



# FIRST GENERATION ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROCESS: TRIBAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

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## ABSTRACT

### KEYWORDS:

*Entrepreneurship, women, Entrepreneurs, tribal women, education, counselling*

*Entrepreneurship is a matter of volunteering oneself to give birth to business enterprise and ideally speaking, it follows a series of processes. First- generation entrepreneurs and more so Bodo women entrepreneurs are not aware of the processes. They have begun the journey as a matter of emancipation and struggling with the problem of knowledge, information and the mindset. It is through sustained awareness and training programme Bodo women would emerge as a successful entrepreneur in near future availing the facilities extended with a visionary mind.*

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship policy 2015, aimed at promoting entrepreneurship culture and calls for promoting entrepreneurship amongst women. Highlighting the need and to widen the base of entrepreneurship both socially and geographically disadvantaged sections of the society, specific attention be given on promoting tribal women entrepreneurship. In this context, the study is undertaken to unearth the entrepreneurship process among Bodo women entrepreneurs of Simla block under Baksa district of Bodoland Territorial Areas District of Assam.

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROCESS

Entrepreneurs give birth his or her entrepreneurial firm through a process. It is the process through which the firm comes into existence. It may begin with innovation, incubation and value creation. It is all about starting new businesses. It demands creativity, imagination and vision to identify and to transform the idea into reality.

Bruce R. Barringer and R. Duane Ireland<sup>1</sup> described the entrepreneurial process in following four steps:

- Step 1** Deciding to become an entrepreneur.
- Step 2** Developing successful business ideas.
- Step 3** Moving from an idea to entrepreneurial firm.
- Step 4** Managing and growing the entrepreneurial firm.

D.D. Mali<sup>2</sup> also described entrepreneurial journey in the following four stages:

- 1. The Dreaming Stage:**  
To dream to become a self-employed or entrepreneur.
- 2. The Planning Stage:**  
To make step-by-step plan to realise the dream to become an entrepreneur.

<sup>1</sup> Bruce R. Barringer and R. Duane Ireland (2011), Entrepreneurship (Third Edition), Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd., Licensees of Pearson Education in South Asia, PP-47.

<sup>2</sup> D.D Mali (2002) Entrepreneurship (A four-stage approach to Self Employment And Entrepreneurial Career, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, 2002) PP- 19.

### 3. The Implementation Stage:

To implement the plan in a most effective manner.

### 4. The Survival and Growth stage:

To take steps to survive and then to grow.

Mridula Velagapudi<sup>3</sup> conceptualized entrepreneurial process in three steps:

**Step 1** is the 'idea conceptualization stage'

**Step 2** is 'validation of the idea' and preparation of a full proof business plan stage

**Step 3** is the 'execution stage'.

She emphasized the need of quality pre-launch ground work to have a better grip on the whole venture and this itself is a complete process.

The development of the entrepreneurial process goes through the following three phases<sup>4</sup>:

- I. Stimulatory phase:** The stimulatory phase involves implementing stimulatory activities for creating interest and awareness in potential entrepreneurs. These activities prepare the foundation for the emergence of entrepreneurship in society. This phase involves various activities such as planned publicity for entrepreneurial opportunities, providing

<sup>3</sup> Mridula Velagapudi, Women Entrepreneurship, Self Publication, email- v\_mridula@yahoo.com PP- 16,17.

<sup>4</sup> Poornima M. Charantimath, Entrepreneurship Development and Small Business Enterprises, Second Edition, Pearson India Education Services Pvt. Ltd., PP- 36, 37

entrepreneurial education, counselling and motivational training to new entrepreneurs, and identification of potential entrepreneurs through scientific techniques, providing guidance in selection of product / service and preparing project reports, creating entrepreneurial forums, and recognizing and rewarding existing entrepreneurs.

**II. Support Phase:** The support phase involves implementation of support activities that help in new venture creation. Support activities nurture and promote entrepreneurship. This phase involves various activities such as registration of enterprises; development of the product prototype; arrangement

of finance, land, shed, power, and common facility centre; offering management consultancy services and marketing support; guidance for selecting plan and machinery; and getting approvals and licences.

**III. Sustenance Phase:** The sustenance phase involves the implementation of sustaining activities that help in the continuous and efficient functioning of enterprises within a society. This phase involves various activities such as modernization, diversification, expansion, getting additional finance, and research and development support to help an enterprise survive, develop, and grow after it is set up.

Essentially, entrepreneurship process boils down to the process of creativity. Therefore, we can outline the same in the following **diagram**<sup>5</sup>:

<sup>5</sup> CA (Dr.) Abha Mathur, Business Entrepreneurship and Management, Taxmann Publications (P) Ltd. , PP- 18.



**FIGURE: CREATIVITY STAGES.**

The stages are briefly discussed as under:

- I. **Identification Stage:** This Stage involves sowing of a seed with an idea for the entrepreneur. The ideas come to the mind as a result of curiosity or passion for doing something new.
- II. **Incubation stage:** Just as egg lies unhatched, similarly, the idea generates and stays in the mind of the entrepreneur, who concentrates, fantasizes and examines it in-depth till a solutions emerge.
- III. **Illumination Stage:** It is synonymous with flash of light or bulb. This stage comes, when there is sudden flash of ideas, which are yet to be tested.
- IV. **Development stage:** An idea/ all the ideas which have flashed in the mind need to be developed at this stage. This phase includes building up the conceptual frame work of the broad idea.
- V. **Analysis Stage:** Once the ideas have been built up, an analysis both at macro as well as micro level has to be carried out.
- VI. **Verification stage:** This stage is where the analysed data under the analysis stage has to be verified in terms of facts and in the light of the each external environmental factors.
- VII. **Elaboration Stage:** The best idea/ ideas that emerge into the verification stage are elaborated and quantified. This enables the management to choose the best option.
- VIII. **Implementation Stage:** The best option is now implemented.
- IX. **Monitoring Stage:** The top Level management has to do a continuous monitoring, so that deviations, if any, are timely corrected. For doing a good monitoring job, it has to be done on three parameters, namely- **pre, current and post monitoring**. This implies that monitoring is planned before the project has started and then is done simultaneously while the project is in progress and ends with a post project review.

Therefore, the entrepreneurial process includes the following:

1. Idea Generation.
2. Feasibility Study.
3. Drawing Business Plan.
4. Outlining Revenue Plan.
5. Establishing Transactional process.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Bodoland Territorial District Areas came into existence in the year 2003 to fulfil economic educational and linguistic

aspirations and the preservation of land rights, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the Bodos. Bodo Kacharis is a branch of the Great Bodo group of the Indo-Mongoloid family falling under Assam Burmese linguistic section and they form one of the prominent Bodo tribe groups in the state. The questions that have surfaced in the mind of the present researcher are:

1. What is the way out to ensure peace and to achieve much needed economic development? Since BTAD has unfortunately witnessed series of violence in recent past.
2. How to fulfil the destined aspiration of identity and economic growth? Since the formation of BTAD is essentially desired to establish ethnic identity of the Bodos.

The present researchers are of the view that engagement and more and more continuous participation will create economic avenues for both income and growth and that will add strength to their identity and ultimately ensure peace in the region. Engagement in various kinds is the stepping stone in their entrepreneurial journey. The perception of the people in general has also changed in terms of development and the course of steps adopted for development. Entrepreneurship is the new order and the fundamental tenet of development. Self help and self sustaining growth would be the lasting growth impetus. The study is undertaken to know the process of entrepreneurship and that will reveal the role of Bodo women to generate employment and income. It is in reference to Simla Block under Baksa District of BTAD, Assam.

### OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To unfold the process of entrepreneurship amongst Bodo Women in the study region; and
2. To analyse the constraints associated with entrepreneurial process and the remedy thereof.

### METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary data collected through questionnaire cum schedule designed in reference to the objectives stated above. Information are collected from 30 Bodo entrepreneurs selected purposively through personal interaction along with the questionnaire cum schedule. Thus, the sample size is n=30. The population consists of all the Bodo women entrepreneurs of Simla Block under Baksa District. However the size of the population is not known.

### ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROFILE

The field study has revealed the entrepreneurial profile as tabled below in terms of units and the percentage thereof:

SERIAL NO.	BASE	PARTICULARS	UNITS	PERCENTAGES
1.	Nature of Business	• Vending	12	40
		• Food & Refreshment	03	10
		• Seasonal	03	10
		• Handicraft	09	30
		• Modern Services	03	10
2.	Period of Commencement	• Prior to 2003	04	13.33
		• After 2003	26	86.67

3.	Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Married</li> <li>• Unmarried</li> <li>• Widow</li> </ul>	24 06 00	80 20 00
4.	Driving Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Necessity Driven</li> <li>• Factor Driven</li> <li>• Innovation Drive</li> </ul>	30 Nil Nil	100 00 00
5.	Initial Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Savings</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Family Finance</li> <li>• SHG/ Institutional</li> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>	14 05 11 Nil Nil	46.67 16.67 36.67 00 00
6.	Funding Amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upto Rs.1000</li> <li>• Rs.1000-Rs.5000</li> <li>• Rs.5000-Rs.10000</li> <li>• Above Rs.10000</li> </ul>	Nil 27 2 1	00 90 6.67 3.33
7.	Ownership Pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Ownership</li> <li>• Individual Ownership</li> <li>• Partnership</li> </ul>	07 18 05	23.33 60 16.67
8.	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government Institution</li> <li>• Private Institution</li> </ul>	1 Nil	3.33 00
9.	Support System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Husband &amp; other Family Members</li> <li>• Friends and Neighbours</li> <li>• No help</li> </ul>	14 12 04	46.67 40 13.33
10.	Problems Encountered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw Material &amp; Technical</li> <li>• Role Conflict &amp; Time Constraint</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>	10 18 04 03	33.33 60 13.33 20
11.	Motivational Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Support Family</li> <li>• Desire For Self Dependence</li> <li>• Desire For Income</li> <li>• Inherited Business &amp; Joy of Creation</li> </ul>	15 5 9 1	50 16.67 30 3.33
12.	Demotivating Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Failure</li> <li>• Disinclination</li> <li>• Role Conflict</li> </ul>	20 05 05	66.67 16.67 16.67

13.	Future Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation</li> <li>Expansion</li> <li>Diversification</li> </ul>	04 22 04	13.33 73.33 13.33
14.	Future Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very High</li> <li>High</li> <li>Don't Know</li> <li>No Comment</li> </ul>	20 10 Nil Nil	66.67 33.33 00 86.67

Source: Field Study

## OBSERVATIONS

In the context of the study, the field study reveals the uniqueness of the process of entrepreneurship among Bodo women entrepreneurs.

- Idea Generation:** Bodo women entrepreneurs cannot be called born entrepreneurs or opportunity sniffers. Idea generates from visionary mind, lifestyle and the state of living. It is the passion, inherent skill and the urge for survival which have resulted in undertaking entrepreneurial venture.

In reference to idea generation, entrepreneurship requires both left and right brained thinking. Right brain thinking draws on the power of divergent reasoning, which is the ability to create a multiple of original, diverse ideas. Left brain thinking counts on convergent reasoning, the ability to evaluate multiple ideas and choose the best solution to a given problem. Entrepreneurs need to rely on right brain thinking to generate innovative product, service or business ideas. Then, they must use left brain thinking to judge market potential of the ideas they generate<sup>6</sup>.

The study reveals the respondents are first generation entrepreneurs and it is their first venture. They are part-time entrepreneurs, home-based entrepreneurs, co-preneurs, and the area of venture centered on handicraft and service.

- Feasibility study:** In the context of the study, the feasibility study is out of the equation. It is a test of business viability. How far the idea generated is worthy of investment and tested on the premise of pursuing commercially and profitably. A feasibility study covers financial, commercial, technical, economic, social and environmental feasibility. It is conducted before making investment and not to toy with failure for wishful thinking.

The field study reveals that the respondents are lending their whole hearted effort to make a living through the venture undertaken. The formation, the scale and the operation of the entrepreneurship undertaken are all about survival and urge for living. Understanding and application of business processes are still to enter into the process of entrepreneurship. The respondents began their entrepreneurial journey without bothering the end result.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas W. Zimmer & Norman M. Scarborough (2011), Essentials of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management, Fifth Edition, PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd – PP- 49.

Sustainability of their entrepreneurial venture is going to be ensured through hard work. The continuous persuasion will enrich the entrepreneurs to add feasibility.

- Business plan:** Business plan can be defined as the process of deciding how to translate the business idea into reality. Defining the business concept, gathering all business related information, drawing business blue-print, management layout, financial, operational, marketing plan and formulating business strategy are the key components of a business plan.

In reference to the study undertaken and the direct interaction with the respondents, all the above connotations of business plan are still to become a reality. The nature, the size, ownership pattern and the method of formation are yet to penetrate the need for drawing business plan in the light of the key components. A spirit is working the mind of the respondents and they are giving their best to earn a living.

- Revenue plan:** Identifying what to sell and whom to sell and at what price to fetch surplus are the key components of a revenue plan. In reference to the study undertaken, the product variety in reference to the traditional business of handicraft or services is very limited and meant for local customers or consumers substantially meeting on market days. There is no homework for identifying customers and no exercise on satisfying customers to fetch profit.

The revenue plan is therefore based on anticipation and expectation without any ground work. Since the respondents are not privy to any formal training and unaware of technicalities of the elementary business process, appropriate revenue plan to start a business is yet a distant dream.

- Transactional process:** Business conducted formally follows a normal process to record cost and the revenue in different format depending upon the nature and the scale of business. There are standard procedure of accounting, record keeping and delivery mechanism.

In the context of the study undertaken and during the course of interaction with the respondents, it is found that there is no such formal process. The entire operation is personalized. It is all about receiving and paying and safe custody of operational fund. There is no mandatory necessity as well to follow a formal system and to maintain the record thereof. The entire transactional process is straight

and simple. There is uniformity of price of the product and no discrimination on term of offer from customer to customer. The word of mouth is the final say and a marginal surplus over cost is good enough for the respondent to continue their pursuit of entrepreneurship.

### CONSTRAINTS

The above narrative of the entrepreneurial process of Bodo women exposed the following Shortcomings to emerge as an entrepreneurial class or community:

- Knowledge gap;
- Perception gap;
- Information gap;
- Formational gap;
- Visionary gap.

**KNOWLEDGE GAP:** This refers to lack of understanding of business concept and its processes in terms of commencement, method of operation accounting, preservation and presentation of records.

**PERCEPTION GAP:** This refers to the inability to handle business issues and the lack of confidence to volunteer for business. Perception gap weaken the mindset and

unable to add strength to pursue business.

**INFORMATION GAP:** This refers to lack of knowledge of government facilities provided under declared policies, government schemes announced from time to time, initiatives undertaken by banks and other funding institutions for entrepreneurship programmes.

**FORMATIONAL GAP:** This refers to the lack of inherited strength in terms of life style of pursue entrepreneurship. The habit of savings to create fund, the desire to procure assets and the desire to retain property are not noticeable enough to build capital and to pursue business.

**VISIONARY GAP:** This refers to the inability to dream and to dream bigger in terms of business. It is the dream that gives birth to ideas and ideas unfold opportunities. More and more exposure, socialisation, increasing flow of information and rising level of awareness can open-up the mind to become visionary.

### REMEDY

The above constraints can be removed through a sustained process of massive campaign, information drive and training programmes without allowing any mis-match amongst the trainer and the trainee. However, we can't expect a remedy without entering into the process of entrepreneurship. Humble-beginning and the experience gained thereby will add real strength to these first-generation bodo women entrepreneurs to build a strong foundation of entrepreneurial process and the confidence to become successful entrepreneurs.

### CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship is becoming a way of life and silently changing the life style among Bodo community. It is going to be a long-term process and by dint of their hard work Bodo-women are creating new avenues of income and employment. Technically, they are still to be equipped in terms of the processes and struggling with the problem of financing and marketing. But, the beginning made and experience gained will certainly add strength to their venture to achieve success and to establish a new horizon of growth.

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