

From Margins to Headlines: Role of Media in Pathalgadi Movement in Shaping Public Opinion for Indigenous Rights and Autonomy

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ABSTRACT

The Pathalgadi Movement, a tribal based movement primarily originated in Jharkhand, India, for asserting indigenous autonomy and protect their resources and land. Pathalgadi means carving a stone slab inscribed with constitutional provisions and tribal rights. This emerges as symbols of protest captured the interest of journalists and news outlets. The movement focus on asserting tribal autonomy, protecting land and resources, and preserving indigenous customs and traditions resonated with the media and the public. This emerged as a movement that is political, ethnic and ecological which is all about “Jal, Jungle aur Zameen” (Water, Forest and Land) to safeguard their land rights and resources, where the tribal populations in the Scheduled Areas are becoming active citizens for the assertion for Tribal self-rule. This movement gathered significant media attention due to its unique form of protest and its impact on indigenous communities. With the help of news coverage, documentaries, and social media, the media brought visibility to the movement and shed light on the historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors underlying it. And also got international attention, leading to solidarity and scrutiny from human rights organizations and global communities. Overall, the role of media in the Pathalgadi movement was very crucial in shaping public opinion, promoting accountability, and facilitating a broader discussion on indigenous rights and autonomy. This study wants to explore the current scenario, structure, characteristics and identity assertion of the Pathalgadi Movement and where the media stands for them at present. In which the ethnographic technique will be used in terms of data collection, including; purposive sampling, observation, focused group discussion, and semi-structured interviews.

Keywords: Media, Pathalgadi movement, Public opinion, Indigenous rights

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I. INTRODUCTION

India is one of the most socially stratified society in the world. There are different caste, races, tribes, religions, ethnic groups which shape the structure of society in a multicultural way. It is not just an ordinarily democratic country but its democratic structure is based on social and humanistic perspective. The



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Constitution made a provision to include the rest of the population for further welfare programs for their social and economic upliftment. This research is based on how the *Pathalgadi movement* emerged as a self-autonomy and identity assertion for the tribal. An identity is basically a sense of belonging to a particular group which consists of different sub groups having different physical attributes like race, sex or socially constructed attributes like caste gender, religion, regional attributes, linguistic attributes and ethnic attributes (Sinha, 2023).

As the world turns its attention to this significant movement, media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions and understanding. This article develops into the multifaceted relationship between media and the *Pathalgadi Movement*, exploring how media framing influences public sentiment, government responses, and the empowerment of indigenous voices. It also highlights the ethical responsibilities of journalists in accurately representing the movement and fostering constructive dialogue.

Jharkhand is a tribal inhabited state in eastern India. It was carved out from the Southern part of the State Bihar in the year 2000, 15th November (Dutt, 2014). The ancient name of Jharkhand means "Forest tract" also the forested area also known as the Chhota Nagpur plateau. Jharkhand is rich in its minerals with magnificent reserves of coal, mica, iron ore, limestone, bauxite and much reserves of copper, chromite, asbestos, tungsten, and gold etc. (Areeparampil, 1996). Jharkhand state was created to prioritize the development of a region predominantly inhabited by indigenous communities, protect their rights, and preserve their unique cultural identity.

The history of the Jharkhand movement reflects the resilience and determination of the indigenous peoples to assert their rights and identity. From the pre-colonial era to post-independence, the region witnessed significant changes, with the demand for a separate Jharkhand state emerging as a symbol of the indigenous community's struggle for autonomy and recognition.

The modern tribal movement for regional autonomy in India gained momentum after independence, with the Jharkhand movement being a significant example. The primary goal of the Jharkhand movement was the creation of a separate "Adivasi state." Before independence, this was the central issue, but after independence, the focus of the movement shifted from ethnicity to regionalism.

Nearly two centuries ago, the Mundas led an armed resistance against local landlords and the British administration, under the leadership of Binsu Manki. The discontent stemmed from the transfer of Jharkhand to the East India Company in 1771. The Kol Insurrection, led by Singh Ray and Binray Manki between 1830-33, is regarded as the earliest rebellion with widespread influence and impact. The Munda tribes, joined by other tribes such as the Oraon and Hos, expanded the reach of the resistance, marking the first united uprising against "outsiders" in the region. However, the most significant uprising that left a lasting impact on both tribal and non-tribal populations was the Santhal Rebellion of 1855-57, led by Sidhu and Kanu. They rebelled against the landlords who exploited them for many years (Horo, 2013).

The Jharkhand movement was supported not only tribals but non-tribals as well. Secondly, the proposal of forming state, Jharkhand, was supposed to comprise of parts of Eastern the term Jharkhandi is used as a substitute for the term Adivasi, living in Western and Northern parts of India may not be identified. Moreover, since the creation of Jharkhand, the non-tribal inhabitants state is also called Jharkhandis (Shailee, 2002).

According to the 2011 census, 104.3 million people belonging to the group of Scheduled Tribes, forming 8.6 percent of the total population of India (India, 2013), these people generally in India is considered to be Adivasis. Adivasis is term that means indigenous people or who have been through since the origin or known as the original habitants (Bijoy, 2001). The word indigenous was officially and firstly used by United Nation in its political declaration on world Summit on sustainable development in 2002, before this, the term was unofficial term and was in debate over to use in the UN official documents (Peters, 2017). This lack of universally accepting the definition of 'indigenous people' had led UN to take self-identification as a criterion (Bhengra, 1998).

II. METHODOLOGY

Identification of Research Gaps

This movement Pathalgadi, has very less research work done, this movement even does not have books on it, as this is a new social movement there are much information to dig out, this movement does not have any sociological or empirical work done on it. This movement is not very popular like the other movements hence giving a good chance to explore more about the tribal and their culture.

Epistemological and Ontological Position of the Research

Epistemology examines the assumptions and beliefs underlying research methodologies, data collection, and data analysis. Epistemology deals with questions about knowledge, how it is obtained, and what makes knowledge valid. It's about how the researchers learn and know things about the movement. In this study the epistemology of *Pathalgadi Movement* is acquired, constructed, and interpreted in the ethnographic study. It encompasses the researcher's philosophical assumptions, research paradigms, and methodologies that guide the investigation of the movement. By using methods like talking to people involved in the movement, observing their activities, and taking notes about what they see and hear. By directly engaging with the community and being present in their environment, the researchers gained first hand insights into the movement's experiences and perspectives.

Ontology pertains to the assumptions about the nature of the phenomena being studied and the reality of the entities involved. It deals with questions about the existence of the subject matter, the nature of social phenomena, and how these phenomena are understood to interact with each other. In this study the ontology of the research refers to the understanding of what the *Pathalgadi Movement* is and how it exists in the world. It's about how the researchers see and describe the movement's reality. The movement is deeply connected to the cultural practices and beliefs of the indigenous communities. They understand that symbols, rituals, and traditions play a significant role in shaping the movement's identity, demands and



goals. They also likely understand that the movement is not static but constantly changing and evolving over time. It is influenced by historical, social, and political contexts, and different actors may have varying perspectives about it. It may be seen as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, involving various social, cultural, and political factors.

Research Questions

- What are the historical background and evolution of the *Pathalgadi Movement* of Jharkhand?
- What is the media response to the *Pathalgadi Movement*?

Objectives of the Study

- To study the historical background and evolution of the *Pathalgadi Movement*
- To examine the media response to the *Pathalgadi Movement*

Analytical Framework

The present study is descriptive in nature; it draws from the methodological inventory of qualitative research with a focus on multiple method approach. Based on the principles of qualitative research, the study aimed to approach the world out there and to understand, describe and explain social phenomena in its natural setting (Flick, 2007). These methods are similar in that they concentrate on comprehending how individuals create their own perceptions of the world, what they are doing or what is happening to them, when they are doing, where they are doing in terms that are meaningful for the purpose of research and offer rich insight.

Qualitative research, with a multiple method approach considered to be appropriate as it is a combination of various methods, including field notes, semi-structured interviews, conversations, photographs, observation, and focused group discussions. Qualitative researchers study the things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin, 2005).

The research was focused on different sites where the *Pathalgadi* erected within the Khunti district. *Pathalgadi* as the object of inquiry and aimed to undertake study of the movement which in this case was understood as diverse range of expressions of tribal movement as their self-autonomy. The *Pathalgadi movement* unfolded a dynamic set of social action as a wide range of group come together and speak up for their rights. Such a study required an open ended and flexible approach for the rights and autonomy of the tribals. For this the approach was to understand and reconstruct the meaning, through different methods and to develop broader themes for describing the phenomena under study.

The present study required information from multiple such groups to answer the research questions. The universe of the study refers to the people or communities who are the part of the movement directly or indirectly from the Khunti district in

the state of Jharkhand. There are 6 blocks in which one block are chosen for the study which is Murhu Block. These blocks are selected because these blocks are more affected by *Pathalgadi Movement*.

III. ANALYTICAL LANDSCAPE

The Pathalgadi Movement

The *Pathalgadi movement* is a socio-political movement in Jharkhand, emerged as the installation of stone plaques, known as “*Pathalgadi*,” as symbols of self-governance and the assertion of tribal rights. The meaning of ‘*Pathal*’ is ‘stone’ and ‘*gadi*’ means to erect or fix. The Adivasis of the scheduled area have been doing “*Pathalgadi*” for various purposes but at present time “*Pathalgadi*” is chiefly done for tribal self-assertion for self-rule (Ekka, 2018). *Pathalgadi*, meaning ‘carving a stone’ is an ancient tradition among the tribal communities in Jharkhand. This movement was started in 9th February, 2017, in Bandra village of Khunti District, the epicenter of the movement of the State Jharkhand (Dungdung, 2022). Painted in green and white slabs of stone about 15 feet tall and 4 feet wide (Banerjee, 2020). On the stone, they inscribed references to four specific articles of the Indian Constitution, including:

- According to Article 13(3)(a) of the Indian Constitution, customs or traditions can have the force of law, equivalent to constitutional authority. This implies that existing Adivasi customs or laws, as defined by the village Gram Sabha, are upheld as long as they do not conflict with the Constitution.
- Article 19(5) restricts outsiders or non-customary individuals from freely moving, residing, settling, or traveling in Scheduled Districts or Areas.
- Article 19(6) of the Constitution forbids outsiders from engaging in business, trade, or any other form of employment within Scheduled Areas.
- Paragraph 5(1) of Article 244(1)(b) stipulates that laws enacted by Parliament or state assemblies do not apply to Scheduled Areas. This provision also emphasizes the necessity for the Governor to convene the Tribes Advisory Council as outlined in Schedule V, though such meetings are infrequent (Sundar, 2018).

According to the custom, erecting a huge engraved stone marks the death of a person (Maanvi, 2020), especially among tribes belonging to the Austro-Asiatic linguistic family such as the Mundas, Khasis, etc. Sasandiri was the original term the Mundas used to describe this practice but now its famous as *Pathalgadi* (Xaxa, 2019). It is also done in honors of their ancestors, to announce important decisions regarding their families and villages or to simply mark the boundary of their villages (Angad, 2020).

There is a growing interest and participation in erecting stone as symbol of tribal beliefs, customs, practices and rights. The ‘*Pathalgadi*’ has been the living symbol to teach the generations about the powers and provisions the constitution of the land provides to Tribals especially in the Scheduled Areas in accordance with the valid practices of customs and rights. The governments have strongly opposed the

indigenous push for self-governance in Scheduled Areas. In Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh, the government have labeled the Pathalgadi movement as anti-national and anti-constitutional, and have outrightly rejected the self-assertion efforts of the indigenous communities. Then the question arise, is the 'Pathalgadi' wrong? Is the action of inscribing the constitutional provisions on stone and erecting in the village anti-social activity? Is it really anti-national and anti-constitutional activity? (Ekka, 2018).

People who are part of *Pathalgadi movement*, indigenous communities have called for self-rule, insisting that the government should only enter their areas with permission from the Gram Sabha. They cited Article 19(5) of the Indian Constitution, which restricts outsiders from residing or working in indigenous villages without consent. The administration's pamphlet labels this stance as unconstitutional and a violation of fundamental rights. Additionally, the communities rejected Voter ID and Aadhar cards, arguing that these are meant for "common people," and chose not to adhere to them, asserting their own distinct status (Angad, 2020). Radical *Pathalgadi* leaders in recent days, tried to create a self-sufficient governance system in the area that is 'separate' from the state, forming a bank of their own and following a unique education policy, as well as setting ablaze voter ID and Aadhaar cards (Kiro, 2018). The *Pathalgadi* people also follow 'Kunwar Keshri Sinh of the Sati-Pati cult from Gujarat's Tapi district', Sati refers to mother and Pati to father. The cult claims that the tribals were given rights over rivers, forest land and forest produce by Queen Victoria (Dutta, 2018). They refuse to pay land revenue, vote, or take part in government schemes. In Gujarat, they appear to be patronized by the ruling parties (Sundar, 2018). They did not believe in constitution and also, they rejected government services (Angad, 2020). Like its parent, the Sati Pati movement, the *Pathalgadi movement* too argues that the government is a servant of the people (Sundar, 2018).

The *Pathalgadi movement* has emerged as a movement that is political, ethnic and ecological. This is all about "Jal, Jangal aur Zameen" (Water, Forest and Land) to safeguard their land rights and resources, where the tribal populations in the Scheduled Areas are becoming active citizens for the assertion for Tribal self-rule. Mainly Munda tribes uphold this movement and others are Oraon, Santhal. *Pathalgadis* have their presence in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and parts of West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh (Singh, 2019).

Relevant Legislations

PESA (The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996)

Parliament passed PESA Act on December 24, 1996, based largely on the recommendations of a committee of MPs and experts constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development and headed by Dilip Singh Bhuria. PESA provides the Gram sabha some specific powers. Three significant ones are the ownership of minor forest produce, the power to prevent land alienation and restore land to scheduled tribes, and the power to control money lending (Sundar, 2005). Gram Sabha safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution (Authority, 1996).

CNT Act (Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908) & SPT Act (Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act, 1949)

The Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act (CNT Act, 1908) and Santal Pargana Tenancy Act (SPT Act, 1949), both of which aimed to give rights and protect the interests of the vulnerable sections of society in two administrative divisions of Jharkhand (Davidsdottir, 2021). Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act (CNT act) is a significant act for the indigenous population of Jharkhand. It prohibits transfer of indigenous land to non-indigenous and protects community ownership. The act is listed in the Ninth Schedule of the Indian Constitution; hence, it is beyond judicial review (Kant, 2020).

In the Santhal Pargana area, which sits on Jharkhand and Bengal, it is illegal for indigenous land to be sold to non-indigenous people under the terms of the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act of 1949. Protecting the land rights of the Santhal tribe in Jharkhand, this legislation is the first written tenancy law (Thapliyal, 2020). The Jharkhand government's effort to overturn the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908 gave rise in part to the Pathalgadi movement. The government attempted to change these rules in 2016 in order to make it easier for indigenous people to give their property to non-indigenous people. The suggested revisions to the CNT and SPT Acts was met with large-scale resistance across the state (Davidsdottir, 2021).

FRA (Forest Rights Act, 2006)

The Khunti region of Jharkhand stands out for its unique land rules, known as Register II, which differ from those in the rest of the state. These rules allow Munda families to retain their zamindari rights, enabling them to employ tenants on their land and collect revenue. Additionally, certain forest areas, known as Mundari Khuntkatti forests, remain under the ownership of Munda villages. Historically, there were around 500 such forests across the district.

In 1947, the government of Bihar (which now forms part of Jharkhand) enacted the Bihar Private Protected Forest Act, transferring control of approximately 300 Mundari Khuntkatti forests to the government. However, 200 of these forests continue to be owned by the Munda.

In 2006, the Government of India introduced the Forest Rights Act, which allowed individuals living and cultivating land in forests to apply for ownership of the land they tilled. Consequently, the Munda were encouraged to apply for legal rights over the land they had traditionally cultivated under this Act. They refused, saying that this violates their Register II rights (Kiro, 2018).

Media Framing

Media framing effects on how the *Pathalgadi Movement* is perceived by the public. Different news sources have presented different themes and messages in their coverage, categorizing the movement as a peaceful or a disruptive. Media framing has been involved in taking public opinion and support for the movement. Ethical reporting and responsible journalism are crucial for ensuring the accurate representation of the *Pathalgadi Movement* and other indigenous rights issues. Journalists must struggle for objectivity, equality, and factuality, for a comprehensive view of the movement and its historical context.



The *Pathalgadi Movement* emerged as a response to perceived neglect and exploitation of tribal communities by the government and non-tribals. It aimed to assert the autonomy of tribal communities and uphold their traditional customs and land rights. Media plays an important role in shaping public opinion about social and political movements. It influences the way people understand and interpret events, including tribal rights movements like *Pathalgadi*. Media framing the presentation of news stories from a particular angle, can significantly impact how the movement is recognized by the wider society. Positive and accurate media coverage can gather support and empathy for indigenous rights, while biased or sensationalist reporting can distort the public's perception and discredit their cause. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for indigenous activism, providing a platform for direct engagement with the public. It can mobilize support, raise awareness, and connect indigenous communities with allies and advocates globally. To address the biases and misconceptions surrounding the *Pathalgadi Movement* and similar indigenous rights issues, ethical reporting and responsible journalism are crucial (Smith, 2021).

Case Study

The case study is based on Khunti district of Jharkhand. Qualitative interviews with *Pathalgadi* leaders and local journalists exposed the effects of media representation on the ground. Leaders said: Unfavorable coverage made tribal communities more fearful and mistrustful of the movement, as many of them believed their cause was being misinterpreted and misrepresented to the public. Local journalists pointed out that although mainstream media frequently overlooked grassroots perspectives, alternative media and social media platforms were vital in distributing factual information and sustaining the movement's spirit. Negative media coverage had a major influence on the movement's tactics and morale, according to leaders of the *Pathalgadi movement* interviewed for this article. Leaders expressed concern about the state and media, saying that their communities were mistrusted and felt humiliated. This created an environment of chaos. Local Khunti journalists voiced their dissatisfaction with the prevailing national narrative. They emphasized how headline-grabbing national media frequently eclipsed their attempts to convey fair and impartial news, highlighting the movement's legal foundation. These journalists frequently encountered threats and pressures for agreeing to various unfavorable depictions from both local law enforcement and other media organizations. Key leaders were local indigenous activists who convened Gram Sabhas, or village councils, to deliberate and make decisions on the adoption of *Pathalgadi* customs. They made it easier for groups to make decisions together, which kept the movement's foundation in established political systems.

The *Pathalgadi movement's* the public's views and direction were greatly influenced by the media's role in it. The movement was frequently portrayed negatively by mainstream media, which labelled it as separatist or anti-nationalist. By portraying the movement as a threat to law and order and national unity, this representation helped to create a narrative that supported official actions and legal measures against the leaders and members. The public's prejudices and anxieties were heightened by this coverage, further suppressing the affected indigenous communities.

Although the mainstream media frequently ignored or misrepresented indigenous rights and constitutional provisions, alternative media, which included social media platforms, independent local outlets, and online publications, played a crucial counter role by providing a more nuanced viewpoint. These platforms gave tribal leaders and activists voices a platform to express their demands for autonomy, land rights, and the preservation of their cultural and traditional practices. Social media data from WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter revealed a distinct pattern. Here, the *Pathalgadi movement* got a lot of momentum through hashtags and postings, particularly among academics, campaigners for indigenous rights, and members of the local community. Social media was essential in organizing support and proving popular narratives, according to an analysis of engagement metrics including shares, likes, and comments.

The media's dual function produced a nuanced dynamic. Alternative media supported the movement by educating and organizing followers both inside and outside of the tribal groups, while mainstream coverage frequently served to repress it by supporting governmental interests. Thus, the movement's advancement, the public's perception of it, and the government's response were all greatly influenced by the media.

Contextualizing the Tribal Autonomy

The Adivasis who have been fighting to protect their identity, autonomy, culture, languages, lands, territory and resources, are branded as Naxals, anti-national and anti-development, and as a result are criminalized, being falsely implicated in crimes, tortured and imprisoned and their right to freedom of expression compromised (Dungdung, 2022).

Habermas observed that social movements often arise in response to issues of displacement and violation of rights experienced by marginalized groups. Habermas emphasized that social movements play an important role in democratizing society and enhancing the communicative power of marginalized groups. By bringing issues of displacement and rights violations into public discourse, social movements challenge dominant power structures and seek to create more inclusive and participatory societies. He emphasizes the centrality of communication for social coordination and understanding. Also, his views on social movements highlight their significance in responding to displacement and rights violations, as they strive to empower marginalized communities and foster democratic deliberation in society (Habermas, 1985).

The history of tribal autonomy in India reflects a struggle between preserving traditional governance systems and the impact of external influences, be it colonial rule or modern developmental pressures. While constitutional provisions and legislation like the PESA Act provide opportunities for tribal autonomy, their effective implementation and protection remain essential to ensure the well-being and self-governance of indigenous communities. The Pathalgadi movement and other similar movements can be seen as contemporary expressions of the ongoing struggle for tribal autonomy and the assertion of cultural identity in the face of these challenges.

During the colonial and post-colonial periods, tribal movements in various regions of India played a significant role in advocating for the rights and autonomy of indigenous communities. These movements emerged as responses to the oppressive policies of the colonial administration and continued struggles for socio-economic and political empowerment in the post-independence era.

Santhal Rebellion (1855-1856), The Santhal Rebellion in present-day Jharkhand and West Bengal was one of the most significant tribal uprisings against British colonial rule. The Santhals revolted against oppressive land revenue policies, land alienation, and exploitation by moneylenders and landlords. Munda Rebellion (1899-1900), The Munda Rebellion, mainly in the Chotanagpur region of present-day Jharkhand, was a response to the British colonial administration's oppressive policies that led to the dispossession of tribal lands and forced labor in mines and plantations. Jharkhand Movement (1970-2000), The Jharkhand Movement, also known as the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) movement, sought the creation of a separate state of Jharkhand with greater autonomy and recognition for the tribal communities. The movement aimed to address issues related to land rights, cultural preservation, and socio-economic development (Singh S. K., 1982).

The Constitution of India has two specific annexes that address the land rights of indigenous peoples: the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. The Fifth Schedule offers special protection to 'Scheduled Tribes' residing in 'Scheduled Areas,' which are officially recognized regions in eight states. This section of the Constitution aims to create special provisions for the development of tribal lands and safeguard them from alienation. The Sixth Schedule, which is more complex, grants a degree of autonomy to certain tribes in the Northeast, providing them with a distinct framework for self-governance. This part of the Constitution is applicable only in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram, and reflects the legacy of the history of resistance of the Northeastern tribes (Gilbert, 2005).

In 1996, the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) was enacted to extend the Panchayat system to Scheduled Areas. Under PESA, the Gram Sabha was empowered to manage natural resources, conserve and protect customs and traditions, oversee community resources, manage minor water bodies, resolve disputes through customary methods, regulate money lending to Scheduled Tribes, and control and manage non-timber forest produce. PESA introduced a new approach to indigenous rights by promoting self-management through village community decisions represented in the Gram Sabha. In contrast, the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution adopts a paternalistic approach, where power is vested in the President and state Governors to oversee tribal rights. Relating to land control, the Gram Sabha has a central role to prevent alienation of land and restore unlawfully alienated land of Scheduled Tribes (Gilbert, 2005).

Challenges to Tribal Autonomy

Of all the tribal movements, movements for autonomy have drawn wide attention. Autonomy movements are an expression of the larger articulation of identity by tribals. Such movements have been widespread in the north-eastern region, where they have been based on intense mobilization (Xaxa, 2008).

In 2000 only Jharkhand attained the state of autonomy and got separated from Bihar and became a state only for the tribals where tribals can live a life they wanted to. It is only a state which got the autonomy status and which only works for tribals welfare. What makes Jharkhand only the state that was able to attain the state of autonomy and the rest of the regions didn't able to attain the state of autonomy? There are many reasons for this, first being that the people of Jharkhand were struggling and fighting with the colonial rule since much before. Jharkhand had much of a tribal activist like Birsa Munda and Tilka Manjhi who were in favor of attaining the state of autonomy. These people created a sense of unity which led them to not give up on the situation and just to be brave enough and fight back for the autonomy. They were also going through much exploitation and also were dominated in the post-independence era. This led them to be stronger and the feeling of unity rose much more. These incidents made their tribal identity strong. These people had an opportunity of joining the mainstream and by doing that they would have got much of a livelihood also the discrimination could have been stop because of the people who fought against the colonial rule. These people could have got a much better life but they refused as it would have been the end of the tribal unity and their identity thus these activists and all stick together and refused to join the mainstream so as the protect their identity and the sense of unity.

The fight that was going on in the Jharkhand area, this worked as a spark for other tribal community and the tribals got awareness of the movements that took place in Jharkhand. The main factor was their language and culture through which they can be differentiated between tribals and non-tribals. If they join with the mainstream their language and culture will be changed resulting into a weakening of their identity and unity. The tribals having a different language and different culture resulted into a bias government, bias in the sense that the non-tribal got much more benefits as the government was of the mainstream people resulting into an uneven development. So, these were the factors making only Jharkhand attain a state of autonomy, these factors weren't present in any other region hence only Jharkhand got the autonomy (Xaxa, 2008).

IV. CONCLUSION

The Pathalgadi movement empirical evidence demonstrates the significant impact of media narratives on public opinion, social movements, and government action. The mainstream media significantly contributed to the justification of government crackdowns and legal measures by portraying the movement as a danger. This representation especially in larger towns, aided in the public's misperception and alienation of the movement. On the other hand, social media and alternative media offered a crucial counter-narrative that kept the campaign going and attracted support from a larger audience. The information emphasizes how important it is to cover complicated sociopolitical movements involving marginalized people from a variety of media viewpoints.

The media's role in the *Pathalgadi Movement* has been transformative with its power to shape public opinion, influence government responses, and increases the indigenous voices. As media representation continues to evolve, there is an ongoing need for ethical reporting and a commitment to inclusivity and accurate representation of indigenous perspectives. By understanding the role of media in this movement, society can foster constructive dialogue and meaningful change,



leading towards a more inclusive and just society that upholds the rights and autonomy of indigenous communities. The media's representation of the *Pathalgadi Movement* has not been without challenges. Indigenous voices often face barriers in gaining fair and accurate representation. Language barriers, cultural biases, and lack of inclusivity have hindered the media from presenting diverse perspectives within the movement. The *Pathalgadi Movement* has been a significant voicing of indigenous communities for autonomy and preservation of their cultural identity. This paper has examined the multifaceted role of media in shaping perceptions and understanding of the movement. The demand for autonomy lies at the core of the *Pathalgadi Movement*, as indigenous communities seek greater control over their land, resources, and decision-making processes. Media coverage has played a key role in spread the information about the movement, bringing it from the margins to the headlines. The framing of the movement in media narratives has influenced public opinion, garnering support, and empathy from both national and global audiences.

The *Pathalgadi Movement* is a reminder that the struggle for indigenous rights and autonomy is ongoing. The media has a significant role in shaping the movement's path, how people see it, and how governments respond. By reporting fairly and respectfully, the media can be a powerful force in supporting indigenous communities and their fight for a better future.

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