



INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF THE DHAKI PEOPLE IN BONGAON BLOCK, NORTH 24 PARGANAS, W.B.

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ABSTRACT

Information is important to every human life. Information needs and information seeking behaviour of Dhaki Community in Bongaon Block area. In Hindu culture, during worship to God or Goddess, Dhak is played by Dhakis or drummer. They play an important role during the puja. Dhak instrument makes a pure sound which creates the sweet environment in puja pandel. Devi Durga, Maa Kali, Maa Jagadhatri puja festivals are celebrated in West Bengal, Bagladesh and Assam mainly. Charok is performed for God Shiva. The musicians of Dhak are called Dhaki or Drummer. A Dhak does not complete the music itself. Kashore is another instrument that combinedly create pure music to welcome the God and Goddesses. From the welcome session to end part of the puja, this music is played by the Dhakis. It brings purity in the puja pandal, attention of the devotees and comfortable puja environment. Direct interviews with Dhaki and group of Dhakis, Team leaders of Dhakis, public representatives across 10 gram panchayats of Bongaon Block have been completed. The economic condition of Dhakis are not good. This paper explores the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of Dhaki community.

KEYWORDS

Information needs, Information seeking behaviour, Community Information Services, Dhak, Dhaki, Marginal Family, Instruments. Lady Dhakis.

INTRODUCTION:

Information plays a crucial role in economic, political, social reflections of the society. People perform their worship to God with the help priest and Dhakis. A Dhaki seeks first job information, wages rate, price of drum and another instruments, health information, information regarding different community development, govt. or non-govt projects, information regarding any govt facility, etc. Each year Devi Durga comes to her parental house in autumn. We can hear the musical sound of Dhak. The kashful, a kind of flower blooms in the autumn session and musical sounds of Dhak welcome Maa Durga in every puja pandal. As we know when worship begins, priest chants mantras and Dhaki plays the drum with a sweet and rhythmic sound. Dhak is a hollow barrel. The both side of the drum are covered with goat skin. It's lace is of cow skin tied and bind both the drum's side which is covered by the goat skin. One side, is covered with the mixture of black lyre of manganese oxide and iron ore. Dhaki patches on the black places. The Dhak is designed by bird's feathers. The drum is covered with a colourful cloth. Then it is hanged on Dhaki's shoulder with a strap. The Dhak is played with two bamboo sticks or wooden sticks. People believes that Dhak is originated from Bengal. Dhak is made by the wood of named 'Dhak'(scientific name -butea monosperma, Sanskrit-Kingshuk).The drum of the dhak is made by this wood. This tree is available in our country. Drum have two sides. One side is played by the Dhaki (Srinivasan,2019). This Bongaon Block is situated in Indo-Bangladesh boarder. The goal of this study is to analyse Dhaki community and their information need and information seeking behaviour.

Dhaki community in Bongaon Block:

Bongaon block is situated in Indo-Bangladesh Border area in North 24 parganas District, West Bengal. There the Dhaki community people are residing in 10 Gram panchayat area. The maximum Dhaki families (60) are residing in Kalupur Gram panchayat and 50 families are residing in Gopal Nagar Gram panchayat. All belong to scheduled caste. They are all from marginal families. They are poor, uneducated, they do not get any good job. So, They continue this profession generation-wise. They are called to play Dhak in various puja festivals and many social programmes. They are not satisfied with wages in Dhak playing, So they need information.

Review Of The Literature:

Prologue:

A review of relevant literature is crucial for any paper, as it help to identify gaps, provide a theoretical foundation, and improve the study's quality. This review is organized chronologically under each topic, using criteria such as information need, information seeking behaviour, community information services, and Dhak players. It sets the scene, provides background information, and lays out the research rationale.

Information Needs:

Information needs for academicians and professionals.

Gorman (1995), investigated the understanding of information was evolving, with varying estimates and methodologies. Found that most clinical questions remain unanswered, often due to time constraints and lack of access to the information. Information needs among health care professionals.

Information seeking behaviour:

Information seeking behaviour studies in other contents:

Humbhi, Tareen, and Humbhi (2022), examined undergraduate information-seeking behaviour and challenges they faced, while using libraries. It found the Results showed that 62% of undergraduates need information for work, 29% for job-related information, and 44.2% use social media. The majority visit the library for study purposes, with 20% for newspapers and political information. The findings could help librarians redesign information literacy programs and inform higher authorities about these obstacles.

Community Information Services:

Rabi Das Community Information Services:

Poojn (2025), examined the Rabidas community, which was established by the poet-saint Guru Rabidas in the fifteenth century and fought against caste-based prejudice by promoting equality and social justice.

Das (2022), investigated Saint Ravidas, born in 1377 CE, challenged the caste-based system of social exclusion and untouchability in India, Known as for his unique method of Bhakti, he challenged oppressive structures of social dominations.

Information needs for the Dhak (Drum) players:

Information needs of a Dhaki (drummer) players in Bongaon Block:

Sharma (2017), investigated, Gokul Chandra Das organised women Dhakis, they need passport to go to foreign countries for Dhak playing. Mr. Das trained lady Dhakis carefully to develop their professional skill. He wanted to establish a Dhakis Institute. Recently, He was awarded 'PADASHREE' by Govt. of India by his excellency in Dhak playing.

Objectives Of The Study:

- To identify the information needs and information seeking behaviour of Dhakis or drum players.
- To explore the present status and problems faced by the Dhakis.
- To identify any initiatives taken by Govt. or local Govt. organisations.
- To identify the role of libraries for the community.

Scope And Coverage:

This study focused on 10 gram panchayats where Dhakis reside mainly in Bongaon block in North 24 pgs, The research was conducted over the span of **2.5 months**, during which field surveys, interviews, and

data collection on the Dhaki community's demographics, livelihoods, and cultural practices were carried out. The study encompasses all age groups within the Dhaki community, offering a comprehensive view of generational differences, skill transmission, and community dynamics. Acknowledging its scope limits, this study opens avenues for extended research at district or state levels.

METHODS:

This study adopts a qualitative research approach and relies primarily on primary data. This paper carried out direct interviews with Dhakis and their group leaders across 10 Gram Panchayats, selected from the total 16 Panchayats under Bongaon Block, using purposive sampling in this study. Additionally, The interviews have been taken on local public representatives and Gram Panchayat staff to understand their perspective on the livelihood and welfare of the drumming community. Special attention was given to documenting their socioeconomic status and current living conditions. To gain official insights, conversation held with the Sub-Divisional Officer (Information and Broadcasting), Bongaon, and inquired about the registration of Dhakis. Again, the matter discussed with the District Officer (Information & Broadcasting), who provided me with an official list of registered Dhakis in the Bongaon Block. The direct interview method was used to collect responses from the drummer community, based on a set of limited and structured questions focused on their income, profession, social condition, and livelihood challenges. Maximum respondents responded significantly good.

Data Analysis And Interpretation:

Distribution Of Respondents People

Table 1: Distribution Of Respondents In Respect Of Gender Distribution In Bongaon Block.

Respondents	Male	Female	Total
Gender	314	40	354
% of gender	88.70%	11.30%	100 %

Distribution Of Respondents In Respect Of Age Of Dhakis.

Table 2 shows us the highest 127 Dhakis i.e 35.87% in 18-29 years age groups and lowest age group 16 i.e 4.51% who are above 60 years.

Table 2: Age Distribution Of Dhakis Under Bongaon Block:

Range of ages	Below 18 years	18-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	above 60 years
No. of male Dhakis	38 (10.73 %)	127 (35.87%)	61 (17.23)	72 (20.33)	40 (11.29%)	16 (4.51%)
No. of lady Dhakis & %	-	15 (4.23%)	20 (5.64)	5 (1.41%)	-	-

Distribution Of Respondents In Respect Of Education

Table 3: Education Level Of Dhakis In Bongaon Block.

Classes upto VII	VIII-IX	M.P	H.S	GRADUATE
250	83	43	41	9
70.62%	23.44%	12.14%	11.58%	2.54%

Table 3 shows us the education of Dhakis or Dhak players are divided in 5 groups in above. The education picture really unregretful. A community like such education can not run fast. It run backward. It has to take new education policy. To develop the community, it is mandatory to provide education to all, first.

Distribution Of Respondents In Respect Of Wages :

Table-4: Distribution Of Respondents In Respect Of Wages For Dhakis:

Different Rates	Rate-1	Rate-2	Rate-3	Rate-4
Rate of wages	Rs. 500-600	Rs. 700-800	Rs. 1000-1200	Rs.1500
Dhakis	134	100	70	50
% of Dhakis	37.85%	28.24%	19.77%	14.12%

Table 4 discusses Dhakis rate or wages per call are Rs.500-600. These are 134 in number i.e is 37.85%. The rate Rs.700-800 for Dhakis who are 100 in number i.e is 28.24 %. There Rs.1000-1200 per call of 70 Dhakis i.e 19.77. Finally, remain 50 Dhakis i.e 14.12% gets Rs.1500.

Distribution Of Respondents In Respect Of Either Registered Or Not Registered?

Table 5: Registered and non registered Dhakis:

Particulars	Registered Dhakis	Non -registered dhakis
No. of Dhakis	40	314

% of Dhakis	11.30 %	88.70%
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Table 5 shows us total 40 Dhakis registered and non-registered Dhakis are 314, i.e 88.70%.

Requirement Of Community Information Services:

Table 6: Requirement Of Community Information Services:

Dhakis	Requirement of CIS	Not responded properly
No. of Dhakis	300	54
% of Dhakis	84.75%	15.25%%

In Table 6 says that Dhak players have requirement of CIS is 84.75 (%) and respondent Dhakis who are not respondent is 15.25%.

Role Of Lady Dhakis In Bongaon Block:



Picture.1: Lady Dhaki team in Bongaon Block

Lady Dhaki team is prepared in Gopal Nagar Daspara (Gram panchayet-1).The team leader Mr. Hare Das arranged a lady Dhak team. Mr. Samir Das formed a lady Dhaki group also.Lady Dhakis are active and determined and devotee of their work. Total lady Dhaki is 40 out of total 354 Dhakis i.e 8.47%.

Another Community People Entire In Dhaki Profession:

Table-7: Import Of Non Rabidas People In Dhaki Profession:

Caste	Rabidas	Non rabidas
Dhaki	319	35
% of Caste	90.11	9.89

Table 7 describes, In Bongaon Block there at least 35 Dhakis are not from 'Rabi Das community' or caste. They are from another community. And already 9.88 percentage (%) of other cast Dhakis entered in this profession.

Information Needs:

Wilson (1981b) human needs are 1. Physiological need are for food, clothing, water and shelter. 2. Affectionate need which includes need for attainment, domination, etc 3. Cognitive need that is need for how to learn , how to plan and how to create.

Table 8: Information Needs Of Dhakis:

Job information and Festivals Booking	Wages information	Govt. Schemes	Health information	Dhak training information	Dhaki registration information	Information on Education
250	150	200	220	200	300	50
70.62 %	42.37 %	56.49%	62.15%	56.5%	84.75%	14.12%

Information seeking behaviour:

Age Group	Male	Female
Below 18	30 (8.47%)	-
18-29	105 (29.66%)	13(3.67%)
30-39	50 (14.123%)	16 (4.51%)
40-49	65 (18.36%)	4 (1.12%)
50-59	32 (9.03%)	-
60 above	11 (3.10%)	-

Table 9 shows that while information is seeking the age group 18-29 male responded cooperate highly i.e 29.66% male information seekers. Again age group 30-39, lady Dhakis cooperated highly. Age group above 60, they are not interested to respond the answers exactly. It is 3.10% exactly.

Lack of Knowledge in information seeking behaviour.

Table 10 Distribution of respondents in respect of lack of knowledge in seeking and using information for their day-to-day needs:

Age Group	Male	Female
Below 18	22 (6.21%)	-

18-29	80 (22.59%)	8 (2.25%)
30-39	45 (12.71%)	11 (3.10%)
40-49	42 (11.86%)	2 (0.56%)
50-59	25 (7.06%)	-
60 above	6 (1.69%)	-

Table 11 described that the respondents have not such knowledge to answer the questions which are asked to them. The age group 18-29 responded highly i.e 22.59%. Lady respondents answered well in the age group 30-39 age group which is 3.10%. Hence, male and female both responded successfully that they have lack of knowledge.

Feeling Shy While Seeking Information:

Age Group	Male	Female
Below 18	08 (2.25%)	-
18-29	25 (7.06%)	10 (2.82%)
30-39	12 (3.38%)	6 (1.69%)
40-49	05 (1.41%)	4 (1.29%)
50-59	05 (1.41%)	-
60 above	8 (2.25%)	-

Table 11 shows some respondents feeling shy to answer to a such unknown person. Almost each of groups answered the questions minimumly. Age group 18-29, both male and female responded that they feel shy during the responding time and the high percentage are respectively 7.06% and 2.82%. They are feeling shy to answer those questions.

Respondent's Benefit Against Their Question—answer.

Table 12: Distribution of respondents in respect of their questions, what is their benefit? Why we will answer? It is your need only....while seeking information about their regular needs and sometimes they do silence.

Age Group	Male	Female
Below 18	22 (6.21%)	-
18-29	85 (24.01%)	8 (2.25%)
30-39	45 (12.71%)	11 (3.10%)
40-49	42 (11.86%)	2 (0.56%)
50-59	25 (7.06%)	-
60 above	6 (1.69%)	-

Awareness For The Library And Information Service Centre. Table 13: Distribution Of Respondents In Terms Of Awareness For The Extension Of The Library And Information Service Centre.

Age Group	Aware	Not aware	Total
Below 18	22 (6.21%)	-	
18-29	80 (22.59%)	8 (2.25%)	
30-39	45 (12.71%)	11 (3.10%)	
40-49	42 (11.86%)	2 (0.56%)	
50-59	25 (7.06%)	-	
60 above	6 (1.69%)	-	

Awareness about the community Information services through Public libraries.

Table 14: Distribution Of Respondents In Terms Of Opinions Of Respondents To Establishing Public Library As A Community Information Centre.

Age Group	Aware	Not aware	Total
Below 18	32(9.03 %)	-	
18-29	100 (28.24%)	12 (3.38 %)	
30-39	52 (14.68 %)	16 (4.51%)	
40-49	55 (15.53 %)	4 (1.12 %)	
50-59	32 (9.03 %)	-	
60 above	10 (2.82 %)	-	

Findings:

- There total Dhakis are 354, in which 40 Dhakis are female i.e 11.30% and 314 Dhakis are male i.e 88.70%. ale Dhakis are highest in numbers but female Dhakis are a important number. [Table 1]
- There are below 18 ages are 38 i.e 10.73% and above 60 aged respondent Dhakis are 16 i.e 4.51%. It is very sad news below 18 aged are not eligible to do such work and over aged Dhakis are steel now working unfortunately. [Table 2]
- Class upto VII Dhakis or respondents are 83 i.e 70.62%. It show that maximum numbers are almost not educated. [Table-3]
- Wages varies mam to man. Who are week, not clever are not get job maximum time and they get wages with low price. Because,

wages is given between Rs.500 to Rs. 1500 for their work.A unique rate is required.[Table 4]

- There only 40 respondents are registered Dhakis and 314 are non registered. So, they need to register immediately for their future facilities.[Table 5]
- Lady Dhakis need to get proper training and facilities. [Pic 1]
- The Dhakis who are regular through the whole year. They do Dhak playing with best performance, efficiency and popularity. Another Dhakis who are not such popularity and performance, not get job whole time in the year. They are irregular.[Table 7]
- Another community capturing Dhak profession, the RabiDas community who are traditionally Dhaki, may loss their traditional job. [Table 8]
- Respondents have the need of information on wages, Govt. scheme information, Health information, registration information and etc. [Table 9]
- Information seeking behaviour on lack of knowledge, Respondent's shy to respond the answer, Respondents ask their benefit in respect of answering a question. So, they not respond perfectly sometimes.[Table 11]
- They want to community information services through public libraries to equip themselves for future.[Table 15]

Suggestions:

- Special education with stipend and support are need to improve the community. Like Rabindra Mukta Vidyalaya open schooling is to be contacted to the community.
- Drum player who is engaged in their job, partially they are to be connected with on line platform like 'SWAYAM' for their better education. Because, other than education the community will not be developed.
- Need drummer or Dhaki school or class to learn music perfectly in competition market by proper trainer.
- A Bongaon Dhaki portal is required for communication and sharing information.
- Free education with all related facilities by the govt. or local bodies for this community children.
- All Dhak instrument are to be donated by the Govt. yearly as per their requirement.
- All govt. programme where Dhak is required like 26th January ,15th august, etc local Dhakis are to be called with proper wages and prizes for their encouragement.
- Local govt. has to perform duties for their home, water, health etc.
- Public libraries have to contact with them for community information service programme regular basis. At least four times setting with them in a year. The community is to be involved with library extension programmes.
- Role of libraries is important to provide them books, magazines, newspaper, career guidance and employment news papers.
- They need to improve their speaking habit and to be removed their lack of knowledge, Shy to respond anything, less interest to respond against a question.
- They all are labour class. Local govt. should take initiatives for 100 days job scheme for them.
- Dhakis are need a cooperative society on micro credit by the governance of local govt.
- Proper rationing and govt. facilities are to be provided to the financial weaker Dhakis.
- In this competition market Dhakis have to be trained well to remain their demand, personal image as a good drum player, in case they have to take further training.
- Dhakis have the responsibility to obtain their Dhaki prestige in Bengal.

CONCLUSION:

The Dhaki community of Bongaon Block holds a significant place in preserving cultural heritage through their traditional profession. Major findings are they face multiple socio-economic challenges, including low income, lack of awareness about government schemes, limited access to health and skill development resources, and very low levels of formal education. Community Information Services (CIS) can play a transformative role in uplifting this community by bridging the information gap. In literature review, It is not found the information need and their information seeking behaviour. Through CIS, Dhakis can gain access to vital knowledge about government welfare schemes, healthcare, digital literacy, and job opportunities, thus enhancing their livelihoods and income levels. Preserving their cultural identity while ensuring sustainable livelihood development is

crucial. Although the profession traditionally passes from one generation to the next, people from outside the community are now entering in this field. The first Dhaki player Gokul Chandra Das, awarded 'PADMASHREE' in 2025. All Dhaki player want to get respect and recognition from Club, organiser, individual or any other social Organisation. Some T.V, Radio news agency started it like best Dhaki team or player and special expectation from Sub-Divisional Information and broadcasting office regarding their recognition, award, honorium, etc. This paper expect future study by the future researcher. This study focuses on Bongaon Block only. Researchers will think on district Dhaki, State Dhaki and National Dhaki study definitely.

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