Analyze The Information Needs And Information Seeking Behavior Of A Tribal Community In The Mayurbhanj District

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Submitted: 02-10- 2023 Reviewed: 07-11- 2023 Accepted: 04-12- 2023	Information is an essential requirement for life, and without it, no community can grow. This study article investigates the information demands and seeking behavior of a tribal community in the Mayurbhanj District. Through a survey involving 250 participants encompassing students, daily-wage laborers, government employees, retirees, self-employed individuals, & the unemployed, the study highlights the prevalent information sources among the community, with print media and the Internet emerging as prominent channels for accessing external information. The research also uncovers challenges faced by the community in their information-seeking endeavors, encompassing issues such as limited access due to costs, inadequacies in the local library's collection, outdated resources, language barriers, scarcity of relevant materials, and restricted library operating hours. These findings emphasize the significance of addressing these challenges to better cater to the community's unique information requirements and improve theiroverall access to information for empowerment and growth. **Keywords:** District, Tribal community, information needs, information seeking behavior, Mayurbhanj

1. INTRODUCTION

Information is incredibly important in today's world. We cannot survive without information; without it, we will perish. Due to this previously unheard-of volume of data, there is fierce competition among nations in many fields. The data at our disposal helps us to streamline daily tasks. Without libraries & other information hubs, there would have been a far smaller amount ofinformation that was disseminated globally. Information management technology has developed in step with the rise in demand for it (Ukachi, N. B. (2007). Our daily existence requires our access to pertinent information. You should begin your information search in libraries, information centers, documentation centers, & other institutional repositories (Nasreen,M.,2006).Nowadays, having knowledge is crucial. People are unable to obtain the information they require due to a variety of reasons, including ignorance, unawareness, accessibility issues, poverty, a lack of trustworthy informationdelivery systems, and others (Sinha, M. K. & Das, P. ,2015).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Hansdah et al. (2023) focused on indigenous people in the Mayurbhanj District of Odisha. A significant roadblock to progress & a key element in dealing with persistent Maoist threats is their failure to communicate effectively. Because of a lack of education, superstition has been deeply ingrained in their worldview, trapping people in a loop of pointless grieving and bringing disease to their communities. The main objective of this research is to compile indigenous people's perspectives on the challenges and opportunities that come with enhancing health care
in the study's target regions. The study discovered a relationship between respondents' financial security and their use of public health services, as well as between undesirable behaviors like drinking and conventional belief systems like traditional medicine & superstitions.
Sahoo et al (2023) examined the socio-economic profile of the Hill Kharia people and the special provision for the girls of the Hill Kharia community. Education plays an important role for a family and helps in the

development of a society as well as an individual's socio-economic status. Out of 30 districts, 9 districts are considered as tribal districts with 45.45% to 58.72% of Scheduled Tribe population as per 2011 Census. Most of these tribal communities are socio- economically lagging behind many others. Their knowledge systems, religious beliefs, social structures, and cultural practices are wholly distinct from those of any other people. Their economies are frequently built on ecologically friendly practices. The Birhor, Hill Kharia Lodha, Mankidia, etc are some of the major pre-literate tribes inhabiting the Mayurbhanj district and they have a pre agricultural level of technology. They mostly subsist on collecting natural resources. Their way of life has impacted the spread of literacy in many ways. The Central Government implemented special provisions and with the collaboration of State government made schools for Hill Kharia primitive people which give them a better platform to strengthen their social and economic life.

Mallik et al. (2022) conducted a study on the information needs of the Lodha people of Senna & Chandana mouza in Keshiary block & Khamar & Kattara mouza in Binpur II block in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal. The study's findings demonstrate that different geographical regions have different information needs and different ways of using information resources. The information needs of the Lodha people in these places vary, as do the information sources they employ to fill those needs. These folks require knowledge, but they have no notion of where to look for solutions. Since this is the case, their needs & social standing remain the same. Even after 74 years of independence, they are still sufficiently uneducated to have missed out on the advantages of advancement. The only bright spot is that some residents of these areas have discovered how to obtain the information they require and are making an effort to do so. Chattopadhyay et al. (2022) focused on the social and cultural life of young people in the Lodha tribal community in the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The survey also looked at the relationship between young people's sense of social isolation and their lack of access to modern media. Data were gathered and generated through in-person interviews, focus groups, & close observation. The study concentrated on five villages where the Lodha population was greater than 70%. A stratified random sampling technique was used to choose the sample. The results show a connection between the use of digital media & a generational divide in the Lodha community. The young tribal people were eschewing their traditional institutions & adjusting to an urban lifestyle that was extremely dissimilar from anything their parents or grandparents had known.

Panda et al. (2020) examined the distribution of MCHC services among India's tribal population, with an emphasis on the tribally dominant areas of Odisha. The additional goal of this research is to look into the reasons behind the general inability to achieve MCHC in these regions. Secondary data from the National Family Health Survey & other Ministry of Tribal Affairs reports were used in the study. Both the simple percentage ratio method & multivariate regression techniques have been used to support the goals. As a result, in order to bridge the gap between MCHC indicators among tribal people & the national average, a multidimensional strategy is required, with an emphasis on the successful implementation of programs in tribal areas. Districts with sizable tribal populations are some of Odisha's poorest areas. Both the frequency of underage marriages and the education of women have been proven to have a substantial impact on institutional birth rates in the districts of Odisha. While underage marriage is adversely connected with the coefficient, women's education levels are positively correlated with it. Whether or not parents choose to immunize their children is significantly influenced by their degree of education. The findings show that long-term investment in women's education is essential for the expansion of MCHC.

Maharana et al (2022) examined the traditional health care system among the Santal of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha. Public health is greatly influenced by individual and group health behaviors. Every particular tribal community's health status has been influenced by the surrounding environment, the use of local plants, taboos, superstitions, & so forth. It's possible that different societies and cultures will understand health, illness, and health-seeking behavior differently or with a different meaning. Thus, every culture has its own distinct explanations of health and illness and its own beliefs and practices concerning diseases. This study was carried out in the village of Bantali Rakhasahi, which is home to 131 Santal people, in the Mayurbhanj region of Odisha. The goal of this study is to understand the attitudes and practices of the Santal people in relation to health care.

Mishra et al. (2017) conducted a study of the mothers of a migrant tribal population in Bhubaneswar, India, to learn more about their capacity for disease recognition and the circumstances that led them to seek medical care for their kids. 175 families were selected from the four slums where Santals predominate on the grounds that they (i) had migrated during the previous 12 years and (ii) had a child between the ages of 0 & 14. Mothers took part in semi- structured interviews to learn more about the illnesses their youngest child had in the previous year. Before a sickness was diagnosed, a number of symptoms were considered. Different diseases trigger treatment & care-seeking behaviors in various ways. According to conventional belief, if you wait two or three days after the onset of symptoms, the sickness will go away on its own. The mother chooses to take her child to the doctor because of the severity and delayed start of the symptoms.

Balgir et al. in 2006 focused on health issues particular to tribal groups, such as illness prevalence and preventative challenges. There is an urgent need for local, tribal, action-oriented health research that is in line with the actual demands of indigenous populations. The studies should have a clear goal, be practical, and work toward improving the lives of indigenous people. The health of the indigenous communities of Orissa is a colorful mosaic of communicable & noncommunicable ailments, in keeping with the state's socioeconomic growth. Major causes of poor health in Orissa's tribal groups include pervasive poverty,

illiteracy, malnutrition, a lack of safe drinking water and hygienic conditions, insufficient access to national health and nutritional services, etc. The indigenous populations of Orissa are very susceptible to infections, non-viral, and silent-killer inherited illnesses. By early detection, health education, & other types of information, education, & communication (IEC) activities, many viral and parasite infections can be avoided.

3. RESEARCH GAP

The research gap that emerges from the provided literature reviews is the lack of an integrated and holistic understanding of the information needs & seeking behavior of the tribal communities in the Mayurbhanj District. While some studies, such as Hansdah et al, 2023 and Mallik et al, 2022 have touched upon the health and information needs of tribal communities in the region, the focus has been relatively narrow, either concentrated on health challenges or limited to certain aspects of information behavior. Additionally, the research by Sahoo et al, 2023 and Chattopadhyay et al, 2022 has explored socio-economic aspects and cultural transformations among tribal communities but has not explicitly delved into their specific information-related struggles. The existing literature also reflects a significant knowledge gap concerning the interplay between traditional knowledge systems, external information sources, literacy rates, and socio-economic development within the tribal context. Hence, there is a distinct need for a comprehensive study that encompasses the broad spectrum of information needs, seeking behaviors, and challenges faced by the tribal population in the Mayurbhanj District, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of their information ecosystem and potentially paving the way for tailored interventions that address their unique needs and facilitate their holistic advancement.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the information needs and preferences of the tribal community residing in the Mayurbhanj District.
2. To assess the utilization of traditional knowledge sources within the community for meeting their information needs.
3. To examine the extent to which participants rely on local information sources specifically related to the Mayurbhanj District.
4. To analyze the various sources from which the tribal community seeks external information.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design: The Mayurbhanj District's indigenous population's information needs and information-seeking behaviors are examined in this study using a mixed-methods research technique. By combining quantitative data collection through surveys and qualitative insights from interviews and observations, a comprehensive understanding of the community's information landscape can be achieved.

5.2 Participant Selection: A purposive sampling strategy is adopted to select 250 participants from diverse segments of the tribal community. This sample encompasses various demographic categories, including students, daily-wage laborers, government employees, retirees, self- employed individuals, & the unemployed. This diverse selection aims to capture a representative range of perspectives and experiences related to information needs and seeking behaviors.

5.3 Data Collection Instruments: For quantitative data, a structured questionnaire is designed to gather information on participants' information sources, preferences, challenges faced, and socio-economic backgrounds. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions. Qualitative insights are collected through semi-structured interviews and direct observations to delve deeper into the context, motivations, and behaviors related to information seeking.

5.4 Survey Implementation: The structured questionnaire is administered face-to-face with the selected participants. To ensure consistency and reduce bias, trained enumerators conduct the surveys. Participants are given ample time to provide thoughtful responses, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their information-related experiences.

5.5 Interview Process: Semi-structured interviews are conducted with a subset of participants to gain qualitative insights. These interviews allow participants to express their thoughts, experiences, and challenges in more detail. The interviews are audio-recorded with participants' consent and later transcribed for analysis.

5.6 Data Analysis: Quantitative data from the surveys are analyzed using descriptive statistics to quantify participants' preferences, trends, and challenges. Qualitative data from interviews and observations are thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns, emerging themes, and in- depth insights related to

information needs and seeking behaviors.

6. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 and Figure 1 illustrate the gender distribution of respondents. According to the data, 120 of the total respondents identify as men, representing 48 percent of the sample. However, 130 respondents identify as female, constituting 52% of the sample. This table provides a clear overview of the gender distribution within the studied group & emphasizes the relatively equal representation of male and female respondents in the research.

Table 1: Distribution of Gender

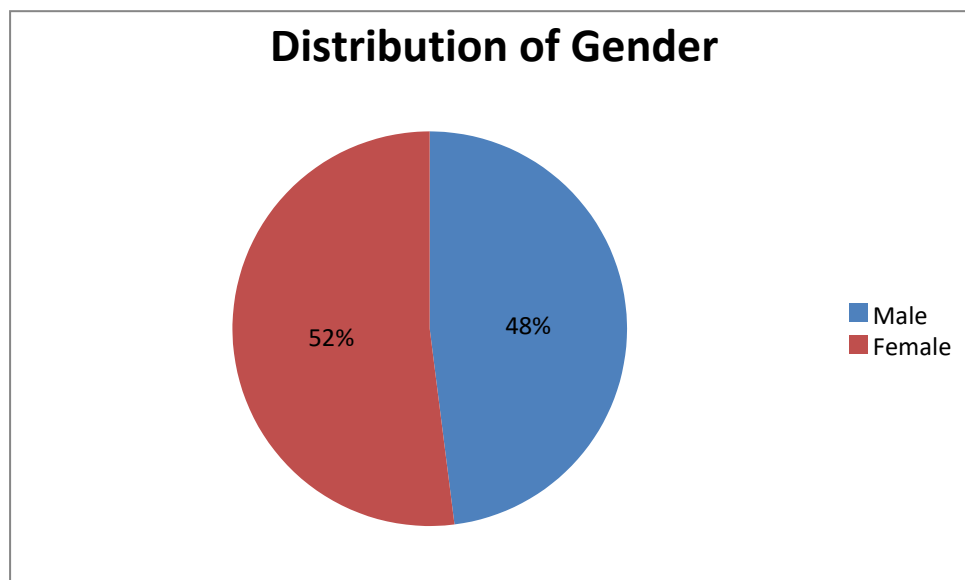| Respondents	Number	Percentage
Male	120	48%
Female	130	52%

Fig. 1: Distribution of Gender

The distribution of respondents by age category is depicted in Table 2 and Figure 2. Twenty individuals, or 8% of the sample, are classified as "Under 18" according to the data. 50 respondents, or 20 percent of the sample, are between 18 and 25 years old. There are 80 participants between the ages of 26 and 40, representing 32 percent of the total. In addition, 70 respondents between the ages of 41 and 60 make up 28% of the total sample size. 30 respondents, or 12 percent of the total, are individuals older than 60 years old. This table provides a comprehensive breakdown of the distribution of respondents across different age categories, illuminating the age demographics of the population under study.

Table 2: Distribution of Age

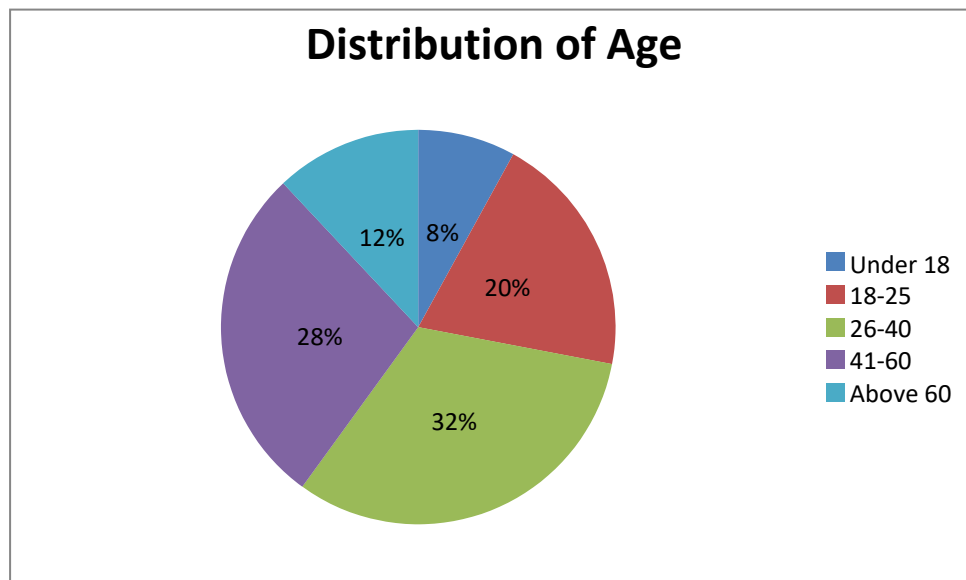| Respondents	Number	Percentage
Under 18	20	8%
18-25	50	20%
26-40	80	32%
41-60	70	28%
Above 60	30	12%

Fig. 2: Distribution of Age

Table 3 and Figure 3 illustrate the distribution of respondents' occupations. According to the data, forty of the total participants are students, constituting sixteen percent of the sample. 50 respondents, or 20% of the sample, are engaged in work for a daily wage. 30 participants, or 12
% of the total, are government employees. Twenty participants, or 8% of the sample, are seniors. In addition, there are 60 respondents, who are self-employed, or 24% of the total, while there are 50 participants who are currently unemployed or 20% of the sample.

Table 3: Occupation

Respondents	Number	Percentage
Student	40	16%
Daily-wage worker	50	20%
Government employee	30	12%
Retiree	20	8%
Self-employed	60	24%
Unemployed	50	20%
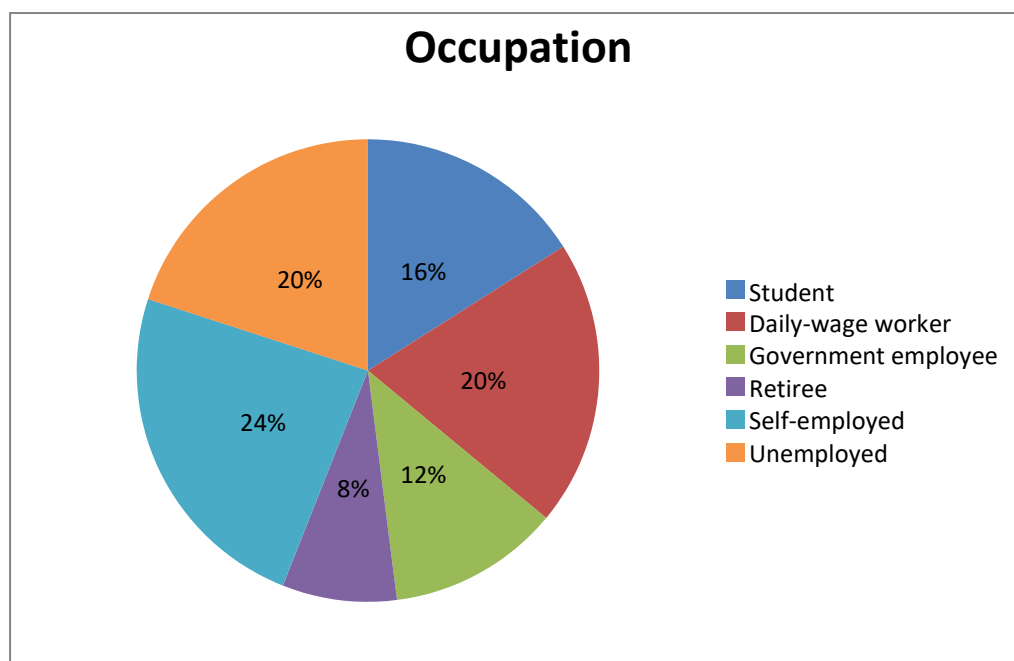
Fig. 3: Occupation

The distribution of respondents based on their levels of education is shown in Table 4 and Figure 4. Twenty participants, or 8% of the sample, have no formal education, according to the collected data. Forty respondents, or 16% of the sample, have completed their primary school education. 60 participants,

or 24% of the total, hold a secondary school education. In addition, 70 respondents, or 28% of the sample, have completed their secondary school education. In addition, there are sixty participants with a college or university education, representing twenty- four percent of the total.

Table 4: Level of Education

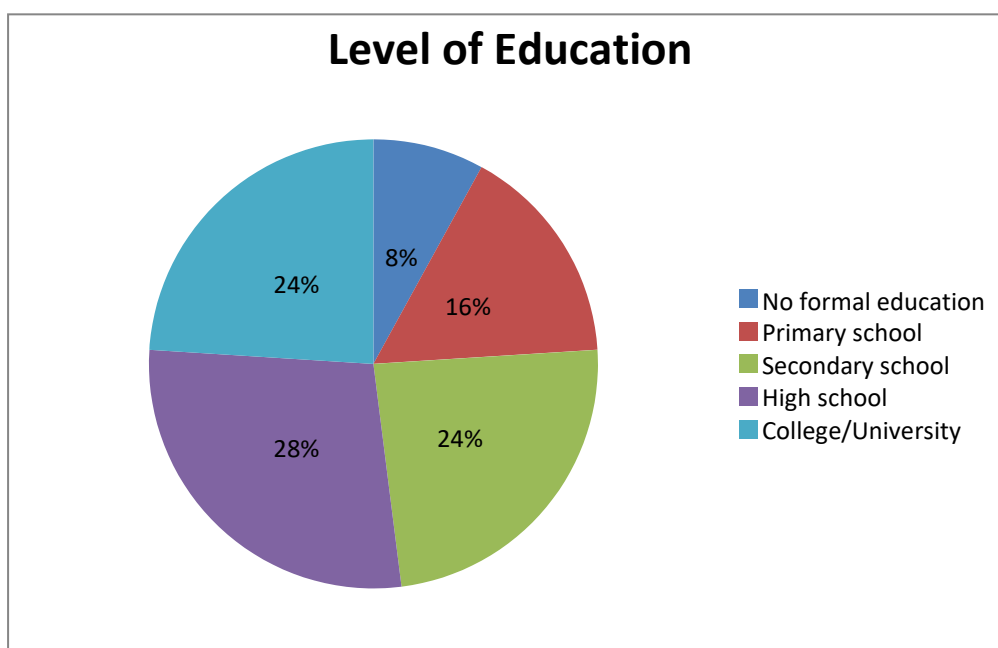| Respondents	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
No formal education	20	8 %
Primary school	40	16 %
Secondary school	60	24 %
High school	70	28 %
College/University	60	24 %

Fig. 4: Level of Education

Table 5 and Figure 5 depict the preferences of respondents for various information sources. 80 participants, or 32% of the total sample, access information through print media such as newspapers & periodicals. The majority of participants, 120 respondents or 48% of the sample favor the internet as their primary source of information. Thirty respondents, or 12% of the sample, favor the radio, while forty respondents or 16% of the total, and prefer television. In addition, 60 participants, or 24% of the sample, cite local community gatherings as their preferred source. 90 respondents, or 36% of the total, use friends and family as a source of information, while 50 participants, or 20% of the sample, utilize the local library.

Table 5: Information Sources and Preferences

Information Sources	Number	Percentage
Print media	80	32%
Internet	120	48%
Radio	30	12%
Television	40	16%
Local community gatherings	60	24%
Friends and family	90	36%
Local library	50	20%

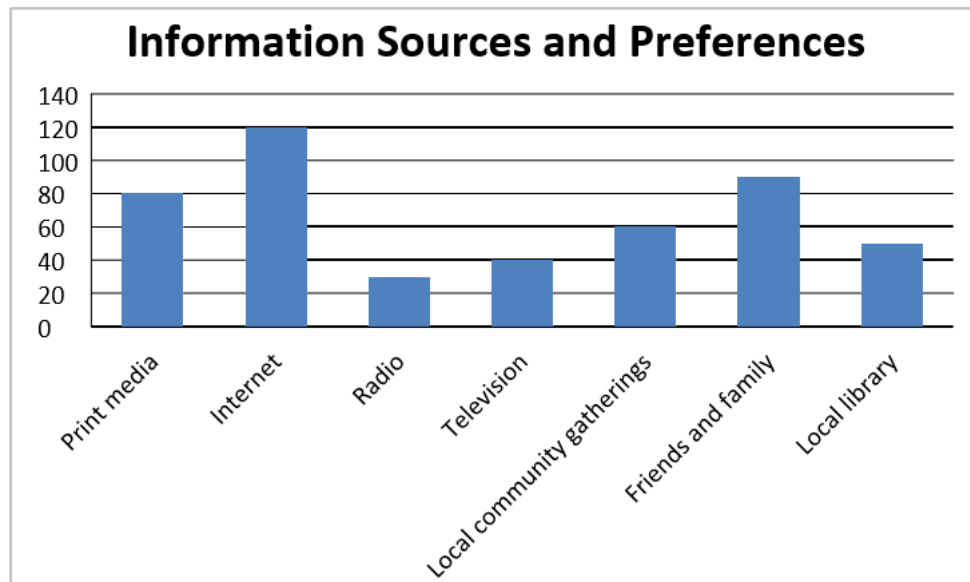## Information Sources and Preferences

Fig. 5: Information Sources and Preferences

Table 6 and Figure 6 display the distribution of respondents' information-seeking difficulties. 70 individuals, or 28 % of the sample, are challenged by the elevated costs associated with information access, according to the data. In addition, 90 respondents, or 36 % of the sample, encountered the issue of limited availability of pertinent data. Forty participants, or sixteen percent of the total, are affected by the problem of obsolete information sources. For 80 respondents or 32% of the sample, language barriers present obstacles. In addition, 60 participants, or 24% of the sample, find limited library hours to be a difficult. Fifty participants, or twenty percent of the total, are hindered by the lack of essential resources in the local library.

Table 6: Challenges in Information Seeking

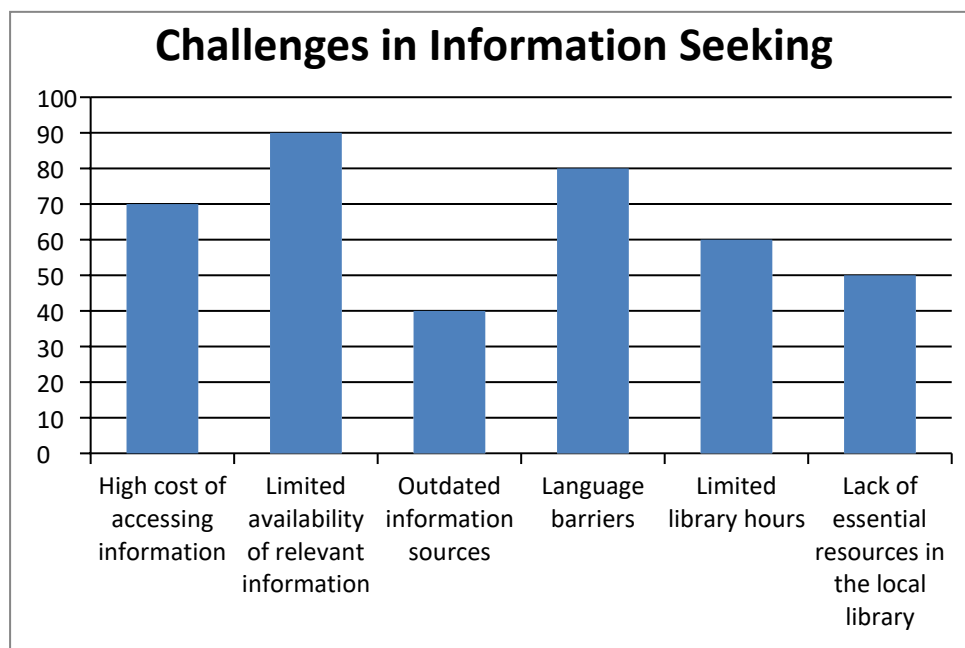| Challenges	Number	Percentage
High cost of accessing information	70	28%
Limited availability of relevant information	90	36%
Outdated information sources	40	16%
Language barriers	80	32%
Limited library hours	60	24%
Lack of essential resources in the local library	50	20%

Challenges in Information Seeking

Fig. 6: Challenges in Information Seeking

Table 7 and Figure 7 illustrate the distribution of responses regarding information access via the local library. 50 participants, or 20% of the total sample, responded affirmatively, indicating their use of the

local library for information access, according to the data. Contrarily, 200 respondents, or 80% of the sample, responded negatively, indicating that they do not use thelocal library to access information.

Table 7: Do you use the local library for accessing information?

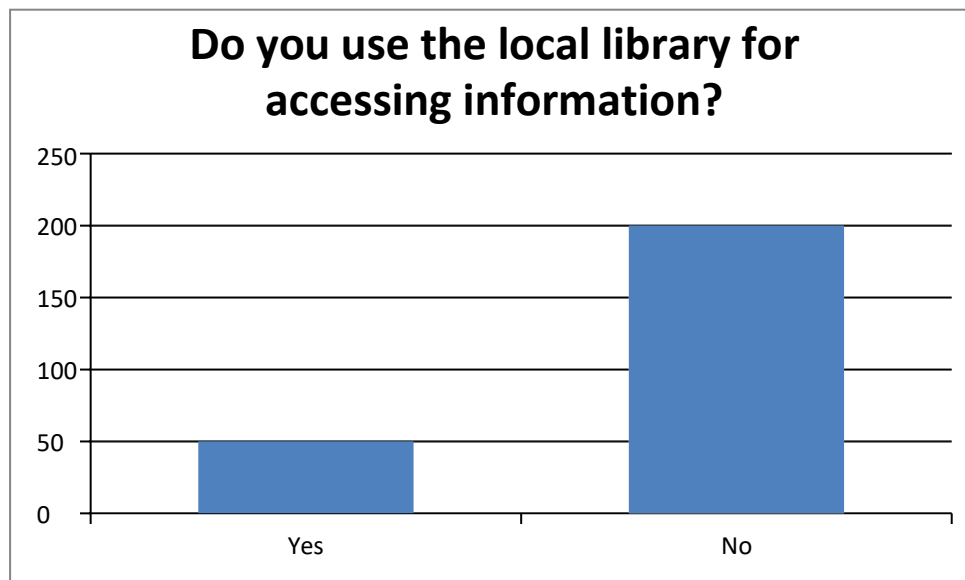| Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	50	20%
No	200	80%

Fig. 7: Utilization of Local Library for Information Access

Table 8 and Figure 8 depict the distribution of responses regarding the occurrence of language barriers when gaining access to information. The data reveals that among all participants, 16 percent, or 40 individuals, frequently encounter language barriers when pursuing information. In addition, 80 respondents, or 32% of the sample, experience occasional language barriers. Alternatively, 130 participants, or 52% of the sample, do not experience language barriers when accessing information.

Table 8: Do you face language barriers when accessing information?

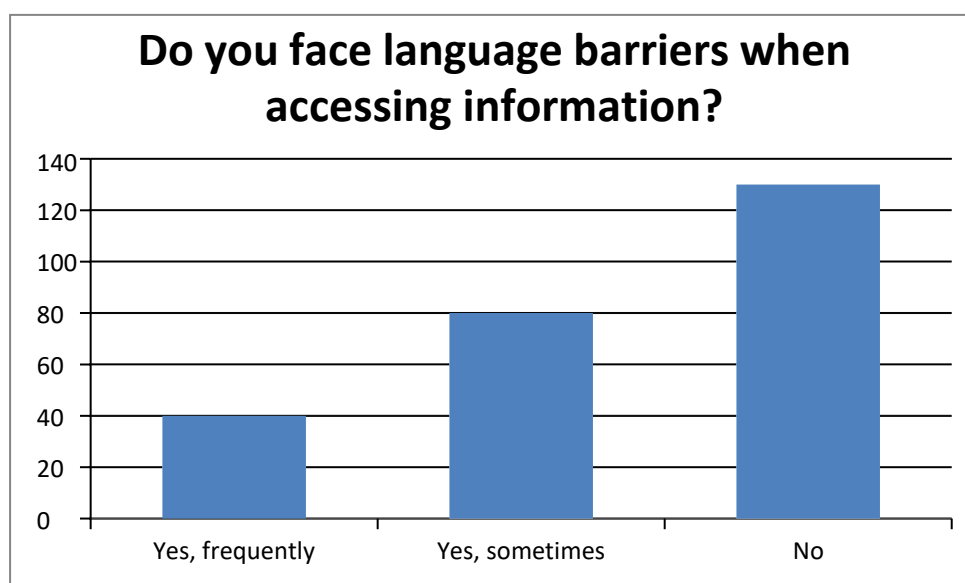| Response	Number	Percentage
Yes, frequently	40	16%
Yes, sometimes	80	32%
No	130	52%

Fig. 8: Language Barriers in Accessing Information

Table 9 and Figure 9 illustrate the distribution of responses regarding the availability of information in the

preferred language of participants. 60 participants, or 24% of the sample, find information to be easily accessible in their preferable language, according to the data. Moreover, 120 respondents, or 48% of the sample, consider information to be somewhat accessible in their preferred language. In contrast, 70 participants, or 28% of the sample, perceive information to be completely inaccessible in their preferred language.

Table 9: How accessible is information in your preferred language?

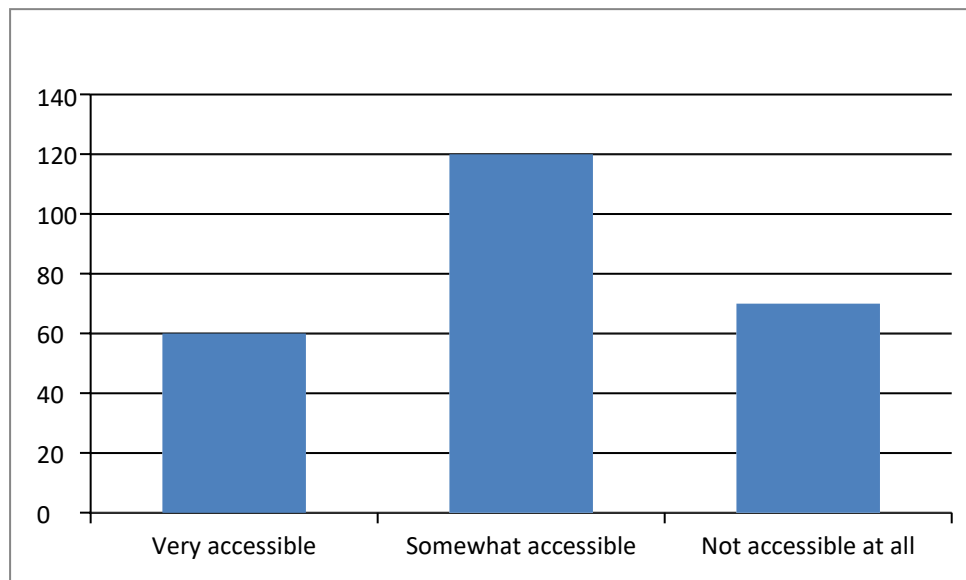| Response	Number	Percentage
Very accessible	60	24%
Somewhat accessible	120	48%
Not accessible at all	70	28%

Fig. 9: Preferred language

Table 10 and Figure 10 illustrate the distribution of participants' beliefs regarding the potential ofinformation access to enhance their socioeconomic circumstances. The data indicates that 90 participants, or 36 percent of the sample, strongly concur that access to information can improve their socioeconomic status. Moreover, 120 respondents, representing 48% of the sample, concur with this statement. Twenty individuals, or 8% of the sample, express a neutral position. Ten participants, representing 4% of the sample, disagree with the statement, while a further ten respondents, also representing 4% of the sample, strongly disagree.

Table 10: Do you believe that having access to information can improve your socio-economic condition?

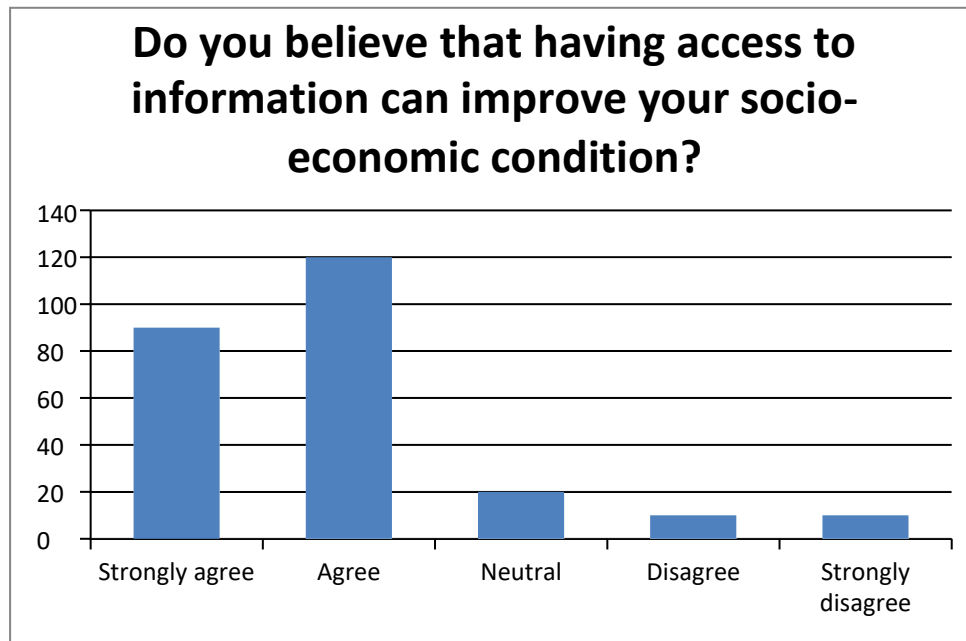| Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	90	36%
Agree	120	48%
Neutral	20	8%
Disagree	10	4%
Strongly disagree	10	4%

Fig. 10: Perceived Impact of Information Access on Socio-economic Conditions

Table 11 and Figure 11 illustrate the distribution of participant responses regarding their reliance on traditional knowledge sources in their community for information. 80 individuals, or 32% of the total sample, frequently rely on traditional knowledge sources for information, according to the collected data. In addition, 100 respondents, or 40 percent of the sample, occasionally use traditional knowledge sources. In contrast, 70 participants, or 28% of the sample, do not rely on traditional sources of information within their community.

Table 11: Do you rely on traditional knowledge sources within your community for information?

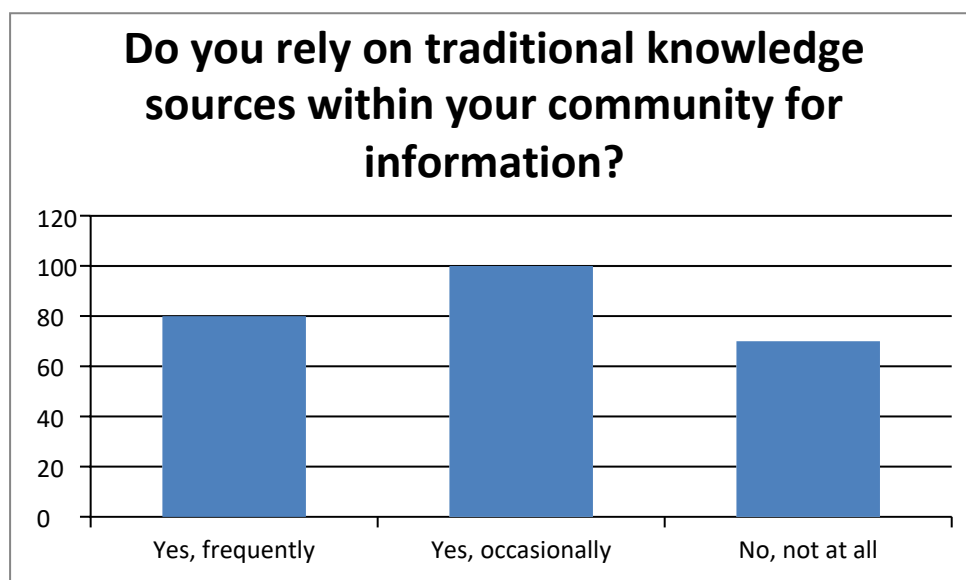| Response	Number	Percentage
Yes, frequently	80	32%
Yes, occasionally	100	40%
No, not at all	70	28%

Fig. 11: Utilization of Traditional Knowledge Sources

Table 12 and Figure 12 display the distribution of responses regarding the perceived effectiveness of traditional knowledge sources in meeting the informational requirements of participants. Twenty participants, or 8% of the total sample, deem traditional knowledge sources ineffective for meeting their information requirements, according to the collected data. Moreover, 50 respondents, or 20% of the sample, consider these sources to be somewhat effective. In addition, 80 participants, or 32% of the sample, believe that traditional knowledge sources are moderately effective at meeting their information requirements.

Moreover, 70 individuals, or 28% of the sample, consider these sources to be very effective, while 30 respondents, or 12% of the sample, consider them to be extremely effective.

Table 12: How effective do you find traditional knowledge sources in meeting your information needs?

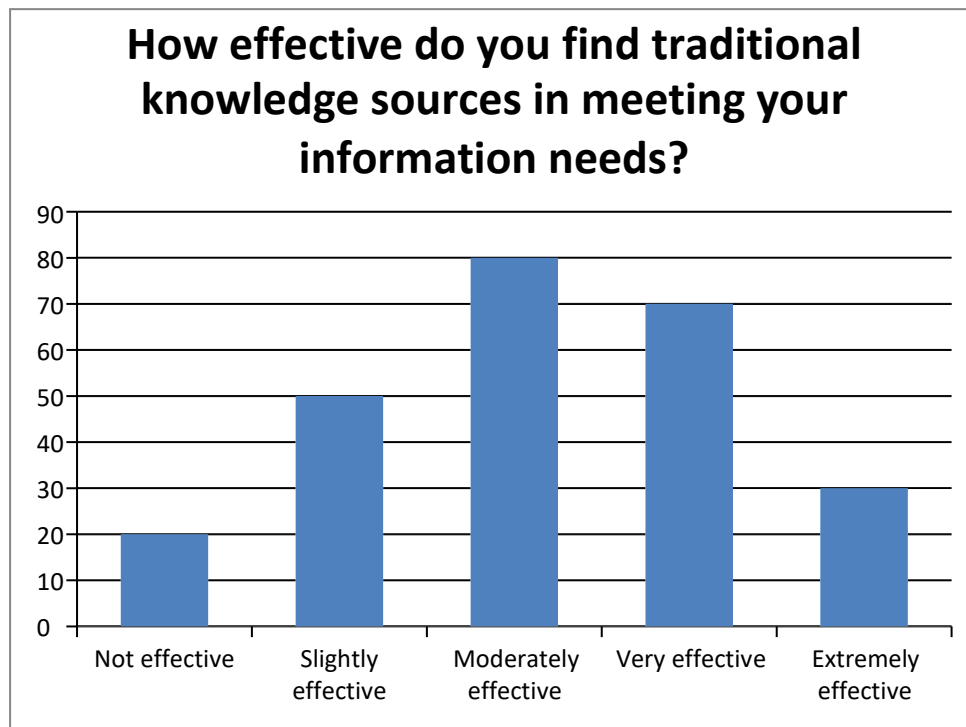| Response	Number	Percentage
Not effective	20	8%
Slightly effective	50	20%
Moderately effective	80	32%
Very effective	70	28%
Extremely effective	30	12%

Fig. 12: Effectiveness of Traditional Knowledge Sources

Table 13 and Figure 13 depict the distribution of participant responses regarding their cognizance of government programs or initiatives that provide information to their community. 60 individuals, or 24% of the sample, are aware of these government programs or initiatives, according to the data. Alternatively, 190 respondents (or 76% of the sample) indicate that theyare unaware of these government initiatives.

Table 13: Are you aware of any government programs or initiatives that provideinformation to your community?

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes, I am aware of them	60	24%
No, I am not aware of them	190	76%

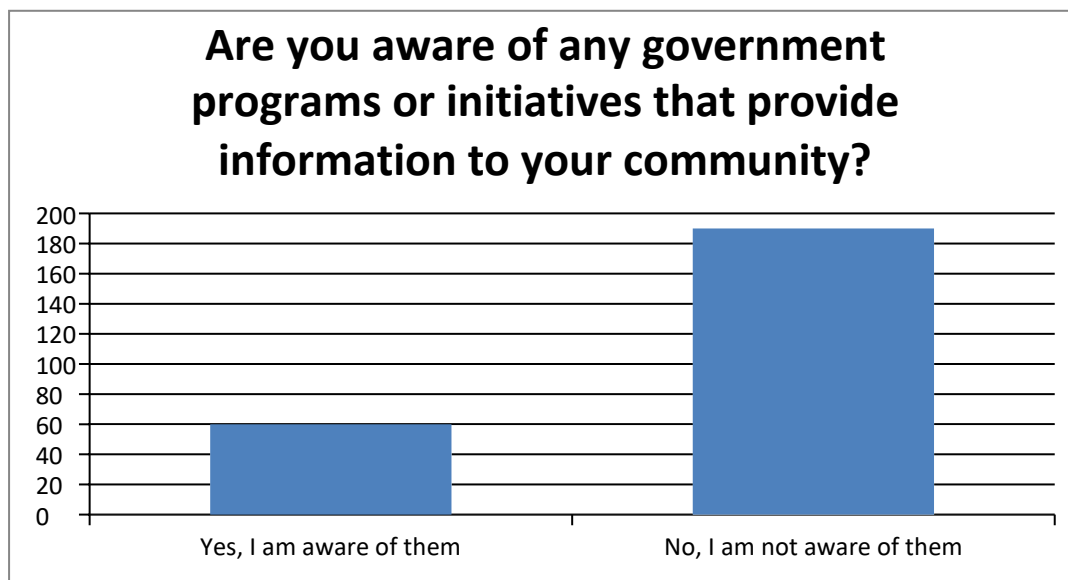## Are you aware of any government programs or initiatives that provide information to your community?

Fig. 13: Awareness of Government Programs and Initiatives

Table 14 and Figure 14 show the distribution of responses regarding the perceived usefulness of government programs in meeting the information requirements of participants. Twenty individuals, or 8% of the total sample, consider these government programs to be extremely useful in meeting their information requirements, according to the data. In addition, 30 respondents, or 12% of the sample, view these programs as somewhat beneficial. In contrast, 10 respondents, or 4% of the sample, indicate that these government programs have not been useful in meeting their information requirements.

Table 14: Have these government programs been helpful in meeting your informationneeds?

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes, very helpful	20	8%
Yes, somewhat helpful	30	12%
No, not helpful	10	4%

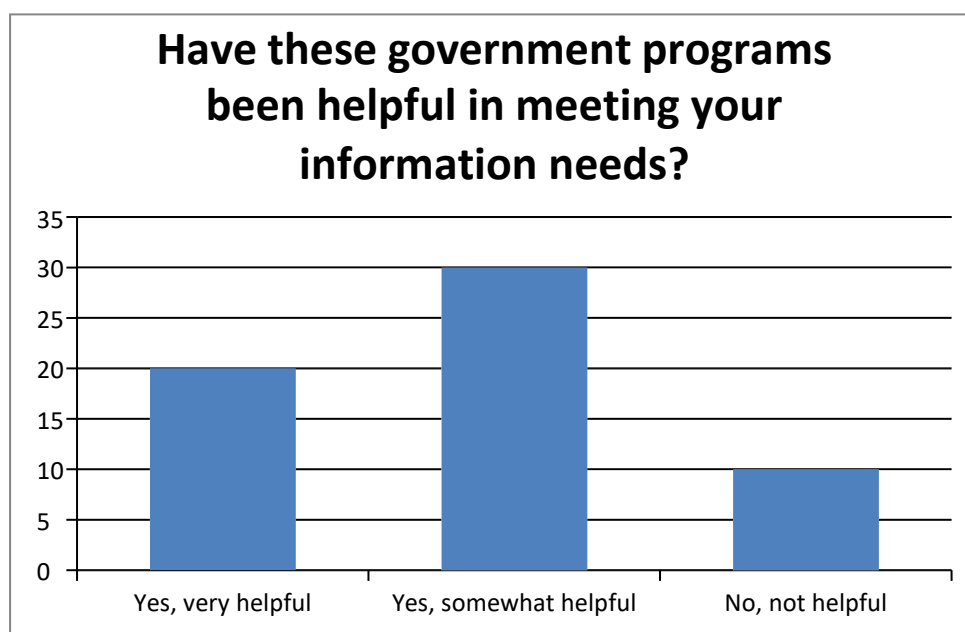## Have these government programs been helpful in meeting your information needs?

Fig. 14: Perceived Effectiveness of Government Programs

Table 15 and Figure 15 illustrate the distribution of responses regarding respondents' reliance on various local sources for Mayurbhanj District-specific information. 80 individuals, or 32 percent of the sample, rely on community gatherings as a source of information, according to the collected data. In addition, 50 respondents, or 20% of the sample, seek information from local elders or leaders. Forty participants, or 16 percent of the sample, are influenced by traditional storytelling. Thirty participants, or 12% of the total, depend on local radio programming. In addition, 70 individuals, or 28% of the sample, rely on local newspapers or bulletins for Mayurbhanj District-related information.

Table 15: Which of the following local sources do you rely on for information specifically related to the Mayurbhanj District?

Response	Number	Percentage
Community gatherings	80	32%
Local elders or leaders	50	20%
Traditional storytelling	40	16%
Local radio programs	30	12%
Local newspapers or bulletins	70	28%
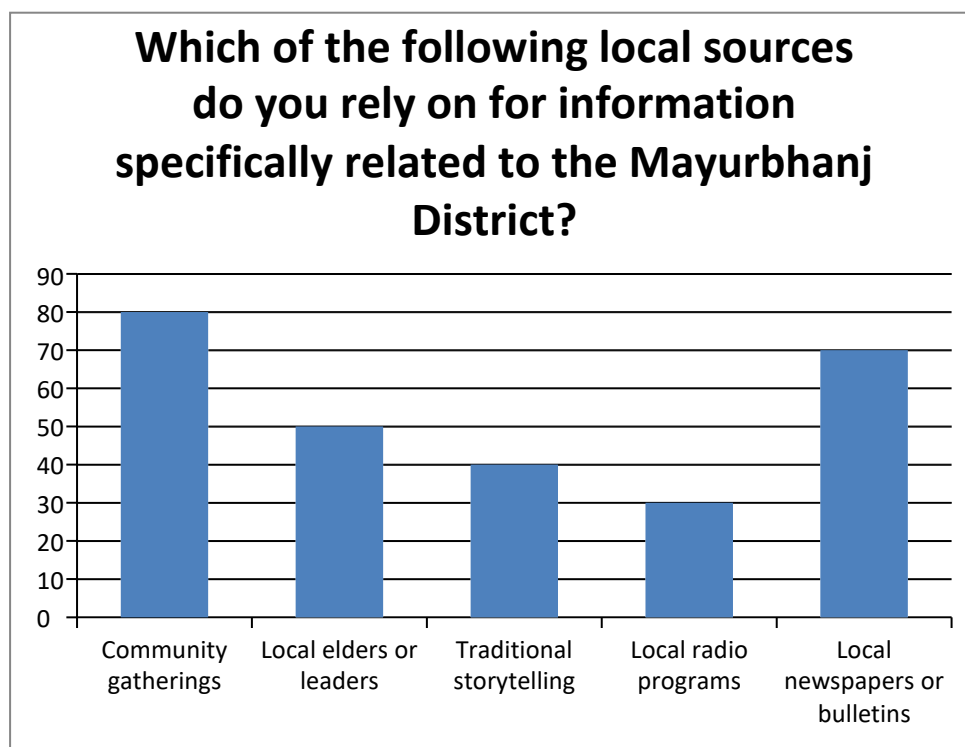
Fig. 15: Local sources for information specifically related to the Mayurbhanj District

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study's comprehensive analysis of the information needs & information seeking behavior within the tribal community of the Mayurbhanj District illuminates the multifaceted challenges and opportunities that shape their interaction with external knowledge sources. The findings underscore the significance of traditional knowledge networks and localized information channels alongside modern mediums like print media and the internet. Moreover, the identified obstacles, including limited access, language barriers, and inadequate library resources, highlight the pressing need for targeted interventions to enhance information accessibility and empower the community. With insights into the interplay between socio- economic conditions, government initiatives, and information utilization, this study not only contributes to academic discourse but also lays the groundwork for informed strategies that could catalyze the socio-economic advancement of the tribal community in this region.

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