

Fostering Entrepreneurial Propensity: Internal Challenges Among The Oraons Entrepreneurs Of Jharkhand In India

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship encompasses potentials of paving the path of improvement in socio-economic position, growth in the living standards and bringing positive changes in life style of individuals, groups and communities. It requires having entrepreneurial propensities and learning to take the associated risks by the individuals and groups. The Oraon tribe is one of the agro based tribes living in India. It has been engaging itself in hunting, gathering fruits from the forests, day labor along with its settled agricultures for livelihood. Presently, it is faced with socio-economic issues challenging its sustainable livelihood practices. These socio-economic issues including poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, migration have forced it to explore other opportunities of livelihood besides agricultural activities. Entrepreneurship can be one of the suitable options though it does not have entrepreneurial history. The present study tries to analyze the internal challenges faced by the Oraon entrepreneurs in Gumla district of Jharkhand. Primary data was used for the study collected from 99 Oraon entrepreneurs. The study employs Relative Importance Index (RII) to measure the significance of the internal challenges in fostering entrepreneurial propensity among the Oraon entrepreneurs of Gumla district. The study reveals ignorance of entrepreneurial opportunities, poor economic background, and lack of encouragement and support by the family members and negative attitude towards entrepreneurship are some of the major internal challenges among the Oraon entrepreneurs. The study shows high influence of the internal challenges in shaping entrepreneurial propensity. The internal challenges become big barriers in fostering entrepreneurial propensity among the Oraons Entrepreneurs. Lack of support, poor economic condition, evils within the tribal society, difficulty in arrangement of capital and lack of awareness do not allow them to come up as entrepreneurs.

Keywords: *Fostering Entrepreneurship, Propensity, Relative importance index, Internal challenges, Oraon,*

Date of Submission: 08-04-2025

Date of Acceptance: 18-04-2025

I. Introduction

The word entrepreneur is derived from the French word 'entreprendre', which means to undertake. An entrepreneur is an individual or group of individuals who undertake the task of identifying business opportunities, initiating establishment process, bearing the risks associated with it with some specific objectives such as making livelihood, earning profits, and empowering any society etc. Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying, designing, launching, and running business with some specific objectives. It involves identification of business opportunities, developing new products or services, and taking financial risks with the hope of earning profit. Entrepreneurs are the innovating persons bringing new ideas to market, driving economic growth, and creating jobs while entrepreneurship is the process of implementing these ideas into realities. In the words of Joseph Schumpeter, 'entrepreneurship is processes of creative destruction, where new innovations replace outdated practices and entrepreneur is an innovator who drives economic development by introducing new products and technologies.'

Entrepreneurial propensity is an individual's inclination to engage oneself in entrepreneurial activities. It includes having the mindset, attitude and behavioral traits of becoming an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial propensity can be naturally inherited. It can also be acquired and developed with personal desire, curiosity, interest and endeavors. It can also be taught by one person to the others. Entrepreneurial propensity is essential

for individuals to identify business opportunities on appropriate time. The chances of becoming successful entrepreneurs increase with an individuals' enhancement of entrepreneurial propensity. It can be further enhanced with availability of friendly environment for individuals to imbibe innovative mindset, risk tolerance and self-confidence. The motivations of entrepreneurs can be transformed into expertise with the use of analytical skills and exposure to the real-life situation.

The Oraon Tribe which prefers to call itself as Kurukhar is one of the largest ethnical tribal groups in India. Kurukhar means those who speak Kurukh. It is a Dravidian Tribe and speaks Kurukh. According to Census of India 2011, its total population in India is 36,84,888 and in Jharkhand is 17,16,618. It lives mostly in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and West Bengal. Over the years it has migrated to other states as well. Apart from India, the Oraon tribe is also settled in Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. The Oraon economy is depended on settled agriculture, hunting and finishing and working as daily labor. The present economic condition the Oraon tribe is dwindling. It is faced with poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and malnutrition. According to Chaudhuri, (1997) they are faced with the unfortunate factors like scarcity of agricultural lands and forest restriction added with meager rainfall the member of the Oraon community are now working as migrating labor. According to Raul et al. (2022) Covid-19 created socio-economic problems in the livelihood practices. Ali & Basak (2018) say they continue to face lot of problems related to sanitation, seeking of health condition, lack of education, unemployment. According to Xalxo (2009) modernity, capitalism, globalization and change in rules and regulations by the government have adversely affected their economic life. Migration to metropolitan cities in search of jobs does not reduce their agony. It increases their pain. Singarayar & Susairaj (2021) in their study among the migrant Oraon workers in Pune found that migration contributed positively in their economy, it failed to improve their living conditions in the places of destination. Their study shows that housing condition, access to safe drinking water and hygienic facilities, proper electric supply, road conditions, and medical facilities are more critical for survival in the destination place. According to Purkayastha (2018) migration resulted in loss of their identity as Scheduled Tribe and deprivation of educational, economic and political privilege granted by constitution of India. They are classified as other backward class (OBC) based on their social and economic condition. The tea migrant settlers are on the verge of forgetting their own traditional culture, custom, religion, and language due to acculturation, generation gap with their original community members of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana. Gradually, these entire phenomena, led the tea migrant tribals towards identity crisis (Prakash & Kumar, 2018). According to Ghosh (2023) the negative impact of displacement on tribals was very clearly visible in the census reports between 1960s and 1990s. as per the 1961 census 68.18 percent of Scheduled Tribes were cultivators which dropped to 54.50 percent in 1991 census, while an increase from 19.71 percent in 1950s to 32.69 percent in the census reports was noticed in the increase as agriculture laborers was noticed among scheduled tribes.

The Oraons do not enjoy natural inclination towards entrepreneurship. They never realized the need of becoming entrepreneurs because they were economically strong. They were contented with their traditional economic activities. Hardly anyone experienced the need of changing their occupation. The community did not appreciate any change in their occupation with the fear of losing their social bonding and disintegration of their traditions and customs. The need of exploring other means of livelihood is experienced only in the last two-three centuries caused economic shrink. Entrepreneurship has emerged as one of the options to be adopted creating an environment more sustainable and viable. However, there is a challenge of increasing the acceptability of entrepreneurial activities as an alternative option of livelihood within the society.

S. C. Roy who studied the Oraon cultural, tradition, economy in early 1900 does not find the instances of entrepreneurship among the Oraons. Roy (1915) the Oraon tribe is not a manufacturing tribe and trading tribe. Its sales are limited till selling the agricultural products in the village markets to fulfill their daily needs. Trade within the village is almost absent (Sachidananda, 1960). According to Lutz & Munda (1980) trading and business do not fit into their nature. They are too naïve for business and too generous to sell things on credit. There is hardly a single thriving or industrial establishment in existence.

Rapid change in socio-economic condition marked by consumerism has affected every individuals and every society. The Oraons cannot remain isolated from these changes. Their daily needs cannot be fulfilled only through traditional agriculture. There is an urgent need of not only upgrading their agriculture method but also exploring other means of livelihood. According to Oraon (1993) there is a need of having honest approach in implementing the programs prepared for development of Tribals in Jharkhand. According to Prasad (2014) the NGO activities and the Government agencies working for the empowerment of the tribal communities at the grassroots level need proper training to enhance their knowledge and expertise. According to Ramanujam & Prasad (2014) there is a need of setting up small industrial unites in villages and focusing on the revival of Khadi which were sure assurance of rural prosperity for Gandhi. Exploring opportunities in entrepreneurship could be unprecedented step in the process. However, embracing entrepreneurship requires creative thoughts, management skills, vigilance and presence of mind to exploit available opportunities in the market. Therefore, there is a need of understanding their psycho-social issues and addressing them adequately. Xalxo (2009)

focuses on the need of providing proper training facilities to the interested families in entrepreneurship to understand the factors responsible for their growth as entrepreneurs.

II. Literature Review

There are numerous studies underlining the internal and external challenges faced by the new entrepreneurs. Kumari & Sharma (2024) opined low access to capital, deprivation of entrepreneurial education, lack of skill training, limited market access, regulatory and institutional barriers and socio-cultural factors are the main challenges faced by tribal entrepreneurs. Lowry (2008) states that most Indian entrepreneurs have few resources to work with and their poverty create extremely difficult situations for starting businesses. Naik & Panda (2023) identify economic vulnerability, market pressure, lack of interest among younger generations in traditional occupation, gender inequality and lack of government support as the challenges in adopting and sustaining innovative entrepreneurship initiatives. Praveesh (2016) identify numerous challenges working as hindrance in the growth of tribal entrepreneurship. It includes financial challenges, policy changes, lack of technical knowhow, low motivation level, marketing of product, lack of infrastructure, developing the vision and business idea, dealing with competition and other challenges. Miller (2008) identifies cultural issues, capital issues, government issues and infrastructural issues as unique challenges for American Indians enterprises. Adams (2000) states that Indians do not have access to avenues for starting business that is accumulated family wealth, bank loans backed by home mortgages, and regular bank loans are not availed due to the long history of destitution, poverty, and lack of economic opportunities in Indian country. Gease (2008) says that most banks did not even consider loaning in Indian country, tribal entrepreneurs in getting bank loans. Peredo & Anderson (2006) state many entrepreneurial programs intended to support tribal communities are not aligned with their cultural and financial circumstances. Mohapatra et al.(2012) identify challenges faced by tribal dairy farmers which include high cost of concentrates, high cost of crossbreed cow /buffalo, inadequate bank finance to purchase milch animal, difficult loan procedure and requirement of high investment.

III. Research Gap

There are inadequate studies trying to understand potentials of tribal economic growth. The tribal economy in India deeply connected with nature and traditional practices rely on agriculture, forest-based resources, and artisanal crafts for their livelihoods. There is scarcity of studies transforming these sources of livelihood with professional approach to use them as a tool of sustainability.

The available studies on tribal entrepreneurship in India are majorly concentrated around the external challenges. The real concerns are beyond external challenges. The root problems of entrepreneurship among tribals are deeper and serious. They are directly connected with their deeply wounded history and negative experiences of the past. At the outset these challenges can be classified as internal and external challenges. The internal challenges include challenges existing within society and the external challenges existing around society influencing entrepreneurship propensity among the tribals.

The Tribal communities in India are in constant search of the place they deserve. Despite numerous attempts their concerns remain unaddressed. They are pushed to the bottom of hierarchy in the process of development and are marginalised. Majority of the available studies concern underline their culture, language, social, political, and religious issues. There is a need of developing a livelihood pattern integrating their traditional values and sustainable economy.

IV. Research Methodology

The study was conducted among the Oraon entrepreneurs in Gumla district of Jharkhand. Gumla district is situated in the western part of Jharkhand. It is one of the poorest districts of the state having second largest tribal population only after the district of Khunti. The Oraons are the largest community of the district. Other tribal communities in the district include Mundas, Khariyas, Asurs, Baigas, Lohras, Chik Bariak and Birhors. The tribal communities are faced with poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, mal nutrition and migration.

The two Research objectives of the study are:

1. To understand the Socio-economic profile of the Oraon entrepreneurs in Gumla district of Jharkhand
2. To analysis the internal challenges exiting faced by the Oraon entrepreneurs

The study employs primary data. Primary data was collected through personal visits, observations and semi structured questionnaires from the exiting Oraons entrepreneurs to find out the internal problems faced by them. The data was used to find out the influence of internal challenges in shaping the entrepreneurial propensity among the Oraon entrepreneurs. Responses from 99 Oraon entrepreneurs was collected using a 5 point Likert scale to measure the impact of lack of support of the family members, poor economic condition, exiting evils within society, difficulty in arrangement of capital and lack of awareness among the members of the society. Relative Important Index (RII) method was used to measure the impact of entrepreneurial

propensity. The Relative Importance Index (RII) is a statistical tool used to rank or prioritize factors based on their relative importance in a particular context. It is commonly applied in fields when responses are collected using Likert scale. The impact of the RII is measured by the value of index ranging from 0 to 1. RII value closer to 1 indicates high degree of importance while RII value closer to 0 indicates low degree of importance.

RII can be calculated as follows:

$$RII = \frac{5n_5 + 4n_4 + 3n_3 + 2n_2 + 1n_1}{A * N}$$

Where,

RII: Relative Important Index

N: Total number of Respondents

A: Highest weight

n5: Number of respondents for Strongly Agreed

n4: Number of respondents for Agreed

n3: Number of respondents for Neutral

n2: Number of respondents for Disagreed

n1: Number of respondents for Strongly Disagreed

V. Results And Discussions

Data was collected from a total of 99 respondents. There were 67 males and 32 females. The male respondents were more than double of the female respondents. Table 1 gives the gender profile for the respondents.

Table: Gender profile of the responders.

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	67	68
Female	32	32
Total responses	99	100

Source: Authors own collection

The age group distribution of the respondents is presented in Table 2. The highest numbers of respondents are coming from the age group of 26 to 40 and 41 and 60 which altogether compose ninety three percent of the total respondents. Only five percent respondents are above the age of 60 and only two percent respondents are below the age of 25.

Table 2: Age group distribution of the respondents.

Sr. No.	Age group	Number	Percentage
1	Below 25	2	2
2	26 – 40	46	47
3	41 – 60	46	46
4	Above 60	5	5
	Total	99	100

Source: authors own collection

Table 3 shows the educational qualification of the respondents. Highest numbers of respondents have passed matriculation comprising forty percent of the total respondents followed by intermediate passed and middle school passed with twenty-two and fifteen percent responses respectively.

Table 3: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Sr. No.	Level of Qualification	Number	Percentage
1	Illiterate	3	3
2	Primary education passed	4	4
3	Middle School passed	15	15
4	Matriculation passed	43	44
5	Intermediate passed	22	22
6	Graduation passed	11	11
7	Technical education passed	1	1
	Total	99	100

Source: authors own collection

Eleven percent respondents have passed graduation while four percent have passed primary education; only one percent respondents have passed technical education while three percent respondents are illiterate. Table four gives the numerical details of responses on concerned issues like challenges of lack of support, poor economic condition, evils within society, financial issues and lack of awareness.

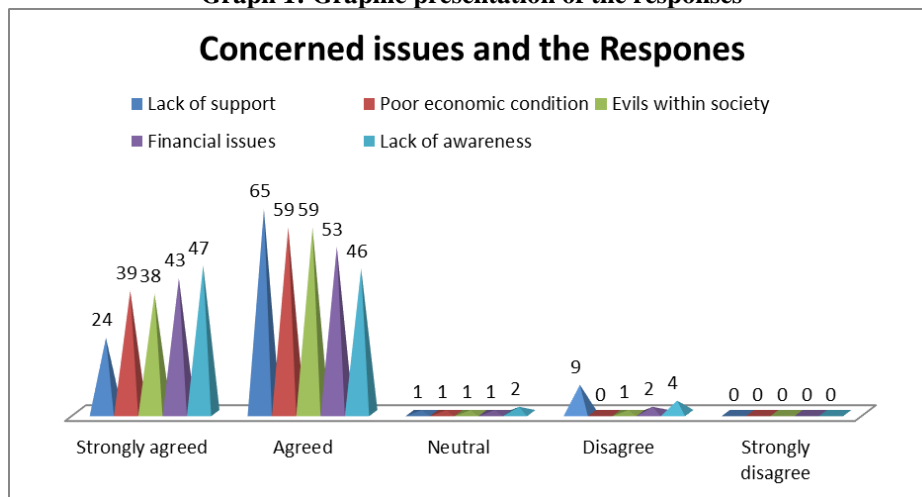
Table 4: Numerical details of responses on concerned issues

Concerned issues	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Lack of support	24	65	1	9	0
Poor economic condition	39	59	1	0	0
Evils within society	38	59	1	1	0
Financial issues	43	53	1	2	0
Lack of awareness	47	46	2	4	0

Source: authors own collection

On the issue of lack of support twenty- four people strongly agree, sixty- five agreed, one remained neutral, nine people disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. On the issue of poor economic condition thirty- nine people strongly agreed, fifty -nine agreed, one remained neutral, no one disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. On the issue of evils within society thirty-eight people strongly agreed, fifty- nine agreed, one remained neutral, one disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. On the issue of financial issues forty- three people strongly agreed, fifty- three agreed, one remained neutral, two disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. On the issue of lack of awareness forty -seven people strongly agreed, forty- six agreed, two remained neutral, four disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. Graph 1 gives the presentation of the responses.

Graph 1: Graphic presentation of the responses



Source: authors own collection

Graph one gives the graphical presentation of responses on the issues lack of support, poor economic condition, evils within society, financial issues and lack of awareness presented in the numerical forms in table four. Maximum number of entrepreneurs strongly agrees or agrees that these issues are the challenges in their growth as entrepreneurs.

Table 5 gives the details of calculation of RII and its ranking

Table 5: Calculation of Relative Importance Index (RII)

Challenges	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	N	A*N	RII	Rank
Lack of support	24	65	1	9	0	401	99	495	.810	4
Poor economic condition	39	59	1	0	0	434	99	495	.877	1
Evils within society	38	59	1	1	0	431	99	495	.871	3
Financial issues	43	53	1	2	0	434	99	495	.877	1
Lack of awareness	47	46	2	4	0	433	99	495	.875	2

Source: authors own collection

Table five shows the calculation of RII of challenges faced by the Oraon entrepreneurs. The RII is prepared by multiplying the total number of responses categorized as 'Strongly Agree' by five, 'Agree' by four, 'Neutral' by three, 'Disagree' by two and 'Strongly Disagree' by one and then multiplying the total number of responses in each category. The multiplied value is totaled and divided by total number of responses. The outcome is the Relative Important Index value. The RII value of lack of support is 0.810; of poor economic condition is 0.877, of evils within society is 0.871, of financial issues is 0.877 and lack of awareness is 0.875. RII values close of 1 indicate high negative impact of lack of support, poor economic condition, evils within society, financial issues and lack of awareness on fostering entrepreneurial propensity among the Oraon entrepreneurs.

Ranking compares the level of impact of one concerned issue with the other issues. Table 5 indicates that the poor economic condition of families and difficulty in arranging the capital stand jointly in the first position and lack of awareness among the Tribals and existing evils within the society stand in second and third positions respectively and lack of support from the family members' stands in the fourth position. It means poor economic condition of families and difficulty in arranging are the biggest challenges in tribals becoming entrepreneurs. The tribal attraction towards professionalism and business is seen less due to the internal challenges of the society.

VI. Suggestions

The Oraon community exploring alternative source of sustainable livelihood through entrepreneurship requires working out on several grounds to overcome internal challenges for developing sustainable livelihood through the fostering of entrepreneurship propensity. A few suggestions from our study are given below.

1. The Oraon community must identify the right source of finance to reduce the burden from the entrepreneurs to carrying out their entrepreneurship programs. Collective efforts should be made to avail resources for the ventures in the other field.
2. The Oraon community should to focus on the educating the youth to solve the problems of ignorance and to identify the prevalent opportunities around them.
3. The Oraon community needs to strengthen its support system and come out of evils like competition and zealous on the success of the other.
4. The Oraon community requires reassessing its value systems to overcome their limited approach.
5. The Oraon community needs to widen its horizons to be able to appreciate and encourage the members for taking up new financial ventures. It needs to incorporate other means of livelihood along with agricultural activities. Collective efforts should be emphasized to achieve the economic goal.

VII. Conclusion

Ideological formation of a society corresponds with its socio-economic position, customs, traditions, cultures, life style, past history, and social structure shaping its perception, attitude, behavior, philosophy, value system, passion, inner strength and future course of actions. The current socio-economic position unmasking the hard reality of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and migration in the Oraon community is compelling it to explore alternative means of livelihood including entrepreneurship besides being engaged in settled agriculture. The Oraon Community needs to break the tag of not a manufacturing and trading community by addressing the internal challenges to grow as a creative and innovative community.

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