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Role of Entrepreneurship Development among Gond Women with reference to Traditional Gond Painting

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment of tribal women refers to focusing on their development through entrepreneurship thus enhancing socio-economic emancipation which will act as a medium of social change. The role of women in tribal communities has been very crucial and substantial because they face various challenges and obstacles both in-home and out of the home. Entrepreneurship development among tribal women is recognized as an element for promoting and imparting their skills thereby strengthening their managerial abilities and enhancing their socio-economic condition by promoting their traditional art and painting. Among the Gonds, though the women have contributed significantly to the development of the economy still their contribution is not well recognized. This study focuses on various factors to understand the role of tribal women entrepreneurs in the empowerment of the Gond tribe. In this backdrop, this paper explores various constraints and reasons for lack of entrepreneurship among Gond women with special focus on their traditional Gond Painting. It also aims to have an empirical study to understand the challenges in their entrepreneurship.

Keywords: *Women entrepreneur, Gond Painting, Women empowerment, Traditional art, Entrepreneurship development*

I. INTRODUCTION

Women have been subject to gender discrimination throughout the world in many forms. Being outnumbered by men, the women did not have proper access to the property, business and land. They are subject to discrimination and have lesser mobility than men. The tribal population is an indispensable part of Indian society comprising the second-largest concentration after the African continent. The population of tribal communities scheduled in the Indian constitution and known as the Scheduled Tribes is 104 million with 93.8 million in urban and 11 million in rural areas as per the 2011 census. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) reveals

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that 8.63% population in India comprises the scheduled tribe.² Women play a vital role in the tribal communities in their economic, social and cultural aspects and are considered as major assets. But in different walks of life, there are lagging behind the men, like economic stability, empowerment, education and employment. Although being industrious, control over resources and economic activities is minimal. Thus, there is a quest for the empowerment economically to conquer gender discrimination and misuse of the tribal women to achieve an all overall progress in society. For sociologists and policy-makers, "Economic empowerment" of women in tribal communities has been a new concept. There is a need for scientific study to overcome the socio-economic problems of tribal women. Empowerment not just means rendering access to services but recognizing their talents and enhancing their abilities thus doing away with gender inequality. Economic empowerment of marginalized groups refers to enhancing their socio-political and socio-economic condition and liberation from masculine norms and bondages. It means considering the hopes of the exploited marginalized people for overall social harmony and stability thereby making them empowered socially and economically. This concept also highlights the new avenues and prospects for entrepreneurship and the various constraints which affect them. Suggestive measures must be taken to liberate and empower tribal women efficiently.

A. Statement of the Research Problem

Over the decades the Gond people have seen to have amalgamated into the realms of modernization and have started adopting new ways of life and are in the process of transformation. This is due to their inclination towards employment opportunities, both private and government sectors, better prospects for education along with awareness and influence of popular culture and customs. They are found to be moving at par with their primitive tradition and heritage. The gender discrimination is gradually declining over the years. The tribal women are equally capable of contributing to their community. Through their traditional Gond painting there are generating revenues and making it their source of income.

The statement of the research problem for the current study can be outlined as –“To study the level of socio-economic development and entrepreneurship among the Gond women and focus on various constraints related to it with reference to traditional Gond painting. It also highlights various schemes and policies to support them and measures which can be adopted to empower them.

² (2017). *UNINCORPORATED UNITS CONTRIBUTE Rs11.5 LAKH CRORE TO ECONOMY. India Business Insight.*

B. Objective

As mentioned earlier, the Gonds are in the process of social change and transformation. In a tribal society, women are equally capable to contribute to their community. Due to modernization, introduction to modern culture, spreading of education and an inclination towards employment opportunities, their socio-cultural heritage is seen to be gradually declining. Through their tradition, tribal women can enhance their socio-economic conditions. In this paper, efforts will be made to attain the following objectives:

1. To study the level of entrepreneurship among Gond women in terms of traditional painting.
2. To study the market linking for the painting
3. To study the availability of cooperatives and Self-help groups to support the painting work.
4. To examine various constraints in the level of entrepreneurship in general and Gond painting in specific.
5. To provide a few suggestive remarks to eliminate the constraints of entrepreneurship among Gond women.

C. Hypothesis

The following pre assumption has been made based on the study of literature, peer views, and personal observation.

1. Gond paintings can create prospects for business and can be a better source of income.
2. Due to the internal hierarchy, there are certain obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs.
3. Measures need to be adopted to encourage them and support them financially.
4. Resources must be adequate to motive the women entrepreneur to widen the horizons and expand their business.
5. Awareness and proper training must be provided to boost their skills.

D. Research Design

Patangarh is located on the eastern part of Madhya Pradesh, bordering the state of Chhattisgarh. It is a small village in Dindori which is legendary for an upscale tradition of creating world class painters depicting tribal culture and heritage in their paintings. It is a speciality of the Gond tribe, which is relatively a new art form, and its roots can be traced far down in history.³

³ (2025) *Culture & Heritage | District Dindori, Government of Madhya Pradesh | India.*
<https://dindori.nic.in/en/culture-heritage>

The art of Gond Painting is passed on from generation to generation in Patangarh. India's Gond tribe are renowned by art aficionados for the colourful artwork they produce. In their work, animals, plants and scenes from lifestyle are rendered during a colourful, highly patterned style cherish aboriginal art. But up until the 1980s, Gond tribal art was about unknown to outsiders, used only to embellish their homes.⁴

The Gonds also have a tradition of painting the walls and floors of their huts during important Hindu festivities. They draw scenes from religion and myth, also as natural objects.³ Before mass-produced paints were available, natural pigments were used and therefore the tribe's artwork was rarely if ever, committed to paper. 17-year-old Gond, Jangarh Singh Shyam, was discovered. After seeing the murals Jangarh painted, Jagdish persuaded him to maneuver to Bhopal and experiment with paints and canvas. Jangarh began to make hypnotic paintings bursting with colour and motion. His reputation spread rapidly. After exhibiting at Bharat Bhavan, he gained international attention.

II. FACTORS INFLUENCING INDIAN WOMEN TO UNDERTAKE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Despite the increasing number of female entrepreneurs, female entrepreneurs still have a relatively small share relative to their participation rate.⁵ Factors that are responsible for increasing the level of female entrepreneurship in India are-

1. Origin of Entrepreneurship: Women participate in entrepreneurship because traditional employment does not give them the versatility, power or challenge that business ownership provides
2. Drive: Some evidence suggests that women do not lack the drive to enter ownership of the company.
3. Empowerment: Nowadays Indian women are becoming more motivated. Legislation is slowly being introduced to provide them with more resources at different levels.
4. Social Conditions: Growth of the population results in a strong positive impact on the business activity. Increasing demand and competition for jobs are pushing more people across genders into the required entrepreneurship. Particularly for women, the relatively

⁴ *Gond Art Collection | Tribal Print Clothing | Geometric Print Dresses – Sandhya Garg.*
<https://sandhyagarg.com/collections/gond-collection>

⁵ Karimi, S., Biemans, H., Lans, T., Chizari, M., & Mulder, M. (2014). *Effects of role models and gender on students' entrepreneurial intentions.* *European Journal of Training and Development.* <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejtd-03-2013-0036>

high participation in required entrepreneurship indicates that self-employment is used as a way to circumvent institutional and cultural interests.

5. **Economic conditions:** Favorable economic conditions promote women's engagement in entrepreneurial activity. The need for financial resources and a higher proportion of the available bank loans positively correlate the degree of female entrepreneurship with the economic situation. In reality, in a country such as India, there is a relationship between the size of the unofficial economy and business activity.
6. **Literacy and experience:** Increased educational levels have been instrumental in initiating the entrepreneurship process. Not only are the analphabets starting the businesses, but also those with education and skills take advantage of the opportunities for profit.

III. NEEDS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Some of the basic reasons found which could be listed as the reasons for starting entrepreneurial activities for women are:

- There is very regular discussion of more and improved access to finance / credit. Access to resources and information for enterprises, including greater integration of business services.
- Training in matters of industry and related matters
- Better access to both local and international markets.
- Provision of day care centers and infant nurseries, as well as old age homes
- Positive image building and attitude changes among women, whereby women see themselves as competent attainers and build confidence.
- Breaking through conventional norms and systems that hinder women's advancement.

IV. CHALLENGES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Lack of education: Tribal women fall far behind in education in India. Because of a lack of proper education, women entrepreneurs remain in the dark about developing new technology, new production methods, marketing and other governmental support that will enable them to flourish.

Social Barriers: In Indian cultures, traditions and customs toward women often serve as an obstacle to rising and prospering before them.

Shortage of Raw Materials: The lack of raw materials, sometimes the shortage of sufficient and adequate raw materials, sounds like the death knell of women entrepreneurs run businesses. Women entrepreneurs are facing a tough challenge when the prices are very high in getting the required raw material and other necessary inputs for the companies.

Finance problem: Female entrepreneurs are struggling a great deal in raising and fulfilling the business ' financial needs. Bankers, creditors and financial institutions are not in the process of providing financial support to women lenders on the grounds of their less creditworthiness and more business failure chances. They also face financial problems due to raw materials blocking the funds.

Tough competition: Typically women entrepreneurs use low technology in the manufacturing process. In a market where competition is too strong, they have to fight hard against the organized sector and their male counterparts who have ample experience and ability to implement advanced technology in business management to succeed in the industry.

Low Risk-Bearing Capacity: Indian women are weak, shy and mild by nature. They cannot bear the amount of risk that's essential to running a business. Lack of outside schooling, preparation and financial support also limits their ability to manage the risk involved in an undertaking.

Limited Mobility: Women's mobility in India is extremely limited and has become a problem due to traditional values and vehicle driving incapacity. Going alone and calling for a place for business purposes to hang out in the night are still looked at with skeptical eyes. Younger women often feel uncomfortable engaging with men who show extra interest in them than things relevant to the job.

Legal Formalities: Completing the legal formalities required to run an enterprise becomes an uphill task on the part of a woman entrepreneur due to corrupt practices in government offices and bureaucratic delays for various permits, power, water and shed allocations. In these circumstances it is difficult for women entrepreneurs to focus on the smooth running of the Enter.

Middle Men's exploitation: Because women are unable to run around to collect marketing, distribution and income, they have to rely on middle men for the above activities. In the name of aid, middle-men tend to manipulate them. They add a profit margin of their own which results in less revenue and less profit.

Lack of self-confidence: female entrepreneurs due to their inherent nature, lack of self-confidence that is ultimately a demotivate them from effectively running a business. To strike a balance between managing a family and managing a company, they have to work hard.

V. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR EMPOWERMENT

Measures taken by Government of India to empower women entrepreneurs There is growing evidence worldwide that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in any country's national economic development. In India, the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Ministry (MSME) is implementing promotional schemes for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises growth. With regard to entrepreneurship / skill development training programs, the requisite guidelines and unique reservations for women have been given under the National Awards for Entrepreneurial Creation (Quality Products) and Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD) programmes. Likewise, several changes have been made for women beneficiaries under two job generation programs introduced by the Ministry such as the Rural Job Generation Program (REGP) and the Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) Prime Minister's. In addition, the Coir Board is introducing the Mahila Coir Yojana, a women-oriented self-employment programme.

- a. TREAD Women's Trade-Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD) scheme envisages women's economic empowerment by improving their entrepreneurial skills in non-farm activities. The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are provided with grants of up to 30 per cent of the total project cost to encourage entrepreneurship among women. The remaining 70 per cent of project costs was funded as a loan for performing operations by the funding agency as envisaged in the proposal. In addition, government grants up to Rs.1 lakh per program are given to training institutions / NGOs to provide women entrepreneurs with training. Proposals involving Rs.51.65 lakh grant to 16 NGOs / institutions have been accepted under this scheme to support 1700 women.
- b. The REGP Rural Employment Generation Program (REGP) is the Government's flagship scheme for unorganized sector employment generation programs. While there are no clear provisions for women entrepreneurs under this scheme, as a result of the promotional activities undertaken in this regard, there has still been significant participation by women. In 2008-09, 3,656 women entrepreneur projects involving a margin money of Rs. 6800 lakhs were distributed as government grants under this programme.

- c. PMRY Women's participation in job creation under Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) was 16.5 per cent during 2006-07. Under the scheme women beneficiaries are given preference. The government has made many relaxations for women to promote the involvement of female beneficiaries.
- d. Training of Women Entrepreneurs Through various training and support services, the government's industrial policies, announced from time to time, have placed considerable emphasis on promoting women entrepreneurship, especially among first generation women entrepreneurs. The organization of exclusive Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) for women is giving particular attention.

Suggestive major points:

- a. Awareness about stand up India scheme to promote entrepreneurship.
- b. Awareness about the grant utilized for economic development of Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP), Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Modified Area Development Approach (MADA), Clusters, Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and dispersed tribal population.⁶
- c. Awareness about the list of NGOs working in Tribal welfare.
- d. Programmes for *Promotion of Tribals Cooperative Marketing Development*.
- e. *Skilled development program for promotion and to fulfill individuals need.*
- f. *Raw material availability at low cost.*
- g. *Awareness about the programs like Aadi Mahotsav which aims to cover tribal needs in the country.*

VI. CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization and modernization, we need a democratic setup where women can receive the freedom to express themselves in the domain of entrepreneurship in any area. Literacy of women is also a very prominent requirement to put forth their ideas and efforts for enhancing entrepreneurship more sustainably. What we require is to introspect the contemporary situation and provide all kinds of support to tribal women to amplify their indigenous knowledge in the field of traditional painting. Government programs and policies should aptly focus on various training and capacity building programs to strengthen the tribal women and their entrepreneurship abilities for the sustainable development of the tribal society.

⁶ (2018). *India : Schemes /Programmes of Ministry of Tribal Affairs. MENA Report*

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