

A Study on the Boro Communities' Motivation towards Entrepreneurship: In Reference to Kokrajhar District of Assam

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship as an occupation is an activity which is carried out by an individual as a source of livelihood. It is a very dynamic activity which varies depending upon one's nature, occupation of previous generation, lifestyle etc. It has been observed that in every community, occupation of people changes with the changing generation, which occurs due to various reasons. The present paper has tried to find out the reasons of motivation for the shift in occupation of Schedule Tribe (Plains) i.e., Boro Community in Kokrajhar district of Assam from agriculture to entrepreneurship in various sectors. It has also highlighted the problems faced by them in their entrepreneurial journey as an occupation.

KEYWORDS: *Scheduled Tribes (Plain), Boro Community, occupational mobility, first generation.*

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INTRODUCTION

A country for its development and prosperity is not dependent only on the natural resources of a country, rather on the availability of the functions of energetic entrepreneurs of all the communities who contribute effectively to national prosperity. If today, some communities have remained as underdeveloped one, it is largely because of the dearth of entrepreneurship among that particular community. Entrepreneurs, the spirit they embody and the bold ventures upon which they embark are essential ingredients of economic progress by engaging in any enterprise in the hope of creating wealth, and includes who starts even the small business such as pan shops, restaurants, and bicycle repairs shops, as well as those who innovates entirely new technologies and products. They contribute to the economic progress and well-being by mobilizing resources from less productive to more valuable employment.

Entrepreneurs play an important role in the economic growth and transformation of a nation. With

entrepreneurs a country prospers, without entrepreneurs it is poorer.

Rationale of the study:

The Boro population consists of 28.39%, Garo 1.21% and Rabhas 2.58% as per the Population Census 2011 in Kokrajhar. Since very ancient times it is known that the people of Boro Community were engaged in the occupation of agricultural activity which was their chief source of their livelihood. However, of late it has been observed that with every changing generation the occupational activity of this community is also changing. At this backdrop, this paper has tried to find out the reasons for the shift in occupational activities (Entrepreneurship) of the Boro Community and the problems associated with it. It will help the researcher, administration and the government to know what actually activates entrepreneurship and devise an appropriate monetary and non-monetary incentives and training requirements and facilities required for the

development of entrepreneurship among the Boro Community.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

Dehingia (2017) made a study entitled "Occupational mobility among the kaibartas: the study based on three urban fringe villages of Dibrugarh district of Assam, India", and stated that, the Kailbartas are traditionally a fishing community of Assam who were considered as one of the most socially and economically weak and deprived community. But now, with changing scenario situations they are engaged in variety of income generating activities and have been able to augment their socioeconomic position by changing their traditional occupation. (Hagen, 1962) proposed the theory of Social Change, arguing that historic shifts in the process of social change are brought about by technological progress, that leads to the emergence of entrepreneurial class from different castes and communities. (Schumpeter, 1961) regarded entrepreneur as a creator and a catalyst for change. (Drucker, 1964) responded that entrepreneurs always search changes, respond to it and exploit it as an opportunity. (Kirzner, 1978) viewed entrepreneurs as one who restores equilibrium. (McClelland, 1961) has propounded that people with high need for achievement behave in an entrepreneurial way and take moderate and calculated risk, not motivated by money, per se, but, employ money as a method of keeping sure of their achievement. (Kuratko and Hodgetts, 2001) viewed entrepreneurs as a creation of micro and macro factors.

(Triveni, 1991) found that, tribals have travelled long; from forest workers to entrepreneurship to earn their livelihood. (Dahiwale, 1988) observed that the general tendency among the Scheduled Caste people is to choose the service jobs rather than self-employed jobs because the opportunities of jobs are created due to the policy of reservation in service sector. However, he warned that reservation has its own limitation as well. (James J. 1960) findings go against the popular belief that caste and tradition play an important role in the emergence of entrepreneurs and suggests that any entrepreneur's performance could be improved if certain help in techniques of production and management could be provided. (Borah, 2000) gave a picture of opportunities for developing the handicrafts artisans with the help of local resources, emphasizing on including a lecture on cognitive development of the entrepreneurs in every motivational training programme which will help them in implementing their venture. (Sagar, 1985) revealed that the political process at local levels has remained confined to the traditionally dominant caste

groups along with entrepreneurial roles largely coinciding with political leadership. However, there are mild indications of change in the political and economic processes forcing some weakening of such concentration. But the forces of change are so mild and slow that they are almost consequential. They hardly had any promise of tearing off the overburdening situation of dominance and concentration. (Sadhak, 1989) has observed that the first-generation entrepreneurs come with lot of hopes and aspirations but turned into frustration due to several environment forces and lack of support base. He examined the critical issues of the Indian economy and traces the missing link between objectives and achievements under a broader socio-economic perspective.

(Guha, 2000) reviewed historically the development of Parsi entrepreneurs during 1750 to 1850 that their success was attributed to their greater ability to adjust themselves to European Power and their relative non-involvement in the earlier civil and military administration. (Khanka, 2005) in his study found that the entrepreneurs were primarily motivated by the need for economic achievement (i.e., survival, financial independence and security), personal growth, autonomy and recognition. (Keming, 2007) has observed that the inconsistent and ambiguous institutional rules and their varying enforcement have induced the emergence and development on entrepreneurship in China. Entrepreneurship is everywhere in China's economic life. The high school teacher offers coaching services during weekends, policemen work as estate agents, several University lecturers are partners in consultancy companies, a group of retired factory workers run car servicing shops etc. For many people in China, being entrepreneur has become a way of life. (Berna, 1960) Studied on the social origin of entrepreneurs and found that entrepreneurs belong to the forward community.

On the contrast (Murthy, 1989) argued that entrepreneurs can emerge from any family background. Caste and tradition do not play an important role in the emergence of enterprises. He also propounded that, hold of caste structure on occupation in India is getting loosened throwing the door of opportunities wide open to people who are willing to take risk. (Bal and S. Judge, 2001) in their study in the most disturbed village in the entire district of Amritsar described the process whereby entrepreneurship among members belonging to a particular caste and religion emerged as a result of terrorism. They found that it was the political instability due to the insurgency and terrorism that

have facilitated the emergence of entrepreneurial group which took the advantage of the economic vacuum.

Butool (2018) in his study on “Scheduled Caste Occupational Mobility: A Study in Askaranpur Magrohani Village of Sirathu Block in Kaushambi District” have concluded that occupational distribution depending upon the caste is not the problem of past or the incidental force creating inequality, but an active agent in growing the gap between those at the top and those at the bottom of Indian Society. There is an upward intergenerational occupational mobility among the scheduled caste population of Askaranpur Magrohani village of Sirathu block of Kaushambi District. Gang, Sen and Yun. (2012) in their research study entitled “Is Caste Destiny? Occupational Diversification among Dalits in Rural India” concluded that there is a discernible direct effect of caste identity on occupational diversification, which is observed since 1980s to the early 2000s. Kaur (2015) in her research study entitled “Socio – Economic Mobility among Schedule Caste: A Study of Village Mugalmagri in Rupnagar District of Punjab” have concluded that majority of respondents have considered education and occupation is one of the most important factor for their social mobility. Rajarshi Majumder (2010) in her study entitled “Intergenerational Mobility in Educational and Occupational Attainment: A Comparative Study of Social Classes in India” has found that only few castes among the scheduled caste people are showing upward occupational mobility.

OBJECTIVES:

The study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study the reasons/motivation for the occupational mobility of the Boro Community people living in Kokrajhar district of Assam.
2. To study the problems encountered by the entrepreneurs.

METHODOLOGY:

To understand the occupational mobility of Schedule Tribe (Plains) Boro Community people in Kokrajhar district of Assam, a field survey was conducted in 2020. The sample of the study consist of 190 ST(P) Boro Community across Kokrajhar district of Assam who has a departure from agricultural activity to other income generating occupational activity. The sample respondents were taken from the records of Kokrajhar District, DICC official record who has registered their industrial activities from 2000 to 2020. The data for the present study were collected from the primary source with the help of Interview Schedule prepared for the purpose for the collection of the required data.

Both Primary and Secondary Data are used for the Research Work.

Sampling frame of Entrepreneurs:

Male Entrepreneurs	Female Entrepreneurs	Total Entrepreneurs
91 (48 %)	99 (52 %)	190 (100 %)

FINDINGS:

1. Motivational:

Different communities are motivated differently for shifting or moving into other activities. Here, for Boro community female entrepreneurs, the reason is "for using my technical competence in a specialized area" is accorded the rank-I (weighted score=134, rating %=22.6%) of 99 female entrepreneurs. This may be because of the tendency and inclination that they have towards weaving, where once women who do not know how to weave their own dress were not considered to be eligible for marriage. This is followed by the reason "by the encouragement provided by the government incentives and financial institution" as rank-II (Weighted score=125, rating%=21%).

Thus, the second reason has reinforced the first reason where the government is successful in upgrading the skill of the women weavers through providing proper training facilities and monetary incentives for commercialisation of their inherent and acquired skills.

For Boro Male entrepreneurs, the reason "by the encouragement provided by the government (incentives) and financial institution ranked the top list which accounts for rank-I (weighted score=114 and rating%=20.9%) of 91 male entrepreneurs. The reason " for self-employment as an alternative to my unemployed condition " ranked the second most important reason. Rank-II (weighted score=110, rating%=20.1%). There is only a slight difference between the score of rank-I and the rank-II reason. Here the rank- I reason is considered as a pull factor and the rank-II is considered the push factor for entering into entrepreneurship. Hence, it has been found that the incentives and the encouragement provided by the government has been successful in transforming the lives of the Boro community.

2. Problems:

For Boro Community **female entrepreneurs**, the dominant problems no. Rank-I, is “the arrangement of seed capital” (weighted score = 211, rating % = 35.5%) of 99 female entrepreneurs. This is because the female members in the Boro Community does not hold property in their own name in most of the cases. Rank-II, is “cumbersome procedure” (weighted

score=114, rating % =19.2%) of 90 ST female entrepreneurs.

For Boro **Male entrepreneurs**, Rank-I dominant problem is “red tapeism /favouritism (weighted score=158, rating % = 29%). This might be because they are new to official work to be performed by them for availing incentives and registration, document filing etc., as they were mostly engaged in agricultural activities – who of them are the first-generation entrepreneurs. And Rank-II dominant problem is” arrangement of seed capital (weighted score=128, rating % =23.5%).

Suggestions:

1. There should be training facilities for skill enhancement for the women entrepreneurs in the areas of their technical issues relating to new methods of production, marketing and problem handling so that they can compete with their counterparts in the present cut throat and fluctuating market position. Government can provide collateral-free loans to the women entrepreneurs because they basically do not property in their name.
2. There should also be hand holding support from the leading entrepreneurs in the concerned areas/activities to keep them motivated and engaged.
3. There should be incentives from the government in the areas of finance as per their genuine needs. The procedures for starting enterprises should be made easy because they do not need to go through many hurdles. Red-tapeism should be eliminated.
4. There should be healthy competition and prize distributions from amongst the local entrepreneurs in the exhibitions or trade fairs entrepreneurs arranged by the government or the NGOs.
5. There should also be a programme for developing Visions, Mission, Objectives, Strategies and Action plans (VMOSA) amongst the entrepreneurs to sustain in the hard times as because it is in this hard-times they fail to sustain. Helping developing Vision will helps or assist in sustaining because it is not what they can see with their physical eyes but what they can see with their mind that helps them standing in the tough times

Conclusion:

Energetic entrepreneurs contribute effectively to national prosperity. Motivation is the key to gaining information relating to any activity. Therefore, Boro Community entrepreneurs should be given the

information of various facilities and incentives provided by the government so that they are not left behind in respect to entrepreneurship. Weaker community entrepreneurs can embark the economic progress. Broadly speaking, Weaker communities can create wealth through starting small business such as pan shops, restaurants, and bicycle repairs shops, as well as innovates entirely new technologies and products. Weaker Community Entrepreneurs play an important role in the economic growth and development of a nation because they form a large portion the population. It goes well with the saying, “Without Weaker community entrepreneurs we are poorer and with Weaker community entrepreneurs we are richer”

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