

REVIEW

Tradition of cooperation in Sudurpashchim province of Nepal

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Even though it is a common occurrence in nature, human collaboration is superior to that of all other species in terms of the scope and variety of cooperative actions. The emergence of collaboration is not a recent phenomenon that is influenced by culture. People have followed tradition and culture since the dawn of human civilization. For a common goal, they both live and work in groups. In Sudurpashchim province, there are a lot of customs and distinct civilizations. However, they are not presented in writing. The traditional cultures are being marginalized by the idea of modernization and a focus on the various or imported cultures of people in this region. In order to protect the identity of these cultures, we have to bring them out and apply them as the previous time.

Keywords: traditions, cooperation, mutual work, *Desawar*, voluntary labor, *Parma*, *Paicho*, *Ghatta*, *parsai*

1. Introduction

Cooperation is necessary for human existence on both psychological and societal levels because people cannot live alone. Society depends on cooperation. Cooperation is necessary for advancement in the fields of science and technology, agriculture and industry, transportation and communication, trade and commerce, and social integration. The world is greatly impacted by social traditions and practices. A social custom is an accepted way of acting or doing something in a specific society, location, or period of time. Traditions are ideas and behaviors that have developed over time, and the only distinction between a custom and a tradition is the generational transmission of the custom.

In the context of Sudurpashchim province, there are many customs and traditions of cooperation that people have been practicing for generations. These include *Parma*, *paicho*, *Khedi*, *mustikaanna*, and *Dharma Bhakari*, to name a few. These traditional collaborative approaches were based on a systematic approach. Traditional cooperative processes often focus on local culture and community development. Typical examples of common partnerships include job sharing programs (e.g., harvest times), irrigation/water allocation schemes, savings and lending clubs (each member pays regularly and takes it in exchange for cash in

advance), religious activities, information sharing, and creating awareness.

Most of the traditional social customs and practices of cooperation have existed informally and inherited from generation to generation. Now, the society is changing fast, and many traditional social customs, traditions, and values are also changing. People are knowingly or unknowingly adopting new things in the name of modernity. In this process, many of our valuable traditions and customs of self-help and cooperation are slowly disappearing. These traditional practices of cooperation were affecting the lives of community people. The *Desawar* system of voluntary labor by farmers of *Kailali* district and renowned community schools in *Doti* and *Bajhang* districts, all based on local participation and resource mobilization. As time passes, once very effective community mobilization traditional practices are slowly being non-existent. Therefore, it has become necessary to get an insight into these social traditions of cooperation and their role in society. Through an analytical study and documentation, these traditional forms of cooperation can be an important source of knowledge management for the present generation. If these traditions are preserved and adopted in the modern context, they can be an important source of sustainable development. Another

factor related is the creative self-reliance community through the use of these traditional self-help practices.

2. Review of literature

Humans have always been willing to work together in order to survive in spite of competition and conflicts of interest with some species of animals and the environment. People are willing to help others with their problems, even when there is no obvious benefit. People also redouble their efforts in collaborative businesses to produce results beyond the power of any one person, such as sailing across the sea, building castles, and forming an army that will fight for freedom. Various sectors are investigating these events by examining how cooperation can emerge through natural selection, which defines your historical development and your role in economic trade. In this complex business environment, psychological research highlights that human interaction often requires complex processes of understanding and motivation. For example, in order to help someone with a problem, the facilitator must have the ability to understand the goal the other person is trying to achieve and the motivation to take action on behalf of the other. In addition, cooperative participants must integrate their individual actions in a particular way of employee segregation and direct their own and others' interests into a joint venture aimed at a cohesive goal (1).

A group's or community's common beliefs and customs that are based on social knowledge are referred to as its culture. It is a shared understanding of how to perceive, feel, and consider social groups, and it is influenced by shared cultural sensibilities, know-how, beliefs, and ideologies that specify individual behavior. As a result, it is described as a social glue that is frequently affixed to both individual and collective beliefs. As a result, culture refers to a sizable population that is a wonder of human creation, a product of civilization, and composed of members of various groups. Through education, people learn about human systems ethics and beliefs, which help them integrate within society. It has the integrated mental network that distinguishes members of one group of individuals from those of another, as well as the unwritten laws of public relations. It is a set of beliefs that were created in a community or group and are strong enough to be deemed applicable to groups with various values (2).

There are several elements that affect cultural identities. As a result of the population's diversity and multiculturalism, the boundaries between cultures have loosened from their former thickness, especially in urban regions. Due to this, the foundation of social cohesion changed from identity local to a given location. In fact, some people claimed that the maintenance of cultural heritage and identity should not be used as a tool for social division and must be replaced by cosmopolitanism, which gives people a stronger sense of shared citizenship. Culture may consider this a type of

historical repository. On the contrary, people draw from a historical reservoir of data (3).

The concept of tradition, for example, might be described as a psycho-social dynamic process that ensures adherence to a specific set of material and spiritual values that are relatively constant. Tradition adds time, activity, involvement, and permanence to the human experience by integrating it into the system of values. Tradition serves as a constant source of knowledge as well as a source of life. According to tradition, cultural values that are absorbed, unique, and serve as goals are what create "human nature," not the rigidity of its biological and psychological structure (4).

Traditions are concepts and convictions that are handed down from one generation to the next. Unlike rules and regulations, traditions are not obligated to be observed. Cooperation is one of the fundamental tenets of social existence. When two or more individuals or groups work together to achieve common goals, it is a sort of social process. Everyone benefits when individuals cooperate to achieve their goals since it is a kind of social engagement.

The Latin words "co" and "operary," which both mean "to labor," are the origin of the English word "cooperation." Therefore, collaboration is working together to achieve the same objective or goal. Cooperation occurs when two or more individuals get together to work toward a common objective. Cooperation is the term used to describe two people working together to achieve shared or comparable goals.

Cooperation (and therefore good behavior) is always a problem, as it requires individuals to suppress their interests in order to reap the benefits of others or to balance their interests with those of others. Collaboration can only occur in certain situations. People have been able to emerge from the lives of great partners by participating in a variety of collaborative activities on which they depend. These participatory activities are the basis of human behavior. Humans are great apes, as well as orangutans, gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos. The social life of large monkeys is very complex. People not only build long-term social relationships with others, but also understand social relationships between third parties, for example, who has power over whom and who is friends with anyone in the social network. In addition, they recognize that individual actions are driven by both their intentions and their perception of the situation. This means that large monkeys take almost all of their behavioral decisions into a complex social environment that includes all other people close to their goals and ideas, as well as the social relationships of those people both to themselves and to each other (5).

Working together toward a shared objective while fully aware that we may accomplish more as a team than as individuals is the art of cooperation or teamwork. The term "cooperation" is so enchanted that just thinking about it makes us feel better. There is a modest but persistent niche in economic studies for the function of social traditions

and conventions in the economy. A social custom is an established way of doing something in a specific culture, location, or period of time. Beliefs and behaviors that have developed over time are known as traditions and customs. Being able to collaborate with others to accomplish a task for a shared goal or to benefit both parties is a fundamental life skill. Cooperation is a skill that shows off the capacity to compromise and reach a decision-making agreement while working productively and politely with individuals or teams that have different perspectives.

Collaborative and breeding diets provide a natural basis for understanding the emergence of cooperation in humans, as the return of cooperation in these activities would be on top of our ancestral hunters and collectors. However, to explain how our ancestors successfully dealt with the problem of free passengers in this context still remains a challenge. Factors based on human interaction, however, give us an indication of the mechanisms that can lead to assortativity (6).

Customs and traditions are the common and anticipated activities, behaviors, and norms of a given community. One who upholds traditions and customs, upholds national principles, and has a feeling of social duty is a good citizen. The social norms have a tremendous global reach. Traditions are ideas and ways of doing things that have developed over time. The duration and widespread following of a tradition appear to be the only distinction between a custom and a tradition.

Since the beginning of time, man has belonged to some type of community; without it, he cannot survive. He has a biological and psychological need to be a part of society. Living outside of society prevents a man from developing his personality, language, culture, and “inner depth.” Man cannot survive as a being without association. Therefore, a large portion of a man’s life is spent in a group. Because relationships cannot be understood without reference to the units (or terms) of the relationship, neither can persons be understood without reference to their relationships with one another. Understanding things like synapses and neurons, for example, may be helpful to a man of society, but his goal is still to analyze social relationships. When we study how they emerge in a person’s life, the function of social life becomes clearer. The mix of numerous elements, including activities, people, and locations, makes up social life. While each of these elements is necessary to create a social life, the nature of each element varies from person to person and can change depending on a number of external factors. In actuality, a person’s actions, yes, even his ideas and feelings, are greatly influenced by the complicated social life of our day, which surrounds him like an environment. It is true that human achievement is characterized by his capacity to do it in a way that no other species can. Everywhere, social life places restrictions on and heavily affects individual behavior (7).

2.1. Research questions

The study is mainly directed toward answering the following questions:

- (i) Is there any tradition-related cooperation in Sudurpashchim province?
- (ii) What are the forms of cooperation of Sudurpashchim province?

2.2. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to find out the traditions of cooperation in Sudurpashchim province of Nepal. Thus, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- (i) To find out the cooperation-related traditions of Sudurpashchim province.
- (ii) To identify the forms of cooperation of Sudurpashchim province

3. Methodology

The study is designed to examine and analyze traditional cooperation practices in Sudurpashchim province. The study has used historical, exploratory, and descriptive research designs, and qualitative techniques have been used based on the nature and source of the data. Cooperation is the creation of the culture of any society. There are different types of systems, beliefs, understandings, patterns, and rituals of each society. The real meaning is based on the behavior of social people; the qualitative approach was used to collect the information from the social context. The study covers the Sudurpashchim province of Nepal, which is the smallest province of Nepal. This study mainly used primary data. Primary data were collected from the respondent of provincial level cooperative units, social workers, and the cooperatives. Purposive sampling was used for answer different types of cooperation in this province. The oral-verbal stimuli are presented as part of the data collection process in interviews, and respondents respond orally and verbally. If at all feasible, telephone interviews should also be performed in conjunction with this strategy. This interview was conducted at their respective offices or homes. The researcher had personally interviewed 10 local community people from different districts of the province.

4. Result and discussion

4.1. *Mano pratha*

It is one of the cooperation systems of Sudurpashchim province on the occasion of the wedding ceremony,

bratabandha, and death of a person. This system covers the entire family, relatives, and villagers. The system is being limited with family and relatives in the present situation of migration (P. Joshi, personal communication, May 10, 2019).

Diyo mano is related to marriage and *bratabandha*; in this *mano* system, rice and flowers were used in ancient time, but it is now modified with rice, money, fruits, flowers, incense sticks, and others as their capacities.

The word *Bhete Mano* is used for the death of the person. In the past, villagers or relatives contributed rice to visit the dead person's house after the funeral process. Now, the system is ongoing, but people are living with the mixed community, and the persons who were migrants from the particular village or community are receiving help today. The best *mano* system is a little bit different from the person giving money, rice, fruits, etc.

4.2. Parma/parima

Parma is a community practice of providing and taking care of work or services in exchange (*alopalo*) while performing major social, cultural, and agricultural activities. For example, during the planting or harvesting of crops or the building of shelters or roofs, people in the community lend work to each other (*alopalo*) as *Parma* to complete the existing work. Such *Parma* is restored the next time the *Parma* lender has to perform the same functions. The practice of *Parma* is therefore a tradition of doing each other's work in a joint manner. This is particularly prevalent in rural and agricultural communities.

Parma is another traditional trade union. First, during the farming season, there is a shortage of workers on the farms. Second, most Nepali farms depend on rainwater during the monsoon season to be taken on time. Third, the rotation of workers helps the farm owner to plant seeds/samples in a shorter period of time, which reduces the time needed to go there daily. The motto of *Parma* is that if everyone in the community does farming when they can get a good harvest, it will bring happiness to the family. The exciting thing about *Parma* is that it is organized by people in need and destroyed as the work is completed (8).

Parma is one of the mutual works in the tradition of Sudurpashchim province. Exchange of service of persons is known as *Parma*. All the villagers have the objective of mutual support for completing the tasks like harvesting grains, applying fertilizers, and painting the home once a year (R. Bam, personal communication, May 12, 2019). There was not enough money or food for the citizens. So, in the line of poverty, the exchange of service is more valuable in Sudurpashchim province Nepal.

4.3. Paincho

Paincho is related to goods in need; "*Paincho*" means "Barter." Persons who bring some food or other item to their neighbor to repay the same quantity are called *paicho*. So, thinking that no one would die without food was the main theme of the community. This *paicho* is not only applied in food exchange but also in others like ornaments in a wedding ceremony. If the person has no capacity for the gold ornaments, other villagers help them by giving the ornaments. A person said that one set of ornaments can be used for a whole village marriage ceremony. Thus, *paicho* is useful for the person to solve their current problems.

4.4. Parsai

The people of one village works for self-help by mutual support in this *parsai*, that is, the agriculture field were so far from their living village and during harvesting time, they help each other deliver fertilizer in the field from their home area (B. Pandey, personal communication, May 15, 2019).

The pattern of life and cultural practices keeps us within a certain limit, making us culturally disciplined. This vision guides and directs us through the times of our ancestors. They worked together. They use the trade of goods (*paicho*) to meet the needs of each other with respect for religion, whose guidance, moral values, and moral excellence were highly commendable for a gifted person but not our ancestors. They even built a party, *pauwas*, temple, *gumba*, etc., focusing on the protection and preservation of ancient paintings and buildings. We feel proud today of their nature and contribution to the culture and tradition of Nepalese.

4.5. Khedi

Khedi is a type of social or mutual work for doing any heavy work. *Mukhiya* is managed for social work or social welfare work. Another example is when a person informs *mukhiya* of the difficult work, like carrying and managing *pather* (tile of roofing) and *Basa* and *Bharaina* for the main support of home, like the main beam of a new technology's home. The societal-related work like New koel's establishment, the construction of *panlo* and *Ghatta*, and *aafer* for weapons like *kuto kodalo* axe, etc., are important in society. The social sympathy and help for the poor and disabled, such as a widow, is critical in agriculture process, such as harvesting and managing crops. Not only that, but when a person cannot do the work himself, there is the important tradition of completing the task in koel *pelne* and *aafer* for making a weapon for the entire village (S. Dholi, personal communication, 15 June, 2019).

In Nepal, performing community service is not a new concept. Its foundation is a rich cultural history. Every schoolboy in Nepal is familiar with a tale about volunteerism, service groups, and non-profits. It is the story of a village striker who, though materially destitute, is wealthy in spirit and left a lasting legacy for everyone by digging a well for drinking water. The Grass Cutler's Well, a brief poem by Bhanubhakta, Nepal's 19th-century "Pioneer Poet," is well known in Nepal and tells a tale of immortality. The poem's opening lines in English are as follows: Digging a well or spring (fall, inar), constructing a well or waterspout (Pani Dharo), constructing and maintaining a shaded lounge (chautaro) or lounge (pati, pauwa), and offering free service (shramadan) to the neighborhood. Many Nepalese people want to perform or gain from performing all conventional charitable deeds—good neighbor, volunteer work, and generosity—before they pass away. The great significance of doing good deeds and helping others is expressed in such words as paropakar garnu (to do selfless service for others), swachhale paropakar garnu (to do voluntary and voluntary service, voluntary), and swayamsewa garnu (to volunteer; i.e., the "act of serving"). Simple deeds of courtesy and consideration are simply a tiny step away from more extensive civic engagement.

Community-based grassroots groups are crucial in addressing issues of inequality, segregation, and poverty. They encourage self-awareness and confidence-building, practice democracy and good governance, and foster dual ties between the community and other stakeholders. Additionally, they encourage the utilization of neighborhood resources, apply a need-based strategy for community development, provide voices to the voiceless, and create a safety net for underserved areas (9).

All the components of socioeconomic empowerment are related to the welfare of the community, or all these activities complete the economic and social upliftment of the society, which is related to community welfare as well as the individual members or persons.

Dharma Bhakari is the food storage in a particular village. This is run with community contributions. There, individuals who had anything to give might do so, and those who did not could take what they needed. This technique proved to be extremely helpful during landslides, fires, famines, and droughts. This system's primary goals were to end hunger and eradicate poverty. Since ancient times, cooperatives such as Guthi, Dharma, Bhakari, Manka Khala, Kulayan, Dewali, Parma, Bheja, and Dhukuri have operated in Nepal.

5. Conclusion

Sudurpashchim province is rich in tradition and culture; there is much cooperation related to culture and traditions

practiced by the people for their survival. There are many important informal institutionalized traditional cooperation practices among the rural people. For example, the *Desawar* system of *Kailali* is one of the biggest community-based irrigation systems in South Asia, involving thousands of rural farmers. The *Desawar* system, which is continuing for centuries, is now slowly disappearing. Such a strong social institution, which was based on self-help and cooperation and effectively functioning without any written document but institutionalized through social customs, needs to be preserved. This study examined the functioning of this system. Moreover, there are several other traditional forms of cooperation through which many schools, temples, and irrigation systems have been functioning to date. The study will provide guidelines for the provincial and local governments and other development-related organizations relating to the existing state of these traditional forms of cooperation and make necessary provisions for their role in the present-day context.

Sudurpashchim province comprises different social-cultural traditions and practices. Cooperation practices existing among hill people and *Tharu* people of *Kailali* Kanchanpur are mainly included in this study. Tradition helps to maintain unity among people. It also helps to preserve the identity of different communities. It reflects the countries' lifestyles and people. However, it is also the way for entertainment, joy, and refreshment. So, every culture and tradition should be respected because we people are the same kind, just with different colors. Traditions are good for gathering with friends, loved ones, and community.

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