

## **NAMGHAR INSTITUTION IS A DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND HEALTH, A STUDY.**

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**Abstract:** *Srimanta Sankaradeva's innovation regarding human resource through his specific quality of emotional maturity was also a great innovator and social reformer, highlighted and stimulated the concept of human resource, social development and their quality to expand them positively. The unique creation of Sankaradeva was Namghar and used it as an educational institution where syllabus of "tol" was introduced with democratic way. It was the centre of mass communication and performing art for skill development and self sufficiency in medieval Assam (1468) base on Indian philosophy and culture. It is a common socio-cultural democratic platform of Assamese society. Positive psychology is the new area of psychology in modern era. It is not simply based on positive thinking, positive emotions but focused about what makes people of different communities flourish, rather than languish. It focuses on well-being, happiness, flow, personal strength, wisdom, creativity, imagination and characteristics of positive groups and institutions (Sheldon et.al., 2000). It highlighted on these basic areas of study and practice positive emotions, consisting of contentment with the past, current happiness, hope for future. It is a specific study of health assets, factors that produced longer life lower morbidity, lower healthcare expenditure, better prognosis when illness does strike and higher quality of physical health. Health refers the process of expanding consciousness that synthesizes disease, no disease and is recognized by patterns of person's environment interaction. It refers to the ability to lead a socially and economically productive life of individual. Namghar institution and usual relationship with the system even in modern age is the life example of positive mental, physical, spiritual, emotional, social health development. The system promote individual towards positive environment, life satisfaction, positive emotion, happiness, optimism, self regulation, engagement, social support, peer group satisfaction, skill development, creativity, self respect. These are the result of positive psychology, positive health through Namghar system. The arrangement of present study is analytic and descriptive in nature. The data collections of this paper are from primary and secondary sources.*

**Key words:** Namghar institution, positive psychology, emotional maturity, positive health.

## I. Importance of the Topic

Positive psychology and emotional maturity are terms which are used by modern psychologists. A healthy person contains sound health and a sound mind. Philosophy of Sankaradeva in the light of Vaisnavism gave emphasis on these aspects of positive psychology. But in modern times, Sankaradeva's works and creations are not assessed in the light of positive psychology, health and emotional maturity. Namghar is a place of activities where all the rituals and functions pertaining to Bhakti faith take place. Function related to positive psychology, emotional maturity and health are displayed through Namghar institution and Nam prasanga (Prayer ) performed in different times. The present study is going to analyse the Naamgharh from this angle.

## II. Introduction

The birth of a saint enriches the world and brings sanity and well being to mankind (Pathak, 2012). The great people are known by their humble works. During Sankaradeva's life time, the works which he did, was not of a super human being but these were the reflections of the sorrows, happiness of an ordinary human being. He even followed the general norms of the society of that time. But his thinking was much ahead of his time. He attempted to solve the maladies of the society and his analytical and racial mind established him as a "*Mahapurusha*".

Namghar institution established by Sankaradeva in his young age near Bordoa was earlier known as Hari griha more than 550 years ago. Now there is a Namghar in each village of Assam where the virtues of Hari are chanted and listened to at appointed time.

The Namghars were constructed either by bamboo or by wooden material in past. The architecture of it is very simple (Kalita, 2014). It was the first place in which he introduced his creativity of mime (*muka-abhinaya*), bhaona *Chihna-yatra* (1468). Besides this, he inculcated the masses in democratic way (Borkakati, 2006). At that time, the institution of 'tol' was open only for the students belonging to the upper section of the society. It was Sankaradeva who spread education beyond the "tol" institution in a liberal and democratic way for the masses through his creativity. Namghar is the spiritual institution which is also known as Kirtanghar, Than or Debogriha. Baatchora, Community prayer hall, Manikut and Choghar are the four main parts of Namghar. Namghar is the core part of a Satra.

Positive psychology has more often than not emphasized the short comings of individuals as compared to their potentials. It is not targeted at fixing problems, but is focused on researching things that make life worth living instead. Its aspiration is to bring solid empirical research into areas such as well-being, flow, personal strengths, wisdom, creativity, psychological health and characteristics of positive groups and institutions. The science of positive psychology operates on three different levels namely subjective level, individual level and group level.

Health refers to the ability to lead a socially and economically productive life. According to WHO (1998) the word “Health” covers the mental, physical, emotional, spiritual and social areas of an individual. A health is a stable or normal condition of an animal or human beings. Health of a man may be divided into physical health, mental health, social health, emotional health, spiritual health and emotional maturity, well- beings are directly depends upon the different kinds of health status (Kusre and Kusre,2013).

Emotional maturity is an aspect that is related to one’s personality. A person can be said to have matured emotionally when that person is able to think objectively. Emotional maturity is an expression of emotion that is constructive and interactive. Individuals who have reached emotional maturity are characterised by the ability to control emotions, to think realistically, understanding of themselves and display of emotion in an appropriate manner.

### **III. Methodology**

- **Tools:** The arrangement of the present study is analytic and descriptive in nature. Interview method is taken for data collection. Secondary sources of data collection were also included. Different related books, research publications containing factual information, vertical, research oriented journals, newspapers, reports, internet etc.
- Face to face interview was taken with related persons.
- **Study area:** Namghars of Nagaon Town. And the number of samples is 60 both male and female.
- **Subject inclusion:** The middle age and old age people who are directly or indirectly related and visited to Namghar institution.
- **Subject exclusion:** Adolescent, mentally retarded and those are not believed or related to Namghar institution are excluded.

#### IV. Objectives

- a. To explain the activities and objectives of Namghar institution and its processes.
- b. To find out the relation between positive psychology, emotional maturity and health and Namghar institution.
- d. To search the relevance of positive psychology and health to Namghar institution for reducing minor psychological diseases.

#### V. Result and Discussion

According to Gait (1905), the amalgamated Assamese identity was initiated by the great Saint Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva with his Neo-Vaishnavite Movement. The hallmark of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in Assam is the evolution of two distinctively unique institutions, viz., the *Satra* and the *Namghar*, both of which began to serve not only as the instrument spreading faith but also intimately associated with the social as well as the cultural life of the Assamese society (Rahman, 2015).

Srimanta Sankaradeva used to practise *Namprasanga* and *Naam kirtan* process regularly in the Namghar institution, along with his follower devotees. Unnecessary rituals are avoided by *Ek Saarana Hari Naam Dharma* established by him. Chanting and hearing about the work of Vishnu Krishna or Hari is the main purpose. Sankaradeva and his devotees established the system of *Naam prasanga* and *Nam kirtan* which has been followed in Namghar institution fully or partly in present days also. Namgharia (head of the Namghar) used to lead the process of *Namprasanga*. Common people of village related to Namghar, usually are the part of it. Through *Namprasanga* system and *Namkirtan* in Namghar institution, knowledge management took place from grass-root to higher level, classes to masses. It is a process which has significant economic benefit and which provides religio-cultural aspects of the individual in a democratic way.

Sankaradeva was not only the first dramatist of Assamese literature but also the first dramatist of the medieval India (Pathak, 2015). A unique creation of Mahapurusha is drama which is known as "*Bhaona*" still played on stage as performing art. The story is taken from the early epics of Indian writings such as Ramayana and Mahabharata. The moral of the story is "Always you do good things you will get good if not then you damage yourself and your society". The language of these dramas was "Brajawali" which was a mixture of Maithili,

Oriya, Sanskrit and Assamese. By this new language every common people can easily understood the aim and theme of the drama as compared to the Sanskrit.

Here more than 10 thousand persons enjoyed the weeklong drama festival of 1568 AD with the pantomime equipped with elaborate painted scene. Thus drama and painting culture of medieval age used for the development of well-being like mass communication, skill development, religious accuracy, spiritual development, soft skill, life skill, economic awareness, creativity, and developed democratic religious cultural activities in the society from medieval age till present age (Borkakati, 2006).

By developing emotional maturity of the masses and providing spiritual well-being to the classes, he centralised the spiritual emotion inside the Namghar and made people aware and alert about the life and activities of lord Krishna through art of drama and paintings. He took great pains for the well being of the medieval Assamese society and improve their social health and to make them emotionally matured. He employed Indian drama tradition as a tool of well being and religio-social awareness. By translating drama from Sanskrit, he worked for the well-being of psycho-religio development. (Smith, 2002).

The main objective of drama is to evoke a sense of devotional fervour in the audience (Phukon, 2011). He motivated the people to follow value based life. Through drama and performances, an open air stage of humanity without any caste and community was arranged for the development and well-being of that society.

The dance form which was developed by Sankaradeva is called “*Satriya*” or “*Sankari*”. It is one of the eight principal Indian classical dance traditions, where he drew elements from various folk and ethnic traditions as around him, and refined them to create his own dance form (Phukon, 2011). Bhakti is the main goal of entire dramatic performance by which a clear message is sent to the people for their well-being and positive health.

The dress code for the orchestra was white which is symbolic of piousness. The use of mask is another unique feature of the play which symbolizes both goodness and evilness. Costumes are made of traditional Assamese silk, woven with intricate local motifs (Phukon, 2011). Sankaradeva collected concept of the dress from different ethnic communities. His organising capacity exemplifies positive psychology (Borkakati, 2013). Artisans were used for making masks and get their earning from it.

Through his literary works, Sankaradeva built a spiritual empire for the well-being of Assamese language besides contribution to literature comprising songs, verse, plays, philosophical treatise, translating Sanskrit scriptures, etc. thus he helped to spread positive psychology among different areas of the people of the Assamese society. He created many original things during his life time on social, cultural, religious and ideological principles through which entire socio-cultural scenario was changed. He was the example of instant tolerance, sacrifice and compassion. His creations were the examples of epitome of love and universal brotherhood. His works in different areas of positive psychology has been applied for humanity which is relevant in present day's world (Borkakoti, 2015).

Borgeet (holy songs), bhatima, totoya, prayer, paath (reading out the scripture) etc. are completely free from any trace of materialism. They are the songs of spiritual worship (Neog, 1952). Borgeets are holy songs with poetical beauty, generally free from sentiments of conjugal love. These songs centre around the activities of Lord Krishna. Total 192 songs were composed by the two saints and their followers.

As a poem, these songs celestial are very rich in emotional appeal, philosophical import, imagery symbolism, figure of speech and elegance of words. Borgeets are based on the development of emotional maturity of individual which teach people to be content and lead a life fully devoid of materialism.

The transitoriness of illusiveness of human life is found in Borgeets of Sankaradeva but in Madhavdeva's borgeet we find profound moral and spiritual principles (Kakati 1949). He glorified the childhood of Krishna through his Borgeets. The 3effort of borgeets is positive on the psychology of the people and hence it can be considered as a case of applied education.

Sankaradeava also encouraged decoration of the Namghar walls with pictorial depiction from stories from Bhagavata (Borkakati, 2007). The figures in *Chitra Bhagavata* were drawn in an angular pattern. Another important example of the Sankari art form is the *Vrindavani cloth* prepared by the saint at the behest of the Koch King Naranarayana. The Mahapurusha also created his own school of sculpture and painting in the second half of the fifteen century. All these works were used for the motivation of mass people. Art, sculpture and scripture were used for the welfare of the whole of the society.

Raas is an annual cultural festival related to group activities started from medieval age. Now a days it is a common national festival of Assamese society which celebrated by

Assamese people in their local village Namghar beyond caste and creed. The festival symbolise the destruction of evil power. This festival is a part of socio- cultural life of Assamese society. This unique festival is celebrated with grandeur on a fullmoon night. The uniqueness of this Raas purnima is still found in Majuli, the heritage area of Assam where different people across the world come to enjoy it. It is a cultural show containing with music, song, dance, makeup, drama displaying the lord Krishna,s activities from his birth to late childhood period. The focus on the divine activities of Lord Krishna creates positive health and emotional maturity which he applied for the upliftment of the society and humanity.

Sankaradeva (1449-1568) was the most renowned social reformer, saint of cultural procreator and proctor of medieval age. He showed his emotional maturity in an applied manner through his cultural works. During the time of pilgrimage he earned different experiences from various places of India and got the knowledge of economic, cultural, aesthetic, moral and spiritual value. He added a touch of local colour to his experiences according to the need of environment and population which established him unique one. He studied the common people of that time; motivate them towards Indian culture and philosophy by applying the method of people's participation and skill development through medium of fine Arts, used audio-visual aids for social change and well-being.

Sankaradeva studied the psychology of the masses. He cared for the well-being of the individuals in an ethical, disciplinary manner and applied aspects on health, literature, culture, etc. of positive psychology for the well-being of the people. It shows that he was emotionally matured and familiar with the concept of socialisation, reformation and established new scientific thoughts and action in society and social process. By providing cultural elements and liberal language to the masses he developed human resources with perfect health, related to economic and self-development in a large scale. The method of social reform and cultural awareness and oneness based on the provision of mass modernization, mass-communication, performing art, art galleries, skill development, self sufficiency with the help of community's creative talent in a large scale. These are the factors related to positive psychology and health.

His works were based on mostly in group activities, the process of collectly raw materials, exhibition, sculpture, scripture, literature, art, painting, music, dance, makeup, textile, translation. All these are not found in individualistic attitude but in group activities exhibition on all-inclusive perspective and ethnic integrity. This reveals his attitude towards emotional maturity, social reform, adjustment with environment and common masses. The

Namghar institutions combine all these aspects which work for development for human potentialities. It is said “the Namghar combines the functions of a village parliament, a large village court, a village school and a village church (Nath, 1997)”

Sankaradeva was a mesmerising personality with a beautiful mind and positive thinking. As managerial expert and social engineer, he constructed Assamese socio-cultural base. The present time is the right time to follow the path and ideology of Sankaradeva, because everybody is facing a problem of frustration, restlessness, mental, emotional immaturity. To achieve a complete life system, community development, skill development and become a complete individual, only the philosophy of Mahapurusha is the only way.

All the above findings reflect those contributions of Sankaradeva which are related to positive psychology and emotional maturity, have an impact on the society based on values. It was his foresight step before 500 years back (Kalita, 2014). He was a social engineer and great researcher of religio-philosophic concept. Since he was a great patriot and humanitarian, his work with proper application provides the virtue of emotional maturity and areas of positive psychology towards the people directly or indirectly related to Namghar institutions of concerned places. Namghar is a unique socio-cultural and religious centre which was developed by Sankaradeva. Through this Namghar system, unity among the society was formed, various social activities like disputes, quarrels, entremets, well-being, goodness among the society, meditation and physical exercises through various dance forms for health development, unique prayer system by chanting and hearing to create a peaceful mind etc. were developed. Namghar is the centre of all activities which is essential for an emotionally matured society.

As a democratic platform, process and activities of Namghar-

Increases	Decreases (Minor psycho-physical diseases-)
Peer group support	Loneliness
Empathy	Frustration
Discipline	Anxiety
Positive thinking	Stress
Creativity	Hypertension
Happiness	Depression
Wisdom	Dissatisfaction
Meaning of life and emotional maturity	Introversion
simplicity	Luxuriousness



## VI. Conclusion

Impact of positive psychology, health and emotional, maturity has been displayed through Sankaradeva's positive work and innovations. All areas of positive psychology and health related with his works and innovations with the relation of religion literature, art, culture and value base education for all, was forwarded only by Sankaradeva from medieval age till now in Assamese society.

The Namghar institution even in modern age is the prime example of positive mental, physical, spiritual, emotional and social health. It decreases physical disease and mental illness, this process is just like applied therapy of positive thinking. It reduces hyper tension, obesity, loneliness, introversion, luxuriousness, dissatisfaction etc.

Namghar institution with its balanced system promotes individual towards life satisfaction, positive emotion, happiness, optimism, self regulation, engagement, social support, peer group satisfaction, skill development, creativity, self respect and predict positive health.

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