



Exploring Corporate Governance and Women's Empowerment: Closing Gender Disparities in Tribal Communities

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted on: 22-03-2025

Published on: 15-04-2025

Keywords:

*Corporate Governance,
Gender Inclusivity, , Skill
Development, Tribal
Communities, Women
Empowerment.*

ABSTRACT

This study explores the intersection of corporate governance and women empowerment, with a specific focus on bridging gender gaps in tribal communities. Corporate governance serves as a crucial framework for ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in organizational processes. However, tribal women continue to face systemic barriers such as limited education, socio-cultural norms, economic constraints, and underrepresentation in leadership roles, which hinder their participation in corporate structures. Through an in-depth investigation, this research identifies these persistent challenges and examines the transformative role corporate governance can play in empowering tribal women. Key findings highlight the need for inclusive policy frameworks, leadership training, and financial and skill development programs to promote greater representation and participation. Strategies such as strengthening corporate policies for gender inclusion, increasing leadership quotas, offering business incubation support, and implementing community-based awareness programs are proposed to drive sustainable empowerment. The study



underscores the importance of collaboration between corporate entities, government bodies, and community stakeholders in fostering gender-inclusive practices that pave the way for equitable development. By addressing these gaps, corporate governance has the potential to not only uplift tribal women but also enrich organizational decision-making with diverse perspectives, ultimately contributing to long-term socio-economic growth. The research emphasizes the urgent need for policy reforms, targeted interventions, and continuous evaluation mechanisms to create sustainable pathways for empowering tribal women through corporate governance.

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15222846>

INTRODUCTION

Increased corporate governance comes with the utmost importance of transparency and accountability in organisational processes. Recently, the inclusion of social components like gender inclusivity and the empowerment of women have emerged alongside the discussion of corporate governance. The inclusion of tribal women is still a nuanced and unexplored aspect of governance despite considerable progress in incorporating the feminine elements of most corporate governance practices. This calls for examining the broader, more complex issues tribal women face and how governance structures can assist in resolving these disparities. Tribal communities, defined by their distinctly different cultures and socio-economic status, face social subsystems that discourage women from participating in the economy and decisions that affect them. The barriers arise from the lack of essential education opportunities, socio-cultural barriers, economic marginalization, and inadequate representation in office buildings or other positions of power. From this perspective, corporate governance can radically change the situation for tribal women by implementing policies that allow participation, opening opportunities, and developing programs aimed at these communities. In addition, the participation of tribal women in governance enhances the living conditions of the family and the community and the quality and competitiveness of the decisions made by organizations. Firms integrating gender diversity into their governance structures are more likely to be innovative, improve their corporate image, and make lasting socio-economic contributions. With respect to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities, skills development initiatives, and inclusive policies, corporate



governance can facilitate sustainable disempowerment and transform the world into an empowered place.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Even though gender equity is often discussed in the boardroom, tribal women members face many challenges regarding their attendance and involvement in the corporate and decision-making structures. Some of the barriers include a lack of sufficient education, socio-economic and cultural aspects, the status of women in the community, and a lack of adequate women leaders. Furthermore, the needs of tribal women are often irrelevant to the majority of corporate policies and initiatives that do not seek to empower tribal women. The absence of adequate governance gaps not only covers women and gender discrimination but also the broader scope of socio-economic stagnation in the development of tribal societies. This study aims to analyze the gaps above and assess corporate governance's influence on tribal women toward building an inclusive culture.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is of great relevance in dealing with the issues of gender gaps in corporate governance, in this case, through focusing on tribal women, who, as per the development story, are a bypassed group. While analyzing the constraints to their involvement, this study highlights how corporate governance systems may be transformed to be more participative. The results from this study will benefit policymakers, business authorities, and social agencies wanting to formulate policies to inclusively integrate tribal women as active participants in socioeconomic and leadership ventures. In addition, the study addresses the issue of inclusiveness from the perspective of social responsibility and tribal women empowerment in equity gender and corporate social responsibility discourse. It also demonstrates the contribution of business to sustainable development through inclusive governance, where diversity in decision-making is prioritized. This research study will lay the groundwork for future studies aimed at broadening the scope by devising standards to assess corporate governance that has the potential to encourage women's empowerment in other marginalized societies. This research focuses on the interaction between the empowerment of women and corporate governance in relation to tribal societies. Identifying the gaps, measuring the impacts of corporate behaviour, and formulating strategies to promote inclusive governance tailored to meet the needs of tribal women is also included. In doing so, this study attempts to address the negligence of gender and development issues within corporate norms, showing how corporate governance can lead to the creation of an equitable society.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To examine the current corporate governance practices concerning gender inclusivity in tribal communities.
- To identify the key challenges faced by tribal women in accessing corporate opportunities and leadership roles.
- To propose strategies for enhancing corporate governance frameworks to promote women empowerment in tribal communities.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This investigation focuses on how corporate governance enables tribal women's empowerment through integration into the company's culture and adoption of gender equality. It examines existing business policies, programmes, and structures and their impact on the decision-making potential of tribal women. The study intends to determine what social, economic, cultural, and political factors act as constraints to holding office or exercising leadership. The subjects of this study are indigenous people and the principal concern is how they participate in business governance across various sectors. It also investigates the performance of gendered private and public enterprises and seeks to establish whether they contribute towards gender equality and the advancement of tribal women. The approaches or strategies that seek to assist women through social change are analysed to find out what impact they have on regulations, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and women's skill development programmes in the studied regions. This study aims to determine factors that account for failure to meet these objectives. Another aim would be to propose policy reforms which enhance corporate governance systems for tribal women so that all participants can be afforded opportunities and be empowered. In order to address this issue, this study seeks to examine the impact of governance in tribal societies on women's empowerment. It analyses these phenomena in order to contribute to the multidisciplinary discourse on gender and socio-economic equality within the context of organisational development and growth. It demonstrates how ethical corporate governance can facilitate social development.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are some problems with this study, even though its main goal is to look at company governance and women's empowerment in tribal communities in a broad way. First, the study only looked at a few



tribal groups, which means that the results might not be applicable to other areas. Second, there may not be a lot of information about tribal women's involvement in corporate governance because there aren't many reports and figures available. Third, cultural sensitivity and sociopolitical issues may affect how easy it is to get information and how willing people are to talk about their experiences. It mostly examines how corporations are run, but it does discuss politics and the economy. It doesn't discuss how the government affects businesses. These issues underscore the need for further research and larger studies to deepen our understanding of the subject.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A few of the studies undertaken have focused on the importance of corporate governance in advancing inclusiveness and diversity in gender matters. Adams and Ferreira claimed that gender-balanced boards 'improve organisational performance', in their case studies, and enable better decision-making within the organisation. Also, Terjesen, Sealy and Singh have described the value of diversity in the governance of corporations and have shown that there is a need for policies that will motivate women to assume authoritative positions within the organisation (2009) Widely Known.

Studies concerning tribal sociopolitical structures have highlighted the multi-dimensional tribal women's problems anthropologically, particularly educational and occupational problems dissemination (Xaxa, 2011). These types of problems are certainly constraining them to be economically and administratively active. In addition, Baruah (2013) has documented that participation of the business sector through skill providing and economic support to underprivileged groups in these communities will have sustainable positive results for the communities' economy.

Sharma and Bhatnagar (2017) have argued that the CSR strategies which aim at educational and skill provision and financial literacy constitute proactive means of reducing the tribal women gap in inclusiveness to business governance structures - heights of the tribal communities. The initiatives yielded positive results and these positive changes were consequent to wise women adopting greater CSR strategies.

Despite unlocking this area, little attention has been given to how corporate governance interacts with the domain of tribal women empowerment. This gap clearly needs additional research on how tribal women's unique challenges can be integrated within the corporate governance contours to enhance their decision making and leadership engagement.



This study intends to examine the nexus between corporate governance and women empowerment, particularly concerning tribal societies. It strives to fill the gaps, determine the impacts of corporate sponsorships, and design governance systems that are responsive to the needs of tribal women. In addressing those questions, the study seeks to add to the debate on equality and inclusive development concerning the corporate world and the possible contribution of corporate governance towards building an equitable society.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This analysis examines the role of corporate governance in empowering tribal women, identifying key challenges, impactful governance aspects, and strategies for inclusion. The findings offer insights into bridging gender gaps and fostering equitable participation in tribal communities.

Table No: 1

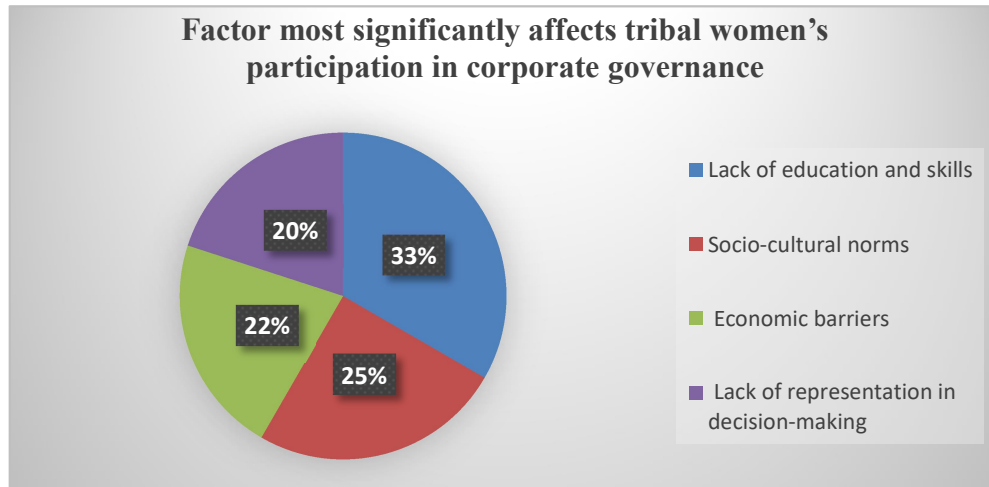
Factor most significantly affects tribal women's participation in corporate governance

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a) Lack of education and skills	20	33.3%
b) Socio-cultural norms	15	25.0%
c) Economic barriers	13	21.7%
d) Lack of representation in decision-making	12	20.0%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The majority (33.3%) identified lack of education and skills as the biggest barrier, followed by socio-cultural norms (25%), economic barriers (21.7%), and lack of

representation (20%). This highlights the need for holistic interventions addressing education, cultural norms, and economic empowerment.



Source: Table No: 1

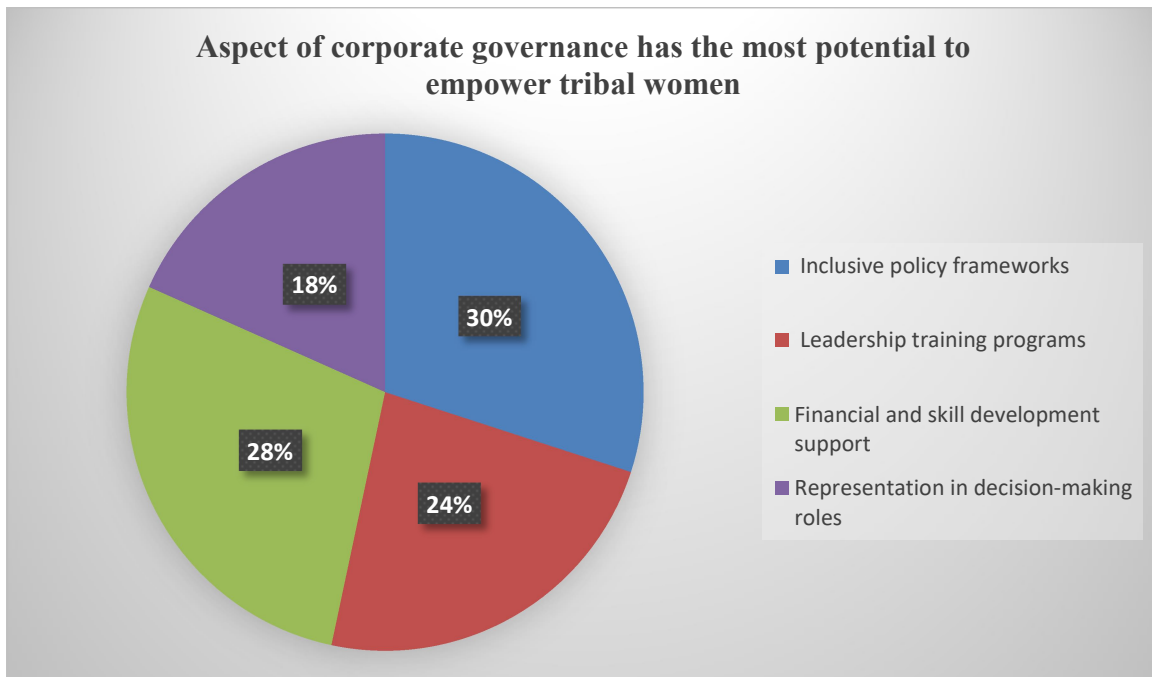
Table No: 2

Aspect of corporate governance has the most potential to empower tribal women

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a) Inclusive policy frameworks	18	30.0%
b) Leadership training programs	14	23.3%
c) Financial and skill development support	17	28.3%
d) Representation in decision-making roles	11	18.3%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Inclusive policy frameworks (30%) emerged as the most impactful, with financial and skill development support (28.3%) and leadership training (23.3%) also seen as crucial. Addressing these aspects can promote sustainable empowerment.



Source: Table No: 2

Table No: 3

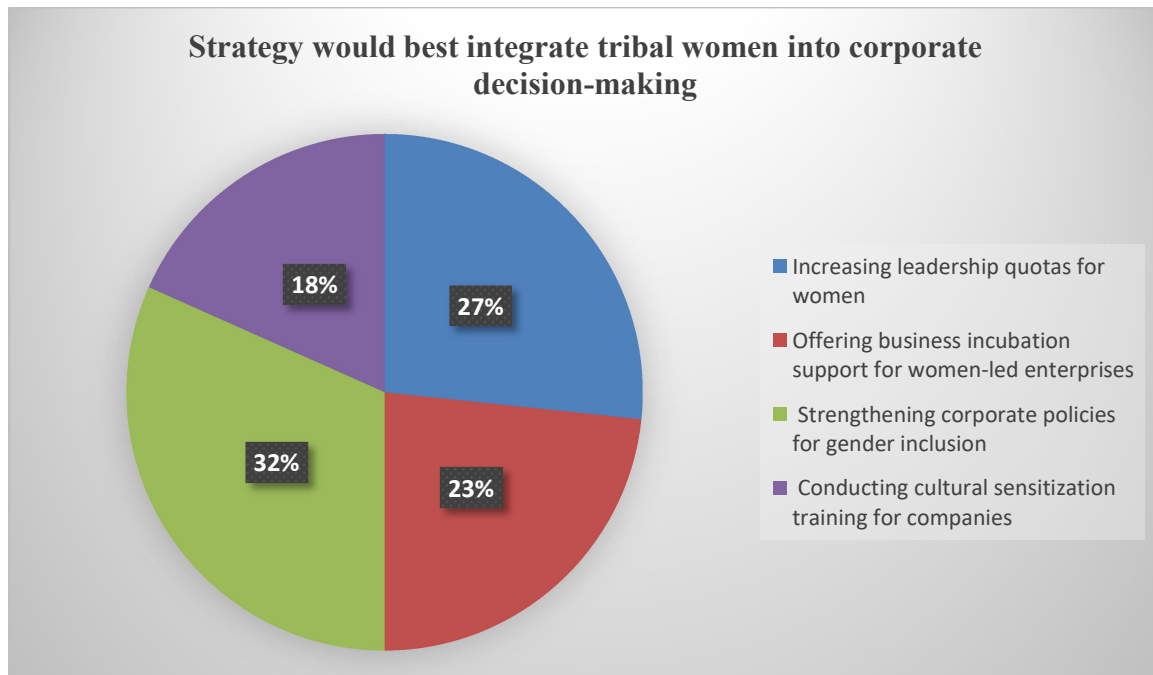
Strategy would best integrate tribal women into corporate decision-making

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a) Increasing leadership quotas for women	16	26.7%
b) Offering business incubation support for women-led enterprises	14	23.3%
c) Strengthening corporate policies for gender inclusion	19	31.7%
d) Conducting cultural sensitization training for companies	11	18.3%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The top strategy (31.7%) is strengthening corporate policies for gender inclusion, followed by increasing leadership quotas (26.7%) and business incubation support (23.3%). These

findings emphasize policy reform, leadership opportunities, and entrepreneurial support as key drivers for change.



Source: Table No: 3

FINDINGS

The study's findings demonstrated that the primary obstacles preventing tribal women from participating in company governance are the gaps in their education, skills, and social as well as cultural hindrances. Respondents felt that policy and funding tools, as well as programmes to teach entrepreneurial and leadership skills, should be made available to tribal women. Among the primary actions termed as 'negative affirmative action' include policies that allow greater discrimination of women, increasing the number of women in leadership positions, and providing business incubation services. Proposals were also made to change company attitudes and practices around hiring and provide mentoring aid to women and mothers who come to work after giving birth. In addition, while community campaigns to increase awareness were said to be directed at the general public, some attempts were made to engage the private sector for the purpose of supporting permanent empowerment. It was clear from the feedback we received that the respondents appreciated the CSR initiatives aimed at educating on entrepreneurship and financial literacy along with those that dealt with education and skill training. From our study, we saw that the cooperating companies' attitudes towards the programme



affected their behaviours and practices. Thus, the companies were invited to develop measures aimed at improving the business ethos. Many people were of the opinion that the presence of tribal women in positions of authority would enhance decision making, foster innovation, and bring about a positive social and economic impact. The findings suggest that collaborative efforts between the government, the business sector, and community organisations would yield the most effective approaches to empower tribal women in governance and business.

SUGGESTIONS

The assessment contends that focusing on the education and skill acquisition impediments of tribal women corporate employees is vital. Policies which advocate for tribal people need to be formulated. It is recommended that discriminatory corporate policies regarding gender and the allocation of leadership positions be relaxed in a way that enhances the participation of women in decision-making roles. Financial literacy, entrepreneurship and business incubation training geared towards active and meaningful participation of tribal women in the corporate world will be possible. In addition, mentorship programmes, open access to employment opportunities, and non-discriminatory remuneration practices foster equity and diversity. The study underscores the importance of community sensitisation initiatives to address existing socio-cultural negativity towards women in leadership. There is an urgent need for almost all government and private organisational community actors to formulate strategies aimed at achieving effective empowerment for almost everyone. Finally, tribal societies will be able to close the gender gap through the initiatives with the support of a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework that allows for the alteration of any barriers to assistance.

CONCLUSION

The research effectively argues that corporate governance can directly provide significant support to the tribal woman by overcoming such issues as the absence of education and skills, ethnocentric socio-cultural norms, and economic hindrances. Properly developed strategies such as inclusive policy frameworks, leadership training, and financial education programmes can help increase the level of participation of tribal women in decision-making positions. In addition, there is a great need for better gendered corporate policies, corporate mentorship, and a partnership with the government and private sectors to provide genuine pathways to sustainable empowerment. Incorporating tribal women into corporate governance not only enhances women's empowerment but also brings greater diversity into organisational decision-making which will help boost socio-economic development in the long run.



A multi-stakeholder approach that focuses on education, economic integration, policy and legislative change, as well as cultural identity reform is necessary in order to facilitate progress toward these ends.

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