

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIA THROUGH FOLK AND MODERN COMMUNICATION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

For any development project to be successful in its fundamental terms, active participation of people is required instead of development being done to them and their environment. The mode of Communication needs to resonate with the concerned communities while also fulfilling the criteria of making the information presented in a way that could be comprehended easily. Traditional folk media has an essential role in indigenous communities and their Communication as it focuses on their own social and cultural environments. Bodo community is one of the largest indigenous tribes in the northeast part of India, and the community has its own culture and tradition. The Bodo community uses the help of traditional folk media to communicate amongst themselves on socio-cultural and political matters. The sustainability of coastal landscapes ensures the proper functioning of natural systems, as these places are essential components of the whole structure. The study considered 201 people from different occupational sectors, among which the survey was conducted to know the role and impact of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development of coastal areas of India and found that Distribution & Transmission of Information, Awareness, and Interaction, Engagement and Connection and Health and environment are some of the factors that determine important Role of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development. The study concludes that Communication has a significant impact on sustainable development.

KEYWORDS: Folk and Modern Communication, Sustainable Development, Coastal Areas, Bodoland, Traditional Folk Media.

Introduction

India is a diverse country with peasantry occupying a significant share of its population, and rural development requires adequate knowledge of folk culture, customs, and traditions. Using traditional media and employing these cultural resources that are locally relevant in the respective rural setting becomes an efficient and effective communication for developing rural locations and communities. Traditional media works better than other forms in rural areas as well. Folk media enables the rectification of communication barriers that could happen during the development as there is a sense of familiarity. This brings the local communities closer and makes them more involved in the development process (Chapke & Bhagat, 2004). Especially for culturally and socially significant events like marriages, traditional media is what helps in the maintenance of the system. In a community that is spread geographically in a way that does not have the required level of connectivity and communication tools, traditional media and folk values become the primary thread that ensures the proper functioning of society (Mushahary, 2021).

Traditional folk media, because of its close connection with the values and beliefs of the people and that too without exploiting them, makes for a widely used and effective form of Communication in rural areas. Traditional folk media does not involve complicating the message, instead simplifies it, and the people find it easier to comprehend and accept them. It can be a good tool for various interventions dealing with social issues like education, women empowerment, child protection, and Health and

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nutrition. It can also be used for broader causes like rural and agricultural development. The media has been sustained for years for its adaptable and reliable nature for rural communities (Arulmanikandan & Shubham, 2022).

In places where the voices of the indigenous communities are not vocalized correctly, traditional folk media becomes the carrier of change and progress by helping these communities communicate the social, political, and economic environment within and outside the factions. Traditional folk media has a well-grounded relationship with the tribal and other ethnic societies, presenting various locally relevant and famous mythology, philosophy, and other values and beliefs. This relationship facilitates a connection to the content in the performance, even if it is novel. Its presence and participation in the cultural richness of these societies also enable fast and comprehensible Communication with these communities (Mishra & Newme, 2015).

It is not only underdeveloped countries that utilize the benefits of sustainable development but also developed and developing countries. It has become not just a means to bring simplistic development but also to improve existing systems. What focuses on environmental issues now focuses on socio-political arenas, and countries and areas need to endorse sustainable development (Uche, Ikonne, & Udochu, 2020). The young generation must also be aware of its importance as they will have to keep the process going, and their participation is precious for sustainable development (Ruma Saha, Sharmila Kayal, 2019).

Literature Review

The influence of the internet and social media in every aspect of our lives has been reflected in its impact on building and popularizing sustainable tourism destinations. Actively promoting these destinations on social media platforms increases the destination's popularity and image and the accessibility to the destination significantly. Especially in economically underdeveloped regions, causes like combating poverty and women empowerment need to be prioritized as this forms an essential evaluation of the destination. At the same time, local issues must be rectified to attract a better inflow of visitors to the destination. For example, in the case of Assam, the ongoing insurgency issues keep visitors from not exploring the place freely (Chatterjee & Dsilva, 2021).

An analysis of the impact of social media usage and digital innovations on fisheries and seafood in Minamisoma city, Fukushima prefecture, Japan, inferred that social media facilitates an increase in the shared feeling of pride about the coastal landscape and life. This also helps in making industries like fishing thrive better. The space that social media provides helps these coastal communities reclaim their identity and have better connections among themselves. These factors have led to increased resilience in adverse situations in the past. Social media also assists in creating a platform for these communities to respond to negative perceptions about their communities and the coastal landscape. (Mabon & Kawabe, 2023).

Folk media is ingrained in societies as part of their public cultural gatherings, and there is a collectiveness about the presentation and the medium itself that creates a sense of connection with the audience, helping them to disseminate the content of the performance with ease. Traditional folk media speaks loudly to rural communities, and its effect on community development programs was studied in Sri Lanka by Jinadasa, 2011. Traditional folk media utilizes local cultural elements like storytelling, songs, and performances to convey the message, allowing effective communication and entertainment. This is a form of interactive Communication as well as the audience is also invested well in the presented content. As folk media is primarily exclusive to regional divisions, development projects aiming at regions using the respective appealing media can bring a massive shift in the development process. In agriculturally significant places, it is essential to encourage agricultural extension to enable development in the sector. Folk media plays an influential role in communicating these strategies to those involved. Prevalent in the coastal regions of Karnataka, the folk medium of "yakshagana" is used extensively for agricultural Communication. It has proven to be very effective as a communication tool. It works by having an impactful psychological impression that proceeds to translate the development process in ways easily understood and digested by the local masses (Padmanabha & Kumar, 2020). For the Bodo community of Assam, folk media is of great importance, and there is the organizing of folk competitions. Such events are done regularly for cultural events. The performances are an effort to preserve, and Bodo, an indigenous community, places great importance on the underlying significance of the connotations of these folk items. It also helps community members appreciate their cultural heritage (Barmahalia, 2022). The Bodo community is found to have extensive use of traditional folk media and its elements in awareness creation strategies, and this culture is still highly efficient in working out good Communication

with the community (Barmahalia, 2018). Assam has been focusing on sustainability for some time now, and it is still an ongoing process going deeper into other areas and indigenous communities. Assam has devised elaborate plans to incorporate sustainability into its projects, and the tribal communities of the state are also included in the process (Pratyush Paras Sarma & Sagarmoy Phukan, 2021).

Bodo community has been striving to unite the dispersed groups living in various regions of Assam and the world. This process was done by integrating traditional and cultural elements and conducting workshops and conferences to create cultural awareness and unite them. Connecting the community, not just a titular connection but in a larger sense, to various socio-political and cultural spaces strengthens the unity and solidarity of the community. In these processes, traditional folk media is found to have an immensely prioritized role by mediating the flow of information and content across barriers and demographics. The community's identity is traced to the folklore associated with it; thus, its acclamation also induces a feeling of unity (Barmahalia, 2012).

The familiarity in folk forms gives the information conveyed more credibility. Sustainable development visions in rural areas can be achieved by this as the active involvement and cooperation of the rural communities accelerate the process. Even in terms of socio-psychological impact, traditional folk media has a better influence on the people enabling an open-mindedness toward the process (Shaika, Lal, & Jonjua, 2021). Halim, 2016 analyzed the social Communication of sustainable coastal tourism in Karawang regency, Indonesia. It inferred that the local government's social communication efforts caused a slight improvement, and its effectiveness was needed to match the desired intent. The training and interactive initiatives proved ineffective as most of the local people needed to comprehend the vision and intent of the sustainable coastal tourism strategies and their influence on economic factors such as GDP and small-scale economic growth such as profits from sustainable tourism projects. Environmentally friendly activities were also incomprehensible due to barriers in Communication, and the local people did not know how to reduce adverse impacts on the coastal landscape. Communication is pivotal in the distribution of information as well as in promoting active participation and creating visions of unity and community. Sustainable development and its ideas are often challenging to get across to an audience, and according to the study by Richter et al., 2021, it was found that strategically planned and created scenarios that vocalize environmental issues are an effective way to get people to think through the ideas of sustainable development. Promoting scenarios instead of products creates a space for people to engage and contribute to sustainable behavior, which is shown to have a direct positive impact in increasing their involvement in actualizing these behaviors. People were more aware and considerate of their actions' consequences, and these scenarios' emotional impact also caused them to be active participants in sustainable development processes.

Folk media, in general, is perceived to influence communities to give out sustainable and preservation measures as the messages transmitted through these media have cultural values and beliefs incorporated in a latent way. The characteristics like accessibility, inclusivity, and cost-effectiveness make it ideal for Communication. Folk media, when used for environmental-specific purposes, yields amicable results as there is better content acceptance (Yemer, 2020). Folk media integration is essential in ensuring that people across social and cultural differences are accessible to information and other content, especially for illiterate people. Folkmedia, which comprises culturally important constituents like folk dances, songs, and even festivals, makes the assimilation of the intended message as the media uses signs and symbols that do not require the knowledge of any special education. (Iyyanar & Jebakumar, 2019) Folk media is also an efficient tool that can be used to address Health-related information, and information conveyed through folk media has a better reception among the people due to its deep-rooted hold on cultural values (Kumar, 2012).

Sustainable development is significant as it is the amalgamation of development, conservation, and informed choices without compromising future resources. It is essential to protect the ecosystem and prevent the escalation of anthropogenic harm to the environment. Technological advancements should be made without compromising the Health and well-being of the environment (Simionescu, Horváthová, Kovshun, & Kushnir, 2020). Sustainable development in destinations attracts better crowds of tourists, and the image of the destination formed becomes important for the process of choosing a destination (Sultan, Sharmin, Badulescu, Gavrilut, & Xue, 2021). Media has been an important tool for publicity since the time of its inception, but it has also become a tool for the promotion of sustainable development and as well (Hysa, Zdonek, & Karasek, 2022).

Coastal regions also become areas of concentrated socio-political as well as economic focus as it yields a lot of benefits for each of the industries. Sustainable development of coastal regions needs to be prioritized for these reasons and for the preservation of marine life as well as the resources (Neumann, Ott, & Kenchington, 2017). It is not just the coastal landscape that needs to be monitored and worked on but also the external environment, especially the immediate one needs to be monitored as well. Issues like inflow of industrial effluents into the coastal landscape are problems that need to be worked on from outside the coastal environment (Gourbesville, 2004).

Objectives of Study

- To measure the different factors of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development of coastal areas of India.
- To ascertain the impact of Communication in the sustainable development.

Research Methodology

The study had considered 201 people from different occupational sectors among which the survey was conducted to know the role and impact of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development of coastal areas of India. The data of this study was collected through “Judgmental Sampling Method.” The data was analyzed by “Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA)” and “Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA)” tools to get the results.

Data Analysis, Interpretation and Findings

Table 1 shows the respondent's general details. 71.1% of the respondents are males and 28.9% are female. 34.3% are below 35 years of age, 40.8% are between 35-47 years of age and 24.9% are above 47 years of age. 25.9% are high school and below, 43.8% are intermediate & graduate and the rest 30.3% have qualification of higher education. 25.9% of the respondents are in agriculture, 33.8% are salaried, 35.3% are in business and the rest 5.0% are in some other occupation. 25.9% of the respondents are in the tourism sector, 32.8% are in in hospitality, 35.8% in health care, 20.4% in environment and the rest 14.9% are another occupational sector.

Table 1: General Details

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	143	71.1
Female	58	28.9
Total	201	100
Age in Years		
Below 35	69	34.3
35-47	82	40.8
Above 47	50	24.9
Total	201	100
Qualification		
High school and below	52	25.9
Intermediate and graduate	88	43.8
Higher education	61	30.3
Total	201	100
Occupation		
Agriculture	52	25.9
Salaried	68	33.8
Business	71	35.3
Others	10	5.0
Total	201	100
Occupational Sector		
Tourism	52	25.9
Hospitality	66	32.8
Health care	72	35.8
Environment	41	20.4
Others	30	14.9
Total	201	100

Factor Analysis

Table 2 Shows the “KMO and Bartlett’s Test”. KMO value found is .826.

Table 2: “KMO and Bartlett’s Test”

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.826
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2002.635
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

Table 3 shows that there are 4 factors. This explains a total of 75% of the variance. The variance explained by the first factor is 21.405% followed by the second Factor with 19.747%, third Factor having 19.336% and fourth factor explains 14.429% of variance.

Table 3: “Total Variance Explained”

“Component”	“Initial Eigenvalues”			“Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings”		
	“Total”	“% of Variance”	Cumulative %	“Total”	“% of Variance”	Cumulative %
1	6.220	41.465	41.465	3.211	21.405	21.405
2	2.047	13.648	55.113	2.962	19.747	41.152
3	1.653	11.018	66.130	2.900	19.336	60.488
4	1.393	9.286	75.417	2.239	14.929	75.417
5	.675	4.501	79.918			
6	.606	4.042	83.960			
7	.525	3.502	87.462			
8	.374	2.493	89.956			
9	.329	2.192	92.147			
10	.267	1.782	93.929			
11	.253	1.684	95.613			
12	.230	1.532	97.145			
13	.177	1.179	98.323			
14	.140	.935	99.258			
15	.111	.742	100.000			

Figure 1 is the graphical presentation of the Eigen values obtained from the Total Variance Explained table.

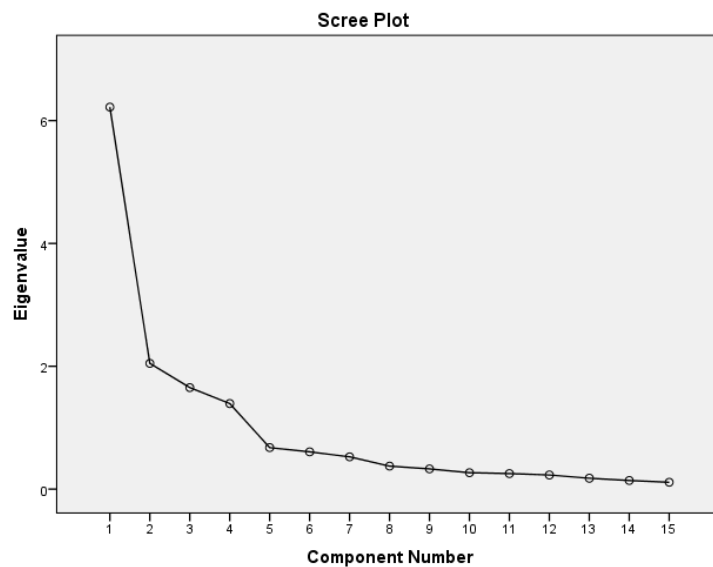


Figure 1: Scree Plot

Table 5 presents the factors and the corresponding items. 1st factor is Distribution & Transmission of Information which includes the variables like different modes of Communication provides current information, helps to observe, interact, and exchange information, informs people regarding workshops and training and Modes of Communication helps in marketing. 2nd factor is Awareness and Interaction, and its associated variables are Communication helps to increase social consciousness, help service providers to connect with other investors, helps global interaction as an effective source of information and spreads educational and agricultural awareness along with Health, environment, and other social issues. 3rd factor is named as Engagement and Connection, which includes the variables like Communication is an effective way to engage people in sustainable development, helps people to stay connected with the world, increase brand awareness among potential consumers and helps people to express their views on community development. 4th factor is Health and environment, and its associated variables are Communication helps people to transform their lifestyle, promote go green programs to save environment and Influencers encourage people regarding their Health and environment.

Table 5: Factors and Variables

S. No.	“Statements”	“Factor Loading”	“Factor Reliability”
	Distribution & Transmission of Information		.899
1.	Communication provides current information	.881	
2.	Helps to observe, interact and exchange information	.866	
3.	Informs people regarding workshops and training	.838	
4.	Modes of Communication helps in marketing	.794	
	Awareness and Interaction		.877
5.	Communication helps to increase social consciousness	.890	
6.	Help service providers to connect with other investors	.828	
7.	Helps global interaction as effective source of information	.812	
8.	Spreads educational and agricultural awareness along with Health, environment, and other social issues	.693	
	Engagement and Connection		.852
9.	Communication is an effective way to engage people in sustainable development	.819	
10.	Helps people to stay connected with the world	.818	
11.	Increase brand awareness among potential consumers	.778	
12.	Helps people to express their views on community development	.742	
	Health and Environment		.830
13.	Communication helps people to transform their lifestyle	.890	
14.	Promote go green programs to save environment	.867	
15.	Influencers encourage people regarding their Health and environment	.556	

Development of Factors

Table 6 shows the reliability which is 0.897 of all the 15 items that includes the variables related to Role of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development.

Table 6: “Reliability Statistics”

“Cronbach's Alpha”	“N of Items”
.897	15

In Multiple Regression analysis, the value of Adjusted R square is 0.512 with 50% of the variation (Table7).

Table 7: “Model Summary”

“Model”	“R”	“R Square”	“Adjusted R Square”	“Std. Error of the Estimate”
1	.715a	.512	.502	.72818

a. Predictors: (Constant), Distribution & Transmission of Information, Awareness and Interaction, Engagement and Connection and Health and environment

Table 8: “ANOVA^a”

“Model”	“Sum of Squares”	“df”	“Mean Square”	“F”	“Sig.”	
1	“Regression”	108.829	4	27.207	51.311	.000 ^b
	Residual	103.927	196	.530		
	Total	212.756	200			

DV: Impact of Communication in the sustainable development
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Distribution & Transmission of Information, Awareness and Interaction, Engagement and Connection and Health and environment

Table 8 and 9 show that significance value is less than 0.05 which reflects that one or more of the IDVs significantly influences the DV.”

Table 9: “Coefficients”

“Model”	“Unstandardized Coefficients”		“Standardized Coefficients”	“t”	“Sig.”
	“B”	“Std. Error”	“Beta”		
(Constant)	3.368	.051		65.577	.000
Distribution & Transmission of Information	.699	.051	.678	13.576	.000
Awareness and Interaction	.111	.051	.107	2.147	.033
Engagement and Connection	.178	.051	.173	3.464	.001
Health and environment	.107	.051	.104	2.078	.039

DV: Impact of Communication in the sustainable development

Table 9 and Fig, 2show that all the factors namely Distribution & Transmission of Information, Awareness and Interaction, Engagement and Connection and Health and environment are having significant impact on sustainable development. Highest impact is shown by Distribution & Transmission of Information with beta value 0.678 followed by Engagement and Connection (0.173), Awareness and Interaction (0.107) and Health and Environment with beta value 0.104.

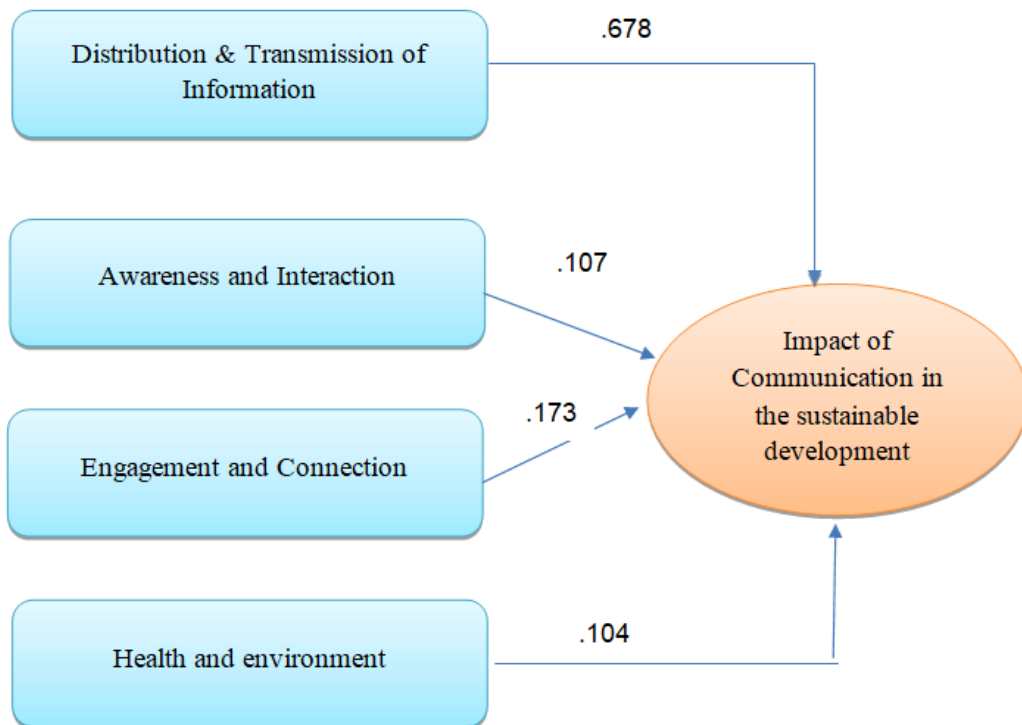


Figure 2: Impact of Communication in the Sustainable Development

Conclusion

The study has explored different Role of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development of coastal areas of India and found that Distribution & Transmission of Information, Awareness and Interaction, Engagement and Connection and Health and environment are some of the factors that determines important Role of Folk and Modern Communication in the sustainable development where Communication provides current information, helps to increase social consciousness, Communication is an effective way to engage people in sustainable development, helps people to transform their life style and Promote go green programs to save environment. The study concludes that there is a significant impact of Communication in the sustainable development.

It is no doubt that mass media has developed so much that the world runs on the information that is being disseminated by newspapers, television, and other digital media, but it is equally important to make sure that all of the population is made accessible to this information. Traditional folk media is highly important in this aspect as it enables people and communities from rural areas to participate in this discourse of information sharing and intake even across language and other barriers. The folk traditions of the community like folk dances and songs let information be conveyed to their audience effectively. In rural places where language and literacy take a different definition than from other contrasting settings, traditional folk media is used to create awareness of issues, rights, and even intercultural aspects of communities. Promoting the local industries and culture over social media as well as over traditional media causes greater influence on the increase in visibility.

Sustainable development goals are the future of every industry and country, and there is a high need to promote and spread awareness about the advantages of sustainable development across regions. Sustainable coastal management and development requires proper resource management, resource quality, technical support, financial investments as well as productivity. Well-coordinated dialogue between coastal management and the external environment precedes a well-planned integration of effective factors for sustainable coastal development.

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