

SKILL INITIATIVES FOR TRIBES TO USE MINOR FOREST PRODUCE FOR LIVELIHOOD GENERATION: A PERSPECTIVE THAT LEADS TO AGRIPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT: About a billion people worldwide depend on forests for food, fuel, and money. Notably, woods occupy more than a fifth of the nation's total land area in India. India has a sizeable rural and tribal population dependent on forests for their livelihood and basic needs. The tribes live in the elementary stage and far away from the mainstream of development. They mainly live in the forests and depend on forest products, herbs, wood, etc., for their livelihood. The tribal population has carried on the practice of farming and cultivation. This article explains how minor forest produce (MFP) can be given value addition to increase the earning opportunities for tribal people and overall revenue. The study is based on secondary data. The study explores various skill development programs and training to improve the skill of tribal people to make better use of minor forest produce by giving knowledge about growing, preserving, and marketing MFP for a better price so their livelihood can be increased. A scheme like TEDP makes them skilled, provides funds, and encourages them towards entrepreneurship.

KEYWORDS: Minor Forest Produce, Skill Initiatives, Livelihood, Tribes, Agripreneurship.

1. INTRODUCTION

Minor Forest Produce (MFP) has a vital role in millions of rural and urban people's livelihoods across the globe (Shackleton, 2015; Malhotra, 2010; Pandey, 2011). Food, medicines, cultural artifacts, and energy are the products provided by the MFP for many poorest people in the world, and a proportion of the less poor (Hegde, 2000; Kaimowitz, 2003; Vantomme, 2003; Saha, 2012; Saxena, 2003). The MFPs give many households a way to generate money, either as a major source of income or as a complement to other means of subsistence (Areki, 2010; Babulo, 2009; Mahapatra et al., 2005; Marshall, 2006). Almost two billion people live in forests worldwide and depend on MFPs for food, money, and the security of life (Vantomme, 2003). MFPs are crucial for maintaining rural livelihoods, lowering rural poverty, preserving biodiversity, and promoting rural economic growth.

The potential of MFPs to contribute to the national economy, mainly through medicinal and aromatic plants, has recently come to the attention of those working on the growth of the forestry sector. They have realised the need to protect this priceless resource. The conservation, cultivation, use, and sale of MFPs have shown increased local community understanding of MFP management. This has been improved even more by the rise in community forestry user organisations, which tend to cultivate and preserve MFP, which mature more quickly than trees and offer better revenue options. Indian tribal people make a living from subsistence farming, gathering and selling minor forest products (MFP), and wage work (Phansalkar, 2005).

Although MFPs only make a little contribution, as a whole, they frequently account for a more significant share of the rural economy and can greatly boost export earnings. India is an agriculture-based nation where 70% of the population and as much as 92% of tribal people live in rural areas. It is a well-known fact that the majority of tribal populations reside in forested regions and rely entirely or primarily on foraging for food.

Agripreneurship means entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector. According to the concept of entrepreneurship, one individual, a team of individuals, or an existing business can transform an idea or vision into a new business or new venture creation, or the extension of an existing organisation. Agripreneurship may aid in a number of economic and social growth activities, such as boosting nutrition, health, and overall food security for the nation's economy, as well as generating money, jobs, and alleviating poverty. Agriculture can spur economic development by diversifying sources of income, creating a wide range of jobs, and opening up business opportunities in rural regions (Bairwa, 2014). Entrepreneurship in agriculture is defined by Dollinger (2003) as the development of an innovative economic organisation for growth or gain under risky and uncertain conditions in agriculture. The phrases entrepreneurship and agripreneurship are commonly used regarding agricultural education and the development of small businesses.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sharma. P et al, (1999) on the theoretical framework for entrepreneurship, there have been characterized as two thinking clusters. One group concentrated on the definition of entrepreneurship based on the traits of entrepreneurship, such as originality, growth, and innovation, while another group focused on the consequences of entrepreneurship, such as value generation.

Della Giusta et al, (2006), in many nations, the number of women's income creation projects and programs has increased during the past several years. Agriculture offers a lot of room for entrepreneurship, but this potential can only be realized via efficient industry administration.

Bairwa L. et.al (2014) states that there are opportunities for entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector, but this potential can only be realized through efficient management of agri-elements like soil, seed, water, and market requirements. An individual willing to take risks and a thirst for the most recent information in the agriculture business may be an effective agripreneur. The agricultural industry has a significant potential to boost national GDP while directly employing and supporting a broader and more disadvantaged segment of society. To increase the output and profitability in agriculture and related industries, agribusiness is a chance and a requirement.

Saboo, S. (2019), according to the study's findings, MFP is crucial to tribal tradition, economy, and social life. We must remember that MFP is a ready-made gift from nature instead of gardening. Grass grows independently, whereas fruits and vegetables need to be manually tended to in horticulture. To benefit commercially, we merely need to add value to it through processing. In order for this to occur, grassroots organizations like JFM committees must be given more power, and laws must be slightly pro-tribal zed. Value addition should therefore be highlighted as a state economic concern initially. The establishment of adequate infrastructure, such as a nutrition lab, is the second step.

Gali B. et al. (2022) that tribal business owners have numerous obstacles in order to exist or survive in the market of rival businesses. They lack the necessary infrastructure to implement their business idea or grow an already established business. They are having trouble coming up with the money to start or circulate their production process. The traditional knowledge and competence of tribal entrepreneurs should be updated with modern, inventive production methods. They constantly struggle with management and marketing issues. Because the internet is today the primary and global source of marketing and promotion, tribal entrepreneurs must train in online marketing and internet promotional strategy. So, it's essential to establish the ideal conditions for tribal entrepreneurs to succeed. The government should ensure that tribal business owners have access to new training in entrepreneurship.

OBJECTIVE

1. To study the impact of Minor Forest Produce on the livelihood of Tribals.
2. Exploring the importance of skill initiatives in using MFP for tribal subsistence.
3. Current scenario of skill initiative in developing Agripreneurship.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Minor Forest Produce

MFPs are utilised for household needs and offer individuals living in wooded areas essential nourishment, making up a significant portion of their non-cash income. MFPs are also a source of financial income for many indigenous groups who engage in agriculture, particularly during lean seasons. MFPs are crucial, especially for women, in the poorest households in forested areas. According to a study (The Livelihood School, BASIX, 2010), tribal households in Chhattisgarh depend on the MFP economy more than non-tribal households do, and poorer households depend on it more than comparably better-off households do. For the most vulnerable groups in society, the MFP economy is crucial. The Fig 1. shows the economically importance of MFP state-wise.

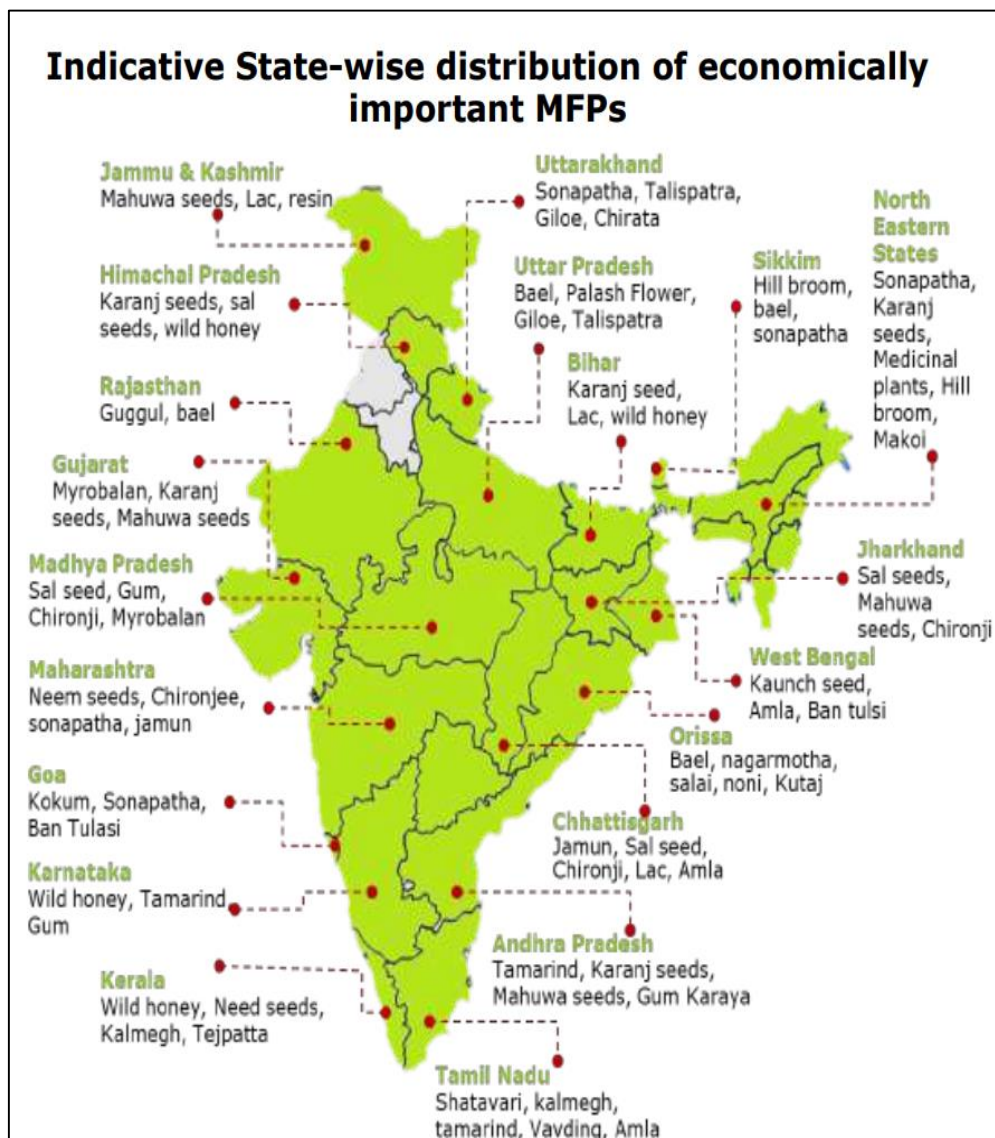


Fig.1 Source: Van Dhan Yojana Report.

Following figure 2 shows MFP gross value added (GVA) in the economy from the financial year 2014 to 2022. In 2014, the GVA of the MFP was 264 billion INR, which increased in 2015 to 267 billion INR. Further, it has been raised in 2016 to 271 billion INR, but in the year 2017, it marked a fall in GVA to 265 billion INR. GAV increased in 2018 and 2019 to 269 and 278 billion INR and marked the highest GVA in 2020 by 283 billion INR. In 2021, GVA fall to 263 billion INR and increased in 2022 to billion INR.

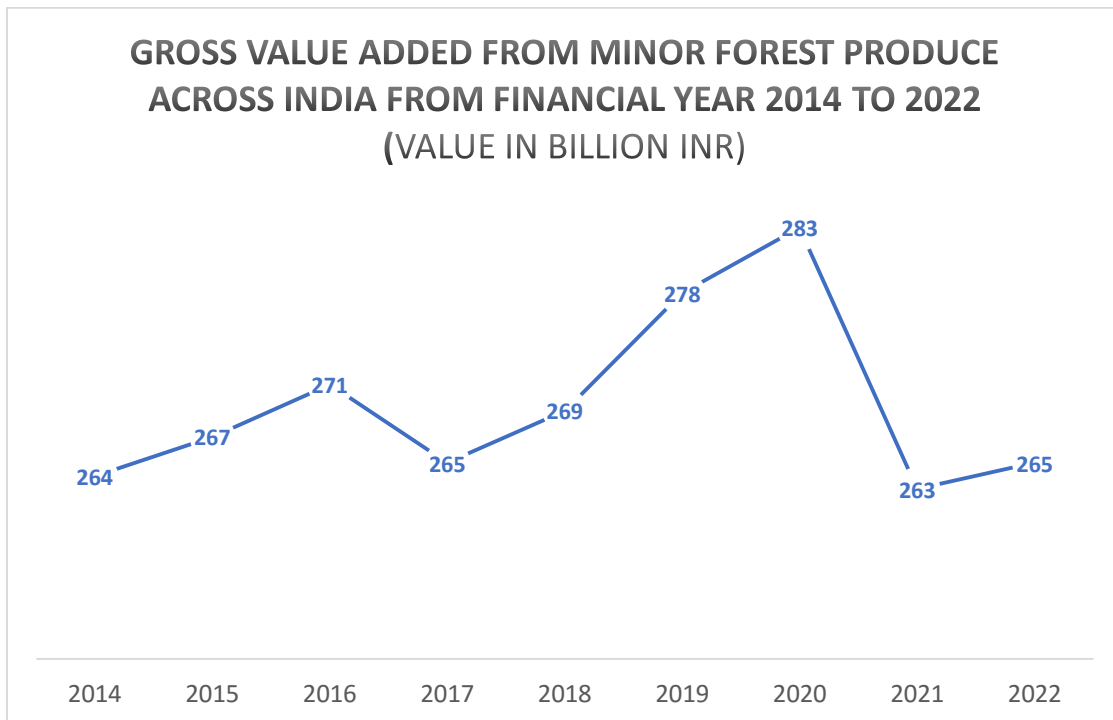


Fig.2 Source: Statista*

Marketing of Minor Forest Produce through Minimum Support price

MFP provides 100 million forest people with food, housing, healthcare, money, and other necessities. The percentage of MFP in a household's income might range from 10 to 70%. MFPS provide between 25 and 50 percent of the food needed for forest residents. Instead of a demand/supply system, traders most frequently decide the price of MFP. The plan established a framework for ensuring that the gatherers received reasonable financial compensation for their efforts in gathering, primary processing, storage, packing, transportation, etc. The plan aims to provide gatherers with a portion of the sales revenues once costs are subtracted. The programme intends to solve further sustainability-related challenges.

The following table. 2 shows the minimum support price of the minor forest produce made fixed by the TRIFED. The product's standard price has been made to protect the tribes from mediators who gave low prices for that product. MSP provide them with livelihood by giving them a fair price for their products, and they don't have to rely upon others to decide the price. MSP has made them aware of the prices of their products, which helps them for their livelihood and helps them move ahead toward establishing their own agripreneurship.

S.No.	Name of MFP	MSP (RS. Per kg.)
1	Tamarind (with seed) (<i>Tamarindus indica</i>)	Rs.36/-
2	Wild honey	Rs.225/-
3	Gum Karaya (<i>Sterculia urenus</i>)	Rs.98/-
4	Karanj seeds (<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>)	Rs.22/-
5	Sal seed (<i>Shorea robusta</i>)	Rs.20/-
6	Mahua seed (<i>Madhuca longifolia</i>)	Rs.29/-
7	Sal leaves (<i>Shorea robusta</i>)	Rs.30/-
8	Chironji pods with seeds (<i>Buchanania lanzan</i>)	Rs.126/-
9	Myrobaian (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>)	Rs.15/-
10	a) Rangeeni lac b) Kusumi lac	Rs.200/- Rs.275/-
11	Kusum seeds (<i>Schleichera oleosa</i>)	Rs.20/-

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12	Neem seeds (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>)	Rs.23/-
13	Puwad Seeds (<i>Cassia tora</i>)	Rs.16/-
14	Baheda (<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>)	Rs.20/-
15	Hill Broom Grass (<i>Thysanoidia maxima</i>)	Rs.50/-
16	Dry Shikakai Pods (<i>Acacia Concinna</i>)	Rs.43/-
17	Bael pulp (dries) (<i>Aegle marmelos</i>)	Rs.30/-
18	Nagarmotha (<i>Cyperus rotundas</i>)	Rs.30/-
19	Shatavari Roots (dried) (<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>)	Rs.92/-
20	Gudmar/Madhunashini (<i>Gymnema sylvestre</i>)	Rs.35/-
21	Kalmegh (<i>Andrographis paniculata</i>)	Rs.35/-
22	Tamarind (De-seeded)	Rs.63/-
23	Guggul (<i>Commiphora wightli</i>)	Rs.700/-
24	Mahua flowers dried (<i>Madhuca longifolia</i>)	Rs.30/-
25	Tejpatta (dried) (<i>Cinnamomum species</i>)	Rs.33/-
26	Jamun dried seeds (<i>Syzygium cumini</i>)	Rs.42/-
27	Dried amla pulp (deseeded) (<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>)	Rs.45/-
28	Marking nut (<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i>)	Rs.8/-
29	Soap nut dried (<i>sapindus emarginatus</i>)	Rs.12/-
30	Bhava seed (<i>Amaltas</i>) (<i>Cassia fistula</i>)	Rs.11/-
31	Arjuna Bark (<i>Terminalia Arjuna</i>)	Rs.18/-
32	Kokum (Dry) (<i>garcinin indica</i>)	Rs.25/-
33	Giloe (<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>)	Rs.40/-
34	Kaunch seed (<i>Mucuna pruriens</i>)	Rs.21/-
35	Chirata (<i>Swertia chirayita</i>)	Rs.29/-
36	Vaybidding/Vavding	Rs.81/-
37	Dhawai phool dried flowers (<i>Woodfordia floribunda</i>)	Rs.37/-
38	Naxvomica (<i>strychnos nux-vamica</i>)	Rs.36/-
39	Van Tulsi Leaves (<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i>)	Rs.19/-
40	Kshirni (<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>)	Rs.30/-
41	Bakul dried bark (<i>Mimusops elengil</i>)	Rs.40/-
42	Kutraj dried bark (<i>Haiarrhena pubescens</i>)	Rs.27/-
43	Noni/Aal dried fruits (<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>)	Rs.15/-
44	Sonapatha/ Syonak pods (<i>Oraxylum indicum</i>)	Rs.18/-
45	Chanothi seeds (<i>Abrus precatorius</i>)	Rs.39/-
46	Kalihari dried tubers (<i>Gloriosa superba</i>)	Rs.27/-
47	Makoi dried fruits (<i>Solanum nigrum</i>)	Rs.21/-
48	Apang plant (<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>)	Rs.24/-
49	Sugandhmantri roots/ tubers (<i>Homalomena aromatica</i>)	Rs.33/-

Table.1 Source: TRIFED

Van Dhan Vikas Yojana

On April 14, 2018, Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi unveiled the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Vikas Yojana (PMVDVY), a part of the "MSP for MFP" programme, intending to improve the livelihood of tribes that reside in forested areas. The government planned to implement this programme across the nation and assist in generating tribal incomes by utilising the wealth of the forest, i.e., Van Dhan, with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs serving as the nodal department at the central level and Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) serving as the nodal agency at the national level. The primary goal of TRIFED is to empower the tribal people. All of our efforts are directed towards this end, whether they are focused on helping farmers receive better prices for their food, assisting them in adding value to the primary production, or giving them access to more significant markets. Notably, the Van Dhan Yojana has a transformative role in revitalizing the rural tribal economy.

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Van Dhan is aiming to help wage workers become micro-entrepreneurs. The traditional view of wage labour has denigrated the tribals, particularly in the villages. Van Dhan uses the phrase "tribal start-ups" to emphasise the entrepreneurial mentality. These start-ups primarily concern little facilities that handle non-timber forest products (NTFP). The tribes have been given ownership rights over NTFP or MFP by law and have significant traditional knowledge and expertise in this area. So, it makes sense for them to use these tools and abilities to repurpose their current line of work into a modern sector. TRIFED is facilitating this change.

Van Dhan Vikas Yojana Kendras

As of March 31, 2021, TRIFED approved 33,360 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs), divided into 2224 VDVKCs, each housing 300 forest inhabitants. 20 tribal individuals make up a typical Van Dhan Vikas Kendra. One Van Dhan Vikas Kendra cluster is made up of 15 of these centres. According to TRIFED, the Van Dhan Vikas Kendra Clusters will give over 6.67 lakh Tribal Forest gatherers in 23 states and 2 UTs access to economies of scale, livelihood, and market linkages, as well as entrepreneurship prospects. According to TRIFED, the Van Dhan start-ups initiative has impacted 50 lakh indigenous people overall. Around the catchment areas of the neighbourhood haat bazaars, the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras will be built, and it will be at these locations that the MSP for MFP plan will be used to acquire MFPs (IBEF).

In the tribal territories, there are reportedly more than 5000 haats. It is recommended that these Haat Bazaars be modernised with permanent buildings and facilities for storage, drinking water, shade, platform, weighing equipment, and other stools, etc., within the parameters of the system of MSP for MFP. Together with the development of the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, the modernization of the Haat bazaars would be done in stages.

Table 2 below shows the state wise number of Van Dhan Vikas Kendra Cluster (VDVKC) established across the country.

Table. 2 Sources: TRIFED

State Wise Van Dhan Vikas Kendra Cluster (VDVKC)	No. of VDVK
Rajasthan	479
Gujrat	116
Madhya Pradesh	107
Ladakh	10
Jammu and Kashmir	10
Himachal Pradesh	4
West Bengal	665
Uttarakhand	12
Uttar Pradesh	25
Maharashtra	264
Tripura	32
Assam	302
Telangana	17
Sikkim	80
Mizoram	159
Odisha	170
Goa	10
Chhattisgarh	139
Andhra Pradesh	1500
Meghalaya	415
Manipur	200
Arunachal Pradesh	85
Karnataka	140
Kerala	44
Nagaland	206
Tamil Nadu	8
Bihar	8

Tribal Entrepreneurial Development Programme

Tribal Entrepreneurial Development Programme is a three-year project that uncovers artisans working in fields such as tribal textiles, paintings, and wall art, superfoods, traditional medicinal plants, products, and forest produce. The programme chose about 1000 artists from across the nation. The training module has been created based on the assessment of the selected pan-Indian tribes. The training has been focused on enhancing the participants' skill sets in their areas of specialization and developing new product concepts in response to market demands. Better accounting methods for managing finances, maintaining checks and balances, and knowing how to advertise items across numerous platforms are all stressed in the classroom. The TEDP programme aims to improve tribal entrepreneurship and guarantee the quality of life for tribal members. Based on training requirements, evaluation, and market research, tribal entrepreneurs will begin receiving training. The evaluation helped establish whether skill-based training is necessary, as well as the specific training modules needed to increase the marketability of items.

Following are few of Entrepreneurship that has been established:

1. Mendha Lekha: India's first bamboo economy village

Residents of forests have the right to manage, maintain, protect, and regenerate the forests and their resources under the Forest Rights Act of 2006. The statute grants village resident's ownership of minor forest products, with the exception of wood. Its produce comprises, among other things, bamboo, honey, lac, herbs, leaves, berries, and fruits. But, Mendha Lekha, a tribal hamlet in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, had to wait six years and endure a protracted legal struggle before it could become the first village to be given communal forest rights. As of now, the village's bamboo industry is prosperous. Together, the 450 residents of the hamlet, most of whom are from the Gond tribe, cultivate bamboo as a raw material for the paper industry. Crores of dollars are made by the locals, who use the money for local development and social welfare initiatives.

2. Aranya: building a tamarind economy in tribal Chhattisgarh

The southernmost district of Chhattisgarh is Sukma. The District Collector created Aranya, a social venture, in 2016, and it is already transforming the lives of the local tribal people. The company makes Imli Chaska, a sauce from tamarind, a widely available fruit in the area. The organically grown sauce has 85 percent fruit pulp instead of the 27 percent industry standard.

3. ALC India: empowering 65,000 women by turning them into entrepreneurs

About 65,000 women now have jobs thanks to 54 social companies launched by the Hyderabad-based organization in five Indian states. These women are from vulnerable populations such as tribal groups, tiny and marginal agricultural communities, livestock owners, weavers, and internally displaced people. ALC India assists social entrepreneurs in becoming self-sufficient and successful via training, skill development, market connections, and other support systems. Now, most of these businesses—from milk cooperatives to farmer producer companies—are bringing in millions of dollars.

4. Gothrathalam: an alternate school for tribal children in Kerala

Gotrathalam is an alternative school for tribal kids and is located in Chavady village, 20 kilometres from Thiruvananthapuram. Mini Raman and her husband Sudhi Nammayan founded the school in 2012, and it offers alternative instruction not just in Malayalam and English but also in the local tribal tongue. Children are trained and mentored to become inquisitive individuals while learning dance and art in this environment.

5. EAGL: using goats to fight poverty in tribal Maharashtra

Dr. Nilratan Shende expanded the scope of his Doctoral study on eradicating poverty and turned it into a social company. He founded the EAGL company, which uses livestock to empower farmers and tribal tribes in the Melghat district of Maharashtra. Melghat is home to several tribal communities, mostly belonging to the Korku group, tucked away in the lush forests along the river Tapti. EAGL has assisted approximately 200 households in escaping the chains of poverty by providing them with animals, primarily goats.

6. Women of Odisha: when 'pattals' trended in Europe

A formal agreement was made with Leaf Democracy, a German corporation, by a group of more than 3,500 women from 127 tribal hamlets in Kandhamal, Sambalpur, Angul, and Deogarh to provide one lakh siali leaf plates each month. The plates, often referred to as pattals, are highly sought after in European nations and serve as a biodegradable replacement for plastic and Styrofoam. These ladies, who once worked as a women's self-help

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organisation and inspired many more women to follow suit, formerly marketed local minor forest goods such as sal leaves, sal seed, mohua flowers, and tamarind.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- This study is based upon secondary data; further research can be made on skill development and entrepreneurship development by primary data.
- This study of skill initiative is related to agripreneurship. In the future, it can be done with "Go Vocal for Local."
- It can also be studied with the start-up India initiative.

7. CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA)'s Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) is an entrepreneurial development programme that links markets to the formation of clusters of tribal Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and their development into Tribal Producer Businesses. There are programmes like the Constitutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/Produce, Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value Chain for MFP, and Tribes of India E-Marketplace that are designed to address the issues of inadequate financial linkages and market access. To encourage the addition of value to Minor Forest produce, MoTA and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) have been executing the TRIFOOD Program (MFP). It seeks to enhance the quality of life and give tribes more power through sustainable science and technology (S & T) applications. To encourage entrepreneurship among tribal youth, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) launched a mentorship-based entrepreneurship development programme in collaboration with Facebook (Sahu, 2021). These schemes and programmes are making tribal people more aware of the production, market price of their produce, how to store it, and various types of entrepreneurial skills. In a nutshell, these programmes are making tribal people more competent to run their own businesses, which helps them to sustain a better livelihood. But these programmes still have to reach a vast number of people.

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