



The Pattern of Interpersonal Communication among Families of Oraon Tribe in Arangi Village of Jharkhand, India

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal communication can also be defined as the communication that takes place between people who are interdependent and have some knowledge of each other. Interpersonal communication refers to what takes place between a son and his father, between husband and wife, between mother and daughter in a family. Although largely dyadic in nature, interpersonal communication is often extended to include small intimate groups such as the peer group and extended family. Interpersonal communication can take place in face-to-face settings, as well as through media platforms, such as social media. Every family has a pattern of communication which is often channelized through various kin acting as a medium. In this study, the main focus will be concentrated on knowing about a general pattern of interpersonal communication among Oraon families of Arangi Village. The Oraon tribe is one of the major tribes of the Chotanagpur region. They have settled agriculturists which make them remarkable for complex family studies as they have a strong and extensive kinship system. They speak Kurukh which falls in the Dravidian linguistic family which itself is considered as one of the root linguistic families of India. Hence, as Oraons have already their own distinctive kinship and family pattern so this paper attempts to highlight the pattern of interpersonal communication among them using an integrative approach.

Key Words: *Interpersonal communication, Oraon, Kinship, Family, Integrative.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In most common terms interpersonal communication can be defined as process of exchange of information, ideas, feelings, notions and meaning between two or more people through verbal and/or non-verbal methods. It often includes face-to-face exchange of messages, which may take form of a certain tone of voice, facial expressions, body language and gestures. The level of one's interpersonal communication skills is measured through the effectiveness of meaning transferred through the message. Interpersonal communication can also be defined as the communication that takes place between people who are interdependent and have some knowledge of each other. Interpersonal communication refers to what takes place between a son and his father, between husband and wife, between mother and daughter in a family. Although largely dyadic in nature, interpersonal communication is often extended to include small intimate groups such as the peer group and extended family. Interpersonal communication can take place in face-to-face settings, as well as through media platforms, such as social media. Even family has a pattern of communication which is often channelized through various kin acting as a medium like in some traditional Hindu families, matters at hand are not directly communicated by daughters directly to the Father, as a distance out of sheer respect for the father is maintained ever since the childhood. Hence whenever the issue arises that needs the decision of the head (usually father in patriarchal Hindu society), matters are communicated through a medium, like through mother or elder brother. Similarly, some behaviour of avoidance is maintained in the process of interaction between some kin like between daughter-in-law and father-in-law or between sister-in-law and elder brother-in-law. Also, system of teknonymy is found in many families where kin is referred through the name of other kin as direct names can't be uttered out of respect. The terms used for referring to kin in a family also forms the pattern of interpersonal communication among the family members. Several aspects from kinship studies can be taken in studying the pattern of interpersonal communication among family members as the pattern is formed through such aspects of kinship system. Hence this study is an integrative approach of sort to study the prevailing pattern of communication in families of a particular ethnic group.

1.1 Arangi village and The Oraons:

Arangi is a village situated in Ghaghra block of Gumla district in Jharkhand state of India. It is one among the 119 villages of Ghaghra block. Arangi village is Oraon dominated area where the settled agriculturists and Kurukh speaking tribe Oraon, live with neighbouring less populated tribal groups namely Mahli, Lohra, Chik Baraik and some castes like Ahir and Mehto. About 19.85% of total population of the state Jharkhand is constituted by them. In Arangi village their population is in majority and they still maintain their culture very strictly. They belong to Proto Australoid racial group. Short stature, narrow head, broad nose usually are their physical characteristics. They speak a dialect called KURUKH which has Dravidian affinity.

1.1.1 Family: Oraon families in Arangi village are usually joint families where two or more generations of family live together under the same roof and shares a common hearth but with the growing distress of finance and urban source of income, some families are being disintegrated and new generation of families prefer to live separately.

1.2 Political Structure: In Arangi village, village head is the Pahan. All the matters of disputes are solved by Pahan, Pujar and Mahto. They are consulted first for suggestions and before any major decision is made.

Religion: Oraon families of Arangi village mainly follows Sama religion. Pahan is the main religious specialist. Sarhul, Karma, Holi, Diwali, Ramnavmi are some of the religious festivals which is celebrated with great joy in Arangi village. Date of Celebration of Sarhul varies in this village from the date of celebration of Sarhul in Ranchi and other districts. In Arangi, Sarhul is celebrated just after two days of Holi. Beside Sama sthal there is also one more sacred plume in village called as Devi Mandap. This sacred place faces West Direction as mountain which is revered by Oraons of this village is located in west hence opposite to the popular belief of keeping sacred places facing East, Devi Manda faces West along the direction of Putt Raja (mountain deity). And before each ritual being performed, Pahan first asks for the forgiveness for keeping the face of deity in mandap in west. Some taboos are followed in this village by Oraon families due to some religious beliefs, like women are not allowed to touch the plough and enter the Sama Sthal. Also people of other tribe and caste along with members of family living outside the village are not allowed to enter the main kitchen.

1.3 Magic: There is prevalence of both white and black magic in an around village. People has firm belief in magical practices and ojha and guni are well revered by people in village as they are believed to have supernatural powers and knowledge to ward off evils.

1.4 Economy: Oraons of Arangi village are usually agriculturalists. They perform settled cultivation and grow crops like arhar, khesra, jatangi, rice, wheat, marwa, gondli. Many people are also engaged in government jobs occupying administrative positions in nearby locality. Also, some people are engaged as labourer working in brick factories, or at the time of house construction and as workers in industries in cities.

2.0 PATTERN OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AMONG ORAON FAMILIES IN ARANGI VILLAGE

The pattern of communication was almost same in most families of Oraon in Arangi village. The head of the family is the father and even though children do communicate with the father directly but at the times of serious issues, matters are taken to the father through mother, first it is the mother who is informed of whatever the need is or the matters at hand and then only it is communicated to the father by her. In case mother is not present then the elder brother or the closest sibling takes the matter to the father. There is indirect interaction between father and the wife of the son. A physical distance is maintained and in no case, wife is allowed to make physical contact

2.1 Terms of Reference Used for Kin (In Kurukh)

FATHER— EMBAS OR BABA

MOTHER- ENGYO OR AYO

DAUGHTER- KUKKE

SON- KUKKO

ELDER SISTER— DAI

BROTHER— BHAYOS

GRAND FATHER- AJJA

GRAND MOTHER- AJJI

UNCLE (FATHER'S BROTHER)— KAKA

AUNT (FATHER'S SISTER)- TAACHI

MOTHER'S BROTHER— MAMA

FATHER'S SISTER'S HUSBAND— MAMA

BOTHER-IN-LAW- BHATU

SISTER-IN-LAW- NASGO

WIFE- KHAI

WIFE OF HUSBAND'S BROTHER— BAINALI

BABY GIRL- MAIYA

BABY BOY- BABU

INFANT— KHADD

HUSBAND AND WIFE— AALAS & AALI

These are some terms which are used or referring to primary or secondary kin in the Oraon family during interpersonal communication.

2.2 Pattern of interpersonal communication between Oraon families and families of other tribes or caste-Although the majority of population in Arangi village is of Oraon tribe but other tribes like Lohra and Mahli also live there. Though the interaction between members of all tribes occurs in a civil and polite manner but still distance is maintained from Lohra and Mahli on religious grounds. Commensality is observed between the members as it is believed that traditional god would get angry if done otherwise and guardian of the family would have to suffer the wrath of the deity. Hence interpersonal communication between members of other tribes is not that much open.

2.3 Languages used during interpersonal communication- Kurukh is mainly used for the conversational purpose but the individuals of new generation could be observed interacting in Sadri or Hindi. Kurukh is used for communicating with elders in family if the language is known by individuals of younger generation.

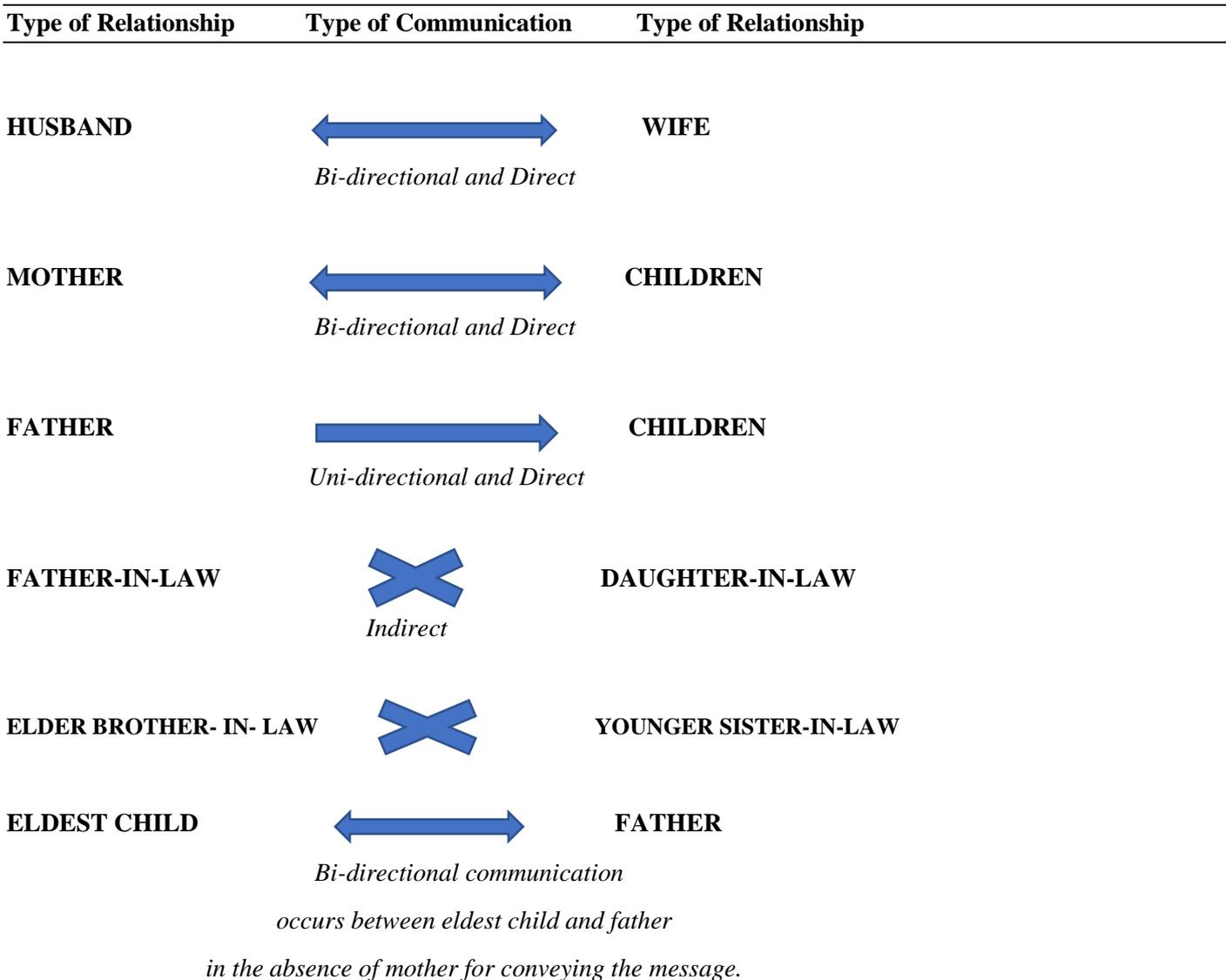


Figure 1. General Pattern of Interpersonal communication between different kin in an Oraon family

CONCLUSION

The study highlighted the pattern of interpersonal communication among the members in the Oraon families. The terms of usages, avoidance behaviour, direct and indirect interaction among the members of a family gave an idea of the similar pattern of communication as observed in many Hindu families of India. This again creates curiosity to find out to what extent ideologies arose due to acculturation has penetrated in Oraon society that now it has taken such a complex form. Further this study opens up new avenue for multidisciplinary researches involving kinship studies, ethnography as well as communicational anthropology.

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