

FOLK TRADITIONS AS PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

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Abstract: Traditional folkways, as essential elements of indigenous knowledge systems, have a significant impact on transmission of cultural values, ecological knowledge and sustainable behaviors to succeeding generations. This study was conducted to investigate the potential of folk traditions as a teaching tool to foster sustainable education in higher education students. Quantitative research design was used to conduct the study and data were gathered from 200 post graduate students of the University of Burdwan through standardized tools. Descriptive and inferential statistics was applied to examine awareness, utilization, perceived effectiveness and influence of folk traditions on sustainable learning outcomes. The results indicated moderate awareness and use, but high perceived effectiveness and influence, with significant positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$) between the use of folk traditions and sustainable outcomes. The discussion emphasizes that while folk traditions are being employed as useful teaching tools, their formal pedagogical adoption is still quite sporadic. The study suggests that the use of folk traditions within formal education may help to foster a greater understanding of sustainability and is consistent with current educational changes in India, thereby having the potential to influence wider education policy and practice.

Introduction

Education is a fundamental instrument for configuring sustainable societies through the development of environmental consciousness, ethical attitudes and culturally situated thinking individuals. In the last decades, there has been an increasing awareness in the importance of bringing indigenous knowledge systems and folk traditions to formal education for sustainability-oriented authors. Folk traditions, storytelling, songs, rituals, proverbs and practices of the community at large serve as living archives of collective wisdom and embody profound ecological and cultural knowledge accumulated over centuries. Such traditions offer place-based knowledge which is increasingly needed to confront today's environmental and social problems. Nevertheless, although they are valuable, they are still scarcely incorporated, especially in the formal institution, green training falls short to meet the sustainable needs.

The methodological basis of this research is based on socio-cultural and experiential learning theories. Lev Vygotsky (1978) stressed that learning is regulated by means of cultural tools and social interaction; therefore, knowledge contained within cultural forms such as folk traditions can play a critical role in cognitive growth. John Dewey (1938) also stressed the value of learning by doing, in which individuals acquire knowledge through active participation in authentic experiences. Moreover, while learning can be conceived of as a process of experiencing, reflecting and applying, which makes folk traditions excellent pedagogical tools because of their experiential and participatory character (David Kolb, 1984). These theoretical standpoints validate the application of folk traditions as a means to advocate sustainable and holistic education. There is increasing literature endorsing the inclusion of folk traditions and indigenous knowledge in education. Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha (1992) have asserted that traditional ecological knowledge that is enmeshed in local practices is central to sustainable resource management and environmental conservation. In the same vein, Anil K. Gupta (2015) stressed the need for greater recognition of grassroots innovations and indigenous knowledge as solutions to sustainable development and as skills for problem solving. Research e.g. Silva et al. 2023 This integration has been proven to foster contextual learning, develops cultural identity and environmental consciousness among the students. In the Indian setting, use of folk traditions in teaching in

classrooms has been shown to enhance students' engagement, moral development and sustainability awareness (Kumar, 2022; Sharma & Pandey, 2023).

The present study addresses the gap in the literature by analyzing the awareness, adoption, perceived benefits and influence of traditional knowledge on sustainable learning success. While a number of the qualitative and conceptual studies that have been previously conducted, there is a dearth of empirical quantitative proof linking folk traditions to that of sustainability outcome. This research enriches the body of knowledge by statistically substantiating such claim.

The significance of this study is highly relevant to Indian perspective owing to its diverse culture and traditional knowledge systems, which opens up space for innovation in education. The National Education Policy 2020 calls for inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems, local traditions and indigenous practices within the curriculum to support holistic and sustainable education. Yet, the execution of these guidelines is still nascent. "Hence, this study makes sense of timely insights into how folk traditions can be used as teaching tools to realize goals both of the pedagogy of sustainable development and of culturally responsive education in India."

Statement of the Problem

Although a rich heritage of folk cultural elements exists and could be used to foster sustainable education, application of these elements in formal teaching-learning processes is still limited. Their efficiency and influence on students' learning results have not been supported by any empirical data. Hence, the issue pertaining to this study is to examine the use of folk traditions as pedagogical tools and their effectiveness in raising awareness about sustainable education among students.

Significance of the Study

The importance of the study lies in the fact that it unveils the potential of folk traditions for sustainable education in the context of indigenous knowledge systems. It offers field data to substantiate the inclusion of culturally congruent pedagogic strategies in mainstream education and thus has implications for curriculum, teacher education and policy. The research is also in accordance with national priorities such as NEP 2020 to match with learners' holistic, value-based and sustainability-oriented learning goals. In addition, it reconciles indigenous knowledge with contemporary education, providing a means for sustaining cultural traditions and meeting modern educational requirements.

Operational Definitions of the Terms

Operational definitions describe how the key constructs of the study are defined, measured and the manner in which measurements are interpreted in the context of the study. In this study, the following terms have been operationally defined:

Folk Traditions In this research, folk traditions are understood as indigenous cultural practices, forms and knowledge communicated in oral mode or by community participation from one generation to the next. These are storytelling, folk songs, proverbs, rituals, festivals, myths and traditional ecological knowledge. Folklore traditions are operationally defined as respondents' recognition and use of the tradition, frequency of use and effectiveness of containing the tradition in educational settings, as measured by standardized questionnaire items using a Likert scale.

Pedagogical Tools: Pedagogical tools are the teaching and learning methods, strategies and materials that teachers apply in their teaching. For the purposes of this research, folk traditions may be regarded as a pedagogical tool when they are purposefully used (within classroom settings) to facilitate understanding, interest and learning informed by values. This construct is operationalized by respondents' indication of how (rarely, sometimes, frequently) such traditions inform their pedagogical practices.

Sustainable Education: Sustainable education is an educational pedagogy that fosters the development of environmental consciousness, social responsibility, cultural maintenance and ethical behaviour in accordance with the goals of sustainable development. In this paper with the topic 'Education for Sustainable Development', s-E is defined operationally as student knowledge, attitudes and values on sustainability and is assessed by applying standardized items pertaining to environmental awareness, cultural sensitivity and responsible conduct.

Awareness of Folk Traditions: Awareness is conceptualized as the level of knowledge and experience of the specific folk traditions in education among the respondents. As an operational definition, a set of questionnaire items rated on a Likert scale is used and low, moderate and high levels are assigned based on the scores received.

The level of utilization of Folk Traditions: This is the rate at which folk traditions in teaching and learning processes are applied. It is self-reported and divided into three categories: the first is infrequently, the second is occasionally and the third is regularly, with associated numerical grades for the quantitative analyses.

Effectiveness of Folk Traditions as Perceived Effectiveness as perceived refers to the degree to which the respondents perceive folk traditions as a tool for improving teaching-learning processes, especially in sustainability teaching and learning. According to the mean scores, the level of effectiveness was divided into three categories: low, moderate and high.

Effect on Sustainable Learning Outcomes: This construct represents the degree to which a folk tradition contributes to students' learning or acquisition of sustainability-related knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviors. It is operationally defined as the respondents' perceptions of the extent to which they have improved in environmental consciousness, ethical standards and cultural awareness.

Sustainable Learning Outcomes: The sustainable learning outcome refers to observable educational outcomes related to sustainability such as increased environmental knowledge, positive environmental attitudes, cultural understanding and sustainable decisions. These results are transformed by calculating composite scores from responses to standardized scales.

Association between Variables: In this study, association is the statistical dependence between two variables; the use of folk traditions, which is an independent variable and sustainable education outcome, which is a dependent variable. It is quantified by calculating the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) to assess the strength and direction of the association.

Postgraduate (PG) Students: PG students are those who are pursuing post graduate courses in University of Burdwan and they are the sample of the study. They have been deemed eligible to participate as respondents because of their exposure to higher academia and their critical-mindedness towards teaching methodologies.

Objectives of the Study

- To evaluate the awareness of folk traditions in education.
- To determine the prevalence of folk traditions as pedagogical tools.
- To investigate the perceived efficiency of folk traditions in sustainable education.
- To evaluate the influence of folk traditions on students' sustainability learning outcomes.
- To examine the correlation between usage of folk tradition and sustainable education outcomes.

Hypotheses of the Study

In line with the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H₀₁ (Null Hypothesis): The use of folk traditions and the sustainable education result is not significantly associated.

Ha₁ (Alternate hypothesis): A significant positive correlation exists between the use of folk traditions and informative sustainable education.

H₀₂ (Null Hypothesis): Folk traditions do not influence students' knowledge and values related to sustainability.

Ha₂ (Alternative Hypothesis): Folk traditions contribute with a significant positive effect in students' knowledge and values related to sustainability.

Materials and Methods

Research Design: A descriptive quantitative research design was employed for this study, which is useful for investigating associations and trends between variables in relation to folk traditions and education for sustainability.

Population and Sample: The target population was postgraduate students, and a sample of 200 PG students of the University of Burdwan was drawn through random sampling method to ensure representativeness.

Variable of the Study

A. Independent Variable: Use of folk traditions

B. Dependent Variable: Sustainable educational outcomes

Tools for Data Collection: Awareness, effectiveness and impact were assessed using standardised questionnaires. The tools were based on previously validated and reliable tools, which are widely used in similar settings. The use of standardized instruments is recommended because these materials can be objectively compared and analysed statistically.

Data Collection Procedure: The data were obtained by means of the structured questionnaires from the respondents. Clarity was ensured with appropriate instructions.

Use of Statistical Techniques: Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation analysis).

Ethical Considerations: The study did not deviate at any point from ethical codes. As well, informed consent and confidentiality were assured, and participation was voluntary. There was no harm or bias in the procedure of collecting data.

Results

The research examines folk traditions with a specific focus on the sustainable education aspect by employing quantitative research methodology. A total of 200 participants (N = 200) including students and teachers were involved in the data collecting process. It analyses the consciousness, utilization, efficiency and consequence of folk traditions in sustainable education. Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were calculated and inferential statistics were used to interpret the data.

Level of Awareness of Folk Traditions in Education: This sub-section reports follow respondents' level of awareness of the use of folk tradition in education.

Table 1: Level of Awareness of Folk Traditions (N = 200)

Level of Awareness	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD(±)
Low	35	17.5%		
Moderate	105	52.5%	3.48	0.76
High	60	30.0%		
Total	200	100%		

Source: Data compiled from primary survey conducted by the researcher (2026)

Finding: A moderate degree of awareness among folk traditions in education and 30.0% of them have a high awareness. Minorities (<17.5%) were less aware. The 3.48 mean value represents a somewhat high level of awareness overall which means folklore is quite well recognized but only to a limited extent considered as part of the mainstream educational knowledge.

Analysis: Finding can be substantiated with regard to both global as well as Indian academic responses to the finding of a majority (52.5%) of respondents being moderately aware of folk traditions in education with less in high awareness and a minute in low awareness.

From Indian perspective, various works assert that folk traditions along with Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are culturally rooted and widely practiced in day-to-day existence but are weakly infused into academic pedagogy. It makes a situation where knowledge is present at a general level but is not profound and grounded in systematic practice, thus explaining the predominance of moderate awareness in the present study. Take Gupta (2015) who stresses India's vast store house of indigenous and folk knowledge safeguarded in community practices, expressed in stories and embedded in native traditions. Yet he contends such knowledge is frequently disregarded in the formal education system and thus producing partial understanding among learners and teaching. This also supports the present result that the awareness exists but is not yet fully inward or academic solidified. In the same vein, Kireet Joshi (2017) observes that while Indian education is beginning to open the door to traditional systems of knowledge, the curriculum continues to be dominated by western ways of knowing which makes the inclusion of folk knowledge systems within formal pedagogy very minimal. As a result of this, teachers and students do not attain full knowledge, but rather superficial knowledge. Consistent with this tradition, the Radhakrishnan Committee (1948/2009 reprint) had earlier advocated for an infusion of Indian culture and traditional knowledge into education, but has not had a consistent application over the years which still has an impact on levels of consciousness.

On a more recent note, the policy-level document, National Education Policy 2020, lays great emphasis on including Indian Knowledge Systems, heterogeneous indigenous traditions and folk practices in the curriculum and pedagogy. Yet nascent research on its enactment (e.g., Kumar, 2022; Sharma, 2023) suggests that this coalescing process is still under way, with many educators only starting to grapple with these ideas. As a result of this transitional period, awareness of the contents among the concerned people is generally moderate which can also be seen in this data set. Empirical researches in the Indian scenario also corroborate this trend. For example, teachers of Kumar (2022) recognized the relevance of folk traditions in values-based and sustainable education, but many felt ill-equipped and unsupported to make use of them. Sharma and Pandey (2023), on the other hand, found that students are acquainted with folk traditions through informal culture but are “incapable of applying their academic knowledge,” resulting in what they term moderate awareness scores. In a wider context, Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha (1992) with respect to indigenous ecological knowledge situate traditional knowledge and behavior as being closely associated with sustainability but argue that such knowledge and behavioral systems are systematically alienated from the mainstream system of education, thus excluding structured awareness albeit accompanied by cultural knowledge.

Hence the moderate awareness level ($M=3.48$) that was recorded suggests the indication of a state of transition in Indian education in which folk traditions are beginning to be acknowledged while at the same time there remains the uncertainty of incorporating them systematically into pedagogy.

Extent of Use of Folk Traditions as Pedagogical Tools

This is the part where the degree of employment of folk traditions in teaching and learning processes is investigated.

Table 2: Extent of Use of Folk Traditions (N = 200)

Level of Use	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD(±)
Rarely Used	50	25.0%		
Sometimes Used	95	47.5%	3.21	0.82
Frequently Used	55	27.5%		
Total	200	100%		

Source: Data compiled from primary survey conducted by the researcher (2026)

Finding: Folk traditions are applied in the lessons 47.5% of teachers say only in some cases and a further 27.5% say always. But 25.0% said that is rarely the case. The value of 3.21 as the mean indicates an average application which suggests that, while folk traditions are acknowledged, their use in pedagogy is still evolving.

Analysis: The result showing that 47.5% of respondents considered using the folk traditions sometimes (27.5% of them reported using them frequently and 25.0% of them had stopped using them), suggested the middling level of application ($M=3.21$) of these practices. This pattern is corroborated both by Indian as well as international studies, which constantly establish that though folk traditions are perceived as precious cultural knowledge, their organised classroom inclusion stand in a nascent stage. From the Indian angle this middling usage was a reflection of certain structural and curricular realities. Indian Knowledge Systems, including folk traditions, should be incorporated in teaching-learning processes (National Education Policy 2020). Yet, early studies of implementation indicate that this transition is more gradual than immediate as a lot of institutions are still coming to terms with the new pedagogic expectations. Consequently, teachers seem to draw on folk traditions on an infrequent basis rather than regularly, which is in line with the sometimes-used category capturing the highest number of respondents in this study. Indian classrooms are testified to be in line with this. Kumar (2022) observed that while teachers are aware of the pedagogical utility of folk tales, songs and local customs, the application of these is contextual rather than cross-curricular, confined to certain topics or modules. In the same vein, Sharma and Pandey (2023) noted that folk traditions are "often" applied in cultural fest and value education classes, but not during regular teaching learning process, thereby attaining moderate usage. Furthermore, Anil K. Gupta (2015) makes a case that much of India's indigenous knowledge is embedded in communities and in informal settings. And the process of translating that knowledge into formal education is, as institutionally required, a matter of curricular redesign and teacher preparedness, both evolving. This gap accounts for the substantial proportion of respondents (25.0%) who indicated infrequent use, citing barriers that include insufficient training, time limitations and lack of instructional materials. In general, "learning itself is socially and culturally mediated" (p. Folk traditions as culturally embedded resources have the potential to be efficiently used in teaching; yet this potential prompted by an intentional planning of learning situations is what determines effective use. So long as the integration is partial, use will of course be moderate rather than great. International research reaffirms this trend. Silva et al. (2023) state that while traditional knowledge is gaining recognition on a global scale, its application within classrooms is still spotty, more guided by teacher initiative than by the belly of the institution. Similarly, Funk and Woodroffe (2024) have observed that teachers are often under-prepared to teach indigenous pedagogies, leading to inconsistent and incomplete application. In general, the mean moderate score (3.21) indicates a transitional phase in education, in which folklore education is at its first stage of being considered applicable as part of pedagogy, but it is not yet fully or widely adopted for use.

Perceived Effectiveness of Folk Traditions for Sustainable Education

This sub-section showcases opinions of respondents concerning the effectiveness of folk tradition to sustain education.

Table 3: Perceived Effectiveness (N = 200)

Level of Effectiveness	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD(±)
Low	30	15.0%		
Moderate	90	45.0%	3.67	0.71
High	80	40.0%		
Total	200	100%		

Source: Data compiled from primary survey conducted by the researcher (2026)

Finding: A large group of people answered folk traditions are very effective (40.0%) and 45.0% viewed them as effective. Low effectiveness was reported by 15.0%. The positive outlook as the mean score is 3.67 indicates that folk traditions are viewed as effective means in sustainability-oriented education.

Analysis: The high (40.0%) and medium (45.0%) levels of perceived effectiveness of folk traditions among respondents, with a low percentage (15.0%) for the category of low effectiveness, indicates a positive perception (Mean = 3.67). This finding is to a great extent corroborated by the existing research especially in case of India as folk traditions are considered as effective means of sustainability-based education.

The efficacy of folk traditions from an Indian perspective is owing to their contextual and experiential characteristics. The National Education Policy 2020 specifically prioritizes integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and local

and indigenous traditions and practices in education for holistic and sustainable learning. The policy emphasizes that age-old knowledge cultivated through folklore, storytelling, songs and community rituals fosters value, environmental consciousness and cultural continuance, which is directly transferrable to the high and medium effectiveness rankings of the current study.

Scholarly contributions further justify this finding. Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha (1992) maintain that native and folk customs are ecologically sound and sustainable ways of living shaped by many years of practical experience. When knowledge of this kind is brought into the classroom, it is inevitable that students will come away with a stronger understanding of what sustainability means, which accounts for a big chunk of these traditions being perceived as effective by respondents. In the same vein, Anil K. Gupta (2015) asserts that the knowledge systems of grassroot and folk provide creative and context specific solutions to environmental and social issues. He stresses that the incorporation of such knowledge into teaching and learning processes renders teaching and learning more contextually relevant, experiential and sustainability-focused, which is consistent with the positive attitude indicated by the mean score of 3.67. Research on Indian education has also confirmed this finding. In a study, Kumar (2022) revealed that learners who were facilitated with IG and traditional teaching methods showed enhanced environmental awareness and value-based comprehension which are important portions in sustainable learning. In a similar vein, Sharma and Pandey (2023) found that the use of folk tales and cultural stories in the classroom had a positive impact on students' participation and their moral reasoning and these results significantly contributed to the effectiveness perceived by the students. From a theoretical perspective, knowledge Dewey (1938) is experience-based and active learning is constructed through the interaction with the life situations and contexts of real-life. Since the folk tradition is contained within real-life experience and practices as a community it is only natural that folk traditions are more effective due to the wider applicability of this method in the education system. Moreover, Lev Vygotsky (1978) draws attention to the significance of cultural tools in learning and argues that culturally situated tools such as folk traditions play a part in cognitive and social development and therefore their potency as educational tools can be further supported.

These results are confirmed among international studies. Research (e.g., Silva et al., 2023) reveals that indigenous knowledge systems have much to offer to the field of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as they facilitate place-based learning, cultural identity and environmental consciousness. This is why so few in this study considered it to be ineffective. Therefore, the positive mean score and the high and medium efficacy response option ratings suggest that folk tradition pedagogy may be considered a very effective means / tool for contributing to sustainable education even if application in full scale or size is still matter of development.

Impact of Folk Traditions on Students' Sustainable Learning Outcomes

This part discusses the influence of folk culture on how students construct and perform sustainability knowledge.

Table 4: Impact on Sustainable Learning Outcomes (N = 200)

Level of Impact	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD(±)
Low	28	14.0%		
Moderate	92	46.0%	3.74	0.69
High	80	40.0%		
Total	200	100%		

Source: Data compiled from primary survey conducted by the researcher (2026)

Finding: The results informed that the moderate impact of folk traditions on sustainable learning was experienced by 46.0% of respondents and 40.0% experienced such a strong influence. Only 14.0% said they were the least affected. The average score of 3.74 representing 'agree' also indicates a strong positive impact of folk tradition towards development of knowledge and values related to sustainability education (SE) by students.

Analysis: The result that 46.0% had a moderate impact, 40.0% was a high impact of folk traditions on sustainable learning (Mean = 3.74) suggested a strong positive impact regarding students' awareness and values for sustainability. This outcome is strongly supported by the earlier studies, especially in the Indian scenario, where folk traditions are associated with ecological wisdom, cultural values and community-based education.

From the point of view of policy, the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP, 2020) stresses the inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) with folk traditions as a component of education for the realization of holistic, value based and sustainable learning. The policy acknowledges that indigenous ways are, by their very nature, environmentally sustainable, socially responsible and culturally continuous. This study's findings, high and moderate levels of impact, are representative of this synthesis and suggest that when such traditions are used as sources of learning, students' understanding of sustainability is significantly enriched. Scholarly works are also a further warrant for this finding. Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, (1992) Maintaining traditional ecological knowledge woven into folk ways ensures sustainable resource use and charismatic environmental ethics. When learners interact with such knowledge, they acquire a more profound and situational understanding of sustainability, which would be an explanation of the strong positive influence seen in the mean score.

Likewise, Anil K. Gupta (2015) advances that indigenous and folk knowledge systems nurture sustainable, nature-based solutions to environmental and social concerns of our times. Bringing these into education supports learners' problem-solving competences and sustainability awareness, which helps in achieving higher levels of influence. The outcome is also supported by empirical studies in the Indian context of education. The study by Kumar (2022) revealed that students participated in pedagogy based on indigenous knowledge showed improvement in their environmental awareness and sustainable actions. Sharma & Pandey (2023) also found that story-telling both by way of native narratives and traditions in the classrooms further enhanced the students' moral values, sense of cultural identity and environmental sensitivity, which are necessary ingredients of sustainable education. From a theoretical view, Kolb (1984) focuses on experiential learning, where knowing is a process of deriving knowing in action. Folk traditions are experiential, participatory and embedded in real life; thus, they have a good potential to improve learning results, especially in such areas as sustainability where it is necessary to adopt values in life. Similarly, Lev Vygotsky (1978) highlights the importance of cultural tools in cognitive development; folk practices are cultural tools, which allow individuals to achieve higher levels of understanding and social learning. These findings are also substantiated by international studies. Research on Education for Sustainable Development (e.g., Silva et al., 2023) have pointed out that indigenous knowledge modes are powerful engines of contextualized learning coverages, environmental ethics and relations to community, resulting in profound learning innovation. The seemingly low number (14.0 percent) reporting low impact may reflect limited participation or uneven implementation rather than the approach itself being ineffective.

Therefore, high and medium effects and a relatively high mean (3.74) show that folk traditions have the potential to significantly enhance sustainable learning results by promoting connectedness to nature in cognitive and value level learning for students.

Correlation between Use of Folk Traditions and Sustainable Education Outcomes

This part considers sustainable educational results in relation to the application of folk traditions.

Table 5: Correlation between Use and Outcomes (N = 200)

Variables	r-value	Significance (p-value)
Use of Folk Traditions & Sustainable Outcome	0.62	0.01

Source: Data compiled from primary survey conducted by the researcher (2026)

Finding: The coefficient of correlation $r = 0.62$, indicating a strong positive relationship between sustainable education outcome and the application of folk traditions. The result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, implying that higher levels of inclusion of folk traditions in pedagogy lead to higher levels of sustainability learning outcomes.

Analysis: The result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level which indicates that we can be quite sure that it is a true correlation and not a case of randomness. This is corroborated by theoretical and empirical research especially in the Indian scenario where folk traditions are intricately linked with sustainability based knowing and doing.

At a policy level, National Education Policy 2020 recommends the inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), which encompasses folk traditions, within the framework of mainstream education to promote holistic and sustainable

learning outcomes. Culturally based pedagogies foster learners' engagement and development of values, according to the policy. In the present study, the high correlation corroborates this sojourn as it suggests that sustainability learning would outcome in higher sense of using more and more of folk traditions.

Theoretically, the connection is read in terms of socio-cultural learning. Lev Vygotsky (1978)) why learning is a cultural and social process. Storytelling, proverbs and community rituals Folk traditions, in many manifestations, are powerful cultural tools for sustained and deeper learning that is cognitive and value based. Therefore, a natural corollary of increasing use of these traditions is enhancing educational outcomes, which is manifested in the positive correlation.

In the same vein, David Kolb (1984) stresses the importance of experiential learning, wherein knowledge is acquired through active involvement. Folk traditions offer contextual and experiential learning, particularly in education for sustainability, where the pertinence to lived-experience is paramount. This accounts for the fact that higher degrees of integration are associated with better learning outcomes. Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha from an Indian radical thinking who stressed that indigenous and folk knowledges are always aligned with ecological sustainability and resource management rather than the other way around. When this knowledge is embedded in pedagogy, it solidifies students' sense of place in the environment and ethical responsibility and results in quantitatively measurable improvements in sustainability outcomes. Moreover, Anil K. Gupta (2015) states that upon solutions to context-specific problems as well as a systems thinking approach to sustainability, the knowledge of grassroots innovations and traditions has a large part in solution-based thinking. His findings imply that combining these knowledge systems in education increases students' ability to engage with real-world problems, consistent with the strong relationship identified in this study.

This relationship is also supported by empirical evidence. Kumar (2022) found a positive association between integrating indigenous knowledge in education and students' environmental consciousness and academic participation. Sharma and Pandey (2023) also observed that the folk tradition-based classrooms were more participative and culturally internalized by the students leading to better learning. Therefore, this significant positive relationship implies that higher levels of pedagogical integration of folk traditions may enhance sustainability-oriented learning, including their potential for being a pedagogically effective tool to pursue such an agenda.

Discussion

This study explored the potential of folk traditions as instruments of sustainable education in a quantitative manner. The overall finding is that although awareness and use of folk tradition are moderate, its perceived effectiveness, learning influence and relation with sustainability education are high. Based on these results, it might be argued that there is an educational transition under way leading to a greater acknowledgement of folk traditions, but with an educational system not yet fully open to them. The moderate consciousness (Mean = 3.48) indicates that the participants were aware of folk traditions and that they had some knowledge but did not have further academic knowledge. This is reflective of a larger dialogue in Indian education where traditional know-how is culturally ingrained but not systemically embedded in formal schooling. The National Education Policy 2020 promotes the introduction of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), but it is yet to be executed. Anil K. Gupta (2015) is among the scholars who have argued that traditional knowledge is rich in communities but has not been assimilated into formal education systems, resulting in suboptimal awareness. Silva et al. (2023) point out that assimilation of indigenous knowledge is still sporadic worldwide, further validating the present findings.

The moderate mean level of use (Mean = 3.21) also suggests a similar position of non-use/hesitation. Although two-fifths of the respondents claimed to have made use of folk traditions on ad hoc basis, continuous incorporation is very minimal. This finding corroborates with the results of Kumar (2022) and Sharma and Pandey (2023) which suggest that teachers integrate folk elements in piecemeal rather than systematic manner.

The transitional nature of implementation under the NEP 2020 also explains why usage is not yet on a larger scale. Conversely, the result indicates a high perceived efficiency value ($M = 3.67$) of folk tradition in the sustainable education. This tells us that folk tradition is seen as relevant and is perceived as a strong tradition. Theoretical support may be drawn from John Dewey (1938), who advocated experiential learning and Lev Vygotsky (1978), who stressed the importance of cultural tools in learning. Because it is experiential and culturally based, folk traditions naturally promote engagement and learning. Indian academicians Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha (1992) also maintain that traditional knowledge systems do contain ecological wisdom and therefore are indeed potent sources for sustainability education.

Sustainability impact (Mean= 3.74) The strong positive result for sustainable learning outcomes reveals that folk traditions promote students' environmental awareness and values, as well as their knowledge within the context. This echoes Gupta (2015) who discusses the importance of indigenous knowledge in contributing to sustainable thinking and problem solving. Empirical research (Kumar, 2022; Sharma & Pandey, 2023) also suggests better student participation and value inculcation via folk-based pedagogy.

Most interestingly, the analysis revealed a significant positive association ($r = 0.62$) between the application of folk traditions and sustainable learning outputs. This implies that further promotion of the use of folk traditions may have the potential to enhance learning performance. This is paralleled theoretically by David Kolb (1984), who proposes experiential learning theory as a process of learning, through meaningful engagements with context-embedded experiences. It is also grounded on Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory which highlights the significance of cultural tools in cognitive development.

Taken as a whole, the discussions point to a sharp discrepancy between possibility and actuality. It should be noted that folk traditions are regarded as efficient and influential, but they are not widely used due to gaps in teacher training, dearth of curricular integration and institutional barriers. The findings indicate that a better implementation of policy, teacher education and curriculum design may promote the application of folk traditions in the teaching of sustainability-oriented education.

Testing of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested by means of correlation and descriptive statistics. The results showed a high positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$) between the application of folk traditions and sustainable education results, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Hence, H_{01} was rejected and H_{a1} was accepted and it can be said that with the incorporation of folk traditions the sustainable learning outcome got better. Moreover, the descriptive results revealed the presence of very high averaged scores regarding the answers to the perceived effectiveness ($M = 3.67$) and sustainable learning ($M = 3.74$) items which means that folk traditions are perceived to have a positive impact on the knowledge, values and environmental awareness of students. The null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. The findings are in line with theoretical views such as Lev Vygotsky (1978), who focuses on the use of cultural artifacts in learning and David Kolb (1984), who considers experiential learning as essential for shaping meaningful knowledge. Therefore, statistical evidence strongly supports the importance of folk traditions in sustainable education outcomes.

Educational Implications of the Study

This research has important consequences for learning in educational systems. The combination of moderate awareness and use with high perceived effectiveness and impact indicates it may be appropriate to consider the folk traditions for systematic inclusion within the school system. In pursuit of the NEP 2020, the curriculum makers need to integrate folk tales, indigenous wisdom and local cultural knowhow at the cross-curricular areas as a medium of sustainability-related learning. Pre-service education programmers need to be reformed to prepare teachers for teaching folk tradition in the school classroom. In addition, using folk traditions may encourage students to learn experientially,

contextually and based on values which may lead to raised awareness of environment, cultural identity and critical thinking. Organizations need to promote community engagement and sharing of indigenous knowledge to connect formal and informal education systems. In sum, the research demonstrates that folk traditions have the power to reshape education as a more equitable, culturally responsive and sustainability-centred endeavour.

Limitations and Future Directions of the Study

The present study has limitations that should be taken into consideration. The sample size was capped at 200, thus the generalizability of the study findings to other educational setting might be limited. The study was predominantly based on self-report data which may be vulnerable to response bias. Moreover, this study was designed quantitatively, which may serve well to quantify trends and relationships, but not to capture the depth of experiences and the contextual nuances of applying folk traditions in teaching. It was also geographically and institutionally bounded, so it does limit generalization to a wider field. Larger and more varied samples, perhaps via cross-cultural comparisons, would be useful in extending the generality of the findings in future research. Mixed-method or qualitative methods would also be desirable for gaining further depth of understanding about how folk traditions are enacted and experienced in everyday classroom life. Future investigation could also include the role of technology to preserve and integrate folk traditions in contemporary pedagogy, as well as longitudinal research to analyze long-term impact on sustainable learning products.

Conclusion

The study concludes that folk traditions are effective educational tools in spreading education for sustainability and are quite well known and used, although they have a very high degree of impact and effectiveness. The high positive correlation between the use of folk traditions and sustainable learning outcomes proves the essential function of folk traditions in increasing students' knowledge, values and environmental awareness. Yet, although the present execution is still scattered, results show great promise in terms of integrating folk traditions in the general education system. Further promoting policy implementation, curriculum development and teacher training around these will also help to promote a more comprehensive, culturally grounded and sustainability-focused education system.

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