



A Study of Development of Entrepreneurship Skills among the Tribal Women of Maharashtra's Tribal Region for Economic Empowerment

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Abstract:

In India, especially in the tribal areas of Maharashtra, the economic empowerment of tribal women is a crucial concern. Tribal women frequently encounter obstacles such restricted access to financial resources, education, and business possibilities, despite their talent. This study looks at how tribal women in Maharashtra's tribal area have developed their entrepreneurship abilities and how that has helped them become more economically empowered. Using both qualitative and quantitative data gathered from specific Maharashtra locations, the study examines the training programs now in place, the difficulties faced by tribal women, and the effect of entrepreneurship on their means of subsistence.

Keywords: Tribal women, Maharashtra, Entrepreneurship, Economic empowerment, Skill development, Rural development, Indigenous communities, Livelihoods

Introduction:

In India, tribal women have historically had limited access to economic, educational, and resource opportunities. Many such groups can be found in Maharashtra, which has a sizable tribal population, particularly in locations like the Sahyadri, Vidarbha, and Marathwada. Tribal women have proven resilient and capable in managing household economy despite historical exclusion, but frequently through unofficial, unacknowledged means.

Tribal women might be able to raise their economic standing, increase household incomes, and make a positive impact on the economy as a whole through entrepreneurship development. This study investigates the manner in which tribal women in Maharashtra might acquire entrepreneurship skills and how these abilities contribute to their economic empowerment.

Objectives:

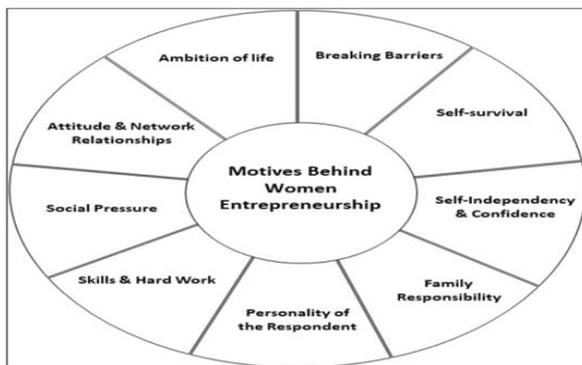
1. To evaluate the present level of entrepreneurial proficiency among Maharashtra's indigenous women.
2. To examine how well skill-building initiatives contribute to economic empowerment.
3. To determine the obstacles indigenous women encounter when trying to take advantage of business opportunities.
4. To investigate the effects on families and communities of indigenous women's economic empowerment.

Literature Review:

1.The Context of Tribal Women in Maharashtra: Many tribal communities, including the Bhils, Gonds, Warli, and Kolams, call Maharashtra's tribal areas home. These groups follow distinctive social, cultural, and

economic customs. These women, however, frequently lack access to jobs, healthcare, and education, which results in low levels of financial independence. They do engage in subsistence-based rather than entrepreneurial activities, such as farming, weaving, and forest-based livelihoods.

2.Importance of Entrepreneurship for Economic Empowerment: Women's economic results can be greatly improved via entrepreneurship, especially in rural and tribal areas. By creating revenue, expanding job options, and encouraging self-reliance, it aids in ending the cycle of poverty. Additionally, it improves women's status in families and communities by giving them authority over financial resources and decision-making procedures.



(Image Source: <https://springer.com>)

3.Role of Skill Development Programs: Programs to encourage entrepreneurship skills among rural women, especially tribal women, have been started by the Indian government and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Through skill development in areas including agriculture, handloom, handicrafts, food processing, and hospitality, programs like the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), and the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) aim to empower women. These programs aim to increase women's employability and make it

easier for them to join the entrepreneurial community.

4.Challenges in Entrepreneurial Development: Tribal women encounter various obstacles that impede their ability to pursue entrepreneurship:

Sociocultural barriers: Women's mobility and decision-making authority are sometimes limited by restrictive family structures and traditional gender roles.

Capital Access: Tribal women's access to credit facilities and financial resources is restricted.

Absence of instruction and training: Lack of formal education and low literacy rates prevent women from developing the essential entrepreneurship skills.

Insufficient market accessibility and infrastructure: Tribal women entrepreneurs' success is hampered by a lack of networking opportunities, inadequate infrastructure, and restricted access to markets.

Research Methodology:

1. Research Design: A mixed-method approach is used in this study, combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques. To learn more about the economic impact of tribal women's entrepreneurship skills development, the study uses surveys, in-depth interviews, and case studies.

2.Sample Population: The study will concentrate on tribal women from the tribal areas of Maharashtra, especially from districts with sizable tribal populations including Nandurbar, Palghar, Gadchiroli, and Chandrapur. For the surveys, a sample of 250 indigenous women will be chosen, including those who participate in self-help groups (SHGs) and skill development programs.

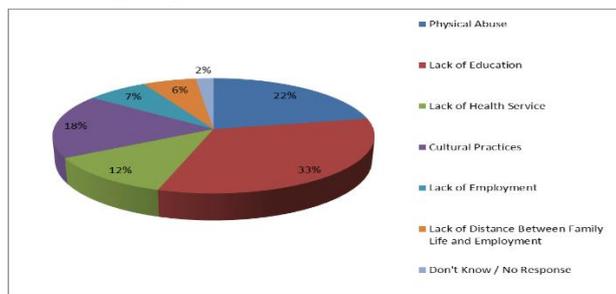
3.Data Collection: Surveys: Information on income levels, business operations, and difficulties faced by indigenous women

entrepreneurs will be gathered using a systematic questionnaire.

Interviews: To obtain qualitative perspectives, semi-structured interviews with tribal women entrepreneurs, government representatives, and trainers will be carried out.

Case Studies: To pinpoint best practices and critical success factors, in-depth case studies of prosperous female entrepreneurs will be recorded.

4.Data Analysis: Data will be analyzed using both descriptive statistics (for the survey data) and thematic analysis (for the interview and case study data). This mixed-method approach will provide a comprehensive view of the issues at hand. As per the survey conducted online the following responses received:



Findings:

1. Entrepreneurship Skills among Tribal Women in Maharashtra:

The report indicates that indigenous women in Maharashtra are increasingly participating in entrepreneurship. Many have engaged in traditional crafts like Warli painting, beading, and ceramics in addition to modern pursuits like dairy farming, small-scale agriculture, and food processing. However, their entrepreneurial activities are sometimes limited by their lack of expertise in marketing, financial management, and business development.

2. Impact of Skill Development Programs:

Training in Traditional Arts and Crafts: Many women have benefited from programs that assist them in honing their traditional craft abilities. These programs have increased their revenue by

improving their technical expertise and product marketing skills.

Agricultural and Livelihood Skills: Tribal women have been able to diversify their sources of income through programs that emphasize gardening, agriculture, and animal husbandry.

Training in Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship: Women have been able to better manage their enterprises and reach a wider audience by taking courses on digital marketing, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy.

Development of Honey Production Skills: To promote participation in the honey production industry by tribal women, a multifaceted strategy that takes into account their particular difficulties and makes the most of the industry's opportunities is needed. To increase the value of their honey production, give women training in areas like quality control, post-harvest processing, and product diversification (e.g., propolis, beeswax).

- **Beekeeping Workshops:** Offer instruction on contemporary beekeeping methods as well as the collection and processing of honey. These ought to concentrate on both the business side (marketing, packaging, and branding) and the technical side (hive management, disease control, harvesting techniques, etc.).
- **Honey Producer Cooperatives:** Promote the establishment of women's cooperatives for the production of honey so that they can pool resources, expertise, and expenses and gain from group bargaining strength.
- **Common Facilities:** Establish shared processing and storage facilities so that tribal women can bring their harvests, process them in large quantities, and split the cost of marketing and packaging.

Ayurvedic Herb-based Medicine

Manufacturing Skills: Encouraging tribal women to start an Ayurvedic herb-based medicine manufacturing enterprise can be a game-changer for their economic empowerment

and the preservation of traditional knowledge. Many tribal tribes already have a thorough understanding of medical plants and natural cures, and India's tribal regions are rich in biodiversity. A comprehensive strategy that incorporates education, financial assistance, infrastructure, and market access is necessary to assist indigenous women in entering the manufacturing of Ayurvedic medicines.

The following are important steps to encourage tribal women to start making medicines using Ayurvedic herbs:

- **Revitalization of Traditional Knowledge:** Acknowledge and codify the traditional knowledge that tribal women already hold about therapeutic plants. Provide them with organized programs that assist them in transforming this knowledge into contemporary methods for producing herbal medicines.
- **Workshops for skill development:** Provide training courses and seminars covering the fundamentals of producing Ayurvedic medicines, including formulation, processing, quality assurance, labeling, and packaging. Experts in the production of herbal medicines and Ayurveda should lead these workshops.
- **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) Certification:** Provide GMP training, which is necessary to establish a licensed facility for the production of herbal medicines. Tribal women will have a better understanding of safety procedures, industry standards, and legal obligations thanks to this training.
- **Support for Herbal Farming and Cultivation:** Give tribal women the equipment, instruction, and encouragement they need to grow premium medical plants. Promote the sustainable cultivation of herbs used in Ayurvedic remedies, such as ashwagandha, tulsi, neem, and amla.

- **Technical Assistance and Seed Distribution:** Collaborate with agricultural extension agencies to provide guidance on sustainable farming methods and distribute high-quality seeds. Encourage the establishment of small farms or herb gardens in tribal regions.

3.Challenges Faced by Tribal Women Entrepreneurs:

- **Cultural and Social Restraints:** Women's time and freedom to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors are restricted by patriarchal norms and family obligations.
- **Lack of Access to Capital:** Due to a lack of official financial documents or collateral, the majority of tribal women have trouble obtaining loans or microfinance.
- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** The expansion of small enterprises is impeded by inadequate communication, transportation, and market accessibility.
- **Limited Networking Opportunities:** Tribal women have little access to platforms or networks that would allow them to advertise their companies and make connections with other company owners and buyers.

Discussion:

One successful tactic for economic empowerment among tribal women in Maharashtra has been the development of their entrepreneurial abilities. Women who have taken part in skill development programs report feeling more confident, having more financial freedom, and having more influence over family decisions. Their full potential is still being hampered by a number of obstacles, including inadequate infrastructure, a lack of funding, and cultural limitations.

Although government initiatives and policies aimed at rural and tribal women have shown promise, additional specialized

interventions are still required. To improve the success of indigenous women entrepreneurs, stronger financial support systems, greater public awareness, and better infrastructure are essential.

Recommendations:

1. **Better Access to Credit and Financial Services:** Programs for financial inclusion that target tribal women should be increased with an emphasis on making loans and microfinance easily accessible.
2. **Enhancing Skill Development Programs:** Initiatives for skill development should be tailored to the unique requirements and preferences of tribal women, especially in non-traditional fields like hospitality, e-commerce, and digital marketing.
3. **Community-Based Support:** Women can pool resources, lower risks, and acquire more negotiating power in markets by promoting the establishment of cooperatives and self-help groups.
4. **Infrastructure Development:** Women can access larger markets and increase the sustainability of their businesses by enhancing roads, transportation, and market accessibility in tribal regions.

Conclusion:

Tribal women in Maharashtra have a great deal of potential for economic empowerment through entrepreneurship. Programs for skill development have demonstrated benefits in raising social standing, income levels, and self-reliance. However, a thorough strategy tackling monetary, infrastructure, and sociocultural issues is required for sustainable growth. Tribal women in Maharashtra can use entrepreneurship to bring about long-lasting change for their communities

and themselves if they receive the proper assistance.'

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