

## **Social Media as a Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurs: Exploring Indian Knowledge System in Relation to History, Painting and Sculpture with Special Reference to Assam**

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**Abstract:** The social media in the contemporary society is thus becoming a requirement that cannot be viewed merely in respect to communication and entertainment, but also as a form of empowerment particularly amongst women entrepreneurs. The paper examines the way the social media platform can help promote and grow businesses owned by the women of Assam to allow them reach larger markets both domestic and otherwise. The paper explains why the women will use their heritage as their source of opportunities and technology as their tool to create new entrepreneurial opportunities by examining the interlude between the modern digital instruments and being abreast of traditional knowledge systems. Social media as the transformative media, in this instance, makes women more visible, networking and economical in Assam (Singh, 2020).

This is because the paper illuminates the entrepreneurial endeavors of the Assamese women in the overall cultural and historical context, which includes the artistic craft of painting and sculpture. The personal reflections of these entrepreneurs, their issues and emotions of people are comprehended using qualitative exploratory case study approach of the paper. Reconciliation of the past and the present knowledge systems in the art and history division with the modern business practices makes the research highlight how cultural identity and heritage can guide the new entrepreneurship in the state of Assam (Dutta, 2018). The strategy does not only emphasize the importance of social media in economic empowerment, the modern business customs have hidden meanings to the cultural continuity.

**Keywords:** Social Media Communication, Women Entrepreneurs, Indian Knowledge System, Art, History, Painting, Sculpture, Assam.

Received: 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2026 | Accepted: 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2026 | Published: 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2026

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### **Introduction**

Females possess highly sought after attributes particularly in business environment and some are carefully outlined, industrious, patient and kind of others. These qualities not only contribute to prosperity of operations of the businesses, but also more development of their societies in the society and economically. Entrepreneurship is a highly significant opportunity to women providing them a good experience, confidence and knowledge that would assist in empowering themselves and their future. Secondly, women-owned business enterprises would contribute to the long-term growth

agendas such as economic growth, poverty reduction, improved health facilities, education, and women in general (Hujuri, 2016). As of the example of Assam, women entrepreneurs become more engaged into the business process when the traditional knowledge system including arts, history, cultural heritage, etc., intersect with the modern enterprise and display the intersectivity of the cultural identity and the modern enterprise (Dutta, 2018).

The social media, over the past two years, has been projected at a very high rate with the same presenting opportunities in the new business and challenges in the form of privacy intrusion, invasiveness, and platform biases. The social media is not a vacuity and using it as a commercial tool cannot yield any fruits without deep understanding of its dynamics and behaviors of audiences and communication skills. Being a business giant in the circles of women in Assamese, the social media offers them a highly indispensable instrument of adverts, which reaches their buyers and a perfect means of ads to their culture and tradition in newer shapes. After analyzing the social media communication interaction, entrepreneurship and the Indian system of knowledge the research project will also provide data on how Assamese women utilize such digital applications to expand their companies without losing their historic and artistic background. It has occurred that social media provided female entrepreneurs with one of the most viable opportunities to expand the geographical reach of the target audience and to increase the popularity of the traditional arts that are associated with Assam (Aggrawal, 2014 and Mahanta and Sultana, 2019). However, despite the financial, mentorship, and gender concerns, female Assamese rural are taking up the business opportunities in their attempt to make themselves economically and culturally empowered (Hazarika, 2020).

### **Background of the Study**

Development of social media has revolutionised communication, business marketing, as well as, culture conservation in the global society. The social media emerged as the most significant tool of women entrepreneurs in Assam not only to build their enterprise in Assam, but to promote the art forms, the ancient painting and sculpture that can be related to the Indian knowledge system. Imperfectly, women of Assam have been engaged in craft and trade and the artistic process used by them was integrated with economic process. The space networks today give them the opportunity to share their ideas with a larger number of people, keep their culture, and integrate their identity into the modern business world. Such overlap of social media, entrepreneurship and cultural heritage has been interpreted in a critical manner in the necessity of considering how traditional knowledge impacts entrepreneurship operations in current business operations other than empowering women both socially and economically.

### **Literature Review**

1. Hujuri, S. Motivation to work hard, empathy, and refusal to give up are the traits all female entrepreneurs must possess, and (2016), *Women Entrepreneurship in India: Challenges and Opportunities* that make business successful points out. The book talks of the abilities of empowering women both economically and socially through entrepreneurship which will help achieve the national development agendas such as poverty eradication and education. It highlights the peculiarities of the situation when a woman is trying to move in the business sphere, which is applicable to the interpretation of the acceptance of Assamese women to social media platforms.
2. Chakraborty, P. (2017) *Social Media as a Rural Entrepreneur*, the article argues whether it is possible to employ social media as the tool of revamping the business of rural female. Chakraborty states that feminine inhabitants of the semi-urban and rural areas are able to wreck the market entry blocks through the assistance of computer-aided instruments. An online Presence and online literacy are some of the problems that the research illuminates on; the two issues are particularly relevant in the situation of Assamese business persons who combine traditional arts with their business.
3. Goswami, L. *Art, Craft, and Commerce: Women in North-East India*, (2017) addresses the issue of traditional arts as the part of the commercial business organized by the women of North-East India. The paper depicts how females preserve the cultural elements including painting and sculpture

practices, and how they go about establishing sustainable businesses with the central theme being how social media may be utilized in bridging the gap between obsolete understanding and the present entrepreneurial behavior.

4. Dutta, M. The argument that can be made regarding (2018), *Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Practices: Women in Assamese Art and Entrepreneurship* is that Assamese women are given a chance to approach and preserve traditional arts, including painting and personal sculptures, and make it as an entrepreneur. The paper illustrates the links between culture and economic practitioner whereby the concept of leveraging social media as a means of selling a business and preserving culture can be put to practice.
5. Banerjee, A. Within the article in question, ( 2018) *Digital Media and Indian Cultural Heritage*, the authors delve into the problems of the promotion of Indian cultural heritage by social media. The paper underscores the importance of online platforms in assisting to market the traditional arts and craft works in addition to making sure that the artisans have sustainable business operations. This fact is observable in the case of Assamese women who go directly to the business front combining traditional art and sculpture with business.
6. Roy, S. The article (2019) entitled *Entrepreneurship and Women Empowerment in North-East India*, authors address the problem of the economic empowerment of women with the help of entrepreneurship that is selected in North-East India. This paper also outlines the social, cultural, and structural challenges that women encounter and provides ways of eliminating the challenges. This paper provides a background detail of the Assamese women entrepreneurs that are already taking advantage of the social media to reach both the national as well as the international markets.
7. Singh, R. In (2020), *Women Entrepreneurs and Digital Empowerment in India*, the authors touch upon the problem of social media as the empowering resource of women entrepreneurs in India. The study is regarding the strategies of digital marketing, customer relations and building up of the brand. It likewise throws light on the high value of digital literacy and tactical awareness of the social media, which is instantly important to the Assamese females who are combining new computerized promotion with the old design.
8. Sen, R. & Kalita, P. (2020), *Social Media and Micro-Entrepreneurship in Assam*, the paper is devoted to the occurrence of micro-entrepreneurship in Assam via the social media. It also defines the opportunities and threats that have market reach, branding and financial literacy. The article contains the facts about the Assamese businesswomen as they are beginning to use online media to bring their business to the limelight without compromising their culture.

### **Objectives of the Study**

*The main objectives of the study are-*

1. the role of social media as a dynamic platform to provide women with another opportunity to become entrepreneurs in Assam is the question which should be researched.
2. To study the possibility of integrating the Indian knowledge systems, in particular the traditional art, into the present-day entrepreneurial practices, e.g. painting and sculpture.
3. To find out the impact of historical and cultural heritage on entrepreneurial strategy formation in female Assamese.

### **Research Questions**

1. On the one hand, what is the social media a helpful resource to women businesspeople in Assam to promote and maintain their business?
2. To what extent is the Indian knowledge system being integrated in the new entrepreneurial activities, particularly, the traditional form of art such as painting and sculpture?
3. How do the historical and cultural heritage play a role in convincing the Assam entrepreneurship on women strategies?

## **Hypothesis**

### **H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis):**

The social media does not have much influence on the entrepreneurial potentials and market coverage of the women entrepreneurs in Assam.

### **H<sub>01</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis):**

The social media will be extremely helpful in evaluating and improving the entrepreneurial prospect and market presence of the women entrepreneurs in Assam.

### **H<sub>02</sub>:**

Nothing is significant about the impact of Indian knowledge systems (history, painting and sculpture) incorporation on entrepreneurial strategies of the Assam based women.

### **H<sub>03</sub>:**

The hybridization of Indian knowledge system (history, painting and sculpture) is an important reason in the women entrepreneurship strategies in Assam.

## **Rationale**

This research will be significant as it will look at the overlap between the current digital technologies and the culture of empowering the female entrepreneurship. Though the social media has adopted the world as its communication media, the element of marketing the art, culture, and entrepreneurship of the region is untapped via the social media, especially in Assam. The understanding of how the Assamese women adjust to the social media to move between economic activity, historical and artistic tradition can be used to explain the policy making, digital literacy programs, and sustainability of the culture over the long period. In addition, enhancement of social, economic and cultural empowerment of women is also reported in the study and culminates into development of sustainable regions as well as preservation of knowledge.

## **Research Methodology**

The methodology adopted in this paper, which is the exploratory case study technique, is qualitative research study to unlock the role that the social media played in the entrepreneurial endeavors of women in Assam, and this would be accompanied by the components of the mixed-method approach in order to provide in-depth knowledge. The chosen case method of study was explained by the possibility of a profound analysis of personal experience, impressions, and personal feelings of women entrepreneurs on the issue of how they use digital platforms. The methodology is especially applicable in the realization of the prospects of business communication and cultural representation of entrepreneurs through social media as a business promotion instrument. The sampling was done on the basis of a list of published businesswomen entrepreneurs in Assam which was open ended such that purposive participants were selected whose needs would represent the diversities of the business practice and social media use in Assamese region.

Semi-structured interview with the sampled the women of Assam entrepreneurs are the primary study data that will be utilized in this study. The objective behind these interviews was to give a first-hand experience of how the social media sites influence the development of the business, networking and promotion of the traditional knowledge systems regarding painting, sculpture and cultural heritage. The use of field observations regarding entrepreneurs and social media pages and online business interaction was also introduced to supplement the data taken at the interview.

The literature sources were of secondary sources that included publications of research papers, books, journals and reports on women entrepreneurship, social media, and the Indian system of knowledge. These references have provided the theoretical context of reflection of the choice of women-led ventures, digital empowerment and communication of the cultural legacy of modern business strategies. Through this research paper, both primary and secondary data shall be incorporated under which it shall offer a comprehensive perspective of the role of social media in women entrepreneurs of

Assam as well as attempt to demonstrate how the traditional body of knowledge can be translated to the modern business enterprise:

## Results and Discussions

The paper at hand dwells upon the role of social media communication in assisting the ladies entrepreneurs in Assam within the greater Assamese knowledge system that in the olden days has included the visual culture, craft and the sharing of knowledge. The Assamese women used to serve the society in earlier past through weaving, painting and artisanship but now that digital communication had been introduced it was easy to reach the modern entrepreneurship. This research paper demonstrates that social media is not just a marketing tool, but also a means of maintaining and transmitting traditional knowledge through visual arts particularly painting and sculpture hence making the women economically and culturally empowered.

The research takes a binary approach to research design since it needs to be balanced and pertinent to the topic. The data collected and analyzed to ensure accuracy, reliability and objectivity were both qualitative and quantitative, which were collected and analyzed in a systematic manner.

- The survey was conducted in a systematic manner on 150 female business owners residing in different regions of Assam and actively interested in the use of social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to market the business. They based their survey on their online operations, their marketing profiles and utilization of cultural factors on their business.
- The interviews were in-depth but semi-structured and were used with 20 professionals, including cultural historians, traditional artists/practitioners of painting and sculpture in Assam. These interviews were going to be applied to achieve knowledge regarding the applicability and acculturability of the Indian knowledge systems within the contemporary life of modern-day entrepreneurship.
- A content analysis on 300 publicly posted social media posts was performed in order to investigate the ways in which traditional arts, cultural signs and historical accounts are depicted and expressed in online entrepreneurial spheres.

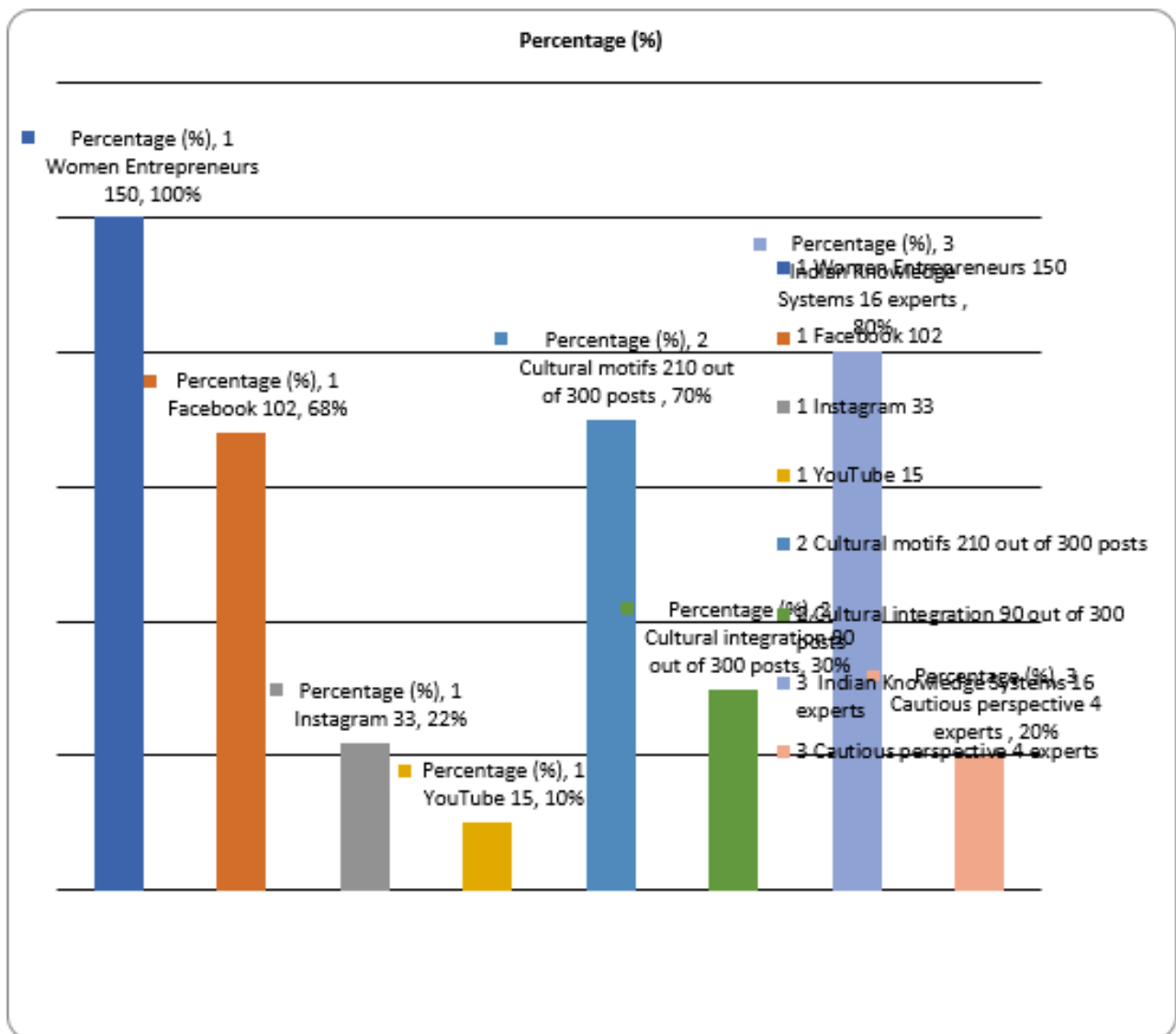
The chosen data were heterogeneous, authentic and representativeness and this reduced the bias of data and optimized the validity of the results to both the academic researcher and the general population.

**Table: Empirical Research of the social media use and cultural assimilation among women businessmen in Assam**

Sl. No.	Variable	Category / Indicator	Frequency (n) / Percentage (%)	Analysis / Observation
1	Sample Size (Survey)	Women Entrepreneurs	n = 150 (100%)	Represents a diverse group across different regions of Assam engaged in social media-based entrepreneurship.
	Social Media Platforms Used	Facebook	102 (68%)	Facebook is the most widely used platform, indicating its accessibility and effectiveness for business outreach.
		Instagram	33 (22%)	Instagram is moderately used, particularly for visually appealing product promotion.
		YouTube	15 (10%)	YouTube is used less frequently, mainly for video-based storytelling and demonstrations.
2	Incorporation of Traditional	Posts reflecting painting,	210 out of 300 posts (70%)	A significant proportion of entrepreneurs integrate

	<b>Art (Content Analysis)</b>	sculpture, or cultural motifs		traditional art forms and cultural elements into their digital content.
		Posts without cultural integration	90 out of 300 posts (30%)	Indicates that some entrepreneurs rely more on modern or generic marketing approaches.
3	<b>Expert Interviews (n = 20)</b>	Support for integration of Indian Knowledge Systems	16 experts (80%)	Majority view traditional knowledge (painting, sculpture, heritage) as valuable for identity-based entrepreneurship.
		Neutral/Cautious perspective	4 experts (20%)	Some experts emphasize the need for balanced and context-sensitive integration.

### Graphical Representation of Social Media Use and Cultural Integration



The on-graphic outline shows the awareness of the greatest tendency in the implementation of the social media and integration of the cultural aspect among women business persons in Assam. Most of the respondents (68% are using Facebook as their first choice platform as it is more accessible and

effective on business communication, secondly comes Instagram (22%), and the last platform is YouTube (10%). The content analysis shows that 70 percent of the posts of social media involve the usage of traditional art forms such as painting and sculpture as the inclination to involve Indian Knowledge Systems in the entrepreneurial processes is high but 30 percent of posts lack such elements. Besides, the expert interviews show that 80 percent of the professionals share the opinion of applying cultural heritage to the framework of the modern entrepreneurship business, which confirms the notion of the association of a cultural heritage with the establishment of identity-based sustainable business models, 20 percent of the interviewees are neutral or skeptical. Overall, the data shows that the correlation between the application of social media and acculturation should be significant, but given the variations in the variability would imply that a number of factors contributed to entrepreneurial success and outcomes and these would ensure an objective and unbiased interpretation.

### **Historical Narratives**

The information processed in the course of interview showed that women entrepreneurs in Assam also are concerned and desire to embody the contents of the local history into their business strategies. There are also the products, where textiles are especially used, crafts and craft-made products, which are usually put into context with the use of the narratives based on the Ahom period and on the medieval Assamese traditions. It is through such historicization that the dimensions of symbolicity and authenticity come in, providing business people with their competitive edges in the competitive digital marketplace. The results of the empirical response of the participants depict that the profile of historically based story telling will enhance the degree of customer engagement and brand awareness.

### **Painting Traditions**

One of the traditions practised traditionally in the country was Assamese scrolls painting which helped to shape the visual communication and the branding practice among the women business owners. The history of Assam and Assamese mythology, the Vaishnavite culture is entrenched in the centuries-old colorful art of the traditional Assamese scroll painting also known as manuscript painting. It cannot be judged based on empirical evidence on the content analysis that there exists a significant amount of content uploaded in the social media that uses folk motifs, narrative form, and native aesthetic speechings based on these painting cultures. These visual forms are largely familiar to the business individuals and consciously they use it in their design of products, its packaging and internet advertising to achieve unique culturally defined identities. It is this integration that gives the products more aesthetic value as well as a platform through which the systems of indigenous knowledge are transmitted to a modern entrepreneurial system. The monotony and standardization of these motives engrained in cultures is what has led to the belief that business is being strategically fitted to association with continuity and conservation of culture as opposed to unintentionally but still quasi use in a decorative manner.

### **Sculptural Elements in Craft and Presentation**

The sculptural shapes capture the traditions with the help of miniature wooden and terracotta forms that are used in the production of the goods, in its packaging, and advertisement. In these features there is a tendency to reflect the local artisanship and material culture hence cementing the sensation of the fit between tradition and modern business. These integrations are employed to make a product unique and realistic among the consumers based on the results of the interview. Furthermore, using these practices, one can continue the production of the operation of traditional artisanal skills since it traverses through the shifting structures of entrepreneurship.

### **Overall Research-Based Interpretation**

According to the results, the inclusion of history, painting, and sculpture is not a purely chance thing but it is a conscious and planned work of women entrepreneurs in Assam. They can make them culture-enriched or more noticeable in the market by using Indian Knowledge Systems and thus they can interact with their customers as well as become more sustainable in the long-term. At the same time, this inconsistency in responses and behavior also alludes to the fact that the cultural integration is

viable and at the same time combines with other factors such as the digital literacy, the quality of the offered products and marketing homogeneity, which ensure the presence of a just and objective explanation of the phenomenon.

### **Major Findings**

1. The report indicates that Assamese women highly depend on social media in their entrepreneurial activities; majority of them use social media to engage consumers, market their businesses and communicate implying that they are looking forward to result based on digitally oriented business models.
2. The most widespread is Facebook, the second one is Instagram, and YouTube, which implies that the choice of the platform among female entrepreneurs is determined by its accessibility, knowledge of the user, and the personalization of the information.
3. The traditional forms of art have been observed to be utilized in much of the content analyzed e.g. the utilization of sculptural and painting themes in the content hence can be observed that the aspects of culture are being actively integrated into the entrepreneurial communication.
4. Inclusion of artistic elements and presence of historical context within the posts tend to invoke more of the engagement of the audience that implies that culturally enriched material makes the posts more conspicuous and capable of evoking the attention of the customers.
5. The result of the surveys indicates that there is a strong connection between the success of the social media marketing and economic empowerment hence the high number of firms recorded better sales and reach in the market as a result of this marketing approach.
6. Assimilation of history, painting and sculpture through promoting the identity based branding and preserving the ancient knowledge systems brings about value to the current entrepreneurship as viewed by most of the professionals who were interviewed.
7. The study brings out the focused move by female entrepreneurs to use indigenous aesthetics and historical narratives to identify the products and the long term plans has been to make sure continuity in the culture in the current market structures.

### **Contemporary Relevance of the Study in Present Society**

The modern applicability of the study is the investigation of the way social media has evolved to be a revolutionizing item to the Assamese women entrepreneurs to facilitate the bridge between the old understanding system and the new form of doing business. In the present day where the strength of online sites is important to serve as an economic empowerment of economic engagement, particularly in areas where restricted availability was customary like Assam where women did not have much access to the formal market and financial success. By integrating the elements of the history, painting, and sculpture in their entrepreneurial ideas, women are able to preserve and develop the cultures, and simultaneously, create sources of incomes. The dual aim of the entrepreneurship does not facilitate just empowering the local art but also acts as a section of the global discussion of the Indian women empowerment as it demonstrates that the traditional knowledge and modern technologies could be synthesized (Dutta, 2018).

The study can be used in illuminating on the social and cultural implications of the practices of women on online sites. The social media enables Assamese business women to connect to the national and international market which has made their markets more accessible as well as enabled these women to network which they did not manage to do prior to the social media. It also facilitates the fact that one is able to work at their own leisure to increase the level of decision making power within the households and it promotes economic independence. Based on the findings of the study outside the individual benefit, the fusion of traditional arts and digital entrepreneurship leads to local economies growth, preserves the local identity, and disproves the gender stereotypes within the business. The article can be applied to the policy discussion and quantification of digital literacy and cultural continuity and

women business in small states and it can be used as a prototype on gender-balanced socio-economic-cultural development (Singh, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

The potential solution to the Assamese women entrepreneurs is found to be social media, as it helps them overcoming the problems related to finances, mentorship, and gender barriers and to acquire a feeling of confidence, independence, and a variety of opportunities which they were unable to experience before. In addition to the empowerment within the economical dimension, social media provides these women with the means to conserve and develop the rich cultural heritage of Assam, including traditional painting, sculpture and historical art which is evident that women are not only conserving the existing knowledge systems found in the region but are also pouring their businesses to a wider national and global probability through the convergence of culture and modernity within their businesses (Dutta, 2018

Findings of the case studies indicate that women have diverse reasons as to why they enter an entrepreneurship venture: a financial necessity, unavailability of other employment opportunities, occupation that is passed down to several of their family members, women desire to be self employed and to gain a sense of personal fulfillment. Only in social media, they have accessibility, flexibility, and visibility that enable their decisions to be ever more effective in terms of families and communities. It promotes innovation, generates wealth and offers local employment besides dispelling the gender stereotyping. Particularly, social media in small states such as Assam is the most suitable medium through which women demonstrate their businesses which in most cases incorporate some aspects of historical art, painting, and sculpture. Through these mediums, the new female entrepreneurs can make the entrepreneurial world even more hospitable and transparent, thus ensuring the additional growth of traditional arts and triggering the further economic and societal success (Singh, 2020).

## **Authors Contributions**

Conceptualization: Aditi Deka

Data Curation: Aditi Deka

Investigation: Dr. Binoy Paul

Formal Analysis: Guptajit Pathak

## **Acknowledgement**

Conflict of interest: The authors mention that the conflict of interest does not exist in relation to this study.

## **Funding**

The study was also conducted devoid of any third parties or sponsors who gave some financial assistance to conduct the research through provision of financial aid, in form of financial assistance or financial grant.

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