# Media Literacy and Political Communication among the Tea Tribes of Udalguri District: A Comparative Analysis of Traditional and Digital Media

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**Abstract**

This paper examines media literacy and political communication among the Tea tribes of Udalguri district in Assam, India. It compares the influence of traditional and digital media on the political participation and awareness of this marginalized community. The study was based on a field survey conducted in the Dhunseri tea estate in Majbat circle of Udalguri district, with 100 respondents using a random sampling method. The results show that digital media is becoming popular among the Tea tribes as many of them have smartphones, but their digital awareness is low, and their use of social media is limited to entertainment only. The paper discusses the implications of these findings for the political empowerment and education of the Tea tribes and suggests ways to improve their media literacy and digital citizenship.

**Keywords:** Tea tribes, Udalguri district, media literacy, political communication, digital media

## Introduction

In the contemporary landscape, media literacy and political communication stand as pivotal elements influencing the trajectory of community development. Media literacy, characterized by the ability to critically analyse and interpret media content, empowers individuals to navigate an increasingly complex information environment. Political communication, on the other hand, serves as the conduit through which communities engage with political processes, fostering informed citizenry and active participation. Media literacy transcends traditional literacy by encompassing a spectrum of skills essential for comprehending, interpreting, and creating media content. In the context of community development, media literacy equips individuals with the tools to discern credible information, challenge misinformation, and engage with diverse perspectives. A media-literate community is better positioned to make informed decisions, fostering a culture of critical thinking and intellectual autonomy. Political communication is the heartbeat of democratic societies, facilitating the exchange of ideas, opinions, and information among citizens and political entities. Effective political communication is instrumental in shaping public discourse, influencing policy decisions, and fostering civic engagement. For marginalized communities like the Tea tribes in Udalguri, understanding and participating in political communication processes are paramount to ensuring their voices are heard and their concerns addressed. The synergy between media literacy and political communication is particularly pronounced in marginalized communities. Media literacy enhances the

capacity of individuals to critically engage with political messages, while effective political communication relies on a media-literate populace for meaningful interaction. Together, these elements create a symbiotic relationship that can either empower or marginalize communities, depending on the extent of access, awareness, and utilization.

On the other hand, Traditional media encompassing newspapers, radio, and television, has long been a cornerstone of information dissemination. Among the Tea tribes, the role of traditional media in shaping political awareness, attitudes, and behaviours is a focal point of investigation. Understanding the community's reliance on and interaction with traditional media channels provides essential context to discern the historical foundations of political engagement. In parallel, the advent of digital media, propelled by the widespread use of smartphones, introduces a transformative dimension to the media landscape. The Tea tribes, like many other communities, are experiencing a shift towards digital platforms. However, the extent to which digital media influences political engagement remains a critical question. Factors such as digital awareness, access, and the utilization of social media platforms for political discourse demand scrutiny. The intersection of traditional and digital media further complicates the dynamics of political engagement. How do these distinct mediums coexist within the information ecosystem of the Tea tribes? Are there synergies or conflicts between traditional and digital media consumption patterns, and how do these impact political perceptions? Through a comprehensive analysis of these questions, this research aims to unveil the multifaceted nature of media influence on

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political engagement among the Tea tribes. By dissecting the intricate interplay between traditional and digital media, we aspire to provide a holistic understanding that goes beyond surface-level observations, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on media dynamics within marginalized communities.

**Review of Literature**
Bipul Das (2020) conducts a survey-based study of the political awareness among the tea tribes' women in Biswanath district of Assam, India. The author analyses the factors that influence the political participation and awareness of the women, such as education, occupation, income, family background, and media exposure. The paper finds that the tea tribes' women have low levels of political awareness and participation and face various socio-economic and cultural barriers. The paper is relevant for the paper as it focuses on the same research area and population as the paper and provides empirical data to support the paper's findings.

Hossain and Acharya (2021) investigate the media literacy among the student community of the tea estates of Darjeeling, India. The authors assess the students' knowledge and use of various media forms, such as newspapers, television, radio, and online platforms. The paper also examines the impact of media literacy on the students' academic performance, social interaction, and cultural exposure. The paper reveals that the students have low levels of media literacy, especially in terms of new media, and face challenges such as lack of access, affordability, and quality of media resources. The paper is relevant for the paper as it deals with a similar topic and population as the paper and offers insights into the media literacy scenario of the tea tribes in another district of the region.

**Objectives of the Study**
The objectives of the study are:
i). Assess the level of media literacy and political communication among the Tea tribes of Udalguri district in Assam, India, using traditional and digital media as indicators.
ii). Explore the factors that affect the political participation and awareness of the Tea tribes and the role of media in shaping their political opinions and preferences.

**Methodology and Sample Design**
The study used a quantitative approach and a survey method to collect data from the Tea tribes living in the Dhunseri tea estate in Majbat circle of Udalguri district in Assam, India. A random sampling technique was employed to select 100 respondents from the study population. A structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents, which included questions on their demographic profile, media access and usage, political interest and involvement, and media influence on their political opinions and preferences. The data was then analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics,

**Area of Study**
Dhunseri Tea Estate, a prominent tea garden under the ownership of Dhunseri Tea & Industries Limited (DTIL) based in Kolkata, India, is situated in the Assam region renowned for its high-quality tea production, boasting an annual capacity of approximately 1.5 million kg of tea. The estate is home to the Tea tribes, a marginalized community of tea workers who migrated from various parts of India during the colonial era. According to the 2011 census, the Tea tribes

in Assam numbered 6.07 million, comprising 17.2% of the state's population, with a literacy rate of 59.3%, lower than the state average. The gender gap in literacy within the Tea tribes was substantial, with 68.9% of males and 49.4% of females being literate. This paper focuses on the Dhunseri tea estate in the Majbat circle of Udalguri district, Assam, where the district's overall population is 832,769, with a significant concentration of Tea tribes constituting 36.8% of the population. The literacy rate in the district stands at 66.59%, with variations between males (73.71%) and females (59.39%). The study, conducted with a randomly selected sample of 100 respondents from the Tea tribe population in the estate, aims to evaluate media literacy and political communication levels among the Tea tribes, utilizing traditional and digital media as key indicators. Additionally, the research explores factors influencing political participation and awareness within the Tea tribes, shedding light on the role of media in shaping their political opinions and preferences.

**Data Analysis of the Study**

**Table 1:** Profile of the Respondents of Dhunseri Tea Estate, Udalguri

| Basis | Classification | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 54 | 54% |
| | Female | 46 | 46% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |
| Age | 18-25 | 12 | 12% |
| | 26-35 | 31 | 31% |
| | 36-45 | 26 | 26% |
| | 46-55 | 22 | 22% |
| | 56 or above | 9 | 9% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |
| Educational Qualifications | No formal education | 33 | 33% |
| | Primary school | 47 | 47% |
| | Secondary school | 10 | 10% |
| | Higher secondary school | 7 | 7% |
| | College or University | 3 | 3% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

(***Source:*** *Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

The table shows the profile of 100 respondents from Dhunseri Tea Estate, Udalguri, based on their gender, age, and educational qualifications. The respondents are almost equally divided by gender, with 54% male and 46% female. The majority of the respondents are in the age group of 26-35 years (31%), followed by 36-45 years (26%), 46-55 years (22%), 18-25 years (12%), and 56 or above (9%). The table also reveals that most of the respondents have low levels of education, with 33% having no formal education, 47% having primary school education, 10% having secondary school education, 7% having higher secondary school education, and only 3% having college or university education. This suggests that the respondents are mostly unskilled or semi-skilled workers in the tea estate.

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**Table 2:** How often do you use traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or television) for political information news?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Daily | 3 | 3% |
| 2 | Weekly | 12 | 12% |
| 3 | Monthly | 33 | 33% |
| 4 | Rarely | 22 | 22% |
| 5 | Never | 26 | 26% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

(*Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

The table shows the frequency of using traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or television) for political information news among 100 respondents. The table indicates that most of the respondents do not use traditional media regularly for this purpose, with 33% using it monthly, 22% using it rarely, and 26% using it never. Only 15% of the respondents use traditional media daily or weekly for political information news, with 3% using it daily and 12% using it weekly. This suggests that the respondents have low interest or trust in traditional media as a source of political information news.

**Table 3:** How often do you use digital media (such as social media, online news portals, or blogs) for political information or news?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Daily | 5 | 5% |
| 2 | Weekly | 8 | 8% |
| 3 | Monthly | 19 | 19% |
| 4 | Rarely | 29 | 29% |
| 5 | Never | 39 | 39% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

(*Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

The table shows the frequency of using digital media (such as social media, online new portals, or blogs) for political information or news among 100 respondents. The table reveals that most of the respondents do not use digital media frequently for this purpose, with 39% using it never, 29% using it rarely, and 19% using it monthly. Only 13% of the respondents use digital media daily or weekly for political information or news, with 5% using it daily and 8% using it weekly. This suggests that the respondents have low interest or access to digital media as a source of political information or news.

**Table 4:** How do you rate your media literacy skills i.e., your ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media content?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Very **Low** | 88 | 88% |
| 2 | Low | 6 | 6% |
| 3 | Moderate | 6 | 6% |
| 4 | High | 0 | 0% |
| 5 | Very High | 0 | 0% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

(*Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

The table shows the self-assessment of media literacy skills among 100 respondents, i.e., their ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media content. The table indicates that most of the respondents have very low media literacy skills, with 88% rating themselves as very low, 6% as low, and 6% as moderate. None of the respondents rated themselves as high or very high in media literacy skills. This suggests that the respondents lack the knowledge or confidence to use media effectively and critically.

**Table 5:** How do you rate your political awareness, i.e., your knowledge of political issues, parties, candidates, and policies?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Very Low | 79 | 79% |
| 2 | Low | 10 | 10% |
| 3 | Moderate | 5 | 5% |
| 4 | High | 3 | 3% |
| 5 | Very High | 3 | 3% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

(*Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

The table shows the self-assessment of political awareness among 100 respondents, i.e., their knowledge of political issues, parties, candidates, and policies. The table reveals that most of the respondents have very low political awareness, with 79% rating themselves as very low, 10% as low, and 5% as moderate. Only 6% of the respondents rated themselves as high or very high in political awareness, with 3% each. This suggests that the respondents are either indifferent or uninformed about the political scenario in their region.

**Table 6:** How do you rate your political participation, i.e., your involvement in political activities such as voting, campaigning, protesting, or petitioning?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Very Low | 28 | 28% |
| 2 | Low | 10 | 10% |
| 3 | Moderate | 43 | 43% |
| 4 | High | 9 | 9% |
| 5 | Very High | 10 | 10% |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100%** |

(*Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

The table shows the self-assessment of political participation among 100 respondents, i.e., their involvement in political activities such as voting, campaigning, protesting, or petitioning. The table indicates that most of the respondents have moderate levels of political participation, with 43% rating themselves as moderate, 10% as high, and 10% as very high. However, 38% of the respondents have low or very low levels of political participation, with 28% rating themselves as very low and 10% as low. This suggests that the respondents have varying degrees of engagement and interest in the political process.

**Table 7:** Which media source do you trust more for political information or news: traditional media or digital media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Traditional media | 22 | 22% |
| 2 | Digital media | 20 | 20% |
| 3 | Both | 58 | 58% |
| 4 | Neither | 0 | 0% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

(*Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024*)

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The table shows the preference of media source for political information or news among 100 respondents: traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or television) or digital media (such as social media, online news portals, or blogs). The table reveals that most of the respondents trust both media sources equally, with 58% choosing both. However, there is a slight edge for traditional media over digital media, with 22% trusting traditional media more and 20% trusting digital media more. None of the respondents trust neither media source for political information nor news. This suggests that the respondents have a balanced and diverse approach to consuming media content.

**Table 8:** What are the main sources of traditional media that you use for political information or news?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Newspapers | 3 | 3% |
| 2 | Radio | 9 | 9% |
| 3 | Television | 88 | 88% |
| 4 | Magazines | 0 | 0% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the main sources of traditional media that 100 respondents use for political information or news: newspapers, radio, television, and magazines. The table indicates that television is the dominant source of traditional media for this purpose, with 88% of the respondents using it. Radio is the second most used source, with 9% of the respondents using it. Newspapers are the least used source, with only 3% of the respondents using it. Magazines are not used at all by the respondents for political information or news. This suggests that the respondents prefer audio-visual media over print media for this purpose.

**Table 9:** What are the main source of digital media that you use for political information news?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Social Media Platforms | 88 | 88% |
| 2 | Online News Portals | 6 | 6% |
| 3 | Blogs or Podcasts | 0 | 0% |
| 4 | Online Forums or Groups | 4 | 4% |
| 5 | E-mails or News | 2 | 2% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the main source of digital media that 100 respondents use for political information or news: social media platforms, online news portals, blogs or podcasts, online forums or groups, and e-mails or news. The table reveals that social media platforms are the most popular source of digital media for this purpose, with 88% of the respondents using them. Online news portals are the second most used source, with 6% of the respondents using them. Online forums or groups and e-mails or news are the least used sources, with 4% and 2% of the respondents using them respectively. Blogs or podcasts are not used at all by the respondents for political information or news. This suggests that the respondents rely heavily on social media platforms for this purpose, which may have implications for their media literacy and political awareness.

**Table 10:** How satisfied are you with the quality and diversity of political information or news that you receive from traditional media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very Dissatisfied | 11 | 11% |
| 2 | Dissatisfied | 17 | 17% |
| 3 | Neutral | 52 | 52% |
| 4 | Satisfied | 8 | 8% |
| 5 | Very Satisfied | 12 | 12% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the level of satisfaction with the quality and diversity of political information or news that 100 respondents receive from traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or television). The table indicates that most of the respondents are neutral about this aspect, with 52% choosing neutral. However, there is a higher proportion of dissatisfied respondents than satisfied respondents, with 28% choosing very dissatisfied or dissatisfied and 20% choosing very satisfied or satisfied. This suggests that the respondents are not very impressed or content with the political information or news that they receive from traditional media.

**Table 11:** How satisfied are you with the quality and diversity of political information or news that you receive from digital media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very Dissatisfied | 10 | 10% |
| 2 | Dissatisfied | 10 | 10% |
| 3 | Neutral | 66 | 10% |
| 4 | Satisfied | 9 | 9% |
| 5 | Very Satisfied | 5 | 5% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the level of satisfaction with the quality and diversity of political information or news that 100 respondents receive from digital media (such as social media, online news portals, or blogs). The table reveals that most of the respondents are neutral about this aspect, with 66% choosing neutral. However, there is no clear preference for digital media over traditional media, with 20% choosing very dissatisfied or dissatisfied and 14% choosing very satisfied or satisfied. This suggests that the respondents are not very impressed or content with the political information or news that they receive from digital media either.

**Table 12:** How often do you share or comment on political information or news that you receive from traditional media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Always | 2 | 2% |
| 2 | Often | 3 | 3% |
| 3 | Sometime | 59 | 59% |
| 4 | Rarely | 6 | 6% |
| 5 | Never | 30 | 30% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(Source: Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the frequency of sharing or commenting on political information or news that 100 respondents receive from traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or

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television). The table indicates that most of the respondents do not share or comment on this type of content very often, with 59% doing it sometime, 6% doing it rarely, and 30% doing it never. Only 5% of the respondents share or comment on this type of content always or often, with 2% doing it always and 3% doing it often. This suggests that the respondents are not very active or vocal about their political views or opinions based on traditional media.

**Table 13:** How often do you share or comment on political information or news that you receive from digital media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Daily | 0 | 0% |
| 2 | Weekly | 11 | 11% |
| 3 | Monthly | 9 | 9% |
| 4 | Rarely | 11 | 11% |
| 5 | Never | 69 | 69% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(**Source:** Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the frequency of sharing or commenting on political information or news that 100 respondents receive from digital media (such as social media, online news portals, or blogs). The table reveals that most of the respondents do not share or comment on this type of content at all, with 69% doing it never. Only 31% of the respondents share or comment on this type of content occasionally, with 11% doing it weekly, 9% doing it monthly, and 11% doing it rarely. None of the respondents share or comment on this type of content daily. This suggests that the respondents are not very active or vocal about their political views or opinions based on digital media.

**Table 14:** How confident are you on your ability to identify and avoid fake or misleading political information or news from digital media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very Low | 78 | 78% |
| 2 | Low | 14 | 14% |
| 3 | Moderate | 2 | 2% |
| 4 | High | 3 | 3% |
| 5 | Very High | 3 | 3% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(**Source:** Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the level of confidence on the ability to identify and avoid fake or misleading political information or news from digital media (such as social media, online news portals, or blogs) among 100 respondents. The table reveals that most of the respondents have very low confidence on this aspect, with 78% rating themselves as very low and 14% as low. Only 8% of the respondents have moderate, high, or very high confidence on this aspect, with 2% each. This suggests that the respondents are either unaware or vulnerable to the problem of fake or misleading political information or news from digital media.

**Table 15:** How confident are you on your ability to identify and avoid fake or misleading political information or news from traditional media?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very Low | 72 | 72% |
| 2 | Low | 20 | 20% |
| 3 | Moderate | 2 | 2% |
| 4 | High | 3 | 3% |
| 5 | Very High | 3 | 3% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(**Source:** Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the level of confidence on the ability to identify and avoid fake or misleading political information or news from traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or television) among 100 respondents. The table reveals that most of the respondents have very low confidence on this aspect, with 72% rating themselves as very low and 20% as low. Only 8% of the respondents have moderate, high, or very high confidence on this aspect, with 2% each. This suggests that the respondents are either unaware or vulnerable to the problem of fake or misleading political information or news from traditional media.

**Table 16:** How do you think traditional media influences your political opinions and decisions?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very Negatively | 10 | 10% |
| 2 | Negatively | 15 | 15% |
| 3 | Neutral | 50 | 50% |
| 4 | Positively | 15 | 15% |
| 5 | Very Positively | 10 | 10% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(**Source:** Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

The table shows the perception of the influence of traditional media (such as newspapers, radio, or television) on the political opinions and decisions of 100 respondents. The table indicates that most of the respondents are neutral about this aspect, with 50% choosing neutral. However, there is a slight difference between the negative and positive views, with 25% choosing very negatively or negatively and 25% choosing very positively or positively. This suggests that the respondents have mixed feelings about the role and impact of traditional media on their political views and actions.

**Table 17:** How do you think digital media influences your political opinions or decisions?

| Sl. No | Response | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very Negatively | 10 | 10% |
| 2 | Negatively | 5 | 5% |
| 3 | Neutral | 55 | 55% |
| 4 | Positively | 13 | 13% |
| 5 | Very Positively | 17 | 17% |
| | Total | 100 | 100% |

*(**Source:** Field Study, Dhunseri Tea Estate, 2024)*

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The table shows the perception of the influence of digital media (such as social media, online news portals, or blogs) on the political opinions and decisions of 100 respondents. The table reveals that most of the respondents are neutral about this aspect, with 55% choosing neutral. However, there is a slight edge for the positive views over the negative views, with 30% choosing very positively or positively and 15% choosing very negatively or negatively. This suggests that the respondents have some appreciation or trust in the role and impact of digital media on their political views and actions.

**Findings and Conclusion**
**1. Media Usage Patterns**
**Traditional Media Usage**
- Low regular use for political information, with 33% monthly, 22% rarely, and 26% never.
- Only 15% use it daily or weekly, indicating low interest or trust in traditional media.

**Digital Media Usage**
- Limited frequency of use, with 39% never, 29% rarely, and 19% monthly.
- Only 13% use it daily or weekly, suggesting low interest or access to digital media.

**2. Media Literacy and Political Awareness**
**Media Literacy Skills**
- Overwhelmingly low self-assessment, with 88% rating themselves as very low.
- No respondents rate themselves as high or very high, indicating a lack of confidence in using media critically.

**Political Awareness**
- Majority perceive low political awareness, with 79% rating themselves as very low.
- Only 6% rate themselves as high or very high, reflecting either indifference or lack of information about the political scenario.

**3. Political Participation**
**Levels of Participation**
- Moderate political participation for 43%, while 38% have low or very low levels.
- Varying degrees of engagement and interest in the political process.

**4. Media Preference**
**Preference for Media Sources**
- Balanced preference, with 58% trusting both traditional and digital media equally.
- Slight edge for traditional media (22%) over digital media (20%).

**Main Sources**
- Television dominates traditional media usage (88%), followed by radio (9%), with newspapers being the least used (3%).
- Social media platforms (88%) are the most popular digital media source, followed by online news portals (6%).

**5. Satisfaction with Media**
**Traditional Media**
- Neutral stance for 52%, but more dissatisfied (28%) than satisfied (20%) with political information quality.

- Indicates overall dissatisfaction with traditional media content.

**Digital Media**
- Neutral stance for 66%, with no clear preference over traditional media.
- Similar dissatisfaction rates (20%) but slightly lower satisfaction rates (14%) compared to traditional media.

**6. Political Engagement on Media**
**Traditional Media Sharing/Commenting**
- Majority do it sometime (59%), with only 5% doing it always or often.
- Indicates low activity or vocal expression based on traditional media.

**Digital Media Sharing/Commenting**
- Most do it never (69%), with only 31% occasionally.
- Suggests low digital media-driven political expression.

**7. Media Literacy Challenges**
**Confidence in Identifying Fake News**
- Very low confidence for both traditional (72%) and digital media (78%).
- Indicates vulnerability to misinformation from both sources.

**8. Perception of Media Influence**
**Traditional Media Influence**
- Mixed feelings, with 50% neutral, 25% very negatively/negatively, and 25% very positively/positively.
- Reflects uncertainty about the impact of traditional media on political opinions.

**Digital Media Influence**
Neutral stance for 55%, with 30% very positively/positively and 15% very negatively/negatively.
Suggests a relatively higher level of trust or appreciation for the impact of digital media.
In conclusion, the respondents from Dhunseri Tea Estate in Udalguri exhibit a predominantly low level of media literacy, political awareness, and engagement. While there is a balanced preference for both traditional and digital media, dissatisfaction with the quality of political information is evident. The community shows limited political participation, with challenges in identifying and avoiding fake news across both media types. The mixed perceptions about media influence on political opinions highlight the complex relationship between the respondents and the media landscape.

**Suggestions for Increasing Media Literacy among the Tea Tribe of Dhunseri Tea Estate**
**Tailored Media Literacy Programs**
- Develop targeted media literacy programs tailored to the educational levels of the tea tribe, focusing on basic digital and traditional media literacy skills.
- Collaborate with local educational institutions and community leaders to implement workshops and training sessions.

**Local Language Content**
- Provide media literacy content in the local language to enhance understanding and accessibility.

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- Utilize local cultural references to make the content more relatable and engaging for the tea tribe community.

## Community Workshops and Events
- Organize regular community workshops and events specifically addressing media literacy, political awareness, and the role of media in shaping political opinions.
- Include interactive sessions to encourage active participation and practical application of media literacy skills.

## Collaboration with Local Leaders
- Partner with local leaders and influencers within the tea tribe community to promote media literacy.
- Use community leaders as advocates for the importance of media literacy in navigating the information landscape.

## Integration into Formal Education
- Advocate for the inclusion of media literacy modules in formal education within the tea estate.
- Work closely with schools and educational authorities to integrate media literacy into the curriculum.

## Accessible Learning Resources
- Create and distribute easily accessible learning resources such as pamphlets, posters, and online materials focusing on media literacy.
- Ensure these resources are available in common community spaces and digital platforms.

## Promote Critical Thinking
- Emphasize critical thinking skills in media literacy programs, teaching the community how to evaluate and analyze information critically.
- Encourage questioning, fact-checking, and seeking multiple perspectives.

## Digital Access Initiatives
- Collaborate with local authorities and organizations to improve digital access within the community.
- Provide resources and training on using digital platforms responsibly and effectively for accessing political information.

## Partnerships with Media Outlets
- Collaborate with traditional and digital media outlets to conduct awareness campaigns on media literacy.
- Encourage media organizations to produce content that educates and empowers the tea tribe community.

## Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation
- Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of media literacy initiatives through feedback mechanisms.
- Be adaptive in approach, incorporating lessons learned to enhance the impact of ongoing programs.

By implementing these suggestions, there is an opportunity to empower the tea tribe community in Dhunseri Tea Estate, Udalguri, with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the media landscape effectively, critically assess information, and participate meaningfully in the political discourse.

In conclusion, the tea tribe community in Dhunseri Tea Estate, Udalguri, exhibits diverse educational backgrounds, low media literacy, and limited political awareness. Targeted interventions are imperative to address these challenges. With a reliance on traditional media, especially television, and limited engagement with digital platforms, tailored programs should utilize preferred channels, prioritize local languages, and involve collaboration with local leaders and media outlets for effective communication. The pressing need for enhanced media literacy is evident in the community's low self-assessment, emphasizing the importance of integrating educational initiatives into formal systems and conducting community workshops. To maximize political participation, fostering critical thinking, fact-checking, and digital skills is essential. While the community shows a preference for both traditional and digital media, the dissatisfaction with political information quality highlights the urgency for media outlets to enhance content reliability. Overall, a multifaceted approach is crucial to empower the tea tribe community for active political engagement and informed decision-making.

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