

Ecopsychology: A Weave of Psyche and Nature for Sustainability

A Study of Daver Tannaz's *One Night in Sunderban*

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Abstract

Environment is based on the human interaction with it and nonhuman. If the interaction is careful and smooth, then environment has no harm but if it gone wrong then environment lose its balance and affects the sustainable development. As the future generation children play crucial role. Children must be aware and connect with nature and nonhuman empathetically. Literature is an influential tool for reconnecting children to nature for growing awareness about nature and human-animal bond. Present paper analysis the story One Night in Sundarbans through ecopsychological approach. Aim of this research is to find how the nature and its problems are reflected in selected story. Also, this paper explores the human-animal relation and awareness of the ecological problems in children.

Key words- Ecopsychology, Environment, children's literature, animals, sustainable development, awareness

Ecological crises are hazards for the sustainable development of the world. Human beings are responsible for ecological problems and its imbalance. Human beings are behaviour is changing towards the environment behave as if they are divorced from it and get alienated. So, they lost the affection of the nature and nature elements. Making policies and finding solutions are not just enough to reduce the ecological problems with that human being's behaviour towards nature must change. Ecological problems arise due to the human being's unconscious behaviour with nature. Ecology is losing its balance affecting adverse effect on biodiversity. Therefore, concern for environment and biodiversity is most needed.

Ecopsychology is a new branch that studies ecology and psychology together to reduce the ecological crisis happened

due to human beings. It is transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary study. This term is evolved by Theodor Roszak in his book Voice of the earth in 1992 Etymology of ecopsychology is eco means oikos (home) and psychology means a study of human mind and behaviour. Ecopsychology is the study of human behaviour towards nature. It is an appeal to environmentalist and psychologist for a dialogue that will enrich both fields and play vital role in public policy. It was known by different terms like psychoecology, ecotherapy, green therapy, earth-centered therapy. "Roszak called Jung's collective unconscious as ecological unconscious. The core of the mind is the ecological unconscious, and its repression is the reason of the alienation between the person and the environment." (Roszak, 1992, p 14)

Ecopsychology helps to develop the attachment with nature as it gives

importance to human psyche and nature interconnectedness as human mind is the core of the ecopsychology. United nations have declared 17 sustainable development goals in Agenda 2030. Out of 17 three goals are related with environment i.e., Life below water, climate action, and Life on the land. To achieve all these goals is possible by developing affection towards nature and interconnectedness. Ecopsychology has three basic characteristics on which this theory is based: 1 biophilia 2. Ecological self and 3. Environmental alienation.

Biophilia: Biophilia word is formed from two words bio means nature and philia means love means love for nature. This term is found by two renowned different people i.e., Erich Fromm and Edward O. Wilson the Harvard zoologist. According to Wilson: human being possesses the innate emotional tendency to affiliate towards nature. As children are most affiliated toward nature and nature elements. It is vital force to work for the endangered biodiversity of the planet.

Ecological self: Ecopsychology focuses on the human-nature bond filled with the awareness of the interdependency, connectedness and belonging to the earth. According to Theodor ecological ego is the next step in the individual development process. "The ecological ego matures towards a sense of ethical responsibility with the planet that is as vividly experienced as our ethical responsibility to other people. It seeks to weave that responsibility into the fabric of social relations and political decisions." (1992, p 321) It widens the eco dimension promoting ecological horizons for sustainability.

Environmental alienation: Ecological problems are spurred by the apathetical behaviour towards nature. Advancement in technology separated individuals from nature and become self-centric caused nature destruction. Alienation is the main cause of environmental problems.

To reduce this separateness attachment with nature is necessary.

Children are the future of the world they should be aware of the current environmental condition. in 2017 a schoolgirl Greta Thornburg stated a campaign 'Friday for Future' for climate change. Affection towards nature is developed through the Eco literacy through literature as an influential medium. children literature i.e., one of the best medium to connect and develop attachment with nature among children. children literature is didactic in nature. It mostly describes the stories related with animals as children are very close to it. It consists of fairy tales, fables, fiction, non-fiction, picture book. The main aim of children's literature is to teach and instil better ideas along with providing the pleasure of reading. For creating the awareness through children's literature, it is needed to analysis children's literature texts through eco-critical lenses. In the book 'Children and Nature: psychological sociocultural and evolutionary Investigation edited by Peter Kahn and Stephen Kellart (2002, P.153) the importance of animals especially those with which a child can develop a nurturing relationship is emphasized for early and middle childhood The research by Makwanya and Dick concluded that:

children's literature promotes environmental consciousness, appreciation, knowledge and

stewardship of the children. In addition, to inculcate long lasting impression on environment stewardship it has been concluded that catching them young is the best method. (Makwanya and Dick, 2014)

For the sustainable future behaviour of children towards nature should be close. The depiction of the nature and its element in text will help to arise encouragement among children to get back to it. Through the representation of nature, children become curious to explore their surrounding nature.

Research Method -

This study uses qualitative research methodology based on the interpretative philosophy. In qualitative research data is presented in the form of narrative text or the textual description of the phenomena under study. This research analysis the Story of Daver Tannaz, One Night in Sundarbans by rereading it through ecopsychological lenses.

Findings and Discussion –

Application of ecopsychological approach in children's literature in this study aims to find how children's literature helps to raise awareness about ecological problems and human behaviour towards nature and animal.

One Night in Sundarbans story written by Daver Tannaz and illustrated by Ratna Moriniaux Rege is based on theme of conservation. Protagonist is a girl named Diya of eight. The story describes the pastoral setting of village named Bonmati in Bengal near the Sundarbans Forest located in eastern India. The author depicts the Sundarbans Forest and its beautiful nature as:

.....a simple hut on the fringes of a lush and dense forest called Sundarbans. It is also said that the Sundarbans is named after the Sundari trees that grow there. But Sundarbans also means 'beautiful Forest'.....the forest with its enchanting trees and dark green water was beautiful indeed.

One of the aims of the children's literature is to develop empathy towards others, nature and other nonhuman make them sensitive and conscious about them. Diya's parents teach her the importance of nature and nonhuman by telling her,

.....to respect the forest and all the plants and animals that lived in it. The forest gives them food, shelter and helped them to make a living.

Curiosity is one of the qualities of every child. They want to know everything. Diya is also curious about the nature and asks questions to her mother:

Diya goes to forest. She paused to listen the singing of the birds and calling out each other." She asked her mother, "What are birds singing about, Ma?

Story depicts names of various kinds of flowers found in the nature like 'red Genwa flowers', 'the yellow Khalsa blossoms and crab-like' Kankara blossom'. Diya loves that flower; she collects that flower every day. Children shares a special bond with animals. Children loves the animal as their pet. Pet allows to feel witty defensive and nurturing. Diya also has three goats and she love them, "Diya would play with her three goats, Kaalu, Jhimali and Misti. Although she cared for all three of them she loved Misti the most." Not just

children are attached with their pets, but pets also share the emotional attachment with children. Misti also love Diya described as:

Misti's entire world revolved around Diya, Misti woke her in the morning with little kisses and licks on her face and then follows her wherever she could.

Anthromorphism is the attribution of human characteristics to nonhuman. In children's literature anthromorphic tendencies are practiced for creation of animal characters and stories with animals. This story also contains the anthromorphism technique as the animals given the human quality of speaking for expressing their anger for human and concern for the Sundarbans Forest. King Cobra, Crocodile and Bengal Tiger spoke with Diya about their concern and conflict with human beings.

Human becomes more unconscious about the nature and animals and use them for his selfish purposes without thinking its consequences. Due to the deforestation animal become concern about their habitat. Crocodile expresses her concern to Diya:

Mankind has been entering this forest and destroying our home for centuries. I am sure you'll act surprised if I told you that a part of my family has actually become extinct thank to your efforts.

Due to the selfish behaviour of human being animals faces the troubles and get concern about their home forests. Animals also have some expectations from human being as both are a part environment. Crocodile expresses her expectations from Diya:

Can you stop your people from plunging the forest? Can you teach your friends to respect the jungles and its laws? Can you help save our Sundarbans?

Anthropocentric attitude and unconscious behaviour are responsible for the environmental crisis stated as:

Many men started dying, killed by the forest animals who fought back. People grew afraid and, in their fear, they broke more laws and killed more animals. Now things are in a really sorry state. Man enters areas in the forest which he knows he must not. He fishes in waters where it is illegal to do so. He cuts trees, steals honey and kills for pleasure..... "Man has become our enemy and it need not be so.

Human beings needed to change their behaviour from anthropocentric to ecocentric for the mutual growth of human beings and nature and nonhuman. The Bengal Tiger said to Diya:

All I'm saying is we need to find a solution before it's too late and we all die. So, would you be prepared to help? Well, you can start by taking our message to your family and friends. Tell them about the forest and its laws. Tell them we need to respect each other's space and lives!

An ecological self is an important step of eco-consciousness. Ecological self promotes the expansion of self-reconnection to the natural terrain and sharpens sense, awareness, insights, and affirmative experiences, Diya also realizes the importance forest and empathy for

animal concern. So, she promised the Tiger to help them.

Conclusion –

The story explores the environmental crisis, human-nature, human-animal, animal-human relation shares a special

bond through different characters. It also shows that human behaviour toward others and need to change the behaviour to ecocentric and responsible towards nature and nonhuman. The story raises the eco-consciousness towards the nature and animals in very lucid language.

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