

How social media helped in popularising and preserving – Khortha folk music



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Abstract

Folk music is an ancient form of Music. This word comes from a German word “Volk”, it means “the people”. Every community or society in the whole world has their own traditional Folk music whether it is Chile, Germany or India. Especially India has a very rich and diverse culture of Folk music. Here I am writing about one of the most famous Folk music of Jharkhand that is “Khortha”. This language is spoken by approximately 1.5 Crores people of Jharkhand. The objective behind writing this article is to make society aware about “Khortha’s” beautiful folk music and its rich Folk culture. This article will give little bit of exposure to Khortha Folk music and it will help scholars who are working on Folk music. Descriptive research methodology has been used for writing this article. Khortha is such a beautiful and famous language of Jharkhand that it should also reach to different parts of India. And this is one authentic way of giving respect to this Language and its culture which it truly deserves.

Key words: Khortha, Jharkhand, Folk Music, Community, Culture

Research Paper

Musical sounds are a powerful human resource, and at times we have been using it for different purposes like entertainment, therapy, mediation, stress buster and many more. Music is one but it has many soul purposes. Different people used different kinds of music to make the society a better place to live in. It is one way or another the best way to express the feelings. Music has been used on various occasions and platforms like to celebrate someone’s wedding, to connect ourselves to the supreme power, to make babies quiet and sleep. In the whole world we have 12 notes/ swaras only and there are millions of tunes too but not a single tune match to another. This is the power of divine music. It has also been used for making money and fame. Music is like an ocean where you can swim, jump, enjoy play but cannot get the control over it. “Music and dance are key to identity formation because they are often public presentations of the deepest feelings and qualities that make a group unique.

India is a diverse country, and its music is known as one of the richest and ancient forms of music in the whole world. It has two widely famous forms of music i.e., folk, and classical. In India each state has its own music and culture. This is why the folk music in India is so diverse. Here the language and culture changes in every

200KM. Now a days everyone is on social media and the best way to connect yourself to the world, is social media. It has also expanded its wings, there are many platforms where one can share their ideas, music with everyone and everywhere like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn to name a few.

Jharkhand–The State of Mines and Rich Folk Culture

According to (Tiwari) the 28th state of the Indian Union was brought into existence by the Bihar reorganization Act on November 15, 2000- the birth anniversary of the legendary Bhagwan Birsa Munda. Jharkhand is famous for its rich mineral resources like Uranium, Mica, Bauxite, Granite, Gold, Silver, Graphite, Magnetite, Dolomite, Fireclay, Quartz, Field spar, Coal (32% of India), Iron, Copper (25% of India) etc. Forests and woodlands occupy more than 29% of the state which is amongst the highest in India. Jharkhand is full of lush green trees and mountains and with that it has also diverse culture. There are many tribals and communities which have been living here for a very long time. They all have different languages, culture, festivals, and music. In every festival, there is a tradition of singing and dancing. Without music and dance, not a single festival is celebrated in Jharkhand. Among the

most widely recognized of Jharkhand's dances is chhau, an elaborate masked dance of the south-eastern region, particularly the Sarai Kela and East Singhbhum districts. Although once a village tradition associated with Chaitra Parva, a festival held every April in honour of the god Shiva, chhau eventually received royal patronage and then state sponsorship; it has since become a virtual emblem of the region.

Khortha Language and Khortha Folk Music

According to (Aman) a language which is considered dialect of Magahi language spoken in the Indian state of Jharkhand, mainly in 16 districts of two divisions: North Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana. Khortha is spoken by the Sadaans as native language and used by the tribal as a link language. It is most spoken language of Jharkhand. Most of the population in Jharkhand speaks Khortha language. George Grierson classified Khortha as a dialect of Magahi language in his linguist survey. Khortha is widely spoken language in Jharkhand. Mainly it is used in Bokaro, Dhanbad, Hazaribagh, Koderma etc. There are not so many poets, writers or folk musicians who have worked on Khortha folk music and literature. Some of the poets and writers who have really struggled to make Khortha literature and folk music popular are Srinivas Panuri, Binay Tiwari, Dalel singh, Shivnaath, A. K. Jha to name a few.

It is a very famous language of Jharkhand and yet not much work has been done or published on this theoretically. Folk music can be learnt by oral traditions only. One can learn Khortha folk music through a performance or Akhra. "Akhra" is a kind of social gathering where people from different communities come and dance and sing in front of each other. This is one of the best methods of learning Khortha folk song. They use different types of Instruments with their performances like Dundubhi, Maandar, Shehnayi and Flute to name a few. The richness and depth of Khortha folk tradition and culture, preservation of the Khortha music, art, dance, language, and instruments assumes significance. It can aid younger generations in learning about Khortha heritage and lifestyle, providing them much needed exposure to the diversity that India as a nation represents. There is no tradition of Guru - Shishya Parampara, like we have in Indian Classical Music. In Folk music everyone is guru, and everyone is disciple, learning from each other.

How Social Media Came into Existence

In the world of media, social media played a vital role in transforming communication and business. In

2000, many social networking sites emerged to ease interaction with people that share common interest in music, education, movies and so on. This also affected how businesses conducted their transactions and advertisements, and their products social media was further developed during the 1970s. (Edosomvan) Many social networking sites were created in the 1990s. Some examples include Six Degrees, Black Planet, Asian Avenue, and MoveOn. In 2000 social media received a great boost with the witnessing of many social networking sites springing up.

Internet proliferation and preservation potential of Khortha Folk music

Khortha folk music is diverse, and it has different kinds of shades as well. There are different kinds of music for every occasion or festival. If there is a festival of crop cutting, they sing songs related to crops. If they worship a god, they sing songs related to that only. These kinds of divine connection we can see in general. People who speak Khortha and sing, it gives them joy and feel of belongingness to their motherland. Mahendra (Chamga 2019) who is in his late 20s has used Facebook since 2010 and once bagged a 50,000 gig after uploading his group's Bhangra performance on Facebook. Further he said, "With social media we are easily traceable and that has made us visible and reachable." (Chamga)

In an article published in (Encyclopaedia Britannica) it is stated that today, virtual space is taking local forms to a global audience, thus enhancing awareness about the Khortha folk music and their relevance, the learning it offers for day-to-day life. Interestingly many studies and surveys show and proven that new age audiences are also taking a major part in it. Their principal source of information is the internet and the social media platforms. It is not from their books, parents and grandparents and such literary sources that this young age generation is learning about folk music. Their initiation into the different forms and formats is happening via social media, facilitating their acquisition of insights into the diverse Khortha folk music.

Now a days the Khortha folk music does not only sticks to Jharkhand and its people. Even it got popularity in Western countries also and the credit goes to the social media. It really changed the vision of the people and music appreciators. Social media gave a unique and new experience to the artists and the listeners. Now one can listen to any folk music of any artist whenever he or she wants. This gave a new direction to Khortha folk

music. Before the social media came into existence it was very difficult for the artists to even survive through performing and doing work on folk music and literature. The situation before social media arrived was way too scary and dark for the folk artists. It was a do or die situation that time. It wasn't a matter whether you are a gifted singer or an amazing folk artist, mainly because the place that they usually went and performed, it used to cover a very limited number of audience and because that Khortha folk music was not getting that recognition which it could. But now a days the scenario has been completely changed as now there are many platforms where artists can put up their work and get appreciation for that. There are many platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Spotify etc, where one can put their audios and videos. Now it is very easy for the artists to connect to a wider audience without even taking a foot outside their home. For example, this is one of the most famous Khortha folk song which got millions of views on it - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syx9Kf8JjO8>. This is just an example, there are tons of Khortha folk songs like this which are getting millions of views. YouTube has further enabled the preservation and circulation of Khortha folk music through its repository of songs, music, audio-visual productions and shows on current affairs available for those interested in exploring more. Since most Khortha music are produced on a low budget, YouTube has emerged as a boon enabling the distribution of such content far and wide. It also presents a route through which producers can earn from their investments. Now at least we can say that it has been started to reach to the wider audience. Apart from popularity of Khortha Folk music, when artists upload their work on different platforms, somehow social media has been also preserving it at the same time. Artists are making content and distributing it, is one of the most significant ways that social media remains an important place to be in the Khortha folk music industry. Not only does this content led to more interest and a wider audience but it is also the foundation of finding and keeping long-term folk music appreciators.

It's important to understand that each platform demands different kinds of content. For example, viewers tend to enjoy longer videos on YouTube and Facebook, but they enjoy shorter videos on Instagram and TikTok. It also depends on the platform that what kind of music does it wants to promote and how much duration should be of any music video have to be. For example, one can upload a very long video (1-10 hrs.) on YouTube but not on Instagram. So, artists are already aware about this, if

they are putting a small video then they must upload it on Instagram instead of YouTube. It will help them getting more wider audience and popularity. Social media also made the Khortha folk artists realise that uploading or sharing their work through social platforms, they must keep in mind that what kind of audience, artists want to listen to their music. Because not everyone has a taste of listening to the folk music of Jharkhand or anywhere else. So, it is also important to target the right audience and it can happen through social media only.

Some Key Points of How Artists can Promote their Music through Social Media: –

1. Target the right audience.
2. Consistency is the key. It is important to keep in mind that one should be consistent about putting up their work on social platforms.
3. Gradually building the audience for your content.
4. Your music should reflect your personality and charm.
5. Give your audience their daily fix.
6. Provide value to your audience.

Sharing an example, of a Khortha Folk songs which gained a huge success written by Folk artist Binay Tiwari-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZjXuYLPVvE>

This song tells us about the wedding rituals and how the parents of a bride feel sad that their daughter is leaving them behind and starting a new phase of life. It is available on YouTube. We can also see that if this song would be sung in a particular area or a place in Jharkhand then, it wouldn't be this much popular. Through YouTube, now it is available to everyone in this world. Anyone can listen to it from anywhere. This is the power of social media. Now Khortha folk artists can easily earn money by putting their music or songs on social media. Because of the social media, different folk artists of Khortha are travelling to different locations for concerts and performances. They are also travelling out of India which is a big recognition for any folk language and music. Sharing a table which is showing how different social media platforms are being used by the people.

Pinterest	20					
Blogs	150					
Twitter		288				
Instagram		300				
Google+		359				
Facebook					890	
YouTube					1000	

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(Zlatanov) stated that number of active social media users in millions (Calculations according to data taken over from Statista, 2014. Gradually the number of users on social media are increasing and the interaction with different genres of music is increasing too. In the book 'Metaphors of the World Wide Web: An Introduction to the Art of New Media,' (Szuts) explains that the advent internet and virtual communication has ushered in the age of touch and augmented reality (Szuts). According to the author, this phase holds within itself the specialities of the earlier phases and, in composite, offers a communication medium that comprises sound, visuals, and touch. Such trajectory from narration to augmented reality, in a way, underlines the evolution constantly occurring regarding the generation and flow of information, its subsequent recording and documentation. With changes in the communications landscape, what is also changing is the way information is being recorded, preserved, and transmitted. In keeping with the evolution of communication approaches and technologies, storage techniques and subsequent retrieval of traditional elements related to folk culture are also transforming.

Conclusion

With time, an initiative taken by Binay Tiwari, Dinesh Dinmani and other poets and musicians, on their own accord and a limited scale, is evolving into a movement of sorts and gathering momentum. In addition, it also enables younger generations to learn about their traditional language and culture, thereby inculcating a feeling of association and pride. It can be referred to in case of need in future. With technology providing the tools and bandwidth required to achieve this end, the day may not be far when Khortha folk music will have its own online website. Social media effectively preserves traditions and cultures has been clarified by several examples. This provides permanency and immortality to the Khortha folk music, its art forms, music, and other cultural aspects. In addition, such

archiving makes it possible for people from different parts of the world to know more about this old art form and its cultural tradition by simply assessing the online materials available.

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