains them in socio- cultural, religious and economic activity. It enhances cooperation, coordination among the member of tribal community.

CONCLUSION

Youth dormitory is an important social institution which plays a significant role for the integration of tribal community in northeast India. Dormitory as a social institution not only practice by the tribal people in northeast India but it appears in other parts of India and the world. Some examples of dormitory which is practiced by other tribal groups are- In Trorbraind island dormitory is known as Bakumatula, in Oraon it is known as Jonkerpa and Dhum Khuria, in Gond dormitory is known as Gotul which is practiced by both boys and girls. From this discussion we can see that most of the tribe practices their youth house which is an integral part for maintaining social structure. Though the existence of youth dormitory is gradually declining in present society, it has occupied a significant position in tribal society.

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