



Women Entrepreneurship Development in Tribal Areas in Odisha: An Effective Means of Women Empowerment

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Abstract

Women constitute not only half of the world's population but also sway the growth of the remaining half. They produce half of the world's food supply. They account for 60% of the work force. The emergence of women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible in India. In India the self-employed women account for only 7.2% of the self-employment persons in the country. Majority of them are engaged in the recognised sector like agriculture, handicrafts, handlooms and cottage based industries. The socio-economic features of the tribal are significantly different from non-tribals. They are not very much entrepreneurial in true sense of the term but, there exists traditional entrepreneurship which is manifested through simple technology that fits with their external environment. It is fact that tribal's are yet to be a part and parcel of the modern economic system because of the lack of education, inaccessible habitation and lack of awareness. Therefore, they operate themselves in a separate economic system which is fully different from the mainstream economy. Culturally and geographically these communities differ in language, occupation, child rearing etc. Odisha has one of the highest incidences of poverty in the country with 45% below the poverty line compared to all India average of 23%. Poverty and backwardness of women in the state are mammoth in proportions that need for redressed. The study has been undertaken in the tribal dominated Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The tribal people in the study area were involved in different agriculture based entrepreneurial activities. It is revealed from the study that majority of the respondents belong to low innovativeness, low farm decision-making ability, medium level of knowledge, medium risk taking ability, medium level of self confidence, medium level of management orientation, high leadership ability, medium achievement motivation category.

Keywords: Socio-economic development, women entrepreneurs, leaf plate, tribal economy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of rural development has attracted the attention of economists and policy makers as the only means of removing multidimensional problems like poverty, unemployment and social backwardness in rural areas. Women empowerment has been the central theme of all development programs introduced by the Government of India towards rural development, but the effectiveness of all these programs is not impressive. Poverty alleviation in India has been one of the major challenges. While there is an argument of steady decline in India's poverty rate by government agencies, many reports show that at present, 55% of total population are living in poverty which is about one third of the world's poor. The situation in tribal areas of the country is worse compared to other parts of the country. The Government of India has been initiating various poverty alleviation programmes since 1950s. But, most of the policies are not implemented properly; as a result, the target groups have always been deprived from the facilities. Another development during the post globalization period is that regional and sectoral disparities have also grown alarmingly. Small-farmers with small holding of agriculture field has become unviable, driving 2.98 lakh farmers have made their suicide between 1997 to 2016. Over two decades of "free-market" or neo-liberal policies, an additional 125 million people have also been driven into poverty. India's Human Development rank has slipped from 121 in 1991 to an even more miserable 130 in 2016.

In recent period, Entrepreneurship development among women has been recognised and accepted as one of the important tools for poverty alleviation through social and economic empowerment of the poor. Many findings also show that, in India, there are number of women entrepreneurs who have been playing an important role in the development of various sectors including agriculture, banking, dairy, housing which leads to poverty alleviation, food security and employment generation. The women entrepreneurship in the form of SHGs and many forms can also deliver goods and services in areas particularly the tribal areas of north-east India where the large enterprises fail to reach. For the above study we assumed that the women entrepreneurship development in tribal areas may take as the tool to alleviate poverty. The study has been undertaken in the tribal dominated Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The tribal people in the study area were involved in different agriculture based entrepreneurial activities. In this paper an attempt has been made to indicate that women entrepreneurship has a significant bearing in poverty alleviation. The study concludes that there is a positive correlation between women entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study under take the following objectives:

1. To study the factors that influence to become a women entrepreneur in Mayurbhanj district.
2. To analyse that tribal entrepreneurship has an important bearing in the part of poverty alleviation.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is Descriptive in nature and based on both primary and secondary data. For this purpose Mayurbhanj District of Odisha has been taken as area of study since more than 60% of the total population belongs to different tribal communities. Data is collected from 200

respondents in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. Respondents vary in age, occupation, income, risk bearing capacity, leadership quality and decision-making capacity etc. All respondents surveyed will be selected randomly. To get the secondary data, literatures on entrepreneurship and other related literatures has been collected from various books, journals, websites and etc.

4. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Women entrepreneurship has been recognised as an essential ingredient of economic development. 'Women Entrepreneur' is a person who accept challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically viable by exploring innovative ideas, identify business opportunities, combine all the factors of production and undertake an economic activity for the purpose of earning profit out of it. Tribal women entrepreneurs are those who belong to different tribal communities as recognised as Scheduled Tribe by the government of India. Women entrepreneurship development is a process where women take lead and organise a business or industry and provide employment opportunities to others. Women constitute only 13.76% of the total entrepreneurs. It means out of 58.5 million functional businesses, only 8.05 million have female boss. Out of the total establishments under women entrepreneurs, percentage share of various social and religious groups OBC: 40.60%, SC: 12.18%, ST: 6.97% and Others (40.25%); Hindus: 65.6%, Muslim, 12.84% and Christian: 5.2%. Another revelation is that out of these entrepreneurs, 2.76 million women (34.3% of the total entrepreneurs) work in agriculture sector whereas 5.29 million females (65.7% of the total entrepreneurs) work in non-agricultural sectors.

4.1 General Profile of Mayurbhanj District: Mayurbhanj is the largest district in terms of size and 3rd highest in terms of population. It is the 22nd urbanized district in the state having about 7.00 per cent of its population living in urban areas while about 14.99 per cent of state's population live in urban areas. The total population of the district is 25, 19,738 which consists 12, 56,213 male and 12, 63,525 female. The tribal population is 14, 79,567 (male 7, 30,487 and female 7, 49,089). The District has a geographical area of 10418 sq kms (or 10418 lakh hectares), which is the 6.69% of the total geographical area of the State. The district presents a panorama of many millennia in the human history. It is a hand locked district with a total geographical area of 10,418 sq.kms and situated on the northern boundary of state with its districts headquarter at Baripada. The District is bounded on the North by West Bengal and Jharkhand, on the west by Keonjhar District and on the east by Balasore District of Odisha. Out of 26 Blocks, the tribal are mostly concentrated in Udla, khunta, Bijatala, jamda, Baripada, Bangiriposi, Bisoi, Jashipur, Kuliana, Samkhunta, Kaptipada, Kusumi, Thakurmunda and Karanjia, where population is more than 60% of the total population of respective Blocks. The majority tribals of Mayurbhanj are the Santal, Kolha, Bathudi and Bhumija. The santals are the main inhabitant of Bijatala block where they constitute about 77% of its total population.

4.2 General Profile of Women Entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurship is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Since economic reforms there has been lots of restructuring in the Indian labour market in terms of employees qualifications, nature of work contents and work contracts. These changes have raised the profile and importance of entrepreneurship in the Indian economy. Despite growth of women in professional and managerial jobs, the gender gap in entrepreneurship remains significant. In India, women entrepreneurship can be considered as

“necessity entrepreneurship” rather than “opportunity entrepreneurship”. The women of the district are more enterprising. They are very laborious.

Table 1: General profile of Women Entrepreneurs

Age	Numbers	percentage	Qualification	Numbers	%
Below 30	Nil	Nil	Illiterate	Nil	Nil
30-40	80	40	Literate	100	50
40-50	100	50	HSC	40	20
Above 50	20	10	+3 & Abov	60	30
Marital status	Numbers	%	Nature of Family	No. of entrepreneurs	%
Married	140	70	Nuclear	50	25
unmarried	40	20	Joint	150	75
Widow	20	10	Total	200	100
Total	200	100			

Source: Primary Data

The table No.1 reveals that 50% of the total respondents who become entrepreneur in Mayurbhanj district are between the ages of 40-50; it is found that only 17% of the respondents are unmarried while 8% are widow. It further exhibit that only 30% entrepreneur completed graduation. Regarding the family norms, majority of the respondents are from joint family.

Poverty and backwardness of women in the district are mammoth in proportions that need for redressed. Women suffer more on account of poverty, illiteracy, social and material deprivation, dependence on agriculture and non-timber forest produces for livelihood, lack of avenues for supplementary income, coupled with physical distances from the centres of development and developed markets contribute towards overall poverty, the major brunt of which is faced by women.

Table 2: Causes for becoming an entrepreneurs

Why to becoming an Entrepreneur	Numbers	%
Poor income	60	30
Unemployment	40	20
With the advice of well-wishers	20	10
To become financially sound	36	18
To become an established person	28	14
Innovation of new product	----	----
Desires to produce product & services	16	08
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Table No.2 depicts the causes of becoming an entrepreneur. The entire district is rich with natural resources. In last few years women are increasingly participating in various economic activities including the field of industry. Entrepreneurs are one such traditional male preserved where women have made their rightful entry. Availability of financial, marketing and training assistance given by the government encourage women to adopt entrepreneurship as career. Both Central and State Government have introduced a new package of concessions, incentives and subsidies

for the promotion and development of women entrepreneurship in “Zero Industry Districts” and backward regions. Preference is given to those women entrepreneurs in selection of entrepreneurial training, own experience of business and family background. The table depicts that most of the women (30%) have opted this profession because of poverty. They have long stories of trials and hardships. Their task has been full of challenges. They have had to encounter public prejudices and criticism, family opposition and social constraints. Out of the total respondent 48% of sample population entered into this activities due to unemployment, to become financially sound and to become self employed. Only 18% of the respondent wants to become an established and esteemed person in the society.

Table 3: Effects of becoming an entrepreneur

Monthly income before joining	Numbers	%	Monthly income after joining	Numbers	%
2000-4000	70	35	2000-4000	Nil	--
4000-6000	50	25	4000-6000	Nil	--
6000-10000	40	20	1000-20000	50	25
10000-20000	30	15	20000-40000	90	45
Above 20000	10	05	Above 40000	60	30
Total	200	100	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

There is a symbolic relationship between generation of income and employment opportunities. It seems after becoming an entrepreneur their monthly income is significantly increased. It means entrepreneurship have a favourable impact on generation of income in the above sample.

Table 4: Sector-wise participation of women Entrepreneurs

Sl. No	Occupational Break	Numbers	%
1	Agricultural Business	60	30
2	Dairy Firms	32	16
3	Handloom & Handicraft	16	08
4	Tailoring	10	05
5	Sal leaf plate making	34	17
6	Sabai Grass product	48	24
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 5: Effects by becoming an Entrepreneur

Sl. No	Benefits	Numbers	%
1	Self confidence	40	20
2	Children education	40	20
3	Leadership Quality	16	08
4	Decision making power	10	05
5	Risk taking capacity	26	13
6	Self employment	68	34
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The table No.-5 reveals about the effect of becoming an entrepreneur. It is found that after becoming an entrepreneur their quality of life has been improved. Entrepreneurship development among women not only provides self employment to the employees but also improves social status of women in the field of leadership, decision making capacity, risk taking capacity and provides better education to their children. Tribal families are always male dominated. By becoming an entrepreneur they are able to take part in the decision making process of their families. They become financially solvent. In addition to the income and employment, the women entrepreneurs of Mayurbhanj districts are able to achieve various social benefits in this process.

Table 6: Employment opportunities provided by women entrepreneurs

Sl. No	No. of employees	No. of enterprises	%
1	Less than 10	20	10
2	10-20	30	15
3	20-30	40	20
4	30-40	50	25
5	40-above	60	30
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The individual is one of the very important factors in entrepreneurship. The individual with high-need for achievement become entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship development among tribal women should first prepare them through motivation training for entrepreneurial venture. The findings of the study clearly indicate that entrepreneurship development in Mayurbhanja District helps in capacity building of the women entrepreneurs of the district as well as provides services in various forms which may become a powerful weapon to reduce unemployment, poverty alleviation in future.

During this study it was found that the following constraints are faced by women entrepreneurs:

Constraints Faced by Women Entrepreneurs

- Tribal woman are lack motivation to undertake any non-traditional economic activity. They are not only lacking in motivation to take up non-traditional, independent economic activity but also lacks any skill of her own. Even she is not mentally prepared to unveil herself from the traditional thinking.
- It is seen that tribal women are always busy in agriculture and allied activities. Mostly they perform domestic duties and rarely aware about how to manage their time.
- Lack of education is another constraint which confined them in agriculture and allied activities.
- Lack of exposure to the business environment.
- Less mobility of women.
- Tribal women entrepreneurs face several risks such as social risk and technological risks.
- They are supposing to answerable to their counterpart and village community for taking any advance step.
- Lack of access to credit.

- Lack of information to credit availability schemes.
- Lack of marketing knowledge.
- Lack of collateral security.
- Lack of financial literacy.

6. SUGGESTIONS

In the era of post economic reforms, empowerment of women is vital for eliminating poverty and overall development of the economy. Since social empowerment is a long-term phenomenon, emphasis needs to be given for economic empowerment of women. Once women are economically independent they will be able to overcome their dependency on the household as well as the society. Entrepreneurship development or income generating business activities is a feasible solution for empowering women. The following suggestion in this regard may be encompassing for the socio economic development of women in India in general and Odisha in particular.

- Women entrepreneurs need to 'start small but think big'. Once the initial hurdles are crossed they will be more confident to face challenges and take risk.
- There is need of a specific programme which can remove constraints and social barrier among the tribal women which can help them to get the test of entrepreneurship.
- To reduce social and technological risks faced by tribal women, entrepreneurship may be developed on group basis. As within the group they face less social problems and which can reduce not only the social castigation in pursuing non-traditional roles but also provides them strength and courage to face social problems.
- The government should have definite policies to create entrepreneurial opportunities for women in tribal areas.
- They should have some prior knowledge or skill before starting the enterprise.
- They should undertake feasibility study and risk assessment before starting any entrepreneurial work.
- They should have some start up capital
- They should use easily available resources
- Marketing of the products can give to specialized agencies. Collaboration with an already existing company is always better for a start up.

7. CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs in India face numerous problems in establishing as well as the successful running of their business. During the start-up phase, women are reported to encounter more problems than their male counterparts, both within their family and as part of the larger system, which discriminated against women. For instance, problems are cited pertaining mostly to obtain finance, delay in the process, and providing collateral security, often to as a consequence of insensitivity to the particular situation of women, or due to gender biases. Most women, however, find marketing to be their main problem. Neither the government nor the market alone is enough to alleviate poverty in the Indian context. Poverty alleviation needs various approaches. It is not just about raising income of the poor by any means, rather it needs various services to improve the human and social capital of the poor. Taking up entrepreneurial activities not only includes the initiation of enterprises, but also the involvement of various sections of the society, utilization

of available resources, etc. Economic development in general requires more than just a proper macro-economic environment. It demands more practical mechanism to improve the well-beings of the people. To conclude, it can be suggested that, in addition to the poverty alleviation programmes of government, there is a need to focus on entrepreneurship development among women in tribal areas so as to develop their living standards as well as to make them ready to face the challenges of the market.

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