

Status of Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar tribes of Bihar and role of media in awareness generation

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ABSTRACT

Bihar has 32 tribal communities with the population of 13,36,573, which is merely 1.28 percent of the total population of the state (Census, 2011). In present paper, the socio-economic and health condition among three tribal communities of Bihar i.e. Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar will be explored. The study focuses on awareness level regarding development issues within the said tribal communities. The study emphasizes on whether the studied tribal communities have information about development schemes and proper information about health as well as social issues. It will discuss the sources they use for getting information, education and motivation. The study is based primarily on the experiences from the field work conducted among the said Scheduled Tribes. The study is based in Banka and Bhagalpur district of Bihar. Purposive sampling has been used for the selection district, block and village. The respondents were selected through simple random sampling. It has been found that these tribal communities face severe social, economic, and developmental challenges. All of the major development indicators, such as income, literacy, health, and so on, are bleak. They have been far behind the general population. Their educational attainment and awareness towards development is also very poor. These tribal communities often suffer from many diseases due to poor sanitation conditions. In most cases, patients seek treatment from local quacks. They also believe in the exorcist, which sometimes becomes lethal to them. The government's efforts have supported them in improving their socioeconomic conditions, but they have not achieved the expected level of progress. There are several reasons for this development lag. One of the key causes of their backwardness is also a lack of communication with these tribal people, as development initiatives did not reach the intended beneficiaries owing to a lack of a proper communication infrastructure. They have limited access to modern media. Poverty, a lack of information, and a lack of awareness are all factors that contribute to their poor living condition. The study's author argues that proper development schemes should be implemented for the studied tribal communities. It is also suggested that the tribal people should have access to these schemes, which means they should have knowledge of and awareness towards this. This purpose can be achieved by using proper communication channels within the said communities. As everyone has agreed, the development process should be participatory, which necessitates the establishment of effective communication channels with native populations. Since tribal people mostly use interpersonal communication and traditional folk media for information and entertainment. Thus, these mediums can be helpful in informing and awakening the tribal group. Government and other agencies should use folk media to educate, motivate and generate awareness about a multitude of issues including health, sanitation, education, and any other socio-economic and political aspects.

Keywords: *tribe, socio-economic condition, awareness, communication, media.*

INTRODUCTION

Bihar was a tribal dominated state before its bifurcation and formation of Jharkhand in 2000. Census 2011 revealed that the tribal population in Bihar is only 1.28 percent of its total population, but STs and PVTGs are present in a lesser number. Santhals and Tharu are the two most predominant types of tribal communities in the present state of Bihar. According to Census 2011, the total population of Bihar is 104099452, with 32 different tribes, mostly in villages. The decadal population growth of the tribal population in Bihar has been 23.66 percent. Scheduled Tribes in Bihar are overwhelmingly rural. Eight of the 32 Scheduled Tribes in Bihar are belonging to PVTGs, or Particular Venerable Tribal Groups, which are a significant factor in the state's high poverty rates. These PVTGs practise settled agriculture and live in a lack of essential amenities, which has restricted their sources of income and the variety of food grains available to them. The two major causes of their poverty are low agricultural productivity and inadequate facilities. (Dasgupta, 2005; Ekka, 2012; Paltasingh and Paliwal, 2014; Jha and Kumar, 2016).

Tribal communities of Bihar, including Jharkhand, are facing poor health and socio-economic conditions, with the most common diseases being parasitic infections, diarrhoea, dysentery, skin diseases, respiratory infections, whooping cough and measles. Serious diseases such as tuberculosis, leprosy and malaria are also common. Health facilities are not available, leading to a lack of pay for medicines and diagnostic tests, and tribal women's health is at risk during their reproductive years. Tribal communities of Bihar practice agriculture and labour, but face pressure on land, land tenure, indebtedness and rights, and shifting cultivation. They also suffer from chronic scarcity of food, water and employment.

Condition of Tribes and approach of government

The social and economic problems of different ST groups in Bihar differ from area to area. The problem and the basic issues of tribal development are not new. The broader approaches towards the issue of tribal development have also been changing. Historically the approaches towards administering the tribal areas have been oriented towards three main policies, i.e., 'policy of isolation', 'policy of assimilation' and 'policy of slow and steady integration'. The basic issues on tribal development include not only economic development, but also the preservation of their ethnic identity, ecology, language, traditional practices, etc. At the same time, empowerment of tribal population, fair distribution of income and wealth, health facilities, basic facilities like transportation, communication, and sanitation are also needed for the welfare of the STs. This

can be possible only with the participation and involvement of tribals in project formulation and implementation by working through their traditional system (Vidyarthi, 1984; Deogaonkar, 1994; Verma, 1996; Singh, 2000; Mohanty, 2001; Gangele, 2019).

Tribal participation in project formulation and implementation is essential for the welfare of scheduled tribes, as their development level is below that of non-tribal communities. Empowerment of tribal population, fair distribution of income and wealth, health facilities, basic facilities like transportation, communication, and sanitation is need for the welfare of the STs. It can be possible only with the participation and involvement of tribal in project formulation and implementation by working through their traditional system(Singh, 2000; Mohanty, 2001; Paltasingh and Paliwal, 2014; Gangele, 2019).

The Constitution of India provides safeguards and provisions to improve the lives and quality of life of its citizens, including the appointment of a Minister in charge of Tribal Welfare and grants-in aid from the Consolidated Fund of India. However, efforts to uplift the tribal society are not achieving satisfactory results due to lack of coordination, complex administrative structure, and lack of understanding of tribal culture.(Bardhan, 1973; Mohanty, 2001;Samal, 2001;Kumar and Kapoor, 2009).

Tribal communities in India have experienced rapid social change due to urbanization, modernization, interaction with neighbouring caste groups, migration to the urban areas, modern technological exposure, penetration of market forces, and political consciousness. Lack of access to development schemes and awareness generation are hindering their development. The tribal population is not fully aware of development schemes available to them. Such information is not clearly circulated and reaches to them. Thus, they are not able to accrue the benefits of the government developmental programmes and schemes. Awareness generation is very much required to avail the existing schemes and programs made for tribal communities.

Objectives

- To study the status of the socio-economic condition of the Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar tribes of Bihar;
- To study the development status of the Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar tribes, different development programmes and schemes, and their awareness among them;
- To study the popular communication channel in tribal society and its role in the development process; and
- To suggest some measures based on the findings of the study for increasing awareness level towards development.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is exploratory in nature. It has been carried out among three tribal communities of Bihar i.e., *Santhal*, *Sauria Paharia* and *Kharwar* tribes in Banka and Bhagalpur districts. The study involved the collection of both primary and secondary data. For the collection of primary data, an interview schedule was developed. For the present study, Banka and Bhagalpur districts and blocks have been selected using the purposive random sampling method. Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar tribes have been selected from Banka and Bhagalpur district of Bihar. The ethical consideration was taken into account while conducting the study. The information was gathered only after establishing proper rapport with these communities.

Tribal Development and Media

Media has been an integral part of human life since the formation of society, and its popularity varies depending on availability and access. Media and development are closely linked, and without proper communication channels, people will not get information and knowledge about development processes. Present study focuses the socio-economic and health status of Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar tribes of Bihar and role of media in their development process. For this study the total sample size is 350 in which 150 respondents belong to Santhal, and 100 each Sauria Paharia and Kharwar. This table shows that Santhal respondents have been selected from four villages of Banka district (Sahupokhar, Kauawaran, Bangalgadh, and Gorwakura) and two villages of Bhagalpur district (Gokulpur and Agaiya). Sauria Paharia has been selected from two villages of Bhagalpur district (Ramzanipur and Kutubpur) and Kharwar has also been selected from the other two villages of Bhagalpur district (Budhuchak and Naya Gaon).

Social Status of Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar

The primary occupation of studied communities has changed with time. Now a day, they also practice more than one occupation, as there has not been any single primary occupation associated with them. Most of the respondents informed more than one primary occupation for them. It is clear from Table 1 that almost half of respondents (43.4 percent) have adopted daily wage labour as their primary occupation, due to lack of lands and other resources. More than one-third of respondents (38.3 percent) are also engaged in agriculture and more or less do farming on their own land. They also take lands on a lease, which is called '*batai*' (share cropping). Only a few respondents are engaged in petty business (2.0 percent) and government

jobs (2.9 percent) or other occupations, such as animal husbandry, liquor making and selling, handmade products from bamboo/wood, basketry work, etc. for their livelihood. Most of them complained that they do not have regular source of income. Sometimes they have to suffer from starvation due to lack of wages.

Table 1: Tribe wise primary occupation of respondents

Tribe	Agriculture		Labourer		Business		Govt. job		Other		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	81	54.0	43	28.7	1	0.7	3	2.0	22	14.7	150
Sauria Paharia	19	19.0	62	62.0	2	2.0	1	1.0	16	16.0	100
Kharwar	34	34.0	47	47.0	4	4.0	6	6.0	9	9.0	100
Total	134	38.3	152	43.4	7	2.0	10	2.9	47	13.4	350

The monthly family incomes of the respondents have been divided into different income groups for the purpose of analysis (Table 2). It can be observed from the table that more than half of the respondents' have monthly income below 10,000 rupees. Only 3.7 percent respondents said that their family's monthly income is more than 15,000 rupees.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to monthly family income

Tribe	Below 3,000		3,001-5,000		5001-10,000		10,001-15,000		15,001 and above		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	31	20.7	74	49.3	39	26.0	4	2.7	2	1.3	150
Sauria Paharia	21	21.0	65	65.0	13	13.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	100
Kharwar	3	3.0	36	36.0	42	42.0	9	9.0	10	10.0	100
Total	55	15.7	175	50.0	94	26.9	13	3.7	13	3.7	350

Most of the houses of these tribal people are of very low cost and made of locally available raw materials, such as bamboo, wood, straw, clay and sun-baked earthen tiles. It can be observed from table 3 that most of the respondents (64.3 percent) have Kachha/Fuss houses, 23.1 percent of respondents live in semi-pucca houses and only 12.6 percent of respondents have pucca houses. Most Sauria Paharia respondents (86.0 percent) live in kachcha houses. The Kharwar have the better economic conditions as compared to the other two studied tribes, as they mostly live in either semi-pucca houses (45.0 percent) or pucca houses (28.0 percent).

Table 3: Tribe wise type of houses

Tribe	Kachha house		Semi Pucca house		Pucca house		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	112	74.7	25	16.7	13	8.7	150
Sauria Paharia	86	86.0	11	11.0	3	3.0	100
Kharwar	27	27.0	45	45.0	28	28.0	100
Total	225	64.3	81	23.1	44	12.6	350

Educational Status

It has been found in Census reports and different studies that the educational status of the tribal population is very poor as compared to the general population. This is even poorer for tribal groups who belong to numerically minor groups and living in more isolated parts of the country, especially the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Although, tribal societies are egalitarian in nature and there is not much gender discrimination, but when we analyze the educational attainment for both male and female tribal populations, there is a large gap between the two. In the present study as well, the educational attainment of the studied group is very poor as more than 52 percent of respondents are still illiterate and 21.7 percent of respondents are only able to do signatures or can read and write. It can be observed from the table that, only 2 percent of respondents have completed their graduation. If we compare among the three tribes, it can be observed that the condition of Sauria Paharia is very poor than the other two (Table 4).

Table4: Tribe wise educational attainment of respondents

Tribe	Illiterate		Literate/ Primary		Middle		Matric		Inter		Graduate		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	78	52.0	38	25.3	13	8.7	9	6.0	11	7.3	1	0.7	150
Sauria Paharia	60	60.0	24	24.0	8	8.0	5	5.0	3	3.0	0	0.0	100
Kharwar	45	45.0	14	14.0	13	13.0	12	12	10	10.0	6	6.0	100
Total	183	52.3	76	21.7	34	9.7	26	7.4	24	6.9	7	2.0	350

Now there has been a change towards the formal education among the studied tribes, as they have started sending their children to school. However, this is not sufficient, as the school enrolment for tribal children should be higher. Table 5 shows that nearly two-third children

(69.2 percent) of school age are attending the school. Of this, the percentage of the Kharwar (87.7 percent) is more than the other two tribes. Sauria Paharia has the lowest percentage (60.6 percent) in this category. The dropout rate increases in higher classes. Children who do not go to school earn wages. Parents do not send them to school because it will hamper their family's income. Some of the parents said that giving education to their children is not beneficial to them, it cannot improve their economic condition.

Table 5: All children of school going age group in the family attend the school (n=315)

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	90	64.3	50	35.7	140
Sauria Paharia	57	60.6	37	39.4	94
Kharwar	71	87.7	10	12.3	81
Total	218	69.2	97	30.8	315

Sanitation and Health Status

Health is one of the very important indicators of development. Proper hygiene and sanitation are closely associated with the health status of people. These two conditions ensure healthy surroundings as well. The proper sanitary situation includes drainage of the used water from the houses, covered drains in the villages, toilets in the house, etc. A brief finding of the sanitation and health status of these three communities is given in this section.

The majority of respondents (80.3 percent) are dependent on hand pumps installed by the government for drinking water, only 6.6 percent of respondents have private hand pumps. Also, 11.1 percent of respondents use well for drinking water and very few (2.0 percent) depend on rivers or ponds for drinking water (Table 6). Most of the respondents do not boil or filter the water before drinking. Only 2.3 percent of respondents said that sometimes they boil the water before drinking. In most of the tribal village there is no proper drainage facility. Dirty drains keep flowing in the streets which spread diseases.

Table 6: Tribe wise availability of source of drinking water

Tribe	Govt. hand pump		Own hand pump		Well		River/Pond		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	122	81.3	2	1.3	25	16.7	1	0.7	150
Sauria Paharia	83	83.0	0	0.0	13	13.0	4	4.0	100
Kharwar	76	76.0	21	21.0	1	1.0	2	2.0	100
Total	281	80.3	23	6.6	39	11.1	7	2.0	350

Toilet is one of the most basic and essential facilities one should have in the house, but the table 7 shows that only 13.1 percent of respondents have this facility in their houses. Rest 86.9 percent of respondents still go to open places for defecation. It has also been observed that the studied villages of these communities are also devoid of any community latrine. Open defecation causes lots of diseases.

Table 7: Tribe wise availability of toilet facility in respondent's houses

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	3	2.0	147	98.0	150
Sauria Paharia	0	0.0	100	100.0	100
Kharwar	43	43.0	57	57.0	100
Total	46	13.1	304	86.9	350

Table 8 shows the responses on where the respondents go for treatment in case of any illness. Multiple responses were recorded for this question. When it comes to the treatment for illness, local quacks are popular among the respondents (92.9 percent) These quacks are easily available and also cheap as compared to any other source of treatment. However, quacks have little knowledge about appropriate medicines and remedies. It is also very risky to get treatment from them. For serious diseases, respondents usually opt for government hospitals (68.3 percent). Respondents who can afford private hospitals or not getting cures in government hospitals go to private hospitals (19.4 percent). Home remedies/traditional medicinal systems are also popular

among the respondents, especially among Santhals and Sauria Paharias. Black magic and witchcraft are also believed more among Santhal and Sauria Paharia respondents.

Table 8: Tribe wise place of treatment

Tribe	Government hospital		Private hospital		Home remedies		Quack		Exorcist		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	121	80.7	3	2.0	59	39.3	150	100	55	36.7	150
Sauria Paharia	69	69.0	1	1.0	40	40.0	100	100	66	66	100
Kharwar	49	49.0	64	64.0	4	4.0	75	75.0	3	3.0	100
Total	239	68.3	68	19.4	103	29.4	325	92.9	124	35.4	350

The respondents were asked about whether they get any medical facilities from the government. On this both types of responses were recorded (Table 9). About half of the respondents (48.6 percent) deny that they are getting any type of medical facilities from the government. On the other hand, 51.4 percent of respondents accepted that public health services are available to them.

Table 9: Tribe wise availability of public health facility near the village

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	96	64.0	54	36.0	150
Sauria Paharia	38	38.0	62	62.0	100
Kharwar	46	46.0	54	54.0	100
Total	180	51.4	170	48.6	350

Government Schemes and Coverage

Tribe wise awareness regarding government development programmes has also been inquired and analysed. Table 10 describes that more than one-third of respondents (39.4 percent) have knowledge about the government's development programmes and schemes, 35.1 percent of

respondents have some idea about these programmes and 16.0 percent of respondents have no idea regarding these types of schemes and programmes. The name of government programs from which respondents are benefited such as ration from PDS, Indira Aawas, MGNREGA, health check-ups and free vaccinations are few government programmes, which are named by the respondents.

It was also asked how they get information about these government development programmes and schemes. The table presents the popular media for getting information about the developmental programmes and schemes. For this question, multiple responses were recorded. The majority of respondents (99.6 percent) are dependent on interpersonal communication for this purpose. Most of them revealed that they know only what Ward Members and Mukhiya tell them. ASHA and Anganwadi workers are also sources of information for them. Folk media is also popular among most of the respondents, but villagers are not getting information about these schemes through folk media (41.8 percent). The less use of folk media by the government may be the reason for poor awareness about the development programmes and schemes. Respondents are also unable to get information regarding development schemes through television and radio as most of them are not able to afford these due to poor economic conditions.

It can be observed that respondents are using only those media that have easy accessibility for them. The study also aims to know the opinions of respondents regarding the preferred media that they want to use, and also how it can be more effective to make them aware. Most of them prefer interpersonal communication as it is more reliable to them. They suggested that the government should use more traditional folk media for this purpose. They also said that folk media is easier to understand and interesting as well.

It was also asked from the respondents that what type of media they use for getting information regarding government schemes. Most of the respondents (87.7 percent) depend on interpersonal communication and folk media. On the other hand, more Kharwar respondents use electronic media like TV and radio, as they have the better financial conditions as compared to the other two tribal groups. Some respondents (13.1 percent) also said that they do not get these types of information (Table 11).

Table 10: Tribe wise awareness regarding government development programmes

Do you know about the government programmes and schemes?							
Tribe	Yes		No		Some idea		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	65	43.3	15	10.0	70	46.7	150
Sauria Paharia	26	26.0	27	27.0	47	47.0	100
Kharwar	47	47.0	14	14.0	39	39.0	100
Total	138	39.4	56	16.0	123	35.1	350

Source of information about government schemes availed by respondents (n=261, multi response)

Tribe	Inter-personal communication		Folk media		Radio/ TV		Newspaper		Poster/Banner		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	130	96.3	46	34.1	25	18.5	2	1.5	2	1.5	135
Sauria Paharia	65	89.0	35	47.9	4	5.5	1	1.4	1	1.4	73
Kharwar	65	75.6	28	32.6	18	20.9	8	9.3	8	9.3	86
Total	260	99.6	109	41.8	47	18.0	11	4.2	11	4.2	261

Table 11: How do you usually get information about government schemes in your village?

Tribe	Inter-personal communication		Folk Media		Radio/ TV		Newspaper		Poster/ Banner		Not getting information		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	130	86.7	48	32.0	23	15.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	6.7	150
Sauria Paharia	88	88.0	31	31.0	9	9.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	24	24.0	100
Kharwar	89	89.0	11	11.0	22	22.0	17	17.0	3	3.0	12	12.0	100
Total	307	87.7	90	25.7	54	15.4	18	5.1	3	0.9	46	13.1	350

Media

Tribal people receive information primarily from outside through inter-personnel or oral communication, but also from mass media. However, the large majority of the tribal people still have easier and more access to inter-personnel and oral communication, which is also much effective when compared with that of mass media devices alone. Tribes are one of the most

deprived communities in India, and hence need more interventions. They lived in isolation for very long, and many of them are stuck still in somewhat similar situations. Now they are not much isolated as such but still, most of the population are rural and away from the mainstream development, their development process is still very slow. Media can act as a social agent for social change by providing access to non-local information, education and entertainment, transforming development activities and dissemination of information by the government.

Table 12 shows that only 10.3 percent of respondents read newspapers, rest 89.7 percent of the respondents do not read newspapers. Most of them read it at other places, such as others home (5.6 percent), tea shop or another place (50.0 percent) etc. Low literacy level, poverty and lack of interest are some major factors that are obstacles in the reading habit of newspapers among respondents. Less penetration and coverage of print media among studied communities also relate to the poor awareness level on different programmes and schemes of the government. Magazines or any other print media is also not popular among them.

Table 12: Accessibility to newspaper and place of reading

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	13	8.7	137	91.3	150
Sauria Paharia	10	10.0	90	90.0	100
Kharwar	13	13.0	87	87.0	100
Total	36	10.3	314	89.7	350

Electronic Media

Table 13 shows tribe wise distribution of respondents according to accessibility to radio sets and place of listening to the programmes. It is clear from the table that a little more than one-third respondents (36.6 percent) listen to the radio. 63.43 percent of respondents do not have accessibility to this medium. It can also be inferred from the data that radio as a medium of communication and information is liked by the studied communities, but all of them do not have access to it.

Television has also become very popular these days, even in rural areas, but the present study shows that the respondents belonging to these three studied tribal communities have very little access to it. Table 14 shows tribe wise distribution of respondents, according to the accessibility

of television sets. It shows that only 14.9 percent of respondents watch television as most of them do not have access (85.1 percent). Out of them, only 57.7 percent of respondents have their own television sets. Rest of them respondents watch television at either neighbour's house or any tea shop. The poor access to modern media through radio and television is also an indicator of the poor economic condition of studied tribal communities, and also due to lack of electricity.

Table 13: Accessibility to radio and place of listening

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	66	44.0	84	56.0	150
Sauria Paharia	35	35.0	65	65.0	100
Kharwar	27	27.0	73	73.0	100
Total	128	36.6	222	63.4	350

Table 14: Accessibility to television and place of watching

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	5	3.3	145	96.7	150
Sauria Paharia	4	4.0	96	96.0	100
Kharwar	43	43.0	57	57.0	100
Total	52	14.9	298	85.1	350

Digital Media

Present day is the age of information and technology and it has played important role in building the modern urban society. Information communication technology (ICT) has revolutionized the world and touched the entire humanity. Digital media has become more popular after the introduction of computers, the internet, and mobile phones in the open market. Table 15 shows that 39.7 percent of respondents have the accessibility to mobile phones or smart phones as the respondents or any other family member owns the phone. Out of them, 84.9 percent of respondents have their own personal mobile or smart phone. The rest of them have it within their

family. The Santhal (34.0 percent) and Sauria Paharia respondents (26.0 percent) have limited access to mobile/smart phones, but more Kharwar respondents (62.0 percent) have access to it in comparison to other two studied tribes.

It has also been observed that those respondents whose family members have migrated to other states or towns generally own the mobile phones. Migrant people also come with smart phones in the village and that's why this medium is getting popular. Villagers like to listen and watch Hindi songs and movies on smart phones, but due to low literacy, respondents and their family members are unable to take more benefit of this powerful media. They use it more for connecting with the family members than for entertainment and information. The study further shows that respondents are not able to use mobile phones effectively. They do not know about most of the features of mobile phone and smart phone.

Table 15: Accessibility of mobile or smart phones by respondents or their families

Tribe	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	51	34.0	99	66.0	150
Sauria Paharia	26	26.0	74	74.0	100
Kharwar	62	62.0	38	38.0	100
Total	139	39.7	211	60.3	350

Computer and Internet

At present, computers and the internet along with smart phones have also become very popular. In fact, before the launch and access of smart phones, computers and the internet are the main source of social media and electronic mails, but it still has very limited reach, especially in rural and tribal areas. Therefore, it has also been enquired whether respondents are friendly with the computer and internet. Only 5.7 percent of respondents are computer literate. Most of the respondents said that they have never seen computers, as they are very poor and living in more isolated areas. However, they also said that if the computer and internet are available, they will learn it and take benefit from it.

Media Preferences among Studied Tribes

Media preferences among different social groups depend on accessibility, place of residence, types of society, educational level, cultural groups, contents of the media package, presentation

style, etc. Tribal people have limited exposure to different types of media due to limited availability and accessibility, cultural values, and traditions. The content and packaging of media content are essential for successful awareness campaigns, and local people and community members can provide insights to make the media more effective and useful. This study examines the opinions of respondents regarding different types of media channels, such as traditional folk media and modern mass media. It was found that respondents from Santhals and Sauria Paharia communities are more inclined towards folk media as they are easily accessible and part of their culture. Despite not being able to access modern media channels due to poor economic conditions, lack of electricity connection and difficulty, they are open to them and welcome them. The respondents belonging to the Kharwar community were more exposed to modern media and had better access and reach.

To understand the perceptions of respondents regarding the most popular form of media including both folk media and modern mass media, they are asked about the most popular media available in their communities. Multiple responses are recorded on this question. It could be observed from Table 16 that responses are different for Kharwar from the other two studied tribes. Most of the Santhal respondents (98.7 percent) and Sauria Paharia respondents (95 percent) prefer folk media (folk dance and folk music) for the entertainment and getting information on the development programmes and schemes. Street play is the second most popular choice among them. They also like to get information through the interpersonal communication. Television and radio are choices of more Santhal (60 percent) and Kharwar respondents (61 percent) than the Sauria Paharia (only 24 percent). As the Kharwar community is more advanced and exposed than the other two communities, the respondents belonging to this community prefer more mobile and smart phones (56 percent) for this purpose. But mobile/smart phones are not popular among the Santhal (11.3 percent) and Sauria Paharia respondents (7 percent).

Table 16: Tribe wise favourite media for information and entertainment (multiple responses)

Tribe	Interpersonal communication		Folk song and dance		Street play/ Drama		TV/Radio		Mobile/ Smart phone		Other		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	91	60.7	148	98.7	110	73.3	90	60.0	17	11.3	9	6.0	150
Sauria Paharia	51	51.0	95	95.0	75	75.0	24	24.0	7	7.0	3	2.0	100
Kharwar	18	18.0	11	11.0	24	24.0	61	61.0	56	56.0	12	8.0	100
Total	160	45.7	254	72.6	209	59.7	175	50.0	80	22.9	24	16.0	350

It can be observed from Table 17 that the maximum respondents (54.9 percent) like traditional folk media and mass media, 37.4 percent of respondents like folk media alone and only 7.7 percent of respondents prefer mass media for entertainment. One-fourth of Kharwar respondents (25 percent) use mass media alone for entertainment. Traditional media is most preferred by Sauria Paharia (52 percent) and Santhal (40 percent). The reasons for the preference of the media for entertainment, for this question also, multiple answers are received from the respondents. About half of the respondents said that they do not have access to mainstream mass media and about two third of the respondent said that they have opted for it because it is easily available to them and also very easy to understand. Kharwar respondents have more access to mass media than the other two. The study shows that more respondents like both mass media and folk media but due to poor access to modern media many of them choose folk media.

Table 17: Most preferred media for entertainment and reasons

Tribe	Mass media		Traditional folk media		Both media		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Santhal	1	0.7	60	40.0	89	59.3	150
Sauria Paharia	1	1.0	52	52.0	47	47.0	100
Kharwar	25	25.0	19	19.0	56	56.0	100
Total	27	7.7	131	37.4	192	54.9	350

It has been revealed from the existing studies that modern communication system is still available to limited people. The government should pay attention to the traditional media for communicating with the tribal population, as it is more effective in making them aware of government's development programmes and schemes. Lack of communication medium has been identified as one of the biggest reasons behind underdevelopment of tribal people, as they rely on their traditional system of communication. This system refreshes their mind and provides them with a new energy.

The respondents are also enquired about their opinions on the most effective media for awareness generation and spread of information regarding any type of development programmes and schemes among the tribal people and their area. It could be seen from Table 18 that 50.3 percent of respondents believe that one-to-one (inter-personal) communication could be the most beneficial for awareness generation among them. The respondents said, they trust people known

to them personally and also who can explain any information and message in their language. Information or messages from other sources are difficult to understand and it is also not much trustworthy. They believe more in face-to-face communication and get any information or news from this source mostly. Mobile, computer and internet are least preferred by the respondents of all the three communities.

Table 18: Tribe wise response on most effective media for awareness generation

Tribe	Inter-personal communication		Folk song and folk dance		Street play/ drama		Community radio and TV		Mobile/ computer/ internet		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
	Santhal	90	60.0	140	93.3	105	70.0	17	11.3	0	
Sauria Paharia	57	57.0	94	94.0	74	74.0	5	5.0	1	1.0	100
Kharwar	29	29.0	15	15.0	24	24.0	31	31.0	8	8.0	100
Total	176	50.3	249	71.1	203	58.0	53	15.1	9	2.6	350

CONCLUSION

The socioeconomic conditions of the tribal people of Bihar have not significantly changed despite the fact that the central and state governments have been implementing different development programmes for their welfare. They still lack the basic needs of housing, sanitization, education, and healthcare in their communities. Though socially and culturally very wealthy, their living conditions are still very low. They deal with numerous issues on a daily basis. Unemployment is the tribes' primary issue because it leads to poverty. The studied tribe i.e. Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar are not aware of government development schemes and programmes. The studied tribes Santhal, Sauria Paharia and Kharwar are not much aware of these developments schemes. Proper communication media is also not available to them for informing them about the development schemes. It was also found that those who have availed or in the process of availing any scheme are facing a lot of problem in getting the benefits. They required special attention. They need to be educated, informed and aware of the development programmes and schemes. To achieve these goals, communication system should be improved. Community television and radio can be useful idea. We can also use their traditional folk media such as folk music, folk dance, *nukkad natak*, etc. for making them aware as these are also

culturally embedded. For proper implementation, the monitoring system should be robust. The success of any schemes or programme depends upon the collective efforts and hence the tribal participation should be ensured as well.

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