

# SUSTAINABILITY OF LIVELIHOOD OF TRIBAL SOCIETY IN RURAL ODISHA THROUGH UPSKILLING THE YOUTH MASS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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## **Abstract:**

**Aims:** The current study's objective is to examine the characteristics of skills of tribal young people living in rural areas of Odisha & suggest the skill programme which can develop their sustainable livelihood.

**Sample:** The present study focusses on the rural tribal youths of Keonjhar district of Odisha. The study's target on the population includes young people who are between the ages of 15 and 29. There were roughly 270 responders in the sample, with 55.7 percent men and 46.3 percent women.

**Study design:** The study used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods and was analytical and descriptive. The survey was conducted using a Likert Scale questionnaire. Finally, descriptive SPSS was used to process and analyse the data once it had been coded, and the results were presented as a figure, table and chart.

**Place and duration of study:** The place of the study consists of Odisha's rural district Keonjhar and the data collected during the period of 2nd half of 2023.

**Results:** The preceding study that demonstrated that skill development for rural youth can promote sustainable livelihood in Odisha supported how young people saw the training in skill development.

**Conclusion:** The report concluded that state youth policies be implemented in spirit, including agricultural-based skill training; that the federal government and the state make greater investments in programs like "start-up" schemes for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe in isolated rural areas; and that the government take responsibility for the market.

**Keywords** Sustainability, Livelihood, Tribal youth, Upskilling, Tribal society

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Even in modern times, Gandhi's adage "If the Indian village is developed, the nation is developed" holds true. In the rural areas of India, which is an agrarian nation, more than 70% of the population lives. The majority of the rural population depends on agriculture and related industries for their living. Any society must have the capacity for its members to contribute to social change, economic expansion, and process advancement. Consequently, institutions, entrepreneurship, and skill development are needed for a country to advance

towards development in order to start and complete the process for change & adjust to the shifting sociocultural structures and patterns of livelihood (Singh, 2016). India has a wealth of human resources; what is needed now is a long-term plan for their development through training, education, empowerment, and the establishment of a friendly institutional, political, and socioeconomic environment for the best possible use of the vast, unexplored reservoirs of human potential and creativity (Singh, 2004). The Government of India has adopted a two-pronged strategy to encourage self-employment among rural youth, which are (i) facilitating skill development and (ii) establishing direct employment schemes for less skilled workers (NYP, 2014). The National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) was established in June 2013 and has since absorbed the National Skill Development Agency (NCSD), the NSDCB, and the Office of the Adviser to Prime Minister on Skill Development. The Ministry of Labour and Employment has launched several projects in the areas of employment and skill development.

In the past, the majority of rural kids were content working seasonal plantation jobs; no specific education or talent was required, and parents did not want to move their children to distant urban and semi-urban areas for employment. However, current trends indicate that young people are drawn to skill development as a means of generating income (Satyaseelan, 2014). The study recommended using a Public Private Partnership (PPP) strategy to help rural youngsters who are jobless enhance their skills. Based on this PPP model, the improvement of self-employment for rural youth will increase employment opportunities, which will promote sustainable livelihood among young people in rural Odisha.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKDROPS**

The present study considers the livelihood issues of tribal people of Odisha in general and rural tribal youth of Keonjhar District in particular. The tribal youths facing a lot of challenges in their engagement and employment, as they face a lot of difficulties to adjust them in the urban areas as well as outside their domicile. Hence, the study aims at how their existing skills are to be developed as well as new skill trainings are to be provided so that without disturbing their life style, Culture, habits and place of living they can earn their livelihood in a sustainable manner so that they can lead a decent life.

### *Government Programmes*

The Ministry's mandate is to reduce rural poverty by implementing projects that are specifically designed for rural poor households. The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was the first of this Ministry's major initiatives that directly targeted poor families for the development of assets, skills, and self-employment. The desired linkages between these initiatives were not successfully developed due to the abundance of programmes, each of which was seen as a separate programme in and of itself. This paid greater attention to accomplishing specific programme goals than to the important problem of generating sustained income (Singh, 2016).

### *Prof. S. R. Hashim Committee*

In 1997, the Planning Commission established a committee to analyse and evaluate various Centrally Sponsored Schemes for Poverty Alleviation and Employment Creation,

which was headed by Prof. S. R. Hashim. For enhanced links, the Committee suggested integrating associated projects with IRDP. The report served as the foundation for the change from a group strategy to poverty alleviation to one that targets individual beneficiaries. The Planning Commission's suggestions led to the consolidation of the TRYSEM, SITRA, GKY, and DWCRA programmes into the Swarnjayanti Gramme Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), a single self-employment initiative run by the state governments. The goal of these self-employment programmes is to provide rural residents with employment opportunities with a focus on reducing poverty.

### *Profiles of rural tribal Odisha*

Since more than 90% of Odisha is rural (hilly district) and only 9% is urban (valley) region, implementing the National Rural Livelihood Mission in Odisha is quite difficult. As shown in Table 1, the rural areas (hill district) made up about 20,082 sq km (or about 91%) of the state's entire area, while the valley region in the state's centre made up about 2,238 sq km (or about 9%), making up just one-tenth of the state's total size. The ten hill districts (rural areas) of Odisha are all home to various indigenous communities. Urban areas and the valley both have sporadic pockets. In Odisha, the population is made up of about 40% of people between the ages of 15 and 29. They can become change agents by learning a range of career-relevant abilities that will allow them to make a difference in their own lives as well as the lives of others.

### *Skill development Programmes for rural youth*

The Society for Skill Development (MSSD) is a project of the Manipur government under the State Skill Development Mission (SSDM) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to help young people develop their skills and find employment possibilities in a comprehensive way. The mission seeks to train young people in skills that are appropriate for their aptitude and merit in order to prepare them for the workforce. A flagship programme for providing skill training to youngsters, the recently approved Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) focuses on better curricula, better pedagogy, and skilled teachers. The instruction covers soft skills, personal hygiene, and any necessary behavioural changes. He stated during the Mission's debut that it aims to give youngsters around the nation access to vocational training. By 2022, the government hopes to have trained 40.02 crore individuals in vocational skills across the nation through the skill India Mission. The National Skill Development Mission aims to cover, organise, carry out, and oversee skilling initiatives across all of India. It begins to establish a network across all Indian government agencies, businesses, and the private sector in order to develop skilled labour in India.

The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)'s key characteristics are:

- (i) Improve workforce skills through extensive industrial involvement, especially for underprivileged groups and backward regions of the nation.
- (ii) Using a public-private partnership (PPP) model, support, strengthen, and coordinate private sector initiatives for development of skill.
- (iii) Collaboration with industry groups to establish standards and accreditation systems, as well as curriculum creation, development of faculty, assurance of quality, technological

infrastructures, placement of learners mechanisms, and guidelines and quality assurance, will all be greatly impacted by the NSDC.

### *The National Skill Development Mission*

The National Skill Development Mission (NSDM)'s establishment has made it necessary to reevaluate the relationship between skill development and rural livelihood in Odisha. This is especially apparent in a state like Odisha where the demographic dividend is challenging both the rural and urban environment. With 64% of its population in the working age group by 2020, India is predicted to overtake Japan as the youngest nation in the world. In Odisha, youth unemployment (for those between the ages of 15 and 35) was close to 40% as of 2016–17. Therefore, it may be said that skill development is urgently needed to support rural livelihood in Odisha.

### *Employment Scenario in Odisha*

Odisha has some of India's highest rates of youth unemployment, which primarily affects those between the ages of 15 and 29. India also has a very robust entrepreneurship culture, according to the Young Entrepreneurs Summit (G20 YES) 2011. Ninety eight percent of Indian businesspeople thought that their culture supports entrepreneurship, compared to eighty percent in countries experiencing rapid expansion and seventy two percent in economies. However, the situation was different in India's rural areas, particularly in Odisha. Despite having the enthusiasm to start something new and inventive, young people can become disillusioned and turn to drugs or join rebel organisations because they lack training opportunities, financial assistance, and skilled labour. There are over 7 lakh job seekers in Odisha, most of them are young individuals in the 15–29 age range. With 33.36 percent of them unemployed, matriculants had the highest rate, closely followed by under matriculants at 31.08 percent. 18.82 percent of the population is intermediate or in Class XII, 2.96 percent are graduates, 2.28 percent are postgraduates, and 1.50 percent are engineers. The greatest rates of unemployment (matric and under-matic) indicate that young people make up the bulk of the unemployed

## **3. MATERIALS & METHODS**

The present study is based on the following objectives and accordingly materials are collected and appropriate methods are applied for a conclusive finding from the study.

### *Objectives*

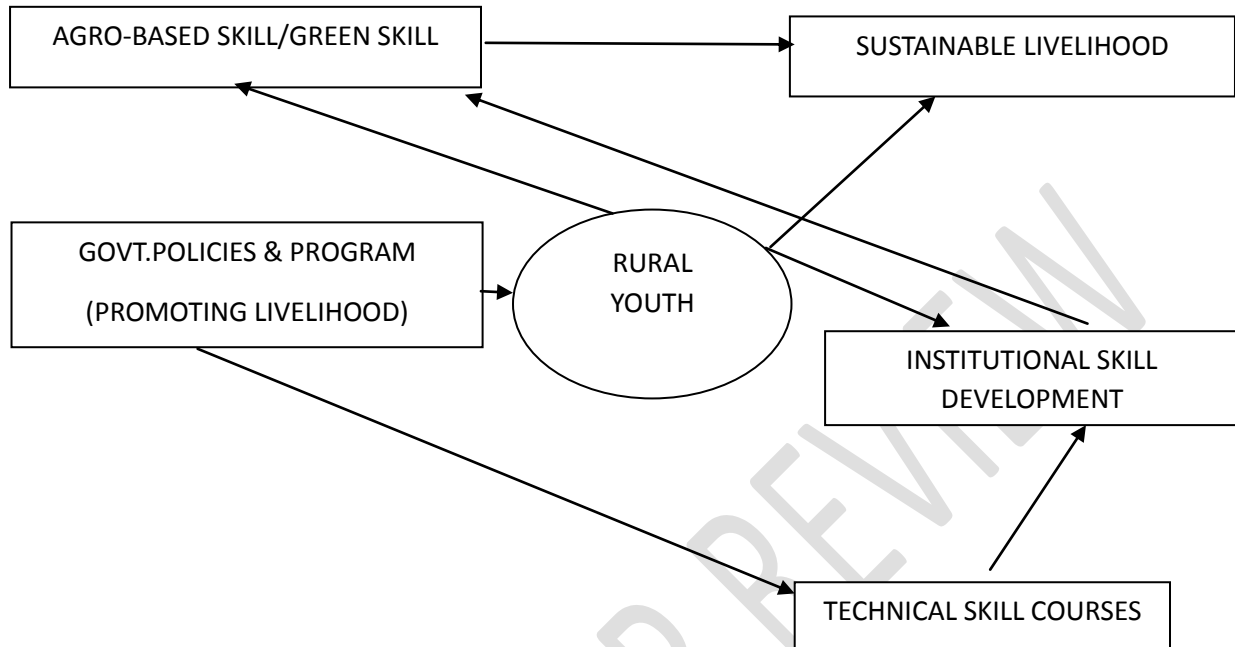
- i. To study the characteristics of tribal rural youth for sustainable livelihood through skill development.
- ii. To study the appropriateness of skill elements of tribal rural youth for sustainable livelihood development.

### *Methodology*

The study used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods and was analytical and descriptive. Information was gathered from rural youth using simple random sampling and specifically from leaders of student organisations. Data comes from both original and

secondary sources. The survey was conducted using a Likert Scale questionnaire. Finally, descriptive SPSS was used to process and analyse the data once it had been coded, and the results were presented as a figures, tables and charts.

*Chart 1. Conceptual Framework*



#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### *Demographic Profiles*

The study's geographical focus is on Odisha's rural district Keonjhar. The study's target population includes young people residing in Keonjhar district who are between the ages of 15 to 29. There were roughly 270 responders in the sample, with 55.7 percent men and 46.3 percent women.

Table-1 Age profile of the respondents

GENDER	RESPONDENT'S AGE BY GENDER			
	15-19	20-24	25-29	TOTAL
MALE	21.1%	14.0%	18.6%	53.7%
FEMALE	24.5%	18.6%	5.7%	46.3%
TOTAL	45.3%	30.3%	24.3%	100%

*Source: compiled from collected sources*

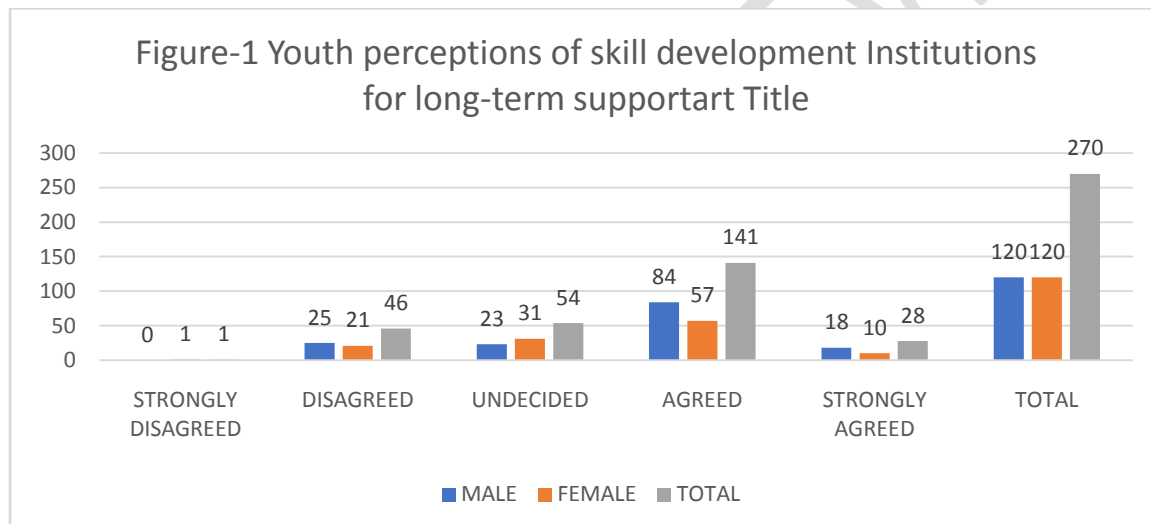
##### *Skill Training Institutes*

In rural district of Keonjhar, one barrier to getting skill training is the lack of professional training institutions. Due to the dearth of institutions providing vocational training in rural areas, many tribal young people are searching for lucrative jobs in other states.

The respondents were given the question, "Absence of skill training Institutions consequence unemployment among the rural youth," in order to validate the aforementioned statement. Figure 1 below provides a vivid depiction of the youth's perception of the necessity of vocational and entrepreneurial training facilities in rural areas. The majority, 141 (52.2%),

agreed with the aforementioned statement, while 46 (17.0%) disagreed. Within the gender category, 57 (21.1%) females and 84 (31.1%) males were present.

The results can be grouped broadly into three categories: Favourable (Strongly agree and agree), Unfavourable (Strongly disagree, disagree), and Neutral (Undecided). Favourable responses account for 169 (62.5%) of the total. The table reveals that the majority of respondents (62.6%) agreed that one reason for unemployment in rural tribal areas was the lack of entrepreneurial training facilities. The below mentioned graph makes it clear that the opening of a skill training facility will increase rural youths' opportunities for self-employment. In order to substantiate the aforementioned claim, Satyaseelan (2014) noted that "in the past, most of the rural youth were comfortable with seasonal plantation jobs, no specialised skill and education was needed, but the present showed the need for institutional skill development of unemployed rural tribal youth." Additionally, it was suggested that skill development institutions should use the PPP model. Additionally, Kumar and Ajay (2014) reported that young agricultural labourers from the countryside moved to the city to work in factories and building projects. Thus, institutionalised skill development will improve ruraltribal youth's ability to sustain their way of life in Keonjhar.



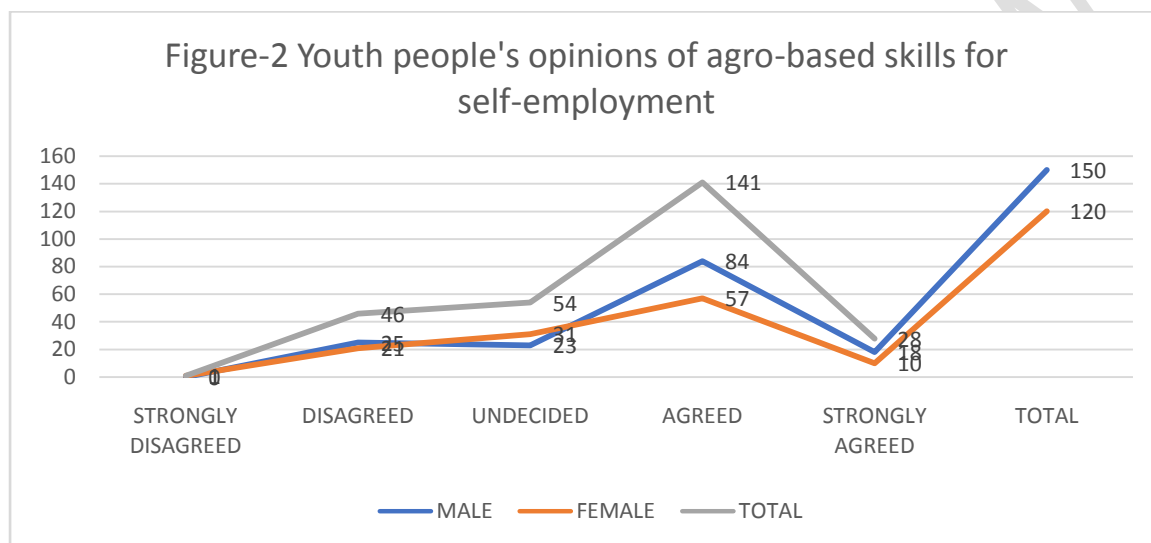
Source: compiled from collected sources

#### Agro based skill

The respondents were asked a question titled "Training on agro-based farming, will enhance self-employment" in an effort to find a solution to the issues around a shortage of green skills for sustainable livelihood. Of the youth, 32.2% are male and 30.7% are female. 24.1% of adolescents strongly agree, according to 15.6% of young men and 8.5% of young women. Self-employment will improve with training in agro-based farming, such as:

- Lemon grass, cardamom, bamboo cane, and medicinal plants. Like the recent initiatives to plant cardamom (known locally as alaichi) and lemon grass in an effort to wean people off of growing poppies and give them a source of alternative income (Sangai Express, July 2, 2016). Since they are readily available in rural areas, Singaravelu and Kavitha (2014) proposed supporting cottage and domestic businesses including basket manufacturing, and carpentry.

- Secondly, encouraging the growth of commercial products like coffee, tea, ginger, cardamom, ground nuts, vegetables, and fruits, among others, can help farmers earn a good living. Thirdly, exciting programmes and projects will be introduced to give local youth new opportunity to put their skills and enthusiasm to work on programmes for their development.
- According to Prasain (2014), self-employment supported by microfinance could be another alternative to agro-based entrepreneurship for addressing young unemployment. The three aspects of youth perception towards skill development discussed above revealed that agrobased skills, training programmes, and skill institutions will all increase rural youth in Odisha's ability to live sustainably.

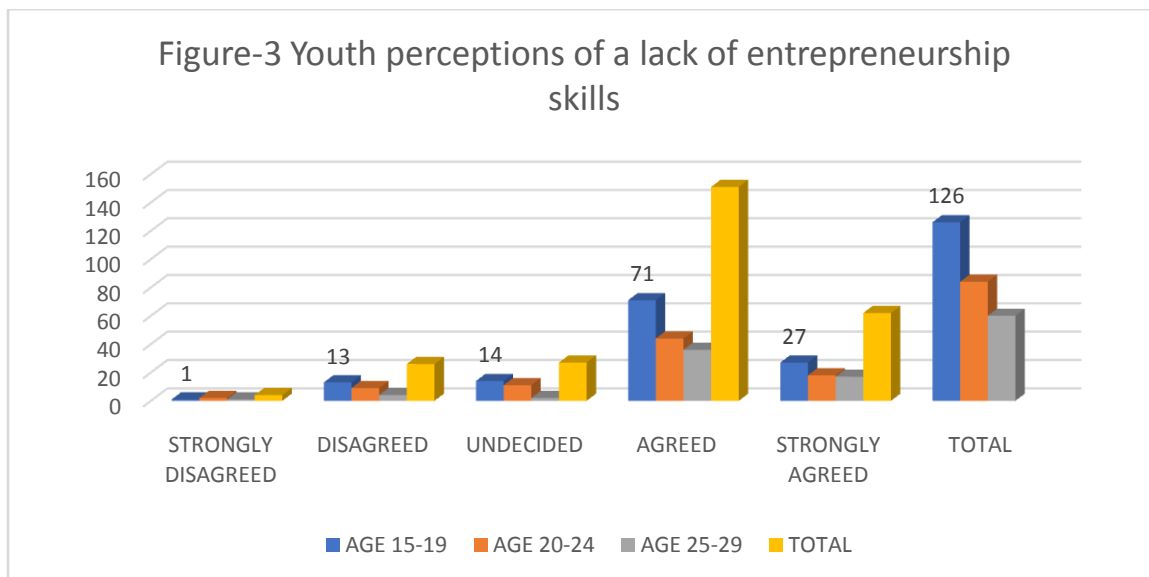


Source: compiled from collected sources

### Technical Skill

One barrier to the employment of Odisha's rural tribal youth is lack of skills. In response to young unemployment owing to technical/unskilled labour, those surveyed were questioned about what extent "Training on skill and social entrepreneurship among the youth may enhance employment" may help with the issue of unskilled for sustainable livelihood among rural youth (not possess required skills).

According to the figure 3 below, 23% of young people strongly agree, and 55.9% of them believe that entrepreneurship and vocational training are essential to improving employment. The respondents emphasised how important courses in entrepreneurship and job-oriented vocational training are. In terms of the age group with the highest percentage of responders, those between the ages of 15 and 10 felt the need to make the aforementioned statement. The term "social entrepreneurs" refers to people who "find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to move in different directions" and "have innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems."



*Source: compiled from collected sources*

The achievement of skill entrepreneur and vocational training is contingent upon both hard and soft skills in addition to course material. Nandi E. (2013) discovered that businesses need new emerging "E" equity, expansion, and excellence. Few research provides a solution for the unskilled labour shortage. Che Omar and Rajoo (2016) claim that the key to young people getting work-related tasks is having soft skills like communication and problem-solving abilities. The majority of the labour force in rural areas works in the agricultural sector. While young people are eager for jobs, the industry is struggling due to a lack of competent labour. Youth are rendered unemployed by this mismatch (Sunita, 2014). The preceding study that demonstrated that skill development for rural tribal youth can promote sustainable livelihood in Odisha supported how young people saw the training in skill development.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Instead of traditional training consisting of dry lectures or lengthy manuals, the youths from rural tribal areas need current, relevant information that will help them build skills that will enable them to support a sustainable livelihood. Long-term strategies for rural youth's sustainable livelihood through skill development are required. First, Odisha State Youth Policy shall be implemented in full compliance with National Youth Policy 2014, with "Skill and Entrepreneurship" listed as one of the main areas. Second, the government must investigate the large uncharted territory and forest resources that can be employed for agriculture-based business. Like the recent initiatives to plant cardamom (known locally as alaichi) and lemon grass in an effort to wean people off of growing poppies and give them a source of alternative income (Sangai Express, July 2, 2016). Thirdly, greater funding should be allocated by the central and state governments to fostering the expansion of entrepreneurship. Make sure skill trainers have access to "Smart capital" like the SC and ST start-up scheme. Strong and long-lasting connections between young trainers and NABARD, which provides money for young, brilliant entrepreneurs in rural areas. Fourthly, the government would take care of the market while local young entrepreneurs and skill trainers strive to produce the most products possible.

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