

# Role of media and communication in professional and social development of Scheduled Caste: A Study of Purvanchal

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**Abstract** - Media and communication is important tool for development of people specially marginalised and downtrodden section of society. Scheduled caste people of Purvanchal are such a marginalised community that bear the brunt of caste system that is responsible for their backward social and economic status. The situation is compounded as they are living in one of the most backward and poor part of India Purvanchal, where development is lacking. Though Purvanchal is placed very near by the capital of India in comparison to other places but it still suffered lack of concern and ignorance of local problems from the political leaders. The study is about role played by media for the development of Scheduled caste community residing in Purvanchal. As professional growth and social status are the indicators of development so these parameters are studied here. The main objective is to understand the different types of media and communication Scheduled caste people use for their occupational needs and which of them is most effective for the purpose. This study also seeks answer about how much media is effective in eliminating caste related discriminations. Exploratory research design is used for study and Sample survey method is utilised to obtain primary data. The study concluded that there is important role of media and communication in professional development. Communication by colleagues and professional mates are quite effective for the information. Newspaper is best media for providing effective solution for occupational /professional problems.

**Keywords** — Caste discrimination, communication, media, Occupation, Purvanchal, Scheduled Caste,

## I. INTRODUCTION

**Area of Study**- Purvanchal is situated in eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. Urdu, Hindi and its dialects Awadhi and Bhojpuri are main spoken language in this part of Uttar Pradesh. Its boundary touches Nepal in north, Bihar in east and MP and Chhattisgarh in south and Avadh region of Uttar Pradesh in west.[1] . Purvanchal is not an administrative unit but it is a concept that rests in minds of people of Uttar Pradesh. The concept of Purvanchal can be first seen in a book by Dr. Ambedkar “Thought on linguistic states” as he proposed to divide Uttar Pradesh in three states each having population around two crores at the time of Independence. According to his proposal Allahabad would be the capital of the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. This proposed divisional plan would help in effective administration [2]. Dividing Uttar Pradesh into four states was proposal of Mayawati government in 2011. One of those states was Purvanchal, eastern part of UP [3]. The number of district that could be part of Purvanchal state is not clear. There are many websites claiming different

numbers. According to Map of India site there are 28 proposed districts in Purvanchal[4].The geographical area covers the districts of Bahraich, Balrampur, Sidharth Nagar, Maharajanj, Kushinagar, Deoria, Sravasti, Ballia, Mau, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, Pratapgarh, Sultanpur, Ambedkar Nagar, Azamgarh, St. Kabir Nagar, Basti, Faizabad, Gonda, Mirzapur, Allahabad, Kaushambi, Chandauli, Sonbhadra, Varanasi, St. Ravidas Nagar, Fatehpur, Gorakhpur. So for the ease of study I had taken these 28 districts as part of Purvanchal for my present study.

**Scheduled Castes** – These are among the most disadvantaged socio-economic groups in India. Society in India is stratified into four classes based on unique caste system exclusive to Indian society called ‘varna vavastha’. This caste system has divided all human into a hierarchical class in which Shudras lie at fourth level.[5] The main profession of Shurdas were labour and agriculture. They were humiliated for centuries for the work they do because those were considered menial. Though the work they do

were very important for the society, they were denied of religious rituals, share water from the village well and forced to live in outskirts of human population. To give dignity to this section of society in 1935 Government of India Act was passed that gave a reservation to a list (Schedule) of group/community/ caste which were earlier known as 'Depressed' class. They constitute the Scheduled Caste since then [6]. They constitute 16.2% [7] of the Indian population and also 48% of poor in the country. While in Uttar Pradesh they constitute 21.1% of total state population [8].

Agriculture is the most important profession for the livelihood for Scheduled caste, 20% of them are cultivators and 45.6% are agriculture labourer 30.5% do other work according to planning commission report [9]. According to planning commission reports in 1961 72.24% of Scheduled Caste people were dependent on Agriculture. In 1991, 74.50% of Scheduled Caste people were dependent on agriculture. They are mostly dependent on agriculture which is itself a very risky occupation and seasonal in nature with low returns and these people are unemployed for half of the year because agriculture cannot be done throughout the year. Most of those depends on agriculture are agriculture labours (49.06% in year 1991) with less salary. [10] Though most of the Scheduled caste population depend on agriculture but majority (77 %) of them are land less [11].

Among people below poverty line, scheduled caste show the following data. It is observed that as against 27 % of all population living below the poverty line in the rural areas in 1999-2000, 36 per cent of SC population lived below the poverty line while in urban areas 38.47% lived below poverty line. In Uttar Pradesh 43.65% SC in Rural and 43.51% of urban SC were below poverty line between 1999-2000. [12] Representation of Scheduled caste in government job in year 2000 is 16.41% which is quite satisfactory. [13]

Social status – for years Scheduled caste people suffered inequality and humiliating social structure that did not give them right to participate in political system in India. Politics and ruling over the state was managed by Kshtriya and Brahmin community. Scheduled caste people were deprived of political power so they are socially marginalised. Before Independence choosing for governance is not an option for Indian citizens as there was lack of democratic system of government. There was incidence of polling during British period first time in 1920 but it did not stand on the pillars of true democracy. The elected representatives did not have autonomy to make policies for governances as most of the laws were passed from British parliament and Governor General retained significant power over Imperial Legislative Assembly. Scheduled caste people also got reservation in electoral democracy after Puna pact in year 1932. Before British

period there were few evidences of democratically elected governance as mentioned in Jain and Buddhist text. So real political participation for citizens came after independence and Scheduled caste people also strengthened their political aspirations. As democracy count numbers and population of Scheduled caste people cannot be ignored by political parties. This gave significant power to Scheduled caste people to utilise their power of numbers in democratic setup to uplift themselves in political status. The trends of removing higher caste people from governing them catch fast first in southern India and then extended up to northern Indian state when Mayawati ruled one of the most populous state Uttar Pradesh in year . Political empowerment leads to social empowerment also. Article to abolish untouchability, Scheduled caste and Schedule tribe (prevention of atrocity) Act 1989, and reservation are the assertive programs that helped not only abolishment of untouchability but also improved the social status. Media and communication role in professional growth is important aspect. Development communication played important role in agriculture and extension development.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Media and communication do not only pass information from one person to other but have capacity to transform, educate and change the life of people. It induces education and change of heart and creates awareness that leads to change in habit and performance of a person, community and nation. It has the capacity to enlighten, to remove ignorance and a tool of awareness. It helps in shedding the superstition and elevates the confidence in common man to utilise media as platform. That is the reason media is given so much importance in every society and people tries to manipulate media for their benefits. But this media is also tool for development of marginalized section of people.

Voting rights is one of the tool of political participation which is utilised by Scheduled caste people more frequently than any other caste. But it is always seen that Scheduled caste electoral roll are manipulated by political parties for their own benefits and real political strength is not transferred to the grass root level. Political participation of scheduled caste also strengthened with reservation given to them at parliamentary, legislative assembly and Panchayat elections. [14]

A study done on Dalit elected women members of Uttar Pradesh at Panchayat election describe that democratic processes at the village level did not strengthen or empower the participants of Dalit community. Even after reservations of Panchayat raj it is common observations through media reports and CSOs studies that dominant groups resorted various measures to disrupt the attempts of marginalised groups especially Dalits to empower themselves. [15]

A study on Role of social media on development said that people utilise social media to build professional network.[16]

Mass media and communication not only help people in their jobs and professional life but also brought about social awareness about their community.

Media make the society or community to be aware about the standard of living worthy of a human being causing the community to assess to the environment is possible or whether it has met these standards. Messages conveyed by the media help making people feel good about themselves. The change of behaviour that resulted from the media messages can occur in a family environment, school, and in social life [17]. When the marginalised people receive media message they compare their life with the media images and try to achieve those standard built up by the media. They also fight against social norms if that hindered their way of progress towards making of those images.

The role of media in a democratic country is not only dissemination of information and entertainment. In a country where there is large scale poverty, unemployment occurs, responsibilities of media go beyond the above two functions but also to play role in development of the society as whole.[18]

Information is fundamental to knowledge. Informed and knowledgeable citizens are empowered to participate in civic affairs, social development and progress. Right to free expression and access to information are vital that consolidate and develop a democratic, civil, and healthy society which respects human rights and truly serves the public.”[19]

### III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Role of media in professional and social growth of scheduled caste people of Purvanchal are not studied. This study bridges that gap of understanding the role of media in professional growth of Scheduled caste people of Purvanchal. Schedule caste community forms major population in India. But they are marginalised, socially and economically backward community. Media houses and advertisers hardly try to study about them as there no monetary benefit associated with their study. So its duty of social science scholars to study the role of communication for the benefits of Schedule Caste section of society. The study also observed the function of media in social development of Scheduled caste people with the following objectives

1. To study different types of mass media and other communication sought by Scheduled Caste people of Purvanchal for professional and occupational needs.
2. To explore the most effective media or communication tools for occupational needs.

3. To study most effective media for helping in abolishment of caste discrimination.

4. To study most effective communication for influencing Scheduled caste for voting

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design- the proposed study employs exploratory research design. The major emphasis in such studies is on the discovery of ideas and insight. As such the research design appropriate for such studies must be flexible enough to provide opportunity for considering different aspects of problem under study.

Sampling plan- Scheduled caste people of Purvanchal region (28 district of Uttar Pradesh) form population of this study. The rough population is more than one crore. For investigation purpose member attaining age of 18 years are proposed to be studied. Convenient sampling is done to obtain information at two levels. First From each districts two towns or village is randomly selected and then 20 people of Scheduled caste community were selected from each selected town or village. Total of 40 samples are investigated per district. So sample size for the study would be 1120 respondents. They are selected as per convenience and availability of people from Scheduled caste community.

It is easy to find Scheduled caste people in rural areas. It is because villages are small and people are more aware about the people living there. They are more aware about the caste of their neighbours. More over the Scheduled caste population is higher in rural areas in comparison to the Scheduled caste population in cities. It is easy to find Scheduled caste people in rural areas as they are generally residing collectively but in rural areas Scheduled caste community people are distributed. To obtained data from Scheduled caste people in town areas private and government educational institutions were contacted.

Data collection- Field survey is done to collect data. A structured questionnaire is used to obtain responses. The questionnaire is multiple choices and close ended. Those who cannot fill their questionnaire because of illiteracy, the researcher herself filled questionnaire by asking questions from the questionnaire on behalf of them. Secondary data from the authentic sources will be utilized where need warrant to do so. Reference books, reports and survey publications of governments and its agencies will be used to supplement primary data.

### V. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

#### Role of media in growth of professional capability of Scheduled caste people

When asked to the respondents what are the sources that play important role in information about occupation related needs? 33.92 per cent respondents said other farmers/

colleague/ people of same profession are helpful. 19.196% respondents think newspaper as good source of information for their occupation. 18.30% respondents find Television as good source of information. 12.946% people find radio useful while 9.375% think internet as important. 12.5% people think Panchayat and 6.696% considered government officials as important source for occupation. Only 1.339% respondents think no one among asked are important source for information for their occupations.

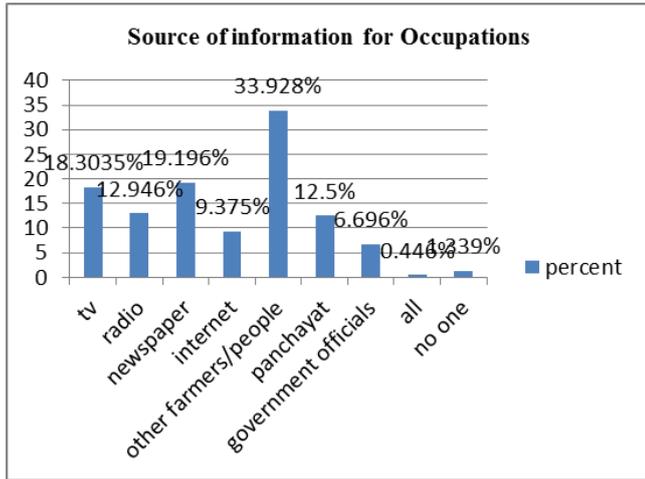


Figure 1 Source of Information for occupations

When asked which source provide maximum solution of their problem. 26.78% think newspaper is most beneficial, 25.446% find other colleagues/people/farmers as source of solution for their occupational problems. 18.30% think radio and 15.6% think television as source of solutions for their problems. 11.6% think government officials as useful and for 9.8% Panchayat is useful.

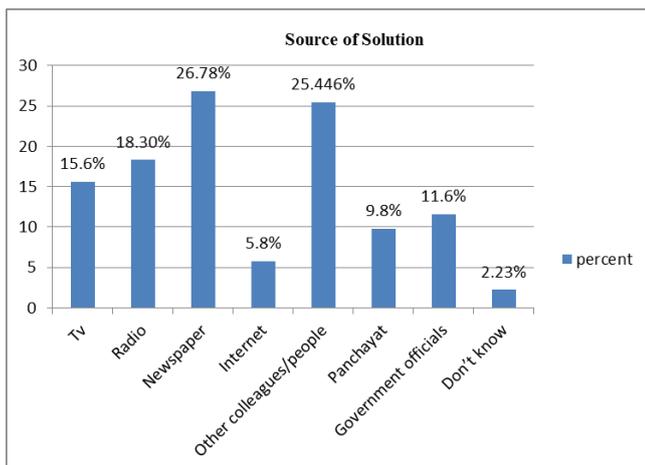


Figure 2- Source of Solution

When asked about which media sources important for agriculture practises 35.7% people said Television are most important 22,76% said newspaper and 22.76 % said don't know. 17.857% people think radio as important source for agriculture programs.

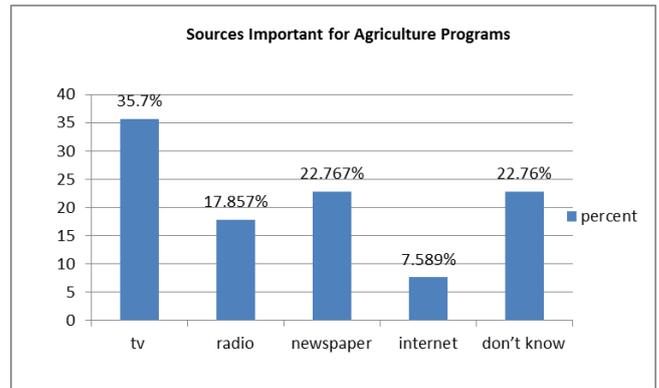


Figure 3- Sources important for Agricultural Programme

When asked which media show important program for other occupations. For 37.053% respondents newspaper is important while for 20.98% Television is important, 20.98% said they don't know which media is important, for 16.07% internet is important and for 10.26% radio is important.

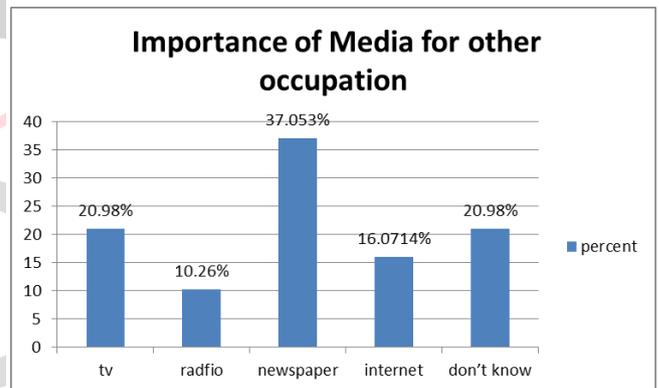


Figure 4-Importance of media for other occupations

When asked if they think media is important for employment 33.928% people think media is sometimes important. 23.214% think media is not important and 22.32% think that media is very important. 19.196% respondent said they don't know.

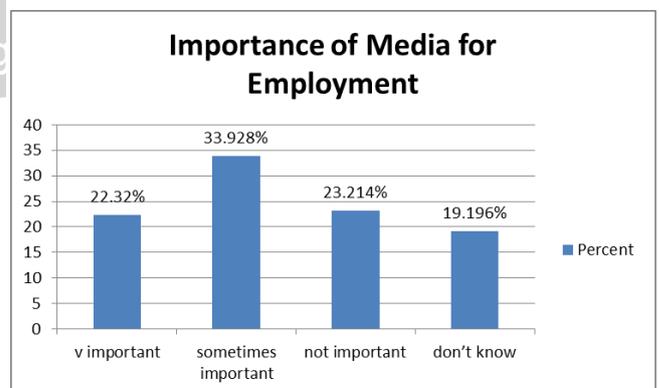


Figure 5-Importance of media for employment

### Role of media in socio political status of Scheduled Caste

When asked if they are discriminated at work place ever, 53.125% said no while 43.303% said yes.

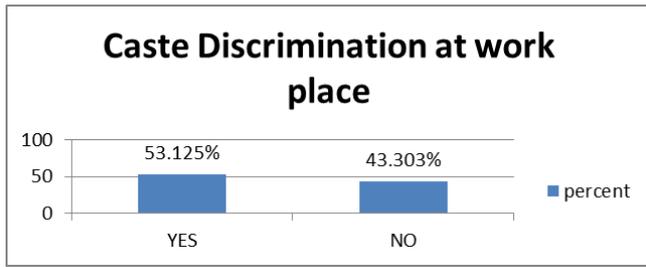


Figure 6- Caste discrimination at work place

When asked if they felt discrimination at educational place, 47.32% respondents said yes while 44.64 % said no caste discrimination at place of education

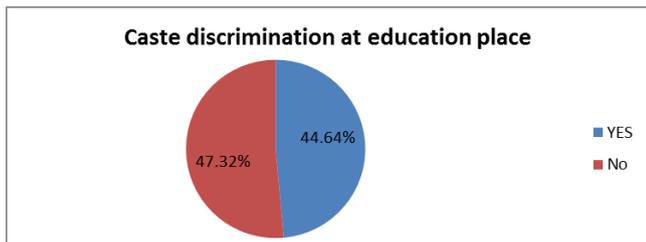


Figure 6- Caste discrimination at educational place

Regarding role of media in creating sensitivity for caste discrimination, when asked to the Scheduled caste people if Television broadcast program on Caste Discrimination 44.64% said yes while 32.58% said no. 21.42% respondent said don't know.

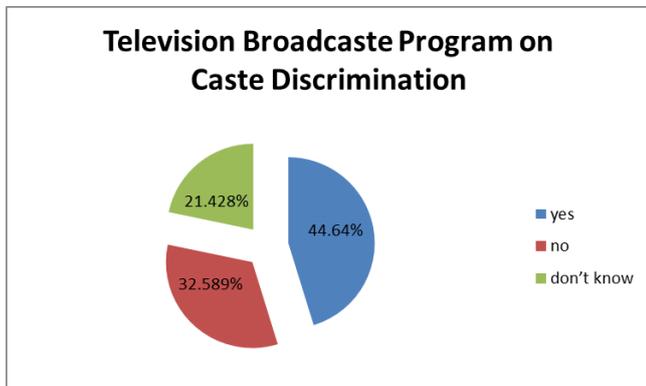


Figure 7-Television Broadcast programme on caste discrimination

When asked to the Scheduled caste people if Radio broadcast program on Caste Discrimination 46.42% said yes while 35.26% said no. 21.87% respondent said don't know.

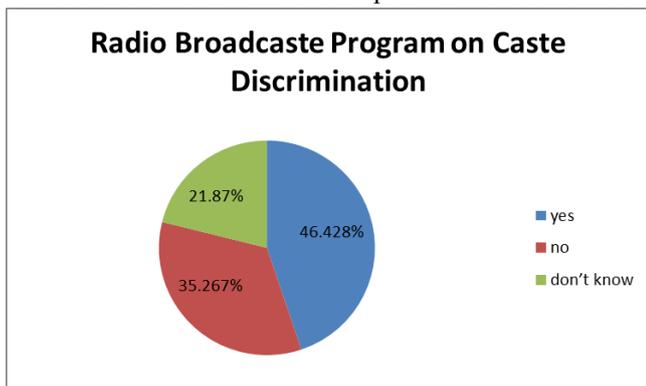


Figure8- Radio Broadcast programme on caste discrimination

When asked which media play most effective role in eliminating Caste Discrimination 28.57% said Television play important role. 27.23% said they don't know which media play important role. 22.32 % think newspaper play important role. While 17.41% think radio play important role in elimination of caste discrimination.

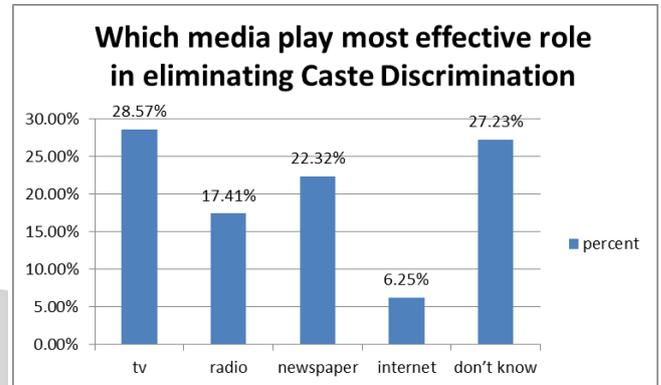


Figure 9- Role of media in eliminating caste discrimination

When asked which media or communication source help or influence them for making decision for voting 32.58% of the respondents said their members influence their voting pattern. Political messages on television (15.62%) also play significant influence followed by radio (14.28%). Candidate's campaign also has significant influence as 13.83% respondents think it is useful for their decision making.

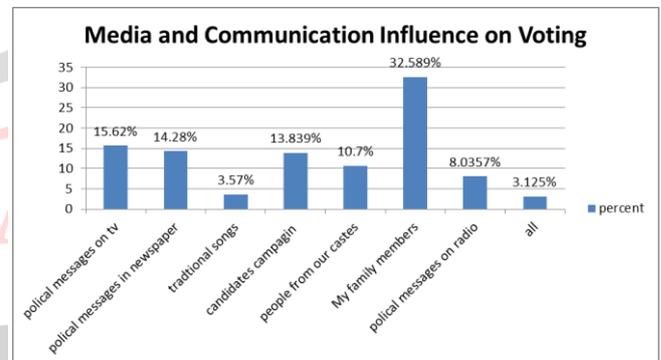


Figure 10- Media and communication effect on voting

## VI. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The study shows that Scheduled caste people are utilising different sources of information for their occupational need. That includes mass media sources like Television, radio, newspaper and internet. There are other sources working with mass media to inform them and to solve the problems related to occupation, which includes Panchayat, Government officials and their colleagues / other people of the profession. Among all these sources most of the respondents find their colleague as most effective source of information for occupational needs. Newspaper play second important role in giving information about their occupation. Regarding the solution of the problems related to occupation newspaper is most important source. Two

communication sources emerged out most effective for occupations are newspaper and communication from colleagues. Regarding dissemination of agriculture related program television is most effective media. For other kinds of occupation newspaper is more effective according to the respondents. When asked if media is important for employment most of the respondents said media is important only sometimes.

Regarding the survey on role of media in uplifting social status of Scheduled caste they said caste discrimination still exist in place of education and work. Most of the respondents think that television and radio broadcast program related to caste discrimination. But Television is most effective among all media for eliminating caste discrimination. When decision on voting pattern is made by Scheduled caste people family member opinion is most influential.

So this study show that media is important in professional and occupational information but not much. Other sources of information people of same profession, government officials and panchayat for occupational needs. Similarly media also help in eliminating caste discrimination and television is playing most important role.

## VII. FINDING AND SUGGESTIONS

It appeared from the study that media play important role in helping Schedule caste people in their profession but traditional communication medium like interpersonal communication between them and colleagues, people from society or friends, communication by panchayat and government officials still play important role. So media should work harder to establish interpersonal relationship to win their trust by helping them more in their professional development. They can increase duration of programmes related to their professions or change the timing that suits most or introduced a new format of developmental journalism that not only informative but also interesting.

Regarding the social status of Scheduled caste is concerned much work is needed to be done. Media play can important role in empathizing people about their social status. They can show stories of real heroes and people doing contributory roles in eradicating caste based discrimination. Younger generations of scheduled caste community to educated and know the laws that could help them to fight the caste based atrocity in a nonviolent way. Media can also help new generation for opting new professional avenues for their own development and as society as whole.

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