Oral Media for Raising the Tribal Voice

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Abstract

The present paper will reveal the use of digital media among the tribal community. Discussing in detail how content is accessible, with "right to information" which is making information accessible to the tribal community and the barriers as linguistic barriers, signs, symbols or jargons creating problems in understanding the meaning. The study also identified potential barriers to access, such as the lack of availability of structure as electricity or its un-affordability. How come these communities are not coming into mainstream while so many schemes, projects, plans of government of India are executed by its own agencies for their overall agencies? The method is descriptive survey and data is used from secondary sources. Findings of the study reveal not only the present problems with tribal communication development, but also attempts to find out possible solution in order to overcome those loopholes.

Keywords: Tribal; Oral media; Digital media

Introduction

Aristotle once said "Man is by nature a social animal, an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human". Beyond physical requirement of food and shelter, human needs to communicate with fellow human beings. In contemporary civilisation it's a necessity for survival with the concept of global village by Marshal Macluhan. With advancement in information and technology, along with the traditional communicative forms, contemporary media forms like print media, audio-visual media (film, radio and TV shows, and voice-based platforms), and internet-based social media have also emerged in the media landscape of India. According to Wilbur Schramm, communication is an integral process of a society; it preserves and transmits the culture of society. As Mahatma Gandhi's Talisman, when you feel doubtful, and conscious for the next further step, remember the face of neediest person, you saw, standing last in the row of development and think whether this step will be helpful to him. Pyarelal (1958) the new technology ideas and innovations must reach the last person for providing equal opportunities to fulfil once potential. In India, the co-existence of two media forms, i.e., traditional and contemporary media forms is a reality [1].

Traditional media as T.S.Eliot presents the idea of tradition in his essay tradition and individual talent, (1919) which means a historical timelessness – a fusion of past and present – and, at the same time, a sense of present temporality as it include folk dance, song, storytelling, poetry, plays and puppet shows, etc. They can be found mainly in rural and suburban sectors and are practiced for communication and entertainment; oftentimes, they are used to convey messages relating to contemporary socio-political issues. The use of media is influenced by a number of factors including social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Different forms of media are available for different audience the usage of these medium also varies. In the world of instant communication and high technology, where some people have an immense exposure to new technology with high affordability and access where as there are traditional medium which is still prevalent in some communities? Media has affected masses in one form or the other as nature survives with communication. Human being has developed advanced form of communication. As Marshal McLuhan mention, in his book "Understanding Media: the extension of man", he mentions that how Media is the extension of Man it is assumed that media has affected how we see as television an extension of eye our vision, or view, radio extension of our ear/ hearing capability [2, 3].

Traditionally, community was created with geographical neighbourhood and cultural background. However, in an epoch of globalization characterized by flows that connect individuals and objects across distance and via technological mediation as Innis argues upon the concept of space biased and time biased, how media has changed it. With the satellite and cable technology in

India, Doordarshan in 1959 came in to educate, entertain and inform as an experiment but the gap between the information rich and information poor in India is still not filled. With expanse of medium, the media is providing entertainment and consumer culture where the marginalised are pushed to margins. Digital divide term introduced in 1990 representing the gap between people who have access and those who don't have access to information technology. Access to high-speed Internet service has become an essential component to the nation's economy, education, and healthcare now a-days. How digital media accessibility has affected the social and cultural life of the youths of this tribal community [4-6].

Right to receive information is a Fundamental Right

Media freedom is derived from right to free expression, guaranteed by Indian constitution under article 19(A), which is also related to public liberty, public right to information article 21. Media freedom and public right to free speech is coextensive. Constitution of India guarantees equal rights to all it's citizen irrespective of caste creed, colour, religion, gender. As the constitution use the word citizen guaranteeing rights to the citizen. The media rights in India are also derived from right to free expression which is freedom of information. Media's freedom is in part the fulfilment of public right to information [7].

On 9.2.1995 in the case between the Union of India & Cricket Association of Bengal Right to access information: as Justice PB Sawant put it, in one of the two concurring judgments in the case" the Airwaves or frequencies are a public property. Their use has to be controlled and regulated by public authority in the interest of public and to prevent the invasion of their rights". In justice Sawant's words "The Right to freedom of speech and expression also include the right to educate, to inform, and to entertain and also the right to be educated, entertained, informed". The challenge of regulation is to harmonise the two one of which is right of the telecaster and right of the viewer. Justice Reddy laid down the principle; it is the duty of the state to see that the airwaves are so utilised as to advance free speech right of citizen which is served by ensuring plurality and diversity of views, opinion, and ideas. Conceding such right would be detrimental to the free speech right of the body of citizen in as much as only the privileged little powerful economic, commercial and political interest would come to dominate the media [8].

In the model "The Diffusion of Innovation" by Everett Roger the Diffusion of technology, idea, and knowledge making the knowledge accessible to the have not section of the society, which requires accessing capacity and purchasing capacity in masses.

Using media different group of people are making their presence felt by sharing their culture, belief, traditions, problems, life altogether. Building digitally local and global communities, as different, tribes, regional population, students, constructing their identities, legitimising their narratives as mentioned by Appadurai (1990). Digital India programme targets universal digital literacy and approachability for all by ensuring that the resources and services are accessible in regional languages to local population.

The need of digital India programme at this modern time is very relevant for the country which is on the track of developing and accelerating condition. The needs are as follows: To produce a fast communication bridge among government body and stakeholders [9].

• To reduce the problems of communication with citizens due to wide spread geography distance

• Tribal population and diversity. To facilitate digital library to secondary and higher education

•To produce universal digital literacy to make availability of digital services and resource in Indian languages.

For New initiatives, on new media platforms, in different states of India, most of the government departments use media extensively to disseminate valuable policy and government program related information to the intended beneficiaries. As Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda has launched the "GOAL Going Online As Leaders - programme of his Ministry in partnership with Facebook at a Webinar in New Delhi. GOAL participants will have access to Meta Business Coach a Whatsapp based learning bot that will enable participants an opportunity to learn skills on how to build and grow their business using Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp. Digitally empowering India's tribal communities could contribute significantly to the socioeconomic development of the country. It can prove too helpful for show casing authentic tribal music, launched recently by the All India Radio (AIR), called as "Adiswar". Public broadcaster launched a first- of-its-kind talent hunt "AdiSwar" for tribal music. The new initiatives to showcase tribal produce and handicrafts for connecting tribal forest dwellers and artisans with national and international markets with the intensions to further enable their economic welfare and also bring them closer towards mainstream development [10].

Indian tribes is mainly a political identity that has given a legal recognition by Government of India called schedule tribe in constitution of India ST is described in article 366(25)" such tribe or tribal communities, or part of group within tribes as deemed under article 542, to schedule tribe for purpose of constitution. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and shows high rate of illiteracy. India has the single largest tribal population in the world with 8.6% tribal population of the total (Census of India, 2011) tribal throughout history has faced forced displacement, violence, Santhal, revolt, Munda revolt, Kol revolt, Bhil revolt history witnessed struggle of tribal for their land and cultural rights. Marginalisation by forced displacement and by alienation created is a continued struggle for the tribal in India. Subaltern (ii volume).

UN document suggests that "the lack of indigenous media resources, and the dominance of privately owned media whose content was unrelated to the reality of indigenous peoples created a 'serious divorce and inequity that weakens and perverts the cultural identity' of those peoples" (Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2011,)

Article 17 of United Nations, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, said, "Indigenous people have the right

to establish their own media in their own languages" (p7). the Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity (DAVP), Government of India, in 2011, mentioned how, two newspapers were published in Adivasi languages in the central indigenous belt. Moreover, in another instance, the UN commented that by using media, indigenous people across the globe could participate in promoting and protecting the rights and cultures of their own. Many Adivasi publications, funded by local Adivasi groups, are facing various adversities such as inadequate distribution network, poor marketing infrastructures, and limited financial resources. Consequently, publication of many Adivasi newspapers, such as BijBiinko and Dhumkuria, published in the Kurukh language, have been stopped. As a result, JoharSahiya stopped publication at the end of 2013. Similarly a number of tribal publication face the brunt of commercialism [11].

Mobile Internet and tribes

People in developing countries, including India, face several developmental challenges due to economic and cultural barriers and rural and urban gaps. Likewise, low literacy, poor healthcare facilities, low per capita income, a high degree of poverty, and poor infrastructure are common in most developing countries including India. In the rural and mountainous areas, the mobile phone has emerged as an important development tool. For instance, people to have access to health facilities, economic development, publicize their products, and transfer amount using mobile banking. The assumption that permeates throughout the paper is that mobile phone is a network good with convergent technologies embedded in it. According to Rogers (2003), the spread of a new innovation over time typically follows an S-curve, as the early adopters select the technology first, followed by the majority until an innovation is common. The tribal are seen at the laggard position where they are not able to use technology and make profitable decisions. "Determinants of mobile penetration in Asia-a panel stud, examined the mobile phone penetration rates in Asia," using panel data analysis. findings indicate that Gross Domestic Product, Per Capita Income, landline density, number of mobile providers and regulatory policy have positive and statistically significant influence on mobile phone penetration rate. all groups report statistically significant positive coefficients over the reference group "Scheduled Tribe". Jammu & Kashmir 63.7% of schedule tribes own mobile phones Source: Estimated from the Unit Records, NSS 66th Round on Consumption Expenditure [12, 13]. After digital India initiative In an article In North East as well as in Tripura local venders are using online apps for payment through e-wallet, Paytm etc. Which can help the tribal vendors cash their produce in local market?

Kwok (1999) Globalisation and Singapore transmigration: Re-imagining and negotiating national identity has described how the internet can enable ethnic communities to globally react, communicate, share resources, and mobilize in reaction to global events. The exposure of medium is determining factor for use of information on media. Virmani (2000) opined, in Flying with the Crane. "The mass media, if democratized and put in the hands of local communities can become true vehicles of cultural expression and affirmation". The concept of tribal media is prominently debated upon, nowadays.

Geographical isolation, communicative isolation language barriers, lower literacy tribal issues being buried with sheer ignorance led to lower communication media exposure as

With increase in literacy, and affordability of mobile phone and internet one can access information, entertainment and education. But the literacy, lifestyle and purchasing power of the nomadic tribe hampers the exposure of media among tribal masses.

Challenges: The access and affordability is still a challenge for the tribal people, with low purchasing power, illiteracy, lack of access to electricity and internet packs the information on phones are still away from people. As Amartya sen's concept of forced inclusion and forced exclusion in the book by Sukhdev Singh Throat, "caste, social exclusion and poverty"(2012).the use of mediums also create exclusion where for using internet, mobile technology group of people are improving their life style due to inconsistent use of contemporary technology they are not able to come into mainstream media. Sonum Lotus, the director of meteorology in the state's summer capital Srinagar, said that since the nomads move way up in the highlands for grazing their livestock, they are unable to get signals from mobile phones or radio. "This makes it impossible for them to receive weather updates from radio or through phone," he told how Digital Satellite Phone Terminal (DSPT) service be used to alert the nomads about extreme weather events. The national telecommunication corporation of India, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) starter the DSPT service in some remote areas. DSPT works on satellite signal, but it is not mobile. This does not have to be a problem. "DSPTs can be installed along the migratory routes of nomads so that they make and receive calls about weather information before making a decision on their movement," G.M. Mufti, the deputy general manager of telecommunications in Kashmir told There are a number of factors still prevailing hampering the reach of information through media among tribal masses in Jammu Kashmir. Due to nomadic nature of moving from one place to another it disconnects the tribal. During the movement any emergency cannot be communicate to police or hospital. Even though it has been their traditional occupation, in the contemporary times, they are confronted with the challenge of livelihood insecurity, the main cause being massive degradation of their habitat. Digital inclusion has the potential to uplift their status and bring them into the mainstream society. Supreme Court Advocate Sanjay Upadhyay pushed for digitally empowering India's tribal population and said advocated for serious brainstorming for inclusion of tribal in the decision-making process. As digital revolution is to increase the pace of knowledge and simplify life [13-15].

Information surplus: Marxism concept of surplus how the gap between the rich and the poor is constructed through the gap which is created by the unequal distribution of profit which is concentrated in the hands of the rich. The new concept of information surplus and information deficit is created. This concentration of information limit down the interaction, representation, flow of ideas and information. Similarly, the information gap between the information rich and information poor is visible, where the surplus of information is concentrated

with the information rich population of the country. Which creates another ghetto. The socio economic factors affect the use of media too. The unavailability of electricity, nomad nature of the tribe keep them away from television medium. The literacy rate among tribal as State of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a United Nations publication (2009) noted, that the indigenous communities of India as ranked in the bottom 25. Scheduled Tribes (Adivasi people) score lower in education, health and other social and economic aspects measured by the HDI (Human Development Index) (p. 29) In this study 50% of respondents stated that their internet use was limited because they did not have enough data in their cell phone plan Tribal Technology Assessment: The State of Internet Service on Tribal Lands. Especially in a region as disturbed region as Jammu Kashmir ,where internet is curbed, restrictions were imposed forced to depend on personnel information, and opinion leader, the mass communicated information do not reach the tribal population. Which is the forced exclusion as described by Amaratya Sen. The technological innovations are not being fully utilised by the tribal group of people with the lack of electricity, awareness and late adoption of technology economic factors, which hamper the way to get their hands on new communication mediums. Illiteracy among the tribal population. Lack of interest in digitization programme. • Negative thinking due to complexcity of digital India programme.• Lack of concept of using smart phones.• Unavailability of internet signal at remote areas.• Non-connectivity of optical fibre cables (OFC) throughout the rural areas.• Very weak concept about internet language.• Very less knowledge about English language.• Lack of English medium schools in rural areas.• Fear of loss of money by cheque transaction• Lack of awareness programme in rural• & remote areas.

The communications systems are in conflict with the dominant perception of the State in relation to media. With the penetration of mobile and mobile internet the information can be imparted among the tribal in local language, where sign, symbols and complicated jargons do not become the hurdle to decode the message from the government and get benefit of different schemes and policies framed for them. Policy information should not be limited to advertisements oral mode should be used where reading, understanding and perceiving of information is not distorted due to syntax or semantics. The bottom-up approach of development communication needs to make information as understandable as possible for the listener, viewer to be beneficiary.

Is Oral media the solution?

ORAMEDIA consist of two separate words 'oral' and 'media

Which highlights the significance of oral language in reaching large population, if they meet in the marketplace, or individually, if the process is interpersonal Their significance is found in the fact that tribal are rich in folklore and symbolism. PRIMEDIA new name for the traditional folk-media, which have its essence local, culturally produced and consumed content, of information, education and entertainment by members of a group. As they still depend on the one to one information. Medium with Local language, and with local issues but on new media platform which is accessible to tribal population can help to inform, educate. To make people educated. To set-up more number of governments managed English medium schools in rural areas.• To arrange frequent awareness programme in Tribal remote areas for adults.• To establish digital school for adults.• To spread concept of digitization among tribal students through computer education in schools.• To arrange for campaigns by digital literate persons to spread digital literacy.• To arrange hands on training about the use of smart phones among tribal adults.• Content in local language. Providing smart phones with subsidized rate among poor tribal families. To cover all remote areas with mobile towers. To employ some digital literate team at remote area for constant help of the community, To setup digital club.

Conclusion

The new mobile internet media have reached the tribal population due to its portability, accessibility, and affordability. Which connect them to their family, friends and government institutions? The technological revolution has convergence of mediums the audio visuals mediums, text option for the masses. The barriers in the utilisation of contemporary media is still the access of medium is limited due to other social economic and lifestyle aspect of tribal community as they move from one place to another. As they move electricity is not accessible during there month long travels, even in their temporary nomad huts in Jammu Plains in winter & in Hilly Areas of Jammu in summer, there is no electricity connection. they get their phones charged from permanent villager's houses, even if they get electricity mobile network is bleak in forests and in difficult terrain. The elite culture of internet mediums, hamper their connectedness and relevance to the data imparted in the media. Majorly the internet is being used for entertainment. Lack of electricity, movement, low literacy rate, elite language useful of complicated syntax, jargons which makes information irrelevant to them. The mobile internet has changed the arena; the policy framed for tribal groups should be advertised on mobile platforms too. The challenge being the fake news on the internet mediums. So these are some of the conclusion from the study.

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