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Digital Mediation of Indian Oral Traditions: Communication, Representation and Cultural Transformation

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Abstract

Oral traditions like folklore stories, ballads, myths, legends, proverbs and oral history are prevalent in India. Traditionally, this information is transmitted between generations by means of talking, hearing, performing arts and social interaction within a society. Digitalization is changing them through means like recording, representation, dissemination and access to oral tradition. The concept of this paper is to study how digital media mediates Indian oral tradition and its impact on communication, representation and cultural continuity. This article is about four interrelated aspects to digital mediations such as creation, representation, communication channels and use by consumers. A digital archive helps preserve oral history; on the other hand, video clips, audio recordings of interviews or podcast episodes are available online for people all over the world who may not be able to visit a physical location where these materials were recorded. Also, digital mediation may alter an oral tradition's original context, form, and meaning by means such as editing, visualization, remixing, commercialization, and audience involvement. Thus this article is concerned with arguing against viewing digital media merely as a means of preserving oral tradition but rather it creates new space where such traditions are interpretable, reproducible and transformative. Through an analysis of existing research papers about this topic, we discuss some advantages as well as problems associated with digital mediation such as preserving culture integrity, authenticity issues related to copyrights concerns for authorship rights within communities' etcetera. This article is theoretical rather than based on direct research findings. This paper offers an approach towards studying Indian oral tradition through electronic means for further studies of them within modern times.

Keywords: Indian Oral Traditions, Digital Media, Digital Mediation, Cultural Representation, Cultural Continuity, Indigenous Knowledge, Communication

1. Introduction

There is a long tradition of knowledge, values, beliefs, stories and memories that have been shared orally from generation to generation in India. It includes folk tales, myths, legends, songs, proverbs, riddles, chants and oral histories. Oral traditions are not just means of entertainment—they are a vehicle for cultural knowledge, social norms, collective memory, and community identity. UNESCO (2003) considers oral traditions and expressions to be an important dimension of the intangible cultural heritage and records that they are also important means of transmitting knowledge and cultural values from one generation to the next. An understanding of the importance of oral traditions is enhanced when read as a form of communication. Oral traditions rely heavily upon the interactivity between the performer and audience, where the written word is not a factor. A story can be retold by various people or in various social and cultural settings, in which case the story may appear in slightly different forms. UNESCO also states that oral traditions are a blend of the act of re-creating, reproducing, and improvising (n.d.). Hence, oral traditions are not culture products; they are dynamic modes of communication that are able to transform from one generation or context to the next. They are also related to language, performance, place, community, and storyteller-audience connection. Oral and local traditions are also associated with Indian knowledge in the Indian context. Indian languages, culture, arts and traditional forms of knowledge have been

given importance in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) (Ministry of Education, 2020). This recognition is significant because great amount of cultural knowledge is found not only in the classical texts and formal institutions but also in folk practices, local traditions, community narratives and the oral form of knowledge. Preservation and transmission of this knowledge thus rely on ongoing engagement of the communities and younger generations. New opportunities have opened up for the transmission of these traditions with the development of digital media. Once told orally by people in a specific community, oral stories and performances can now be recorded and shared via websites, YouTube, podcasts, social media, digital archives, and other online spaces. Digital technologies can capture the audio-visual components of performance such as voice, music, gesture, expression, audience interaction. UNESCO (n.d.) acknowledges the potential that ICTs have in safeguarding the oral traditions by recording oral performances and disseminating them to a broader audience. Recent studies of digital narratives and oral heritage in India also highlight the potential of these digital tools to enhance accessibility, participation, and the documentation of oral history and folk narratives (Pal et al., 2026). But the digitization of an oral tradition is not just a preservation exercise. The process also alters the experience and communication of the tradition. A longer oral story can be shortened for a social media video. A folk song can be set to new pictures, music, subtitles, editing or a mix of all these.

Traditional story can be introduced to a foreign culture context. Likewise, users aren't just listeners anymore; they can comment, share, remix, reinterpret, and even make their own versions of cultural content. Digital mediation thus initiates a transition from an interpersonal way of communicating to a more participatory and networked communication. This change also calls into question the question of representation. With an oral tradition transferred from local performance to digital mediums, choices must be made about what to record, what to demonstrate, what to edit, what language to employ, and how to display the content to viewers. These decisions can have an impact on what the outside culture views as its community and the knowledge it has. The digital circulation can raise visibility and accessibility, but it can also result in decontextualisation, simplification, commercialization or reinterpretation. UNESCO (2003) has thus stressed the need to involve the community, group and individual who produce, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage. On the communication side, these developments imply that digital media as technological devices for the storage of cultural material should not be seen just as such; rather, their communication functions and their significance need to be examined. They may also serve as intervening environments that shape the creation, articulation, dissemination, and reception of cultural knowledge. When the oral performance of a story shifts to the digital medium, the relationship between storyteller, cultural knowledge, medium, and audience changes. This is an important research area in the study of media and communication. While the

issues of preservation and digitisation of cultural heritage have been discussed before, there is a need to focus conceptual attention on how digital media impact the communication and representation of Indian oral tradition. Documentation, preservation and access are seen as key components of safeguarding and the communicative processes by which oral traditions are reformulated to be accessible to a digital audience are not examined. This paper, therefore, attempts to look at the digital mediation of the oral traditions in India from a communication-centred perspective. It emphasizes four interrelated elements – production, representation, transmission and consumption – and explores how these can be used to both sustain and shape oral cultural knowledge within the digital sphere. The paper makes the argument that digital media are not merely an alternative form of the oral tradition of India. Instead, they produce new situations in which these traditions can be documented, displayed, disseminated, explained and reworked. This change also poses questions on authenticity, context, community involvement, ownership and cultural agency. The paper attempts to join these discussions and contribute to the burgeoning discussion on digital media, cultural heritage and the evolving means of cultural communication in present day India.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Oral Traditions, Cultural Memory and Digital Media

Indian oral tradition consists of folk tales, songs, myth, legend, proverb, rituals and other knowledge passed down orally from

one generation to the next. The traditions are shifting in the age of digital media from local and community media spaces to digital media. This shift has opened up new opportunities to preserve, access, represent and participate. Meanwhile, digital mediation may also transform traditional knowledge in terms of its shape, context and significance. To date, the literature on oral traditions and digital media can be broadly summarised through four interrelated themes: digital preservation and digital archiving, remedialisation of oral narratives, new circulation and representation in social media, and new communities and digital audiences. These themes are significant in explaining how the oral traditions of India are being transmitted in the digital world today.

2.2 Social Media and the Digital Revival of Oral Traditions

Kamsi (2025) looks at how social media can help to keep the folklore alive and to bring it back to Arunachal Pradesh. The research emphasizes the diversity of the oral heritage of the region, such as folk songs, folktales, legends and myths. Traditionally, many communities in Arunachal Pradesh have passed on their culture orally, and in some communities without written script, oral communication has been of special significance (Kamsi 2025). The study also points to changes induced by formal education and modern communication technologies, which have led to a decline in traditional ways of passing a message from one generation to the next. Kamsi (2025) contends that social media can be used as a new platform to share these traditions with the younger generation.

Folklore can be accessible in more engaging and accessible forms through platforms like YouTube and social media spaces. The study, therefore, suggests that social media can be used for revival and education from the cultural perspective. But the preservation and revitalisation of folklore is the main item of concern of Kamsi's talk. It pays less attention to how placing oral traditions on digital platforms might impact their representation, interpretation and meaning. This provides a significant space for additional communication research. Traditional narrative can be made accessible to audiences via digital circulation, but digital circulation can also alter the selection, editing, presentation, and comprehension of traditional narrative.

2.3 From Oral Traditions to Digital Narratives

Malhotra, Mehta and Pandey (2025) explore the evolution of storytelling from oral tradition to digital media and explore how media can help maintain traditional knowledge systems of indigenous communities. They examined the comparison between the traditional Indian storytelling, such as Katha and epic stories, and the digital communication. The authors suggest that digital platforms can enable some of the communicative functions of traditional communal storytelling and can enable new forms of narration. Malhotra et al. (2025) pay attention to how storytelling has been continuous and transformed in various media. It appears from their discussion that they do not have to consider oral, print, and digital communication as entirely distinct communication systems. Rather, various modes of communication

may supplement and co-exist. Traditional knowledge can be passed on to new audiences in digital archives, documentaries, and social media as a modern way to communicate the knowledge. This view is especially applicable to the current study as it shifts the conversation from preservation to another level. Oral traditions can take new visual, textual and audio-visual forms when they become digital narratives. Adaptation and reinterpretation are thus also part of the communication process. Rather than being very specific, however, Malhotra et al. (2025) talk of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and oral traditions. The current paper focuses specifically on India, and explores the digitisation of oral traditions, considering the communication aspects of production, representation, transmission and consumption.

2.4 Digital Archiving and Vernacular Oral Music

Deo's research offers a valuable look at the interplay between technology, oral traditions and digital archiving. Deo (2021) in her chapter on vernacular music in North India reviews the digital archiving and documentation projects of oral vernacular music in various regions including New Delhi, Rajasthan, and Gujarat. The study is ethnographic, focused on noticing how the practices of digital documentation and archiving can shape oral musical traditions into culturally accessible, digitally stored musical objects. Deo's work is important in demonstrating that digitisation is not a neutral process. The documentation and archiving of traditional music can help to ensure a music performance is remembered and made accessible outside

its traditional context; however, technology can also affect the way that traditional cultural forms are organised, circulated and interpreted. This is evident in Deo's later work on oral traditional music in digital networks. Deo (2025) discusses the issues of commons, property and belonging in relation to the traditional music of India. The study, based on ethnographic research with musicians, archivists, recording studios and folk music labels, explores how technological circulation can reconfigure notions of ownership over oral traditional music. This then extends the conversation from preservation to ownership, circulation, tech, and cultural belonging which is the work that Deo has done. It posits that if oral traditions become part of digital networks, they can be linked to new systems of recording, distribution, and ownership. This is significant for the current study as an example of the importance of Digital mediation as a communicative and cultural process, not simply a technical approach to preservation.

2.5 Social Media, Representation and Authenticity

Jamir and Das (2026) is better at discussing digital representation and authenticity directly. Ao Nagas stories are found through my work on them being presented as narratives by youtube users and ai-generated articles. This research will be done through an interview method of analyzing images/texts by viewers / creators position. This paper uses literature analysis of folklore studies, post-colonial theories and media anthropological research for understanding traditional stories

interacting with online spaces. According to Jamir and Das (2026) YouTube increases the visibility of Ao folktales; however, platform related incentives tend to favor visually appealing content rather than authentic community based stories. And this information matters since it reveals that digital presence and cultural authenticity might not be developed at the same rate. However, when adapting traditional stories for an online audience, creators might alter their presentation, visual style, narrative and structure so they appeal to viewers. The research shows how media representations are made through interpretation rather than mere reproduction. Also, this raises questions about what kind of culture gets represented through platforms. The research will be about ao naga stories and youtube. To have more knowledge about Indian oral tradition on various types of electronic platforms, we need better comprehension and study.

2.6 Digital Media, Oral Communication and Tribal Communities

This study titled ‘Digital media and oral traditions among tribal groups of Jharkhand’ by Mahto and Mahawar (2025) investigates the relationship among tribal communities and oral traditions through digital media. Their research explores various information sources and their perception of their reliability within tribally living communities. The results indicate that oral communication is still significant, and that many participants use local elders as a source of information. Meanwhile, these communities have a mobile phone and social media information landscape. The study is helpful as it shows that digital media can

be effectively used in addition to the traditional oral communication. Rather, traditional and digital communication channels can co-exist. Therefore, it is important for the authors to point out the need for digital literacy and communication strategies that are sensitive to the needs of tribal communities (Mahto & Mahawar, 2025). This study is especially significant for the study of the transmission of oral knowledge and its consumption from the point of view of the present paper. It implies that people and communities are not a mere audience or netizens of oral or digital information. They select appropriate trustworthy sources and utilize them. Unlike this study, which mainly investigates oral cultural traditions being represented and transformed through digital media, Mahto and Mahawar (2025) have introduced a broader concept of digital media as information channels. In this way, when the oral cultural knowledge is transferred to the digital communication space, there is room for a more extensive discussion of the concept of their study.

2.7 Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature reviewed revealed that digital media is opening new spaces for the preservation, circulation, accessibility and visibility of the Indian oral traditions. The research on Arunachal Pradesh, North Indian oral music, Ao Naga folktales, tribal communities also reveal that digital media can be a tool for cultural transmission but also raises issues of authenticity, context, representation, and ownership (Deo, 2021, 2025; Jamir & Das, 2026; Kamsi, 2025; Mahto & Mahawar, 2025; Malhotra et al., 2025). There are,

however, very few studies addressing the issue that are not community specific or geared towards preservation and documentation. The scope of the conceptual discussion of Indian oral traditions from a wider perspective of communication is limited in terms of how oral traditions are affected by digital media in the processes of their production, representation, transmission and consumption. This paper attempts to fill this gap by investigating digital media as preservation mediums, but also as a mediation environment that can transform the communication and cultural meaning of oral traditions.

3. Conceptual Gaps

The current literature offers valuable insight into the relationship between the oral tradition and digital media, however there are some gaps in the conceptualization. Many studies primarily use the digital media as a medium for preserving, documenting, and making oral traditions accessible to broader audiences (Kamsi, 2025; Malhotra et al., 2025). Less focus has been placed on digital media as active communication spaces that may impact the ways oral traditions are created, presented, shared, and understood. Second, most of the earlier research studies have been conducted at specific community and region level such as Arunachal Pradesh, Ao Naga communities, tribal communities or North Indian musical tradition (Deo, 2021, 2025; Jamir & Das, 2026). Lack of conceptual understanding in relating these several situations in context of India. Third, the literature is not fully integrated around four important processes (production, representation, transmission, and consumption) in a

single communication perspective. Digital mediation can transform the form, context, meaning and relationship between oral traditions and audiences. Lastly, authenticity, decontextualisation, remix, commercialisation, community involvement and cultural ownership are explored in various studies but are not usually analysed under a single umbrella as interconnected aspects of digital mediation. Thus, a wider conceptual discussion that elucidates the possibility of supporting Indian oral traditions' continuity as well as their reinterpretation and cultural change by means of digital media is needed.

4. Research Objectives:

- To examine the role of digital media in the communication and transmission of Indian oral traditions.
- To explore how digital media influence the representation of Indian oral traditions across digital platforms.
- To analyse how digital mediation contributes to the preservation, reinterpretation, and cultural transformation of Indian oral traditions.
- To examine the key challenges associated with the digital mediation of Indian oral traditions, particularly authenticity, cultural context, community participation, and cultural ownership.

5. Theoretical Framework

The present paper aims to give an integrated theoretical approach to

understand the communication, representation, transmission and transformation of Indian oral traditions, in the context of digital media. Oral traditions are transmitted orally, through speaking and listening, performance, memory and community participation. With the advent of digital media, however, there are new methods of recording, presenting, circulating, and consuming these traditions. The learning of digital mediation should thus go beyond a single theoretical approach. This paper integrates Orality and Literacy Theory, Mediatization Theory and Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding Model and utilizes the concept of Participatory Culture as a supplementary theory. These viewpoints together account for the shift from oral to digital communication and begin to look at the ways in which meaning and cultural practices can shift.

5.1 Orality and Literacy Theory

Orality and Literacy (1982) by Walter J. Ong is the first theoretical work on understanding oral traditions. Ong discusses the distinction between oral and literate modes of communication and how communication technologies shape the expression, memory, organization, and transmission of knowledge. Oral communication relies on the speaker's ability to speak, remember, repeat, perform, and engage in dialogue with the listener. This view will be important in the context of Indian oral traditions as it is through interpersonal and community communication that many of the folk tales, folk songs, myths, proverbs, legends and oral history have traditionally been passed on. They don't always rely on literary sources. A storyteller or performer shares

knowledge directly with audience and the tradition can be altered by repeat performance and the social context. Such traditions moving to digital media generate a new communication condition. An oral story can be captured in audio, made into a video, posted on YouTube, shared as a podcast or turned into a short form social media story. The digital recording can capture aspects of the original concert, or it can remove the tradition from the live concert experience, in which the performer and audience are connected. From this point of view, Ong's view contributes to the understanding of the starting point of digital mediation—the shift from primarily oral and interpersonal communication to technologically mediated communication. The present paper does not, however, assume the existence of digital communication as a substitute for oral communication. Rather, oral and electronic versions are able to interact. New places might be created through digital media where the oral traditions can be presented, re-created, and shared with new audiences.

5.2 Medialization Theory

Medialization theory is the second large-scale theoretical approach. The subject of "medialization" deals with the growing significance of media in social and cultural processes. Media has been defined by Hepp (2012) as a "molding force", which can change communicative practices and social interactions. Media, from this angle, are not just conduits in which information flows. The characteristics of media can influence how communication takes place. This is the core argument of the current paper as

digital platforms can have an impact on the production and dissemination of Indian oral traditions. If a folk story is documented for YouTube, for instance, it will be possible for the one who is recording the story to choose the length of the story, the language, how it is presented, the images, the background music, the editing of the story, the subtitles, the presentation title, the thumbnail, etc. Likewise, songs from the past can be remixed, edited, or even used in conjunction with new visuals before they are uploaded online. Digital mediation is therefore more complex than simply digitizing an oral tradition into a digital file. The medium can shape the form and dissemination of cultural material. The geographical scope of oral traditions can be extended through digital platforms, and the tradition can be made available to people who may never have witnessed the original performance. Meanwhile, the nature of the platform can foster shorter, aesthetically pleasing, searchable and highly shareable content attributes. Thus, Medialization Theory can be used to explain the relationship between digital media and cultural transformation. It enables this paper to explore the potential impact of the communication environment on the production, representation, transmission and consumption of oral traditions.

5.3 Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding Model

The third component of the framework is Stuart Hall's (1980) Encoding/Decoding Model. Hall says that the message is produced and then (re)interpreted by the audience. Meaning is not thus just transferred directly from the producer to

the receiver. The same message can have different meaning to different audiences based on their social, cultural and experiential contexts. This way of thinking is especially helpful to understand the presence of Indian oral traditions in digital media. When an oral story is being recorded in a digital format – whether video, podcast or social media post – decisions are being made about what to include and how. Images, music, language, narration and editing, subtitles, and so on are chosen and contribute to the encoding of the tradition. This digital image is then rendered for the audience to interpret. An oral participant from the original community will know the folk story in another way than a member of the audience who is seeing it online for the first time. Other elements that can be involved in the creation of new meanings include comments, discussions, sharing, and audience responses. Hall's model thus helps in linking representation with interpretation. This study is especially significant given the potential of digital circulation to move oral traditions outside of the contexts in which they originated culturally and geographically. Tradition can have new resonance if it is shared with broader or other audiences.

5.4 Participatory Culture

The idea of Participative Culture (Jenkins, 2006) is another lens to view the shifting role of audiences in digital media. Jenkins writes on digital convergence and the new media producer-consumer relationships that have emerged. The audience is not a passive recipient but rather can be part of circulation and production of media products. In the context of Indian oral traditions, this is key since digital

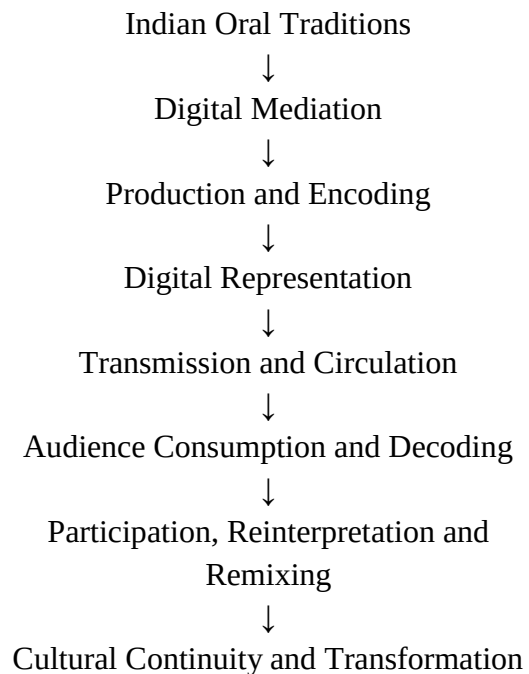
audiences can participate in the culture. Users can share a folk song, comment on a traditional story, make up their own version of a story, remix existing material or add their own traditions to new audiences. In such an environment, there is less of a distinction between the producer and consumer. Participative Culture thus also lends grounds for supporting the consumption and circulation aspects of this paper. It helps to understand the role of digital mediation in reinterpretation and transformation as well as an increase in the spread of information. Meanwhile, involvement creates issues of cultural ownership, authenticity and community agency over their traditions' online representation.

5.5 Integration of the Theoretical Perspectives

The great thing about this frame is that these views are not used as distinct theories but are combined. Each view describes a related phase of the digital mediation process. Orality and Literacy Theory describes and offers the foundation for understanding the process of the shift from one mode of communication to another, from oral to technologically mediated. The theory of 'mediatisation' can help us understand the implications for communication patterns and how digital media can impact the creation and dissemination of cultural products. Hall's Encoding/Decoding Model describes the process of representing oral traditions via digital media and how audiences make sense of these representations. Participatory Culture builds on this process by clarifying concepts of audience

participation, sharing, remixing and user-generated interpretations.

The integrated process can be represented as follows:



This integration is directly aligned with the four dimensions of the current paper: production, representation, transmission and consumption. Production: mediatisation and encoding; Representation: Hall's model; Transmission: changing communication environment due to digital media; Consumption: decoding, participative engagement. The integrated frame also offers a means of comprehending the tensions generated by digital mediation. Digital media can help to preserve, access, see and keep oral traditions alive. Simultaneously, they can be responsible for decontextualization, simplification, commercialisation, remixing, reinterpreting, and altering the cultural ownership. In the following processes, it can be seen that digital mediation is not always a good or bad thing. The impact

will vary in relation to how traditions are created, depicted, shared and understood. Overall, the structure places oral traditions in India as dynamic communicative entities as opposed to being cultural artifacts. Digital media can create new spaces where these traditions can be sustained and the tradition can also transform in form, meaning, audience and context. This paper brings together the work of Ong, Hepp, Hall and Jenkins to create a communication-centred approach to the understanding of the transmission of India's oral traditions from oral and community-based environments to the digital world today. This theoretical integration serves as the basis for a critical examination of digital media, not just as a medium of preservation, but as an active mediation environment that can aid cultural continuity as well as cultural change.

6. Conceptual Discussion

Digital media has altered the modes of communication, representation and experience of Indian oral traditions. The traditional means of oral communication was through face to face interaction, performance, memory and community involvement. In the digital media, such time-honored customs can be captured, edited, saved, shared, and retrieved from their social and geographical contexts. Digital media should not then be considered solely as media of preservation, but as also a medium which can be used to shape the form and meaning of oral tradition. Production is the first dimension. With digital technologies, oral stories, folk songs, myths, and oral histories can be recorded in audio, video, podcast and other digital media. In the course of this,

the creator can choose specific versions, performers, languages, visuals and sounds. The decisions made in these choices can affect the potential presentation of an oral tradition to an audience. The second dimension is representation. The digital platforms can change the oral traditions by editing, subtitles, visual effects, background music, thumbnails, and written descriptions. These practices can make traditions more available and appealing to a larger audience, but can also reduce or alter the cultural context. Therefore, it becomes relevant to consider representation as an important part of the mediation of digital. The third dimension is transmission. Social media, video sharing platforms, podcasts and digital archives are all ways oral traditions can reach beyond local communities using digital platforms. This increased visibility and continuity can be achieved in culture. Meanwhile, traditions can be passed on to those who are not familiar with their native culture. The 4th dimension is the consumption. Digital versions of oral traditions can be viewed, heard, commented on, shared, interpreted and in many cases mixed. This makes the viewers more engaged with the creation of new meanings. It also poses questions of authenticity, cultural ownership, commercialization and community agency, however. Digital mediation, then, is characterized by continuity and transformation. Digital media can assist in the conservation and dissemination of Indian oral traditions, and can also redefine their production, representation, transmission, and consumption.

7. Discussion

This conceptual analysis has shown that the connection between the oral tradition in India and digital media is not restricted to the preservation of the tradition or to documenting it through technology. Digital media offer an environment in which new forms of communication emerge that allow oral traditions to be recorded, represented, circulated and interpreted in ways different from their traditional forms. The implications of this change point on the understanding of digital mediation as a process that can contribute to the continuity and the transformation of cultural knowledge are highlighted. One of the key questions is how oral and mediated communication have evolved into a relationship. The use of traditional oral communication relies heavily on performance, memory, listening, repetition, and interaction between the speaker and the community. Some of these can be captured in a digital format of an oral tradition, but the communication process becomes more reliant on the technological format and platform. In this way, digital media perpetuate and expand the reach of oral traditions while altering its contexts of experience. Representation and cultural context are also emphasized. Choices of language, visuals, editing, music, subtitles, titles, presentation style are all aspects of digital representation. This selection can enable the transmission of oral traditions beyond their original communities. But the traditions without context in society or culture can give less visible meaning or different meanings. A question that must be addressed is how cultural authenticity can be preserved when oral traditions are transferred to the digital context. An

additional major problem is audience involvement. Digital platforms enable consumers to engage with the media rather than being consumed. Users can comment, share, discuss, reinterpret and make new versions of cultural content. This may raise the awareness about lesser-known traditions, and offer communities new avenues for disseminating information about their culture. Simultaneously, there might be issues arising from user-generated modification and remixing that involve cultural ownership, authorship and community control. The conversation thus leads to a double aspect of digital mediation. Digital media can serve the purposes of accessibility, visibility, preservation, intergenerational transmission, and broader culture circulation, on one side. The other side, however, is the decontextualization, simplification, reinterpretation, commercialization, and cultural meaning changes. The outcomes are not mutually exclusive; they can happen concurrently in the same digital environment. Indian oral traditions need to be seen as a dynamic practice of culture, from a communication point of view, rather than as a static cultural artifact. They have brought about new connections between communities, creators, platforms and audiences in digital spaces. The conceptual framework outlined in this paper serves as a starting point to look at these relationships in the context of production, representation, transmission, and consumption. Further empirical studies may explore the processes at work across various Indian communities, traditions, languages and digital platforms.

8. Limitations

This paper is not empirical, and does not rely on first hand data from oracles, cultural communities, videogamers, or viewers. As such, the discussion offers a theoretical approach to social life in the age of the Internet, not empirical evidence of the social life of certain communities mediated through the Internet. The language, region, and community diversity of India also makes it challenging to capture all of the traditions in one, broad conceptual framework. Further, technologies, algorithms, and communication practices in digital platforms are continually evolving, and this could affect the creation and transmission of oral traditions. The paper primarily concentrates on the communication, representation, transmission, and consumption, and does not look in detail at specific platforms or communities, or conduct field-based research. The limitations could be overcome in future empirical research using interviews, digital ethnography, content analysis and community research.

9. Conclusion

Indian oral traditions represent an important form of cultural communication through which communities transmit stories, beliefs, values, memories, knowledge, and cultural practices across generations. The growth of digital media has created new possibilities for recording, preserving, representing, circulating, and accessing these traditions. However, this paper argues that digital media should not be understood only as technological tools for preservation. They also act as mediating environments that can influence how oral traditions are communicated and experienced. The conceptual discussion

presented in this paper examined digital mediation through four interconnected dimensions: production, representation, transmission, and consumption. At the production level, digital technologies allow oral traditions to be recorded and converted into different audio-visual and digital formats. At the representation level, editing, visuals, music, subtitles, and other digital elements can influence how cultural traditions are presented and understood. At the transmission level, digital platforms enable traditions to move beyond their original geographical and community boundaries. At the consumption level, audiences can access, share, comment on, reinterpret, and participate in cultural content. The paper also highlights that digital mediation can produce both opportunities and challenges. Digital media can improve the visibility, accessibility, preservation, and intergenerational circulation of Indian oral traditions. At the same time, the movement of oral traditions into digital environments may create concerns related to decontextualisation, authenticity, cultural ownership, commercialization, and community agency. These issues demonstrate that preservation and transformation can occur simultaneously. The integrated theoretical framework, drawing on Orality and Literacy Theory, Medialization Theory, Encoding/Decoding, and Participatory Culture, provides a broader communication perspective for understanding these changes. It shows that digital media influence not only the availability of oral traditions but also the relationships among creators, communities, platforms, and audiences.

Overall, the paper presents Indian oral traditions as dynamic communicative practices that continue to evolve within changing media environments. Digital media can support cultural continuity while also creating new forms of representation and interpretation. Future empirical research can build on this conceptual framework by examining specific communities, traditions, languages, and digital platforms to understand how digital mediation is experienced and negotiated in different cultural contexts.

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