

The Tribal Women Empowerment in Vidarbha: issues and challenges

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Introduction:

India's tribal population is the largest in the world, and they are also the most economically and socially disadvantaged in our nation. A mix of economic, educational, and legal initiatives, together with community involvement, is needed to empower tribal women. A multifaceted strategy that incorporates legal reforms, socioeconomic initiatives, education, and community involvement is needed to empower tribal women. Tribal women's empowerment and involvement in local governance depend on their understanding of the laws and their constitutional rights. The Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state consists of 11 districts with a large tribal population. Among the major tribes in this region, Gond forms the largest group and has its ethnically related tribes like Pardhans, Kolams.

District wise Major Tribes in Maharashtra State (As per Census 2011)

Sr. No.	District	Major Tribes
	Gadchiroli	Gond, Raj Gond, Arakh.. Pardhan, Pathari, Saroti Halba, Halbi, Kawar, Kanwar, Kaur..
	Chandrapur	Gond, Raj Gond, Arakh.., Pardhan, Pathari, Saroti, Halba, Halbi, Kolam, Mannerwarlu
	Yavatmal	Gond, Raj Gond, Arakh.. Andh, Kolam, Mannerwarlu, Pardhan, Pathari, Saroti, Pardhi, Advichincher
	Gondia	Gond, Raj Gond, Arakh.., Halba, Halbi
	Amravati	Korku, Bopchi, Moasi, Gond, Raj Gond, Arakh, Pardhi, Advichincher, koli Mahadev, Dongar Koli

The districts of Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Yavatmal, Gondia, and Amravati are among the several tribal areas in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region. The primary tribal groups in the area are the Gonds, Pardhans, and Kolam.

Objectives:

1. To study the current scenario of the tribal women empowerment in vidarbha.
2. To examine the empowerment issues and challenges of tribal women.

3. To make appropriate suggestions toward tribal women empowerment.

Methodology:

This research paper is a conceptual frame work and understanding related to tribal women empowerment issues and challenges in vidarbha scenario by the researcher conducted study with secondary sources of data. The researcher has used secondary source for further research paper used books research article, government report, news paper online research paper and website.

Current Challenging Issues for Tribal women empowerment in Vidharbha:

Tribal women deal with a number of issues, including assault, poor health, low literacy, and limited access to productive resources. Despite playing a vital role in the collection and management of minor forest products, they also participate in political and decision-making processes to a limited extent. Tribal women in India face many challenges to empowerment, including:

- **Education:** In Vidarbha, tribal communities rely on agriculture and traditional economic activities for their livelihoods. They earn insufficient income from these sources to afford quality education. Access to education is limited, with a scarcity of higher education institutions in tribal regions and high costs associated with tertiary education. Women in tribal areas encounter numerous socio-economic challenges that hinder their educational pursuits. Additionally, tribal women experience gender inequality and other biases stemming from the prevailing patriarchal societal structure.
- **Health:** Tribal women experience a greater incidence of anemia and underweight compared to the general population. Factors such as malnutrition, anemia, and limited access to healthcare contribute to this disparity. There is a lower rate of institutional deliveries among tribal women, which puts them at an increased risk of reproductive tract infections (RTIs). Tribal children show a decreased rate of complete immunizations and a higher prevalence of being underweight. Additionally, tribal women have an elevated rate of maternal mortality.
- **Violence:** Sexual abuse and contact with dangerous wildlife and toxic flora occur. A biased land management system along with gender-specific societal expectations leads to the violence and subjugation of women.
- **Isolation:** The tribal communities in Vidarbha inhabit secluded hilly and forested regions where modern amenities are scarce. Living in these remote areas with inadequate infrastructure and communication, tribal women experience isolation due to their unique language, way of life, and location. This seclusion can hinder their access to education, government services, and economic opportunities. Tribal women may not communicate in the same language as the broader society. Their lifestyle can differ significantly from that of the general population. Additionally, tribal women reside in distant areas that have limited connectivity and infrastructure.
- **Cultural norms:** While cultural norms and practices are rich and varied, they have limited the mobility and visibility of indigenous women at times. These restrictions may restrict their participation in public meetings, political meetings, and other forums where decisions are made. Early marriage, genital mutilation, and gender roles that give priority to boys' education. Deeply rooted traditional gender roles in tribal societies have confined women to domestic spheres. Historical norms dictate that their primary responsibility lies in the budget, which limits their visibility and participation in public affairs.

The status and experiences of indigenous women vary across the tribal community in India and are influenced by cultural norms, gender roles, and economic factors. Some tribal societies are considered egalitarian, and women have social and family responsibilities similar to men. Some tribal societies have patriarchal practices that treat

women as a “second sex.” Traditional customs and tribal identities can limit women's choices and opportunities. In some tribal societies, women are socially disadvantaged, such as when unmarried women are forced to marry a plant.

- **Economic roles:** Women in tribal societies often perform a variety of economic tasks, including farming, weeding, chopping, harvesting, and threshing. Financial exploitation by moneylenders and low wages for migrant women. Because they are marginalized, tribal women are often forced into informal work areas such as domestic work and the sex industry. In search of work, many migrate to major population centers.
- **Political marginalization:** Limited representation in legislative bodies and governance structures. Tribal women in India face political marginalization due to social, cultural, and economic barriers. These barriers include discrimination, lack of education, and limited access to resources.

In the past, tribal women faced discrimination and marginalization in society. Cultural norms can restrict women's mobility and participation in public life. Tribal women are discriminated against because of their gender and ethnicity. Tribal women may have limited access to resources such as education, training, and development resources. Tribal women may live in remote areas with limited infrastructure, such as transportation and communication networks. The views of indigenous women are underrepresented in political results. Tribal women are often excluded from decision-making processes. The voices of indigenous women are being marginalized.

- **Lack of legal awareness:** Historical lack of awareness of legal rights has prevented indigenous women from participating effectively in politics. The limited knowledge of legal frameworks and political structures was an obstacle to their involvement in governance.

Solutions

- **Affirmative action:** policies and measures to ensure equal opportunities and equal rights. Reservations about government agencies, educational institutions, and local governments can help indigenous women participate in decision-making processes. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs supports the promotion of indigenous women's entrepreneurship. The government supports livelihood development, including agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Empowering indigenous women through entrepreneurship is one way to help them become economically independent and socially inclusive. It can also help break the cycle of poverty and marginalization in tribal communities. Training and support to help women start businesses and make decisions
- **Challenging gender biases:** Combating traditional gender roles that restrict girls' educational opportunities. Increase the number of higher education institutions in tribal regions. Provide targeted financial assistance to tribal students. Create the necessary educational climate to reduce the number of dropouts in elementary school. Encourage meaningful learning in class by building healthy relationships between teachers and students. Spread, respect, and value the culture, traditions, mannerisms, and languages of tribal students.
- **Improving access to resources:** Providing access to education, healthcare, and other resources. To empower indigenous women, they must provide access to resources and opportunities and help them build economic independence. This can happen through education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and land rights.
- **Improving infrastructure:** Improving transportation, communication, and public services. To empower indigenous women in India, their socio-economic status, education and health must be improved. The government and other organizations have created

programs and programs to support indigenous women, including those that improve infrastructure.

- **Improving legal protections:** Establishing legal frameworks to protect the rights of tribal women. To empower indigenous women, they must improve their legal protection and enable them to participate in decision-making processes. This can be done through laws, policies, and programs that address their needs and concerns.

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