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An Empirical Investigation Centered on Indigenous Communities: A Survey to Virtual Agitation

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ABSTRACT

Social media, which facilitates communication and brings people from all over the world together, is a really important piece of technology in today's world. Due to the widespread use of social media in India today, including Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram, the country is now catching up to the rest of the globe. India has a large population, therefore, thanks to 4G technology and the general public's addiction to the Internet, Internet speed has improved nowadays. Today, every citizen in the nation has a smartphone and a social media account. In this case, the tribal people are competing with India's technologically advanced population on social media by articulating their rights in a very beautiful manner. In the previous ten years, social media in India has undergone significant development, as can be seen, if we pay close attention. Additionally, this move is political. various political stances via social media to make people in one's community, caste, religion, and caste more aware of social perspectives and their rights while also disseminating this information through social media. Other significant issues deserve discussion, such as the fact that over the past few years, a number of mainstream TV media outlets in India have demonstrated that it is preferable to inform the tribals of the absence of crucial news from the mainstream media because we understand them. Many people also observed that their news did not appear on the newspaper's front page. In order to distribute news consistently, they developed their own news channel using alternative print, TV, and social media outlets and made individuals in their own community and other communities aware of it while doing so. Social media is used to spread a variety of messages to the public, including disadvantages, complaints, demonstrations, and other messages.

Keywords: Tribal, India, Adivasi, Social media, Agitation, Protests.

I. Introduction

In the current Indian setting, social media has made a significant impact, even in the most isolated tribal regions. Its popularity has been steadily rising over time and has reached a level

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that is acceptable to the general populace. Through social media, the news may be exchanged through writing or video production, and a variety of perspectives can be added on top of it. Even in many cases, social media reaches a sizable indigenous population with news that does not appear in big publications. So, in this instance, we can conclude that social media is a very effective communication tool.

News of various social and political ideas in the tribal sector is being disseminated by social media. At the same time, it is noted that a sizable portion of the tribal community is embracing it. Youthful, middle-aged, and senior Aboriginal males are prominent within this sizable group. In this instance, several native women are seen to hold similar political ideas. However, in that instance, the native women are highly educated and come from relatively affluent families. Adivasi women who live in typical households are not frequently visible on social media debating political ideologies. The public broadcast of an indigenous topic through multiple videos or Facebook Live chats is one of the most frequently seen practices. In this instance, people attentively hear the message and then respond with various viewpoints. This opens up a dialogue between the public and the administrative representatives.

Of course, it is true that any breaking news instantly spreads to everyone and goes viral on social media. Online news travels considerably more quickly than offline news, which takes time to catch on. But one thing that has been observed in India today is that if there are calls made through social media to get people together, significant numbers of people come together without any leadership role. Let's say there are numerous tribal meetings or road meetings. However, their concerns and beliefs do desire to come together.

People in modern India can learn about the daily issues that Indian tribal people experience, but frequently through social media. Through social media, even the issues faced by Indian tribals in various regions of the country are brought to light, and in many cases, justice is sought by utilizing hashtags. Perhaps we observe indigenous people being relocated, or perhaps they are being exploited for whatever reason. Through social media, all daily issues are brought to light. They point to issues like fake ST certificates or college and university admissions as examples of racial prejudice in social media. Then it is officially documented as proof. Additionally, YouTube transmits news via many tribal news channels from various regions of India. The fact that these tribal news networks transmit in their native tribal languages is extremely important. This enables people to comprehend the languages and the main points of the news, enabling them to fight such movements.

Users can use hashtags to communicate their ideas on a number of well-known social media

sites, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Over the past two to three years, tribal people in India have observed this trend and have voiced their thoughts using hashtags like #Save Adivasi and #Adivasi lives matter. As a result, over the past four to five years, we have seen Indian tribal people use social media to reach out to different ministers, leaders, and government officials in an effort to have their varied demands met in a timely manner.

The emergence of online social media platforms has fundamentally changed how marginalised populations express their problems, rally support, and promote change in recent years. Tribal tribes have discovered fresh ways to express their outrage at society injustices and look for answers in these communities. Significant attention has been paid to the interaction between tribal activities, online social media demonstrations, and the ensuing hunt for workable solutions. This introduction lays the groundwork for understanding how online social media is used by tribal activists to address issues that affect tribal communities.

With the rise of social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, tribal communities now have a virtual forum through which to communicate their experiences, tales, and goals. These forums have developed into potent instruments for bringing attention to the challenges of tribal people, amplifying their voices, and undermining established power systems. Tribal activists now have more influence thanks to social media's accessibility to information and communication, which enables them to participate in meaningful dialogue with people all over the world about problems that concern their communities.

Online tribal activities and protests can take many different forms, including as hashtag campaigns, virtual gatherings, online petitions, and the development of multimedia content. With the help of popular hashtags like #IndigenousRights, #TribalSolidarity, and #LandBack, supporters have been organised and the problems of tribal groups have come to light. Social media platforms are used by activists not only to spread awareness but also to create networks of support, encourage conversation, and record incidents of injustice. Tribal activism now includes digital storytelling as a crucial component for highlighting the various cultures, customs, and challenges of indigenous peoples.

Online social media activism is a potent instrument for mobilisation and expression, but its effects extend beyond the virtual world. Social media-based tribal protests and activities have sparked actual actions and given change momentum. Tribal activists have been successful in influencing policy modifications, legislative reforms, and grassroots activities focused at resolving issues that tribal people face by utilising their online presence. In order to mobilise support for practical solutions to problems like land rights, cultural preservation, environmental

protection, and social justice, they have effectively interacted with policymakers, non-governmental organisations, and the general public.

The convergence of tribal activities, protests on social media websites, and the search for practical problem solutions has emerged as a key aspect of modern tribal activism. This introduction offers the groundwork for evaluating how social media might empower tribal communities, looking at the many methods of online protest, and comprehending the possible effects of these actions on resolving the issues that tribal groups confront. Tribal activists work to close the gap between online activism and real-world change by utilising the power of online connectivity, and they do so in an effort to create a society that is more just and equitable for indigenous peoples.

(A) Literature Review:

Tribal tribes and other marginalized communities now have new opportunity to organize and amplify their voices thanks to the advent of internet social media platforms. Social media platforms provide forums for marginalized populations to communicate their stories, take collective action, and challenge prevailing narratives, according to studies by Castells (2012) and Senft and Baym (2015). These platforms allow tribal activists to interact with a global audience and raise awareness of their concerns without having to deal with the conventional information gatekeepers.

On online social media platforms, tribal activities and protests take on a variety of shapes, each with its own distinctive features and effects. Hashtag campaigns against the Dakota Access Pipeline, like the #NoDAPL movements, have garnered a lot of traction, mobilizing support and sparking public dialogue (Dalton, 2017). Tribal activists have ways to organize their demands and reach a larger audience, including internet petitions and virtual rallies (Wulfhorst, 2020). A well-known method for promoting empathy and increasing knowledge of tribal issues is digital storytelling, which includes films, photographs, and personal anecdotes (Tufekci, 2017). In addition, social media websites make it easier to build online communities and networks of support, which empower tribal activists to develop partnerships and pool resources (Narayan et al., 2020).

One of the main areas of inquiry is the impact of tribal activities and protests held via online social media on practical problem-solving. Numerous studies have looked into how tribal communities might benefit from online activism in concrete ways. For instance, Chakraborty and Bosse (2019) investigated how tribal activists in India successfully mobilised online to push for the adoption of land-related government policies. The revival of indigenous sovereignty

movements and the reclamation of ancestral territories in North America were both fueled by social media activism, according to study by West (2019). These studies show how grassroots efforts to address issues affecting indigenous people can result in legislative modifications, legal reforms, and grassroots activities.

There are many opportunities for tribal activists to engage in social media activism online, but there are also difficulties and restrictions to take into account. Concerns about the digital gap have been raised in studies, where it is possible that tribal populations have limited access to technology and connectivity (Boyd, 2012). Concerning issues include the propagation of false information, cyberbullying, and the possible co-optation of indigenous voices (Cabrera and Miller, 2020). Additionally, there is ongoing discussion on the effectiveness of online activism in producing long-term, sustainable solutions, with some academics doubting its capacity to result in noticeable change in the real world (Vromen et al., 2015).

(B) Statement of Problem:

Tribal activities and protests conducted through online social media platforms in the Indian context aim to address the challenges faced by tribal communities and seek solutions to real-world problems. However, several key issues and challenges specific to the Indian context arise in this context that needs to be acknowledged and addressed.

Marginalization and Disempowerment: Tribal communities in India have long faced marginalization and disempowerment due to historical, social, and economic factors. This marginalization affects their access to resources, land rights, education, and healthcare, among other basic necessities. Tribal activities and protests through online social media aim to raise awareness about these issues, but the challenge lies in addressing the systemic barriers that perpetuate their marginalization.

Legal and Policy Frameworks: In India, tribal communities are protected under constitutional provisions and laws such as the Fifth Schedule and the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA). However, the implementation and enforcement of these legal and policy frameworks have been inadequate, resulting in continued violations of tribal rights. The challenge lies in utilizing online social media activism to advocate for the effective implementation of existing laws and the creation of new policies that address the specific needs of tribal communities.

Land Rights and Displacement: Land rights are a critical issue for tribal communities in India, as their ancestral lands are often subjected to encroachment, acquisition, and displacement due to infrastructure projects, mining, and industrial development. Online social media activism

seeks to highlight these injustices, but the challenge lies in securing and protecting tribal land rights and ensuring fair compensation and rehabilitation for displaced communities.

Cultural Preservation and Identity: Tribal communities in India have unique cultural practices, languages, and traditions that are at risk of erosion due to assimilation, cultural appropriation, and rapid modernization. Online social media platforms offer opportunities for cultural preservation and the revitalization of indigenous knowledge systems. However, the challenge lies in striking a balance between sharing cultural heritage online and safeguarding it from commodification, misrepresentation, and distortion.

Intersectionality and Solidarity: Tribal communities in India often face intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization based on factors such as gender, caste, and religion. It is essential to recognize the intersectionality of these identities and foster solidarity between different marginalized groups. The challenge lies in ensuring inclusive and intersectional approaches to online social media activism, amplifying the voices of all marginalized communities, and addressing the unique challenges faced by tribal women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized groups within tribal communities.

Addressing these problem statements and challenges in the Indian context requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders, including tribal communities, activists, policymakers, and civil society organizations. It necessitates the creation of inclusive legal and policy frameworks, capacity-building initiatives to empower tribal communities, and platforms for meaningful dialogue and collaboration. Additionally, there is a need for cultural sensitivity and ethical considerations in online social media activism to ensure the preservation and representation of tribal identities and traditions.

II. COMPARISON ON VIRTUAL WORLD AGITATION AND REAL WORLD AGITATION

Aspect	Virtual Protests	Real-World Protests
Reach and	transcends local boundaries and	frequently attracts a lot of media and
Visibility	reaches a bigger and more varied	local community interest. may have
	audience. spreading knowledge and	trouble reaching people outside of the
	raising awareness on a worldwide	nearby area.
	scale.	

Mobilization and Participation	provides wider participation and ease of mobilization. a quick and inexpensive way to organize and mobilize support.	Some people may not be able to participate because of distance, financial constraints, or other commitments.
Tangible Impact and Policy Change	difficulties in converting internet support into tangible policy improvements. Lack of physical presence and immediate impact to compel officials to act.	played a significant part in influencing policy change and obtaining concrete results in the past. influential in starting a conversation and applying pressure to lawmakers.
Challenges and Risks	Internet connection issues, the propagation of misinformation, and the possible co-optation of indigenous voices all contribute to the digital divide.	physical assault, government repression, and restrictions on the right to assemble in public.
Combining Strengths	Use online demonstrations to garner attention and support. Utilize protests in the real world to challenge decision-makers directly.	Recognize both platforms' advantages while tackling their disadvantages to maximize impact.

(A) Virtual World Agitation:

Tribal rights protests through social media platforms in India offer several advantages in advocating for the rights of tribal communities. Some of the key advantages include:

- i) Wide Reach and Amplification: A large and convenient venue for reaching a global audience is social media. indigenous rights demonstrations have the power to educate a large audience, even those who are not in the surrounding area, about the difficulties encountered by indigenous populations. The possibility for garnering support and inspiring group action is increased by having access to a large and diversified audience.
- ii) Cost-Effective and Efficient Communication: Platforms on social media are powerful and inexpensive communication instruments. They make it possible for tribal activists to communicate updates, news and calls to action in real-time without having to spend a lot of money. Social media can let tribal people and communities

- participate in protests for their rights more broadly by removing obstacles such as a lack of funding and geographic restrictions.
- iii) Engagement and Interactive Dialogue: With the help of social media, two-way communication is made possible, allowing tribal communities to interact with supporters, decision-makers, and the general public. Tribal activists may answer questions, dispel myths, and promote meaningful conversations through comments, shares, and direct messaging. Relationships are forged, awareness is spread, and support for movements promoting tribal rights is mobilised as a result of this involvement.
- iv) Viral Potential and Online Activism: Social media has the power to convey messages quickly and reach a large audience in a short amount of time, making tribal rights demonstrations go viral. Tribal rights-related content has the potential to be very popular and draw the interest of media outlets, influencers, and decisionmakers. Tribal rights demonstrations become more visible and powerful thanks to its viral potential, amplifying their message and increasing pressure for reform.
- v) Building Online Communities and Networks: Tribal rights-focused online communities and networks can be created thanks to social media platforms. These communities offer venues for indigenous members and activists to interact, exchange stories, knowledge, and resources. Tribal rights demonstrations can increase cooperation, solidarity, and group action among various groups fighting for tribal rights in India via creating internet networks.
- vi) Documentation and Archiving: Social media is an effective tool for recording and preserving protests for tribal rights. Social media platforms allow people to contribute images, films, and testimonies that document the hardships that tribal tribes confront. This data enables a fuller knowledge of the difficulties and advancements in the struggle for tribal rights by serving as proof, advocacy tools, and historical records.
- vii) International Solidarity and Pressure: Social media links Indian tribal rights demonstrations with international groups and social justice campaigners. It enables the development of global networks of solidarity, drawing backing and support from people, groups, and institutions all across the world. By increasing global awareness of tribal rights issues and promoting change, this worldwide solidarity can put pressure on Indian authorities.

(B) Real World Agitation:

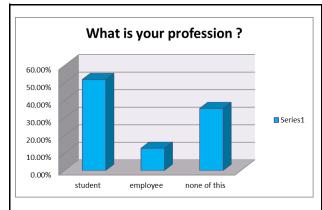
- i) Visibility and Awareness: Tribal rights protests bring attention to the challenges faced by tribal communities, raising awareness among the general public, media, and policymakers. By highlighting the specific issues and struggles faced by tribal communities, these protests create a platform for public discourse and facilitate a better understanding of the unique circumstances and needs of tribal populations.
- ii) Mobilizing Support: Tribal rights protests serve as rallying points to mobilize support from diverse sections of society. They bring together activists, scholars, NGOs, and other stakeholders who are committed to addressing the injustices faced by tribal communities. Through solidarity networks, these protests amplify the voices of tribal communities, enhancing their influence and creating momentum for change.
- iii) Advocacy and Policy Change: Tribal rights protests play a crucial role in advocating for policy change and legal reforms. They draw attention to gaps in existing laws and policies that perpetuate marginalization and discrimination against tribal communities. By demanding legislative and policy reforms, these protests push for a more inclusive legal framework that recognizes and safeguards the rights of tribal communities.
- iv) Media Coverage: Tribal rights protests often attract media attention, allowing for wider dissemination of the issues faced by tribal communities. Media coverage helps in reaching a larger audience, including those who may not be directly involved or aware of tribal rights issues. The media coverage also holds authorities accountable and puts pressure on policymakers to address the concerns raised by tribal communities.
- v) Solidarity and Coalition Building: Tribal rights protests provide a platform for building solidarity and coalition among different marginalized groups. They help forge alliances with other social justice movements, such as Dalit rights, environmental activism, and human rights advocacy. By uniting with other groups fighting against systemic oppression, tribal communities can leverage collective strength and work towards comprehensive social change.
- vi) Empowerment and Self-Expression: Tribal rights protests empower tribal communities by providing them with a space to voice their concerns and assert their rights. These protests help tribal individuals and communities regain agency and

assert their identities, challenging the stereotypes and prejudices that they often face. Through collective action, tribal communities can develop a sense of empowerment and resilience in their struggle for justice.

vii) Community Building and Networking: Tribal rights protests serve as platforms for community building and networking within tribal populations. They provide opportunities for tribal individuals and communities to come together, exchange experiences, and share strategies for addressing common challenges. These connections foster a sense of solidarity, mutual support, and collective action within tribal communities.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

Based on a random sample of 80 respondents from West Bengal, India, the data was gathered to understand tribal activism on social media in real life. The gathered information was analyzed, and bar charts containing 10 questions were created.



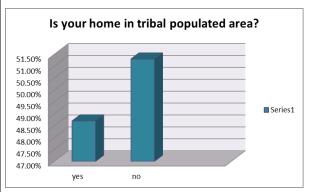
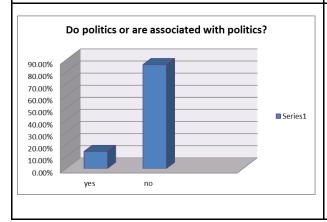


Fig.1 According to the respondents, 12.7% are service members, and 51.9% are students.

Fig. 2 A total of 48.7% of respondents claim to be from a tribally populated location, whereas the remaining respondents do not.



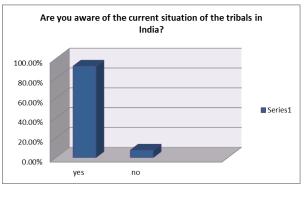
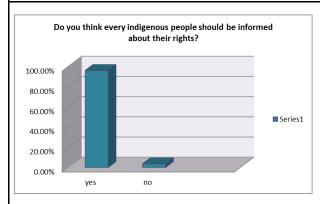


Fig. 3 85.90% of tribal members claimed they were not involved in politics; however, the remaining group is politically active.

Fig. 4 92.4% of respondents claim to be aware of the current conditions facing the tribal people in India.



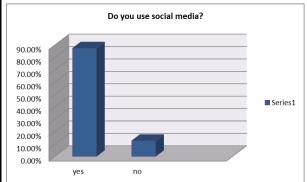
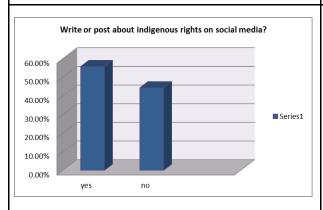


Fig. 5 96.2% of respondents agreed that all tribal members should be aware of their rights.

Fig. 6 Of the respondents, 87.3% use social media.



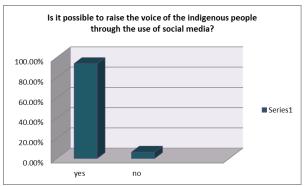
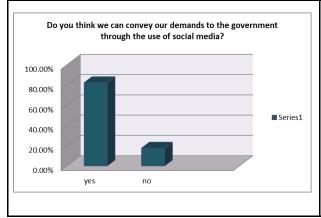


Fig. 7 Only 55.7% of the respondents write or post on social media about tribal rights.

Fig. 8 According to 93.7% of respondents, Indian tribal people can use social media to communicate their opinions.



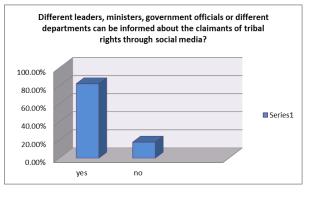


Fig. 9 More than 80% of respondents concur | Fig. 10 More than 80% of respondents concur that using social media will allow them to communicate their demands the governments.

that they can use social media to alert the various government agencies and departments of their demands.

IV. RESULTS

According to earlier empirical research studies, students and youth from Indian tribal communities make up the majority of the respondents in our survey, whereas fewer adults who are employed have voiced their opinions. However, tribally populated places were home to the majority of people who cast political ballots. Additionally, we have seen that the majority of students and young people in the community are politically active and knowledgeable about the current state of tribals in India. Workers and youngsters agreed that each tribal group should be made aware of their rights, though. Social media is used by both adults and children, and many individuals publish and write on indigenous rights there. Both believe that social media usage may be used to amplify the voices of the tribals communicate their requests to the government and other government ministries.

V. CONCLUSION

The combination of online social media platforms used for tribal rights activism in India and offline participation has grown into a potent force for promoting the rights and welfare of indigenous populations. Online social media has given people a forum to be heard, spread awareness, rally support, and create worldwide networks of solidarity. On the other side, realworld engagement brings a physical presence, disruption, and immediate pressure on legislators. A more inclusive and just society that respects and maintains the rights of tribal tribes in India may be possible because to the synergy between these two fields, which has the potential to have a long-lasting effect, encourage policy change, and pave the way.

(A) Suggestions:

Following is a list of some of the recommendations that are urgently needed in light of the data analysis results:

1. People who attempt to develop their social and political ideologies on social media have been halted by the other side by using numerous slurs in many instances when the opposing ideology arises. Our only advice in this situation is to always speak politely and to accurately express one's opinions in relation to other viewers.

- 2. It happens frequently that tribal disputes are brought up on social media, but they are never resolved; instead, the dispute gets politicized. And different parties are accountable for these. In this sense, our message is that everyone should take action to create a healthy society by tackling the issue at its source.
- **3.** Different Indian tribal issues should not be kept to social media, but rather brought to the actual world and addressed in a suitable manner.

VI. SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES

- i) Legal Framework and Policy Analysis: Investigating the gaps, contradictions, and potential areas for change in India's current legal system and tribal rights regulations might be helpful. Insights into the difficulties experienced by tribal communities can be gained by examining the efficacy and application of laws and policies pertaining to land rights, forest rights, education, healthcare, and socioeconomic development. This analysis can also serve as a reference for future policy proposals.
- ii) Impact Assessment of Tribal Rights Activism: It is possible to determine how well tribal rights initiatives are working to bring about meaningful change for tribal communities by evaluating their effects and results in both the actual world and the virtual one. Future activism and advocacy initiatives can benefit by evaluating the achievements, difficulties, and lessons acquired from particular protests, campaigns, and legal interventions.
- iii) Role of Social Media in Tribal Rights Movements: Examining the function and effects of social media outlets on tribal rights movements might offer insightful information on the dynamics of online activism. Effective digital strategies for advancing tribal rights concerns can be developed by researching the reach, engagement, and mobilisation potential of social media campaigns as well as the impact they have on policy change, public perception, and the empowerment of tribal groups.
- iv) Socio-Economic Impacts and Livelihood Challenges: Our understanding of the difficulties faced by indigenous groups can be improved by looking at the socioeconomic effects of development initiatives, land acquisition, and displacement on such populations. Issues including lost livelihoods, cultural disturbance, forced migration, and the interaction between economic development and indigenous rights might be the subject of research. More inclusive and equitable development practices may result from looking at sustainable development alternatives that respect tribal rights and protect cultural assets.
 - v) Intersectionality and Tribal Rights: A comprehensive knowledge of the difficulties

experienced by tribal communities can be obtained by examining the intersections between tribal rights and other social justice movements, such as gender rights, caste-based discrimination, environmental justice, and human rights. Research can show how these problems are interconnected and how tackling various oppressive and marginalizing practices require teamwork.

vi) Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Heritage Preservation: Understanding the cultural resilience and identity of tribal communities requires research into the preservation and revival of indigenous knowledge systems, traditional practices, and cultural legacy. Research may examine the preservation of traditional knowledge, the effects of globalization on indigenous cultures, and the creation of methods for safeguarding cultural assets.

vii)Comparative Studies and International Perspectives: The Indian context can benefit greatly from comparative studies that look at tribal rights movements and initiatives in other nations. To generate ideas and tactics that are specifically tailored to the Indian context for defending and advancing tribal rights, it can be helpful to research international frameworks, policies, and best practices linked to indigenous rights.

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