



An investigation of Agriculture Knowledge Sharing through Indigenous Communication Systems: Insights from Ethnic Communities

Bidyut P. Gogoi^{a++*}, M. N. Ansari^{b#}, Birendra Kumar^{ct}, Yasa Sirilakshmi^{a++}, Ashwini T^{d++} and Dipankar Saikia^{e‡}

^a Dairy Extension Division, ICAR-NDRI, Karnal, Haryana, India.

^b Department of Extension Education, RPCAU, Pusa, Bihar, India.

^c Rural and Agri-Business Communication, ISAB, Greater Noida, NCR, India.

^d Department of Agricultural Extension, UAS, GKVK, Bengaluru, India.

^e Extension Education, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Technology-ADTU, Guwahati, Assam, India.

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ABSTRACT

Developing countries like India are having latest methods of communication, but their effective utilization by people who are less exposed is doubtful. In rural areas indigenous means of communication still play a vital role in social functioning, maintenance and social change. A study

⁺⁺ Ph.D. Research Scholar;

[#] Associate Professor;

[†] Director;

[‡] Assistant Professor;

*Corresponding author: E-mail: bidyut.p98@gmail.com;

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was employed with a qualitative research design to explore the indigenous communication systems of four ethnic communities (Ahom, Kachari, Mising and Deori) in Dhemaji district of Assam. The total respondents for the study was one hundred (100) comprising both male and female to capture gender-specific roles in agricultural communication. Focus group discussions, interviews, and auto-ethnographic observations were employed, ensuring a participatory approach to collect data from four selected villages across two culturally diverse blocks. Findings reveal that folk songs such as Bihu songs, Oi-nitom, and Bisugeet encapsulate agricultural processes and seasonal transitions, ensuring the preservation and transmission of traditional knowledge. The rituals like Narasiga Sabah, Nakathia Sisha, and Guch Luwa not only serve as cultural markers but also communicate critical agricultural practices to farmers. Similarly, proverbs and riddles acted as mnemonic devices for agricultural techniques and ecological wisdom. The study concludes that integrating these indigenous practices with modern extension systems can significantly enhance rural communication strategies. The findings of the present study hold a great potential in the field of communication for development research as well as for planning and dissemination of need based information among rural families for agricultural development that elevate sustainable rural livelihoods.

Keywords: Agriculture; ethnic groups; folk media; indigenous communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indigenous knowledge communication systems plays a vital role in the process of agricultural development of a nation. Communication is believed to be the life stream and blood of every society. Every human society has various forms and channels of communication which are deeply rooted in the people's culture, characterized by its existence, passed down from generation to generation. These channels and forms of communication are known as Indigenous/Traditional knowledge systems that in some instances tap on Folk Media. It refers to "People's Events," such as village folk dance, rural drama, and music among other facets. This term applies to certain types of performance art that have become cultural icons for a people. They existed much before the arrival of mass media, and still exist today as an important tool of communication in different parts of the world despite changes (Wang and Dissanayake, 1982). The desire to express different feelings and to inform certain situations our fore fathers must have created these forms of communication which they exchanged messages and share ideas. These are the indigenous tool kits that exist in the form of traditional music, theatre, dance and puppetry each with distinct characteristics in every society and are based on sound, image and sign languages. Folk media can be used to conserve and disseminate messages in a vibrant manner as well as to pass on the ideals and culture of our forefathers to future generations. They are significant because they are used for moral, religious and socio political reasons. For both literate and illiterate

rural masses, they are personal and familiar reliable means of communication. It also serves to convey the internal feelings of the group reflecting social identity (Bayable, 2020). Folk media has significant position in the field of indigenous media communications because of its uniqueness and practical usage within a specific speech community. Folk-media-mediated communication (FMC) is extremely important for development communication (Iyyanar and Chelladurai, 2019). Development is attainable in its kind of communication because participates determine their destination.

The importance of indigenous communication systems originates from the fact that they address local interests and problems in the language and idioms that the audience is familiar with and understands better. These indigenous channels of communication as informal interaction plays an important role in influencing people to change and can trigger development in the rural areas. The traditional media mainly targets rural people because seventy per cent of them live in remote rural areas of the country with little or no access to mass communication networks. They believe that the folk media's message communication is very straightforward, concentrated, and combined with local dialect and entertainment (Mathiyazhagan *et al.* 2015). No doubt, rural people find radio and television initially very fascinating, but they understand ideas, about family planning, hygiene, agricultural technologies and rural development more when the topics are expressed in a medium familiar to them. Farmers are more likely to comprehend agricultural knowledge if it is

transmitted by conventional media. Since he/she is accustomed to receiving information in that manner, the message becomes more accurate (Rathore, 1975). In order to reach closer to the rural masses, it is important to touch their responsibilities and duties. Indigenous communication methods are important in locating location-specific solutions to challenges based on the micro climate of the farm family, access to land, and accessible inputs at various seasons of the year (Vineetha et al., 2023). To make aware and appeal them it is essential to use their language with appropriate dialectical touch (Sultana, 2017).

India has always been known for its traditional arts and crafts, which represent its cultural and traditional vibrancy. Every area of India has its own folk-art style and pattern (Sharma, 2015). Researches in rural areas have shown that rural communities need to be properly developed in order to create the basic awareness for appreciation and participation in any communication process. It is necessary to establish a traditional knowledge management network that includes numerous stakeholders, including traditional knowledge scholars, traditional knowledge institutions, indigenous people, and communication specialists, in order to ensure long-term traditional knowledge communication (Mahesh, 2023). No communication strategies would be effective unless it includes the traditional folk media, which must rank alongside the more commonly accepted channel of communication. Every Indian state has its own unique cultures, customs as well as its own traditional folk media and Assam state is no different. People used to celebrate their joy of sowing or harvesting the crop with traditional music, dance, or both, such as Baisakhi in Punjab or Bihu in Assam, which is practiced during paddy harvesting. This region's rich cultural legacy is still preserved and portrayed through folklore, folk music, local paintings, and so on (Bhalerao et al., 2016). As a result, it is required to determine what forms of traditional folk media exist in society, what their content/message is, how prominent they are in society, how they are used in society, their role in rural growth and how important their content is in the modern world. The systematic use of Indigenous Communication systems in development efforts is now widely known, but only a few studies have been conducted on the subject. Thus, it is in this context and background a study entitled "An investigation of Agriculture Knowledge Sharing through Indigenous

Communication Systems: Insights from Ethnic Communities" was planned to document various indigenous communication systems related to agriculture in the local community.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Dhemaji district of Assam was purposively selected for the study, as the researcher was familiar with the area, local language, history, values, and attitudes. Out of the five blocks two blocks viz. "Machkhowa" and "Bordoloni" block was selected based on cultural diversities. The two selected blocks comprise fifty-one (51) and two hundred and one (201) in-habitat villages respectively and only two villages were chosen randomly from each of the two blocks resulting in four (4) villages total. The selected villages with ethnic groups are Gohain Bilotia (Ahoms), Begenegora (Misings), Borbam Deori (Deoris) and Borbam Gaon (Sonowal Kacharis). A list of farmers was compiled from each village based on farming and usage of folk media. Every list had twenty five (25) respondents including both male and female, resulting in a total sample size of one hundred (100) for the study. Since, some traditional folk media are done solely by women so both male and female respondents were chosen for the study. For data collection, an interview schedule was created in English and Assamese that included both structured and open-ended questions. Focus group discussions, personal interviews, and auto-ethnographic observations were employed for both men and women ensuring a participatory approach to capture gender-specific roles in agricultural communication and also camera was used to document the various folk media existed in the selected ethnic groups. Data were analyzed thematically, with categories including agricultural practices, ritual significance, and communication systems. Symbolic interpretations of myths, proverbs, and riddles were contextualized to identify their practical relevance in farming.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Documentation of various Indigenous Communication Systems related to Agriculture in the local community of selected Ethnic Groups: The various indigenous communication systems related to agriculture were identified from the local community during the data collection and it was documented as follows.

1. Folk Songs

Songs of Seasonal and Agricultural activities:

- i. **Bihu songs:** Bihu songs are sung mainly during the time of Bohag bihu. They are the most distinctive type of folk songs of Assam, both for their literary contents and for their musical mode. Bihu songs describe the beauty of nature, their beloved, glorify the youth and also represent frustration and sorrow. Some bihu songs also take the pride of representing contemporary issues, agricultural activities as well as history like freedom movement, attainment of independence and the like. The physical feature of the land, hills and rivers, especially Brahmaputra is also reflected in bihu songs. These bihu songs are enjoyed by all age groups.
- ii. **Oi-nitom:** The most popular folk songs among the Mising people is "Oi-Nitom" which refers to love songs through which the lovers express and exchange their romantic thoughts over the love affairs and communicate to each other secretly or openly. 'Oi' signifies love and affection, 'Ni' meaning to console or lull and 'tom' refers to one who is consoled and lulled. The songs (Ni:tom) are also known as 'Brirog Ni:tom'. The meaning of Brirog Ni:tom is the festive songs. These songs are enjoyed by Misings of all ages because of their rich imagination and soothing melody. They are very rich in imagery and other figures of speech. The extempore composition of these songs reflects the socio-cultural life of the people (Dipen, 2017).
- iii. **Bisugeet:** Deoris are mad for Bisu thus they have abundance of bisugeet in their disposal. Before the 20th century, the men and women folk separately used to perform siri bisu or night bisu for the whole month of April, in the big courtyard of any villagers' houses (Deori, 2009). The themes of bisugeets revolve around love, likings amongst youths, traces the societal norms, codes and lives of women of the Deoris.

2. Folk Dances

The Bihu dance is a traditional Assamese folk dance associated with the Bihu festival and is an important aspect of Assamese culture. Bihu

dancers are mainly young men and women who perform in a group and the dancing style is characterised by quick steps and rapid hand movements. The traditional attire of the dancers is bright and centered on the red colour motif, which represents excitement and energy. Bihu dance is meant to honour and reflect the spirit of the season, with a focus on fertility and love. The association of the Bihu dance with fertility refers to both human fertility (sensual aspect of the dance) and natural fertility (celebration of spring and the embracing of the life-giving spring rain). The usage of instruments like drums and horn pipes is thought to imitate the sound of rain and thunder, as a way to provoke a real-life performance (Debasis, 2015).

The "Gumrag" so:man also called as "Gumrag Pakach" is a dance form seen in the study area associated with the harvest festival "Ali-aye-ligang". In this dance form both young boys and girls participate for the praying of their holistic local deity for better harvesting. After the rituals of sowing are done, the young men and women dance "Gumrag Pakach" in a circle. They participate in this event wearing traditional attire and perform Bihu songs, Oi ni:tom or Aaliaay. In the Bihu of Ali-Aye-Ligang, importance is given to the dance than the songs as in this Bihu performance, the female dancers represent various activities like hunting, fishing, reaping crops, weaving etc. The beats of the drums performed in this dance form are different from that of other festivals (Dipen, 2017). According to the popular belief, if Gumrag is not performed or Borkanh (Bel metal instrument) is not played in Ali-Aye-Ligang, the seeds do not grow.

Leseri Dance is a mix performance of song and dance which is one of the remarkable assets of the cultural life of Sonowal Kachari tribe. By leg movement in rhythm, woman of Sonowals dance and sing songs (Chetia, 2018). As the left over in the field of the paddy cultivation is known as "Leseri" in Assamese, similar to this the selected portion of the songs of Sonowal Kacharis arranged and the women gather under a tree in traditional attire perform dance and sing these selected songs (Barooah, 2020). The main purpose of these singing and dancing is to awaken the mother earth for production of paddy grains in the New Year.

3. Proverbs

Proverbs (Dakor boson) are one of the important verbal forms that act as an expression to

communicate moral teachings and traditions. They are short, commonly understood folk sentences that embody knowledge, truth, values and traditional ideas in mnemonic form which are handed over from generation to generation (Saikia, 2017). Although proverbs are created by unknown composer, they throw glimpses on different places like agricultural management, social conduct, patriotism, superstitions, status of women, medical remedies, delinquency, mischief etc.

Proverbs related to agricultural activities

*“Uttare gajile janiba khor, Dhokhine gajile mariba lor,
Pube gajile janiba paan, Paschime gajile janiba baan.”*

(Meaning: If there is lightning on the northern side, it indicates drought; Run for cover, if it is on the southern side; if it's on the eastern side, there will be a bumper harvest of betel vine; and if it's on the western side, there will be flood.)

“Ame baan Kothale dhan”.

(Meaning: If the bearing of mango fruit is very high, flood is almost certain whereas if jackfruit bearing is more, bumper harvest of rice is expected.)

“Puhat ahu jethat salı, Tebe janiba grihasthali.”

(Meaning: That is a proper household which sows Ahu in December and January and Sali in May and June.)

“Pube hanh, pachime banh, Uttare gua, dakhine dhowa.”

(Meaning: This verse refers that on the eastern part of the household, the duck-rearing house should be constructed while planting of bamboo should be done on the western side. It was suggested to plant areca nut on the northern side while on the southern side one should dig a pond for rearing fish and also it will act as a source of water for washing and cleaning.)

“Ahin katit rakhıba pani, Jenekoi raakhe rojai rani.”

(Meaning: A king provides all the comforts and adores his queen with many ornaments. Similarly, the farmers must keep water in the rice field until Ahin/Kati (October/November), when panicle initiation of long-duration, photoperiod-sensitive Sali rice occurs.

“Ahu ruba khujot buri, Sali ruba begot juri.”

(Meaning: Ahu paddy (autumn rice) should be planted in ankle deep water rice while Sali (winter rice) must be planted 5 inches apart for the best growth.)

4. Riddles related to Agriculture

Riddles are short speech often said in social gathering which are metaphorical, sarcastic in nature, humorous contents giving clue regarding the puzzle. Mostly riddles are related with agriculture, nature, human body, food, animals and other types of cultural habits. Some of the prevalent riddles in the area are as follows.

Plough:

*“Jeeva re seleki jai, Tinir majot hodai,
Manuhok diye, Jiyai thokar upai”*

(Here 'Jeeva' means the tongue-shaped sharp iron blade that cuts the ground and prepares it for agriculture. 'Tinir majot hodai' means the two cows and a man who are required to plough the land. 'Manuhok diye, jiyaji thokar upai' means that the plough helps people to cultivate the ground and provides a way of life.)

Paddy:

*“Muke Kate, Muke mare,
Muke Khai, Jibon tore”*

(Cultivators harvest paddy in the field and bring back to the farm. They clean the crops and store them in a store house. They collect rice from paddy and eat to survive.)

Wheat:

*“Haari Haari Guti, Jura Jura paat,
Thakunu Kenekoi, Nukhuwakoi taak”*

(The seeds of wheat are long and slender, with a sharp tip. The seeds are similar to rice in appearance and can be obtained in the same way. As a result, everytime they see it, people desire it.)

Maize:

*“Yaar Suli Pokile Muga, Taar Gaat Bohut Sula,
Sula Khulile Dekha Jai, Mukuta Monire Bhora”*

(Inside the top of the cob, there appear some golden hairs. These were originally green in colour, but as they mature they turned golden. Cob is wrapped with several hasks like wearing dress. When the seeds are exposed or undressed, they shine like pearls and gems.)

Sickle:

*“Ajoni Koli Gai,
Haat khon potharor Pani Khai”*

(The sickle here resembles a black coloured cow (Koli gai) as it is made of black iron. Only one sickle can cut lot of paddy.)

5. Agricultural based Festivals and Rituals

5.1 Festivals

Bihu: Bihu is a popular festival of Assam which is largely based on agriculture. Bihu marked the symbol of joy, reflects the rich culture of Assamese society and celebrated in each and every corner of the state. ‘Bohag Bihu’, ‘Kaati Bihu’ and ‘Maagh Bihu’ are three types of Bihu observed in three seasons in a year. Bohag or Rongali bihu is the festival of merriment, singing, dancing, expressing love and honour. Bohag bihu is the time when the farmers starts sowing and thus they wish and hope for a good harvest. “Kati Bihu” is the festival of hope which is celebrated to mark rice panicle initiation. “Maagh Bihu” is the festival of harvest with satisfaction after harvesting of grains.

Bohag or Rongali Bihu begins as the welcoming of the Assamese New Year dawn. In Assamese calendar, ‘Bohag’ is the first month and thus, New Year starts from this month. This festival represents the happiness of the society as the term ‘Rongali’ resembles to happiness and celebration. It is started with the Sankranti of Sot and Bohag month of Assamese calendar and remains for seven days. With the arrival of spring in the mid of April, this festival is celebrated with zest and zeal. This festival is also celebrated in Odisha, Bengal, Punjab, Kerala, Tamil Nadu etc. with different nomenclatures (Pongol in the south and Baisakhi in the north) as this is the first day of Hindu solar calendar. Earlier Bohag bihu was celebrated for seven days together and each day had a different description like Goru Bihu (for cattles), Manuh Bihu (for mankind), Tator Bihu (for loom), Gossain Bihu (for Gods), Nanglor Bihu (for plough), Bihu for domestic animals and Chera Bihu (concluding day of the Bihu). Since,

cattle are an important aspect of Indian agriculture, the first day of the Bohag Bihu festival is dedicated to them. In rural areas, men continue to collect important items such as “Tara Pogha” (cattle ropes) made from slices of “Tara” - (an indigenous vine) and vegetables such as raw turmeric, brinjal, and gourd etc. for the cattle. On the eve of Bihu, the ladies clean their clothes, homes and prepare unique bihu delicacies such as “Chira”, “Pitha” etc. which are served to guests.

Kati Bihu, also known as Kongali Bihu, is an agricultural festival. This festival is celebrated when the rice crops germinated and there is not enough food to feed and the granaries are empty hence this bihu is also called as Kongali Bihu (Kongal means Poor). It is mainly performed by the women folks by lighting Saki (earthen mustard oil lamps) in the paddy fields, under the Tulsi plant, Bharal ghar (store house) etc. on the first day “Kati” (seventh month of Assamese calendar). In the rice fields, a particular sort of lamp called as “Akaxh Banti” (Sky candle) is set up high on the points of tall bamboo, which attracts insects and keeps the crops healthy and insect-free. Through this lamp farmers recite spells to ward off negativity and pests in the field and to pray for a good harvest. There is also a belief that this is done to ease the soul of the deceased into the next world.

Magh bihu, also known as Bhogali bihu is a festival of harvest with satisfaction after harvesting of grains. This festival is celebrated on 1st and 2nd Magh (tenth month of the Assamese calendar) usually held on the mid of January (14th-15th January). The young folks on the eve of Magh Bihu build a makeshift cottage called “Bhelaghar” using the hay of the harvested rice fields preferably near a river. They prepare “Meji” (a pile on split fire-wood) in a conical shape of a temple. The entire night (Uruka) is spent around the Meji with people preparing food, singing bihu songs dancing with the beats of “Dhol”, (typical kind of drums) and arrange a community feast. In the next morning, people burn the Meji by taking bath in the river and worship to the fire god. They believe that scattering the ashes of the burned Meji over the fields will boost the fertility of the soil. It is also claimed that the Meji fire burns out the winter because the event is held when the winter season is nearing to end.

Ali –Aye- Ligang: It is the most significant and colourful festival of the ethnic Mising community celebrated with zest and zeal. Ali-Aye-Ligang is

celebrated in the spring season with pomp and grandeur on the first Wednesday of the month 'Ginmur' as per the Mising almanac (First Wednesday of the month of Fhagun, mostly falls in the month of February all over Assam) when the nature dances in its youthful beauty and joy. 'Ali' means roots, 'Ai' or 'Aye' means seeds or fruits and 'Ligang' means first sowing or planting. So the meaning of 'Ali-ai-li' gang' would be first sowing or planting of roots or seeds as the name itself, conspicuously signifies as the festival of the peasant people.

Ali-Aye-Ligang is not only an agricultural festival but also it reflects the socio cultural scenario and religious thought processes. The invocation of "Sedi –Melo", "Do:nyi –Polo" accompanied by ritual songs praying to witness the sowing function on the bosom of the mother earth, appealing to her to make the soil fertile without any harmful effect of animal, insects and birds which makes us understand about the religious sensibilities in this festival. Thus, this festival is a symbol of greenery, nature and thanks giving to fore fathers. Prayers, dancing, singing are the distinguishing feature of this festival which is celebrated by men and women in the courtyards of every household in the village. Essential food items of this festival include pork, Apong (homemade rice wine), namsing and purang (a kind of sticky rice, boiled and wrapped with wild cardamom leaves). 'Lilen' is the last day of the festival which is marked by a community feast.

Po:rag: It is one of socio religious festivals of the Mising community also called as 'Nora Chiga Bihu'. The festival is celebrated for three days as a post-harvest festival i.e. after complete harvest of Guni Amro (Ahu) crops. The main function of the Po:rag begins on any Wednesday after the harvest. Po:rag is celebrated in "Murong" with zest and zeal in front of "Donyi: Polo" and asking for peace and harmony of the village. The Mibu performed all the sacrificial rituals of the festivals. The celebration takes place for around three to four days. Various traditional delicacies like Purang apin (boiled rice on plaintain leaves), Peyred Oying (black gram) with pork and Pitang Oying (rice flour) etc. are prepared during the festival. Apong and pigs are essential food items for the celebration since pork and apong are considered indispensable in various ceremonial functions. Although this festival is not customary, it is a part of the Mising traditional festivals and it has been found that celebrations vary from village to village (Boruah, 2016). It was found that this festival is celebrated when the economic

condition of the particular village is stable and the village folks are happy with their harvest.

Bisu: The Deori people observed two major festivals in a year and both the festivals are connected with agricultural activities (Borah, 2020). The first is called "Bohagiyo Bisu" or Bohag Bihu and the other is "Maghiyo Bisu" or Magh Bihu. The Deoris called their Bihu as "Bisu". "Bohagiyo Bisu" is the most important festival and they observed this festival for a period of seven days with unlimited joy and happiness. On the first Wednesday of the Bohag month, the festival starts and continues until Friday of the same week. The Deori community performs Bisu from Wednesday when the sangkranti of chot (an Assamese month) falls on that day (next to transition of Chot and Bohag). The actual festival begins with the sacrifice of thirteen fowls at the sal (shrine) of the priest in honour of their god Kundi-Mama (Hara-Gauri). On the first day both the young and age-old people visit the chief priest's homestead and spend the whole night singing and dancing. In the very next morning, they visit the river for a communal bath that includes dipping cattle in same river. This festival is observed before starting the agricultural season. Households entertained the guest by providing Suje (rice beer). Young males and females together perform Bisu dance by singing different Bihu song at chhaje khula (in the center of the village). Maghiyo bihu is observed on the first Wednesday of the month of Magh. The Maghiyo festival is a grand feast arranged in the premises of Morong attached to the temple wherein fourteen fowls are sacrificed as a ritual activity for the well-being of the villagers. Early in the morning, the next day the youth put fire on in the meji.

5.2 Agriculture based rituals

Narasiga Sabah: It is directly associated with cultivation, which is performed three times in a year- before starting to plough in the paddy field, before collecting the seeds and after finishing the paddy cultivation. It is arranged publicly with a feast in the villages. It is observed to prepare for paddy cultivation, with hopes for its successful harvest and to ensure the safety of the cows, cowherds, and farmland.

Nakathia Sisha (Sowing of Paddy Seeds): On the day of first sowing of paddy seeds the Ahoms perform Dam puja (worship of the dead) near the main pillar of the Borghor (kitchen). After field preparation for sowing the seeds, some bunches

of bitter flowers (Tita Phool) are planted around it. The Ahoms believed that in doing so insects and birds could not do any harm to the seeds (Bijoy, 2015). They also enter one stone, one chaloni and few branches of 'kachu' plants in the field so that the birds cannot patronize the field to destroy the planted seeds. The person in charge of sowing the seeds should also be very careful. While sowing seeds if he/she keeps the seeds tight chance is that it may occur some trouble at the time of extracting the kathiya (newly grown seedlings). He/she should also take note that seeds are sown evenly distributed.

Guch Luwa (transplanting seedlings): On the day of first transplanting of rice (whether it may be Sali, Ahu or Bao) a ritual is observed which is called Guch Luwa. On that day of Guch Luwa the main house wife of the family goes to the paddy field, made ready for transplanting of rice plants. She takes with her a forepart of a plantain leaf and upon that leaf a pair of thuria tamul (areca nut wrapped in areca leaf), a guava, a bhimkal, (Musa balbisiana) and a branch of a 'helos' tree is kept. The woman prays to Goddess Lakhimi to grow their rice in abundance and have seeds just like that of guava or bhimkal. On that very day a kind of family feast is arranged and to that feast men and women who are engaged in transplanting of rice are invited.

Nangal Dhowa (plough washing festival): When the tilling and transplanting works are completed feast is arranged in the family and this function is known as nangal dhowa or plough washing festival. On that day along with the plough is cleaned, the pair of oxen dipped. Some of the families on that day, prepare a kind of pitha (e.g. cake) called bhat-pitha or nangal dhowa pitha. This pitha is prepared from pitha guri (e.g. rice powder). The rice powder is mixed semi tight with half boiled water and then added in boiling water pressing over by a chaloni. The belief attached in this ritual of bhat pitha is that it increases not only the fertility of soil but also of the human being.

4. CONCLUSION

The indigenous form of communication plays an important role in social functioning, maintenance and social change. It is important to consider ethnic groups current communication structures and typologies. The above documented indigenous communication systems are very beneficial to farmers as observed and should be further investigated for scientific details. The

discovery of these indigenous communication systems would assist land extension staff, politicians, scientists and other interested citizens in developing effective communication methods that integrate modern media complementing indigenous practices for sustainable agriculture through with active participation of villagers.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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