

# THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AMONG SCHEDULED TRIBES IN THE STATE OF KARNATAKA

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#### Abstract

Digitalization has pervaded every aspect of daily lives in all ways in urban India, enabling quicker communication than ever. The traditional and modern media of communication have been contributing immensely to the socio-economic growth of our country. Whereas seventy five percent of Indian rural households have a monthly income of less than Rs.5000 and nearly 28% of households do not have mobile phones or any form of communication (Tewari, 2015). The most distressed are the scheduled tribes who have been totally excluded from the mainstream of the society and suffer from social discrimination, low literacy rates, poverty, ignorance and lack of quality education due to poverty and inadequate income. Several development initiatives have been announced by the central and state governments for tribal upliftment. But they have not been adequately communicated to the tribal beneficiaries. The role of media for communicating socio-economic, political and technological developments happening in the country among rural mass has become significant. In this regard, the extent to which traditional and new media of communication help them aware of such progress has to be studied from time to time. The present research work aims at finding out the levelof awareness of development programmes among the rural tribes through traditional and new media of communication. A sample of 60 men and women respondents have been selected from various villages of H.D. Kotein Mysore District of Karnataka for the purpose of the study. The results of the study indicated that age and education of the respondents influence the frequency of usage of media when the frequency was high and medium.

Key Words: Media, Communication, Development, Poverty, Scheduled Tribe, Awareness.

#### Introduction

According to Census 2011, the scheduled tribe population in rural Karnataka was 34,29,791 and the scheduled tribal women population was 17,06,029. The percentage of scheduled tribes in rural areas to total population in 2011 was 9.2.(Source: Office of RGI & Census commissioner of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2011).

The tribes are vulnerable of being isolated due their inability to integrate themselves with the mainstream economy, society, culture and political systems (Mahantesh & Sedam, 2014). The schemes, programmes and services intended for the upliftment of the tribal communities are not adequately communicated by the media to the tribal people and media have not communicated the effectiveness of various tribal development projects to the policy makers and implementers (Guru, Shivaram, Kumar, & Rajagopala, 2015). Media can be used to promote social change and need to be envisaged as an essential component in the process of the development communication (Stevenson, 1992). Development communication is the science which uses communication to educate, change and motivate people's attitudes and values leading to development goals. Development is a widely participatory process of social change in a society to bring about both social and material advancement for the people(Roger, 1976). Though several traditional and modern media of communication are available, tribes prefer interpersonal communication (Mathiazhagan, Nandan, Meshram, Chand, & Meena, 2007).

#### Significance of the study

Development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth and makes possible greater economic and social equality and larger fulfillment of human potential. (Quebral, 1972). Development embraces such areas as quality of life, better nutrition, material health, individual and social transformation (Kumar & Shailashree, 2016). Community radio has been labeled as a symbol of democratization of communication enhancing participation of masses in the process of development and social change (Rani, 2013). An organized media intervention is necessary to accomplish successful communication to bridge the gap between the tribal development programmes and target group. Tribal development demands an effective media strategy which should be considered as a subsystem of overall tribal development process. Media has a social obligation to fulfill the developmental aspirations of the people in general and tribal communities in particular.

#### Literature review

Pujar, Hoogar, & Basavanagouda (2016) conducted a survey among 252 households comprising of 651 subjects made up of 310 men and 341 women belonging to various hamlets of Jenukuruba tribe of Kodagu District. The study revelaed that the



Jenukuruba tribe of Kodagu district was suffering from different grades of malnutrition. Out of 651, 23.9 % of tribal people were suffering from Grade III type of malnutrition, followed by 63.1 % of them having Grade II and 11.2 % suffering from chronic energy deficiencty I. It was found that only 1.5 % of the tribal were normal.

Dakshayani & Gangadhar (2016) explored the socio-demographic and living conditions among the Hakki pikki, Iruliga, Jenu kuruba and Kadu kuruba children of 0-6 years age group in Mysore District. The sample comprised of 800 mothers who were having children below age of 6 years as respondents of the study. The study indicated that 60.88 % of the houses were electrified, 39.12 % use oil lamps. Around 95 % of the houses have electricity in Hakkipikkis, 16 % in Iruligas, 39.50 % in Jenu kurubas and 63 %% in Kadu kurubas.

Kumar & Shailashree (2016) conducted an ethnographic study in Yelandur and Kollegal taluks which is 250 kms away from Bangalore. Most of the tribals (54%) were found to be illiterate as they did not have easy access to schools. School drop out were observed after middle school. Around 25 % of the tribes were using radio for educating themselves and 60 % of them use radio for entertainment purpose.

Siddalingappa, Hoogar, Kumar, Pradeep & Renuka (2016) studied the tribal population residing in selected seven hamlets covering 171 households and 705 individuals in and around Bandipur toger reserve area in Bandipur taluk of Mysore District of Karnataka. Using a cross sectional community based descriptive study, it was found that the literacy ratio was only 47.0% and 56.1% among women and men respectively. Child marriage amounts to 71.5% among tribals. Only 0.9% of the sample had some form of health insurance apart from BPL card benefits and 3.4% had life insurance. Only 28.3% had bank account in their names and surprisingly 79.2% had Aadhar card.

Guru M. C., Shivaraj, Gundlupet, & Kumar (2015) collected primary data from 397 respondents consisting of stake-holders of tribal women empowerment (91) and tribal women beneficiaries (306). It was found that majority of the stakeholders of tribal women empowerment and tribal women beneficiaries were not aware of most of tribal development programmes. They have indicated that traditional media were more useful sources of communication than the new media. 6.30% of the respondents knew about the central government schemes through traditional media and 1.76% through new media and 10.75% of the total respondents were aware of state government schemes through traditional media and 2.61% through new media. Scholarship and educational facilities (traditional media-33.50% and new media-09.07%), Health and family welfare programme (traditional media-14.36% and new media - 06.30%). Self-employmentprogramme (traditional media-16.37% and new media - 07.56%).

Guru, Shivaraj, Gundlupet, & Kumar(2015) conducted a study on the basis of systematic survey research method and primary data was collected from 397 respondents consisting of 91 tribal women empowerment and 306 tribal women beneficiaries using interview schedules. It was found that majority of the stakeholders of tribal women empowerment and tribal women beneficiaries were not satisfied with the role of media in the empowerment of tribal women. Also they were not happy with the media support for various tribal development projects and perceived that media did not play a crucial role in the empowerment of tribal women.

Roy, Hegde, Bhattacharya, Upadhya & Kholkute (2015) reviewed the studies carried out on the health of ethnic tribes of Karnataka. The research highlighted the potential of integration of the rich traditional practices of these tribes with the present day knowledge. Further, it was found that the degree of effectiveness of various schemes in terms of programme implementation in the areas of health, education and poverty reduction was not evident.

Narayanappa, Rajani, Kumar & Manjunath (2015) conducted a community based cross sectional study for a period of over 2 years and 4207 children between the age group of 0-15 years of Jenukuruba tribal community were included in the study. Around 53.4% of them were having varying degrees of protein energy malnutrition. The study indicated that the health and nutritional status of Jenukuruba tribal children was very poor and suggested for immediate interventional programmes for improving health and nutritional status.

Kajekar (2015) conducted a study on the tribes of three districts Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada and found certain reasons for low level of education among the tribal people. Some of them were (i) formal education was not considered necessary to discharge their social obligations (ii)most of the tribes live in abject poverty.



Kumar & Mahesh (2014) conducted a study among women panchayat members and men representatives of Dodda Hejjuru Grama Panchayat having an NGO trained member and of Kottegala Grama Panchayat which had no NGO participation. 62% women were aware of the development programmes undertaken by panchayats in the village where the NGO was working. Around 70% were aware about the timings, agenda of the panchayat meetings and also know about the powers of panchayat. About 56% of the respondents believed that women can perform well as panchayat representatives. They have awareness about issues related to housing under several schemes like IndraAwasYojana, Ambedkar housing scheme etc. they identified the sources of income of their panchayats. Whereas 48% of the women in DoddaHejjuruGrama Panchayat attend meeting regularly and 61% were not attending meetings regularly as their husbands manage the affair.

Manjunatha & Annapurna (2012) studied the school drop outs among three important tribes viz. Soliga, Jenukuruba and Betta Kuruba Tribes of Chamrajnagar district of Karnataka. Around 300 families have been selected for the study, out of which 198 dropout children in the age group 6-18 years were contacted. The study revealed that 51% Jenukuruba children were being droputs at primary level, 57% Bettakuruba children were dropouts at higher primary level and nearly 36% Soliga children at high school level and 5% Soliga children discontinued their education at PU level. The common reasons for dropouts were shortage of income, learning disability, health issue and lack of transportation and migration. An education relevant to the life of the tribal and inclusion of mainstream education without a sense of defiency and social oppression was suggested in the study.

# Statement of the problem

The main challenges to communication in rural areas include illiteracy, poor communication facilities, infrastructuralinadequacies and diversely spread rural audiences characterized by variations in language (Suresh & Sathyanarayana, 2008). The poor family background has been an obstacle hampering the educational aspirations of tribal children (Pimpley,1974; Kajekar, 2015). The tribes suffer from social problems including child marriage, infanticide and other harmful practices (Kajekar, 2015). The existing curriculum has little relevance to the tribal people as they are obliged to learn in a language foreign to them and they do not have a script of their own (Kajekar, 2015). In this context, the role of media in development communication for tribal upliftment must be ascertained in the interest of the beneficiaries of the development programmes.

#### **Research Objectives**

- 1. To study the demographic profile of the tribal people.
- 2. To assess the awareness among the tribes about development programmes initiated by Central and State Governments
- 3. To find out the extent of usage of traditional and modern media for development communication by the tribal people.
- 4. To study the impact of demographic profile on the frequency of usage of particular media of communication.

# Research Methodology

Mysore has the third highest percentage of ST population (7.8%) amounting to 3, 34,547 in the state of Karnataka (Roy, Hegde, Bhattacharya, Upadhya, & Kholkute, 2015). According to Annual Report 2009-10 DSO Mysore, the tribal population in Heggadadevanakote (H.D.Kote) is 23,880 whichis 51.67% of the total tribal population in Mysore. Around 47.79% of the JenuKruba, 100% KaduKuruba, 94.33% of Yarava, 52.46% of Soliga, 31.51% of HakkiPikki communities resides in H.D.Kote.A sample of 60 men and women respondents have been selected from various villages of H.D. Kote which has the highest percentage tribe in the district through probability sampling method. The study has been undertaken during the period October 2016 –December 2016.

A well structured questionnaire has been administered to obtain primary data related to socio-demographic profile of the respondents and usage of traditional media including radio, television, print media, word of mouth and new technology based media including internet, social network sites and WhatsApp to ascertain the extent of media reach. Secondary data has been collected from news papers and websites. Minitab version 15 has been used for data analysis.

## Data analysis and findings

The nature of communication among the tribe need to be understood in order to study the influence of media of communication on their awareness of various development schemes initiated by the central and state governments. It has been noticed that the tribe communicate in a language among themselves which is different from commonly spoken



languages namely, Kannada, Tulu etc. in any parts of Karnataka. They found to have some difficulty in understanding these common languages.

# Demographic profile of the tribes

The sample respondents were from various villages of Heggadadevankote talukin Mysore District, State of Karnataka.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

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Age group	Number	Percentage						
20-30	10	16.67						
31-40	14	23.33						
41-50	12	20						
51-60	15	25						
Above 60	9	15						
Total	60	100						
Education								
Illiterate	25	41.67						
Primary School education	17	28.33						
Middle School education	11	18.33						
PUC	5	8.33						
Collegiate Education	2	3.33						
Total	60	100						
Income level (Monthly in Rs.)								
less than 2500	25	41.67						
2500-5000	13	21.67						
5000-7500	11	18.33						
7500-10000	7	11.67						
more than 10000	4	6.67						
Total	60	100						

Table 1 shows that 25% of the respondents were in the age group of 51-60 years. The age group 20-30 consists of least number of respondents say, 16.67%. Majority of the respondents, say around 41.67% were illiterate. The respondents possessing collegiate education form just 3.33% only. Similarly people with meagre income i.e. less than Rs.2500 constitute 41.67%, which is in contrast to the 6.67% respondents earning more than Rs.10, 000.

Table 2: Awareness of development programme among the respondents

Awareness level	Number	percentage	Men	percentage	Women	percentage
High	9	15.00	6	17.65	3	11.54
Medium	23	38.33	16	47.06	7	26.92
Low	28	46.67	12	35.29	16	61.54

Around 17.65% of themen respondents were highly aware of all the central and state development programmes and most of the women respondents of around 61.54% have low awareness. Around 47.06% of the men respondents and 26.92 women respondents partially aware of these programmes.

Table 3: Usage of traditional media of communication

Agewise respondents preferring various media	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Tota	Percenta ge
Radio	2	3	3	2	0	10	16.67
Television	2	3	3	5	3	16	26.67
Newspaper	1	2	1	0	0	4	6.67
Word of Mouth	2	4	5	8	6	25	41.67
Total	7	12	12	15	9	55	91.67



Educationwise respondents preferring various media	Illiterate	Primary School attended	Mid School attended		Coll.Edn. attended	Total	Percentage
Radio	3	2	2	0	0	7	11.67
Television	12	7	3	1	0	23	38.33
Newspaper	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.67
Word of Mouth	10	8	6	2	0	26	43.33
Total	25	17	11	4	0	57	95.00

Frequency of usage of traditional media	High	Medium	Low	Total	Percentag
Radio	5	4	2	11	18.33
Television	8	6	2	16	26.67
Newspaper	2	1	2	5	8.33
Word of Mouth	11	9	0	20	33.33
Total	26	20	6	52	86.67

It is evident from Table 3 that according to age groups, majority of the respondents of around 41.67% depends on interpersonal communication. Respondents watching television is found to be 26.67%, excess by 10% when compared to the respondents using radio of around 16.67%. In both agewise and educationwise classification of the respondents, interpersonal communication plays a major role as the respondents form 41.67% and 43.33% respectively. The interpersonal communication is found to be very frequently used than any other traditional media of communication stated in the study. The role of media in creating awareness of these programmes among rural mass is questionable as there is lack of required media infrastructure in these remote villages and the media players do not prefer to be purely non-commercial in thegeographical areas of low earnings of the villagers. Therefore the probability of knowing about these programmes through word of mouth is high.

Table 4: Usage of new media of communication

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Agewise	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Above 60	Total	Percentage		
Internet	1	2	0	0	0	3	5.00		
SNS	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.67		
WhatsApp	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.67		
Total	3	2	0	0	0	5	8.33		
Educationwise	Illiterate	Primary School	Mid School	PUC attended	Coll.Edn. attended	Total	Percentage		
		attended	attended						
Internet	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.67		
SNS	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.67		
WhatsApp	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.67		
Total	0	0	0	1	2	3	5.00		
Frequency of usage of new media	High	Medium	Low	Total	Percentage				
Internet	0	2	2	4	6.67				
SNS	0	0	2	2	3.33				
WhatsApp	0	1	1	2	3.33				
Total	0	3	5	8	13.33				



Table 4 shows that compared to usage of Social Network Sites and WhatsApp respondents using internet is marginally higher. It is evident that only those respondents who completed PUC and also who are undergoing collegiate education were using new media.

The impact of demographic variables on the frequency of usage of particular media has been studied by testing the hypothesesrelating demographic variables with the frequency of usage.

 $\mathbf{H}_{N1}$ : Age does not significantly influence the frequency of usage of media.

Using the regression method, the relationship between age of the respondents and the frequency of usage of traditional and new media of communication has been studied as under.

(i)Regression Analysis:High frequency versus age groups 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, Above 60 High frequency of usage of media = -0.60 + 0.68(20-30) + 0.202(31-40) + 0.869(41-50) + 0.677(51-60)

```
Predictor Coef SECoef
                               P
Constant -0.596 1.724 - 0.35
                              0.763
20-30
         0.677 1.636 0.41
                              0.719
31-40
        0.2020 0.4712 0.43
                              0.710
41-50
        0.8687 0.8081 1.08
                              0.395
51-60
        0.6768 0.3024 2.24
                              0.155
```

S = 0.804030 R-Sq = 98.9% R-Sq(adj) = 96.7%

Analysis of Variance

 Source
 DF
 SS
 MS
 F
 P

 Regression
 4
 116.136
 29.034
 44.91
 0.022

 Residual Error
 2
 1.293
 0.646

 Total
 6
 117.429

The regression equation shows that the age groups 41-50 years and above 50 years carry high weightage of 86.9% and 67.7% resulting in the high frequency of usage of media. The p-value 0.022 is less than alpha value of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected and thus age significantly influences the high frequency of usage of media.

- (ii) Regression Analysis: Medium frequency versus age groups 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, Above 60
- \* Above 60 is highly correlated with other X variables
- \* Above 60 has been removed from the equation.

Medium frequency of usage of media =- 0.39 + 0.85(20-30) + 0.636(31-40) - 0.364(41-50) + 0.848(51-60)

Predictor	Coef	SECoef	T	P
Constant	-0.394	1.445	-0.27	0.811
20-30	0.848	1.372	0.62	0.599
31-40	0.6364	0.3951	1.61	0.249
41-50	-0.3636	0.6776	-0.54	0.645
51-60	0.8485	0.2535	3.35	0.079

S = 0.674200 R-Sq = 98.6% R-Sq(adj) = 95.7%

Analysis of Variance

 Source
 DF
 SS
 MS
 F
 P

 Regression
 4
 62.519
 15.630
 34.39
 0.028

 Residual Error
 2
 0.909
 0.455

 Total
 6
 63.429



The age group 20-30 and 54-40 constitute 85% and 84.8% weightage in deciding the medium frequency of usage of media. The p-value of 0.028 is less than 0.05 making the null hypothesis rejected. Therefore age significantly influence the frequency of usage of media.

(iii)Regression Analysis: Low frequency versus age groups 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, Above 60

- \* Above 60 is highly correlated with other X variables
- \* Above 60 has been removed from the equation.

Low frequency of usage of media = -0.27 + 1.82(20-30) + 0.364(31-40) - 0.636(41-50)

- 0.182(51-60)

Predictor	Coef	SECoef	T	P
Constant	-0.273	1.445	-0.19	0.868
20-30	1.818	1.372	1.33	0.316
31-40	0.3636	0.3951	0.92	0.455
41-50	-0.6364	0.6776	-0.94	0.447
51-60	-0.1818	0.2535	-0.72	0.548

S = 0.674200 R-Sq = 75.5% R-Sq(adj) = 26.6%

#### Analysis of Variance

 Source
 DF
 SS
 MS
 F
 P

 Regression
 4
 2.8052
 0.7013
 1.54
 0.430

 Residual Error
 2
 0.9091
 0.4545

 Total
 6
 3.7143

The age groups 20-30 and 31-40 years haveinfluenced the low frequency of usage of media. The p-value is 0.430 which is greater than 0.05. In the context of low frequency of usage, the null hypothesis is accepted suggesting that age does not significantly influence the frequency of usage of media.

# $\mathbf{H}_{N2}$ : Education does not significantly influence the frequency of usage of media

Using the regression method, the relationship between education of the respondents and the frequency of usage of both the media of communication has been analysed as under.

- (i) Regression Analysis: High frequency versus Illiterate, Primary level, ...
- \* Collegiate Edn. is highly correlated with other X variables
- \* Collegiate Edn. has been removed from the equation.

# The regression equation is

High frequency of usage of media = -0.000 + 2.09 Illiterate -4.05 Primary level +

3.41 Middle school+ 1.00 PUC

Predictor	Coef	SECoef	T	P
Constant	-0.0000	0.7071	-0.00	1.000
Illiterate	2.091	1.297	1.61	0.248
Primary level	-4.045	2.878	-1.41	0.295
Middle school	3.409	1.556	2.19	0.160
PUC	1.000	1.000	1.00	0.423

S = 1 R-Sq = 98.3% R-Sq(adj) = 94.9%

### Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	4	115.429	28.857	28.86	0.034
Residual Error	2	2.000	1.000		
Total	6	117.429			



It is observed that illiterates, respondents who have done middle school and PUC contribute to high frequency of usage. As the p-value is 0.034, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus education significantly contributes to the frequency of usage of media.

- (ii) Regression Analysis: Medium frequency versus Illiterate, Primary level, ...
- \* Collegiate Edn. is highly correlated with other X variables
- \* Collegiate Edn. has been removed from the equation.

The regression equation is

Medium frequency of usage of media = 0.500 + 1.32 Illiterate - 2.66 Primary level +

2.43 Middle school+ 1.00 PUC

Predictor	Coef	SECoef	T	P
Constant	0.5000	0.5000	1.00	0.423
Illiterate	1.3182	0.9170	1.44	0.287
Primary level	-2.659	2.035	-1.31	0.321
Middle schoo	1 2.432	1.100	2.21	0.158
PUC	1.0000	0.7071	1.41	0.293

S = 0.707107 R-Sq = 98.4% R-Sq(adj) = 95.3%

Analysis of Variance

Source DF SS MS F P Regression 4 62.429 15.607 31.21 0.031

Residual Error 2 1.000 0.500

Total 6 63.429

The p-value is 0.031 making the null hypothesis rejected. The above analysis shows that the same group of respondents as in the previous analysis contributes to medium frequency of usage.

Thus education significantly contributes to frequency of usage of media.

- (iii) Regression Analysis: Low versus Illiterate, Primary level, ...
- \* Collegiate Edn. is highly correlated with other X variables
- \* Collegiate Edn. has been removed from the equation.

The regression equation is

Low frequency of usage of media = 1.50 + 1.32 Illiterate - 2.66 Primary level + 0.932

Middle school + 0.500 PUC

Predictor	Coef SECoef	T	P
Constant	1.5000 0.3536	4.24	0.051
Illiterate	1.3182 0.6484	2.03	0.179
Primary level	-2.659 1.439	-1.85	0.206
Middle school	0.9318 0.7779	1.20	0.354
PUC	0.5000 0.5000	1.00	0.423

$$S = 0.5$$
 R-Sq = 86.5% R-Sq(adj) = 59.6%

Analysis of Variance

Source DF SS MS F P Regression 4 3.2143 0.8036 3.21 0.251 Residual Error 2 0.5000 0.2500

Total 6 3.7143

The above analysis shows that p-value is 0.251 and the null hypothesis is accepted though illiterates, middle school and PUC respondents contribute to low frequency of usage.

# Conclusion

Though the state and the central governments declare several development programmes for the tribes, the actual benefits to them are delayed and in several cases, the intended beneficiaries are unable to avail. This is due to lack of basic education



and lack of enough exposure to outside world. The present study shows that the education significantly influences the high and medium frequency of usage of media, indicating that the education system for the tribes must be simplified as they perceive the state language foreign to them. Further, the results of the study indicate that interpersonal communication is the most frequently used form of communication. The governments must encourage Non-Government Organisations who are already assisting villagers in some of the development programmesto focus more on establishing new media of communication comprising of interpersonal communication among the tribal mass. A development model need to be devised for social change by empowering the tribal graduates to educate their fraternity and the governments must motivate such tribal trainers by providing monetary and non-monetary incentives. The present study can be further extended to include the impact of income level on the frequency of usage of both traditional and new media.

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