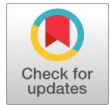# Communication for SDG 3: An Analysis of Strategies and Campaigns of Developmental Agencies in Jharkhand

Shreya Sinni, Rashmi Verma, Rajesh Kumar, Sameera Bhoi

Abstract: Effective communication techniques are crucial for promoting health and well-being in developmental efforts aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3), particularly in challenging states like Jharkhand, India. This study examines the communication tactics employed by a few Jharkhand-based NGOs and agencies to achieve the goals of Sustainable Development Goal 3, and explores potential implementation issues. The study uses a mixed-method approach and descriptive research design to interview representatives of specific NGOs (Breakthrough, Ekjut, Nischay Foundation, ASHA, CINI, UNICEF) in-depth. Qualitative insights into communication tactics highlight prevalent behaviours, obstacles, and outcomes. The results show that NGOs employ a range of communication tactics, including edutainment, community engagement, and the utilisation of both traditional and digital media. Participation in the community is essential for promoting trust and changing behaviour. Language differences, geographical restrictions, poor infrastructure, and cultural traditions that obstruct health education are among the top challenges.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goal, NGOs, Jharkhand, Strategies, Campaigns

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I. INTRODUCTION

Development encompasses the socio-cultural, political, and economic well-being of society, focusing on bridging the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots." It involves qualitative and quantitative improvements in the use of available resources and strategies for socio-economic and environmental transformation from the current state to the desired one [1]. Today, there is a significant emphasis on sustainable development, which aims to use resources in a way that preserves them for future generations. It ensures development meets present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs [2].

The three fundamental pillars of sustainable development are social progress, economic growth, and environmental conservation, which must work together to ensure no one is left behind. In 2015, all United Nations (UN) member countries adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aimed to be achieved by 2030. The UN, established in 1945, focuses on maintaining international peace, developing friendly relations among nations, and promoting social progress, better living standards, and human rights. The SDGs represent a universal call to end poverty, reduce inequalities, and tackle climate change. However, some critics argue that the SDGs are not Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART), making them less effective than the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [3].

Among the SDGs, Goal 3 (SDG3) is particularly significant, aiming to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages, including commitments to end epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria by 2030. This goal also seeks to achieve universal health coverage and provide access to safe and effective medicines and vaccines for all. Achieving SDG3 requires effective communication strategies, particularly in regions facing significant health challenges.

India's role in achieving the SDGs is crucial, given that it houses nearly 17.76% of the world's population [4]. However, Jharkhand, a key state in India, lags in healthcare despite initiatives by the state and central governments, as well as various NGOs. Jharkhand's predominantly rural and tribal demographics, along with hilly terrains, contribute to its healthcare challenges. Key issues include child mortality cases, nutrition, and access to water and sanitation. A lack of awareness about government initiatives, combined with a communication gap, further exacerbates these challenges. Reports indicate that even local leaders and beneficiaries are

unaware of their roles in monitoring healthcare initiatives. NitiAayog's Health Index report shows some positive developments in Jharkhand, but significant progress is still needed. Practical, grassroots-level work on SDG 3 could dramatically improve health outcomes. Six prominent NGOs—UNICEF, Breakthrough, ASHA, Nischay Foundation, Ekjut, and Child in Need Institute (CINI)—are actively working in Jharkhand to address health issues aligned with SDG3.

A robust literature review reveals that NGOs employ a variety of communication strategies to promote health and well-being. One study provides an analysis of how fourth-generation NGOs have evolved their communication tactics over time, emphasizing the importance of strategic communication in social campaigning and resource mobilization [5]. Another work discusses the pivotal role of NGOs in development and democracy in Bangladesh, highlighting how effective communication strategies can lead to significant societal changes [6].

Research in other regions underscores the importance of selecting the most effective communication channels to reach diverse populations [7]. Similarly, another study discusses the global communication challenges faced by human-rights NGOs, demonstrating that despite the rise of digital media, many NGOs still struggle to gain adequate attention for their causes [8].

The role of leadership in the effectiveness of NGOs is also critical. Another scholar emphasises the need for developing strong leadership within NGOs to ensure their sustainability and impact [9]. This is echoed in a case study exploring the legitimization strategies of environmental NGOs in China, showing how tailored communication strategies can help NGOs establish credibility and influence [10].

In the context of India, one study highlights the unique challenges and strategies of NGOs in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, illustrating how these organizations navigate resource constraints and societal needs to promote development [11]. Furthermore, the use of advanced technologies, such as AI, in promoting health presents both opportunities and ethical challenges, particularly in the least developed countries.

Achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 3, requires strong partnerships with development agencies and the private sector. These agencies play a proactive role in raising awareness about health and well-being, protecting the interests of people experiencing poverty, and upholding democratic values. The selected agencies in Jharkhand have made significant impacts in areas such as HIV/AIDS eradication, air pollution, nutrition, and maternal health. Effective communication strategies are essential for achieving the SDGs. Effective communication helps bridge the gap between awareness and implementation, ensuring that people are informed and motivated to improve their health and well-being. This study will examine the communication strategies employed by selected NGOs in Jharkhand, highlighting their efforts and impact on achieving SDG 3. The research addresses a significant gap, as no recent studies have focused on analyzing these efforts in Jharkhand, making this an important area of exploration.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

A. To evaluate the various communication strategies adopted by selected NGOs and agencies for Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3).

B. To identify the challenges faced by NGOs and agencies during the implementation of these communication strategies.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research aims to critically evaluate the communication strategies employed by NGOs and agencies in support of SDG 3 of the United Nations (UN). Therefore, a descriptive research design was chosen. Descriptive research describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon studied, focusing more on the "what" than the "why." It is a fact-finding investigation with adequate interpretation and is more specific than exploratory studies. This design gathers descriptive information and provides a foundation for more sophisticated studies.

B. Research Method and Tools

To evaluate these communication strategies, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, conducting in-depth interviews that included questionnaires with both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Representatives from 'Breakthrough,' 'Ekjut,' 'Nischay,' 'ASHA,' and 'CINI' participated in these interviews. An in-depth interview (IDI) involves asking respondents a set of questions to gather and record critical qualitative data. These interviews are semi-structured, allowing both the interviewer and interviewee the freedom to explore additional points and change direction as necessary. Typically conducted one-on-one or face-to-face, this method helps gather data, build rapport and observe non-verbal cues. There were follow-up questions, probes for additional information, and a revisit of key questions to generate a deeper understanding of attitudes, perceptions, and motivations.

C. Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used by the researchers in this study. Six organizations were selected as samples for this study. In-depth interviews were conducted to portray the organizations with an emphasis on their communication strategies.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Objective-1 Analysis Communication Strategies Adopted by Selected NGOs/Agencies for SDG3

In recent years, communication and information have become increasingly important in implementing various campaigns and strategies. In the presented study titled "Communication for SDG 3: Analysis of Research Strategies and Campaigns of Developmental Agencies," the researcher evaluated the communication strategies and campaigns for SDG 3 adopted by six selected NGOs/Agencies.

To fulfil the first research objective, the researcher proposed two research questions. Firstly, what are the specific issues of SDG 3 for which communication strategies are designed? Secondly, what are the various communication strategies adopted by the selected NGOs/Agencies? To answer these questions, the researcher asked about some

prominent campaigns and the entire strategy involved, from problem identification to impact evaluation. Additionally, the researchers inquired about the communication media used.
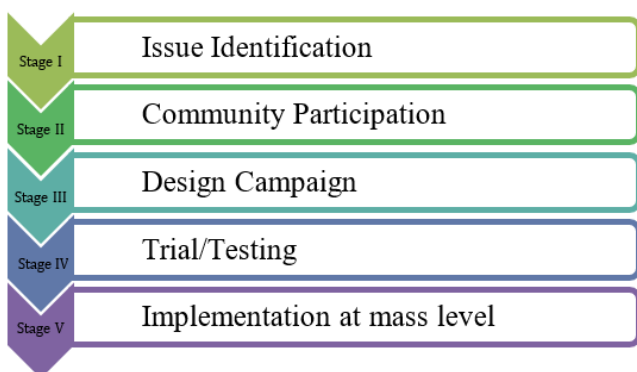
i. Breakthrough

Breakthrough began its work in Ranchi and Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, in 2012, but since 2019, it has focused exclusively on Hazaribagh. In this district, Breakthrough has been active in a predefined area for a specific period, primarily targeting SDG 3 initiatives, with a focus on menstrual hygiene. Good menstrual hygiene is vital for the health, education, and dignity of girls and women, reducing their vulnerability to Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs). However, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) indicates that only 39.9 per cent of women in rural Jharkhand use sanitary pads during menstruation.
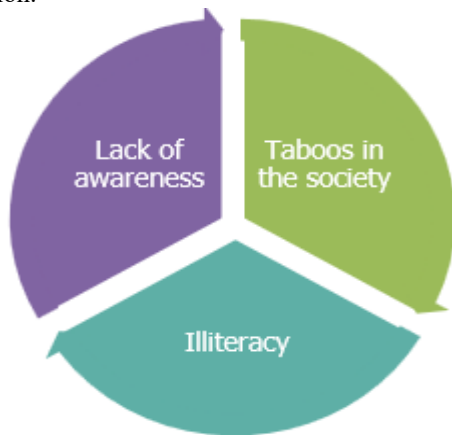
[Fig. 1: Prime Reason Behind **Unhygienic** Menstrual Days]

Cultural norms often prevent girls and women from expressing their needs, leading to poor menstrual hygiene management being ignored or misunderstood. Breakthrough is actively working to break these taboos and raise awareness. They implement impactful strategies through mass campaigns, including folk shows and face-to-face interactions, to address these issues effectively.

[Fig.2: The Strategy is Followed by a Breakthrough to Target Issues Related to SDG 3]

The Campaign Strategy Involves Five Stages:
Issue Identification: A team researches a contemporary topic that needs attention.
Community Participation: Meetings with community leaders at various levels help clarify the issue.
Design Campaign: Teams, such as media and content creators, collaborate to make the campaign interactive and widely accepted.

Trial/Testing: The message is tested in a limited area through mediums like folk shows and social media. Community leaders assess the impact to ensure effectiveness.
Broad Implementation: After successful trials, the campaign is rolled out on a larger scale.

Various communication mediums, including print, folk shows, TV, radio, and social media, are used to maximise reach. Campaigns often feature catchy slogans and appealing visuals to engage the public.

ii. Ekjut

Since 2004, Ekjut has been a key supporter of the state government's National Health Mission (NHM) programs. Instead of planning individual programs or campaigns, Ekjut's work is guided by the principles of equity gain and consists of three main strands.
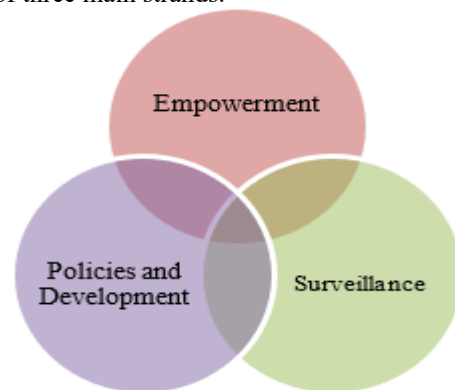
[Fig.3: Three strands of Ekjut's Working Pattern]

Components of Ekjut's Work

- Empowerment: Focuses on building the capacity of the community and women's groups, addressing health, nutrition, adolescent health, and mental health.
- Surveillance: Measures the impact of their work by identifying the right indicators and designing cost-effective impact evaluation processes.
- Policies and Development: Ensures the publication of work in prominent, credible journals like The Lancet, enhancing the impact through peer review.

Ekjut's Theme: Survive, Thrive, and Transform

- **Survive:** Reducing maternal mortality through community participation.
- **Thrive:** Improving nutrition and growth.
- **Transform:** Focusing on adolescent health and well-being, designing community-based modules on adolescent mental health, including clinical interventions at individual and community levels.

Major Initiatives

Ekjut trains ASHA/Sahiya workers on health and nutrition using the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) method, which involves community engagement and collective problem-solving. The community capacity-building strategy comprises five phases, during which trained facilitators encourage discussions and solutions among women, men, and adolescents.
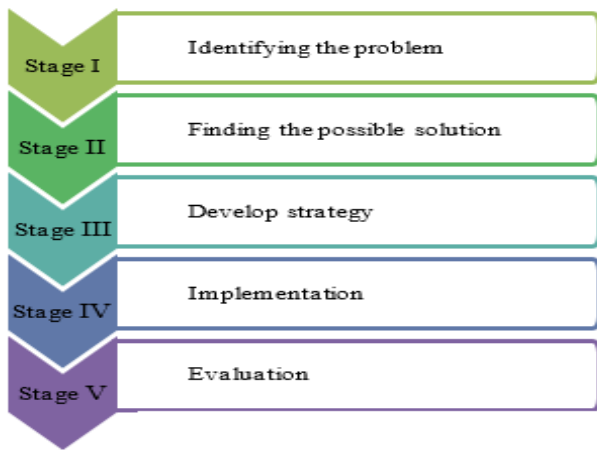
[Fig.4: The Strategy Followed by Ekjut to Address Issues Related to SDG 3]

Communication plays a crucial role throughout the implementation of the strategy. Various media, including edutainment messages at the village level and training ASHA/Sahiya workers to create region-specific stories and thought-provoking questions, are utilised for information dissemination and awareness creation. Additionally, social media, citizen journalism, and print media such as journals are employed, with creative and appealing visuals enhancing their effectiveness.

iii.   Child in Need Institute (CINI)

CINI is a key supporter of the Jharkhand government and primarily operates in Ranchi and Khunti districts. It assists in implementing various National Health programs, including Poshan Abhiyan for maternal health and nutrition, Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) for adolescent health in Saraikela and Dumka, and 1000 Days Care for pregnant women and children under 5 years of age. CINI aids the government in planning and executing program strategies, which can be divided into three phases.
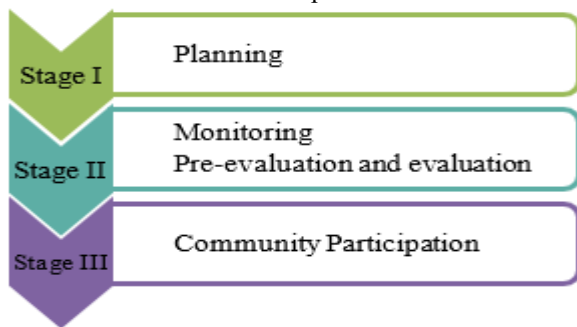

[Fig.5: The Strategy Followed by CINI to Target Issues Related to SDG 3]

- **Planning:** CINI ensures proper resource allocation at district and block levels, beginning with budget analysis and developing micro plans. They map stakeholders, plan communication campaigns, and establish monitoring systems to track progress.
- **Monitoring, Pre-evaluation, and Evaluation.**
- **Community Participation:** This phase includes social audits, accountability, and transparency mechanisms. CINI hires and trains community workers, who attend community meetings to understand issues. Community members conduct

social audits and evaluate processes. If community members are not allocated a budget, CINI trains health workers, such as Sahiya, ASHA, and Aanganwadi workers, for these tasks.

iv.   Association for Social and Human Awareness (ASHA)

The journey of ASHA began in 1997, but it was officially established in 2000, and it has been serving the people of Jharkhand for the last two decades. ASHA is working in the five districts of Jharkhand, specifically in Ranchi, Kharsawan, Lohardaga, Khunti, and Gumla. The key areas in the ASHA work upon are given below in Figure 5.4.1
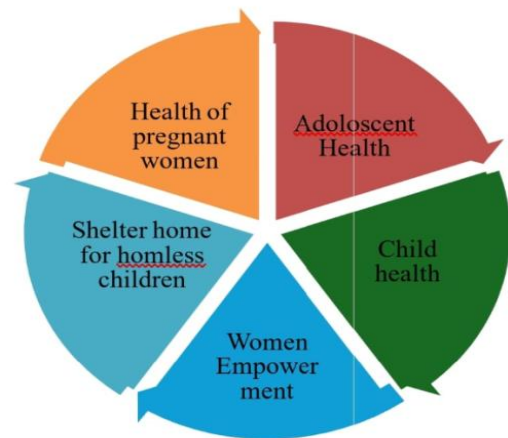
[Fig.6: Key Areas Toward Which ASHA Works]

ASHA works on several major programs related to SDG 3, focusing on health and well-being:

- **Nutrition of Pregnant Women:** Provides proper nutrition, regular health check-ups, and online consultations with doctors from the US and UK.
- **Kitchen Potion Bageecha:** Encourages tribal women to cultivate organic vegetables, improving their diet and that of their families.
- **Supply of Nutritious Food:** Delivers nutritious food to poor people.
- **Education and Nutrition for Dropout Students:** Offers classes and nutritious food for students who dropped out during the pandemic when schools were closed.

ASHA's strategy for "Taking Care of Pregnant Women" involves volunteers engaging with women in different panchayats to collect data and documents. They categorise the women using colour labels: Yellow for those in a better situation, Red for those lacking information and awareness, and Green for those with resources but without awareness. Based on this categorization, ASHA provides the necessary support to ensure the safe delivery of their babies.

v.   NISCHAY

The Nischay Foundation is a social organisation dedicated to promoting health, hygiene, education, and rural development, with a special focus on children, women, and youth. The foundation works effectively to raise awareness among girls about menstrual hygiene. In villages, women and girls often use cloths and other unhygienic materials during their periods, which can be harmful to their health. Nischay

addresses this issue by distributing free sanitary pads to girls and women in rural areas. Some of the most prominent campaigns for this issue include:
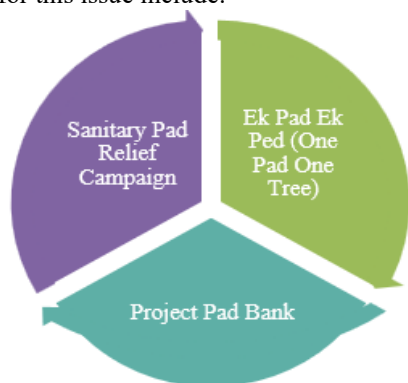

[Fig.7: Prominent campaigns by Nischay]

The Nischay Foundation not only raises awareness about the use of sanitary pads during menstruation but also encourages rural communities to plant trees through its "Ek Pad Ek Ped" campaign. This initiative aims to promote environmental responsibility and safe disposal of sanitary pads. The foundation's efforts are implemented with the help of ground-level volunteers who engage with people in remote areas, discussing the importance of menstrual health and the benefits of using sanitary pads, while also breaking taboos by distributing them for free. Volunteers visit schools and, with the assistance of teachers, create awareness among students.

The Nischay Foundation's efforts to raise awareness about menstrual hygiene in Jharkhand have grown into a widespread movement, aiming to eliminate the stigma associated with menstruation. Communication plays a crucial role in this strategy, with a balanced approach to selecting media that reaches diverse populations across different regions, languages, and age groups. Various communication channels, including digital and traditional media, are employed to maximise outreach.
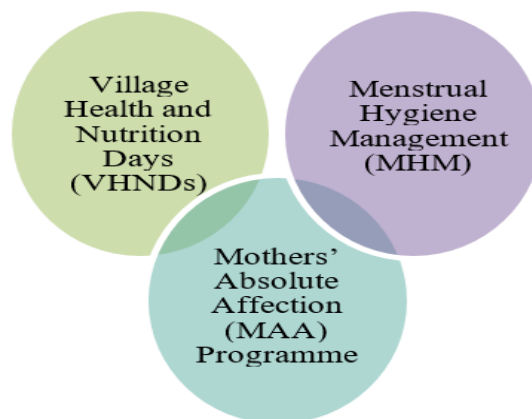
vi. UNICEF

In Jharkhand, UNICEF collaborates with the government, legislative committees, Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs), civil society organisations, the media, academic institutions, and others to drive change in key priority areas. Providing technical support to develop state guidelines, roadmaps, and policy documents is a central part of their work. Key health-related regions in which UNICEF is involved are illustrated in Figure 4.6.1.
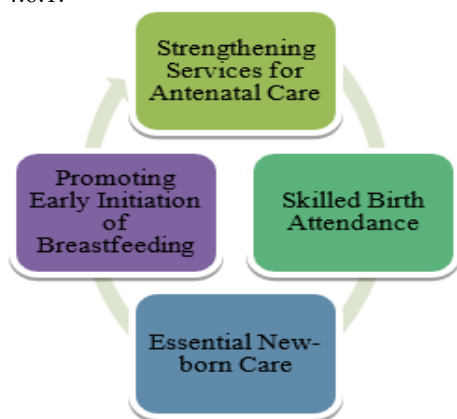
[Fig.8: Key Areas of UNICEF Work]

UNICEF supports Jharkhand by enhancing the capacity of front-line workers and reinforcing social and behaviour change communication initiatives to increase demand for healthcare services. This is achieved through collaborations with various entities, including NGOs, civil society organisations, tribal organisations, self-help groups, and Panchayati Raj institutions.
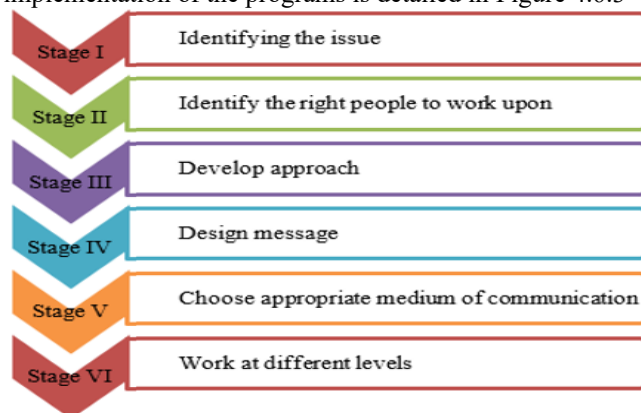
Major programs supported by UNICEF are detailed in Figure 5.6.2.

[Fig.9: Major Programs In which UNICEF Is a Core Supporter]

UNICEF supports Jharkhand's Village Health and Nutrition Days (VHNDs) program, focusing on providing immunisation and integrated services for mothers and children. They assist the government in strengthening cold chain systems, particularly in remote and inaccessible areas. In the Mothers' Absolute Affection (MAA) Program, UNICEF assists the state in phased rollouts to improve breastfeeding practices. The organization expands partnerships to ensure sustained government support for enhancing food security and feeding practices for young children.UNICEF contributes to building the capacity of frontline workers in Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) by challenging social taboos and empowering children with essential life skills. Efforts to strengthen MHM infrastructure at schools and in the community are ongoing.

The strategy adopted by UNICEF for the proper implementation of the programs is detailed in Figure 4.6.3

Stage I	Identifying the issue
Stage II	Identify the right people to work upon
Stage III	Develop approach
Stage IV	Design message
Stage V	Choose appropriate medium of communication
Stage VI	Work at different levels

[Fig.10: The Strategy followed by UNICEF to Target Issues Related to SDG 3]

B. Objective 2- Analysis: Challenges Faced by Developmental Agencies During Implementation of Communication Strategies

The study, titled 'Communication for SDG 3: Analysis of Research Strategies and Campaigns of Developmental Agencies,' aimed to analyze the strategies and campaigns of six selected NGOs/Agencies towards SDG 3. This goal seeks to ensure health and well-being for all, with a commitment to ending epidemics like AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other communicable diseases by 2030.

One objective of the study was to identify challenges faced by NGOs/Agencies during program implementation or campaigns. Additionally, through in-depth interviews, the researcher sought insights from interviewees about observed changes and gaps in Jharkhand based on their experiences.

i.   Breakthrough

In Breakthrough, most of the field-level volunteers are of the 19-25 age group, and for them, the organisation uses the term "Team Change leaders". Team Change leaders act as a bridge between the ordinary people and Breakthrough. They convey a message from an organisation to people and also help Breakthrough identify problems. The key challenges are:
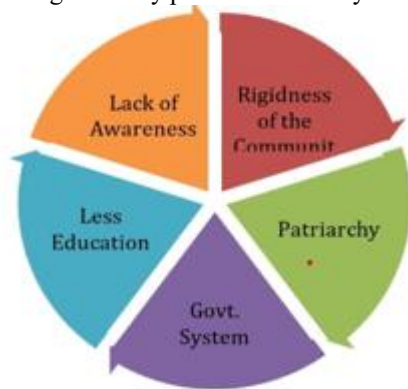
[Fig.11: Key Challenges According to Breakthrough]

ii.   Ekjut

The key challenges, according to Ekjut, during the implementation of the planned strategy are represented in the chart below:

[Fig.12: Key Challenges According to Ekjut]

In Jharkhand, a multitude of languages, including Khortha, Uduk, and Mundari, are spoken among various tribal groups, presenting a significant language barrier. Many individuals do not comprehend Hindi or English, making communication particularly challenging for outreach efforts by NGOs and development agencies. Furthermore, tribal communities in remote areas predominantly rely on forests and natural resources for their sustenance. Their festivals, such as Mage Parab, are deeply rooted in nature and can span weeks to

months, with no fixed dates for celebration. This prolonged festival period complicates communication efforts, necessitating prior notice and flexibility to engage effectively with community members. Ekjut underscores several critical gaps in government focus areas, notably Mental Health, Obesity, and Malnutrition. Despite these pressing issues, a notable absence remains of prominent programs, schemes, or campaigns tailored to address these concerns from the perspective of the local populace.

iii.   CINI

CINI supports the state government in the proper implementation of programs, and according to them, the key challenges hindering development in the health sector are identified.

One of the most common problems in Jharkhand is its remoteness, as it is a forest-dominant state with a significant portion of the tribal population residing in areas lacking proper roads and accessible by few vehicles. The presence of Naxalite groups also poses a threat to life. The government has not been seriously planning and monitoring schemes and programs to improve the situation of affected people. Unprepared health infrastructure is a core issue, frequently leading to news of people losing their lives due to the unavailability of physicians, medicines, or other necessities. Even in places where the government has established hospitals and clinics, resources are often unavailable. Political changes also impact focus and priorities, and panchayats are not equipped with proper equipment or training.

However, some changes have been observed in recent years, and these need to be accelerated. Notably, the government is increasingly recognizing the impact and importance of NGOs, and a larger section of the population is now aware of their rights, making it harder for government officials to cheat them. The Internet has played a crucial role in these changes.

iv.   ASHA

ASHA primarily works in tribal-dominated areas and faces numerous challenges during awareness campaigns, program implementation, and other activities. There is a lack of self-awareness about a balanced diet, especially among pregnant women, who often do not know how to take good care of themselves and their unborn children. Irresponsible working patterns of ASHA and Sahiya workers are also a significant problem. In tribal communities, men are often irresponsible toward women, and panchayats are reluctant to discuss women's health issues.

v.   Nischay

Nischay Foundation is primarily focused on menstrual hygiene, distributing menstrual pads to needy girls and women in remote areas. In these regions, people are still reluctant to discuss menstrual issues openly. However, Nischay's efforts are encouraging women and girls to break this taboo and come forward. Despite these efforts, the foundation faces significant challenges, including a lack of funding and threats to its existence.

40

[Fig.13: Key Challenges Identified by Nischay are Illustrated]

vi. UNICEF

UNICEF is known for working in hard-to-reach and challenging locations worldwide, including Jharkhand. The region presents both geographical and demographic barriers, necessitating that organizations tailor their strategies according to regional accessibility and available facilities.

V. FINDINGS

The study titled "Communication for SDG 3: Analysis of Research Strategies and Campaigns of Developmental Agencies" aimed to analyze the strategies and campaigns of six selected NGOs/Agencies towards achieving SDG 3, which aspires to ensure health and well-being for all. The research had two main objectives: to evaluate the communication strategies employed by these NGOs/Agencies about SDG 3 and to identify the challenges encountered during the implementation of these strategies.

The researcher employed a mixed-methods approach, including in-depth interviews (IDIs) with communication specialists or spokespersons of the selected NGOs/Agencies, as well as document analysis of existing health programs and campaigns. The study revealed that in Jharkhand, many organizations focus on improving women's reproductive health issues. Most of these NGOs/Agencies work in limited areas of the state and often collaborate with the state government to effectively implement existing programs, rather than planning individual campaigns.

The study found that the government heavily relies on ASHA, Sahiyas, and Aanganwadi workers, continuously training them with the support of various NGOs/Agencies to create awareness and implement programs. Agencies like CINI help train these workers, monitor their work, and ensure proper documentation and analysis of effectiveness. However, the reach of these efforts is limited, and the on-ground reality varies significantly across different regions.

Regarding the first research question, evaluating the communication strategies adopted by selected NGOs/Agencies for SDG 3, it was found that community participation is a common and crucial aspect. The focus is primarily on women's reproductive health, with many organizations also considering mental health, which is a positive development. Social media has become the most utilised communication medium.

The study also revealed that non-government health agencies place more emphasis on interpersonal health communication aimed at positive attitudinal changes compared to their government counterparts.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. This study aimed to analyse the various communication strategies employed by selected NGOs/Agencies in Jharkhand that work towards achieving SDG 3, which focuses on health and well-being. The researcher also sought to identify the significant challenges these non-profit organisations face during their work.

After data collection and analysis, it was found that the most common communication strategy adopted by these NGOs/Agencies involves several key steps. Initially, contemporary issues are identified with the help of community mobilizers. Following this, messages are crafted in an edutainment and storytelling format. These messages are designed with catchy taglines, visuals, and a blend of educational and entertaining content. The next step is to select an appropriate medium of communication tailored to the target audience and location. Once the medium is chosen, the message is disseminated. Finally, a post-evaluation is conducted to assess the impact of the communication strategy.

The analysis also revealed a shift in the mediums of communication used over time. Traditionally, print, electronic media, and radio were the primary channels of communication. However, with the rise of digital media platforms, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube have become increasingly popular.

The study also aimed to identify the challenges faced by NGOs/Agencies during the implementation of their communication strategies. The research highlighted several significant challenges, including language barriers, cultural diversity, geographic remoteness, lack of self-awareness among the population, inadequately equipped health systems, and issues within the panchayat system.

DECLARATION STATEMENT

After aggregating input from all authors, I must verify the accuracy of the following information as the article's author.

- **Conflicts of Interest/ Competing Interests:** Based on my understanding, this article has no conflicts of interest.
- **Funding Support:** This article has not been funded by any organizations or agencies. This independence ensures that the research is conducted with objectivity and without any external influence.
- **Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate:** The content of this article does not necessitate ethical approval or consent to participate with supporting documentation.
- **Data Access Statement and Material Availability:** The adequate resources of this article are publicly accessible.

▪ **Author's Contributions:** The authorship of this article is contributed equally to all participating individuals.

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