

# Social Constraints and Prospects in Entrepreneurship: A Study Among the Kandha Tribal Women of Kandhamal, Orissa, India

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## 1. Introduction

Gender inequalities are persisting phenomenon in all over the world irrespective of time and space. The inequitable gender relations are mostly paternalistic and determined by socially constructed imperatives rather than biological determinants. The social constraints and prospects lies on a person's ability (resource sharing and bargaining) to visualize a thing or to fulfill subsistence needs outside the family. The women's income-earning capacity when realized places them in a stronger bargaining position vis-à-vis other members of the household, especially if their income is for the family's survival. The family then itself pave the way for their women as and when realizes and agreeable to co-operate and such co-operation levels then better off than non co-operation. The women entrepreneurs then only can take shape abiding even to social constraints and would become a prospective for livelihood generation and to be self reliant.

## 2. The Study area and the People

For the study, The Phulbani block of Kandhamal district is selected. Most of the information and data were collected from villages Phulbani and Baliguda Block of Kandhamal District. The Kandhas are one of major tribe of Orissa. They are found concentrated in district of Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Koraput,

Ganjam, Boudh, Nayagarh and Gajapati. They are also found scatter here and there in the district and chiefly concentrated in Kandhamal district which the nomenclature suggests and their original reside of Kandhamal district.

## 3. Methods and Techniques

The primary data was collected canvassing the household survey, focused group discussions, interview with male and female informants, Case studies etc. Secondary data was also collected from many shops, petty business men, journals, local markets and internet etc.

## 4. Turmeric Cultivation and Kandha Women

The tribal woman in general and the Kandha women in particular spend much of their time in 'work space' both outside their home in comparison to their male counterpart. The female's ability of working, when considered in a co-operative level by the family members they would be better entrepreneurs.

The avenues like cottage industry, spices and forest products processing and packaging and terracotta making are the most promising areas in Kandhamal for undertaking entrepreneurship by women to generate family income as well as their self sustenance.



- Turmeric and zinger are the main cash crops of the district.
- About 18,000 hectare of land is being cultivated (Gramshakti, 1995:33) as against about 1.43 lakh hectare of high lands for the purpose.
- The majority of tribal women work-force in the district of
- Phulbani belongs to the category of agricultural labour which indicates a high degree of economic insecurity.
- It is owing to insufficient secured employment to the work-force. Land is mostly controlled by lineages rather than chiefdoms or communities.
- In most cases, land is held corporately by descent groups, and any male member has a right to farm land.
- The customary rule is that wives and daughters are bestowed rights to use a piece of land, but they cannot inherit, nor can transfer the property to someone belonging to other lineage.

**The better price in turmeric cultivation induces:**

- To improve the processing aspects of dry turmeric.
- Assistance has to be made to facilitate scientific method in the processing.
- A target is envisaged to produce 100 tons of such well polished Turmeric in the district by imparting adequate training and spot demonstrations.
- The monopoly in the business of turmeric products by the private owners must be checked by law.

A few private traders normally monopolized the business by offering advances to the poor cultivators and used to collect the produce at the time of harvest. As a result, the cultivator not only sold the produce at a throwaway price, but also lost the price for the value added quality products.

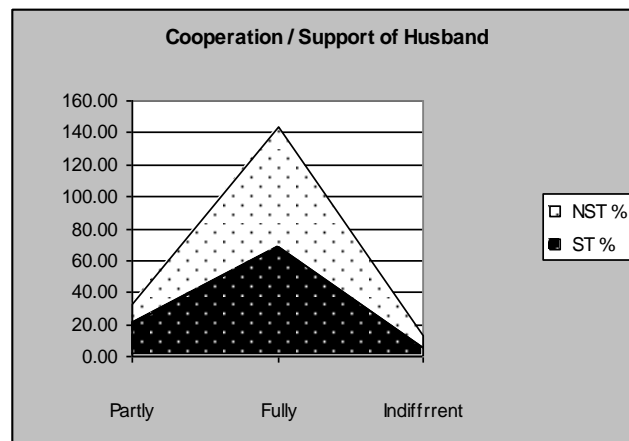
To curb such exploitation, DRDA made a provision of rolling fund for the Secretary RCMS Raikia to pay Re.1/- more per Kg. to the farmers who supply scientifically cured, polished

and coloured turmeric. This did not attract the farmers much because of only one rupee gain for so much of labour.

Since the annual production of turmeric of the district is about 10,000 metric tons, one rupee gain turns to be a benefit of one crore of rupees for such farmers of the district. The turmeric productions are mostly handled by the Kandha tribal's in the district and the females participated more in the processes. The plight is that the actual income from the turmeric business is handled by the male members only.

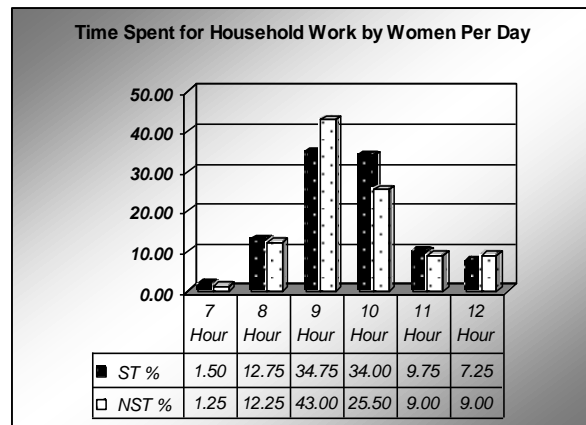
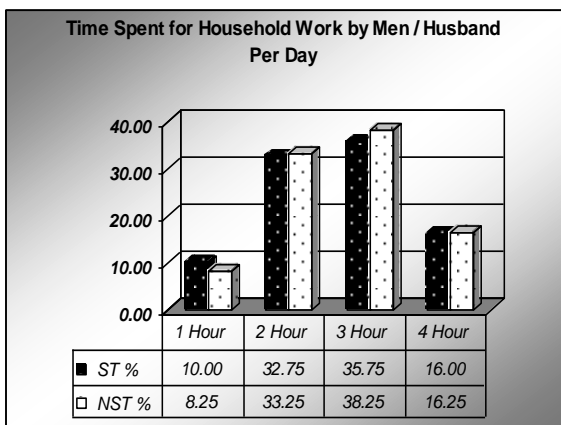
**Women Work Space:**

The Kandha women spend much of their time in their 'work space' both outside and inside their home in comparison to their male counterpart. The avenues like Cottage Industry, Spices and Forest products Processing and Packaging and Terracotta making are the most promising areas in Kandhamal for undertaking entrepreneurship by women to generate family income as well as their self sustenance.



- The major household work for women are consists of cooking, children rearing etc.
- They are also involved in work like looking after the animals, fetching water, and collection of wood for household consumption.
- The economic activities consist of working on their own farm or on the farm of others or chip stones for contractors on wage basis.
- They are also involved in other household works like knitting, sewing etc., apart from the time consuming household chores and economic activities it is difficult

- for the researcher to know the actual time spent by a woman in all this work.
- Even though in some cases husbands and children help in doing household work it is not acceptable to a majority of male members.
- Collection of water and fuel for family consumption is generally confined to the women folk.



- Activities relating to care of livestock like cleaning cowshed, feeding fodder, milking and also management of the milk product are done by the women folk and covered under the household work.
- Even though collection of water, fuel and animal care are time consuming these are not considered as economic activities as they are meant for household consumption. After they freed themselves from economic activities they generally go to the forest to collect fuel and fodder.
- "It is very difficult to measure the economic returns related to women due to their participation in various activities as economic returns in a family are not counted separately for each individual. As a result, it is very difficult to find out how women's participation in the economic activities would enhance their economic

status. But at the same time we should not ignore their economic participation in family labour."

The engagement of Tribal women in informal sector can be grouped under:

- Women working on the family farm.
- On others farm as daily wage worker.
- Weekly wage earning through construction of roads and buildings.
- Engagement in Formal sectors:
- No women, working in formal sector, joined SHG of its own village, for the simple reason that they pose to have little time to spare for SHG activities.



**Kandha Woman has great role in economic participation in the family**

- The educated women often are employed in Govt. /NGO jobs as teacher, Anganwadi worker or ANM. Such women prefer household work to SHG work, as the latter demands more time for petty gains. Even if they are requested to assist the SHG activities, they express reluctance on the pretext of household work, or busy with other engagements like tuition, pending official work etc. The basic attitude behind her reluctance to identify herself with SHG members is to show off her superior status.

Some illiterate as well as literate women of relatively well-off families used to refrain from joining SHGs as they are prohibited by their senior family members.

The reason is mostly to maintain distance from the women belonging to lower status groups. All such instances suggest that educated and well-off families have remained away from SHGs, as they assume that these are exclusively meant for the poor and illiterate women.

Such aspects can be better visualized by the following points when tribal women are considered as entrepreneurs.

- Private ownership and control over assets needs to be more streamlined.
- Access to employment and other income earning means to be more generated.
- Access to communal resources such as village commons and forests to be looked upon.
- Access to traditional social support to be dealt with.
- Access to getting support from the state or from NGOs needed.
- Access to better communication facilities in the tribal areas need to be improved to facilitate safe movements.
- Access to health and education need to be monitored.



The entrepreneurial development can be achieved by the following facts.

- Women educational attainment.
- Legal provision to empower women to separate their learning from the traditional dominancy level.

- Social liberalization towards resource sharing and bargaining.
- Empowering through exposures by SHG parameters.



## 5. Conclusion

Petty business men collected turmeric from the doorstep of the tribal villages in low price. Many times, these petty business men provided advance money to the tribal Kandh turmeric cultivators and just after the harvest, these petty business men collected all the turmeric and other forest produces too. As a result these tribal Kandh turmeric cultivators do not get fair price of their turmeric and other forest produces but these middlemen earn a lot of profit out of this turmeric business. The Kandha women have better ability as an entrepreneur to do

handle Turmeric business in Kandhamal district. They are traditionally well equipped and skilled in doing turmeric cultivation. They need just business and management support to do it in large scale. Formation of SHGs, support of NGOs and Government in this regard may bring great change among these tribal women entrepreneur. The paper may be concluded with a hope that the traditional hereditary dominancy on turmeric production and business needs to be channelized through Kandha tribal women considering their own abilities for better entrepreneur.

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