### A STUDY ON

Assessing the Effectiveness of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana on Empowering Tribal Communities with special reference to Dikhowmukh Van Dhan Vikas Kendra, Sivasagar District, Assam

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Social Work for the partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Social Work (MSW)



### Submitted to:

Department of Social Work MSSV, Guwahati Unit

### Submitted by:

Kabyashree Borthakur MSW 4<sup>th</sup> semester

Roll no: MSW-02/23

Registration no: MSSV-0023-008-001400

Session: 2023-2025

MAHAPURUSHA SRIMANTA SANKARADEVA VISWAVIDYALAYA GUWAHATI UNIT, RUPNAGAR, 781032, ASSAM

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# মহাপুৰুষ শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

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I wish her a bright future.

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The work reported in this research has not been submitted elsewhere, and the facts presented here are true to the best of my knowledge.

I wish her all the very best for her future endeavors.

11/06/2029 Rajlakhi Baruah

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### **ABBREVIATIONS**

PMVDY	Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana
VDVK	Van Dhan Vikas Kendra
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Produce
SHG	Self-Help Group
TRIFED	Tribal Co-Operative Marketing Development Federation of India
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
ITDP	Integrated Tribal Development Programme
IIE	Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship
МОТА	Ministry of Tribal Affairs

#### **ABSTRACT**

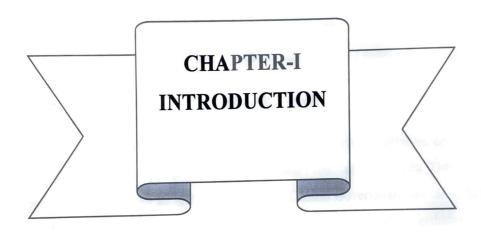
The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY), launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, aims to empower tribal communities through value addition, branding, and marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP). In Assam, the scheme is implemented by the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) in the year 2019, 5<sup>th</sup> November. Over a five-year period to enhance the economic self-reliance of tribal populations. This study explores the on-ground realities of the scheme's implementation in selected tribal regions, highlighting awareness and both its achievements and persistent challenges. The research findings indicate that while the scheme has created livelihood opportunities, promoted entrepreneurship, and helped some individuals move from wage labour to skilled roles, or a mater trainer, but several obstacles continue to hinder its full potential. These include gender-based barriers, lack of awareness, low literacy, poor infrastructure, lack of market linkage, inadequate packaging and branding support, irregular electricity supply, and weak administrative outreach. Despite these issues, the scheme has shown promise in several areas. With focused improvements in training, infrastructure, awareness, and marketing support, PMVDY can evolve into a sustainable model for tribal empowerment and inclusive rural development across Assam.

KeyWord: PMVDY, Economic empowerment, skill development, sustainable development, tribal Entrepreneurs, Self Help Group, Rural livelihood.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana is a flagship programme in India. It was introduced by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs(MOTA) and implemented by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED). The PMVDY Scheme was introduced in India by honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14th April, 2018. But the PMVDY Scheme was launched in Assam by the ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA) after one year i.e. 2019, 5th November. The PMVDY Scheme mainly focused on upliftment of forest-dwelling tribal populations by adding value enhancement, packaging, training, branding, and market entry for Minor Forest Produce (MFP). The primary objective is to living sustainability and improve the tribal people income generation through reasonable prices and profitable return.

### Purpose and Reach

This scheme serves as a marketing relation of tribal enterprise initiative, and form SHG clusters and with aims to establishment of Tribal Producer Companies. The project has been spread across all 27 states in India. The Central Government has taken initiative for the establishment of Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs), which includes training, processing, and support hubs for tribal collectives. These Kendra's are developed based on customized State-level plans considered with the assistance of TRIFED.As of now, 471 such centres have been developed in 34 districts, each comprising to a group of approximately 300 tribal members engaged in MFP collection and associated activities. The initiative aims to harness indigenous expertise, integrate it with modern innovations, and facilitate a transition from subsistence living to commercial ventures.

Van Dhan is visualized as a major employment-generation model by utilizing natural forest resources, also referred to as "Van Dhan." The scheme aspires to enhance traditional craftsmanship and local knowledge systems by introducing technological advancements, including digital platforms and IT-based tools. This structured approach helps in upgrading tribal enterprises at every level, fostering a shift towards organized and profitable business practices. The scheme is expected to support up to 45 lakh tribal

gatherers annually by strengthening their ability to harvest, process, and market forest-based goods. To ensure sustainability and competitiveness, the programme encourages collective operations, where tribal groups function as unified business units. A goal of setting up 6,000 VDVKs over two years has been laid out—3,000 centres each year. The growth and progression of these Kendra's depend on the ongoing performance assessments.

### Implementation in Assam

PMVDY was formally launched in Assam on 5th November 2019 at the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) in Lokhra, Guwahati. The IIE serves as a primary and implementing agency, managing the rollout of 128 VDVKs across 24 districts in the state.

#### Vision and Mission of PMVDY

#### Vision:

• The vision is to empower tribal communities by increasing their earnings through improved processing, promotion, and commercialization of Minor Forest Produce, thereby enhancing self-reliance and sustainable income sources. This will improve their financial and economic conditions.

### Mission:

- To establish VDVKs that assist tribal entrepreneurs in processing, packaging, and selling forest-based products.
- To improve traditional capabilities and develop skills in quality control, product purification and business planning.
- To encourage eco-friendly harvesting practices that preserve forest resources while providing economic rewards.

- To develop strong supply of chains and to enable access across domestic and global markets.
- To foster entrepreneurial potential among tribals by supporting their evolution from raw material collectors to value-added producers.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

- 1. **Tribal Communities**: The scheme primarily benefits individuals from Scheduled Tribes (STs) who are involved in gathering non-timber forest products (NTFPs).
- 2. **Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** Tribal SHGs and cooperatives engaged in forest produce activities are eligible. These groups receive financial support, training, and guidance in product marketing.
- Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs): Implementation is carried out through VDVKs, typically established in areas where tribal are actively engaged in forestbased livelihoods. Each Kendra supports about 300 beneficiaries.
- 4. **Age and Gender**: While the scheme primarily supports those aged 18 and above, there are no restrictions regarding gender. But the researcher collected the data above the age of 20 years. The programme especially focuses on including women and marginalized groups to ensure their progressive development.
- 5. Individuals Engaged in Forest Produce Activities: The scheme targets those involved in the collection and processing of resources such as honey, herbs, medicinal plants, and pickles, among others.

#### Essential Features of Van Dhan Kendra

### Community -Based Model:

1)The Van Dhan SHG will be form by setting up a Van Dhan Vikash Kendra. This Kendra serves as a Centre for procurement cum value addition to locally available Minor Forest Produce. The value addition is expected to increase the share of tribal in the value chain from 20-25% up to 70%-72% in current year.

- 2) A Van Dhan Vikash Kendra shall constitute of 15 Self Help Group. Every SHG set up by 20 members which means Each Kendra support 300 Tribal People.
- 3) The Van Dhan Vikas SHG would belong to adjoining area. At least 50% of beneficiaries shall be tribal, and this SHG shall be led by a tribal member. Priority will be given in collaborating under the Aaajeevika Mission.

### Stages Under PMVDY

There are two processes in each Kendra. The First Stages Are: according to (Yojana, P. M. V. D. PMVDY.)

<u>DStage I:</u> PMVDY aims to establish 6000 Van Dhan Kendra's over a period of 2 years in tribal districts across all States (except Haryana, Punjab and Delhi, as these states do not have Scheduled Tribe gatherers). During this phase the provision for the required building facilities is to establish one of the beneficiary's household or part of house or Government gram panchayat building.

(ii)Stage II PMVDY shall focus on building up the well performing Kendra's into pucca facilities with more sophisticated facilities i.e. storage, primary processing, packaging facilities etc.

Implementation of Stage I which is setting up 6000 Van Dhan Kendras, that would be carried out as follows:

- (i) The PMVDY is planned to be implemented through a unique 'cluster development' type approach.
- (ii)At the unit level, the Van Dhan SHG shall be primarily responsible for collection and aggregation of MFPs from the nearby forests area and undertaking primary level value addition at SHG level. Additionally, these SHGs centre may receive raw material from the District Implementing Units and then return the processed goods to the District

Implementing Units as finished product. The SHGs may also be able to buy MFPs from its own funds.

This stage will involve primary value addition of MFP items through mechanical tools such as decorticators, sickle, secateurs, cutting tools, dryers, graders etc.

- (iii) Under the PMVDY, each Van Dhan Vikas SHG shall be supported with following facilities components:
- (a) Building infrastructure support to be established in one of the beneficiary's house, part of the house or Government gram panchayat building.
- (b) Primary processing equipment tool kit are of equipment's such as small cutting and sieving tools, decorticator, dryer, packaging tool etc. based on MFPs available in the area.
- (c) To facilitate the training for a batch of 20 trainees on sustainable harvesting and collection of MFPs and value addition for all MFPs available in the area. Provisions for raw material for training purpose and supply of trainee's kits.
- (d) Providing and arrangement for working capital for the Van Dhan Vikas SHGs to be met through tie up with financial institutions such as, banks, NSTFDC etc.
- iv) At cluster level, the Van Dhan Vikas Kendra shall act as common facility centre. It shall facilitate linkages in both local and distant markets for the sale of the processed and value-added products produced by the Van Dhan Vikas SHGs.
- (v)The Kendras may also enter into a tie-up with private entities such as NGOs for value addition and marketing on defined terms or may simply provide space to its members on custom hiring basis for processing of their products in hygienic conditions. Besides, the Kendras shall also facilitate transportation and storage (on rental basis) on behalf of the SHGs for the MFPs raw material and the processed products.

(vi) The Kendra may be guided by State facilities like Kisan Call Centre, the State Government's Mandi Board web portal etc. to make strategic decisions based on market intelligence. TRIFED shall develop appropriate mechanisms for collection of information on daily market rates, including e-commerce avenues, to support the Kendra in this regard.

(vii)Each Van Dhan Vikas Kendra shall be managed by a Managing Committee consisting of representatives of Van Dhan SHGs in the cluster.

(viii)Linkage with local Haat Bazaars: The Van Dhan Vikas Kendras will be established around to the areas of the local haat bazaars, where the procurement of the MFPs shall be taken up under the MSP for MFPAs per the estimation there are more than 5000 Haats in the tribal areas.

Within the provisions of the scheme of MSP for MFP, it is proposed to modernize these Haat Bazaars with permanent structure and facilities for storage, drinking water, shade, platform, weighing equipment and other tools etc. The modernisation of the Haat bazaars shall be taken up in a phased manner, along with the establishment of the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras.

This research aims to explore the impact of PMVDY on sustainable income generation and entrepreneurship considering factors such as household income levels, employment opportunities, access to markets, and socio-economic empowerment ,present status of this scheme ,challenged faced by tribal beneficiaries in the research region. By employing a research methodology, qualitative analysis, this study will strive to capture the diverse experiences and perspectives of tribal beneficiaries engaged in the collection, processing, and value addition of Minor Forest Produce (MFP).

Through rigorous data collection, analysis, and interpretation, this research endeavor seeks to generate evidence-based insights that can inform policy decisions, program implementation, and future interventions aimed at strengthening tribal livelihoods,

fostering sustainable resource management, and promoting rural economic development in regions of Dikhowmukh Village, Sivasagar district of Asssam.

# 1.1 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

**Tribal Communities:** Tribal communities can be defined as indigenous groups that live mainly in remote Area and they basically depend on Forest Resources. These communities often have unique culture practices, traditional knowledge and skills related to Non-timber Forest Products(NTFPs).

**Livelihood:** Livelihood means the way people earn money to support themselves and their families. This research study talks about sustainable livelihood, which means finding ways to earn a living that not only meets immediate needs but also ensures that resources are used responsibly and can continue to support future generations.

**Empowerment:** Empowerment can be defined as giving individuals or groups with the authority, power, confidence, and resources to take control of their own lives, make informed decisions, and access opportunities that enable them to become more self-reliant and actively take participate in shaping their future.

**Impact:** Impact means it is a strong effect or influence that shapes the individual or group, how a person thinks, feel, acts or what happened in a particular situation.

# 1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

India is a home to many tribal communities who depend on forests for their livelihood. Tribes are the aboriginal people of the society, basically resides in the hilly and forest area. Traditionally, it has been that the primitive people collect their livelihood from the nature. Including forest agriculture, and water bodies. Tribal are generally backward, economically as well educationally. So, they face many problems such as poverty, unemployment, poor infrastructure, exploitation and lack of access to banks and financial help and ignorance are acute. To address these issue, The government of India, launched the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) to support tribal

entrepreneurs by promoting the sustainable collection and processing and Marketing of Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). This scheme aims to enhance tribal people incomes by organising them in to Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVKS) and Self Help Group (SHG) and providing financial assistance, skill development and market access . However, this scheme face many challenge of tribal people. A major issue is the lack of awareness among the tribal people which leads to limit their participation in the scheme. The geographic isolation limited their access to their markets, education, and infrastructure, and thereby it increasing their socio-economic vulnerabilities. Some tribal are unaware of the actual market value of their raw products, which leading to sell their goods at lower prices. So, still now tribal people have continued to struggle with economic instability and low income livelihood. And due to their poor economic condition they could not improve their livelihood. And tribal people of this research region mostly dependent of rain fed agriculture and using old technology. As the result, their income remains marginal and unstable.

Many tribal people are receiving the government benefits, but in many remote area, yet they are still unable to become entrepreneurs. Although the aim of the scheme is to promote entrepreneurship among the tribal people but in the research region, they still live in destitution, especially the tribal women, who mostly depend on their husbands in a male dominated Society. Even through the scheme is made for the holistic development of tribal people to facilitate entrepreneurship.

So, researcher intends to see whether the rural tribal people in Dikhowmukh Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVKS) are getting benefited by this scheme and what are the challenges they have face to avail the benefit of this scheme.

### 1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

India is large section of people live in Rural Area, especially the tribal people, who depend on forest -based livelihood. However, due the historically marginalized, exploitation, lack of education, backwardness, lack of financial support, these communities are still lagging behind as compared to other section of the society. To address this issue, the Government of India launched the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan

Yojana(PMVDY) that aims to enhancing the income of tribal people by promoting valued addition, branding and marketing of Minor Forest Produce(MFP). Under this scheme, Self Help groups of tribal gatherers are organized into Van Dhan Vikash Kendra, where they receive training in processing, packaging, and marketing forest product. It mainly focused on how it has impacted income generation, skill development and the overall socio economic development of the tribal people, Specially the tribal women.

This research study will help us understand how PMVDY empowers tribal communities by improving their livelihoods and reducing their dependence on intermediaries. It will explore the impact on income generation, skill development and the overall socioeconomic improvement and challenges they have face in Dikhowmukh VDVK that tribal people to avail the benefit of this scheme. Through this study, awareness can be facilitated so that tribal people no longer remain dependent on others and can move forward as individual entrepreneurs, as like the other section of the society.

## 1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

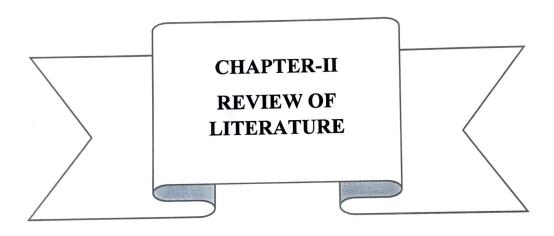
- To analyses the level of awareness about Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY)among the tribal Communities.
- To examine the impact of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana(PMVDY) on tribal beneficiaries in Rural Area.

## 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

- How does Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) help tribal communities in enhance their livelihood?
- What are the challenges of tribal people have to face to get the benefit under this scheme?
- Has the income generated through PMVDY Scheme become a reliable and sustainable source of livelihood?

### 1.6 CHAPTERISATION

To successfully conduct the study, the researcher divided this study into some specific chapters. The first chapter of this study discussed about the introduction of the research. The second chapter will deal with the review of literature. This chapter helped the researcher to know the research gap. The third chapter will be about the methodology of the research. Here the researcher will be discussed the methods that are used to conduct the study. The fourth and most important chapter will deal with the discussion and finding of the research. In this chapter, the researcher analysed the collected data in a systematic form and comes up with some findings. The fifth and last chapter will discuss about the suggestions and recommendations for the promotion and development of non-farm enterprises of rural areas.



#### Literature Review

Ahmed et al. (2016) conducted a study on the "Marketing of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal" They highlighted its significance in improving the economic conditions of rural communities, particularly in the forest depended population. The study that was conducted found that the local NTFP markets still operate under traditional systems, with seasonal variations influencing the collection and pricing of products like Sal leaves, fruits, and tubers. Various Marketing challenges are faced such as the limited number of wholesale markets, unfair practices of traders, inadequate storage facilities, high transportation costs due to market remoteness, and poor road conditions and wildlife disturbances. Also, the brokers exploit primary collectors by purchasing products at low prices without the fair price in market rates. The study also observed a decline in the collection of Kendu leaves due to low selling prices, forcing to illegal market transactions. The primary collectors often lack awareness of sustainable harvesting practices, leading to resource depletion. The authors emphasized the need for government intervention in price regulation, infrastructure improvement, and value addition through small-scale industries, such as oil drilling, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and food processing, to enhance financial returns and employment opportunities for local tribal communities.

Baidya and Barik (et al.) has studied the problems faced by tribal communities in getting education in North-East India. They found that issues like poverty, lack of schools, cultural differences, and isolation has made it difficult for tribal students to access quality education. Despite many government schemes and policies, tribal communities remained behind in education compared to the rest of society. The study looked at challenges faced by students at different education levels—primary, secondary, and higher education and it's emphasizing the need for inclusive policies to bridge the gap between tribal and mainstream society. So, this study offered recommendations to enhance educational opportunities for tribal community's students and ensure their integration into the broader socio-economic framework.

Das (2011) explores the complex nature of women's empowerment in the context of Self-Help Group-Bank Linkage Programme (SBLP) in Karbi Anglong district of Assam, focusing particularly on tribal women. The study highlights that while SHGs are designed to empower women by enhancing their decision-making abilities and financial independence, their success is limited because of structural and social constraints such as gender norms, lack of education, low exposure, and inadequate support systems. Das distinguishes between activities that improve efficiency within traditional norms and those norms that challenges existing in societal structures to bring real empowerment. The paper emphasizes that true empowerment involves psychological change, self-confidence, and collective action, but also notes that most SHG activities tend to focus on household welfare rather than transformative empowerment. It further discusses how tribal women play a crucial role in economic and agricultural activities, yet face challenges such as wage discrimination, lack of training, and limited institutional support. The author suggests that increased educational opportunities, social awareness, legal protection, and supportive policies are essential for sustainable empowerment of tribal women in the region.

Devi (2013) explores the multiple status of women in Assam, focusing on both social and economic dimensions. The author emphasizes that women in Assam, like many parts of India, are deeply affected by traditional customs and social taboos that affects and hinder their progress and participation in public life. Despite government efforts, real change requires awareness and active involvement from women themselves. Economically, while a significant number of women participate in Assam's rural agricultural economy, their contributions often go unrecognized, especially in subsistence farming. The paper highlights that although Assam has a relatively high female worker's participation rate compared to some states, women remain economically dependent and underrated in secondary and third sectors. The author also points out that many women employed in the organized sector, particularly in the tea industry, still face challenges related to financial independence and social mobility. Overall, the study calls for increased socio-political awareness and solid steps to improve the status of women in Assam.

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Das (2012) explored the role of entrepreneurial activities among Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in empowering women, especially in the hill districts of Assam. The study emphasized that entrepreneurship is a vital driver of socio-economic development and that women's participation in entrepreneurial ventures has helped enhance their income, confidence, and decision-making power. As women become more aware of their rights and social position, they are increasingly engaging in various business fields. Empowerment is described as a process through which women gain control over their choices, supported by factors like self-confidence, agency, and awareness of social structures. SHGs and microfinance have proven to be effective tools not only for poverty relief but also for improving the social status of marginalized women. The paper highlighted that women's empowerment and gender equality are essential for broader development goals and that SHGs offer both financial and social support to achieve these outcomes.

Grover and Singhal et al. conducted the study on the status of tribal women in India, their socio-economic conditions, challenges, and contributions to development. The study discusses the geographical spread of tribal communities across India, where Chhattisgarh having the highest tribal population percentage (30.6%) among 641 recognized tribes. They emphasize that tribal women's status is influenced by factors such as education, health, work participation, and decision-making power. Despite their active role in subsistence activities, including agriculture and forest produce collection, tribal women face significant challenges in accessing education due to their geographical isolation, economic instability, and weak coordination between government departments. Health issues are more critical including poor healthcare infrastructure, malnutrition, and high disease burdens, including malaria and maternal mortality risks. The study underscored the need for targeted policies to improve the educational and health status of tribal women, thereby improve their socio-economic empowerment.

Harit and Nidhi (2024) conducted a study on "From Margins to Progress: Unleashing the Potential of India's Tribal Communities for Sustainable Development." The researcher examined the marginalization of tribal communities in India and their role in sustainable development. They explored how tribes, characterized by cultural uniqueness, geographical isolation, and economic backwardness, struggle with accessing basic amenities. The study emphasized the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in improving the quality of life for tribal populations by ensuring education, healthcare, and clean energy. The authors highlighted that while government policies aim to uplift these communities, slow implementation and societal rigidity continue to widen developmental gaps. Through their finding they suggested that both authorities and tribal communities must work together to embrace change to promote growth making sustainable development a reality for marginalized groups.

Kumar (2023) conducted the study on "Impact of Government Schemes on Tribal Development in Nagaland". His study examined various government initiatives aimed at implementing the socio-economic development of tribal communities in Nagaland. This study highlighted the significance of the schemes such as the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP), and Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana in improving the living standards of tribal populations. His studies suggested that these initiatives contributed to enhance the access to education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities among indigenous communities. The Nagaland Health Project, supported by the World Bank, played a crucial role in addressing healthcare foundation by strengthening health systems and tackling non-communicable diseases like diabetes and hypertension. Despite this initiative, he also highlighted that some challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, economic challenges, and policy implementation gaps continued to hinder the development of tribal communities in Nagaland. Therefore, while government schemes had a positive impact, there was a need for sustained policy efforts and targeted interventions to ensure equitable and inclusive growth for tribal people.

Mudoi and Sarmah (2021) conducted a comparative study to analyse the socioeconomic and demographic status of tribal communities (STs) in Assam, revealing a bigger picture of both progress and the societal challenges. Their study highlights that STs are primarily concentrated in hilly and autonomous regions and face significant educational and healthcare problem. While their literacy rates nearly match the state average, access to their higher education remains limited, and spending on education and healthcare is low. Health indicators like institutional healthcare, use of clean fuel, and sanitation facilities are poorer among ST's, their infant and child mortality rates and overall health conditions are better than those of non-STs—possibly due to traditional diets and lifestyle factors. Economically, ST women show higher work participation and more empowerment as compared to non-ST women, though intra-tribal disparities exist, especially in education and employment. Despite high alcohol consumption linked to cultural practices, it has less negative societal impact among these tribal communities.

Mazumdar & Sikdar (2017) conducted a study on "Participation of Tribal Women in Higher Education in India". According to the study, tribal women's status is poor in terms of health, work, and education when compared not only to tribal men but also to women in the general population.

Mehta & Kapoor et al (2022) conducted a study on "the impact of PM Van Dhan Yojana on tribal communities; A case study from Madhya Pradesh". They highlighted that The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) is a government initiative that aimed at empowering tribal communities by enhancing their income through sustainable collection, processing, and marketing of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). The scheme establishes Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs), which serve as community-based processing centres, enabling the tribal population to process their forest products and access better markets. They found that PMVDY has positively impacted the socioeconomic conditions of tribal groups, particularly women, by enhancing financial inclusion, improving their skills, and providing opportunities for entrepreneurship. However, they have faced problems such as inadequate training, lack of proper infrastructure, and weak market linkages.

Mathur (2015) conducted the study on a book outlined by Valmik Thapar Saving Wild India: A Blueprint for change? questioning the validity of his expertise, the superficial nature of his recommendations, and the lack of evidence supporting his call for widespread privatisation in forest and wildlife governance. She argues that Thapar's proposed solutions, especially public-private partnerships and the Van Dhan Yojana, reflect a neoliberal agenda also known as free-market ideology that risks dispossessing local communities and damaging ecosystems. Mathur highlights the autocratic nature, top-down nature of Thapar's approach and stresses the need for more inclusive and democratic environmental policymaking in India.

Northeast live (2020) conducted a study that Nagaland has gained national recognition by gaining seven prestigious awards in Van Dhan Vikash Yojana and minimum Price Support Price Scheme. This state performed topped categories such as Best Survey, Best Training, and the highest number of VDVK clusters established which include 206 clusters, encompassing 2,805 SHGs and 61,800 beneficiaries. This achievement shows that Nagaland State's implement the scheme effectively.

Nath et al. (2022) conducted a study on "Communication sources for farm information and involvement in homestead activities by the women beneficiaries of PMVDY in Sikkim". This study highlighted that how women in East Sikkim and South Sikkim get farm-related information and participate in household activities under the PM Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY). They surveyed 110 women from Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) and found that most women relied on friends (70%) and Panchayat members (60.91%) for farm information. Many also got guidance from NGO or Self-Help Group (SHG) leaders (76.36%), but fewer used mass media like television (50%) and newspapers (35.45%). Despite playing a key role in farming and food security, but these women often lacked proper support from agricultural extension services, making it harder for them to improve their skills and knowledge. The study also showed that women were actively involved in household work, with 81.82% engaged in food processing and 80.91% in preserving fruits and vegetables. However, participation in livestock care varied. The research highlighted the need to strengthen agricultural

support systems and provide better access to modern technology, it can help women improve their farming efficiency and economic well-being.

Network, N. E. (2020) has published a paper titled "Manipur's recognition as a "Champion State" for its successful implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY)". Since it was launched 2019, the state has established 100 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs), comprising 1,557 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and benefiting 30189 tribal entrepreneurs across 14 forest divisions, and generating ₹49.10 lakhs in sales of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) products. This initiative aligns with research emphasizing the importance of government interventions in fostering tribal entrepreneurship by improving market access, financial support, and skill development. This Studies have shown that structured entrepreneurship programs can enhance livelihood opportunities, but challenges such as limited financial literacy and inadequate infrastructure persist. The active role of state leadership and forest officials in Manipur's implementation supports findings that local governance is crucial for the success of tribal enterprises While PMVDY has contributed to income generation and self-reliance

Patil and Kumar (2015) conducted a study on the socio-economic conditions of the Adivasi communities in the Dangs district of Gujarat, they investigated the role of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), the Malki system and the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in shaping tribal livelihoods. The study highlighted that despite the district's rich natural resources, it remains one of the poorest in India, with 86% of households living below the poverty line. Adivasi households rely heavily on NTFPs such as bamboo, mahua, tendu, and amla, alongside timber and fuelwood collection, but they have faced challenges like forest degradation, lack of market access, and unfair trade practices. The Malki system, a unique forest governance practice, provides income opportunities but also contributes to deforestation and environmental degradation. The implementation of the FRA remains problematic, with low success rates in land claims, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and political. Despite these challenges, local activists and organizations played an important role in raising awareness, developing technology, and advocating for the tribal rights.

Ratnakar & Reddy (1991) conducted a study on "Knowledge of Tribal Farmers about Recommended Farm Practices." This study assessed the impact of various farm-related programs implemented by the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Paloncha, Khammam District, Andhra Pradesh, on the knowledge levels of tribal farmers. The research found that beneficiaries of horticulture programs, particularly mango cultivation, demonstrated significantly higher knowledge levels compared to non-beneficiaries. This was attributed to the provision of essential inputs such as grafts, fertilizers, pesticides, and irrigation facilities by ITDA officials. The sericulture program yielded substantial benefits, with all beneficiaries possessing high knowledge levels due to its remunerative nature, allowing for multiple harvests per year. The study also highlighted a significant difference in knowledge scores between beneficiaries and nonbeneficiaries in the fisheries program. The success of this program relied heavily on technical expertise in pond construction, fish breeding, and maintenance, which beneficiaries acquired under the guidance of ITDA extension personnel. Overall, this study highlighted the effectiveness of ITDA initiatives in enhancing agricultural knowledge and promoting income-generating activities among tribal farmers, underscoring the importance of continued technical support and extension services for sustainable tribal development.

Srivani et al. (2022) conducted a study to assess the knowledge of tribal farmers about Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) activities in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in the ITDA-Rampachodavaram region of East Godavari district. This study highlighted that while VDVKs aim to enhance tribal livelihoods through value addition, skill development, and entrepreneurship, most beneficiaries had only a moderate understanding of the scheme's activities. They also found that tribal farmers were more aware of the processing and value addition activities but had limited knowledge of financial support, marketing facilities, and loan provisions. The study emphasized that illiteracy, lack of awareness, and minimal social mobility hindered the complete utilization of the scheme's benefits. Furthermore, the research underscored the

importance of organizing targeted training programs to educate beneficiaries about PMVDVY, extension services, and modern agricultural practices. By improving access to knowledge and financial resources, the study suggested that tribal farmers could enhance their income and reduce exploitation by middlemen, and leading to economic sustainability and improved livelihoods.

Sahu (2021) conducted a study on the challenges and opportunities for promoting tribal entrepreneurship in India, emphasized the need for a broad and inclusive strategy. The study highlighted the socio-economic disadvantages faced by Scheduled Tribes (STs), including limited access to resources such as land, capital, education, and markets, which hindered their entrepreneurial growth. As per the 2011 Census, STs constituted 8.6% of the population, but they owned a disproportionately low share of enterprises, primarily operating in labour-intensive, traditional industries with limited scalability. The study underscored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tribal livelihoods, exacerbating existing inequalities and pushing many into poverties. Various government initiatives, including the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY), TRIFED, and the Tribal Entrepreneurship Development Programme (TEDP), aimed to enhance market access, financial support, and skill development for tribal entrepreneurs. However, the study found that systemic barriers such as low entrepreneurial skills, inadequate financial linkages, and lack of social networks continued to impede progress. The study suggested that a cohesive strategy, including skill mapping, customized training, regulatory simplification, and integration of tribal entrepreneurship with broader economic policies, was essential. Furthermore, it emphasized that partnerships with private sectors, incubators, and community organizations, along with aggressive awareness campaigns on government schemes, could facilitate greater participation of STs in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The study concluded that addressing structural challenges and providing targeted support mechanisms were crucial for fostering sustainable tribal entrepreneurship and reducing socio-economic disparities.

Sharma et al conducted a study on "Impact of Covid-19 on Lives of Rural Communities Dependent on NTFPS, With Reference to Mandi District, Himachal Pradesh", Particularly those who reliant on Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). Their study highlighted that NTFPs played a crucial role in sustaining the livelihoods of economically vulnerable populations, supplementing income alongside agriculture, daily wage labour, and government schemes like MGNREGA. The pandemic-induced lockdown, which coincided with the peak NTFP harvesting season (April-July), severely disrupted collection, transportation, and market access. As a result, many perishable NTFPs remained unharvested, leading to financial losses for primary gatherers. The study also documented a sharp decline in the prices of high-value products such as Guchhi mushrooms and walnut fruits due to the absence of interstate buyers. Women and children, who traditionally sold NTFPs along roadsides and at fairs, lost a significant source of supplementary income. The government introduced the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) to support indigenous communities by facilitating the processing, storage, and sale of NTFPs within local markets, its implementation was limited to Lahaul-Spiti and did not extend to other affected districts. The study emphasized the need for structured policies and financial assistance to protect the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, acknowledging them as the true custodians of these valuable natural resources.

Sharma (2024) conducted a study on "Location, Livelihoods and Tribal People: Exploring the Linkages in India". This study emphasized the impact of geographic location on their access to resources and economic opportunities. Their research highlighted how tribal populations, traditionally residing in remote and resource-rich areas such as forests and mountainous regions, relied on subsistence farming, hunting, gathering, and handicrafts for their livelihoods. However, the study found that geographic isolation limited their access to their markets, education, and infrastructure, and thereby it increasing their socio-economic vulnerabilities. examined how various government initiatives aimed at improving tribal livelihoods had mixed success due to persistent challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and market linkages. They suggested that a targeted and holistic approach incorporating infrastructure

development, skill-building programs, and policy interventions was necessary to foster sustainable livelihoods and economic inclusion for tribal communities in India.

Yogi et al (2018) conducted a study on "Assessing Minimum Support Price for Non-Wood Forest Products (Nwfps): A Priority Based Policy Intervention in India" This research focused on states like Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and the NEH region, where markets for NWFPs are poorly developed and heavily influenced by middlemen. Using data from surveys, group discussions, and marketing federations, the study revealed that the value chains are long, causing a large gap between the collector's price and the final market price. The MSP scheme, first introduced in 2013–14, aimed to cover 12 minor forest products and had an outlay of ₹967 crores during the 2013–17 plan period. The study found that better support systems and transparency are needed in the procurement process to increase earnings for tribal collectors. The authors highlight that timely recommendations to the government and stronger national procurement systems can help reduce exploitation and improve incomes for forest-based communities.

Saikia (2023) explored the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in empowering Tiwa tribal women in Assam, it explained how SHGs have become a powerful tool for rural development and women's empowerment. The study traces the origin of the research problem to the broader context of gender inequality, globalization's impact on welfare systems, and the emergence of SHGs as a grassroots solution for empowering marginalized communities. By offering easy access to credit, SHGs help women start income-generating activities, which in turn improve their household decision-making power, participation in political processes, and access to education and health. The research found significant improvements in women's self-confidence, communication skills, and access to services after joining SHGs. The authors concluded that SHGs play a vital role in bringing tribal women into the mainstream of development, fostering both individual and community growth.

Saikia (2016) examined the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in empowering rural women in Assam, focusing on how participation in SHGs has helped women gain economic independence and confidence in decision-making. The study highlighted that despite constitutional guarantees of equality, Indian women still face discrimination in many aspects of life. However, SHGs have contributed significantly to shifting this reality, especially for illiterate women, with many reporting increased income, participation in family decision-making, and freedom to work outside the home. While empowerment in areas like social involvement remains limited, notable progress has been made in reducing domestic violence and improving women's autonomy. The research concluded that education and changing societal perceptions have played a key role in this transformation, helping women participate equally in various sectors including business, education, healthcare, and governance.

Sarawagi & Singh (2024), conducted a study on "Enhancing Livelihoods and Empowering Tribal Women: Analyzing The Role of Self-Help Groups in Sonbhadra." Their study highlighted the importance of women's empowerment for overall societal development and emphasized the role of financial inclusion and skill development in this process. the study found that SHG participation led to significant improvements in income, savings, employment, and spending patterns. Although the SHG mechanism was found to be moderately effective, it was identified as a strong predictor of socioeconomic empowerment. The study found that sustained support and the expansion of SHG initiatives could further enhance the empowerment of tribal women in underprivileged areas.

Srivani et al. (2022) conducted a study on "Farmer's perception towards Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Vikas Yojana in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh". This study evaluates the perception of beneficiaries towards the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Vikas Yojana (PMVDVY) in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. The scheme aims to enhance the livelihood and income generate of tribal communities, particularly tribal women, and lead to promoting employment opportunities through value addition of tribal products. They found that most of beneficiaries were young female, and

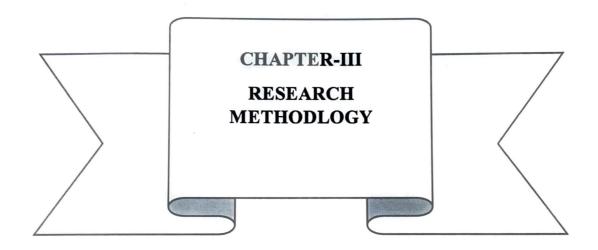
illiterate, with a low annual income and small landholdings. And also, the study found that the majority of beneficiaries had moderate utilization of information sources, medium levels of economic motivation, extension contact, awareness of the scheme, and market orientation. However, the perception of beneficiaries towards PMVDVY was found to its positive impact on tribal communities.

Satish et al. (2024) conducted a study on "Knowledge, Attitude and Utility about Government Schemes among Tribal Gypsies from Tamil Nadu" This study evaluate the knowledge, attitude, and utility of government welfare schemes among tribal gypsies in Tamil Nadu, this study focuses on schemes related to healthcare, education, financial inclusion, livelihood support, and social security. Despite the numerous initiatives launched by the Government of India and the Tamil Nadu state government, the study found that tribal communities face significant barriers in accessing these benefits due to geographical isolation, lack of awareness, language barriers, and cultural differences. They found that 14.36% of the population was not aware of government schemes, 10.19% showed indifference, 68.18% lacked proper guidance, and 7.27% found government officials inaccessible. They found that more than 90% of the tribal population in Tamil Nadu remains unaware of various government welfare schemes, it highlighting the need for targeted interventions to improve outreach and accessibility.

Tripathy (2020) examines the severe impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on the tribal economy of Odisha, particularly focusing on how it disrupted the collection and trade of minor forest produce (MFP), a key income source for tribal communities. The lockdown coincided with the peak MFP season, causing livelihood losses and distress sales, while delays in government responses further intensified the crisis. Though measures like allowing MGNREGA work and revising minimum support prices (MSP) for MFP were introduced, challenges such as reverse migration and underutilization of central grants persisted. It emphasizes the need to acknowledge tribal rights over forests and improve policy implementation to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

Vijaya et al (2023) conducted a study on Van Dhan Yojana – "A step towards tribal entrepreneurship – Implementation in Odisha – A study". Through this study the author highlighted the effective implementation on Van Dhan Vikash Yojana(VDY) in Odisha. It's mainly focusing on the role of boosting tribal entrepreneurship. Under the "Sankalp Se Siddhi" Campaign by TRIFED, Odisha made fast progress and established with 660 VDVKs grouped into 22 clusters benefiting over 6,300 tribal beneficiaries. In districts like Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, and Koraput, tribal groups have started producing items such as sal leaf plates, honey, oil, pickles, and turmeric powder. The scheme supports training, equipment, packaging, and branding, especially for women, who make up 95.92% of the beneficiaries. With 163 VDVKCs set up and 116 operational, more than 27,000 people are already involved in value addition units. This has helped overcome market challenges and provided better income opportunities. The program not only strengthens local businesses but also shows how tribal communities are developing entrepreneurial skills and contributing to the broader economy.

After review the literature, the research found the research gap from the literature review. Different researcher conducted the research study on tribal development, tribal people socio-economic, various scheme related to Tribal Welfare. But there is a research gap, that is few number of research conducted on the effectiveness of the PMVDY Scheme, which need to be required, because tribal people not aware of the scheme benefit. With the aim of giving an insight to the gap, when the researcher were going to conduct the study in Dikhowmukh VDVK.



### RESEARCH METHODLODGY

This chapter define the research methodology in the research study. Research methodology refers to a structured approach used to carryout research, it mainly includes various methods, technique and strategies for data collection, analysis and interpretation. It is a blue print for conducting the study, ensuring that the results obtained are both valid and reliable.

For this study, the researcher adopted a qualitative research methodology. It is a kind of study which is not based on the numerical data but it is based on non-numerical data and qualitative study mainly focuses to understand people's experience and social behaviour in a community.

This research helps the researchers to gain brief knowledge about the study.

#### 3.1THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In the context of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana(PMVDY), The Political Economy Theory can shed light on understand multifaceted interactions between political decisions, economic policies and the social outcomes. Such as involving of different multi stakeholder, institution, private companies etc. The political economic theory was significantly developed by Adam Smith. This theory focuses on how political Economic Theory relationship affect the distribution of resources and formulation of policies.

This scheme Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana(PMVDY) aimed at economic redistribution and social welfare intersect with political objective. By applying this theory, the researcher will analyses how PMVDY serves as a state-led initiative aimed at reducing economic inequalities and promoting sustainable tribal livelihood.

MVDY is a government initiative that designed to promote economic redistribution and social welfare, and intersect with political and economic objectives. The scheme was launched to empower the tribal communities by providing financial assistance, training, and market access for minor forest produce (MFP). Through this scheme, It ensures that tribal entrepreneurs can process and sell their produce at fair prices which contributing to reducing their dependence on middlemen and strengthening their

economic self-sufficient. This aligns with the economic goal of societal welfare, ensuring that weaker sections groups gain access to economic opportunities and can participate actively in the formal economy and reducing the economic inequality in terms of generate employment.

Political Economy Theory also emphasizes the power dynamics and interests of different stakeholders in shaping the economic policies. The scheme also consists of different stakeholder including the government, tribal cooperatives, private enterprises, and financial institutions. The government, through TRIFED and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, provides financial assistance, skill development Programme and infrastructures such as providing various tools. Tribal Cooperative and the self-help groups has managed the collection and processing of forest resources. The private enterprises also help the Self Help Group for marketing their product. Financial institutions also play an important role in supporting credit access for tribal entrepreneurs such as Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship and North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation etc. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures the efficient implementation and success of this scheme.

This scheme is design to enhancing the tribal livelihood in more sustainable and self-sufficient. By promoting entrepreneurship and skill development programme so that tribal can earn better and become financial independent.

Through the lens of Political Economy Theory, PMVDY, it is a long term benefit programme. It can be analysed in terms of resource redistribution, stakeholder interactions, and economic sustainability and human capital development which means it improve people skill, knowledge and productivity's, when tribal community become more self- sufficient and raising the standard of living, it leads to contribute growth of stronger rural Economy.

# 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a framework that help a students or a researcher to decide how to collect data and analyse information in a proper way.It includes different methods and strategies to ensure the research is done correctly.

In this study, the researcher used an exploratory research to conduct the research study and the data was collected from Sonowal Kochari and Missing tribe in Dikhowmukh VDVKs.

# 3.3 UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

This study focused on Rural Tribal Area on Sivasagar District, Dikhowmukh Van Dhan Institute Indian Agency Implementing the Kendra, Under Entrepreneurship(IIE). The target population included the Sonowal Kochari and Missing tribe who directly involved minor forest produce under PMVDY Scheme, within these geographical area.

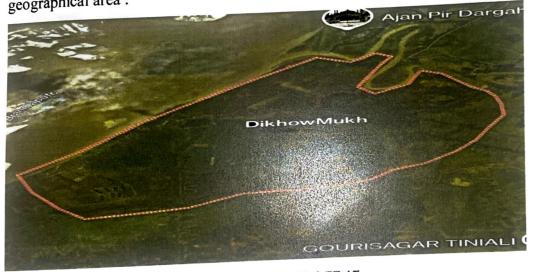


Photo: https://maps.app.goo.gl/7LmrHkp4dXJnk7R47

### 3.4 SAMPLING SIZE

The sample size refers to the numbers of the participants in the study. The researcher selected 20 participants. And the data was gathered the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana.

# 3.5 SAMPLE TECHNIQUE

Pumposive

The researcher conducted qualitative study and the researcher was using is Simple Random Sampling Under Probability Sampling.

# 3.6 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Unstructured Interview Schedule: The researcher used unstructured interview to increase more flexibility and a deeper understanding of participant's perspective. This method helped the researcher to gather detailed information and made a natural flow of conversation. The interviewer recorded the participants assent, and then translated from Assamese to English language.

**Observation:** Observation is a method of data collection. The researcher used the observation method to collect the data. So the researcher can observe the participant's activities, body language, and their living condition as well as their economic condition.

#### 3.7 SOURCES OF DATA

The researcher used both the primary and secondary data. For the Primary Data, the researcher will collect from the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana. The secondary will collect from the article, google scholar, website, book and journal etc.

### 3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION AND CONSENT

Ethical consideration means that the researcher prioritized the ethical guidelines and respect participant's choices and the researcher must reveal all the risk associated to the participants. The researcher must be revealed aim, objective, nature of the study, duration of the study, sponsored and other important information to the participants. This research study field Coordinator of Dikhowmukh VDVK,helped the researcher in conducting the research effectively. Before collecting the data, the researcher will ask

for the permission of respondents to make sure they will participate willingly. The researcher also committed to maintain confidentiality through the research process.

# 3.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This section defines the limitation of the study, acknowledgement and possible weakness, that may impact on the analysis and finding. Understanding these limitation is crucial for the research study conclusion.

#### Time Constraints:

Conducting in depth of research of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana required significant time for field visit, data collection and the research analysis. Managing research along with the academic or professional commitment may limit the extend of research.

### Data avaibility and Reliability:

Limited availability of official report, field survey report from tribal beneficiaries may affect the research finding and analysis of data and in the context of research conclusion.

#### Small Sample Size

The researcher collected the data from few respondents, the sampling size approximately 1-20 respondents, which may be affect to gather all information in effectively as well as data analysis and finding.

#### **Limited Review Literature:**

The researcher found draw break due to limited review of literature. The researcher found limited literature review through Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana. (PMVDY). There is no specific review literature regarding PMVDY Scheme in Assam.

# 3.10 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

#### **INCLUSION CRITERIA**

#### **Tribal Identity**

In the research study, included criteria is the researcher collected data only the individual who belong to the Schedule tribe (ST), to promote value added product from minor forest produce.

#### **Beneficiaries of PMVDY**

The researcher collected the data from the direct beneficiaries who involved in VDVK, and have receiving training, financial support and market support as well.

#### Age Group

The researcher conducted the study the respondents above 20 years.

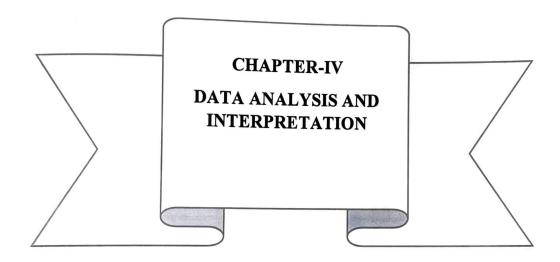
#### **EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

#### Non-tribal Communities

The researcher excluded non-tribal community people. As they are not considered the beneficiaries of PMVDY Scheme.

#### Age Group

The researcher excluded the respondents below 20 years and not more than 45 years.



In the previous chapter, the researcher transcripted the respondent's information and collected data using unstructured interview, individual interview, and observation from the respondents in the study area. Following data collection, the researcher transcripted all interviews from Assamese to English. and the researcher conducted qualitative coding using QDA minor and performed thematic analysis. This chapter will present the data analysis and interpretation thematically. This chapter will discover the finding from the collected data.

# 4.1Awareness regarding Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana:

After collecting the data from the respondents in the research region, it was discovered that this tribal people in the research region learning about or got aware of the scheme primarily via organized advocacy session, workshop or training programme conducted by IIE Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship.

#### 4.1.1 Initial Awareness Source

Most respondents learned and got the initial awareness in PMVDY Scheme through advocacy session and training programme conducted by IIE.or they also got to know from the self-help group and their Van Dhan Vikas Kendra. And some respondents have limited awareness and some have medium awareness.in this context various respondent's perspective are given below- "One day, I got the opportunity to join other women from my area in an advocacy session on the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana, which was organized by Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE). And I have awareness regarding the PMVDY Scheme. "I learned about the scheme through an advocacy and awareness programme conducted by an IIE coordinator."

And other respondents shared that She have heard about the Scheme from her friends. And she got the opportunity to participated in the advocacy and awareness Programme conducted by Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship and she have a middle awareness regarding the Scheme. So, she first started her business for bee keeping.

# 4.1.1. (i) Clarity of Scheme

Some tribal people specially the women demonstrated the While a few women were able to understand the main objectives of the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) Scheme such as value addition, income generation, and promoting self-reliance, entrepreneurs. But many others in the tribal community still remain unaware of the factual purpose of the scheme. According to M Boro, she told her experiences regarding the objective of the scheme-

"She live is the sides of Dikhow River. She was not even aware of the scheme until recently, she has not been able to get benefit from the PMVDY Scheme. The field coordinator did not come to inform or advise them, because of their geographical location. She continued to collect the forest produces, but due to lack of the proper training and value additional knowledge, she forced to sell their product in to the middleman in a low price".

### 4.1.1. (ii) Information Gap in Community

Despite some positive individual awareness, there's a significant lack of awareness in the wider community, especially among the tribal people. Some information from respondents is found that the tribal people specially the women only engaged in agriculture. According to R.Boro, she shared that-"I am a housewife and also works as a weaver. My family depends mainly on agriculture but they have only 2 acres of land, in which only one acre is used for farming. My husband is a farmer. they earned money just only meets their basic needs."

Another respondent shared that- "The main source of my family income is farming. For many years, me and my family struggled to survive on traditional farming practices, we often only dependent on unpredictable weather conditions and low returns.

# 4.1.1. (iii) Need for Sustained Awareness Programme

Respondents emphasized that they need village level camps, storytelling, district coordinator visiting, monitoring, providing long term training, to reach the tribal people who actually need the Scheme benefit. In the context of one respondents mentioned that she believes that more efforts are needed to improve marketing infrastructure, create awareness programme and supervising regularly and monitoring can ensure the long-term success of the PMVDY scheme in tribal areas."

And other respondents shared that "Through the skill development programme promoted by Van Dhan Kendra, she learned how to sustainably collect, process, and add value to forest products like amla, tamarind, and mahua powder without harming the natural eco-system"

### 4.2 Recognition benefit

According to the respondents, through the PMVDY Scheme, tribal people specially the women have experienced various positive changes in their economic, social, and personal lives. The scheme PMVDY has brought visible and meaningful transformation in the lives of tribal women in Dikhowmukh Village. The benefit of the scheme reflects a multi-skill impact not only on their financial status, but also their personal skill and identity. Through their personal narrative, tribal women shared how the scheme introduced them to new opportunities. Such as income generation, entrepreneurship, and training, marketing etc., that were previously inaccessible. The respondents shared that they could utilized the available forest resources to create value- added product, which helped them to earn, save and contribute to their household and their personal lives. Also, they received training from IIE in packaging, labelling, marketing, food processing, dry fruits training, and other forest resources, the Scheme is catalyst for economic empowerment, social mobility and self—identity of tribal people. In the context, the respondents shared their journey from a passive recipient to active contributor to the rural development.

# 4.2.1 Economic Empowerment

The Involvement of the PMVDY scheme has significantly transformed their sources of economic life of tribal women in the research region. They moving them from traditional or unpaid domestic worker into the income-generating and entrepreneurial activities and become a successful entrepreneur. The scheme not only provided financial opportunities but also contributed to long-term livelihood security and self-sufficient and sustainable. In the context, the respondents articulated their opinion those are. The income she earned from selling these products motivated her to improve their work. She also got the opportunity to attend a papad—making training programme at the VDVKC. Her role was completely changed from an ordinary person to master trainer. She also supporting her family by selling papad, Now I am working as a master trainer and has trained 100 women from nearby and far—off district. I lastly told that I was very happy as a master trainer of this block and became independent women."

### 4.2.2Income diversification

Most tribal families depended only on agriculture or daily wage labour and they used outmoded technology depending on climate, weather, crop rotation, shifting cultivation etc. and only harvest the resources just to manage household needs and to feed their family. But when the tribal people participating this scheme, With the introduction of value-added forest-based products such as pickles, papad making, jam, and silkworm, natural oil, soap, and other natural forest resources, this women found new platform of income apart from the traditional sources. This transmission helped reduce vulnerability to seasonal unemployment or crop failure in this research region. In the context the respondents name P Sonowal told that- "the scheme is providing financial assistance, training, and marketing support to tribal entrepreneurs engaged in forest-based livelihoods. With the help of the scheme, she received an initial financial support of rupees 2,000, which she used to start her own initial investment in pickle-making business from home

The another respondent shared that when researcher asked after participating this scheme are your income is increased. The respondents, M Rabha shared her experience—She received training, that introduced her to skill which she has never accessed before. She was trained mushroom training, marketing technique and poultry farming. This training is not just technical, it instil their confidence and gave motivation to experiment to adopt new livelihood option. Mushroom farming and poultry farming is her main occupations now.

"One respondent said that apart from her husband's farming income, her earnings from selling pickles to the market which offered crucial financial support during off-seasons."

### 4.2.3 Augmented household earning

The earning obtained from PMVDY activities led to a remarkable improvement in household income. Even moderate earnings ranges from ₹2,000 to ₹6,000 monthly which made a significant difference in essential needs like food, education, and healthcare. For many tribal families, even small increases in income created more financial stability. Many respondents shared that they could not depend on her husband and also help their family through income earning. In this context, the respondents shared that-

"I earned increased ₹5,000. this scheme helps me to reduce the dependence of rain-fed agriculture and hence I build a sustainable income. With this increased income, I could afford better facility for my family such as managing household responsibility in low stress and plans for future to sell my mushroom products in the town and departmental stores."

# Another respondent shared that-

". Through this training, she learned to make herbal soaps using locally available natural resources like neem, honey, jasmine extracts. She made variety of soap from the various ingredients which is available in their area. which also offering a sustainable and eco-friendly option."

# 4.2.4 Market Expansion Opportunities

PMVDY provides funds to collect resources and create value-added products at the Van Dhan Vikas Kendra. A minimum amount of 300 given to each people to collect the raw materials. The fund is given to each Kendra for the members of Self-Help Groups or Kendras where around 300 tribal women are involved. The scheme also provides a revolving fund to tribal people so that they can use it for their essential needs. If the group or an individual benefit from it, the money has to be returned without interest. This region of this Women not only produced forest goods for their own consumption but also access their new markets through local haat bazaars, VDVK centres, and small shop outlets. IIE also helps in branding and marketing their raw product. Training in branding, packaging, and pricing enabled them to sell in competitive environments and reach wider customer level This improved the commercial viability of their products in to new market .they also got the license to trade their market in international level.in the context, In this context, respondents shared that-She raised Silkworms in my home, later which she harvests the silk from the worms to make Traditional Mekhela Sador.Since Mekhela Sador consumes more time to make, and switching to make Gamusa by handloom in large quantities as much as 200 per day, which is becoming the main product.. And they also provide training like jackert machine training, handloom training etc and her and the other member of their Kendra people got license to start a business individually and trade their product in the global market"

### 4.3 Social empowerment

The tribal communities in India have historically lived in isolation, often residing in forested regions and far from the reach of mainstream society. Over time, due to marginalization and exploitation, they have been unable to improve their living conditions, which lead to economically disadvantaged and socially excluded. To overcome these challenges, the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, launched the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) with the aim of promoting tribal livelihoods through the value addition of minor forest produce. The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana scheme,

it is foundation of an economic initiative, has become a powerful tool for social transformation, particularly among tribal women. Beyond generating income, it has resulted in significant in how these tribal women outlook themselves and how they are recognized by others. The following subsections explain the various aspects of this social empowerment in the research region.

#### 4.3.1. Enhanced Social Status

Usually, many tribal women were confining to domestic duties and had little participation in the economic decision-making. Under PMVDY Scheme, they began engaging in income-generating activities like collecting, processing, and marketing minor forest produce (MFP). And individually the got the license for global marketing. This transition helped break the categorize of women as dependents. Now, this tribal people contribute financially to their households and sometimes becoming specially the women are breadwinner of her family. As a result, their judgement is increasingly worth in family decisions making. Community members, as well as family members, started acknowledging their economic and social importance. In some cases, women who were once unnoticed in public spaces are now invited to meetings and local governance discussions, represent a clear shift in their social transformation and recognition. The respondents shared that- "After the formation of the Van Dhan Vikas Kendra Cluster (VDVKC), she was selected as secretary and participated actively and she also attending a four-day training on value addition of Minor Forest Produce (MFP), Through this training she learned to make pickles, jam, squash. Later, she also attending 12 days of training programme of bamboo craft making. which make her self-sufficient and now people know her from their good work"

### 4.3.2 Collective Action through SHGs

The improvement of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKCs) under PMVDY scheme has promoted collaborative action. These groups are more than just employment units and they serve as shielded and empowering spaces for tribal women to meet regularly, share experiences, solve their problems together,

and make mutual trust. The improvement of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKCs) under PMVDY scheme has promoted collaborative action and take decision collectively. Tribal Women, specially the remote area earlier working in home as a domestic worker or wages labour in isolation place, now they are engaging in collaborative efforts like sorting and grading forest produce, food preservation, packaging handicrafts, and marketing. This collaboration has built up social connection and encouraged community-level solidarity and cohesion among the tribal people. And today allow women to arranged better prices, take collective decision - making, and affirm their rights more confidently. Through group initiatives and taking decision making women learned to speak up, organize events, and take on leadership roles within their SHGs such as secretary and president handled the responsibility to continue their Group. all of which have promoted their sense of belonging and effect the community. In the context of Self Help Group, the respondents shared that-She said that "I was very interested in the training sessions and advocacy programme and So I joined a Self-Help Group (SHG)later;", where she learned hand embroidery and tailoring. the scheme provided them with a revolving fund at rupees 2,40,000 which helped her to buy materials and begin her small production work from home"

Another respondent shared that- "she is a member of a Self-Help Group (SHG) and she actively involved in this SHG since 2020. She said that she improving her livelihood through the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY)".

#### 4.3.3 Gender Role Transformation

PMVDY has directly challenged gender stereotype in tribal communities. Women ambulating into roles such as micro-entrepreneurs, producers, trainers, or coordinators under the scheme destroyed the conventional belief that leadership, business, or financial management is a man's territory. These women now participated in value - chain decisions, procurement, budgeting, and even training as a master trainer to train new SHG members. Some have taken leadership roles within their VDVKCs, specially the tribal women in the research region or have become resource persons guiding others

a position of foregoing unthinkable and incredible for many. In the context, women sell their products individually in the outside market and provided financial support to her family. This respondents are- "According to her, she told that now a day's people are very aware of their health. So, people are in this area are very interest to purchase their soap product from her. This new skill not only gave her a means of livelihood but also boosted her confidence as an empowering woman. Currently, she has started producing soaps in small quantities and selling them in the local market and the hat bazar."

Another respondent shared that She raised Silkworms in her home and later which she harvests the silk from the worms to make Traditional Mekhela Sador. Since Mekhela Sador consumes more time to make, they are switching to make Gamusa by handloom in large quantities as much as rupees 200 per day.

#### 4.4 Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment is one of the most but often insufficiency outcomes. The transformation from economic inactivity to an active contribution has notably impacted women's self-worth and dignity. Through the scheme, tribal Women discovered that they feeling more confident, independent, and motivated and self—sufficient. The process of learning skills like accounting, marketing, gathering raw product or processing techniques not only increased their capability or the improvement of the financial condition, but also brought a sense of achievement and purpose. Their identity inflamed beyond the domestic economics, and many expressed their pride in being recognized as successful contributors or a successful leader to their family and their community. In the context respondents shared that-He said that the road is very bad pathetic condition, full of mad and it is difficult to travel, so he could not go to the market to sell his product. He said that there is a river besides his house, which also makes it hard to travel to town regularly

"The PMVDY scheme helped her gain confidence in run her own business and support her family. She shared that she also learned some skills such as basic food processing and marketing skills through the help of VDVKC. She said that that the scheme has not

only empowered her personally but has also contributed to the economic development of her village by encouraging the other women to become self-reliant, motivated, more confident and self-sustained."

#### 4.5 Skill Development and Capacity Building

One of the most notable benefits identified through the respondents' narratives was the improvement of practical skills and entrepreneurial capacity in the tribal community. The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) played a pivotal role in provided tribal women with both technical and soft skills, essential for improving their forest-based livelihoods and fostering long-term sustainability. But some respondents have negative experienced regarding PM Van Dhan Yojana Scheme.

#### 4.5.1. Technical training

Under PMVDY Scheme, beneficiaries received practical training, hands-on training in value addition of minor forest produce. This included activities like making pickles, jams, squashes, papads, and bamboo crafts. and also the handloom, training by utilizing the forest product. These skills not only improved the quality and hygiene standards of their products but also allowed them connect into new income-generating avenues. The experience of respondents shared that 'She received an initial financial support of rupees 2,000, which she used to start her own initial investment in pickle-making business from home."

Another respondent shared that "she also attending a four-day training on value addition of Minor Forest Produce (MFP), Through this training she learned to make pickles, jam, squash. Later, she also attending 12 days of training programme of bamboo craft making."

#### 4.5.2 Packaging and labelling Skill

Capacity building under PMVDY also highlighted the market access and promotion of tribal people, especially the women learned essential marketing skills such as food gathering manufacturing, packaging, product presentation, and customer negotiation and targeted marketing. From this interview it is found that that this training gave them the confidence to sell their products in local haats, exhibitions, and retail stores, thereby contributing to financial self-reliance and sustainable .and the PMVDY Scheme have improved their economic status of tribal commodities and products by promoting their tribal entrepreneurship. As a result, they began exploring new markets outside their villages and started receiving bulk orders from urban purchaser and SHG Association. This conversion is not only enhanced their income but also build up their identity as a rural entrepreneur. Under the PMVDY Scheme, the tribal people changes their livelihood and transforming from an informal labour to a formal worker and encourage their tribal community to improve their livelihood. In the research region, many tribal people depending on agriculture because they have not enough resources to collect the raw products from the forests. And created value added and trade their market .and they got benefit from this product. So, some respondents have experiences regarding the scheme. One respondents shared that-. She learned essential livelihood and marketing skills, including food processing, packaging, labelling, branding, pricing, and market linkage and bargaining power

Respondents 6 shared that she faces a major obstacle in the form of inadequate packaging. Due to a lack of resources and support, she collects the shop cover from the other state like Hydarabad, Kolakata. And their delivery charge is very costly to reached this place. So, she is forced to wrap the soaps in old newspapers, which affects the presentation and marketability of her product.

### 4.5.3 Leadership and Training Development

A typical outcome of this capacity-building process was the appearance of communitylevel leaders. Several respondents progressed from being a informal trainee to master trainers of a specific activity and through the PMVDY Scheme as they are capable of guiding others. This significant changes to promoted the leadership and confidence, reflecting the procreant effect of skill-development intrusion. These women now train others across different district which enhancing the human capital within the community. The financial independence and peer support gained through Self Help Group SHGs and its helped reduce feelings of inferiority, helplessness, or social isolation and they began themselves as influential individual build up their mental well-being and emotional strengths. One respondent shared that-After this training, she said that she started making pickles along with other members of the VDVKC and began selling them both locally and at the Haat Bazar in their area.

# 4.6 Challenges or impact and Gaps in Implementation of the PMVDY Scheme

While the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) has created significant opportunities for economic upliftment and empowerment of tribal people in this research region, but many respondents also identified some ongoing challenges that hamper the full implementation and continuous viable of these benefits. These challenges reflecting some structural, social, and implementation gaps or challenges to avail the scheme. Challenges faced by the tribal people through the PMVDY Scheme After implementation of the PMVDY, many tribal have diverse experience both positive and negative. Some problem faced by the respondents by availing this scheme. Due to high literacy rate, poor infrastructure, ignorance of bureaucratic to provide services to needy people, living in a remoted area. low quality of machinery and tools, advocacy problem, which hinder the tribal empowerment. Their challenges are categorized into social, structural and deficiencies of operation from the benefit of PMVDY Scheme. Those are-

### 4.6.1 Gender-Based Barriers in Participation

Tribal community deep rooted with the traditional belief and their culture and traditional belief often regulate which work is acceptable for man and women.based on that ,they are working their own duties.the researcher found that due to some

patriarchal norms that mainly women involved in agriculture and also the women took whole the household responsibilities like cooking ,take caring of her children ,one respondents shared that- she or other women hesitated to making of bamboo craft because as they believed that the working with bamboo was typically done by men. and it is not suitable job for women. As a result of these training, she faced several challenges under the scheme. Due to the common belief of people, they could not engage in other activities, and also the lack of proper marketing support and absence branding or packaging facilities, she could not sell her products at fair prices in larger markets.

#### 4.6.2 Educational and informational Barriers

Illiteracy among the tribal beneficiaries: Many Sonowal tribal in the research region, they have no formal or a little education and even some people did not how to write their name. Most of them did not going to the School, so it is difficult to understand the government scheme, including training programme, food gathering process, financial procedure under the PMVDY Scheme. Many respondents shared that due to lack of educational and institution procedure they face problem. When the official came in VDVK, and understand the concept of PMVDY Scheme in English and Hindi language, then they faced problem to involved the scheme activity. Some narrative of respondents are- The respondent K.Deori, a 25-year-old tribal woman from a remote villagee and has not completed her primary education and she has struggled with illiteracy.

# 4.6.3 Limited Awareness and Concept Clearity regarding PMVDY Scheme:

A significant number of beneficiaries are not aware about the scheme due to their poor exceed and communication from the officials. As a result, that this women participation is very low and many of them are excluded from the benefit of this scheme.

When the researcher asked whether she have heard about the Scheme PMVDY, she said that she was not even aware of the scheme until recently, she has not been able to get benefit from the PMVDY Scheme. The field coordinator did not come to inform or advise them, because of their geographical location. Respondents 1, shared that-The name of the respondents is L Deori. She is 30 years old and has not completed her primary

education and she has struggle with illiteracy. Respondent 7 shared that When the researcher asked whether she have heard about the Scheme PMVDY, she said that she was not even aware of the scheme until recently, she has not been able to get benefit from the PMVDY Scheme.

Respondent 9 She said that due to the illiteracy become hinders full participation in such schemes. She shared that many women do not know about the PMVDY.

### 4.7 Infrastructure and Connectivity Challenges

The (PMVDY) Scheme launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA), through a implementing agency TRIFED, with aim to improvement of livelihood by creating value addition and marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP). The scheme establishes (VDVKs) where tribal people come to the Kendra and received training and supporting each other or Self Help Group for improvement of livelihood. But This Sonowal Kachari tribe, under the PMVDY Scheme in research region, they faced challenges including the Infrastructure and connectivity challenges including transportation problem, high cost of services, lack of accessible resources and lack of market linkage. These challenges are —

#### 4.7.1 Transportation Problems

Many tribes in the research region have faced inadequate road infrastructure and there is an unsafe public transport facility. Due to the lack of safe public transportation they were inaccessible to travel in urban area or wholesale centre to sell their product. Many respondents shared that in the rainy season their road was a very bad pathetic condition, so public vehicle do not go in this road, because the road was full of mad, and even who have their own vehicle at home, they are unable to go to the Urban Area. So, their minor forest products have destroyed. which significantly reduced their profit margins and demoralize participation in the legal market systems. In the context of transportation problem, respondent shared that-He said that the road is very bad pathetic condition, full of mad and it is difficult to travel, so he could not go to the market to sell his product.

He said that there is a river besides his house, which also makes it hard to travel to town regularly.

Respondents 15 shared that she also highlighted that poor road pathetic conditions and a nearby river made travel extremely difficult and preventing her from reaching the market to sell her products in the outside market.

#### 4.7.2 Lack of Market Linkage

The PMVDY Scheme, has been generated employment opportunities for the schedule tribe. But in the research region, because tribal people resided in remote areas. They produce various forest-based goods at home and promoting value-added products, and selling their product, but due to poor market linkage, they are unable to sell their products outside their locality or the urban centres. There are no nearby departmental stores to sell their finished product and they could not get a reasonable price for their finished products. They work very hard from gathering the forest produce to transferring a finished product. Even though they work vigorously through self-help groups or the individually, the profit they earn is very minimal, so they could not have distributed benefit or a surplus in their group. They having good traditional knowledge about forest products, and their traditional foods habit, but due to a lack of proper marketing platform, they are forced to sell their products in neighbouring areas at a very low price or the sell the product in a retail seller. Therefore, they are unable to get the opportunity or a market platform to promote their traditional skills and knowledge about their Minor Forest Product. In this context, the respondents14, shared that-. She also said that due to the lack of market linkage, she could not run the business individually.

Respondents 11shared that he said that they produce a high quantity of honey but due to lack of market or the wholesale market they sell their honey in a lower price in to the nearest shop, if they honey is not sole, they are using at home.

#### 4.7.3 Electricity Problems

In the research region, beneficiaries faced electricity problem because Under the Scheme of PMVDY, heavy electronic machinery are used for manufacturing the raw product. But the transformer was overload cannot take the machinery. Sometimes the transformer was blowm due to the overload of electricity. And there is no electricity for many days. Respondent 14 shared that She also said that due to the disturbance of electricity, the transformer could not take over load of machinery. sometimes this machinery has short-circuited. And sometimes, there is no electricity on this village due to their transformer short-circuited. And new transformer could not set up for many months.

#### 4.7.4 Financial and Economic Constraints

Due to the initial fund or financial support initial funds or financial assistance provided by the PMVDY Scheme were insufficient to get benefit or start a new business.

### 4.7.5 Inadequate Funding Support

Lack of limited capital, tribal women faced challenges such as collecting from the forest resources, purchasing raw materials, investing fund, start a business, upgrading tools and equipment, or improper fund of packaging and branding, which is significantly important for promoting value –added product and start a new business. Many beneficiaries shared that they need more financial support because the scheme provided a revolving fund of rupees 2,60,000 in each Kendra where 300 people working together VDV Kendra. So, it is very difficult for them to borrow the revolving fund and after getting benefit it must be return. Respondent 14, shared regarding the machinery cost-According to her, although this scheme provided machine under 300 people and machine is provided at rupees 4,45,000. She said that among these 300 beneficiaries, the number of machinery is very less. The tribal women are unable to work properly with such limited machinery. So everyone has work same task.

#### 4.7. 6 Involvement of Middlemen

In the absence of direct market access or institutional buyers, or living in a poor condition the indigenous tribal are often forced to sell their forest products to a middleman at low prices. According to this study, found that some middleman takes advantages who have little knowledges. They take most of the benefit which this woman was earned. They did not how much money they take, regarding benefit. As a result, many beneficiaries remains poverty and exploited. But most respondents said that when this Scheme it is help for the improvement of tribal livelihood without involving the middlemen. Some respondents shared their view regarding middlemen- respondents 7 shared that- She continued to collect the forest produces, but due to lack of the proper training and value additional knowledge, she is forced to sell their product in to the middleman in a low price. But respondents 6 shared that after involving this Scheme exploitation and involvement of middlemen was reduced.

### 4.7. 7 Absence of Establishment of Pucca Kendra

Under this PMVDY Scheme, provided Pucca Kendra and proposed to fully funded under the development of Value Chain (training) component of the scheme for MSP for MFP.(trifed.tribal.gov.in) and it is given for upgradation of value chain with facilities such as storage, primary processing, packaging facilities, and secondary items. But in this Kendra, there is no Pucca House. They took a room for rent to storing their product and also for training. In the context, respondent 16 shared that lack of pucca Kendra they store their product and take training in a rent house with pay a high cost of money.

# 4.7.8 Deforestation and Resource Depletion

Due to rising deforestation it harms to the environment, therefore it has become to find the Minor Forest Produce (MFP) in many areas. This is a major problem for tribal communities because this scheme is relying on the minor forest produces to improve their living condition Many respondents shared that chopping down, overharvesting, and resources depletion, and lack of tree-planting efforts have reduced the accessibility

and quality of natural forest product. Because of this, some people are moving to other jobs or moving away. If these problem are not solving so it is difficult to indigenous tribal people to collect the natural resources. Respondents 13 shared that he shared that due to deforestation, many forest tresses were cutting down for establishment of Small Industry specially the brick industry. So, it is difficult find the natural resources in long —term.

#### 4.8Administrative and Implementation Gaps

#### 4.8.1 Delay and Response and Weak Advocacy from Officials

Some delay response and weak advocacy from official, the beneficiaries were upset because the PMVDY Scheme are not carried out on time. Which leads to delay of starting the training, delay of advocacy and awareness programme. Government officials were not regularly visiting the field or each Kendra to monitoring, and reviewing this activity. Local officials did not actively guide or support the beneficiaries, So, beneficiaries were confused and losses their interest and some stopped to participating the scheme. respondent 12 shared that Respondent 7 shared that The field coordinator did not come to inform or advise them, because of their geographical location.



This chapter presents the most significant findings of the study based on the respondents' unstructured interview, experiences and the article review. These findings provide valuable worth and insight to know the practical realities of the (PMVDY) Scheme as experienced by tribal beneficiaries particularly in Dikhowmukh VDVK. This chapter presents the most significant findings of the study based on the respondents' unstructured interview, experiences and the article review. These findings provide valuable worth and insight to know the practical realities of the (PMVDY) Scheme as experienced by tribal beneficiaries particularly in Dikhowmukh VDVK. The findings underline both positive and negative perspective, including empowering tribal people aspects of the scheme and the persistent challenges that hinder to avail the scheme.

This discussion part look to the unveil the complex effects of PMVDY Scheme for promoting the tribal livelihoods, especially for women beneficiaries, by study areas such as income generation, awareness programme, skill development, training, gender roles, market access, and implementation blockage. It also plays a role of community awareness, generating employment opportunities, infrastructure development and government official's responsiveness in shaping the overall success and innovative leaders. The fifth chapter the researcher will discuss the findings from the previous chapter with the help of secondary data.

### 5.1 Lack of Awareness regarding the PMVDY Scheme

The study highlighted that the tribal individuals, especially women, have become aware of the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) through advocacy sessions and training programs conducted by institutions like the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), however, many tribal community awareness remains limited and they could not know how to take loan. and get benefit. Some tribal people specially the women demonstrated the While a few women were able to understand the main objectives of the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) Scheme such as value addition, income generation, and promoting self-reliance, entrepreneurs but many others in the tribal community still remain unaware of the factual purpose of the scheme.

This review literature shows that- Ahmed et al. (2016) conducted a study on the marketing of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal. They highlighting its significance in improving the economic conditions of rural communities, particularly in the forest fringe population. The study found that the local NTFP markets still operate under traditional systems, with seasonal variations influencing the collection and pricing of products like Sal leaves, fruits, and tubers. Various Marketing challenges such as the limited number of wholesale markets, monopolistic practices of traders, inadequate storage facilities, high transportation costs due to market remoteness, and poor road conditions exacerbate by wildlife disturbances. Also brokers exploit primary collectors by purchasing products at low prices without transparency in market rates. The study also observed a decline in the collection of Kendu leaves due to low selling prices, forcing to illegal market transaction.

### **5.2 Employment Opportunity**

Through this research study, it was found this PMVDY Scheme provided an employment opportunity platform. So, that tribal people improved their living condition by creating the value added products from the forest resources. The Involvement of the PMVDY scheme has significantly transformed the economic lives of tribal women in the research region. moving them from traditional or unpaid domestic worker into the income-generating and entrepreneurial activities. The scheme not only provided financial opportunities but also contributed to long-term livelihood security and selfsufficient. Prior to the scheme, most families depended solely on agriculture or daily wage labour. With the introduction of value-added forest-based products such as pickles, papad, jam, and bamboo crafts, women found new streams of income beyond traditional sources. This diversification helped reduce vulnerability to seasonal unemployment or crop failure. In this context, from this literature review it was found that Kumar, J. S. conducted the study on "Impact of Government Schemes on Tribal Development in Nagaland". His study examined various government initiatives aimed at fostering the socio-economic development of tribal communities in Nagaland. This study highlighted the significance of the schemes such as the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP), and Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana in improving the living standards of tribal populations. Studies suggested that these initiatives contributed to enhancing access to education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities among indigenous communities

### 5.3 Market Expansion Opportunities

PMVDY provides funds to collect resources and create value-added products at the Van Dhan Vikas Kendra. A minimum amount of rupees 300 given to each people to collect the raw materials. The fund is given to each Kendra for the members of Self-Help Groups or Kendra where around 300 tribal women are involved. The scheme also provides a revolving fund to tribal people so that they can use it for their essential needs. If the group or an individual benefit from it, the money has to be returned without interest.

This region of this Women not only produced forest goods for their own consumption but also access their new markets through local haat bazaars, VDVK centres, and small shop outlets. IIE also helps in branding and marketing their raw product. Training in branding, packaging, and pricing enabled them to sell in competitive environments and reach wider customer level. This improved the commercial viability of their products in to new market, they also got the license to market their market in international level. Some review literature it was found that The scheme establishes Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs), which serve as community-based processing centres, enabling the tribal population to process their forest products and access better markets. They found that PMVDY has positively impacted the socio-economic conditions of tribal groups, particularly women, by enhancing financial inclusion, improving their skills, and providing opportunities for entrepreneurship. Study is conducted by the Mehta, S., & Kapoor, R.et al (2022) Assessing the impact of PM Van Dhan Yojana on tribal communities; A case study from Madhya Pradesh, but it also found that there is lack of market accessibility, which also found in the research study in Dikhowmukh VDVK.

# 5.4 Gender Role Transformation

PMVDY has directly challenged gender stereotype in tribal communities. Women ambulating into roles such as micro-entrepreneurs, producers, trainers, or coordinators under the scheme destroyed the conventional belief that leadership, business, or financial management is a man's territory. These women now participated in value chain decisions, procurement, budgeting, and even training as a master trainer to train new SHG members. Some have taken leadership roles within their VDVKCs, specially the tribal women in the research region or have become resource persons guiding others a position of foregoing and unthinkable and incredible for many. Mudoi and Sarmah (2021) conducted a comparative study to analyse the socioeconomic and demographic status of tribal communities (STs) in Assam, Economically, ST women show higher work participation and more empowerment as compared to non-ST women, though intra-tribal disparities exist, especially in education and employment

### 5.5 Social Empowerment

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, launched the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) with the aim of promoting tribal livelihoods through the value addition of minor forest produce. The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) scheme, it is foundation of an economic initiative, has become a powerful tool for social transformation, particularly among tribal women. Beyond generating income, it has resulted in significant in how these tribal women outlook themselves and how they are recognized by others. Under PMVDY Scheme, they began engaging in incomegenerating activities like collecting, processing, and marketing minor forest produce (MFP). And individually the got the license for global marketing. This transition helped break the categorize of women as dependents. Now, this tribal people contribute financially to their households and sometimes becoming specially the women are breadwinner of her family. As a result, their judgement is increasingly worth in family decisions making. Community members, as well as family members, started

acknowledging their economic and social importance. In some cases, women who were once unnoticed in public spaces are now invited to meetings and local governance discussions, represent a clear shift in their social transformation and recognition. Getting from the review literature is that Vijaya, C. et al (2023) conducted a study on Van Dhan Yojana - "A step towards tribal entrepreneurship - Implementation in Odisha - A study". Through this study the author highlighted the effective implementation on Van Dhan Vikash Yojana(VDY) in Odisha. It's mainly focusing on the role of boosting tribal entrepreneurship. Under the "Sankalp Se Siddhi" Campaign by TRIFED, Odisha made fast progress and established with 660 VDVKs grouped into 22 clusters benefiting over 6,300 tribal beneficiaries. In districts like Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, and Koraput, tribal groups have started producing items such as sal leaf plates, honey, oil, pickles, and turmeric powder. The scheme supports training, equipment, packaging, and branding, especially for women, who make up 95.92% of the beneficiaries. With 163 VDVKCs set up and 116 operational, more than 27,000 people are already involved in value addition units. This has helped overcome market challenges and provided better income opportunities

# 5.6 Collaborative Action through SHGs

Through the upgradation of Self-Help Groups and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras under PMVDY scheme has promoted collaborative action. These groups are more than just employment units and they serve as shielded and empowering spaces for tribal women to meet regularly, share experiences, solve their problems together, and make mutual trust. The improvement of Self-Help Groups and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, under PMVDY scheme has promoted collaborative action and take decision collectively. Tribal Women, specially the remote area earlier working in home as a domestic worker or wages labour in isolation place, now they are engaging in collaborative efforts like sorting and grading forest produce, food preservation, packaging handicrafts, and marketing. This collaboration has built up social connection and encouraged community-level solidarity and cohesion among the tribal people. And today allow women to arranged better prices, take collective decision - making, and affirm their

rights more confidently. Through group initiatives and taking decision making women learned to speak up, organize events, and take on leadership roles within their SHGs such as secretary and president handled the responsibility to continue their Group, which have promoted their sense of belonging and effect the community.

This review literature shows that "most SHG activities tend to focus on household welfare rather than transformative empowerment. It further discusses how tribal women play a crucial role in economic and agricultural activities, yet face challenges such as wage discrimination, lack of training, and limited institutional support. The author suggests that increased educational opportunities, social awareness, legal protection, and supportive policies are essential for sustainable empowerment of tribal women in the region" (Das 2011)

#### 5.7 Improvement of Leadership and training skill

The Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) played a pivotal role in provided tribal women with both technical and soft skills, essential for improving their forest-based livelihoods and fostering long-term sustainability, beneficiaries received practical training, hands-on training in value addition of minor forest produce. This included activities like making pickles, jams, squashes, papads, and bamboo crafts. and also the handloom, training by utilizing the forest product. These skills not only improved the quality and hygiene standards of their products but also allowed them connect into new income-generating avenues.

# 5.8 Packaging and labelling Skill

Through this research it was found that Capacity building under PMVDY also highlighted the market access and promotion of tribal people, especially the women learned essential marketing skills such as food gathering manufacturing, packaging, product presentation, and customer negotiation and targeted marketing. From this interview it is found that that this training gave them the confidence to sell their products in local haats, exhibitions, and retail stores, thereby contributing to financial self-

reliance and sustainable and the PMVDY Scheme have improved their economic status of tribal commodities and products by promoting their tribal entrepreneurship. As a result, they began exploring new markets outside their villages and started receiving bulk orders. They learned how to improved packing and labelling skill through the various training.

# 5.9 Illiteracy among the tribal beneficiaries

Many Sonowal tribal in the research region, it is found that they have no formal or a little education and even some people did not how to write their name. Most of them did not going to the School, so it is difficult to understand the government scheme, including training programme, food gathering process, financial procedure under the PMVDY Scheme. Many respondents shared that due to lack of educational and institution procedure they face problem. From this literature review it is found that Srivani et al. (2022) conducted a study to assess the knowledge of tribal farmers about Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) activities in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in the ITDA-Rampachodavaram region of East Godavari district. They also found that tribal farmers were more aware of processing and value addition activities but had limited knowledge of financial support, marketing facilities, and loan provisions. The study emphasized that illiteracy, lack of awareness, and minimal social mobility hindered the complete utilization of the scheme's benefits.

# 5.10 Marketing Problem

It is one of the main problem under this scheme there is lack of market linkage. They produce various forest-based goods at home and promoting value-added products, and selling their product, but due to poor market linkage, they are unable to sell their products outside their locality or the urban centres. There are no nearby departmental stores to sell their finished product and they could not get a reasonable price for their finished products. They work very hard from gathering the forest produce to transferring a finished product. Even though they work vigorously through self-help groups or the individually, the profit they earn is very minimal, so they could not have distributed

benefit or a surplus in their group. They having good traditional knowledge about forest products, and their traditional foods habit, but due to a lack of proper marketing platform, they are forced to sell their products in neighbouring areas at a very low price or the sell the product Mehta, S., & Kapoor, R. et al (2022) conducted a study on Assessing the impact of PM Van Dhan Yojana on tribal communities; A case study from Madhya Pradesh. This study highlighted that they have face problem such as inadequate training, lack of proper infrastructure, and weak market linkages.

### 5.11 Electricity Problems

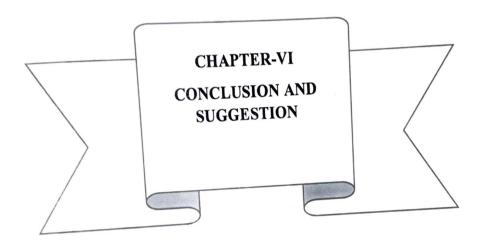
In the research region, beneficiaries faced electricity problem because Under the Scheme of PMVDY, heavy electronic machinery are used for manufacturing the raw product. But the transformer was overload cannot take the machinery. Sometimes the transformer was blowm due to the overload of electricity.

## 5.12 Major Finding

- In the field visit research, the researcher found that the adult from the age group of 25 to 45 are participating more for their empowerment from the schemes
- The finding is that through this PMVDY Scheme provided a platform for equal employment opportunity for all the tribal people. Some people are transmission from a daily wages labour in to a master trainer or a success entrepreneur.
- The major finding from the research is that due to lack of marketing linkage the people are not getting a good platform to sell their goods in a fair price.
- Due to the high rate of lack of literacy the tribal people are not aware of the PMVDY Scheme
- Many tribal people still only dependent on unpredictable weather conditions and low returns.
- Another problem of this scheme is Electricity Problem Under the Scheme of PMVDY, heavy electronic machinery is used for manufacturing the raw product.
   But the transformer was overload cannot take the machinery. Sometimes the

transformer was blowm due to the overload of electricity. Here, there is no electricity for many days or many months in this village.

In conclusion, this chapter under the PMVDY Scheme is found that this scheme takes initiative for the tribal people. The tribal people changes their livelihood and transforming from an informal labour to a formal worker and encourage their tribal community to improve their livelihood. In the research region, but many ongoing challenges that hamper the full implementation and continuous viable of these benefits. Challenges faced by the tribal people through the PMVDY Scheme. Due to high illiteracy rate, poor infrastructure, ignorance of bureaucratic to provide services to needy people, living in a remoted area. low quality of machinery and tools, advocacy problem, which hinder the tribal empowerment.



#### CONCLUSION

The PMVDY Scheme was introduced in India by honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14th April, 2018. But the PMVDY Scheme was launched in Assam by the ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA) after one year i.e. 2019. This Scheme aims to empower the tribal communities by promoting Value addition of Minor Forest Product. This Scheme has been implemented by the IIE over a period of five years old. In a short period, this scheme has shown promising result in several state of India. Many tribal people of Assam specially the tribal women who rely on previously on daily wages labour or housewife, their role or occupation was changed from an ordinary person or daily labour to a master trainer or a successful entrepreneur. The Scheme created a livelihood opportunities and raise community association through VDVK Member and set up a foundation of empowering tribal people. In spite of some positive outcome, the implementation of the PMVDY Scheme experiences several challenges. Many tribal in the research region, there's a significant lack of awareness in the wider community and low literacy rate and very few awareness programme and skill development training conducted IIE. Poor economic condition, lack of sufficient infrastructure, lack of market linkage, weak packaging and labelling skill, irregular visiting by official to monitoring and reviewing, financial support, continue to obstruct the full potential of initiative. Many tribal got benefit yet, but could not get all the facility including geographic location, delay in coordination etc. Essentially, the (PMVDY) Scheme has laid a inviolable foundation for tribal empowerment, bringing significant improvements for tribal livelihoods in a corresponding short period. The scheme has allowed many tribal individuals to transition from a daily wages labour or marginal labour roles to skilled and master trainers, and entrepreneurs. However, to enabling the long-term success and sustainability for the tribal people it and the Scheme address the prevailing operational and structural, social, economic challenges to reduce the poverty and improve their daily lives. With a continuous effort, inclusive development, Essentially, the (PMVDY) Scheme has laid a unviolable foundation for tribal empowerment, bringing significant improvements for tribal livelihoods in a corresponding short period. The scheme has allowed many tribal individuals to transition from a daily wages labour or marginal labour roles to skilled and master trainers, and entrepreneurs. With continued support, improved infrastructure, enhanced market linkages, and inclusive training and outreach initiatives, the PMVDY scheme grasp huge potential to become a transformative model for tribal development not only in Assam, but beyond the country.

### **SUGGESTION**

### Developed Local Market Linkages and Support E-Commerce Platforms

The tribal people in the research region, it was found that there is a lack of proper marketing accessibility to sell their forest product in a global market. So, the government or NGO should have organized weekly or daily tribal market, where the SHG and VDVK member sell their product to the customer. This marketing offers a permanent market platform for showcasing the tribal product. And promoted a develop comprehensive communication and promotion strategy. And this communities also collaborated with digital media or an E-Commerce platform like TRIFED, local NGO, online platform like instamart, swiggymart, departmental store.

## Improved Packaging and labelling Skill of Tribal Entrepreneurs

During the research study, it was found that this product is sold in imperfectly and unattractively, which reduces the market value and quality of product. So, the government agencies like TRIFED and NGO, should conducted regular packaging and labelling workshop training for this VDVK member to improve the packaging and labelling skill.

### Awareness Campaign in local Dialects

The increasing illiteracy rate is the major problem to understand and aware of the PMVDY Scheme. By using common radio, street play, mobile van with loudspeaker, wall painting, folk music, spread awareness among the community. And also engaged a local youth or a peer educator to explain the scheme.

# Invigorate adult literacy rate and Essential Skill development skill

Lack of education anticipate tribal people from understanding and actively participation in the PMVDY Scheme. Many of them under the Scheme only engaged in one training programme. Therefore, set up a literacy training or classes in the VDVK.and facilitate formal learning, various training and development, form-filling support.

# Fostering diversification of livelihood and Climate Stability Planning

Many tribal families in the research region struggled to survive on traditional farming practices, they often only dependent on unpredictable weather conditions and low returns. So, promote more non-firm activities such poultry firming, bee-keeping, sericulture, mushroom cultivation and bamboo craft. And also training this member climate stability planning, new technology for harvesting, risk management training, disaster management for income security.

# Ameliorate Rural Electricity Infrastructure and Promote Alternative System

Due to the electricity problem, install alternative sources such as solar system to reduce the dependence of frequent outage of Electricity. And must upgrade the electricity a power supply line in the VDVKC.

This chapter researcher has described some suggestion for the tribal people to improve the scheme better implementation and reach the PMVDY scheme who have really need. and reduces the socio-economic problem and reduces their poverty. Therefore, they improve their living and being a successful entrepreneur.

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# APPENDIX

### INFORMED CONSENT

I, Kabyashree Borthakur a student of Social Work Department, Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva Vishwavidyalaya, Guwahati Campus, declare that this interview schedule shall only be used to fulfil the objectives of my dissertation, on the topic "Assessing the effectiveness of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana on Empowering Tribal Communities with special reference to Dikhowmukh, Van Dhan Vikas Kendra, Sivasagar District Assam".

KabyashreeBorthakur MSW4<sup>th</sup>Semester Department of Social Wok(DSW)

# INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- 1. Name of the respondent:
- 2. Age:
- 3. Address:
- 4 Educational status:
- 5. What are the Monthly Household Income? (if you interest to sharing your income before joining this PMVDY Scheme)
- 6. Are you a member of any Self Help Group (SHG)? If yes when you joined the SHG?
- 7. Do you collect Minor Forest Produce (MFP)? If yes, which ones?
- 8. Have you heard about the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY)? If yes, from where did you first hear about the scheme?
- 9. Do you know the main objectives of PMVDY? (If you know then explain)
- 10. Are you aware of the facilities provided under this scheme (such as training, financial assistance, marketing support)?
- 11. Have you received any training through the scheme? If yes, what kind of training you have received?
- 12. Have you received financial support under this scheme? If yes, how much and for what purpose?
- 13. Have you noticed any improvement or any benefit in your income after participating in this scheme?
- 14. Are you involved in value addition activities like packaging or processing MFPs under this scheme?
- 15. Do you fill any difficulties for branding the product?
- 16. Has the scheme helped you in accessing better markets for your products?
- 17. How do you sell your forest produce now?
- 18. Have you learned any new skills through the PMVDY training programs?
- 19. Do you feel more confident for managing your forest-based livelihood after participating in PMVDY?

- 20. Has the scheme contributed to the overall development of your Kendra? If yes, how?
- 21. What challenges did you face in accessing the benefits of the scheme?
- 22. Do you face difficulty in selling your products at fair prices? If Yes, Why?
- 23. What impact in your livelihood by the implementation of the PMVDY scheme?
- 24. In your opinion, what type of steps can be taken for improvement of your livelihood?