

EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH INDIGENOUS ART AND CRAFT ENTREPRENEURSHIP**Ms. Tanvi S. Papalkar***Assistant Professor, College of Management and Computer Science, Yavatmal
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This study explores the role of indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship in empowering women from marginalized communities. Through a mixed-methods approach, this research investigates the impact of entrepreneurship on women's economic independence, cultural preservation, and social status. The findings reveal that indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship provides women with a pathway to economic independence, cultural preservation, and social empowerment. However, challenges persist, including limited access to markets, financing, and training. This research contributes to the existing literature on entrepreneurship and women's empowerment, highlighting the importance of indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship in promoting economic development and cultural preservation. The study's recommendations emphasize the need for targeted support and resources to empower indigenous women entrepreneurs and promote their economic and social well-being.

Keywords- *Indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship, women's empowerment, economic independence, cultural preservation, social status.*

Introduction-

In many marginalized communities around the world, women face significant barriers to economic participation, cultural preservation, and social empowerment. Indigenous women, in particular, often struggle to maintain their cultural heritage and traditional practices in the face of globalization, urbanization, and cultural homogenization. However, indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful tool for empowering women from these communities.

1 The Importance of Indigenous Art and Craft

Indigenous art and craft are integral to the cultural heritage and traditional practices of many marginalized communities. These art forms not only provide a means of cultural expression but also serve as a vital source of income for many indigenous women. By leveraging their traditional skills and knowledge, indigenous women entrepreneurs can create sustainable livelihoods, preserve their cultural heritage, and promote their community's unique identity.

1.1 The Potential of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has long been recognized as a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and social change. For indigenous women, entrepreneurship offers a unique opportunity to take control of their economic lives, challenge patriarchal norms, and assert their cultural identity. By supporting and promoting indigenous women entrepreneurs, we can help to create a more inclusive and equitable economy that values diversity and promotes cultural preservations.

Indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship offers a unique pathway for empowering women from marginalized communities. By leveraging their traditional skills and knowledge, indigenous women entrepreneurs can:

1.2 Economic Empowerment

Generate income by create sustainable livelihoods through the sale of indigenous art and craft products. Financial independence to gain control over their financial lives, making decisions about income, savings, and investments. Connect with local, national, and international markets, expanding their customer base.

1.3 Cultural Preservation

Preserve traditional practices to maintain and pass on traditional art and craft techniques, ensuring cultural continuity. Promote cultural identity to showcase indigenous culture, traditions, and values through art and craft, promoting cross-cultural understanding. Revitalize languages by the use indigenous languages in art and craft, helping to revitalize and preserve linguistic heritage.

1.4 Social Empowerment

Enhance self-esteem to develop confidence and self-worth through entrepreneurship, cultural expression, and community recognition. Challenge patriarchal norms by assert women's roles and contributions in indigenous cultures, challenging traditional power structures. Build community networks by foster relationships with other indigenous women entrepreneurs, creating support networks and collaborative opportunities.

Literature review:

The World Bank (2001) describes empowerment as "the process of strengthening the capacity of individuals or groups to make well-informed choices and turn those choices into impactful actions and outcomes."

Amartya Sen (1997) pointing the importance of empowerment of women which is about change in favour of those who previously exercised little control over their lives. This change consists of two key elements: the first is the management of resources, including financial, physical, and human capital, while the second involves the influence over ideology, beliefs, values, and attitudes.

Some parameters given by Hemalata Prasad on empowerment of women as follows-

1. Enhance self esteem and self confidence in women.
2. Build a position image of women by recognizing their contribution to the society and the economy.
3. Develop in them an ability to think critically.
4. Faster decision making action through collective process.
5. Enable women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and health especially reproductive health.
6. Ensure equal participation in development process.
7. Provide information, knowledge and skill for economic independence.
8. Enhance access to legal literacy and information related to their rights and entitlements in the society with a view to enhance their participation in all areas.

Research Methodology:

In this basically descriptive and analytical methods are used. In this paper an attempt of empowering women through indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship. The data used in it is from secondary as well as from primary sources according to the need of this study.

Objectives

1. To enhance the economic status of indigenous women through sustainable livelihoods and income generation.
2. To preserve and promote indigenous cultural heritage through traditional art and craft practices.
3. To empower indigenous women to take control of their lives, make informed decisions, and assert their rights.
4. To increase the income of indigenous women entrepreneurs through improved market access, pricing, and product development.
5. To enhance the skills and knowledge of indigenous women entrepreneurs in areas such as

business management, marketing, and product design.

1. Enhance the economic status of indigenous women through sustainable livelihoods and income generation-

Through traditional crafts society can support indigenous women in developing and marketing traditional crafts, such as textiles, pottery, and basketry. Agriculture is another source to provide training and resources for indigenous women to engage in sustainable agriculture practices, such as organic farming and permaculture. Giving market access can provide indigenous women with access to local, national, and international markets, enabling them to sell their products and services. Providing entrepreneurship training and mentorship programs, empowering indigenous women to start and manage their own businesses. For financial inclusion by providing indigenous women with access to savings accounts, credit, and other financial services.

2. Preserve and promote indigenous cultural heritage through traditional art and craft practices-

Preservation efforts through document traditional art and craft practices through photographs, videos, and written records. Organising mentorship programs that pair experienced indigenous artists with younger generations to teach traditional techniques. Support community that based initiatives that promote the preservation of traditional art and craft practices.

3. Empower indigenous women to take control of their lives, make informed decisions, and assert their rights-

Establish literacy programs that cater to indigenous women, enabling them to acquire reading and writing skills. Support programs that promote cultural preservation, enabling indigenous women to learn about their heritage and traditional practices. Provide education on human rights, enabling indigenous women to understand their rights and assert them. Provide access to credit, enabling indigenous women to access capital and invest in their businesses. Provide health education, enabling indigenous women to make informed decisions about their health and well-being. Facilitate access to healthcare, enabling indigenous women to access medical services and treatment. Promote participatory decision-making, enabling indigenous women to contribute to decision-making processes.

4. Increase the income of indigenous women entrepreneurs through improved market access, pricing, and product development- Support indigenous women entrepreneurs in setting competitive prices for their products and services. Conduct value chain analysis to identify areas for cost reduction and improved profitability. Provide training on pricing negotiation to enable indigenous women entrepreneurs to negotiate fair prices. Support indigenous women entrepreneurs in designing products that meet market demands and standards. Provide training on product quality improvement to enhance the quality and competitiveness of indigenous products. Encourage innovation and diversification by supporting indigenous women entrepreneurs in developing new products and services.
5. Enhance the skills and knowledge of indigenous women entrepreneurs in areas such as business management, marketing, and product design- Provide training on business planning, including market research, financial projections, and strategic planning. Provide training on human resource management, including recruitment, training, and employee management. Provide cultural sensitivity training to ensure that training programs and resources are culturally relevant and sensitive. Offer language support, including translation services and language interpretation, to ensure that indigenous women entrepreneurs can access training and resources in their native language. Develop and provide culturally relevant resources, including business planning templates, marketing materials, and financial management tools.

Findings: It has been acknowledged that empowering women through indigenous art and craft business is a potent instrument for social development, Indian cultural preservation, and women entrepreneurs' economic independence.

1. Income Generation: Women who work as indigenous crafters become financially independent, which lowers poverty and raises living standards.
2. Entrepreneurial Opportunities: Women can offer handcrafted goods in regional and international marketplaces by starting small enterprises or cooperatives.
3. Market Access: Fair-trade networks and digital platforms have made it easier for indigenous

women to connect with customers around the world.

4. Preserving Traditional Knowledge: By transmitting traditional skills, indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage.

5. Community Strengthening: Women's participation in craft production promotes economic growth and community cohesion.

6. Recognition and Respect: Women artisans gain social status and recognition within their communities by contributing economically and culturally.

7. Government and NGO Support: Policies promoting fair trade, microfinance programs, and cooperatives provide critical support.

8. Sustainable and Ethical Practices: Encouraging environmentally friendly and ethical craft production enhances marketability and long-term success.

Conclusion:

Indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship provides women with a means of generating income, improving their financial stability, and enhancing their economic independence. Indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship promotes cultural preservation by providing a means of preserving traditional skills, techniques, and cultural heritage. Indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship empowers women to take control of their lives, make informed decisions, and assert their rights. By empowering women through indigenous art and craft entrepreneurship, we can promote economic independence, cultural preservation, and social mobility, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and just society.

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