

Socio-Economic Conditions of Coir Workers and Problems of Coir Industry East Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

Socio-economic status refers to a wide range of interrelated and diverse aspects and variables relating to or involving a combination of social and economic factors. These aspects and variables could, in general, be categorized into several categories including, economic, demographic, public services, fiscal and social. Socio economics an important determinant of the livelihood assist influences levels of knowledge, skills and income conditions which means for their living. For the purpose of analyses the present divided into two parts, the first part deals with the socio- economic status of coir workers in the study area.The second part analyses the problems of coir industry.

Key Words: Coir, Sickness, Salesman, Wholesaler, . Credit

Review of Literature

S. Rajendran and B. Gandhimurthy (2011)⁷⁰,"SWOT Analysis of Coir Cooperative Marketing Society–A Case Study from Salem Region".India is the largest coir producer, accounting to more than 6.4 lakh persons of whom a majority are Tamil Nadu occupies the first place in producing 6 per cent of total production,.

G. Nagaraja (2016)⁷¹,"An Economic Analysis of Coir Co-operative Societies: A Case Study East and West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh."Co-operativisation in coir sector was an important step to contribute to the steadily growth of the coir industry. societies. Major findings of the study show that 70 per cent of Coir Co-operative societies surveyed were incurring losses.

⁷⁰S. Rajendran and B Gandhimurthy "SWOT Analysis of Coir Cooperative Marketing Society – A Case Study from Salem Region" Journal of Economic and Social Development, Vol. VII,No.1,2011.

⁷¹G. Nagaraja (2016), An Economic Analysis of Coir Co-operative Societies: A Case Study East and West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh."International Journal of Research in Commerce, Economics and Management, ISSN 2231-4245, VOLUME NO. 6 (2016), ISSUE NO. 05 .pp 35-41.

Badar Alam Iqbal (1983)⁷²presented several major aspects. The main object must be to make

improvement in the working as well as the economic condition of the labour force. He also suggested the strengthening of coir co-operative because co-operative as sure the optimum flow of workers.

Jeya Balaji J. (1989)⁷³ in his research study “An Economic study of the coir industry in Kanyakumari District, mainly stated that private effort played a significant role in the marketing of coir products in the district.

RamanathaIyer T.S. and Girish M.S. (1999)⁷⁵ conducted experimental study on coir fabrics for retaining walls. This study mainly focused that natural fibres like coir can be

⁷²Badar Alam Iqbal (1983), “Coir Goods Diminishing Role in Economic Development”, Kisan World, Vol.

X, No. 8, pp. 38-43. ⁷³**Jeya Balaji J. (1989)**, “An Economic Study of the Coir Industry in Kanyakumari District”, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis submitted to Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai.

⁷⁴**Manikandan Pillai (1998)**, “Model Coir Village Care for Coir Workers”, Coir News, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 27-30.

⁷⁵**RamanathaIyer T.S. and Girish M.S. (1999)**, “Coir Fabrics for Retaining wall on Experimental Study”, Coir News, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 17-22.

Neena (1999)⁷⁶, in her research study analysed working conditions of women workers in coir units and also focused the problems faced by worker in the state, majority of workers

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Socio-Economic conditions of coir workers.
2. To examine the problems of coir industry namely, production problems, marketing problems and coir workers related problems.

Hypothesis:

1. There is no significant difference between different coir units and marketing channels.
2. There is no significant difference between different coir units and problems of the industry

Socio-Economic Status of Coir Workers:

The socio-economic status of the coir worker households selected from the study area is analysed in this chapter. The coir industry is spread over the coastal belt of East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh providing subsistence to 50 thousand workers were mostly from the poverty stricken backward and weaker section of the society, particularly in the coastal area of the district.

A coir worker household may be defined as a household in which at least one worker is engaged in coir work (KSI, 1997). A survey has been conducted in 500 such worker's households selected from the coir units spread over the One district of Andhra Pradesh i.e., East Godavari District. In the study area, out of the total 500 coir worker households selected 79.6 per cent is female worker households and the male worker households constituted remaining 20.4 per cent.

Table:1.1

Coir Workers in Sample Households

Sl. No	Population					
	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total	Percentage
1	102	(20.4)	398	(79.6)	500	(100)

Source:SurveyData.

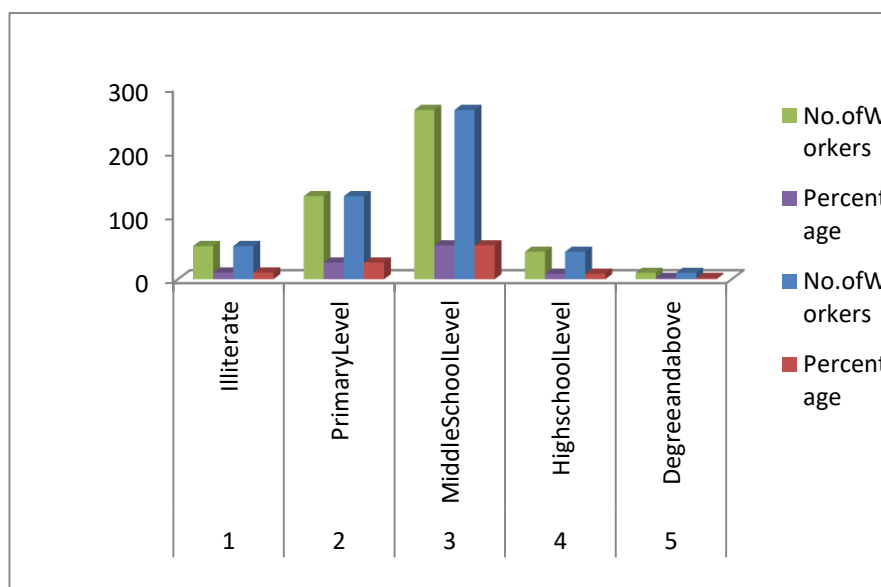
The table 1.1 the present study reiterates the fact that the female workers are still continuing their strong presence in the coir sector. It has observed from the field that in many of the households male workers have already left coir industry and sought employment in other sectors where wages are high. But the females are still engaged in the coir units. From the 500 coir worker households the survey identified 1450 coir workers. The table shows that the gender break up of workers show that female workers constitute 79.6 per cent and the male workers forms only 20.4 per cent. A region wise analysis of workers' status also depicts that in the district female workers out numbered male workers.

Table:1.2

Coir workers Education Level

Sl.No	Education Level	No.of Workers	Percentage
1	Illiterate	52	10.4
2	Primary Level	130	26
3	Middle School Level	265	53
4	High School Level	43	8.6
5	Degree and above	10	2

Source:SurveyData



EducationLevel

Education is the important social factor. The distribution coir industries' women workers on their educational qualification are presented in Table 1.2. It is about 265 (53 per cent) workers are qualified with middle school education, 130 (26 per cent) workers are qualified with primary education, 43 (8.6 per cent) workers are qualified with high school education and 52 (10.4 per cent) workers are illiterate. It is clear that majority of coir industry workers are qualified with middle school education.

Table:1.3

CoirWorkersWagesLevel

Sl. No	WageLevel	No.ofWorkers	Percentage
1	Below150	65	13
2	150-200	260	52
3	200-300	90	18
4	300-400	70	14
5	500 andAbove	15	3

Source:PrimaryData.

Coir Industries workers daily wages refers to the wage obtained for the daily work in the industry indicate Table 1.3. It shows that 13 per cent of workers have the daily wages below 150, about 52 per cent of workers have the daily wages between Rs. 150 to Rs. 200, 18 per cent of workers have the daily wages between Rs. 200 to 300. 70 (14 per cent) have the daily between Rs. 300 to 400 and only 15 (3 per cent) workers

Income and Age Level of Workers:

Table:1.4

CoirWorkersIncomeLevel

Sl. No	IncomeLevel	No.ofWorkers	Percentage
1	Below10000	95	19
2	10001-20000	290	58
3	20001-30000	90	18
4	30001-50000	18	3.6
5	50001-100000	4	0.8
6	Above100000	3	0.6

Source:PrimaryData.

Table 1.4 reveals that the income level of coir workers about 77 per cent of the households have annual

income of Rs. 20,000 and below. Income of 21.6 per cent households is between Rs. 20,001 to Rs. 50,000. The households earn income above Rs. 50,000/- is only 0.4 percent. A detailed examination of the income level of households revealed that the households having high income is not accrued from the coir work alone but from other sources too. The analysis of annual income from coir work as a percentage to their total household income explored that 22 percent households alone is depended on coir work all others have earned income from other sources also.

Table:1.5

Coir Worker Age Level

Sl. No	Age	No. of Workers	Percentage
1	Below-30	66	13.2
2	30-45	210	42
3	45-60	134	26.8
4	Above 60	90	18

Source: Primary Data

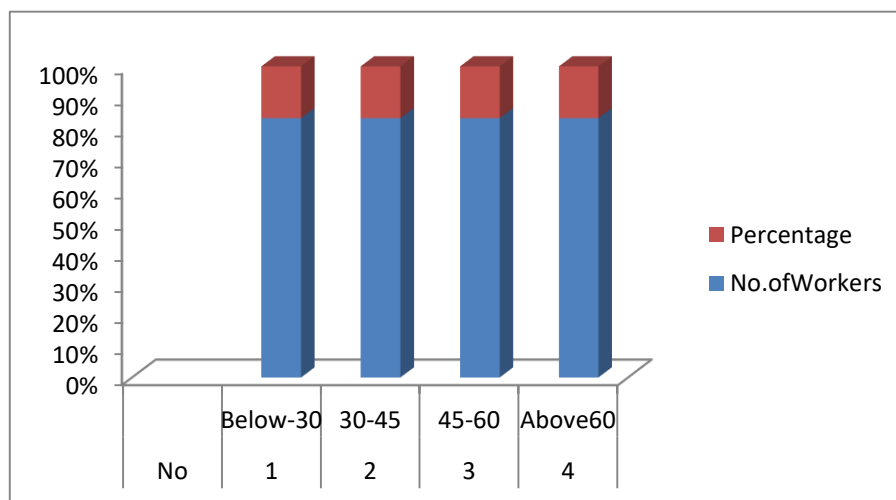


Table 1.5 reveals that the classification of age group among the coir workers. It is interesting to point out that even now about 18 percent of the workers in the coir unit are in the unproductive age group of above 60 years. Of the total workers in the age group of above 60 years about 5.3 per cent are women workers. This may be the result of unhealthy unit practices existing in the records. It is also seen that among the workers younger age group below 30 years are found to be only 13.2 per cent. It may be inferred that the new generation in the coir worker households do not prefer coir work as their source of income. This may be due to its unattractive performance of the industry in giving regular and part-time employment and reasonable wages to its workers. The majority of respondents were between 30 to 45 years (42 per cent).

Community of Respondents:

Community still plays an important element in the social factor of our country. Especially in rural areas, its impact is felt deeply. A very high proportion of coir industry workers labour throughout India belong to socially and economically backward section of rural community and this constitutes the poorest section of the rural society. They are mostly drawn from Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Backward Classes (BCs). The majority of coir workers in rural areas comprises of the backward and weaker sections of society. The study area, East Godavari district, is basically a rural district, and the study on the influence of the community of the workers on the level of satisfaction is quite useful. The caste-wise distribution of the coir workers is presented in table 6.6.

Table:1.6 Classification of Community

Sl. No	Community	Respondents	Percentages
1	SCs	120	24
2	STs	102	20.4
3	Backward Community	180	36
4	Other Casts	98	19.6
	Total	500	100

Source: Primary Data.

Table 1.6 shows that 36 percent of coir workers belonging to backward communities, about 24 percent of workers belonging to Scheduled Castes, remaining 40 percent of workers belonging to STs and other casts 24.4 percent and 19.6 percent respectively.

The coir industry workers were given reasons to continue in coir units indicate table 6.7, stated that even though the coir work is not attractive in terms of employment and wages they prefer coir work on the following reasons; 30.4 per cent

Table 1.7

Reasons for Continuing in Coir units Responses and Percentages

Sl. No	Reasons	Respondents	Total percentage
1	A	152	30.4
2	B	75	15
3	C	91	18.2
4	D	85	17
5	E	30	6.00
6	F	67	13.4

	500	100
Total	(100)	

Source:SurveyData

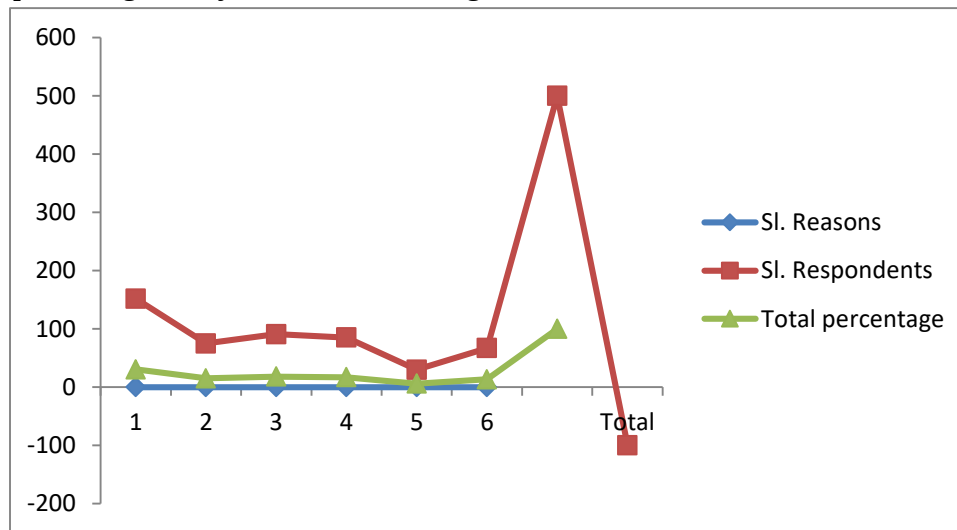
Notes:1.Inbracketspercentagesaregiven.

2.Reasonsarecodedas:

A.Nearnesstohome,B.Nootheralternativejob,

C.Nootherjobskill,D.Needsomeincome,

E. Age doesnotpermittogoootherjob,F.Leisure during work



Occupation Wise Workers

Table 1.8 Occupation Wise Workers

Sl.No	Occupation	No.ofWorkers	Percent
1	Ratter	64	12.8
2	Spinner	89	17.8
3	HuskBeater	4	0.8
4	FibreCleaner	102	20.4
5	Others	241	48.2
Total		500	100.0

Source:SurveyData

The various type of work performed by the coir industry workers are presented in the table 6.8, above 64 workers (12.8 per cent) are directly engaging in retting of coir, 89 workers (17.8 per cent) are engaging in spinning activities of coir, 0.8 percent workers (4 workers) are engaging in husk beating and 20.4 percent coir workers

Table :1.9 Experienceof the workers

Sl.No	Experience	No.of	Percentage
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		workers	
1	Lessthanoneyear	95	19
2	OnetoThreeyears	150	30
3	Three toFive	115	23
4	FivetoSeven	80	16
5	AboveSeven	60	12
	Total	500	100

Source:SurveyData.

Experiencemakesaperceptionofwork.Itisclearfromtable6.9about30per cent ofworkers have been working in coir industries for the period of 1 to 3 years, 23 percent ofworkers have been working in theindustries for the period of three to five years, 10 per cent of workers have been working in industries for the period of five to seven years and only 60 workers(12 per cent) have been working in the industries for above seven years.

Expenditure of Workers

Table.1.10

ExpenditureofCoirWorkers

Sl.No	Items ofExpenditure	AverageAnnual Family Expenditure [In Rs.]	Percentage
1	Food	16537	57.05
2	Medicine	2851	9.83
3	Education	1140	3.93
4	Cloth	1711	5.90
5	Fuelandlighting	1125	3.88
6	Rent	450	1.55
7	ConsumerDurables	285	0.98
8	Recreation	270	0.93
9	Travelling	855	2.94
10	Liquor	1145	3.95
11	Tobacco	150	0.51
12	Socialactivities	2466	8.50
	Total	28985	100.00

Source:SurveyData.

Table 1.10 depicts that the coir worker households incur 59 per cent of their total expenditure on food. This is lower than the state average (60.75 per cent).Expenditure on medicine accounts for 9.83per centof the total expenditure. The clothing expenditurewas found to be 6 per cent which was also higher than the state average of 5.2 per cent". The speedy deterioration of cloth by drudgery work in open air, force them to spend more on clothing. Expenditureonliquor wasfoundtobe around 4percent.The heavy

work and proximity to toddy shops force them to consume liquor. For fuel and lighting, they spend 3.88 per cent which was much less than the state average".

Health Status of Coir Worker:

Most of the spinners work by standing directly under blazing sun. Field level experience revealed that coir workers were subjected to diseases like allergy, chest pain, vomiting and gynecological complaints.

Table :1.11

Awareness of Health Insurance Scheme

Health Insurance Scheme	East Godavari
Yes	380 (76)
No	120 (24)
Total	500 (100)

Source: Survey Data

Table 1.11 shows that the awareness of health insurance scheme In the East Godavari district 380 respondents (76 per cent) have awareness on health insurance scheme and only 120 respondents (24 per cent) not have awareness on the schemes.

Table:1.12

Work Related Diseases of Coir Workers

Sl. No	Diseases	Respondents	Total (percentage)
1	Cough	55	11
2	Body Pain	81	16.2
3	Allergy	165	33
4	Skin Diseases	95	19
5	Sneezing	45	9
6	Asthma	26	5.2
7	Arthritis	17	3.4
8	Others	16	3.2
	Total	500	100.00

Source: Primary Data.

Table 1.12 reveals that the coir workers faced work related diseases. A look through the sickness profiles of coir worker households reveals certain diseases like allergy, body pain, cough, skin disease, sneezing are the major diseases reported affected by the 75 per cent households. It is important to note that even now in East Godavari region the activity of retting of husks and its peeling continues and it is carried out by the workers manually.

Working conditions of Coir workers:

Provision of a safe and attractive work environment is important not only to the workers but also to the employers as the coir sector is currently failing to attract the new generation to its fold. Majority of coir workers in the district is no longer willing to work in poor working conditions. As a result, many of the youngsters prefer to work in other sectors where the work environment is better than that in the coir manufacturing units. So the continued subsistence of the industry lies in their ability to develop attractive and health promoting work environments. Workers in general are of the opinion that over the years working conditions have improved in the sector as the majority of employers are taking proactive steps.

Opinion About Working Conditions of Workers:

The working conditions of coir industry workers are analyzed with the help of Likert Scaling Technique is presented in table 6.13 reveals that, majority of coir workers are highly dissatisfied with their working conditions in coir manufacturing units.. Even though this study reveals majority of respondents are satisfied with water facilities it has been attained by first rank (1970 points), second rank (1430 points) has been attained by canteen facilities, third rank (1080 points) has been attained by toilet facilities, fourth rank (920 points) has been attained by accidental insurance, fifth rank (850 points) has been attained by medical facilities and last rank (540 points) labour welfare measures.

Table:1.13

Coir workers Opinion about Working Conditions

Sl. No	Working Condition	Very Good		Good		Moderate		Low		Very Low		Total		Rank
		No.	Weight	No.	Weight	No.	Weight	No.	Weight	No.	Weight	No.	Weight	
1	Canteen	0	0	150	600	180	540	120	240	50	50	500	1430	II
2	Water	30	150	410	1640	60	180	0	0	0	0	500	1970	I
3	Toilet	0	0	0	0	200	600	180	360	120	120	500	1080	III
4	Medical	0	0	0	0	0	0	350	700	150	150	500	850	V
5	Accidental Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	0	420	840	80	80	500	920	IV
6	Labour Welfare Measures	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	80	460	460	500	540	VI

Source: Primary data.

Assets Structure of Coir workers:

Table:1.14

AssetStructureofCoirWorkers

Particulars	AssetStructureofCoirWorkers					Total
	Agriculture Land	House	Vehicle	Jewellery	Financial Securities	
Total	48	496	85	240	25	894
Percentage*	5.36	55.48	9.50	26.84	2.79	100

Source:PrimaryData.

Note:Percentagesandtotalsarebasedonresponses.

The asset liabilities of coir workers in the district presented in table 1.14. The coir workers of the under study is own one or more assets viz., houses (55.48 per cent),jewellery (26.84 per cent) Investment in financial instruments(2.79 per cent) is not preferred by the majority coir workers. This may be because of liquidity need. They prefer to investment their savings in jewellery because in time of need loan can be availed by mortgaging. The ownership of agricultural land is only with 5.36 % of the coir workers.

Marketing Problems:

Marketing of coir and coir products is another major problem faced by the coirunits in the district. A number of marketing problems faced by coir industry like credit sales, high cost of production, lack of good brand will, lack of publicity through mass media, salesman expenses,involvement of agent, middlemen charges, substitute goods,market rate fluctuations and inadequate storage facilities for coir and coir products are some of the hardships faced by the industry.

Credi tSale:

The most important marketing problem controlled by coir products manufacture units arecredit sale of the product,coir units are competition to sell their product to wholesaler andretailer on credit. Credit sales require industries to keep on producing without realizing the sale proceeds within a reasonable period of time. and raising their productivity

Conclusion:

The study reveals that the socio-economic conditions of coir workers in coir industry, brings out standard of living of workers, working conditions, income level, and assets classification among the workers and etc. On the other hand,the second partof this chapter focused onnumber of problems faced by coir sector in the study area namely production related problems, marketing related problems and workers relatedproblems.The rising cost of living compels the workers to take up the job. Unfortunately workers are facing a lot of problems in their working environment. Their socio-economic status will be improved only if adequate measures are taken to overcome their problems. The state and central

government can formulate many policies to increase the welfare of the workers. This study helps to suggest increasing the socio-economic conditions of workers of Coir industries in the district.

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