Media Responsibility in Revitalizing Indigenous Languages of India

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Abstract

The most attractive reap of any census that happens in India is the treasure trove of language data that is gathered in the process, creating a large sociolinguistic reserve. India has an accumulation of large primitive populace, widespread ethnic topography and a rich reserve of indigenous languages. Post India‟s Independence in 1947, the realization and efforts of the various Governments that came into power, initiated responsible and regulated steps towards the rehabilitation and welfare of the tribes. There were many reformatory moves to curb aboriginal problems, cultural diversity, human relations and communication issues. In the changing canvas of tribal life, media continues to play a pivotal role in conserving and promoting their indigenous practices, traditions, culture and indigenous languages. Media plays an essential role in educating, empowering and entertaining these tribes through both conventional and traditional means of communication.

Democracy requires the dynamic participation of every citizen and media plays a vital role in ascertaining the same. The role of media is to activate the citizen at the grassroot and make him aware about the various policies and benefits that he is entitled. At the same time media also helps in shaping a public opinion. The major role of mass media is to touch the lowest denominator of the country, contribute towards encouraging development in the remotes and promote social change while preserving the ethnic essence of each primitive clan. The challenge media faces are to make available the required technology and to communicate through the primitive language. While mainstream media remains less prevalent in addressing tribal issues, other alternative media tools like tribal dance and music, short films, street plays and some narrowcast initiatives with focus on a particular tribe and its issues are showing a positive impact. Community Radio, Internet and mobile telephony have served as media messengers with positive and reformatory results.

Keywords; *Narrowcast, Community Radio, Mobile journalism, Internet, Traditional media, Indigenous language*

I. OBJECTIVES

- To understand the linguistic diversity of India.

- To understand the media and language interface

- To understand Indian mainstream media in rural and tribal context

- To analyze the importance of community media in the revitalization of native languages.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study, secondary data analysis of research papers, Government reports news articles, interviews, speeches and websites were done. Books on media, communication theory, tribes and languages were also studied, to give a deep insight and understanding on the topic.

III. INTRODUCTION

On the basis of the latest UN data – 2019, the population of India in an estimated 1.36 billion

(PTI). The Indian landscape has a huge congregation of primitive inhabitants and a rich anthology of indigenous languages. UNESCO lists 1635 native languages spoken across the length and breadth of India. The Indian census of 2011 records a total of 705 ethnic groups, notified as Schedule Tribes (ST) or Adivasis of India. The overall Schedule Tribe population adds up to 10.42 crore of which only 1.04 crores live in urban areas while the rest still inhabit the rural Indian landscape. Schedule Tribes constitutes 8.6 % of the country's total population and

11.2 % of the total rural population (General).

The sociolinguistic reserve of India is unimaginably enormous with a complex gamut of languages, having firm presence throughout its population. Languages in India are classified into various compartments. The last language census conducted in 2011 records around 19,500 languages (General). A major part of the population of India comprising 96.71 percent use one of the Scheduled Languages listed in the Indian Constitution as their mother tongue. The remaining

3.29 percent of the population speak their native language (General).

(Kabir) Points out an evidently surging paradox in Indian social history between _Unity and Diversity', that is visible at all times. Kabir rightfully observes that India shows inclination towards unification on the basis of religious conviction and cultural similarity but is fragmented

due to languages, customs, political interest and economical status. (S. Mathur) has described the diversity in the Indian society for having a multifaceted dimensions, that prisms through shades of communalism, casteism, provincialism, and linguist variation etc., making it difficult to formulate plans and policies and execute them for the benefit of the entire Indian populace.

Media has a critical role to play in a developing democracy. The need of media in such diverse socio-linguistic environment with varied ethnic presence requires community centric and participatory media initiative. The Indian media, majorly in form of press, radio, television, satellite and the new age converged media help to maintain a relationship with the people and its elected chosen representatives. Media is a responsible gatekeeper, vigilant watchdog and a meticulous scorekeeper that plays the vital role of an informer, educator and reformer, thus establishing its role as the 4th estate in the Indian democracy. It acts as the voice, eyes and ears and also a motivator in guiding the actions of the citizens himself a journalist and a socio-political reformer; indentified the role of press as to recognize customary feelings of the masses and as a medium of expression to stimulate sentiment and confidently expose flaws. The factual depiction of a democratic system is seen through the good or bad that is performed by the elected representatives (Gandhi). The role of media as defined by Mahatma Gandhi post independence still remains the same today but the performance of media in our times does not adequately equate to the role mentioned by.

Thriving as the world's largest democracy and as the second largest language density in the world, the Indian media has a major challenge when it comes to reaching the entire population of the country. The Indian media is most prevalent in Hindi, English and the 18 regional languages listed in the viii schedule of the Indian Constitution, which existed before the inclusion of the four indigenous languages –Bodo, Maithili, Santhali and Dogri in 2004 (G. o. India). It has been almost 15 years since the inclusion on the native Bodo, Maithili, Santhali and Dogri languages in the viii schedule; the mainstream media has not been active in its efforts for the promotion or propagation of these native said languages. Mainstream media has various limitations curbing its access to each and every citizen of the country. The main restraints being topography, technology,

economic benefit, capable task force and linguistic handicap being the main restraints.

Language and communication

Language is the pulse of any message, dedicated to a selective or random audience. In other words - language promotes communication, the flow of information, enhancement of education, resulting in the mobilization of behaviour, attitude and mannerism of people. Language is the rhythm of human existence and the factor that adds exclusivity to humans over animals. Communication thus plays the very important role of changing and reinforcing a set of behaviour in a target audience, within a given time period. It is the means by which the human kind keeps in touch with each other, allowing social existence. Language promotes communication in human society and is the molecule of forming thoughts, imagination, planning, recalling and finally sharing by means of spoken word, written words, gestures and pictures. The same language also becomes a barrier in the easy flow of effective communication .In the Indian scenario the diverse linguistic and cultural barrier is a challenge hindering the effective rooting of media and communication in rural and tribal India.

Nelson Mendela rightly said that talking to a man in the language he understands it goes to his head but talking to the same man in his own language goes to his heart. Mandel's statement clearly indicates the importance of mother language / First language in communication.

The Language Map of India

The Article 344 (1) and 351 of the eighth schedule of the Constitution of India recognizes 22 languages as Scheduled Languages. Another category is the classical language category that comprises of languages having a recorded past of ancient texts for over 1500 years and have been promoting and preserving the rich heritage and culture of the country. Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odiya belong to the Classical Indian

language category. These classical languages are also a part of the Scheduled Language list. (General) The language data released on 26 June 2018 identifies 43.63% of Indian people have declared Hindi as their native language or mother tongue. Bhili/Bhilodi as the most widely spoken Unscheduled Language with 1.04 crore speakers, followed by Gondi with 29 lakh speakers.

F1-States and Union Terroteries by the most commonly spoken first language (Minorities)

After multiple levels of scrutiny the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India has arrived at a total of 121 Languages. These languages are further fragmented into two – one comprises 22 languages that are listed in the viii schedule of the Indian constitution as Scheduled Languages and the rest 99 languages form the other language category that is the Non Scheduled Languages . There is another category ―total of other languages‖, which includes all other languages and mother tongues which returned less than 10,000 speakers each at the all-India level but were not identifiable on the basis of the linguistic information available. Of the total population of India, 96.71 percent have one of the scheduled languages as their mother tongue; the remaining 3.29 per cent is accounted for other languages. There are total 270 identifiable

mother tongues which have returned 10,000 or more speakers each at the all-India level. Those mother tongues which have returned less than 10,000 speakers each and which have been classified under a particular language are included in ―others‖ under that language category (General).

The census by the Government of India indicates that presently 705 ethnic groups are notified as 'Schedule Tribes'. The mention of Schedule Tribe is important because it is a treasure trove of innumerable indigenous languages. The linguistic culture of India is highly diverse and unexposed. On account of massive migrations, 1.04 crores of the Schedule Tribes live in the

urban topography which means that along with their native dialect they are either bilingual or multilingual (General).

A linguistic survey by the name 'People's Linguistic Survey India' (PLSI) , was undertaken by the NGO - Bhasha Research and Publication Centre, Baroda. The survey revealed some interesting facts about the tribal dialects of India. According to the PLSI, Arunanchal Pradesh is the richest linguistic state of India with 90 languages as on date. Assam has 55 languages; Gujarat has 48 languages, Maharashtra has 39 languages and West Bengal 39 languages, making these states the most linguistically diverse. West Bengal has the highest number of 9 aboriginal scripts which include scripts -Kol, Ho, Olchiki (Santhali) ,BaranghKshiti, Lepcha, Sadri and Limbu (Kuruvilla). Ganesh Devy, the tribal and language activist of PLSI shared startling data (Roychowdhury) on the sinking number of languages in India. He confirmed that 250 languages have already become extinct in the past 60 years while 600 are dying. According to Devy, with the death of a language the way we look at the world also changes (Pathak) .He further informed that on 26 January 2010, the last speaking member of the native Bo community died in the Andaman Islands ending the existence of the Bo language in India and the world (Pathak).

(General) **1st language speakers in India (2011 Census)**

	Language	First language speakers]	First language speakers as a percentage of total population
1	Hindi	52,83,47,193	43.63
2	Bengali	9,72,37,669	8.30
3	Marathi	8,30,26,680	7.09
4	Telugu	8,11,27,740	6.93

(General) **1st language speakers in India (2011 Census)**

	Language	First language speakers]	First language speakers as a percentage of total population
5	Tamil	6,90,26,881	5.89
6	Gujarati	5,54,92,554	4.74
7	Urdu	5,07,72,631	4.34
8	Kannada	4,37,06,512	3.73
9	Odia	3,75,21,324	3.20
10	Malayalam	3,48,38,819	2.97
11	Punjabi	3,31,24,726	2.83

12	Assamese	1,53,11,351	1.31
13	* Maithili	1,35,83,464	1.16
14	*Santali	73,68,192	0.65
15	Kashmiri	67,97,587	0.58
16	Nepali	29,26,168	0.25
17	Sindhi	27,72,264	0.24
18	*Dogri	25,96,767	0.22

(General) **1st language speakers in India (2011 Census)**		
Language	**First language speakers**[1]	**First language speakers as a percentage of total population**
19 Konkani	22,56,502	0.19
20 Manipuri	17,61,079	0.15
21 *Bodo	14,82,929	0.13
22 Sanskrit	24,821	<0.01

Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali which were Non-scheduled languages in 1991 were declared Scheduled languages in 2003 by 92nd amendment.

The above table shows Hindi as the most widely spoken language of India, while Sanskrit has the least number of speakers.

An interesting revelation of the study by PLSI indicates (Jain) 400 million Hindi speaking people, making it the most accepted language of India. English as a mother tongue preference has moved up from one hundred eighty seven thousand in 1971 to 10 million in 2011. It was also found that tribal languages including Santhali ,Gondi, Bheli, Mizo, Garo, Katbatrak are thriving languages, while 400 out of the 780 apprehended to get extinct in the near future . Hence much effort needs to be put in order to conserve these languages (Jain).

Linguistic minority of India

Ordinarily according to the Oxford Dictionary ―minority‖ refers to an assemblage comprising less than half of the population and differing from others, particularly from the principal segment, in creed, faith, ethnicity and customs, lingo, etc. The Schedule Tribes population largely forms the linguistic minority section of India. (Affairs) The term ―Linguistic Minorities‖,

does not find a distinct mention in the Indian Constitution or in any other legal interpretations of India. In 1946 The United Nations Human Rights Commission referred to the ‗minority‘ as those

―non-dominant groups in a population which possess a wish to preserve stable ethnic, religious and linguistic traditions or characteristics; markedly different from those of the rest of population.‖ The Indian Constitution uses the term ‗minority‘ in Articles – 29 to 30 and 350 A to 350 B – but the term ‗ linguistic minority‘ remains specifically un-defined. Article 29 refers to

―any sections of citizens…. having a distinct language, script or culture.‖ Article 30 speaks distinctly of two categories of minorities – religious and linguistic. Articles – 350 A and 350 B communicate regarding linguistic minorities (Affairs).

Under Article 29 (1), a linguistic marginal community has the primary right to safeguard its

own language. It also establishes that the Indian citizens living in India and having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same. It further states that no citizen shall be deprived of admittance into any educational institute run by the State or in getting assistance out of state financial resources; on the basis of faith, race, social order, language or any of them (Affairs).

Article 30 ensures the right of minorities to set up and manage educational institution of their choice. The State shall not discriminate, in granting aid to educational institutions, on the basis that it is managed by a religious or linguistic minority (Affairs).

Article 350-A of the Constitution contains a definite measure of defense for linguistic minorities. It provides that every state and local authority within the state should make available ample services for teaching in the mother-tongue at the primary education stage to children of linguistic minority groups; the President of India may issue such direction to any state to do so, if considered essential.

Article 350-B ensures the appointment of a Special Officer for aboriginal minorities by the President of India to inspect all issues concerning to safeguard the rights of linguistic minorities under the Constitution and report to the President upon intervals (Affairs).

The Honourable Supreme Court of India through various judgments has further established the distinct characteristics of these ‗religious and linguistic' minorities. (Affairs)

According to the Supreme Court judgment in DAV College etc. v/s State of Punjab and others (SCR 688; AIR 1971 SC 1737 (5th May, 1971)) (Affairs) ―a linguistic minority for the purpose of Article 30 (1) is one which must at least have a separate spoken language; it is not necessary that the language should also have distinct script.‖ Articles 29 and 30

seek to preserve the differences that subsist on the basis of religion, beliefs, culture and language with the aim to unite the nation without bias. (Affairs)

In the matter of TA Pai Foundation and Others vs State of Karnataka held as under: (Affairs)

―Linguistic and religious minorities are covered by the expression "minority" under Article 30 of the Constitution. Since reorganization of the States in India has been on linguistic lines for the purpose of determining the minority, the unit will be the State and not the whole of India. Thus, religious and linguistic minorities have been put at par in Article 30 and have to be considered State-wise‖.

The Justice RanganathMisra committee report or the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, 2007 refers to linguistic minorities as, ―unlike Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, backward classes and religious minorities, linguistic minorities are not caste or class or religion based. In fact, a majority community/ group in one State or district or taluka may become a linguistic minority in another State or district or taluka in the same or another State. This is basically due to migration of the population from one place to the other in search for a vocation or employment or otherwise (Affairs).‖

Bilingualism and Multilingualism

The Mono-Lingual / one language scenario changed in India as a colonial implication with the introduction of English, by the British. The introduction of English into the Indian language system is candidly described in Macaulay's minute (1835). (Young) Macaulay says, ‗we must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the million whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste , in opinions, in morals and in Intellect'. Thus, to satisfy the objective of making Indians linguistically English capable, English was given a distinctive place in the Indian School curriculum. While English education was an imperialistic

requirement, it was eventually successful in creating the linguistic divide of

India into the 'classy' interpreters of the British Raj and the 'masses' who were linguistically English deficient.

To understand the multi-lingual acquisition by an individual, it should be well understood that mostly people learn one language to begin with—their "first" language, or native tongue or Mother Tongue ; the language used by their kith and kin and in their immediate surroundings during infancy . Subsequently (Chaturvedi and Mohale) ―second‖ languages are cultured to various levels of proficiency under diverse social conditions. Total proficiency over two languages is designated as bilingualism; in many cases— the factors resulting to bilingualism include upbringing by parents using different languages at home or being raised within a (Srivastsya) multilingual community.

The British institutionalized the English language successfully in India. They left the language to remain and grasp into India's administrative, legal and educational structure. The reminiscences of British colonial India, is today cherished by urban Indians making them a globally acceptable English proficient task force. Today English is an important requisite for education at the school, college and university level. It is a link language. It allows Indians in the attainment of social equity. It is a prime requisite for all Government employment and private engagements.

Language wars in India were flagged post independence, with the tug to make Hindi an official language, it was morally difficult to accept English as a National language due to its alien origin and imperial background. Hindi was not accepted as the National language as the other Indian states had their own vernacular languages. The struggle to give India a National Language still continues.

India's diverse language reservoir, led to the orderly induction of multiple language teaching in the

academic arena. (G. O. India) The Indian Education Commission under the chairmanship of D.S Kothari, chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC), (G. O. India) submitted its report on 29 June 1966. The (G. O. India) recommendations were accommodated in India's first National Policy on Education in 1968.

(G. O. India) The commission made several recommendations for the growth and promotion of languages. The three language proposal by the Kothri commission, listed the following

languages at educational institutions across India with alterations specific to certain regions of the country keeping in view the diverse language anthology.

1. Hindi
2. English
3. Vernacular and Sanskrit

▪ In order to ease the language differences between the North and South Indians the commission proposed that the Hindi speaking belt primarily including 9 states of Northern India were expected to learn any one of the 5 South Indian language, vice versa the South Indians had to learn Hindi. The formula was not followed.

▪ Respective vernacular regional language was taught as the first language by the state Government schools.

▪ What remained a common induction across the Indian school curriculum was the English language.

o English was taught as a second language by all states at school level. The teaching of English at primary and secondary level was emphasized as a result India today has an amalgamation of a huge English literate task force.

▪ The Private English schools reversed the order of teaching, by making English the medium of teaching at the primary level and the vernacular was introduced in the secondary stage.

- English remained as a common factor in all school curriculums, the time of induction varied.

- Higher education was encouraged in English and it continues till date.

Mass Media and Language Interface

Media is best understood as the instrument by which information is gathered and disseminated. Mass Communication is a process (Mcquail and windahal). Mass Media can be defined as a procedural instrument which acts as a channel of communication to a mass audience. These instruments are radio, press, cinema, television, satellite, movies, documentary and new age internet driven media.

The primary functions of mass media are listed below-

- It is used in our country as a tool for socio-economic development, empowerment, political awareness and entertainment.

- It provides an input into the developmental plans launched by the Government from time to time.

- It acts as a catalyst agent in spreading advocacy messages.

- It promotes national integration and communal harmony.

- Plays a very crucial role in the social and economical progress of the rural and tribal mass.

- Access to mass media increases the level of information and knowledge in the population.

- Effective media use is generally aimed to achieve two results which is the standardization of education and harness change in people's lifestyle.

- It is a major medium for leisure and entertainment.

- It plays the role of a supervisory body responsible to shape, guide and reflect public opinion.

The three main functions of mass communication include -

1. Information
2. Education
3. Entertainment

Unlike other forms of communication, mass communication is done by an institution with a team of people involved in production and execution. Mass media plays the role of a public watchdog leading to shape, guide and reflect public opinion. It is a situation where in the participants are no longer in a face to face situation. (Kumar) There is a medium /media between the sender and the receiver and the feedback is not immediate. The audience is diverse and unstable.

According to (Mcquail and windahal) communication is a process which increases commonality but also requires elements of communality for it to occur. A common language for instance, does bring people together but language alone does not suffice for communication to take place. Each language shapes the reasoning of its speaker. Every human is a prisoner of his language and every language has to navigate through cultural, social and generation gaps.

The Indian mass communication platform has been much (Kumar) influenced by the theories of Wilbur Schramm that stresses on three elements as basic necessity for the communication flow process - encoder, message and decoder. The source as the encoder and destination as the decoder and the signal is the language used to put across the message. The Charles Osgood and Wilbur Schramm model of communication is circular, where the sender and receiver are involved as equal partners in the exchange of messages. This pattern is largely dependent on commonality of the signal or the

language of communication as that is what ensures the equal status of the encoder and the decoder.

F2 -Oswood and Schramm Circular Model

The Indian communication theory of (Yadava, Communication in India :The Tenets of Sadharanikaran) "Sadharanikaran" comes close to commonness or 'common' usually associated with communication. Derived from the ancient Sanskrit language _sadharan'; translates as

_common' in English; the process of _Sadharanikaran'; translates to the _process of commonness'. It is an innate ability acquired through cultural adaptation or learning. (IGNOU) The focus here is not on the sender but the receiver of the message. The commonness is also linked with the language that unites and defines a community. The theory of Sadharanikaran implies to an integrated approach of communication, arousing both physical and emotional

behavior in human beings, thus completing the communication process in the best possible way. This pattern of communication considers filtering information , keeping in consideration the audience in his environment. The minimal use of words allows the arousal of sensations created by visual illustrations.

For sociologist like (Thompson) communication is an action, which takes place in a said social circumstance and is linked to questions of economic, political, coercive and symbolic power in society. The uses of the mass media and the new digital media in terms of this viewpoint , engage in the creation of fresh actions and relations in the social world; new social relationships and innovative ways involving others and ones own self.

In a fundamental way the use of media communication transforms the spatial and temporal organization of social life creating new forms of action and interaction and new modes of exercising power, which are no longer linked to the sharing of a common locale. (G. o. India) The National broadcasters -Doordarshan and All India Radio have played a critical role in promoting development but language is a check gate for making the entire process successful with utmost mass reach. While All India Radio is the mass media for the ears, it has language limitations impacting the reception of the message by the listener keeping in view the language proficiency of the receiver. Doordarshan or Audio visual media remains the most effective when it comes to erasing the language hindrance of the receiver, as language plays a secondary role while visual plays the lead. Similarly the written word or the print medium requires utmost language proficiency to successfully transmit the message for which literacy is a must. The new age converged media, driven by the internet have the audio-visual and written word platforms to choose from, with English language as the Search Engine leader.

Media in India

Since the publication of (G. o. India) Hickey's ―Bengal Gazette‖ in 1780 till today the Indian media scenario has grown leaps and bounds. Today India is the largest newspaper market of the world. It has (G. o. India) 70,000 newspapers selling around 100 million copies on a daily basis. The television media stands at around 1,600 satellite channels that include 400 current affairs channels.

The Constitution of India guarantees its citizens' freedom of speech and expression enshrined in Article 19 (i). The same freedom is given to the Indian press as given to all citizens of the nation, neither more or less. Media/ press in India do not have absolute freedom. Much contrary of having an independent and liberated press that is an essential necessity of a healthy democracy. Article 19 (1) does not exclusively mention the freedom of press or media .DrBheemRaoAmbedkar , the chairman of the Indian Constitution's drafting committee defended the omission of freedom of ―Press‖ in Article 19 (1) and explained (www.shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in) that no special rights were necessary to be given to the press ,the press enjoys the rights that every individual of the country enjoys. He further explained that the editors of press or the administrators of a press being Indian citizens choose to voice messages through the media .By doing so ; they merely exercise their right of freedom of speech and expression. On the basis of the above argument he defended that no special mention was necessary towards the freedom of press in the Indian Constitution. Officials Secret Act and the Prevention of Terrorist Activities Act (PoTA) are major deterrents curtailing its liberty thus constraining the freedom of press in India.

Role of Indian media

Justice (Iyer) in his article ―Free Press in a Hungry Republic State‖ says, ―The philosophical basis for the freedom of publication and circulation is the social purpose of supplying unadulterated information without tendentious presentation, readily and at the right time. And Constitutional rights stem from political Philosophy.‖

Although the Indian media lacks absolute freedom but it is expected to perform certain essential roles.

▪ The media is a messenger that carries information on the Government's activities to the people.

▪ It helps in building perceptions and evoking reactions towards both good and bad actions Government and administration.

▪ Media helps in bridging the between the people and the Government.

▪ It is a medium of expressing views and rejections.

▪ It plays the role of an educator.

▪ It helps in the creation, promotion and expression of public opinion.

▪ Helps in the process of nation building.

▪ Preserving and promoting culture.

▪ Empowering the downtrodden and neglected.

▪ Dissemination of unbiased news.

Media structure in India

Media in India is made up broadly of print, electronic, new age, converged media, community media and the indigenous traditional media. It includes television, radio, print, digital, films and various native folk forms. Traditional or alternative media too plays a vital role as it is interactive and is deeply rooted to the culture of a specific region.

Media operations in India can be broadly categorized on the basis of its ownership patterns.

I. The first category is the media that is grouped under an autonomous statutory media agency-PrasarBharati, India's largest public broadcasting agency. It includes All India Radio, the public broadcast agency of India and Doordarshan the public telecast agency of India. Although both the public media facilitators' have been granted autonomous status since 1997; it is much dedicated to the voicing of favourable Government activities. It is more or less the mouth piece of the Government.

II. The second category includes private media that are owned generally by business tycoons or politicians

or a combination of both. They are the owners of the major print media and also the private television channels and FM Radio, that rely on advertisements, with a profit making goal to sustain. This media is consumed by the educated urbanite and its target is the large middle class consumer base India. A visible attribute of private media is Yellow journalism that allows it to sell and remain strong.

III. The last category includes the rural media / community or developmental media that is run by Non Governmental Organizations for the purpose of development at the grass roots of India. This media is the narrowcast media that in contrast to the popular and widespread broadcast media concentrates on a limited populationor community and addresses issues and interests specific to a particular community or topography. This Community based participatory media focuses on the most neglected, illiterate, remote, rural, backward and indigenous population of the country. This media is the least popular.

The overall understanding of Indian media in a nutshell after understanding the above ownership patterns is that media in India is –

o   Government and influence driven media.
o   Currency driven media.
o   Poverty driven media.

Communication for development

(Roy) in her lecture at the Sydney Peace Prize award, 2004 said that there is nothing that is voiceless. There are those who are intentionally silenced or those who are chosen not to be heard. The above statement clearly creates an information divide of the information rich and the information deprived. The need of the present media setup in India is to have media machinery providing an equal opportunity for the marginalized and mute population.

The World Congress in 2004 on Communication for Development defined it as a societal progression based on exchange of ideas using a wide assortment of means and methods. It is also about creating change at different levels including listening, creating trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change. The development communications process can be customized as per the requirements of a particular community or a broader bigger population universe of the entire country. The implementation of this theory plays an important role in the overall development of a country. In India the idea of development communication is persistently in disagreement with its role and in aiding the communication process due to various factors.

The aspects of development communication that diversifies it from the basic communication approach are

▪   Development communication is persuaded with a specific purpose. It is realistic in nature and is done with the intention of encouraging social change.

▪   Development communication promotes the idea of social and political change with the aim of attaining an improved and qualitative life for the neglected social population at the grassroots.

▪   Development communication does not promote financial benefit but assures awareness to empower and redress issues of concern and neglect.

A telecast made on (Ravi) Aljazeera TV in 2015 shows an alarming neglect by the mainstream media towards issues related to 800 million Indian rural populations. The main stream media covers stories majorly related to 4 topics – politics, business, Bollywood / celebrities and cricket.

The TV report is based on a survey done in Nov and Dec 2015 involving (Ravi) three mainstream English and Hindi Daily newspaper.

Newspaper	% of rural news coverage Nov 2015	% of rural news coverage Dec 2015
DainikBhasker (Hindi)	0 %	0 %
Hindustan	0 %	0 %
DainikJagran	0 %	0 %
Hindustan Times	0 %	0 %
Times of India	0 %	0 %
The Hindu	0 %	1.37 %

The above table clearly shows that except for „The Hindu", all the other Mainstream English and Hindi newspapers failed to dedicate any space at all to rural stories.

The television survey includes 5 private channels and 1 public service broadcast. Rural stories on prime time were measured during in Nov 2015.

TV Channels	% of rural news prime time coverage Nov 2015
AajTak (private)	6.63 %
ZeeNews (private)	4.38 %
DD News (Public Service Broadcast)	1.24 %
NDTV (private)	0.62 %
CNN-IBN (private)	0.39 %
ABPNews (private)	0.19 %

The above table clearly shows that „AajTak", has given 6.63% time to rural stories. Even the Public Broadcasting channel DD News has shown poor performance at 1. 24 % while ABP news has the least at 0.19 %.

The overall results are shattering and sad.

The responsibilities of media in a developing country like India are the following.

▪ Drive development with social maturity and educational awareness, causing socio economic development at the rural and urban level with equanimity.

▪ It is the duty of the media to follow an all inclusive media approach encompassing the rich and the poor; powerful and the weak; the educated and the uneducated; the urban and the rural; while gathering and disseminating information. Equal distribution of information is the key to progress.

o The media requires overall change in its approach while covering the highly diverse Indian social system and varied ethnic universe.

▪ Create unbiased and credible stories that are a worthy and reliable source of information.

▪ The main design behind development communication theory is a media for progress of people in a developing nation. It acts to facilitate social consciousness in a segment of the population with an aim to promote transformation and positive change.

▪ Progress necessitates the change in people's attitude and communication assists as an instrument to inform and influence. Mass media plays the ultimate vehicle to make sure the successful achievement of the development process.

▪ Communication seeks to serve the people without manipulation and encourages genuine response.

▪ The Development Communication theory encourages societal transformation and self-responsibility, social ethics and self determination for social duties and righteousness.

▪ Promotes and showcases the ethnic minority and the linguistic minority, those dwelling in the rural landscapes and the forests of the country.

▪ Grooms and creates citizen journalist who can convey their immediate concerns and problems at the grass roots using their native languages and dialects, thus allowing the functioning of fair and participatory media.

▪ Creating the atmosphere to promote learning through observation.

▪ Schooling the Linguistic minority with basic media skills.

▪ Providing better media representation for the 49% of woman population of India.

▪ Extend media initiatives to the rural and forest dwellers to play the role of a motivator, in order to restrict rural migrations. Thus, helping the preservation of indigenous culture, traditions and lifestyle.

▪ Introducing a range of digital technologies and gadgets that makes the media concept broader and more participatory for the inclusive development of a country, allowing news to move from bottom to top.

▪ Indian actor (Madhavan) in his speech on ―India in 2030‖, at the 14th edition of the India Conference Harvard University in 2017 ,was very firm and clear about being able to see a rural India that felt adequate by all means in 2030. By adequate Madhavan wanted to stress at narrowing and finally erasing the gap between rural and urban India, which would enable the rural population to feel at par with the urban dwellers, socially and

▪ economically. Rural India suffers from all recognizable inadequacies which also includes information and media inadequacy.

Media Efforts to revitalize Indigenous Indian languages

Media has an essential and efficient role to play in enhancing and empowering the indigenous population. With 705 Schedule Tribes notified by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, conservation of such a huge variety of ethnic language spoken by these natives is an enormous task. The challenge faced by media in India with such pluralistic ethnic and linguistic conditions, makes it difficult for the media vehicles to reach each and every entity restricting proficient access at the grass-root level.

The case studies discussed below are more or less inclined to E.Rogers Diffusion and Innovations Theory of communication (Rogers). Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over a time period among the members of a social system (Rogers) . Innovation is an idea, practice, or perception by an individual or other unit of adoption (Rogers). The two most powerful channels of communication are the mass media and one-to-one (inter-personal) communication. Mass media helps in creating an understanding, that causes diffusion of information about an improvement; whereas, the one-to-one communication is effective in the shaping of opinions and the possible acceptance or rejection of these opinions. The most successful communication takes place between individuals sharing similar backgrounds on the basis of socio-economic status, linguistic commonality, education etc. Such communication is called hemophilic- where all individuals are placed at the same level. In diffusion of innovation model, heterophilic communication occurs between a person who has enhanced information and understanding of the innovation as compared to a person with lesser awareness on the topic.

A. PARI : P. Sainath

Veteran rural journalist P. Sainath has made backbreaking efforts to cover the rural and the tribal population of the country. Sainath about his own efforts towards the rural and tribal news stories he says that he covers the lowest 5 % of India while the rest of Indian media covers the top 5 % of India (COCKBURN). Giving an account of India's rural and linguistic diversity, Sainath points out that the Indian media is in dire credibility dearth.

He says , (Joshi) ―Nearly 83.30 crore population lives in villages, who speak in 780 different languages and their issues are completely missed out by the Indian media. In a small village in Tripura, only seven people now speak in 'Saimar', a language bound to die out when its speakers do, leading inevitably to the loss of a generation of tradition, knowledge and native wisdom. Mainstream media must start covering such subjects.‖

A two year (P. Sainath) Bennett & Coleman fellowship helped him write 84 articles in between 1990 to 1992 that were published in the ―Times of India‖. Covering 50,000 miles and four years; living in the poverty stricken villages of Tamil Nadu, Telengana, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh ; his gatherings shaped the startling content of the book ―Everybody loves a Good Drought‖, that remains a best seller since 1996 .The very fact that the book has gone into its 45th edition in the past 20 years, clearly reveals that there is a huge readership for rural-tribal and developmental stories and the truth behind the successes and failures of Government projects pertaining to rural and tribal India. Winner of the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2007, for Journalism Literature and Creative Communications Arts, P. Sainath has portrayed the true misery of the rural poor who are the aboriginal dwellers and farmers. He has captured the helpless rural dwellers, caught in the maze of massive economic projections and enormous promises of development resulting in limping success or no success at all. He portrays huge displacements caused due to innumerable projects in the rural and jungle topography, the poor state of the health and education sector and overall neglect and poverty caused to the below poverty line population of rural India that goes unnoticed and least reported.

Presently Sainath is the founder and editor of People's Archive of Rural India (PARI). His mission is to digitalize the rural life and the rural people of India through the PARI project. The objective is to chronicle rural and aboriginal India before it is extinct. In an interview to (OVERDORF) Sainath says that India is presently going through, ―an extremely painful transformation.‖ The country's 2011 census is a matter of concern and worry as it shows one of the biggest mass migrations in the present times confirming more population surge in urban topography than in the villages. The (P. Sainath) PARI website as Sainath informs, offers a glimpse of ―the everyday life of everyday people‖ ,

featuring pictures, audio visuals, texts and recordings. Sainath is ambitious to gather photographs at least of one man, woman and child inhabiting every district of India. He intends to build a language data resource by audio recording the 780 native Indian languages spoken in the country. He intends to document the stories of India's agricultural crisis and collect both Government and credible un-official reports related to rural India. The PARI site aims to chronicle the agony, neglect, celebrations, festivity, music, dance, native languages, medicine, life style, women, farmer's suicide and all that relates to the rural topography ; creating a source of knowledge as well as a weapon to combat negligence and prejudice . For Sainath PARI is the digital library on the world wide web (www) informing the living times of yore, a periodical on the living present and a constantly updating digital textbook of the future ; entirely

committed to rural India including the rural migrants in the cities.

Keeping in view the promotion and motivation of scribes reporting on rural and labour issues in Indian language; (P. Sainath) has established ‗CounterMedia' awards. These awards are funded by the royalties of the book ―Everyone Loves a Good Drougth‖. The aim of these awards is to recognize developmental, rural, Indian language and women journalist. Indian media is void of agricultural and tribal correspondent owing to which village level stories lack representation in the mainstream media. Stories related to the Aboriginal and the rural issues are seldom seen. Sainath has trained around 1000 journalist to cover rural stories.

B. Community Radio

The need of community media enables communication in native dialects and languages; thus gaining acceptance and popularity, alongside helping as a medium to promote information, empowerment and entertainment. It also acts as a medium for conservation of socio-cultural values. The most important benchmarks of community media is its participatory approach, integration of socio-linguistic factors and instantaneous feedback making it far more credible than mass media. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), dedicated several initiatives to promote community radio with an aim to boost the presence of such citizen radio hubs globally (Fredrick).

In a historic judgment in 1995, the Honourable Supreme Court of India, declared the airwaves as public property. In 2006, the Government of India put forward new guidelines allowing Non GovernmentalOrganizations' (NGO) and non-profit institutions to begin a third tier of broadcast-popularly known as Community Radio Stations (CRS) (Fredrick). Besides the public broadcast radio popularly known as All India Radio (AIR) and private commercial FM radio; NGO run Community

Radio Stations were commissioned for creating public awareness, mostly in the rural and aboriginal zones of the country. Sangham Radio, started as India's first community narrowcast radio station; at Pastapur hamlet of Medak district in Andhra Pradesh now a part of Telengana state. Today there are 150 functional community radio stations in India with more coming up.

RADIO DHIMSA 90.4MHZ

Radio Dhimsa is one amid the 150 community radio stations currently functional in India. Drawing its name from the indigenous dance of the Paroja Tribe of Odisha'sKoraput district, Radio Dhimsa came into existence in 2008 . The Citizen radio station is being run by South Orissa Voluntary Action (SOVA) , a non-profit organization with a secular outlook and with the objective to sensitize the large tribal population that dwells in and around its operative area . Located in Chhapar village of Odisha's tribal Koraput district, Radio Dhimsa is one of the 17 community radio stations functional in the state of Odisha. Radio Dhimsa is presently doing a daily 9 hour broadcast covering 60 villages from 6 panchayats, Koraput and Lamtaput blocks including KoraputMuncipality area. On air it covers an area of 12KM in radius. The tribal Paraja community is the largest audience of Radio Dhimsa; Schedule Caste & Other Backward Classes (OBC) population is also the end audience. This Community Radio is covering a population of around 60,000; these people do not have access to any other form of media that delivers messages that matter to them in their own native dialect (BRARA).

Koraput district of Odisha, is a tribal district having the highest concentration of aboriginal communities in the state with 51 native tribes. Most of these tribes speak in their own unique native dialects. The radio programmes are designed only after conducting an assessment regarding the concerns, issues, interest, need and problems of the tribal community at a given point of time. Based on the findings the production team develops content and prepares radio

program in different formats like Radio Drama/Radio Talk/ Experts interview/ Phone-in Program/Feature Programme /Radio Magazine Programs/ Story Telling/Jingles/Quiz etc. Then a narrowcast is done in each of the respective village to gather feedback. Thereafter the program is broadcast on AIR.

Radio Dhimsa played an essential role in educating the tribal listeners on their democratic rights as voters. Before the LokSabha election that was held in the district on 11th April 2019, an election sensitization effort was conducted for the tribes. A special program titled

―Festival of Democracy‖ (Bhattacharya) was created with the help of the Election Commission in order to educate the local populace mostly comprising of uneducated natives of the district. These people were made alerted regarding their voting powers; the candidates and their election manifesto; none of the above (Nota) option, Electronic voting Machines (EVM), finding names at polling booths etc. (Bhattacharya) Dedicated episodes on basic election awareness in the local Paraja and Desia language were aired. This community radio exercise was successful in ensuring participatory democracy, spreading awareness and motivating the tribal community to exercise their right to vote fairly and wisely.

Radio Dhimsa engages 60 village youth volunteers, trained in basic use of radio equipments with necessary technical guidance. Out of these 60 village volunteers, some are assigned the task of radio reporters and some as assistants to these reporters at their respective villages. The fact that it is the only media that allows local context based content to be aired in local language, provides the scope to local talents to showcase their creative traits free of cost in the most comfortable atmosphere giving it community acceptance. As the Radio Dhimsa station is situated in a panchayat village, the local and native people of the area visit the station frequently to express their opinions and concerns.

SOVA in future aspires to support of the tribal community and district administration of Koraput by developing Dhimsa Radio station as a technical communication resource agency for the district. It also aims to provide technical guidance to the newly established community radio stations in other parts of the district.

C. Phone Journalism: CGNetSwara +91 80 500 68 000

The Indian Telecommunication network stands at the second position in the world and includes both fixed and mobile phone users. The country offers the lowest call tariffs allowing it to have a consumer base of 1161.81 million wireless subscribers as on 31 March 2019. As on 31st Dec 2018 India had 121 crore mobile phones and 44.6 crore smart phones. It is also the world's second-largest Internet user-base with 460.24 million broadband internet subscribers in the country (Doval). As per a survey undertaken by Kantar IMRB ICUBE conducted in 2017, the internet network of India would easily reach around 627 million by 2019 end. Rural India offers a major consumer base that is fuelling the growth of digital trend expected to 290 million by 2019 end (N. Mathur).

The huge potential of the Indian telecom sector has propelled a unique citizen journalism movement in Central tribal India with the objective to democratize media by the use of the mobile telephone network available in the area (Garg). The phone journalism initiative popularly known as CGNetSwara is an effort jointly planned and executed by former BBC journalist and digital advocate SubhranshuChoudhary and Bill Thies, an American computer scientist, who have been running the community based mobile phone community based media service, provided free to the indigenous Gond inhabitants of central tribal India in the forests of Chattisgarh since 2010 (Singh).

The 2011 census ranks the Gond natives as the second largest tribe of India after the Bhil, with a population of 4,357,918 constituting 35.6 per cent of the total Schedule Tribe Population of India. The 2011 Indian Census confirms 2.98 million Gondi speaking people inhabiting the states of Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangna, Gujarat, Maharashtra, western Odisha and southern Uttar Pradesh (Census).

CGNetSwara translates to Central Gondwana net and _Swara' a Sanskrit word translates to voice in English. CGNetSwara has given the indigenous people of central Gondwana , the right to speak and the right to be heard in their native dialect –Gondi (Garg). The Gondi natives are encouraged to record issues faced; concerns, neglect and deprivation on their mobile handsets. They are also guided to post pictures and clips of tribal festivity, celebrations, music and dance using the mobile phone. This is done on a daily basis (SMITH).

The objectives of CGnetSwara

1.   Democratizing media by taking it to last person in the society and making it the voice of the rural poor and the native dwellers.

2.   Using Mobile phones at the grassroots and creating an inexpensive media platform.

3.   Creating a huge reserve of tribal citizen journalists by training them in news gathering and channelizing the same news to the concerned authority.

4.   Keeping the natives informed and responsive regarding their rights and duties

5.   Working towards reversing the top to bottom approach of media and making it a bottom to top model. Creating a media platform for the poor and neglected as against the rich and the middle class for which the present media works.

6.   Allowing the indigenous tribe to use their native language to share their concerns and issues in the local Gondi language.

7.   Ruling out illiteracy as a hindrance to limit media impact.

8.   Creating a tribal news resource for the mainstream media.

This unique media platform allows the forest dwellers to report local news by making a phone call on the CGNetSwara number-8050068000. The report is mostly recorded in Gondi language and also allows callers to report and listen to these reports by giving a blank call to the designated phone number free of cost. These reported stories are moderated by journalists and made accessible for playback online and over the phone. Post moderation and editing, the reports are also available and can be accessed on the CGNetSwara website. On a daily basis around 2,000 calls are received from listeners who want to listen to these recorded stories. Approximately 200 calls are made by people, wanting to record their concerns. Around ten chosen stories are reviewed post moderation and cautious editing; the stories are released for public consumption. Users are notified by an SMS when a new story is posted. Callers can press number one either on the fixed land lines or mobile handsets, to record a fresh message. The listeners can press number two and hear the already existing messages recorded previously. The English and Hindi version of these Gondi stories are published on the CGNetSwara website for scribes, non profits and Govenrment organizations to solve critical issues and alerts them (Mudliar, Donner and Thies) .

The pictorial description below gives us an understanding regarding CGNetSwara flow of Information and ―How Swara works‖(www.kractivist.wordpress.com)
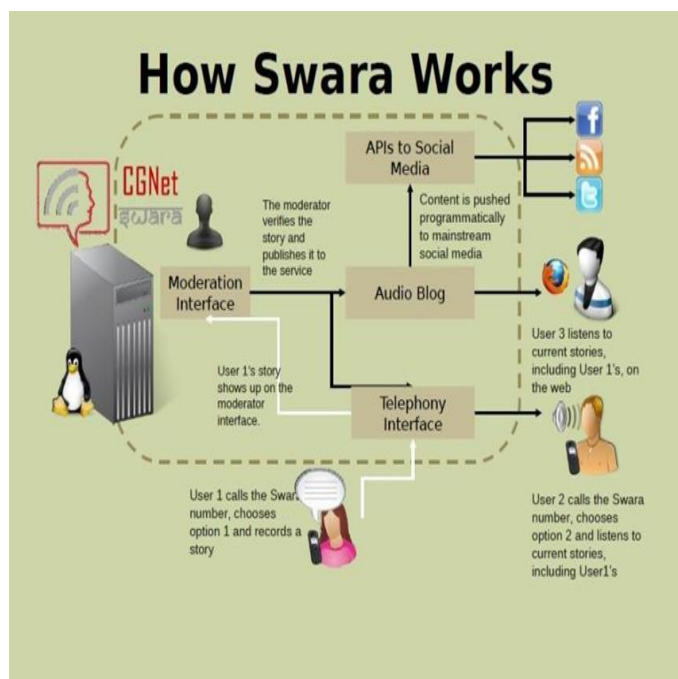
CGNetSwara flow of Information

An everyday rundown of all local newspapers are done. The main news items concerning national issues and issues of the tribal interest, are translated into the local indigenous language, Gondi .The same is also made available on the CGNetSwara platform for the Gondi tribe to listen. This allows the local Gondi population of the region to be updated on information from mainstream media.

CGNetSwara aspires to change the present aristocratic model of media to a democratic model. The aim is to create citizen journalists who in turn are a source to feed mainstream journalist and in the process can democratize media (Ghosh) allowing the last person of rural India having his voice heard. There is a huge prospect in shifting the clout of journalism to the mobile phone and

―give a little power to more people rather than a lot of power to some people", says SubhranshuChoudhary. At present CGNetSwara is functional in the aboriginal region of Maharashtra, MP, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat (Indian).

IV. CONCLUSION

The nature of media in India shows huge laxity towards the rural and indigenous masses. It is fractional in approach, creating a vast information gap and a communication divide.

The very reason of the mainstream media's neglect is because the stories concerning the rural, poor and native people does not support the revenue generation model on which these media houses survive. If negative stories of neglect, corruption, exploitation, unjust and government failures are given space and time slots then the mainstream media houses and their journalists easily become a punching bag for the Government, bureaucracy and the entire system transpires against them to vent their wrath as a result the media houses and the journalists head to a doom.

The Lack of native language proficiency curtails the main stream journalist to seek details and file stories. Language diversity has been a severe deterrent causing media to be sluggish in taking charge of the linguistic minorities.The mainstream media houses lack the intent to spend money on gathering such stories or assigning a dedicated journalist on agriculture, rural and tribal beat. Untrained stringers are another drawback as stories filed by such scribes may lack credibility and may be biased.

The AIR and DD have some slots dedicated to programmes in a few native languages but the time is very limited and the content is mostly entertainment based and repetitive. Indian media is the least regulated media. There have been many policies and committee reports towards the conservation of linguistic minorities but nothing commendable has been put forward for the media to compulsively cover the native linguistic minorities. The call for strict and result fetching regulations are the need of the day. Such stringent policies will compel the mainstream media to dedicate a few journalists, a page or time slot on a daily basis towards stories related to agriculture, tribes, rural

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India and linguistic minorities. New age media is playing a game changer when it comes to covering stories agriculture, tribes, rural India and issues pertaining to linguistic minorities. The only ray of hope is community guided media that has spearheaded the linguistic revitalization in rural and tribal India

The use of community radio stations, community mobile news services, Internet guided media, social media platforms and P. Sainath's attempt for creating the people's archives of rural India are meaningful and result oriented. These initiatives have shown effective results in mobilizing the progress and prospect of the indigenous rural population.

Community based participatory media is alert and powerful with an unbiased approach. It allows flexibility to the tribes and gives them the chance to use local native language to voice their grievances. The community based infiltration of media has helped where the Public broadcast service of India and the mainstream media has failed miserably to support the natives.

Community radio stations like Radio Dhimsa in Koraput uses the local native language of the Parajatribe ; Radio Kothagiri of Nilgiri hills uses the native language of the Thoda and Kota tribe inhabiting the region while Radio Mattoli functional in the Hilly Wayanad district of Kerala uses the language used by the Kuruchiya tribes. CGNetSwara's mobile media initiative for the Gond tribe of Chattisgarh also uses the native Gondi language and has resulted in positive social, cultural and economic change in the naxal ridden tribal belt adding confidence and meaning to the native personality.

Encouraging Regional media to cover more stories on the local native issues will allow more media space to the rural and aboriginal people.

The Indian media is not at all inclusive; this shortcoming has opened space for the creation of an exclusive media space-the participatory community media the forerunner. Citizen Journalism is in emergence to redress the glaring inadequacies and inequalities of the dominant media paradigm. This exclusive emerging media model upholds the responsibility of revitalizing indigenous languages of India, allowing the aboriginal languages to breathe with a hope. To be heard, recognized, considered and addressed. It is the beginning of the next cult in media- By the people. Of the people.For the people.

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