

Tribal Entrepreneurship and Digitalization: A Sustainable Approach for Socio-Economic Development

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ABSTRACT

The frequently used and most discussed lexicon Covid-19 has discovered many unprecedented facts relating to environment. It has worst hit humankind across the globe. It has shaken the economy of every community, paralyzed the means and mechanism of livelihood of poor, informal and unorganized workers. Relying on the secondary source of data, this paper aims to delineate the role of creative economy in the form of entrepreneurship for tribal community. The paper identifies socio-cultural, environmental and economic context of tribal entrepreneurship. It discusses the challenges and suggests mechanism for identification and value addition to tribal knowledge and skill for sustainable socio-economic development of indigenous groups.

Keywords: Covid-19, Entrepreneurship, Migration, Tribal Groups, Sustainable Development, Digitalization

INTRODUCTION

The frequently used and most discussed lexicon Covid-19 has discovered many unprecedented facts relating to environment. It has worst hit human kind across the globe. The earth is experiencing irreparable socio-economic wastage due to Covid-19 (Asian development Bank, 2020). The country has witnessed the second largest mass migration of approximately of (14 million people). In the state scenario degree of unemployment is 23.8% higher than the national average of 23.5% (Figure reflected by Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy). Pandemic has shaken the economy of every community paralyzed the means and mechanism of livelihood of poor informal and unorganized workers (Bhagat *et al.*, 2020).

The portion of poverty and consequential crisis is more for the ST population. Information revealed by (NFHS) 45.9% of tribal population are in the lowest wealth bracket and they are the poorest section in India and their economic growth has become a major challenge.

MOTA identifies the share of underemployment is high for ST *i.e.* 51.3% compared to all other categories *i.e.* 35.5%. this figure depicts the wide prevalence of poverty in the history of tribal economy. However the message of inclusive development has become a buzzword in current intellectual discourse. The realization that tribal groups can contribute tremendously for the sustainable development of the nation is gaining momentum.

Sustainable development and inclusive growth demands active presence and enormous economic opportunities for every segment of population. It encourages effective and essential economic participation of these native groups. In this critical juncture MSME or Small Scale Business sounds reliable and promising. It can contribute enormously to the socio-economic growth of the country.

Thus restructuring the eco-activities for the STs has driven the attention of policy makers to concentrate on creative economy *i.e.* entrepreneurship. MSMEs as the cornerstone of economic growth is boosting in every social platform. But operations of small business should be back

up by economic, social and environmental elements. The significance of MSME is also well recognized in the “Atmanirbhar Bharat Mission” (National portal of India, 2020).

The Key Terminology: Entrepreneurship

The term entrepreneurship is derived from the French word “Entreprendre” which means to undertake, to pursue opportunities and fulfill needs and wants through innovation and starting business (Burch, 1986). According to Schumpeter (1961), an entrepreneur is dynamic agent of changes or the catalyst, who transformed increasingly physical, natural and human resources in corresponding product possibilities. The lexicon “entrepreneurship” is first coined by French writer “Richard Cantillon” meaning one who creates profit by transformation in the midst of uncertainty. But to capture the idea of English classical economists entrepreneurs are the creators of financial capital. To quote Jeremy Bentham entrepreneur is an agent who brings economic progress. The German write up by J. H. Van Thunen and H. K. Von Mangoldt entrepreneurship is essentially risk taking affair. In the word of (Bird, 1981) entrepreneurship refers to the activities for formation of organizations. Formation of organizations involve emergency of new products, identification of new markets, customers, acquisition of skills and know how (Garritner and Scott Shane, 1995).

Existing literature on entrepreneurship figures out two different descriptions in relation to the term entrepreneurship. One the Schumpeterian notion which defines entrepreneurship as value creation through Innovation and another describes entrepreneurship as a process of value appropriation through available market and technological condition. It is progressively acknowledged that entrepreneurship is a multidisciplinary concept widening from social anthropology to organizational theory and to mathematical economics (Wenneker’s and Thuurik 1999), Dana (2018) International Handbook of research depicts the interdisciplinary meaning of the term entrepreneurship. In this context it outlines the view of famous industrialist Jean Baptize. According to him entrepreneurship is the unification of all means of production by the entrepreneurs who drive profit and value from the process. To quote Mill, risk taking behavior is the major element in the process of entrepreneurship Shumpeter viewed innovation is the fundamental

need for entrepreneurship. Cassion (2003) opined entrepreneurship is the logical combination of scarce resource.

Diandra and Azmy (2020) article makes an account of effective definition, sources and types of entrepreneurship and suggests the effective approach to gear up the process. The critical analysis of the existing literature shows that entrepreneurship involves innovation, change, challenges and competition. Exploration of economic opportunity is the common feature in every type of entrepreneurship. Imparting indepth education and skill in most effective teachable manner. Technical knowledge, new idea, innovation are considered the core requirements for entrepreneurship growth the core elements of this process (Peter and Max, 1991; Katz 1991; Vinamrta, 2020). Its sources include opportunities, market, technology and innovations. However, the write up concludes risk bearing at initial stage and government intervention to add value and social recognition of the profession broaden the scope of entrepreneurship.

A group of study on defining the entrepreneurship emphasizes the individuals drive for success, his preparedness to accept risks, developing the attitude to withstand the uncertainties, independent and determined action, strong motivation, value system etc. (Bourne 2011, Comeche and Lors 2010, Elfring and Monaghan, 2010, Alpkhan *et al.*, 2016, McClelland, 1961).

An entrepreneur is also represented as being versatile, persuasive, creative, organized, competitive, and hardworking in attitude (Caceres *et al.*, 2011). (Schumpeter, 1934) focuses on the innovative capacity of entrepreneur.

According to the sixth economic survey report in India MSMEs sector consists of 633.88 lakh enterprises and share to GDP is 8%. In the state scenario there is 4,49,379 MSME sectors which contribute 43.1% to the total employment opportunities. As per (Odisha economic survey report 2020-21) 35,219 youths have gone through entrepreneurship development programme training for last 3 years.

Tribal entrepreneurship : Transition from Tradition to Modernity:

The tribal population of India is more than 11 crore and in the state it is estimated about 1 crore, which is 22.85% of the total population. Odisha holds a unique position in the tribal map of the country. It occupies 3rd most populated tribal states position in the country. It is

considered to be the habitat of 62 tribal groups and 13 PVTGs.

Tribal community holds a distinct sociocultural discourse in the map of Indian society. Their social structure is unique. They possess nature based subsistence economy for their livelihood. They gather food, fodder, fuel from the forest and there by establish a close relation with natural bodies like mountain, jungles, rivers, water reservoirs etc. They are a self-sufficient group. Their economic institutions are not organized like the modern era, rather it is deeply interrelated with their natural environment, culture, community, religion, folklores etc. Each source of livelihood symbolizes a beautiful synthesis of mind, heart, emotion and passion. They possess egalitarian economic rights i.e. property rights is possessed by the community.

As nature is the chief source of livelihood, there is repository of vast local especially environment harnessing knowledge within the primitive group. The age old natural contact provides them the knowledge and skill to collect minor forest product, cultivate the land, how to catch the fish and to worship the nature. So historically they are the people of nature and their economic activity is practiced with the tune of natural symphony. But the vibrant cultural diffusion has not left this simple society. Now the social processes like assimilation and acculturation have shed their feature upon the unreached tribal hinterland. Now they have witnessed a myriad forms of changes, global risk of climate change, squeeze in nature based livelihood, loose primitive property rights etc.

The goal of sustainable growth and inclusive development has recognized the significance of tribal entrepreneurship as a new economic. venture for the native community. Realizing the urgency of tribal entrepreneurship NITI Aayog arranged India's 1st global tribal entrepreneurship summit at Dantewada in the year 2017.

Tribal creativity and innovativeness creates room for entrepreneurship. To capture the view of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan " Tribal entrepreneurship is human entrepreneurship as it contributes for conservation of biodiversity".

Tribal entrepreneurship refers to creative economy within the nexus of tribal community. It amounts market value to tribal knowledge, incorporates technologies to the traditional skills and converts the hidden treasure of native groups in to economic opportunities.

Dana and Anderson (2007) states that "Indigenous entrepreneurship often has non-economic explanatory variables" .

Cahn (2008); "Indigenous business are embedded in cultural and social set up".

Major Schemes, Provisions, Social set-ups :

According to the Tribal co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) in the year 2019, the amount of trading was Rs. 30.28 crore.

The provision facitated for increment of Tribal Entrepreneurship are :

- ❖ This policy was formulated to increase capital investment subsidy to the MSMEs and ensures for entrepreneurship development plan was also made for granting extra amount of capital investment subsidy for MSMEs in the Industrially backward districts, specifically Kalahandi, Nuapada, Balangiri, Subarnapur, Kandhmal, Malkangiri, Raygada, Nabarangpur, Gajpati and mayurbhanj.
- ❖ **Forest Right Act 2006**, was approved in 2006 with a view to acknowledge forest dwellers and tribal rights over the forest resources comprising the elements of livelihood, habitation and other socio-cultural requirements.
- ❖ **National Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Policy** : This policy concentrates on the youth mainly from unprivileged section of the society. This policy aims for creating gainful employment opportunity for them in India as well as the foreign land.
- ❖ **Atal Innovation Mission** : This mission was set up by NITI Aayog foster innovation an entrepreneurship across the country.
- ❖ **TEDP**: This is aimed at improving the lives of the tribal community of India. The programme is focused at providing a platform to tribal artists that can help them reach the international market. This is another step towards the programme would identify ' Atma Nirbhar Bharat'.
- ❖ **National Resource Centre on Tribal Livelihood**: Vanjeevan, will serve as a

framework for creating livelihood mapping, skill gap analysis and knowledge hub relating to livelihood issues and promotion of entrepreneurship.

Vanjeevan programme is designed to point out complications in livelihood issues, skill gap study and development of entrepreneurship models in tribal landscape.

- ❖ **TRIFED** : is a national level co-operative body formed to bring out the tribal art & craft through outlet stores.
- ❖ **TDCCOL** : is recognized as state level agency to facilitate the marketing of tribal products and ensures real benefit to the products through the tribal stores names as “Tribal World”, “Tribes India”, “ADISHA” etc.

Dimensions of Digital Marketing of Tribal Entrepreneurship :

The core process of digital marketing i.e. TRIBES INDIA though was launched in the year 2018 under TRIFED but achieved its boom during the world crisis covid-19. At the outset MOTA introduced the largest handicrafts and organic portal i.e. TRIBES INDIA e-market place and two new TRIBES INDIA outlets. However data represents there is an evolving trend in the TRIFED achievements. Current number of suppliers under tribal e-commerce is 2282. Before the introduction of e-commerce the purchase amount under TRIFED was 846.96 corer in 2017 but got historic turnout i.e. 2572.54 in the year 2021-22. Presently there is 119 retail outlets, 2200 suppliers and 44.664 sale achievement. In the year 2021 the numbers of tribal artisans in the Adimahotsav were 630. This reflects online marketing in to tribal products is increasing rapidly. The products classified under TRIBES INDIA range from monumental artifacts such as dokra, metal craft, beautiful pottery, paintings, colorful apparel, distinctive jewelry. The online portal TRIBES INDIA fulfills the consumer's interest by assuring original tribal products. TRIFED has also created portal with other online shopping apps i.e. Snapdeal, Amazon, Flipkart, GeM. It provides training on digital literacy including financial management, marketing, utilization of applications, process of e-payments, safety online transactions etc. TRIBES INDIA mobile app and other e-commerce represents the native products at the global level simultaneously enrich the cultural heritage of the native groups. In 2021 under the

vision Atmanirvar Bharat the collaborative effort of TEDP and ASSOCHAM in the context of digitalization of tribal business aimed for showcasing the tribal products a far reaching. ASSOCHAM promulgate online training to tribal artisans from different locations all over India. The target population is 1000 out of which 350 have completed the training successfully. Its scope involves training for e-commerce, use of business technology in social media forum, technology of financial report MOTA on TRIFEC (2021). As a result the demand for tribal goods and services has gone up. After going through the training individual native producer or cluster groups are initiating their business page, advertise and post the product image that attracts more and more buyers and has extended the spectrum of tribal business World Wide.

Due to digitalization technological inventions have largely introduced in to the business forum. Consumers are looking for novelty in purchase experience. Calculating the degree of benefits customers increase preference towards products of various suppliers. While dealing online shopping they analyze compare, review the products. A good amounts of products categories in the online web portal which helps to choose the most preferred items. In these process consumers builds direct contact with the suppliers. The suppliers also secure economic interest by providing information of products in a cost effective manner. There is no need for suppliers to develop physical infrastructure for the storage of goods. Only post of product image and profile in the websites satisfies customer's interest about the items. Web portals are utilized for simple quick access to products and easy payment systems. Consumers build direct contact with the suppliers (Sambarni *et al.*, 2020, Mardon *et al.*, 2018).

Research reflects in the emerging form of entrepreneurship there is inter relation between emotional transactions and market exchange. Brand communities are emotionally linked to the entrepreneurs. Destination web sites and strategy have become major criteria for promotion of tribal marketing. As tribes are connected by collective commitment, passion, emotion, value, practice the launch of any product or service require thorough understanding and knowledge of consumer tribe, their community activity, social system, ritual patterns, social experience, degree of deficiency etc. Studies reflect that social cohesion can be generated through digital interaction revolving around product or services. Marketing inherently targets unfolding of tribalism in society. Digital marketing strives for identification of

communities that are clustered around a product and service. The consumer tribe trusts the products, develops eagerness for it and motivates others to associate with this. Exposer to product attaches members of the communities. To locate information regarding consumer group is very easy through digital marketing. The selection or rejection of products, preferences and acceptance can be easily apprehend from the number of click, pause from different geographical locations. However sometimes this effects inherent cultural notion of tribal community as commercialization of subcultures, neglects the cultural prescriptions, violets moral and social boundaries for examples YouTube Bloggers upload blogs of their culture and heritage which may lead to issue of insecurity and lose its significant and future and can bring cultural threats for the whole community (Mardon *et al.*, 2018; Sharma *et al.*, 2020).

The clusters supported by TDCCOL are present in the cluster table below :

| Sr. No. | Name of the Cluster | District |
|---------|----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Handloom Cluster | Mayurbhanj |
| 2. | Wooden Craft Cluster | |
| 3. | Soura Art Cluster | Raygada |
| 4. | Horn Craft | Gajapati |
| 5. | Handloom Cluster | Koraphut |

Source : TRIFED: MOTA Govt. of India

❖ **Dindayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya ayojana:** As a include programme, it is designed to give skill training to rural youth for enhancing

the employability especially of por and marsinalised section including Scheduled Tribe.

To prove the trade and business of the Tribal Handcrafted products TRIBES India set up under eight categories.

Metal Craft, Tribal Textile, Tribal Jewelry, Tribal Painting, Cane and Bamboo, terracota, Stone pottery, Gift and Novelties, Organic and Natural food products.

Enterprises percent wise distribution by social group of owners.

| Sector | Rural | Urban | All |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| SC | 15.35 | 9.45 | 12.45 |
| ST | 6.7 | 1.43 | 4.1 |
| OBC | 51.59 | 47.8 | 49.72 |
| Other | 25.62 | 40.46 | 32.95 |

Source: Annual Report 2018-19 MSMEs

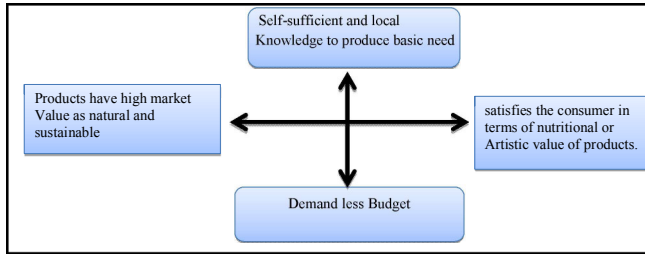
The above figures highlight the percentage of MSMEs for every social category. The share of MSMEs for the ST category is very less in comparison to other social category. *i.e.* 4.1% of total MSMEs which is not very impressing. So this requires serious attention to check out the loopholes and implementation of existing provisions should be gear up through further multiple stake holders here.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report holds its significance for acknowledging, in India entrepreneurship is more necessity based than opportunity based.

The significance of tribal entrepreneurship for sustainable development:

| Category | Tribe Name | States | Raw Material | Items |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cane and Bamboo | North East Tribes (Chakma, Dimasa, Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Garo, Jaintias, Patani) | Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura | Cane and Bamboo | Basketry, Trays, fruit bags, penstand, furniture. |
| Gift and Novelties | Every tribal groups | All tribal states | Clay, forest grass, jute, stones | Exoentstic gift items, souvenirsassort |
| Organic and Natural products | Different tribal groups | All tribal states | Organic food MFPs, corns, fruits, flowers | Honey, Millets, tea, spices, dryfruits, fish, soap |
| Metal Crafts (Dokra art) | Gadwas, Gonds, Dhurwas | Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, W.B. | Mix of Clay and Hay | Trees, Birds, Rituals, Village Ghotul, Animals |
| Textile | Bhutia, Bodh, Lahula | Uttarakhand, H.P. , Jharkhand | Sheep and Angora wool, Muga and Arisilk, Tassar Sik | Drapes, Shirts, Shawls, Sarees, Stalls |
| Jewellery | Konyak, Wancho, Bhattada, Gond | Nagaland, Manipur, A.P. Odisha, Jharkhand | Bones, Corals, Stones, Beads, Shells | Ornaments, Bead necklace |
| Paintings (Warli, Saura, Patachitra, Longpi, Pottery) | Different Tribal Community | All States | Natural colour, Pigments, Black stones | Arts of Saura, Warli, Patachitra, Trays, Kettles, Stout |

Source : Report of MOTA on TRIFED 2020



Social:

The tribal product has artistic value. Their culture is reflected through the items. Cultural assimilation is possible. It creates an identity in the global forum. The indigenous knowledge can accuse market value to reduce poverty within this group.

Economical:

As they are people of self-sufficiency they possess the knowledge how to meet the basic needs. The age old association with nature has developed their productive ability.

Market has a demand for the utilization value of the natural good both in terms of preference by customers and demand of policy issue. Budget requirement to start the entrepreneurship easily approachable. As production cost is less the capitalistic principle is satisfied. Their goods ranging from food items towards home decorating items caters to the nutritional value and artistic satisfaction of the customers.

Environmental:

As the products are nature based the waste material is zero and it is sustainable for environment. The recycling is easily possible. So meets policy requirement for sustainable development thus it is promoted and encouraged by government, civil society, market etc.

Concluding Remarks and Suggestion:

The growing Prevalence of Covid-19 pandemic has clawed the whole society. At growth model of modern society has proved as falsified growth. So the goal of sustainable development can only be achieved through environmental harnessing way of economic generation with the blend of artistic treasure of cultural notion.

Thus cultural consciousness as an alternate approach to sustainable development should be encouraged through tribal ideas, knowledge and know how. However the modernization of traditional economy and groups must follow the policies that can ensure their future livelihood

opportunities.

- ❖ Access to digitalization shouldn't be obstructed by language, social class, gender.
- ❖ Digital marketing must not violate the cultural principles of the consumer tribe to avoid perception of betrayal.
- ❖ Tribal entrepreneurship practices present new ethical dilemma which require further policy research.
- ❖ Awareness regarding identification of context and content of you tube blogs to the consumers must not be neglected.
- ❖ There must be provision for reliable virtual work places to strengthen the customer seller relation on a long term.
- ❖ As ICT has become a vital medium of digital marketing attentions must be prioritized in building skilled man power through effective training.

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