

# **The Contemporary Socio – Cultural Scenario of Tribal Women In India**

**Editor**  
**Dr. Rajesh Sosa**



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Web: [www.pratikpublications.com](http://www.pratikpublications.com)

E-mail : [pratikpublicationbvn@gmail.com](mailto:pratikpublicationbvn@gmail.com)

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## **Tribal Development Through Tribal Women Entrepreneurship**

**Dr. Paresh U. Mordhra & Dr. Ashok D. Gaur**

**Assistant Professor**

**B.J. Vanijya Mahavidyalaya,  
Vallabh Vidyanagar (Gujarat)**

### **Introduction :**

India has about more than 10 Crore tribal community and they depends on forests and other natural resources for livelihood. These tribes community largely confined to forests and villages of central, south, and northeast India the tribal population has been dependent on the jungle and its produce for their livelihood. The standard of living of tribal people is very low because of lack of accessibility and development. There is need for tribal women entrepreneurship development to bring positive social and economic change in their life. By connecting agriculture and forest produce with markets using technology, creation of self-help groups, empowering women, and creating self-sustainable enterprises tribal women entrepreneurs can be encouraged. Recently, NITI Aayog has organized India's first Global Tribal Entrepreneurship Summit in Dantewada, Chhattisgarh with aim of addressing poverty, malnutrition, low literacy and poor health using the power of enterprise and technology

### **Concept of Tribal Women Entrepreneur :**

An entrepreneur is a person who combines capital and labor for production. According to Cantillion "entrepreneur is the agent who buys means of production at certain prices, in order to sell at prices that are certain at the moment at which he commits himself to his cost". According to P.F Drucker " he is one who always (1) searches for change (2) responds to it (3) exploits it as an opportunity." A tribal woman entrepreneur is a woman who starts and owns and enterprise by investing at least 51% in an enterprise in tribal area. The characteristics of tribal women entrepreneur are : Literacy is nil or less , financially weak and involved in family business such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy, Fisheries, Agro Forestry, Handloom, Power loom etc...

**Problems of tribal Women Entrepreneurs in India :**

Following are the problems of Tribal Women entrepreneurs in India

**Male Dominated Business :** Male dominant social order is the main hurdle for them in their way towards business success. Women's are not given full fledged freedom to start business.

**Lack of Support From Financial Institutions :** Financial institution are doubtful about the entrepreneurial abilities of women . Moreover financial institutions are not established in backward ,hilly and tribal area

**Problem of Finance :** The Tribal women entrepreneurs suffers from inadequate financial resources and working capital. They lack access to external funds due to their inability to provide tangible security.

**Family Obligations :** it also block them from becoming successful entrepreneurs. in both developed and developing nations. "Having primary responsibility for children, home and older dependent family members, few women can devote all their time and energies to their business" (Starcher, )

**No Support From Family Members :** The success of entrepreneurship depends on the support the family members support . The interest of the family members is main factor for tribal women entrepreneurship

**Measures to Promote Tribal Women Entrepreneurship :**

Entrepreneurship is the one of the best ways of improving the socio-economic status of tribal entrepreneurs in society.

1. Skill development initiative includes various types of training programmes, involving both conventional and non-conventional subjects, varying in duration and cost. These training programmes are implemented through NGOs and institutions having expertise in their respective fields.
2. Some of the important skill training programmes in equipping tribal youth and women are: Tailoring, embroidery, sanitary pads, cooking snacks, painting potteries, etc Women training programmes on eco-environmental issues, socio-economic and cultural aspects have found its effect in women taking up issues affecting them, through collective action.
3. The farm forestry programme helps in empowerment of women; they are benefited by the easy availability of employment during the dry season. As a result migration of women to nearby industrial towns has come down to some extent. Nurseries for supplying seedlings to farm forestry and wasteland development programme are managed and run by villagers under the guidance of village institutions (both men's and women's village institutions) are allotted to poor women of the villages. Women have gained tremendously from this



mini- enterprise in the form of economic as well as social gains. It helps build their confidence and instill the spirit of entrepreneurial capacity in them.

**Other Measures :**

- Promoting women's entrepreneurship and gender equality helps to create employment as well as to empower women in the family and wider community.
- Gender awareness training for suppliers and service providers is essential in developing their capacities to serve the needs of both female and male entrepreneurs.
- Training in skills may not be enough, as many women lack confidence and belief in their entrepreneurial abilities. One answer is to bundle services such as combining business training with financial education, access to suitable credit and access to networks for women entrepreneurs through strategic partnerships and networking.
- Developing a supportive environment for women's entrepreneurship is important to women's success. This includes helping women to deal with their multiple roles and involving men, families and communities (as appropriate) in women's entrepreneurship.
- Supporting women entrepreneurs' associations can improve advocacy and services for women entrepreneurs.
- Women entrepreneurs can be particularly motivated and effective at protecting the environment and promoting green business opportunities

Welfare Measures for Tribal Women : Following are some of the important schemes/programmes implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the Welfare of Tribals and which have specific provisions for tribal women and girls :

1. **Special Central Assistance(SCA) to Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) :** It provides an additive to the State TSP and is meant for family-oriented income-generation schemes in sectors like agriculture, horticulture, sericulture, animal husbandry etc. A part of the SCA(not more than 30%) is also permitted to be used for development of infrastructure incidental to such income generating schemes. 30% to 50% of the outlay, envisaged for the projects, concern issues of women and female beneficiaries. SCA is released for the economic development of the following
2. **Grants-in-aid under article 275(1) of the Constitution :** The grants are provided to the States on the basis of percentage of ST population to the total tribal population of the country. Funds are released to State Governments against specific projects for the welfare of STs and strengthening of administration of tribal areas from the year 2000-01.

A part from the above, the Committee have been informed that there are other schemes for the benefits of tribal women and the tribal communities as a whole. Some of these schemes are as under

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1. **Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations :** Under this, the Ministry funds projects covering residential schools, non-residential schools, hostels, libraries, mobile dispensaries, ten or more bedded hospitals, computer training centers, rural night schools, agricultural training etc. Financial assistance is also provided for strengthening education among ST girls in low literacy districts and pockets inhabited by Particularly Vulnerable Groups (PVTGs). Naxalite affected areas are given priority.
2. **Scheme for Development of Particularly Vulnerable Groups (PVTGs) :** This scheme covers 75 identified PVTGs among STs in accordance with Conservation-cum-Development plans prepared by the State/UT through various agencies of the State Government/UT administrations like Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDPs), Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs), Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) and also NGOs. Here the scheme envisage skill development and up-gradation activities and give equal emphasis on women.
3. **Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojana (AMSY) :**  
National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) runs AMSY. It is an exclusive scheme/project meant for economic development of eligible ST women. It provides term loan for projects costing up to Rs. 50,000/- at highly concessional interest rate of 4% p.a."

### Some Success Storey of Tribal Women Entrepreneurship :

1. **Mendha Lekha:** India's first bamboo economy village. the Forest Rights Act of 2006 gave forest inhabitants the right to manage, conserve, protect and regenerate the forests and its resources. The act gives ownership of minor forest produce, except timber, to dwellers living in the village territory. This produce includes bamboo, honey, lac, herbs, leaves, berries, fruits, among other things. It, however, took 6 years and a long legal battle before Mendha Lekha, a tribal village situated in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra, could become the first village to be granted community forest rights.
  - Today the village has a successful bamboo economy. The entire village, comprising 450 people belonging mainly to the Gond tribe, works together in cultivating bamboo as raw material for the paper industry. The villagers make profits in crores, and are using the money for several development and social welfare activities in the area.
2. **Women of Odisha:** when 'pattals' trended in Europe
  - A group of over 3,500 women from 127 tribal hamlets in Kandhamal, Sambalpur, Angul and Deogarh entered into a formal agreement with Leaf Democracy, a German company, to supply one lakh siali leaf plates every month. The plates, commonly known as *pattals*, are in high demand in European countries, and act as a biodegradable alternate to plastic and styrofoam. These women, who earlier sold minor forest products such as siali leaves, sal seed, mohua flowers and

tamarind locally, are today working as a women's self-help group and inspiring many other women to follow suit.

**Conclusion :**

Tribal women entrepreneurship must be molded properly with entrepreneurial traits and skills to meet the changes in trends, challenges global markets and also be competent enough to sustain and strive for excellence in the entrepreneurial arena. In tribal areas larger amount of potential, remain untapped due to lack of supportive means and management. Proper entrepreneurial skill and marketing talent are to be given to tribal entrepreneurs through proper training programmes for carrying entrepreneurial activities. What the tribal entrepreneurs need is encouragement and support from the family members, government and societies. If they are properly trained and provided with the required capital then the informal sector will develop, and this, in turn, will reduce the search of livelihood.

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