
Women and Environmental: The Analysis of Correlation and Causation

¹Dr. Tapas Pal, ²Mr. Sukanta Das

¹PostDoc (North Eastern Hill University) PhD (Visva-Bharati)

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Geography, Raiganj University, India

²Asst. Professor, Dept. of Geography, Dr. B.N.D.S.M. College, Burdwan W.B.

Abstract:

According to World Bank (1991), "Women play an essential role in the management of natural resources including soil, forests and energy...and often have a profound traditional and contemporary knowledge of the natural world around them. Since the day of sketching of civilization on Earth, the man-environment relationship has been started its journey. Though the yarn of relationship was started with the nourishing of maternal society yet the invention of Agriculture eroded the empowerment of women in environment. But in recent people are conscious about their environmental degradation and to cope this phase they feel about the contribution of women. In this respect on 1975 (International Women Day) a conference was conducted on the topic 'Women & Environment' in Mexico. Eco-feminists are realizing the importance of women to manage the environment in sustainable way. Since the Neolithic time women have engaged themselves in agriculture with the natural manure system, which was pure application for environment. Women's have multiple relations to their environments- natural, built and social - from feminist and anti-racist perspectives. UNEP hopes that Women and the Environment will inspire the environmental and sustainable development community to better understand the importance of gender, and to integrate a gender perspective across all of its work. Women comprises over half the world's population. They make a major contribution to the well-being and sustainable development of their communities and nations, and to the maintenance of the earth's ecosystem, biodiversity, natural resources and folk-resources. Long before the first Earth-Day in 1970, women were playing a major role in the effort to protect the environment. Women traditionally have been responsible for the care and welfare of families, which makes them especially sensitive to the importance of clean air and safe water. As mothers they know that their bodies provide the first environment for a child, and that they will be primarily responsible for the nourishment, safety and well-being of their children. Women symbolized the life-giving and conserving aspect of human nature. That means they are the causation of environmental nourishment. Parallel the correlation is present here between women and to save the environment. What was sometimes portrayed as blind opposition to progress was actually a zeal to protect human health and the quality of life.

Key Words: Earth-Day, sustainable development.

Introduction:

Women play an essential role in the management of natural resources including soil, forests and energy ... and often have a profound traditional and contemporary knowledge of the natural world around them.² Women's have multiple relations to their environments- natural, built and social - from feminist and anti-racist perspectives (Pal, 2013). UNEP hopes that Women and the Environment will inspire the environmental and sustainable development community to better understand the importance of gender, and to integrate a gender perspective across all of its work. Women comprise over half the world's population. They make a major contribution to the well-being and sustainable development of their communities and nations, and to the maintenance of the earth's ecosystem, biodiversity, natural resources and folk-resources. Long before the first Earth Day in 1970, women were playing a major role in the effort to protect the

environment. Women traditionally have been responsible for the care and welfare of families, which makes them especially sensitive to the importance of clean air and safe water. As mothers they know that their bodies provide the first environment for a child, and that they will be primarily responsible for the nourishment, safety and well-being of their children. Women symbolized the life-giving and conserving aspect of human nature. What was sometimes portrayed as blind opposition to progress was actually a zeal to protect human health and the quality of life.

Objectives:

1. To study the women perception about environmental sustainability.
2. To study how the women preserve environmental sustainability in world wide.
3. To study the how Indian women conserve the environment.

Methodology:

The present study is based on mainly secondary data. Data has been collected from different books, journal, and internet and newspaper. Author also collected information about this matter by observation in various parts India with the help of interview and questionnaires.

Result and Discussion:

Environment has influenced and shaped our lives since the time immemorial. It from the environment that we get our food to eat, water to drink, air to breath and all the necessities of day in our life, thus constituting it as a life support system. Through the process of natural selection and elimination it is environment only which has caused the evolution of biological spectrum, the biosphere as it exists today. Today environment has become the concern of all; the academicians, intellectuals, scientist, policy makers and government across the continents (Kant, S. and Sharma, Y., 2013). The earliest environment was so pure, virgin, undisturbed, uncontaminated and quite hospitable for all life forms to exist. But after industrial revolution man has invented many technologies that can improve the medical facilities help to reduced mortality. From this time population has been sharply increasing throughout the world especially in the developing countries. To satisfy the human needs continuously pressure going to the environment in terms of deforestation, extraction of natural resources, expansion and use of modern technology in agriculture, industrial emission of smoke and waste, emission of smoke from vehicles, production of electricity from coal, unscientific construction of dam across river etc. make the environment polluted, disturbed, contaminated and inhospitable. So, these types of human activities make our wonderful planet 'The Earth' painful for some plants and animal, some are liable to extinct, that ultimately result ecological crisis in our environment (Das al., 2016).

Women and Environmental Sustainability:

Women can help in keeping the village environment clean and pollution-free. Since domestic activities are the responsibility of women, male members of family do not attend to these issues. They have created a special value system about environmental issues. People's approaches to environmental issues may depend on their relationship with nature. Both women and nature have been considered as subordinate entities by men throughout history, which conveys a close affiliation between them. Throughout history men have women have tended to see the environment as a resource supporting their basic needs. As an example, rural Indian women collect the dead branches which are cut by storm for fuel wood to use rather than cutting the live trees. Since African, Asian, and Latin American women use the land to produce food for their family, they acquire the knowledge

of the land/soil conditions, water, and other environmental features. Any changes in the environment on these areas, like deforestation, have the most effect on women of that area, and cause them to suffer until they can cope with these changes. One of the good examples would be the Nepali women whose grandmothers had to climb to the mountain to be able to bring in wood and fodder. An example of female pre-eminence in the defence of natural forests comes from India in 1906. As forest clearing was expanding conflict between loggers and government and peasant communities increased. To thwart resistance to the forest clearing, the men were redirected from their villages to a fictional payment compensation site and loggers were sent to the forests. Gender-based commitments and movements such as feminism have reached to a new approach through the combination of feminism and environmentalism called eco feminism. Eco-feminists believe on the interconnection between the domination of women and nature. According to eco-feminism the superior power treats all subordinates the same. So, eco-feminism takes into account women subordination and nature degradation. Remarkably all these different reactions, one can see that however, most policy decision makers are men. skills education. Secondly that there has been a failure of extension therefore the emphasis on female extension workers in Family Planning, Agriculture, Health, Credit etc. to ensure reaching inputs to the women. This it has been an interesting phenomenon.

Women and Environmental Nourishment

Women in our society silently worked to protect our environment and Bio-diversity throughout the various part of the world. In this paper we highlighted some women from selected countries as well as some selected method practices in the different part of the world by women to conserve nature and the society.

Bangladesh: In Bangladesh, women nourish the “*Basundhara brata*” for rain and to do this they arrange a special method of worshipping. At first they prepare a tripod stand on tulsii plant/bot/pakur (which is based planted in concrete dias /small soil mound), then a water full earthen small pot is attached with the tripod stand (made by bamboos) and a small hole is generated under the pot because the water of pot is dripping on plant (Biswas, 2010).

China: Mei Ng and Her message of sustainability and eco-friendliness have reached nearly 860,000 people in 15 provinces. Mei Ng is an advocate of responsible consumption, renewable energy utilization, and sustainable development through the women and youth of China. She previously held the position of Director for Friends of the Earth 12 (HK) in Hong Kong, an environmental organization which seeks to encourage environmental protection in China. Mei Ng strives to mobilize women to defend the environment and to bring environmental education to all parts of China. She founded the Earth Station, Hong Kong's first renewable energy education centre.²

Russia: Maria Cherkosova coordinating a 4-year campaign to stop construction of hydro-electric dam on the Katun River. After Cherkosova's involvement in the student movement on environmental protection in 1960's she began to work for the Red Data Book for the Department of Environmental Protection Institute. Cherkosova recently has shifted her focus on children rights protection to live in a healthy environment and speaks for both inside and outside Russia.

United States of America: Rachel Carson interested and focused on the sea while she was working at the Marine Biological Laboratories in Massachusetts and also wrote *Silent Spring*. The book was about what man has done to the nature and eventually to him, and started a modern environmental movement. She argued that industrial activities such as pesticides use can damage the earth ecosystem and will have far-reaching ecological consequences such as future human health problems.³

Sudan: The rural women of Sudan are trying to curtail the rate of deforestation and for this they are adopting the reforestation programme from Alstom Foundation.⁴

Tanzania: The pregnant women of Tangania did not take the meal of some specific fishes like Pone, Kamba, Tea, Ngisi, Tasi Magna etc. because they believe that these all fishes may be danger for their child. And in this way these all fishes are not trapping by fisheries and the biodiversity is maintained.⁵

Kenya: Wangari Mathai of Kenya led for environmental conservation and established the Greenbelt Movement in 1977. The starting ceremony was very simple: A few women planted seven trees Maathai's backyard. By 2005, 30 million trees had been planted by participants in the Green Belt movement on public and private lands. The Green Belt movement aims to bring environmental restoration along with society's economic growth. This movement led by Maathai focused on restoration of Kenya's rapidly diminishing forest as well as empowering the rural women through environmental preservation, with a special emphasis on planting indigenous trees.⁶

Iran: Mahlagha Mallah, known as the "mother of Iran's environment", has devoted her life to raising awareness of environmental issues in Iran. Even on the verge of turning 100 years old, she perseveres in her efforts to protect Iran's environment. Mallah played a role in both the 1972 founding of Iran's Department of Environment and the 1993 founding of the Women's Society Against Environmental Pollution. Her approach to addressing environmental issues is holistic, cutting across public and private sectors and promoting comprehensive education on the environment for families, local communities, schools, and workplaces. Mallah believes that with sufficient determination, people are capable of resolving environmental disasters. Since the foundation of the Women's Society Against Environmental Pollution, different environmental activists have used Mallah and Abolhasani's house as a meeting place for discussions. Measures taken by the Society are decided upon collectively, as is the evaluation process by which they determine how to transfer ideas into practice and the tactics they will use, such as participating in protest-like gatherings in Tehran and other cities against environmental pollutions, challenging the lack of care and actions from authorities by writing letters to the Ministries of Education and Sciences, contacting university professors in order to convince them to provide education on the environment and, last but not least, taking pragmatic, effective actions. Since its foundation, the Society has trained 25 thousand families in different parts of Tehran, encouraging them to separate waste from recycling and giving them helpful information and increasing their knowledge with regards to healthy drinking water. In general, the Women's Society Against Environmental Pollution has achieved these items: Establishing the project Earth's Fans Society in schools, ratification for including the course Natural Environment as part of the mandatory curriculum for schools and training teachers on how to protect the natural environment; Ratifying the inclusion of a two-credit, optional course introducing the natural environment and related issues to university students; Ratifying the teaching of the natural environment to children in kindergarten; Training mediators for healthcare, the female housekeepers, in order to protect natural environments via clinics and granting diplomas to them; Training managers of governmental cooperatives in rural areas near Karaj and Shirvan-kala, protecting the natural environment by procuring composites and cleaning up villages; Training managers of governmental organizations about the natural environment in the 15th region of the Municipality of Tehran; Attending and participating in more than 300 conferences and workshops in Iran and other countries; Publishing the seasonal news & applied magazine, *Cry of the Earth*.



picture(1):Mahlagha Mallah, known as the “mother of Iran’s environment.

Source:<https://tavaana.org/en/content/mahlagha-mallah-mother-iran%E2%80%99s-environment>



Picture1.1: Women are collecting garbage in Iran. In The society of Iran women more than men pay attention to their environment and try to keep it clean all the time. Tabrizi women after Public holiday march clean the street and put the garbage in the bags to keep the environment clean.

Indian Scenario:

If we see the Indian scenario then it can be said that Indian women also looking forward and actively engage to conserve environment in different methods.

Vanda Shiva and Bio-piracy seeds:Navdanya¹ is an Indian-based non-governmental organization, which promotes biodiversity conservation, biodiversity, organic farming, the rights of farmers, and the process of seed saving. One of Navdanya's founders, and outspoken members, is Vandana Shiva, an environmental activist, physicist, and author. Navdanya began in 1984 as a program of the Research Foundation for science, Technology and Ecology (RFSTE), a participatory research initiative founded by the scientist and environmentalist Dr. Vandana Shiva, to provide direction and support to environmental activism. "Navdanya" means "nine crops" that represent India's collective source of food security. Navdanya is a network of seed keepers and organic producers spread across 16 states in India. Navdanya has helped set up 54 community seed banks across the country, trained over 500,000 farmers in seed sovereignty, food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture over the past two decades, and helped set up the largest direct marketing, fair trade organic network in the country. Navdanya has also set up a learning centre, Bija Vidyapeeth (School of the Seed) on its biodiversity conservation and organic farm in Doon Valley, Uttaranchal, and North India. Navdanya is actively involved in the rejuvenation of indigenous knowledge and culture. It has criticized genetic engineering. Navdanya claims to be women centre movement for the protection of biological and

cultural diversity. Chemical farming is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions which are causing climate change. Saving seeds of climate resilient crops is a vital safe guard in times of climate change. Navadanya lead the national and international movement against genetically modified organism (GMOs) in Agriculture.



Picture(2): Dr. Vandana Shiva- leader of Navdanya Movement, 1982.

Narmada Bachao and Medha Patkar : Narmada Bachao Andolan announced the arrival of the India Greens, protesting against destructive development. “One of the largest and most successful environmental campaigns, Narmada Bachao Andolan BachaoAndolan started the largest and most successful environmental campaigns with a wide developmental agenda, questioning the very rationale of large dam projects in India” (*India Today*, December 2007).



Picture (3)Narmada Bachao leader Medha PatkarPicture (4)Chipko movement Leader Gaura Devi

Chipko Movement: The Chipko movement or *chipko andolan* was primarily a forest conservation movement in India that began in 1973 and went on to become a rallying point for many future environmental movements all over the world; it created a precedent for non-violent protest started in India. It occurred at a time when there was hardly any environmental movement in the developing world, and its success meant that the world immediately took notice of this non-violent movement, which was to inspire in time many such eco-groups by helping to slow down the rapid deforestation, expose vested interests, increase ecological awareness, and demonstrate the viability of people power.



Picture (5)Chipko movement. Picture (6)Saalumarada Thimmakka

Above all, it stirred up the existing civil society in India, which began to address the issues of tribal and marginalized people. Today, beyond the eco-socialism hue, it is being seen increasingly as an eco-feminist movement.

Saalumarada Thimmakka's story over 400 tall, strong Banyan trees: Hailing from a village in the Magadi taluk of Bangalore's rural district, 103-year-old Saalumarada Thimmakka's story is an awfully respectable and inspiring one. At a young age she married Chikkaiah, a cattle herder. Unable to bear their own children however, this couple decided to make a difference to the environment approximately 50 years ago. Over the years, they continued to plant saplings and care for them, and even after Chikkaiah passed away in 1991, Thimmakka sustained her work for the environment. At present, over 400 tall, strong Banyan trees owe this woman their lives.¹

Sacred Forest of Mawphlang in Meghalaya: Mawphlang are sacred forest around 25kms away from Shillong. These are considered sacred by Khasi women and people were forbidden to enter them earlier. This ensured protection of a dense growth of several kinds of trees including the Khasi pine. A common one day trek from Mawphlang (Sacred Forest) to Lad Mawphlang is a good experience. Meghalaya is also known for its "Sacred Groves". These have been preserved by the traditional religious sanction since the ancient days. The Mawphlang sacred forest, also known as "LawLyngdoh," is one of the most famous sacred forests. It's located about 25 kilometres from Shillong. It's a must visit for nature lovers. The Mawphlang village located near the India-Bangladesh border is known for its cleanliness. The travel magazine *Discover India* declared the village as the cleanest in Asia in 2003, and the cleanest in India in 2005.²⁰ The remarkable story of the tiny community of Mawphlang in Indian north eastern state of Meghalaya illustrate how women are protecting their watersheds and biodiversity by revitalizing their traditional institutions and culture.⁷



Picture(7)Megaliths marking the boundaries of the Mawphlang Sacred Forest.

Mawlynnong Village and contribution of Khasi women:Mawlynnong Village has earned an exceptional distinction of being the cleanest village in Asia. The village is over hundred years old, keeping the surrounding environment clean is an age old tradition of this village; the inhabitants of this village – Khasi tribal are worshippers of nature. Local residents here grow different flowers around their houses to balance the beauty of their tiny cottages. The village council makes it a point to systematize and conduct workshops to create awareness of the dangers from global warming. Mawlynnong village is an eco-tourism spot visited by 1000s of visitors from various parts of the country in every year. There is a violent sense of self-determination among these people and certain rules they have followed traditionally. Every woman makes it a point that dust and waste are not thrown everywhere. All the waste from the dustbin is collected and kept in a pit, which the villagers use as manure. Mawlynnong is an environmentally conscious khasi community of about all families who take turns in maintaining the roads, weeding, sweeping and cleaning. Khasi women have this mania with cleanliness (plate 86 & 98). They are hanging out clothes to dry or sweeping their yards with the soft brooms.



Picture(7)Khasi women are engaged to collect the waste items from the corner of village-road.

Tulsitala/Basil Worshiping: In Hindu and Tamil Society Tulsitala is the abode of God. Most of the Hindu and Tamil maintained the evening prayer in front of this Basil trees. In this way core of Basil trees are conserving in the environment.



Picture(6): Basil Worshiping. Picture(6): Tree worshipping.



Devotees Offer Rituals On The Eye Of Holi In Haridwar.

Tree worshiping: In the tale of Satyavan and Sabitri, Satyaban lost his life in the beneath the branches of a Bot (*Ficus bengalensis*). Savitri courageously entered into a debate with yama; the god of Death, and won his life back. In memory of this couple, in the Bengali month of Jyestho (May and June) the tree is worshiped. Married women visit a Bot (*Ficus bengalensis*) and pray for the long life for their husbands(Aha Sabitri Satyaban Kotha, Dharma Purana 1990, page no. 577). In this way women conserve many Bot trees in the environment (Plate-3).

We are thinking that, we will give right to women about every sector in our society. In Indian Parliament, 33% seated has been already conserved for women. But we did not emphasized on women empowerment in some important sensitive cases like the conservation of tyraditionality in our society, where they are mostly able to conserve it, for their specials habits, psychology as well as behavior. In India, most of the traditionas are being conserved by male society. If we analyze the women contribution in our daily life in respect of as conversationalist, then we can take a right decision that, we should give emphasized on women's contribution for managing the tradition like sacred Grove. In India as elsewhere in many parts of the world, a number of communities practice forms of nature worship. One such significant tradition is that providing protection to patches of forests dedicated to deities and or ancestral spirits. The tradition is very ancient and once widespread in most parts of the world the estimated number of sacred groves in India is about two lakhs(Malhotra& Chatterjee).Groves are rich heritage in India and play an important role in religious and socio-cultural life of the local people. It is believed that sacred virgin forests date back to several thousands of years when human society was in the primitive state. Gadgil and Vartak (1973) have traced this historical link of the sacred groves to the pre-agricultural, hunting and gathering societies. Thus, this term is also included with customs and practices maintained by social interaction, strict adherence to traditional methods or teachings, beliefs or customs taught by one generation to the next, often orally. The role of gender in sacred groves can be analyzed through the-

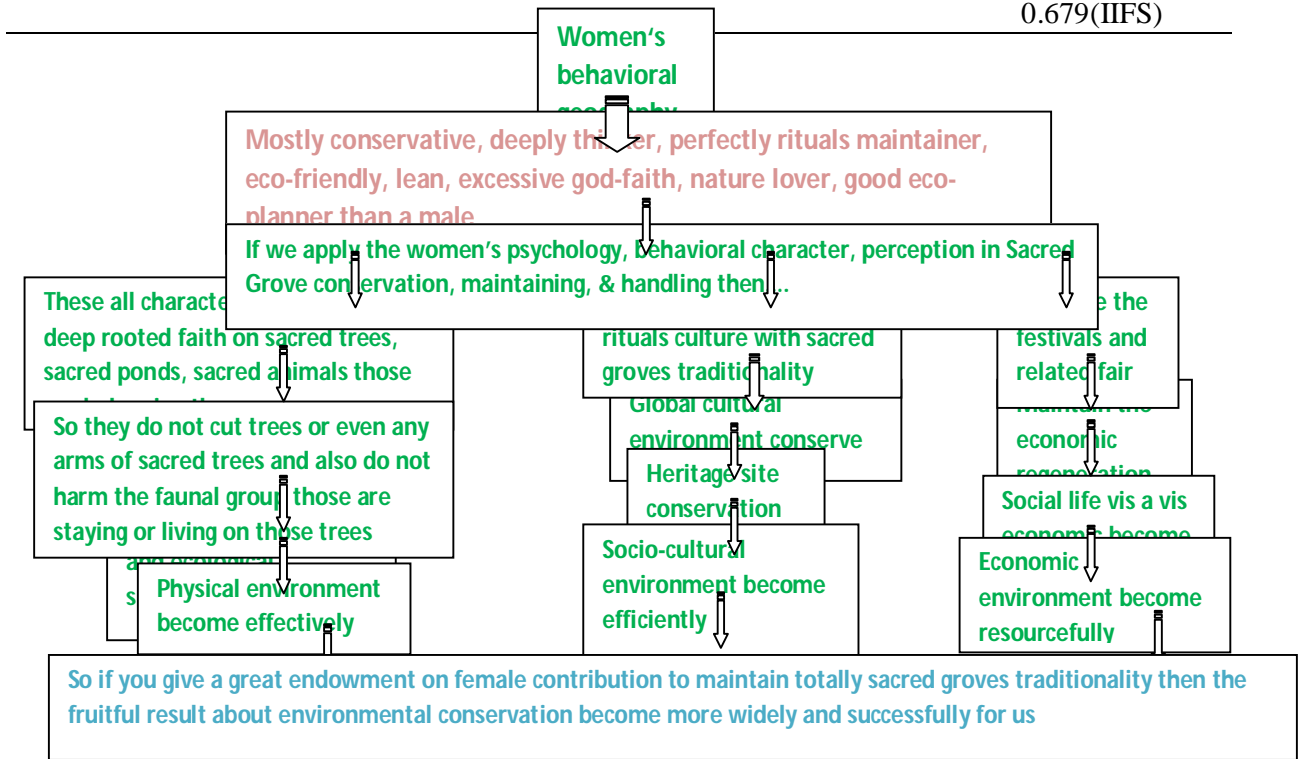
1. Gender of the priest serving the groves,
2. The nature and extent of access to men and women in various rituals, festival, and ceremonies that take place in the groves,
3. Harvest of biomass from the groves and the role of gender in the management of the sacred groves.

Regarding the gender of the priest, it appears that without an exception the priesthood rests with males (see Vartak and Gadgil, 1981; Burman, 1996; Godbole, 1998; Sinha, 1989 etc.)However, this aspects needs to be further studied, as many studies do not provide explicit societies such as *Khasi & Garos* in our northeast India. The data in terms of access to sacred groves by women are also very rear scanty. It appears that generally women are not permitted into the sacred groves after attaining puberty. However, women's entry is not restricted in West Bengal (Deb et al:in press).Roy(1912) while describing sacred groves among the Oraon of Chhotanagpur, mentioned that the main festival associated with Sarana is Sarhul. However, women are not allowed in the

Sarana, but take part in dance at the *akhara* which is located close to the grove (also see Fernandes, 1993). Roy Barman (1996) has reported a similar phenomenon among the *Mahadeo Koils* of Pune and among the *Kunbis* of Kolhapur district in Maharashtra. Malhotra et al. (1997) have observed taboo against entry of women in the sacred groves among the tribes of south-west Bengal & among the tribes of *Koraput* district of Orissa. Nothing is known at all about the kind of role of women play in decision-making regarding management of sacred groves. It will be of immense value to examine whether women are represented in numerous trust bodies that are managing sacred groves, in particular in Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, In West Bengal & Orissa, practically no role of women in the management of Sacred groves environment (Deb et al, 1992; Deb et al, in press; Malhotra et al, in press). From our field survey in *Bolpur* sub division (Bolpur, Lavpur, Nannoor and Illambazar blocks-total 117.53 Sq. km.) in 1999, we have searched out total 39 sporadic sacred Grove units. I was shocked at that time due to the total absence of the female contribution in that field as prime manager, chief guider, seminal priest and a dominant regulator. So, it is a questionable notion that, if we apply the women endowment to sustain our traditionality through Sacred Grove then what would be the actual scenario?

Why a woman is more perfect to manage Sacred Grove Tradition for eco-friendly world?

Being a geographer, we think our geographical research, invention and discovery are cannot be achieved the highest peak of development. The prime cause is that, lack of female contribution mostly. At the onset of 21st century; this statement supports the entire elite thinkers in geography. It is mainly due to some crucial causes like; *curtain –system, Sati-dhaha pratha, child marriage, excessive prominence on male, dominancy approach of male on female society* from the medieval society. So from the dawn of ancient civilization to dusk of 19th century, all the sacred groves are being worshipped by male society in most part of India especially in north-east portion except *Garo and Khasi* society. To explain the above question, a most sensitive analysis must be discussed here. On the basis of psychology and habituation of female society, women are mostly conservative, deeply thinker, perfectly rituals maintainer, eco-friendly, lean, excessive god-faith, nature lover, good eco-planner. These all characteristics are the manager of the eco-climate, biological diversity, social rules –rituals, social traditionality, cultural identity of individual societies, economic regeneration. For instance, most sensitive production like Tea plantation is mostly regulated by female groups in all over world. Most of the festival's rituals and rules have been maintained by women's contribution; for instance male priest worships the gods but female group organize all the material in pre-worshipping in Hindu society. In *naban* festival (Hindu Society), the courtier portrait by liquefied dust rice is being maintained by female incentives even in this globalised era. Women are more conscious about formation, construction, structuring, and evaluation. For information, Children are developed in body and mind by his or her maternal shadow, in which father cannot play as same marvelous role. In micro level another example I will give here that is in every Hindu's housing periphery a *Tulsitala* (Basil-a sacred place where *Tulsi* plant is planted) is conserved, which is the indicator of God's place and is worshipped by elder lady of the house. From *Baidic* time this sacred culture has been conserved by female consciousness and patient. From a long time *Pipal* tree has been conserved by female's sacred belief and the cultural rituals is also conserved like female people bound the sacred trees by yarn to fulfill their wishes. Under the following flow model we can realize the application of women issues to maintain the sacred grove traditionality for maintain our eco-friendly status of environment.



Sacred grove Worshiping: In Chandrakana of Bankura District in West Bengal an isolated sacred grove is worshipping daily by lady. On the basis of folk belief women of this area do not touches this sacred land and maintained the bio-diversity in proper way .

Polom (AFolk art of Tamil): Polom is folk Tamil art, which is painted by Tamil women to their courtier of door of house. Though this is a traditional culture yet it has a great value to nourish the bio-diversity. This art is done by Chalguri (Dust of rice) and after painting every day this rice-dust is eaten by insect, birds etc. So in this way a traditional art supply the foods for avail animals (Plate-5).



Plate-4: Sacred Grove Worshiping. Picture(6): Polom festival art in South India

Conclusion:

In the present time, the trend of environmental deterioration throughout the world is very hazardous and it is a time to think all the people in our society that how can run environment sustain in long run and what are the ideal method for using environmental resources and make environment pure, in this respect we can suggest to follow the traditional method that practices women in our society is very much appreciate to make environment pure and conserve Bio-diversity throughout the world. It has turn out to be very significant to realize the link between gender and environment. Gender issues have come to the front in several expansion sectors including forestry, water, agriculture, energy etc. Women are in earlier contact with nature and their surrounding environment as compared to men. Women are repeatedly most responsive to changes in the environment because they are in adjacent contact with the home and the land. A good number obvious force of a range of activities performed by women on a daily source is on their health. Women use more time than men on basic survival activities, such as gathering fuel- wood, carrying water, grazing cattle, collecting non-timber forest products and cooking. According to the World Bank (2001) women of all developing countries spend between 2 to 9 hours a day collecting fuel and fodder, and performing cooking chores. More than half of the world's households cook with wood, animal waste, crop residues and untreated coal, revealing mainly women and children to indoor air pollution, which according to the WHO, is responsible for the early death of over 2 million women and children a year worldwide from respiratory infections. It has been proved that the amount of total balanced particles current surrounded by a kitchen has 1,000 times greater chance to penetrate profound into our lungs than the suspended particles outside. Women are continually exposed to *chulha* smoke in India due to several cultural mindsets. Men are more linked with the environment when it comes to agriculture. They spend most of their day in the agricultural field. Thus they demonstrate symptoms of the unfavorable impacts of extreme utilize of pesticides during agricultural practices in order to get greater yields. Women have additional traditional knowledge about the medicinal plants in the area and their exercise. Moreover, as women hardly ever own land they cultivate, there is small inducement for them to create environmentally sound decisions, while their be short of access to praise hampers them from buying echnologies and inputs that would be less damaging to ordinary resources. These negative factors set up a cycle of declining output, increasing environmental degradation and food uncertainty for the future. Women farmers tend to apply and wonderful traditional cropping methods developed over time to defend precious natural resources. This makes them key players in the conservation of soil fertility. Women utilize methods such as fallowing (leaving fields uncultivated for at least a season), crop rotation (planting a field with different successive crops), intercropping (planting several different crops in a field at one time), mulching (scattering organic material on the soil around plants to avoid water evaporation) and a diversity of techniques that promote soil conservation, fertility and enrichment. Planners are now recognising the value of learning from women's local knowledge to protect and sustain the environment. In rural India, shifting from fuel wood to cleaner sources of energy, like kerosene or Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), halves the mortality rate of children under five. Home lighting, agro-processing, drinking water pumping and more efficient stoves can reduce women's workloads, provide income earnings and improve women's health. Women in particular, need to be informed about alternative methods of cooking, farming, heating and waste disposal. Gender-sensitive planning in training and technology development would not only improve production today, but it would also ensure the protection of the environment for tomorrow (source: NCERT HandBook, Unit-I).^{S2}

References:

- Kant, S. And Sharma, Y. (2013). *The 'The environmental awareness of secondary school students with reference to their intelligence'*. *BPR Technologia: A Journal of Science, Technology and Management*, vol. 2 (1):33-39
- Pal.T. (2013), *Women, Folk culture and Environment*, Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany.
- Das.S. (2016), 'Environment, Ecology and Humans: Challenges and Cntestations', 'Students perception on Environment... West Bengal, pp- 135-142.
- Biswas, T.K. (2010). *Banger loksanskriti:Prasanga Darjeeling o Jalpaiguri*. Bansai pub. Dhaka.p.16-17
- *Farhang-e Mardom Magazine, Issues 29 & 30, Spring/Summer 2009, pp. 163 - 166.*

Bibliography

- *Sacred groves the virgin forests' –A.Bijukumar, published in science reporter, October.1998*
- *Sacred groves of India. 'A traveling exhibition'-leaflet.*
- *'Culture and ecological dimension of sacred groves in India' by Malhotra K.C.Gokhale, Y.Chatarjee, 1998*
- *Some predominant diseases of Bolpur subdivision: a spatio-temporal analysis 1971-1991by Susmita guha Roy.*

Webliography:

¹Navdanya. Accessed March 5, 2012. <http://www.navdanya.org/home>

²Friends of the Earth (Hong Kong). Accessed March 1, 2012. <http://www.foe.org.hk/welcome/geten.asp>

³Breton, Mary J. (1998). *Women pioneers for the environment*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

⁴www.foundation.alstom.com/project-search-a-to-2/sudan-empowering-women-to-protect-the-environment

⁵www.allafrica.co/stories/20121024011.html

⁶Green Belt Movement. (2006). Retrieved November 15, 2006 from <http://www.wangarimaathai.or.ke>

⁷Mawlynnong-The Cleanest village in Asia, *Neblog.in*