Study of Tribal Entrepreneurship on Indian perspective-Based on the findings of J.B.Komaraiah and Madhusudan Trivedi

Abstract

For ages the tribal people are lacking entrepreneurial knowledge and capabilities which are necessary ingredients for regional sustainable economic development. Again for speedy industrialization they are important factors in development of human based resources in the tribal areas. Initiatives and programs for tribal development are bringing changes to tribal villages by new ideas, techniques and contacts. These in their way are developing new avenues for entrepreneurial propensities among the tribals. About tribal entrepreneurship very little work is being carried out. It’s quite new with respect to the other forms of entrepreneurship in Indian context. Present paper picks up two exceptional works from the list of the few. The study focuses on the works of Dr. J.B. Komaraiah and Dr. Madhusudan Trivedi in the field and tries to explain their views regarding the subject. To fulfill the purpose Dr. J.B. Komaraiah’s and Dr. Madhusudan Trivedi’s books on Tribal entrepreneurship namely-“Economic reforms & Tribal Entrepreneurship” and “Entrepreneurship among tribals” are being reviewed and further analyzed. The outcome of the review and analysis is taken as guideline for further work on the subject of Tribal entrepreneurship

Keywords: Tribal, Entrepreneurship, Book Review

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Introduction

Theory of entrepreneurship was analyzed by Joseph A Schumpeter from new perspective. About development he said that development is the burst of economic activities when the stationary equilibrium is disturbed then development takes place. This disturbance is triggered by innovation and those innovators are entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship, the business or organization started by the entrepreneurs is essential for international, social and economic well-being because the new business enterprise plays pivotal role in job creation, market innovation and economic growth in the society. For uniform growth of a country the prospect of entrepreneurial growth should be equally distributed among all sections of the country’s population and indifferent of urban and rural areas. Throughout the globe, including India the same story prevails that the opportunities for development are not uniformly distributed among the rural and urban part where the urban part is always benefitted. Scheduled Tribe accounting for 8.28% of total India’s population and living mostly in the rural areas (90.38% as per 2011 census) comes under the domain of the fact. Scheduled Tribes are scattered throughout India’s geographic territory and they have their unique way of life, customs, traditions, beliefs and practices. For this major population India has floated her National Policy on Tribals. The policy recognized that majority of the Schedule Tribe people, living below poverty line have poor literacy rates, suffers from malnutrition, diseases and are vulnerable to displacement. The policy focuses on overall development and welfare of the tribal people through means of education and social, political and economic empowerment. Present study focuses upon the change agents experienced by different tribal communities which are being focused by the scholars by the developmental programs. Jadi Bala Komaraiah focused upon the Tharu tribes in Uttar Pradesh for his analysis while the Bhil tribes were focused by Madhusudan Trivedi.

Perspective of Dr. Jadi Bala Komaraiah in his book “Economic Reforms & Tribal Entrepreneurship”

Author Jadi Bala Komaraiah, Lecturer in the Department of Economics in Banaras Hindu University has vast experience in the present field of Entrepreneurship and Tribal development. He has extensively worked among Koya and Lambada tribes in Andhra Pradesh and Tharu tribes
in Uttar Pradesh. Study conducted in his book “Economic Reforms & Tribal Entrepreneurship” takes into count Entrepreneurship development among Tharu tribes of Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh. Kheri district was selected as it was having highest tribal concentration in the plain area of terai region of Uttar Pradesh. Research went through collection of both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from 145 respondents including 41 Tharu tribal villages during July 2004 to November 2004. Secondary data were collected from various published and unpublished reports of state, district, block authorities, tribal research institute and other related organizations in form of evaluation reports, annual reports, different committee’s reports and newspaper information.

The book covers up the topic of tribal entrepreneurship in the environment of economic reforms in seven chapters. Step by step approach has been taken by the author in this context. For every study of this manner a thorough discussion on literature, objectives, hypothesis, methodology, relevance, significance and contribution to the present knowledge is being emphasized. It creates the initial base for the study. Chapter 1 captures all the discussed basic works. Instead of discussing the economic reforms carried out in the Tenth Five Year Plan and how it developed entrepreneurship from the beginning of the study Dr. Komaraiah first takes up the district profile and the Integrated Tribal Development Activities (ITDP) carried out in the district Kheri in Chapter 2. Next he discusses the socio-economic profile in chapter 3. Education level, awareness level, contacts with various agencies and training of the respondents were discussed by collecting relevant primary data in chapter 4. So these three chapters analyze and brings up Tharu villagers socio-economic position, educational and awareness level. On backdrop of these three chapters discussion in Chapters 5 and 6 Dr. Komaraiah places the entrepreneurial and successive commercial activities. It is well carried out in the area in terms of businesses, marketing activities, investment pattern, employment and income generation through entrepreneurial activities, effect of economic reforms in the area and impact of entrepreneurship on the families of the respondents. This specific approach is very important for all the researchers carrying out there studies in the same discussed field. It first suggests checking the basic social and economic infrastructure and on its connection studies the financial activities carried out in the area.

A big part of the book carries data from the field observation. So, obviously the next thing that should follow field observation on basis of the statistical analysis of the data collected. But the
author, keeping in mind about his target readers didn’t emphasize much on the jargons of
statistics. The author collected the field data, analyzed the data by different statistical tools
mentioning the name of the tool(s) used and just interpreted the value of the analysis. He mainly
used two analytical tools Chi-square analysis and Regression analysis. Here one refinement
could be carried out. That is further in-depth interpretation of the value could be done. It could
inform why such sorts of results are coming up. For example, there was an attempt by help of
Chi-square analysis to evaluate the association between the main objectives of business between
two subgroups of Tharu tribes namely Rana and Katharia (in pg 224 and 225). Obtained value of
chi-square indicated that main objectives of the business have an association with the sub-tribe.
This result can be further analyzed by asking further question that what are specific differences
or similarity in objectives of the two sub-tribes that are producing such results. This discussion is
applicable for all the outcomes of the statistical analysis.

Chapter 6 of the book is having high importance considering the sub-topics and contents
covered by it in Part-B (305-318) and Part-C (319-345). Part-B takes care of the Tenth Five Year
Plan which among other Five Year plans is paramount in focusing about Tribal development and
reforms on the environment of deregulation and liberalization since 1991. Part C in its part
examines the impact of liberalization followed by Tenth Five Year Plan on the entrepreneurial
aspects considering the respondents of the area. Since 1991 paradigm shifts were experienced by
India because of economic reforms of deregulation and liberalization. Government policies,
outlook of business and industry experienced some fundamental changes. India transformed into
service-oriented economy from Agri-based one, boosting the shortage economy into a surplus
economy of food and foreign exchange. This further pushed Indian companies to become
globally competitive. But the main concern was fixed upon the point of poverty alleviation. In
this scenario came Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007). Coverage under various programs in the
social sector has been considerably enhanced during this plan. The Tenth Five Year Plan was
guided by the conclusions that were recorded in the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Five Year
Plan (1997-2002) stating that ‘A small bunch of bureaucratic programs had done little to avert
the precipitous pauperization, exploitation and disintegration of tribal communities and therefore,
most of the persistent problems like poverty, indebtedness, land alienation, displacement,
deterioration of forest villages and the tribes living therein, shifting cultivation etc., continue to
Tenth Five Year Plan lays down its first priority in finding solutions to these very unresolved Issues. Author in Part-B with his in-depth knowledge managed to mix the shift in external environment with that of local one. He tried to assess the knowledge and information level of the Tharu villagers with respect to the Government’s economic reform policy. Previous to this part the study concentrated upon local issues and needed responses regarding everyday happenings but this part marked an abrupt change in the pathway of study. Well managed follow-up study was done by the author in Section-C subsequently which again by help of several statistical tools measured if there were any changes in the entrepreneurial activities after the macro-economical environmental changes came into play. Thus two parts, Economic Reforms and Tribal entrepreneurship were joined with each other.

Tribal Entrepreneurship is a unique area of study. Author Dr. Jadi Bala Komaraiah has added special flavor to the topic with economic reforms. Further author’s analytic thought process was once again reflected in Chapter 7 where he suggested important well thought suggestions and ideas for policy considerations.

Pertinent question here arises is what does this book offers to common readers and academics? In a single sentence the book pops up multiple offerings to its readers. It is true for common readers as well as for academics. Next question that definitely will surface up is how? In this matter some of the important offerings like simplified use of statistical tools, methodical convergence towards tribal entrepreneurship in terms of economic reforms are already discussed. Further the study could be very much helpful to all NGOs, research teams and also government departments working in different tribal belts for different developmental projects, framing useful operational frameworks and searching gaps between planned implementation and actual implementation. Komaraiah’s book will definitely add values to all researchers and students who have special interest in rural and tribal entrepreneurship development.

**Perspective of Dr. Madhusudan Trivedi in his book “Entrepreneurship among tribals”**

Author Madhusudan Trivedi, Head of the Department of Sociology, Rajasthan Vidhyapeeth University, is a scholar and resource person in the field of tribal studies and entrepreneurship. He had some great works in the field of tribal development and entrepreneurship. His present study concerns Bhil community in Rajasthan, who constitute the second largest tribal community in...
Rajasthan. He collected samples of 250 entrepreneurs from the Bhil community for the purpose of (J.B.Komaraiah, 2008) (Trivedi, 1991) his study and the subject is being wrapped up in eight chapters. Apart from the primary data he also used secondary data source, e.g, census data and referred various articles, rated journals, important reviews, books, reports of International bodies in entrepreneurial research to generate a base for his present study. In terms of reference one thing is coming up that more references are being cited with respect to entrepreneurial studies rather than pure tribal studies on entrepreneurship. Main reason behind it could be little has been explored in the studies of tribal entrepreneurship.

Scope of the study consist state of Rajasthan’s southern districts, namely, Banswara and Dungarpur and parts of Udaipur and Chittorgarh. These districts are administratively defined to be Tribal sub-plan area(TSP). From this tribal sub-plan area mainly the entrepreneurs from the Bhil community are taken into consideration and sample of 250 entrepreneurs are entertained for the purpose of assessing the entrepreneurial behavior of the Bhils. To make a concrete contextual assessment profile study of the state of Rajasthan taking social and historical forces of the whole region is very much necessary. This is well handled by Dr. Trivedi in the present study in Chapter 1. Dr. Trivedi also felt the study of the state is not enough and this situation total study is needed. So, in Chapter 1, to take care of the present need he analyzed India’s entrepreneurial endeavor from the time of the Aryan conquerors, followed by the Gupta Age, British era and lastly at the Post-independence situation. Analysis in Chapter 1 with respect to Rajasthan brings out some important facts regarding its feudal history, unfriendly environment and tradition bound, illiterate, poverty ridden social structure. On backdrop of these observations present chapter 1 gives hints of decadal position of the livelihood for the tribals.

While chapter 1 takes care of historical perspective for the study of tribal entrepreneurship Chapter 2 further extends the study boundary by focusing upon the theoretical perspectives for the study of entrepreneurship. In this chapter the author puts a strong support for his belief on theoretical formulation followed by model formulation. He believes no single model or formulation is not perfect to present set of perspectives. Each perspective is amalgamated by certain set of bias. So instead of banking upon some theoretical models or framework emphasize is given more on collected data. Banking on the data based evidences the author wanted to reach on some long discussed point’s like-specificity of tribal society and its subsequent interactions
with the non-tribal societies. The approach of moving towards conclusion on basis of data evidence is a welcome approach as data is figured as the ultimate speaker of fact.

Chapter 3 mainly focuses on the problem of study. This chapter seems to be more specific regarding the research matter. Specification has been shown in terms of all the previous research matter carried out by Indian resource persons involving the subject matter of tribal entrepreneurship. By scaling down on the topic the scholar further puts questions to be addressed during the study and also focuses on the research design he tried to follow during the course of his study. Enquiry type followed is structural-historical type and as already mentioned 250 entrepreneurs from four districts of Banswara, Dungarpur, Udaipur and Chittorgarh were taken in this specific study. In this matter objective domain for the study is well defined. One thing the author probably missed out is that whether he went for any type of Pilot survey before framing the research questions for the study because he focused on ten questions but if all the ten questions are enough to handle all the objectives of the study. If yes than surely some pre-study with respect to the field should be carried out which provided necessary assurance to the author.

In his study Dr.Trivedi mainly captures tribal entrepreneurship in the area of Tribal Area Sub-plan (TSP) which is considered to be the major tribal belt of Rajasthan. In terms of data it is-TSP constitutes have a population of 27.6 lakhs in 4409 villages, contains 23 blocks of 17 Panchayat Samitis. Most interesting fact is it constitutes 5.8 percent of the Rajasthan state but have 43.7 percent of the state’s tribal population. Description of the sub-plan and related topics are captured in the chapter 4. In this chapter another important thing is that the author also placed a glimpse upon the history of the Bhils and connecting there history with the geographical region where majority of the tribal group reside in the state of Rajasthan. Connecting history with present geographic location is a welcome step but next related question should be whether the present location is supporting the tribal livelihood or placing obstruction in development. This is well handled by Dr.Trivedi. By facts and figures he pointed that non-fertility of the land, land fragmentation, accompanied by alienation have brought the process of depeasntization. So the author in this chapter has well indicated towards the change of occupation for better livelihood and also the reason behind it. This particular idea inserted, relating to changing pattern for better livelihood is playing a major role in the coming chapters.
Best thing within the chapters are that—each chapter can be taken to be continuation of the previous or in other words previous chapters are generating the strings for the next chapter to follow. Taking conducive or frail linkages from the previous the chapters proceeded. Chapter Five is mainly concerned with data collection and analysis of the same from 250 samples of the entrepreneurs from the Bhil community of Southern Rajasthan. But the analysis highlights on the fact that was generated in the previous Chapter Four, i.e, for multi reason diversion of the tribals from there Agri-livelihood towards the other livelihood which they felt quite sustainable to them. In this Chapter Five it comes up to be entrepreneurship. Thus, though highlighted on the data collection and analysis, main feature of the chapter lies on- how the Bhil community broke their age old closed society structure and embraced the entrepreneurial behavior.

As already mentioned the chapters are passing the batons to the next chapter. Same concept prevails between chapter Five and Six. Discussed tribal community is embracing entrepreneurial propensity but what is the outcome, more specifically how it is changing the development pattern is focused in Chapter Six. In it an important fact is that Chapter six presents in-depth revelation in change in occupation and livelihood. Bhils of Rajasthan have changed their livelihood pattern from agriculture to entrepreneurship, it’s a fact. But precise analysis presents another fact, i.e, those who haven’t change their livelihood generation pattern and stayed in agriculture tried to adapt to modern agricultural techniques to make their old occupation a sustainable source of income.

Entering Chapter Seven it should clear that Dr. Trivedi’s research is not of economical pattern rather it is sociological in nature which is also to a great extent cleared by the author in the chapters. So, obviously it is not a measurement of input and output of entrepreneurship in terms of cost-benefit analysis. Rather how the tribal society’s adoption to agricultural livelihood to entrepreneurial based livelihood has changed the basic structural change in the society is been taken care in the research. Clearly, for it the chapter also focuses upon the constraints those are inhibiting the changes. Now if any one goes through the pages 190,192 and 194, the author could have used the statistical techniques of chi-square to elaborate the relationship between the variables. Apparently it appears that there may be possible relationship between educational levels and entrepreneurial activities but prove could be presented by statistical evidences. Still empirical work is being well taken. This chapter is important because it advocates against the
general notion that tribals are static in nature but if proper guidance and training are imparted they can also show the trend of mobility.

Chapter Eight could be taken as a summary of the previous chapters. But at the end some important conclusions in name of hypothesis is also put forward by Dr. Trivedi which also reflects his intensive work as well as strong grip in the subject matter. That are- Education is necessary for attainment of success in entrepreneurship (pg200) and tribals are quite selective in nature when question of changing their economy comes into play.

Conclusion

Tribal Entrepreneurship is quite a new area of study (as already mentioned). So endeavors of more and more literary person is needed. A Holistic approach is needed to jot down the probable changes and changes that are happening in this new era of globalization, economic reforms and technological changes and its impact on local economy which in present cases for socio-economical structure of the underprivileged classes-the tribals. Dr. Jadi Bala Komaraiah has seen the change in tribal development and livelihood pattern with respect to economic reforms which happened in 1990’s in India. At the same time Dr. Madhusudan Trivedi studied the patterns of changes in the tribal society when they embrace their livelihood stand from purely agricultural to entrepreneurial one. In this way the studies on Tribal Entrepreneurship should be carried out from multiple dimensions. It’s especially true in Indian context.

References


Indian Census, Year-2011