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Research Article

Women's Leadership Trends in Tribal Enterprises-A Study in Cooperatives Based Tribal Enterprises in Jharkhand, India

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to analyse the status of women entrepreneurship initiatives through cooperatives in Jharkhand, India and highlights the impact on tribal women empowerment, and their leadership competencies on this economic contribution. Bargaining for women leadership positions in all spheres of Asian societies has emerged as an important concern in quest of equity, whereas tribal women's development has mostly remained limited to their participation in various programmes run by the government as well as non-government agencies. Recognition of women leaders from a tribal community in the 21st century is still a distant dream. Yet economic empowerment and group activities in the tribal regions of Jharkhand have revealed the potential and are seen as instrumental in transforming leadership capabilities of tribal women leaders in the tribal geography of Jharkhand. The paper shares the outcomes of the author's study based on case studies in the region, secondary data and, literature review, related to the trends in tribal women's leadership. The study reveals that women from tribal communities of Jharkhand have traditionally been disempowered socially and treated as less capable to lead and mostly refrained from societal leadership positions. It is also revealed that with facilitation and support, they demonstrate excellent leadership competencies to manage successful collective enterprises. The study also raises prominent questions of assessing the impact and influence of such empowerment and collective entrepreneurship on socioeconomic aspects.

Keywords: Tribal women of Jharkhand, Women Leadership, Women empowerment, women's Cooperative enterprises

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Introduction

In the journey of human civilization, patriarchy prevailed, and women were relegated to a supportive role in society. Now the time has come that voices of providing equal treatment are perceptible for each human being across the world. In Jharkhand, this is being discussed time and again in almost all the forums of social concern. The context of women in Jharkhand has one of the critical intervention debates to create opportunities for women to give baton in their hands to stand for equal treatment. She requires economic independence in addition to all other aspects of getting equitable treatment. There are so many opportunities for women to engage and gather the strength for bargaining the equal space in society.

Running an enterprise has mostly been associated with men. Similarly, traditionally leadership characteristics had been explored about masculine traits. Together these two variables, enterprise and leadership act have predominantly associated with the menfolk. Cooperative societies are one such impeccable platform exclusively for women to start enterprises. During the last two decades in Jharkhand, few village-based tribal women of Santhal, Oraon & Munda communities have governed many cooperatives of poultry production very successfully. It gives a sign of hope for the women of their respective tribal communities that more numbers of such leaders will come to demonstrate their leadership capabilities. The economic freedom provided during the last two decades to thousands of members of these exclusive women cooperatives is another strong reason to look into the prospects of tribal women leaders by probing into these collectives and their governing leaders.

Research questions and objective of the study

The current paper is trying to bring forth exposure to the unreported capabilities of tribal women of Jharkhand as leaders. Tribal women are governing many enterprises for almost two decades (2002 to 2020). This research paper seeks to highlight the capabilities of Tribal Women leaders of these enterprises. It looks into the following questions

1. What is making them successful leaders that helps them to run cooperative societies for decades?
 2. Are there any unique characteristics of leadership that exist among them?
- Stated research questions translate into the following objectives of this study are
1. To investigate the tribal women leadership in Cooperatives of Jharkhand
 2. To discuss the possible reasons for successful Tribal women leader in cooperatives of Jharkhand
 3. To look into the possibilities for tribal women running successful business enterprises.

Methodology

The exploratory study included the study and review of more than 50 related literature and secondary data received from the cooperatives of collectivised women in Jharkhand. The literature review covered the aspects of cooperative movement, leadership & women and tribal women in Jharkhand. A detailed study was done to understand the case of women's federation of poultry cooperatives in Jharkhand. To analyse and conclude the argument secondary data available was accessed from cooperatives and exploratory interviews were conducted.

Literature Review

The Cooperative societies - a scope of collective enterprise for women

Cooperatives are defined as 'autonomous associations of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically-controlled enterprise' (International Co-operative Alliance (1995).

The cooperative movement can be traced back to the first half of the eighteenth century in England by William King. Soon several social workers from European countries, America, and Asia took over the movement for addressing various socio-economic problems in the geography. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the International Co-operative Alliance got established in London.

In the year 1904, the formal inception of the movement for cooperatives began in India, when the Cooperative society Act got enacted. Later, in 1912 the current act got replaced by the Cooperative society act. Since then, the Cooperative movement in India has travelled a long way and has become the largest in the world with a membership of more than 274 million members in almost 0.8 million cooperatives. The Cooperative movement in India has pervaded almost all the sectors including, credit and banking, Agriculture and agroindustry, water harvesting and irrigation, dairy industry, consumers and public distribution system, weaker-section and labourer, housing, international trade, Information technology, etc.

Mondragon, Spain is the most celebrated Cooperative's network internationally. Whereas, two of the most successful association in India – the AMUL and SEWA, are the effective outcome of the Cooperative movement in India among many. These two get referred internationally too.

250 litter of milk every day in two dairy Cooperatives is the beginning story of AMUL, which resulted in the formation of the Gujrat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation. The movement has now reached 1821 villages with more than 7.5 lakh producer members, who contribute on an average of 3.3 million litres of milk daily. The Amul is having a scale of milk handling capacity of 5 million litres per day.

However, SEWA stands for The Self-Employed Women's Association is a national union of almost 1.5 million women workers from informal sectors in India. It has started its operation in 1972, since then it has successfully included women of the disadvantaged section in its fold from 15 states of India. It is operated by women members, through Unions and Cooperatives. It has promoted more than 115 Cooperatives in India of the weaker section, for dairy, agriculture, vendors, artisans, and financial services.

Women in Cooperatives

Cooperatives have a history of contributing to equality as well as to economic and social empowerment.

Simel Esim, Chief of the ILO Cooperatives Unit (COOP)

“All cooperatives subscribe to a set of values and principles that support the social and people-focused nature of their activities. They are operated democratically by their members. Whether customers of the business, workers or residents, members have an equal say and a share of the profits.” (ILO)

A policy brief by copac coop (copac coop), for Cooperative Women and Gender Equality, includes that the cooperatives are going to be the major contributor for Sustainability Development Goal (SDG) for gender equality, as it increases the opportunity for women's excess to economic gain and resources. It further reports, women in the cooperatives in South Africa are 60% by its membership, whereas in Japan's consumer cooperatives and fashion cooperatives of Italy, women members are 95% in both geographies. Many countries are now forming and promoting women-only cooperatives. These all will create opportunities for women in economic affairs along with social inclusion.

ICMIF reports, “Cooperative and mutual insurance sector has significantly higher numbers of women CEOs than stock companies. Cooperatives to get success in its business venture, invest in capacity building of its members, educate and provide exposure to them is one key area for women members to become empowered. Women develop professionalism, become skilful, and claim leadership positions. It is also the reason that women are holding more leadership positions in Cooperatives than in several sectors. The recent study also reveals that there are nine-woman CEOs in the 100 biggest cooperatives and mutual insurers in the world, compared to only one-woman CEO in the top 100 stock company insurers.

Dr Nandini Azad, acting chairperson, ICA-AP Women's Committee, President, Indian Cooperative Network for Women Ltd. at the Global Conference and General Assembly 14-17 Nov 2017 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) in Gender Equality Workshop, she shares on the topic-Gender Affirmatives – Why Women in Cooperatives

1. Different forms of collectivization like Cooperatives and other forms for economic and social enterprises have been

significantly beneficial in cultivating the women's capacities.

2. Empower women to unite for solidarity and support, it is required to organizing women into different forms of collective enterprises, one such effective form is women Cooperative.
3. Increased economic security, acquire entrepreneurial skills, increase contributions to the economic and social/physical well-being of their families.

Leadership and Women

A comprehensive definition of leadership has always been a challenge for researchers and academicians. As the studies and works on the topic of leadership are wide-ranging, and there is not a single definition that is accepted universally. Only because some clarifies leadership as an act of inspiration, others as a process, and many see it as a set of a person's qualities.

Most recently, leadership has come to be understood as a 'moment of social relations', in which a group of people is moving towards a common goal, and during which leadership may appear in one of many forms (Ladkin, 2010)(Rita, 2015).

Leaders and leadership have always been the most researched, explained, and covered in writeups, specifically most argued is the set of person's qualities. Unfortunately, all are focused on the sets of characteristics that are masculine. Only from 1970 to 80 the researches published started arguing the difference in men and women leadership style and started looking for the exclusive traits of women leadership. It has opened a door for looking into woman leadership. It helps to define leadership more comprehensively by including traits like emotional intelligence, teamwork, and effective social communication.

Power is another aspect of the concept of leadership. Power is seen in three different perspectives – power-over, power-with, and power-within. Power-over is nothing but the dominance and control over others, power-with is the capability to organize for the purpose to collaborate, whereas power-within is the ability to have an understanding of power relation and engaging to inspire the required alterations. Researchers also define power-

within as "the agency" which is critical as the capabilities of setting goals, showing motivation, and acting for challenging the oppressive patriarchal societal norms. For women in society, power-within is the most critical form of power to create a path for self and other fellow women.

Researches have provided enough evidence of the direct effect of gender in the perception and exercise of leadership activities. Initially, it is only the masculine traits that have been remained associated with leadership research work. Later it has been categorized and segregated as a set of a feminine trait. Gendered conceptions of leadership have created space for the characteristics like collaboration, nurturing, and consensus-building as imperative and critical with a feminine set of traits. Another significant outcome of researches on women leadership has revealed that female leaders are inclined to be more transformational. Many other researchers also concluded that there is no direct correlation between gender and leadership style. So, there is a mixed finding on the evidence of whether women and men have a different style of leadership.

Challenges and way forwards for women as leader in society

The research shows that women have to face the dual obstacle on the way to empowerment and leadership, which is the struggle and obstacles of obtaining the leadership positions second the struggle within due to gendered upbringing. Women have to face the gendered perception developed within and challenges thrown by societal norms and expectations of the child and family care. These are the main barriers to the empowerment of women and gender equality claims.

The researchers have proven that women empowerment and space for women in leadership positions require to engage and work upon all the sectors in place of addressing gender only. The areas of all-round engagements that need to focus together are socio-economic empowerment, education along with building capabilities, economic independence, encouragements to create gender norms, accessibility to the resources, political space, and institutional arrangements to give organizational

strength for women. These areas will create realistic decision-making power for empowering women.

Another study on issues and challenges of women empowerment in India summarises

1. Globalization and liberalization have enabled space for the economic empowerment of women in India. Yet, there are many domains where space for women is lacking.
2. The mindset of not only the women but a large portion of people in India needs a sea-change to bring equality and equity as the whole world is putting effort into it.
3. Government and NGOs are putting efforts through various programs of women empowerment in India. Still, there are a lot of gaps that exist, and more concerted efforts are needed to overcome the obstacle in the path of women empowerment in India.
4. The health conditions and safety of women in India is another area of concern which get worsens due to poverty and illiteracy that exists at an alarming percentage. Women empowerment will be much faster with a guarantee for health and safety.
5. It is required to adopt progressive policies for enhancement in the social and economic status of women. The kind of policies that will bring all-around empowerment of women in India with an ethos that women are equal human beings.
6. Without empowering women, the sustainable development of society is not possible in India.

Tribal Women in Jharkhand

Jharkhand is the habitat of 30 notified Scheduled tribes out of which Santhal (34%), Oraon (19.6%), Munda (14.8%) & HO (10.5%) (Census of India, 2001). They are different in sociocultural practices, yet all of them are called Scheduled tribes of Jharkhand.

The customary systems and law of all the tribal community in Jharkhand are different that regulates the respective tribe. It includes not only the social norms of living and resource utilization but also governs themselves through it. Their collective approach and sociocultural orientation give them distinctiveness

from others. Their traditional governance system embodied democratic values. They live life in harmony with nature, which is eco-friendly. Researchers have been reporting repetitively that different tribes in Jharkhand have a traditional system of political governance even long before the kingdom rule system came into existence. Munda and Oraon dominant geography have Parha Raja system, in Santhal region, they have Manjhi-Parganait system, and in Ho tribe, they have Munda-Manki system of governance. These traditional systems face criticisms for the exclusion practices of women in them. These systems do not allow women to participate, particularly in the decision-making process of society.

Tribal community perceived aborigine, regressive, least skill full, suitable mostly for bodily work. Being a woman of a tribal community adds another complicated dimension to the perception. Womenfolk in these communities play a vital role in the livelihood & sustainability of families. Tribal women work at farm fields, collecting forest products and firewood, grazing of cattle, bringing things of daily use for the household from the market in addition to routine household chores. In other words, more than two-third work of total family-level work is being done by women in tribal families, yet they are not allowed to participate directly in the traditional governance system of respective tribes. Women are never considered leaders of their village and society.

Leaders of any society, nation, institution, or any collectives shape it by giving direction through guiding and mentoring. In this noble societal development act, women got minimal and limited space to act as leaders of society. Women are more or less half of the human population on earth. From ancient times, leadership itself is perceived as a masculine characteristic in most of the Societies, and leadership roles had been in the hand of men, not women.

Data in the Census of India reflects that Scheduled tribe communities have a better sex ratio than other communities in India. Whereas the Scheduled Tribal communities of Jharkhand, together have a better sex ratio than overall India's total Scheduled tribes both at rural as well as urban settlements.

Table 1. Depicting Sex Ration Comparison

Sex ratio (Female per thousand male) of Scheduled Tribes in census of India 2001 & 2011						
	Census 2001			Census 2011		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
India	978	981	944	990	991	980
Jharkhand	987	989	965	1003	1003	1007
Positive variance	9	8	21	13	12	27

From the above data, it is evident that women in the tribal community of Jharkhand do fairly well than non-tribe communities in numbers. But does this justify the position of women in the tribal community? They exhibit almost zero visibility especially in a leadership role. Their negligible visibility does not mean they lack potential and capabilities. Women are the most contributing members of tribal societies in terms of work share. They continue to work in the home, field, forest, market place & other work sites. They do live with mobility and freedom as not requiring someone to accompany (male member as in non-tribal community) for visiting places other than their home.

The same is the case in tribal societies of Jharkhand. It is clear why women from tribes of Jharkhand are neither having visibility in their community nor the outer world as leaders. There is a centuries-old norm in the tribal society of Jharkhand that women have no property rights. Women remain the most vulnerable section of society even though generally reported that tribes of the region have almost all the autonomy even during the pre-Independence era. Even after the Independence of India and a separate state of Jharkhand (the movement of a separate state of Jharkhand was for the betterment of tribal), no shift in the role played by women in tribal societies at large is evident. Demonstrating the leadership by tribal women of Jharkhand in any facet of social, political, economic, defence, education, science & technology, art & culture are mostly unnoticed. Few exceptional tribal women in recent past like Late Sushila Kerketta, Dayamani Barla, and Louis Marandi have left some influence on society in general but not specific to tribal women. Two-term of the Panchayati Raj elections has also created potential opportunities for tribal women to represent and lead, which requires more time and evidence to discuss whether this

is successful in fostering such a desired impact for tribal women or not. It does not mean that women from tribal communities lack leadership abilities.

The stimulus of poultry cooperatives for tribal women in Jharkhand

The patriarchal system in the tribes of Jharkhand exists. Women are the most sufferer of these hundreds of year-olds societal arrangement. The potential tribal women of Jharkhand have is not flourishing in the lack of support and movement of these women. The cooperative movement is a promising strategy for empowering tribal women of Jharkhand.

In the same line, women from the different tribal communities of Jharkhand took advantage of the cooperative movement. They denied all the perceptions about them in Jharkhand and initiated the cooperatives for their empowerment and upliftment. The tribal women of Jharkhand have been running successful poultry cooperatives across the state in different districts for almost two decades. It is giving direct employment to hundreds of youths and sustainable livelihood opportunities to thousands of tribal families. In a market estimate, approximately 20% of the total table chicken required in Jharkhand comes from these cooperatives. These women leaders have governed such a complicated operation of the poultry cooperatives, establishes their capabilities as a successful leader.

A case of state level women poultry cooperative federation in Jharkhand

Jharkhand women self-supporting poultry cooperative federation limited (JWSPCFL), Ranchi Jharkhand. One of the largest integration of poultry production of smallholders, only enterprise in Jharkhand having 3 hatcheries, 5 feed mills, parent broiler breeder farm & layer

farm for commercial egg production with broiler poultry production. The enterprise is working with more than 130 staff of different department including Production, Marketing, Accounts & Finance along with hatchery & feed mill management. Almost 300 skilled para-veterinary personnel are supporting and providing required services at door step of producer

members. The enterprise is fully owned and governed by rural women of Jharkhand.

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Table 2. Board of directors of JWSPCFL as per Annul report 2018-19

Sl. No.	Name of Board Members	Designation	Gender
1	Anjana Sardar	President	Female
2	Bhagwati Devi	Vice President	Female
3	Kajri Devi	Board Member	Female
4	Phulmani Bhengra	Board Member	Female
5	Jasmati Bhengra	Board Member	Female
6	Dr Pankaj Das	Ex. Officio Director	Male

Table 3. Member profiles as per JWSPCFL annual report of FY 18-19

Sl. No.	Particulars	No.
1	No. of member cooperative	11
2	Total no. of members	5072
3	Total no. of women members	5072
4	Total no. of ST members	4268
5	Total no. of SC members	105
6	Total no. of OBC members	699

All cooperative members are women. 84% of members belong to the scheduled tribe. JWSPCFL get registered on 31st March 2005 as a federation of all the women poultry cooperatives in Jharkhand. To begin the activity, the Government of Jharkhand supported the initiative of the women's poultry cooperative. The financial support for the first two years was a game-changer for the tribal women in different districts of Jharkhand. Currently, the state-level cooperative federation has 11-member cooperative from Gumla, Khunti, Lohardaga, East Singhbhum, Bokaro, Godda, and Dumka districts. The chairperson of the respective

primary cooperatives governing board constitutes the governing board of the state-level federation. The poultry production operation of the state federation is the largest in eastern India. Together they are more than 5000 women poultry producer members. They are having the capacity of handling ten lakhs of chicks' placement per month. All the cooperative societies along with federation are registered under the Jharkhand Self-supporting co-operative act 1996. All of them are associated with National Small-holder Poultry Development Trust (NSPDT).

Some facts and figures of JWSPCFL, Ranchi

Table 4. Membership of all the cooperatives

Financial Year	no. of members
2003-04	475
2004-05	829
2005-06	1380

Financial Year	no. of members
2006-07	2100
2007-08	2500
2008-09	3235
2009-10	3467
2010-11	3869
2011-12	4007
2012-13	4263
2013-14	4269
2014-15	4330
2015-16	4386
2016-17	4660
2017-18	4670
2018-19	5072

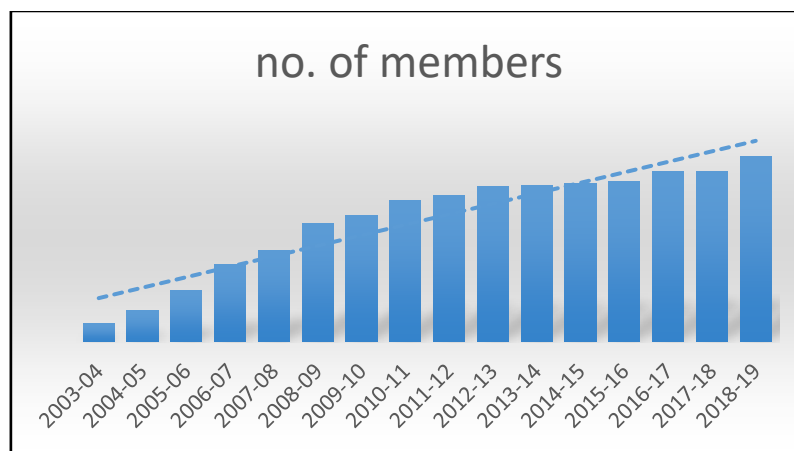


Figure 1. Membership of all the cooperatives

The membership has been continuously increasing and has reached more than 10 times in 16 years.

Table 5. Sales turnover

Financial Year	Sales value Rs in lakh
2003-04	142
2004-05	299
2005-06	771
2006-07	993
2007-08	1253
2008-09	2689
2009-10	3189
2010-11	4208
2011-12	5094
2012-13	5719
2013-14	6987
2014-15	8361
2015-16	9094
2016-17	10010
2017-18	9953
2018-19	11096

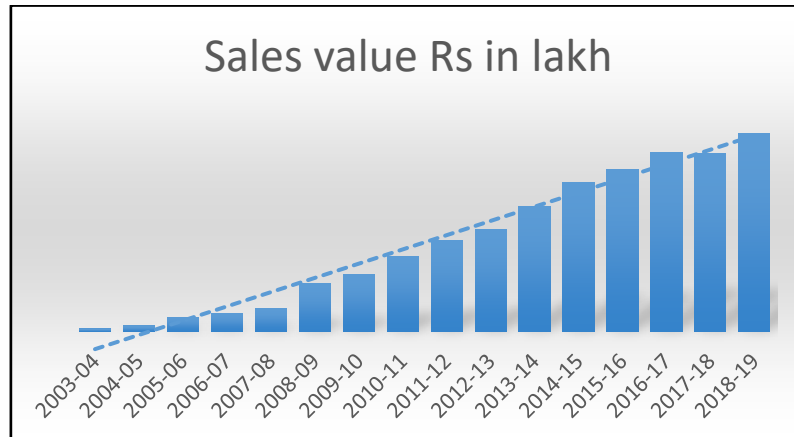


Figure 2. Sales turnover

During 2017-18 minor cut in sales turnover, else it is ever increasing.

Table 6. Income to members as grower charges

Financial Year	Amount Rs in Lakh
2003-04	12
2004-05	19
2005-06	72
2006-07	87
2007-08	92
2008-09	251
2009-10	348
2010-11	309
2011-12	339
2012-13	563
2013-14	625
2014-15	959
2015-16	790
2016-17	808
2017-18	786
2018-19	793

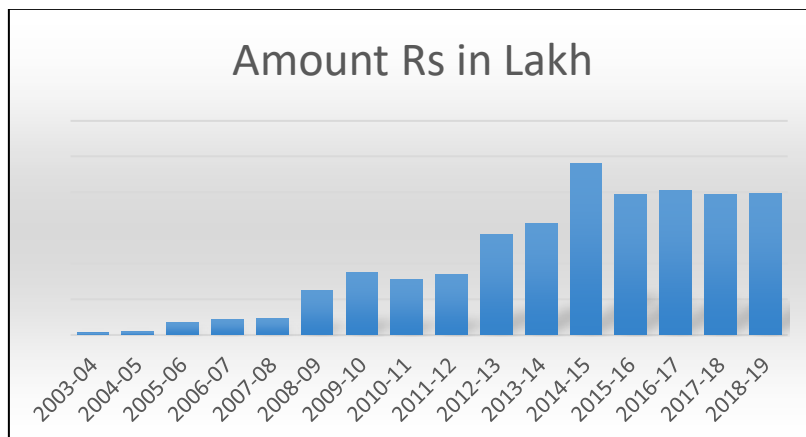


Table 3. Income to members as grower charges

The income earned by the members during 16 years of operation is amounting together Rs 6853 Lakhs.

All these facts and figures are sufficiently telling the story of success of women poultry cooperative in Jharkhand.

As per bye laws and act under which these society is running has rule of rotating leadership for board of directors and the board of directors get elected through democratic processes.

Dr Pankaj Das mentor and CEO of JWSPCFL says, Members and representatives of all the cooperatives get regular trainings, information, motivational engagements and participate in decision making processes. This has been the non-negotiable process engagement since the cooperative got organized is core of the success of poultry cooperative in Jharkhand.

Leader women from all the cooperatives are role models for all members in the cooperative. They are a disciplined member, act as a democratic leader. They take responsibilities and risks for the growth of cooperatives, allow managers to work with sense of accountability and create minimal interference, keep a close eye on the performances of staff, seek help in need from authentic person/institutions and look for opportunities for betterment of business growth. These representative leaders also function to transfer the roles and responsibilities to new representatives. The governing board members have a tenure of three years which facilitates other members to lead and govern the enterprise.

Limitations of the enterprises governed by tribal women

At the one end, it looks very promising and performing enterprise, yet it has limitations too like

1. In a life span of more than 16 years, the enterprise can provide opportunities to little more than five thousand women.
2. Out of 5072 members, less than 200 women got the chance to lead and govern the enterprise.
3. These women required long-term hand-holding support, in this case, more than five to seven years.

4. There are hardly any visibilities of these women as a leader at the district or state level.

Findings of this exploratory study

1. It is evident that women from disadvantaged section of society can govern successful enterprises.
2. Women may not be visibly active in main stream still they have capabilities of leading the institutions
3. Economic freedom is one of strong area for women to become empowered as in the case of tribal women of Jharkhand through poultry production enterprise.
4. Continued support and space of active participation of women from tribal community can show real power of women leadership.
5. Democratic values in governing enterprises are key mantra of success.

Conclusion

Men are only the bread earner of families is a myth. Running an enterprise is not only the forte of men. A Cooperative for economic enterprise governed by tribal women in Jharkhand is a model to establish that women have all the potential. It is also a sign of hope for women in Jharkhand and elsewhere to demonstrate leadership capabilities. A Cooperative has given them the platform to orchestrate the latent potential of the leadership of the tribal women in Jharkhand. As the Mondragon is a celebrated cooperative network in the global scenario, the women poultry cooperative federation necessarily needs to be celebrated as a federated cooperative in Jharkhand.

Research Literature has given supporting shreds of evidence that cooperatives are contributors to increasing the opportunity for women's access to resources and economic gain. It helps in cultivating the women's capacities of leadership activities.

Recent research work has developed the understanding of leadership as the moment of a social relation, which is the outcome of the exploration of women leaders. It has started due to research works done since 1970 in the area of women leadership. It helps to articulate the leadership activities more comprehensibly by

including emotional intelligence, effective social communication, and teamwork.

The power-within and the agency are critical for women to get united for empowerment and progressing as a leader.

Women empowerment needs to achieve by facilitating economic independence, addressing the educational gap, access to the resources, political awareness, altering gender norms, and institutional arrangements for women in general to give decision influencing power. Without empowering women, the sustainable development of society is not possible in India.

Tribes of Jharkhand are different in sociocultural practices. They govern themselves with centuries-old customary practices. These arrangements have excluded women of their right to participate in the social decision-making process, resulting in almost zero visibility of women leaders from the tribal community of Jharkhand. Tribal women from the tribes of Jharkhand are full of potential and capabilities. The patriarchal practices are deep-rooted in the tribal society of Jharkhand.

Women from the tribal community of Jharkhand have taken root of coming out of all the shackles of societal norms through organizing themselves in cooperative for economic independence. These steps have helped them not only in achieving income need but also to exercise the leadership act to show the potential they have.

The poultry cooperatives are owned and governed by rural women of Jharkhand. It has been possible by getting support from the Government of Jharkhand. Handholding, capacity build, motivation, and encouragement to latent potential have made their enterprise the largest poultry production operation by women in eastern India. Now they are more than 5000 women poultry producer members together. Their success has pieces of evidence like

1. The women's membership in cooperatives has been continuously increasing to reach more than ten times in 16 years of its operation.
2. Sales turnover is ever-increasing through the operation years of cooperatives.

3. Rs 6853 lakhs of direct income to women members of cooperative is enough evidence of economic independence created by cooperatives.

The democratic process of rotational leadership engagement by women in cooperatives is the tip of the iceberg of the potential and capabilities of leadership they have.

All these are evidence of women from a disadvantaged section of society can govern successful enterprises. Women from the tribal community of Jharkhand may not be visibly active in the mainstream as leaders, but they have the capabilities of leading the institutions.

Women and Cooperative are the perfect blends for creating synergy in women empowerment. The initial space and supportive environment for proven models of empowerment and economic prosperity with contextual twiggings works effectively and efficiently. Cooperative movement across the globe has proven its relevance. Women in cooperatives create a more supportive environment for women to expedite and demonstrate the potential. With small encouragement, tribal women do wonder. In the case of governing the economic enterprise, tribal women of Jharkhand have expressed the latent potential they have.

For almost two decades in Jharkhand, few village-based tribal women of Santhal, Oraon & Munda communities have governed at least 11 women cooperatives of poultry production very successfully. It gives a sign of hope for the women of their respective tribal communities that more numbers of such leaders will come to demonstrate their leadership capabilities. The economic freedom provided during the last two decades to thousands of members of these exclusive women cooperatives is another strong reason to look further into the prospects of tribal women leaders by probing into these collectives and their governing leaders.

Further, it is required to explore and study the impact of cooperatives and their economic activities on the life of these women. The critical study will help to map the potential of these women leaders. It is also required to study the predominant leadership style of these women.

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