

# Women Entrepreneurship Ventures among Tribal Women: A Study with Reference to Scheduled Tribe (Hills) of Assam

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**Abstract**—The main assumption of the paper is that a number of factors motivate women to take of entrepreneurial ventures and women entrepreneurship development among tribal areas would uplift the condition of socially deprived sections like Scheduled Tribes of the country. In this background the paper examines the motivating factors of tribal women entrepreneurs of hill areas of Assam. The paper also examines the relationship between various social-economic variables and type of entrepreneurial ventures. The paper which is theoretical and analytical in nature is based on both primary and secondary data. The findings reveal that there is no significant relationship between age of the entrepreneur and type of the entrepreneurial venture as well as educational qualification and type of the entrepreneurial venture.

**Keywords:** Scheduled Tribes, Women Entrepreneurs, Assam.

## Introduction:

India is a developing country where creation of employment opportunities is a herculean task because of its ever growing large population. This is where the role of entrepreneurial activities come into play in promoting self employment and absorbing potential employees through the creation of a new ventures/ start up's. It not only promotes wealth creation but also help in distribution of wealth. In India, entrepreneurship is strongly linked to Micro, Small, Medium enterprises (MSME), which plays one of the significant role in the growth of a developing economy. Small and Medium sized enterprises (SMEs) provide jobs to 67.1% of all employees and participate with 57.6% of total value added (Schmiemann, 2008; European Commission, 2009).

Any growth story will remain incomplete without the participation of all strata of the society. The contributions of women towards the process of development have been widely accepted as the role of women is now not only confined to the traditional activities but they have step into the world of entrepreneurship venture (Kapase, 2001). Women entrepreneurs are motivated to enter into entrepreneurial field

with some motives like self-dependent, social status, family encouragement and self-prestige (Geetha, 2017). Women entrepreneurs must also play equal role in entrepreneurial activities and most importantly the weaker and deprived section like scheduled tribes

The tribal women in the hill districts of Assam have been playing an important role in shaping the present society since time immemorial and despite of all the shortcomings, the women can bring considerable changes in the society by involving themselves in various fields. There are (no doubt), numerous Govt. schemes for the betterment of condition of women with varying degree of success. These Govt. policies usually deal with issues of their health and education. Today if we look around especially in our tribal areas, we have realized that the world has moved far ahead and we have failed to take along our women counterpart in the path of equality and empowerment. Women entrepreneurship development is one of the important areas which should be given a special focus to mobilise women in general and ST women in particular to participate in the race of 3 Es equality, enhancement and empowerment.

## Relevance of the Study:

In Assam, entrepreneurship is starting to get its foot hole as one of the main driving force of growth. Women's participation in entrepreneurial activities has shown an encouraging trend. It has helped them in raising their social status and throw financial empowerment. The tribal women in Assam have also found a tool in entrepreneurship to break the shackles of poverty coupled with generations old discriminations towards women. For instance the tribal women of Karbi Anglong are learning to make use of the traditionally use resources available in nature for achieving higher dividend through the process of simple value edition of those resources. It has motivated them to appreciate the

economic value of the resources that they have been using traditionally. The development of entrepreneurship among the tribal societies is at its nascent stage and therefore it is pertinent to have more studies research and document to the growth of entrepreneurship tribal women. This study tries to present an insight on the ways of motivating and enhancing the participation of tribal women in entrepreneurship.

### Literature Review:

There are good number of studies on motivation and women entrepreneurship. Some of the studies like Shane, *et.al.*, (2003) argue that human motivations influence the entrepreneurial decisions and these motivations influence who pursues entrepreneurial opportunities, who assembles resources and how people undertake the entrepreneurial process. According to Bertaux and Crable(2007), entrepreneurship allows women to work from home so that they can attend to their domestic responsibilities, while also helping to financially support the family. Stefanovic (2010) studied the motivational factors and success factors of entrepreneurs in Serbia where the results shows that motivational factors of entrepreneurs are generic in developing countries and also found that there was a lack of motives concerned with sustainable development of enterprise in long run. Uddin and Bose (2013), Premuzic, *et.al.*,(2014), Meyer and Landsberg (2015) found out that independence, personal and family security, self employment, managerial capabilities, infrastructure, to have freedom, family support, social network are the different motivational factors which encourage the women in starting a new enterprise and the growth of the enterprises are affected naturally by psychological needs. Further Ahmad, *et.al.*, (2016) pointed out that need for affiliation is the most influencing motivation of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. In the studies of Mahanta, (2016) ,Das (2017), Priya and Kasthuri (2017), the various motivational factors of women entrepreneurs are identified and constraints faced by the women entrepreneurs are also revealed. Though there are good number of studies on women entrepreneurship, the studies which are related to ST women is missing in the literature.

### Objective:

- To examine the motivating factors of tribal women entrepreneurs of hill areas of Assam.
- To examine the relationship between various social-economic variables and type of entrepreneurial ventures.

### Hypothesis:

Ho1: there is no similarity in the degree of motivating factors among the ST women entrepreneurs of the study area.

Ho2: there is no significant relationship between various social-economic variables and type of entrepreneurial ventures which are owned by the ST women entrepreneurs of the study area.

### Research Methodology:

The paper which is theoretical and analytical in nature is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected by conducting a survey method among 50 ST women entrepreneurs in Karbi Anglong District. 5 point scale has been used to measure the degree of motivation (1-highly agree, 2-agree, 3-undecided, 4- disagree, 5-highly disagree). Descriptive statistics like percentage, mean and standard deviation have been used to analyse data. Pearson Chi-square test has been applied to test the hypotheses. Secondary data have been collected from journal, newspaper, published thesis and internet. IBM –SPSS has been used to conduct the statistical tests. 10 variables i.e. to support family, to earn knowledge, economic necessity, to achieve self independence, to get social recognition, government assistance, training programme, passion, no other job, to earn additional income have been used to find out the motivating factors of tribal women entrepreneurs.

### Results and Discussions:

- Profile of the respondents:** The profile of the respondents is presented in table 1. It is clearly revealed from the table that majority of the ST women who has entrepreneurial ventures belong to the age group of 26-45 and majority are married. Regarding the educational background, a sizable number of women are illiterate and only 18 % percent of the total respondents have accessed higher education. It can also be revealed that majority of the respondents (54%) are owners of manufacturing ventures. The three important findings which can be derived from the that among the ST women , (i) entrepreneurship is a career among the young and middle –aged ST women of the study area; (ii) married women are more inclined towards this profession and (iii) majority of the women entrepreneurs do have higher educational background.
- Motivating factors:** It is also found from the field survey that different factors influence ST women in developing entrepreneurial ventures. In case of two factors V6 (availability of government assistance -) and V7 (training programme),majority (64 % in case of V6 and 54 % in case of V7) of the respondents are highly disagreed that these factors have motivated them in taking up entrepreneurial ventures. In case of all the remaining factors , majority (V1-62%, V2-58%, V3-66%, V4-80%, V5-56%, V 8-69%, V9-72%, V10 82%) of the respondents are highly agreed that these factors have motivated them in taking up entrepreneurial ventures.

Table 1 Profile of the respondents

age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
26-45	32	64.0	64.0	64.0
46-60	18	36.0	36.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Marital status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
married	37	74.0	74.0	74.0
widow	13	26.0	26.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	
Educational qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
illiterate	15	30.0	30.0	30.0
primary education	5	10.0	10.0	40.0
secondary	21	42.0	42.0	82.0
graduation and above	9	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	
Type of enterprise	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
manufacturing	27	54.0	54.0	54.0
service	23	46.0	46.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey

**Hypothesis Testing Result**

**Testing result of Ho1:** The test result of Ho1, is shown below in descriptive statistic table (2). It is clearly revealed that the mean value of all the motivating factors are not found to be same. Hence, it can be derived from the test result that there is no similarity in the degree of motivating factors among the ST women entrepreneurs of the study area. So, the hypothesis is accepted.

**Testing result of Ho2:** The test result of Ho2, is shown below in table 2. All the test result show that the computed  $p > .05$ . hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant relationship between various social-economic variables and type of entrepreneurial ventures which are owned by the ST women entrepreneurs of the study area.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistic result of the motivating factors**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
V1	50	1.00	5.00	1.5800	1.01197
V2	50	1.00	5.00	1.4600	.57888
V3	50	1.00	5.00	1.6600	1.20560
V4	50	1.00	5.00	1.3600	.89807
V5	50	1.00	5.00	2.0200	1.49134
V6	50	1.00	5.00	4.2400	1.22157
V7	50	1.00	5.00	3.2400	1.62330
V8	50	1.00	5.00	1.9600	1.47025
V9	50	1.00	5.00	1.7800	1.46092
V10	50	1.00	5.00	1.2400	.65652

Source: field survey

**Table 3: Ho2: Hypothesis testing result**

	Associationship between	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Remarks
Ho2.a.	Age of ST women entrepreneur and type of entrepreneurial venture	1.817	1	.178	Accepted
Ho2.b	Marital status of ST women entrepreneur and type of entrepreneurial venture	1.708	1	.191	Accepted
Ho2.c	Education of ST women entrepreneur and type of entrepreneurial venture	3.710	3	.295	Accepted
	Test result of Ho2				Accepted

**Conclusion:**

It is an established fact that there are many forces at work that motivate the tribal women to take up entrepreneurial ventures and shine in their chosen fields to match every step of their counterparts from other parts of the country. The present study on the tribal women of the hills districts of Assam points towards economic necessity and unemployment as the primary factors that drive them to thrive in setting up small ventures according to their capacity. Government assistant and training programme do not have higher influence on the ST women entrepreneur of the study area In spite of all the stumbling blocks, their urge to attain financial independence and sustainably utilise the natural/traditional wealth of the region, has propelled them bring about noticeable changes in their overall socioeconomic condition. Service sector is one area with untapped potential where they are trying out their luck. Their budding initiatives need regular supports; encouragement and guidance to instil in self confidence in them and ensure exposures to the ever changing forces of market economy.

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