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Exploring the impact of social media on Tribal Enterprises in Jharkhand: A qualitative approach in the context of the New Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

Introduction: Known as the "land of forests," Jharkhand established itself in 2000 to cater to the socio-economic needs and cultural identity of its predominantly tribal population. Despite its rich cultural heritage and significant natural resources, tribal communities in Jharkhand face challenges including economic marginalization and limited access to technology. This study investigates the impact of social media on tribal enterprises in light of India's New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Objectives: The primary objectives of this study were to understand tribal enterprises' current Social Media usage, investigate perceived benefits and challenges, examine alignment with NEP 2020 objectives, and identify strategies to optimize Social Media's impact on tribal enterprises.

Methodology: Employing a qualitative research approach, this study utilized in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations. Secondary sources such as academic journals, books, policy documents, and internet articles supplemented primary data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Social Media on tribal enterprises.

Findings: The study reveals that Social Media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram are increasingly integral to the business practices of tribal enterprises, providing significant market access and opportunities for cultural preservation. However, challenges such as the digital divide, limited digital literacy, and infrastructural inadequacies limit the full potential of these digital tools.

Conclusion: Social media serves as a vital tool for economic empowerment and cultural preservation among tribal enterprises in Jharkhand. The NEP 2020 makes a significant contribution by fostering digital literacy and inclusion, which are critical for effectively leveraging social media. Continued efforts to improve digital infrastructure and literacy are critical for tribal communities' sustainable development and empowerment.

Keywords: Jharkhand, tribal enterprises, social media, economic empowerment, cultural preservation

1. Introduction

In 2000, Jharkhand was formed from southern Bihar, driven by the distinct cultural identity and socio-economic needs of its tribal populations. The movement arose from issues like resource exploitation, underrepresentation, and economic marginalization. (Srivastava, 2021) [13]. Jharkhand's tribal communities, including the Munda, Santhal, Ho, Kharia, and Oraon, maintain a deep spiritual and economic connection to their natural environment, relying on agriculture, forest produce, and hunting. Their cultural and religious practices are closely tied to the forests and rivers of the region.

(Kumar, 2019) [14]. Tribal communities in Jharkhand face significant socio-economic challenges, including poverty, limited education, and healthcare, exacerbated by resource exploitation, displacement, and environmental degradation. These issues have intensified demands for autonomy and control over local resources. (Mishra & Patel, 2018) [8].

Jharkhand's tribal heritage is rich in traditional music, dance, art, and religious practices, with festivals like Sarhul, Karma, and Sohrai reflecting their deep connection to nature.

Ghosh (2020) [2] emphasizes the importance of preserving tribal cultural traditions in Jharkhand to maintain their identity amidst modernization. However, challenges like land rights, displacement, and lack of political representation persist. The introduction of digital tools and social media is seen as both an opportunity for economic empowerment and a threat to traditional ways of life. (Roy, 2022) [11].

Source: http://www.jharkhand.gov.in/about

Fig 1: Location Map of Jharkhand

Tribal enterprises in Jharkhand, including handicrafts, agriculture, and forest produce collection, are vital for both preserving cultural identity and providing livelihoods in regions with limited formal employment opportunities. (Majumder, 2021) [15]. Jharkhand is a major mineral producer in India, with rich deposits of coal, copper, bauxite, iron ore, and more. Over 29% of the state is covered by forests, making it one of India's most forested regions. Jharkhand's tribal population, comprising 26.2% of the state's total in 2011, was predominantly rural, with 91% living in villages. Khunti and Gumla districts are tribal-dominated, with ST populations of 73% and 69%, respectively.

1.1 Tribal Viewpoints on Social Media
Social media adoption among tribal communities in Jharkhand has revolutionized traditional business practices, enabling entrepreneurs to leverage digital platforms for growth and cultural expression despite initial skepticism. (Singh & Verma, 2020) [12].

1.2 Market Access and Customer Interaction
Tribal entrepreneurs use social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to reach global markets, engage with customers, and enhance their products through feedback, significantly increasing their sales and market reach.

1.3 Preservation and Promotion of Tribal Culture
Social media empowers artisans to share their traditions and stories, enhancing their crafts and fostering community pride while promoting economic growth and cultural preservation. (Gupta & Dey, 2019) [3].

1.4 Empowerment Through Digital Literacy
Digital literacy initiatives under NEP 2020 are empowering tribal communities by enhancing their social and economic independence through the adoption of digital tools for entrepreneurship and growth. (Roy & Lal, 2020) [10].

1.5 Challenges and Concerns
Despite a positive outlook, concerns about the digital divide, privacy, and social media misuse persist, with limited internet access in rural Jharkhand posing a major barrier. Additionally, education on digital security remains essential to safeguard businesses and personal data. (Mehta & Saxena, 2019) [7].
Jharkhand, located in eastern India, is known for its dense forests covering 29% of its area, rich in natural resources but posing challenges for development. The region is home to tribal communities like the Santhal, Munda, and Oraon, who have traditionally depended on the forests for their livelihoods.
The geographical isolation of tribal areas has limited economic opportunities due to underdeveloped infrastructure, such as roads and telecommunications. Innovative approaches, like mobile technology and internet access, are essential for leveraging available resources and fostering economic development in these regions. (Roy & Lal, 2020) [10].

1.6 Economic Upliftment through Social Media
Social media platforms can significantly enhance economic growth in tribal regions by allowing artisans and businesses to showcase their products online, thus overcoming geographical barriers. By enabling direct consumer

engagement, these platforms foster brand loyalty and provide valuable tools for advertising, analytics, and e-commerce to boost sales. (Mehta & Saxena, 2019) [7].

Integrating these platforms into business practices enhances economic growth and digital literacy in tribal communities, empowering them for modern competition and aligning with NEP 2020's emphasis on technology in education and skill development. (Ministry of Education, 2020).

1.7 The Role of NEP 2020 in Economic Development
NEP 2020 promotes technology integration in education to enhance learning opportunities, especially for remote and tribal areas, while also providing digital tools for tribal enterprises to improve business management and marketing through e-learning and online resources.

Table 1: List of Tribal Communities in Jharkhand

SR.NO.	NAME OF THE TRIBE	SR.NO.	NAME OF THE TRIBE
1	• Asur	17	• Kanwar
2	• Baiga	18	• Karmali
3	• Banjara	19	• Kharwar
4	• Bathudi	20	• Khond
5	• Bedia	21	• Kisan
6	• Binjhia	22	• Kora
7	• Birhor	23	• Korwa
8	• Birjia	24	• Lohra
9	• Bhumij	25	• Mahli
10	• Chero	26	• Mal-Paharia
11	• Chick-Baraik	27	• Munda
12	• Gond	28	• Santhal
13	• Gorait	29	• Savar
14	• Ho	30	• Sauria-Paharia
15	• Kharia	31	• Oraon
16	• Kol	32	• Parhaiya

Table 2: According To Census 2011 Population of Jharkhand

Sr.No.	Description	Census 2011		
		Total	Male	Female
1.	Population	32,988,134	16,930,315	16,057,819
2.	Child Population (0-6 age)	5,389,495	2,767,147	2,622,348
3.	Literate population	18,328,069	10,882,519	7,445,550

Source: https://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/jharkhand.html
Source:
https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/DCHB_A/20/2021_PART_A_DCHB_GUMLA.pdf

2. Review of Related Literature
2.1 The Role of Social Media in Business Development
Social media has proven to be a transformative tool for business development, enhancing market reach, customer engagement, and brand awareness. Studies by Hossain and Quaddus (2015) [4] and Kapoor *et al*. (2018) [5] highlight its positive impact on business innovation, marketing performance, and customer relationship management, especially for SMEs.

2.2 Social Media's Influence on Rural and Tribal Enterprises
Several studies highlight how social media platforms empower rural and tribal artisans by overcoming market barriers and preserving cultural heritage. Singh and Singh (2017) [16] and Sharma and Singh (2019) [17] emphasize these platforms' role in expanding market access and preserving traditional knowledge.

2.3 New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Technology Integration
The NEP 2020 highlights integrating technology in education to bridge learning gaps and drive economic growth, especially in marginalized areas. Its focus on digital literacy aims to empower tribal regions and enhance sustainability.

2.4 Challenges in Adopting Social Media for Business Purposes
The adoption of social media in tribal businesses is hindered by the digital divide, including limited internet access and digital literacy, as well as cultural resistance due to concerns about losing traditional values in global markets (Roy & Sivakumar, 2022; Das & Kumar, 2021) [11, 1].

3. Need of the study
The study investigates the impact of social media on tribal enterprises in Jharkhand, highlighting their underrepresentation in digital discourse and the potential for socio-economic empowerment. It aligns with the New Education Policy 2020's objectives by exploring how digital literacy can enhance entrepreneurship among marginalized communities. Additionally, it addresses digital divides and barriers to adoption while emphasizing the role of social media in preserving indigenous knowledge and culture.

4. Operational Definition
4.1 Tribal Enterprises: Tribal enterprises in Jharkhand are businesses owned or managed by tribal communities, including agricultural cooperatives, handicrafts, small industries, and tourism ventures, aimed at generating livelihoods. These initiatives promote economic development within tribal regions.

4.2 Social media: Social media refers to digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn used by tribal enterprises for business promotion, marketing, networking, and customer engagement. These platforms facilitate content sharing and community outreach.

4.3 Impact: This study qualitatively explores the impact of social media on tribal enterprises in Jharkhand, highlighting its role in enhancing visibility, market access, community engagement, cultural preservation, and the development of digital literacy among entrepreneurs.

5. Background of the study
This study explores how tribal entrepreneurs in Jharkhand utilize social media to enhance business visibility and market access, addressing socio-economic challenges within the New Education Policy 2020 framework. Through qualitative methods, the research aims to inform policies for inclusive growth, digital literacy, and economic empowerment while preserving cultural heritage.

6. Significance of the Study

This research investigates the role of social media in enhancing economic opportunities, digital literacy, and cultural preservation among tribal enterprises in Jharkhand, in line with NEP 2020. It offers insights for optimizing social media use in tribal businesses while evaluating policy effectiveness, contributing to the literature on technology adoption and tribal entrepreneurship.

7. Delimitation of the study

7.1 Geographical Scope: This study focuses on tribal enterprises in Jharkhand, India, but its findings may not be applicable to tribal enterprises in other regions due to differing socio-economic and cultural contexts.

7.2 Technological Access: The study assumes tribal entrepreneurs in Jharkhand have access to digital technology, but limited infrastructure like smartphones and high-speed internet may restrict their use of social media platforms.

7.3 Researcher Bias: Despite efforts to remain objective, researchers' backgrounds may introduce bias. The study design and analysis will address this by incorporating strategies to mitigate its impact.

7.4 External Factors: The study recognizes that external factors like economic conditions, government policies, and socio-cultural dynamics may influence tribal enterprises' use of social media, though these factors are beyond the study's control.

8. Objectives of the Study

- To Understand the Current Utilization of Social Media by Tribal Enterprises.
- To Investigate the Perceived Benefits of Social Media Adoption.
- To Explore the Challenges and Barriers Faced by Tribal Enterprises in Adopting Social Media.
- To Examine the Alignment of Social Media Practices with the Objectives of the New Education Policy 2020.
- To Identify Strategies for Optimizing the Impact of Social Media on Tribal Enterprises.

9. Research Questions

- How do tribal enterprises in Jharkhand currently use Social Media platforms for business purposes?
- Which Social Media platforms are most commonly utilized by tribal enterprises, and for what specific purposes?
- What are the perceived benefits that tribal enterprises attribute to their use of social media?
- How do tribal enterprises measure the effectiveness of their Social Media strategies in achieving business goals?
- What are the primary challenges and barriers that tribal enterprises encounter when integrating social media into their business operations?
- How do factors such as digital literacy, access to technology, and cultural considerations influence the adoption of social media among tribal enterprises?
- To what extent do the Social Media practices of tribal

enterprises align with the objectives outlined in the New Education Policy 2020?
- How can the use of social media by tribal enterprises contribute to the broader goals of digital literacy and economic empowerment outlined in the policy?
- What strategies and interventions can be recommended to tribal enterprises to optimize the impact of social media on their business outcomes?
- How can policy makers and stakeholders support tribal enterprises in overcoming barriers and maximizing the benefits of Social Media adoption?

10. Research Methodology: Qualitative Research using secondary sources like

- Journal Articles provide scholarly insights and methodologies.
- Books encompass diverse scholarly works.
- Literature Reviews synthesize existing research.
- Theoretical Articles explore frameworks and models.
- Policy Documents offer analyses for broader contexts.
- Conference Papers present peer-reviewed research.
- Dissertations include extensive reviews.
- Government Publications summarize research for policy.
- News Articles discuss trends and issues.

11. Discussion

11.1 Adoption and Utilization

11.1.1 Findings: Tribal enterprises use WhatsApp for customer communication and orders, while leveraging Facebook and Instagram for marketing, product display, and community engagement.

11.1.2 Success: Enterprises now successfully reach broader audiences, overcoming previous geographic limitations.

11.1.3 Challenges: Key challenges include limited digital literacy, which hampers the ability to exploit these platforms fully.

11.1.4 Interpretation: The choice of platforms indicates a preference for easy-to-use interfaces and functions that facilitate direct communication and visual marketing.

11.2 Impact and Benefits

11.2.1 Findings: The use of Social Media boosts visibility and customer engagement, offering significant benefits in marketing and sales.

11.2.2 Success: Success stories include increased sales volume and market expansion.

11.2.3 Challenges: Measuring the direct impact of Social Media on sales is often complicated without proper tracking tools.

11.2.4 Interpretation: Social media's role in economic empowerment is evident, though its full potential is often untapped due to a lack of analytical tools.

11.3 Barriers to Effective Use

11.3.1 Findings: Barriers include limited infrastructure,

inconsistent internet access, and insufficient formal training in digital marketing.

11.3.2 Success: Some enterprises overcome these barriers through community-led initiatives and informal peer training.

11.3.3 Challenges: Ongoing digital divide and cultural reluctance toward public exposure on social media platforms.

11.3.4 Interpretation: Overcoming these barriers demands coordinated efforts at both community and policy levels.

11.4 Policy Alignment and Support
11.4.1 Findings: The practices partially align with the New

Education Policy 2020, promoting technology integration in education and skill development.

11.4.2 Success: Enterprises successfully integrate social media to support community learning and skill development.

11.4.3 Challenges: The lack of support structures and incentives hinders full alignment in adopting digital tools in business.

11.4.4 Interpretation: Increased policy support and customized programs can strengthen the integration of social media into tribal business strategies.

Table 3: Summary

Theme	Findings	Success	Challenges	Interpretation
Adoption and Utilization	Primary use of WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram	Broader audience reach, enhanced direct communication	Limited digital literacy	Preference for platforms that support visual marketing and direct communication
Impact and Benefits	Increased visibility, customer engagement	Expanded market access, increased sales	Difficulty in impact measurement	Social media as a tool for economic empowerment but underutilized analytical tools
Barriers to Effective Use	Inconsistent internet, lack of digital marketing training	Community-led training initiatives	Digital divide, cultural hesitancy	Need for comprehensive community and policy interventions
Policy Alignment and Support	Partial alignment with NEP 2020	Contributions to community learning	Lack of specific supports for digital tools in business	Potential for enhanced policy support to improve Social Media integration

12. Findings
12.1 Adoption and Utilization
12.1.2 Findings: Tribal enterprises use WhatsApp for direct customer communication and order placement, while Facebook and Instagram are primarily leveraged for marketing, product showcasing, and community engagement.

12.1.3 Success: Social media platforms have helped tribal enterprises extend their reach beyond local boundaries, increasing visibility and enabling direct engagement with a wider audience.

12.1.4 Challenges: The limited digital literacy among tribal enterprise members hampers their ability to effectively utilize social media platforms, restricting optimal online business management. This gap challenges their full exploitation of digital tools.

12.1.5 Interpretation: These platforms are chosen for their user-friendly interfaces, enabling direct customer interaction and effective visual marketing strategies. The selection highlights a focus on seamless engagement and brand promotion.

12.2 Impact and Benefits
12.2.1 Findings: Strategic social media use boosts visibility and customer engagement, driving marketing and sales success.

12.2.2 Success: There are notable success stories where increased social media engagement has led to higher sales volumes and market expansion for tribal enterprises.

12.2.3 Challenges: Quantifying social media's direct impact on sales and business growth is challenging due to insufficient tracking tools and analytics.

12.2.4 Interpretation: Social media enhances economic empowerment of tribal communities by improving market presence and customer engagement, though its potential is limited by underutilized analytical tools.

12.3 Barriers to Effective Use
12.3.1 Findings: Key barriers include infrastructural challenges such as inconsistent internet access and a general scarcity of formal training in digital marketing.

12.3.2 Success: Despite these barriers, some enterprises have successfully navigated these challenges through community-led initiatives and peer-to-peer training methods.

12.3.3 Challenges: Issues such as a persistent digital divide and cultural hesitancy concerning public exposure on social media platforms continue to impede full-scale adoption.

12.3.4 Interpretation: Effective interventions at both community and policy levels are needed to enhance digital literacy and improve internet infrastructure.

12.4 Policy Alignment and Support
12.4.1 Findings: Tribal enterprises' use of social media supports NEP 2020's emphasis on integrating technology in education and skill development.

12.4.2 Success: Enterprises successfully use social media to

promote community learning and skill development, benefiting local ecosystems.

12.4.3 Challenges: The lack of support structures and incentives for digital tool adoption hinders the full integration of social media into tribal business strategies.

12.4.4 Interpretation: Increased policy support and tailored programs are needed to better integrate digital tools into tribal enterprises for maximizing social media benefits.

The findings emphasize the crucial impact of social media on enhancing tribal enterprises while highlighting the need for specific strategies to address current challenges and maximize the advantages of digital engagement.

13. Conclusion

This study highlights how social media has enhanced the operational capabilities and market reach of tribal enterprises in Jharkhand, empowering entrepreneurs with better communication, knowledge exchange, and market access under the New Education Policy 2020 framework. The NEP 2020 has enhanced digital literacy among tribal communities, enabling them to leverage social media for economic empowerment and cultural preservation. However, challenges like the digital divide and language barriers still require ongoing attention from policymakers and educators. In summary, the NEP 2020 is crucial for empowering tribal enterprises in Jharkhand to thrive in the digital age through enhanced digital literacy and inclusivity. By prioritizing these initiatives, we can ensure equitable access to the benefits of digital transformation, fostering sustainable development within tribal communities.

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