

A STUDY ON WOMEN COTTAGE INDUSTRIES IN DINDIGUL DISTRICT

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Abstract

Economic development generally refers to the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy to promote the standard of living and economic health of a specific area. Small scale industries play a vital role in the development of economy, mainly in developing countries. Home-based businesses are the missing majority in entrepreneurial research. This study focuses on the role of women cottage industry in economic development. We have identified various factors of economic development on which the cottage industry is contributing a lot. To explain it we have collected primary data through structured questionnaire. This study also discusses the problems associated with cottage industry. Five sectors of cottage industry have been included into this study. This study focuses on the contribution of each sector to the economic development of Dindigul district. Finally, some recommendations are put forth for the development of cottage industry so that this industry can thrive and contribute more to the economic development of Dindigul district.

Keywords: Women Cottage Industry, Small Scale Industry, Home-based business, Women Empowerment, Economical impact

Introduction

When family members carry a small-scale industry by using their own equipments, it is called cottage industry. In this type of industry labor force consists of family units or individuals working from home with their own equipments. Cottage industries provide economic opportunities for the poor or the middle-income section of people through employment and income generation schemes all over the world, and especially in low income and technologically underdeveloped countries such as Tamil Nadu. This study focuses on the role of cottage industry in economic development.

Women Cottage industries are labour intensive and have the ability to utilize the excess labour. It needs low technology. In this sector private savings is important for investment and capital accumulation as there is less access to formal credit system. Cottage industries can help a lot in this respect by providing forward and backward linkages with agriculture, manufacturing, and the mainstay of the economy. It uses local raw materials and energy supplies i.e. it tries to

ensure domestic resource mobilization. It satisfies local market demand, encourages local initiative and entrepreneurship. Cottage Industry is a specialized form of small scale industry where the production of the commodity takes place in the homes and the labor is supplied by the family members only. It includes sewing, craft production, sales and marketing, typing, bookkeeping, and auto repair are just a few examples of home-based employment and packaging of edible items like spices, oils honey, etc have a huge demand not only within India but also in the foreign markets providing economic opportunities to the poor and the middle-income section of people through employment and income generation. Cottage Industry, or the 'Putting Out System' is a production system of producing goods that rely on producing goods, or parts of goods, by craftsmen at home, or small workshops, instead of large factories. These types of industries are growing fastly especially in rural settings. The Development of cottage industries is equally important as that development of other small, medium and large industries because they generate more rural employment opportunities, especially opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship development. This sector has been successful in generating employment to 19.2 million people around the world in 2001(Subrahmanya, 2004). People, generally of rural areas, depending on cottage industries for many of their basic needs such as clothes and food and increases their self sufficiency. This study focuses on the role of the cottage industry in promoting women empowerment and how it builds confidence among the women enabling them to survive with dignity and self-reliance in today's competitive age.

They work in their own homes with simple tools and raw material and utilize their own labor. These workers are mostly hand labors and with little or no aid from modern technology and machinery, they work in accordance with the traditional methods and techniques. The machinery or means utilized for the production of the commodities generally are readily available in local markets. The basic feature of Cottage Industry is that it is basically unorganized, labor-intensive, predominantly rural in nature and come under the group of small scale industry type. Cottage industries have given economic independence to the women in the developing as well as developed countries.

Objectives of the study

- To identify which industry plays more vital role for women economic development
- To find out problems of the women cottage industries
- To make some suggestions and policy recommendations for overcome those problems

Methods and Materials

This study is mainly based on primary data source. Interview technique was used with structured questionnaire for the collection of primary data. In a questionnaire, besides close-ended questions there was also provision for open-ended optional questions. Sources of raw materials, income-expenditure pattern are mainly included in the questionnaire. Primary data is collected from field

survey. The obtained information are edited and summarized in sequential order. For preparing this study, at first we acquire some knowledge about the five types of women cottage industry in Dindigul district such as Boutique shop, Nursery, Pottery, Cane and Food. Since it was impossible to take into account all the relevant and related aspects of cottage industry of the study area, representative subsets from the whole cottage industry were taken as samples. We have also collected data from 50 people who are the outsiders for presenting their opinion on the role of women cottage industry in economic development in Dindigul district.

Analysis of the Data

Collected data and information have been organized, explained and analyzed by using different statistical tools and techniques. This study is completed in an analytical and descriptive way.

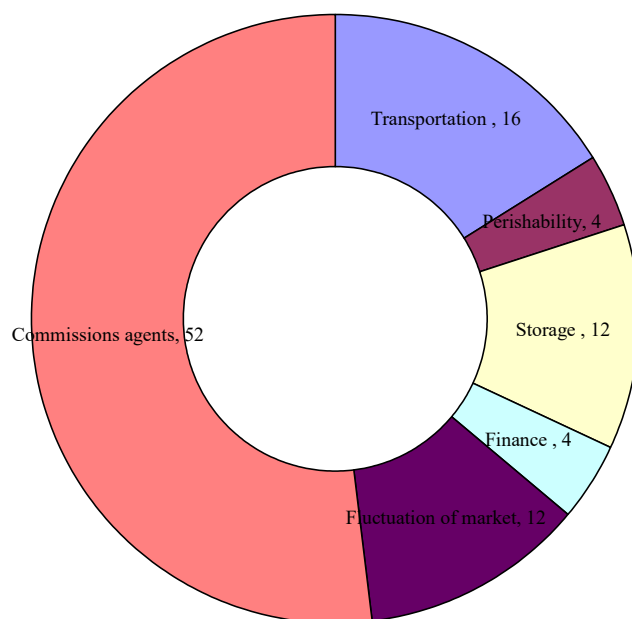
Percentage analysis of socio-economic profile

Particulars	No.of respondents	Percentage
Marital status		
Married	42	84
Unmarried	08	16
Age		
Below 30yrs	07	14
31 to 35yrs	11	22
36 to 40yrs	26	52
Above 40yrs	06	12
Educational Qualification		
SSLC	07	14
Upto HSC	33	66
Graduate	10	20
Experience		
Below 5yrs	28	56
6 to 10yrs	13	26
Above 10yrs	09	18

Source: Primary data

The above table reveals that majority (84 per cent) of women entrepreneurs have married and remaining 16 per cent were unmarried. More than half (52 per cent) of women entrepreneurs between 36 to 40yrs of age group, 22 per cent were 31 to 35yrs, 14 percent were below 30yrs and remaining 12 per cent were above 40yrs. Majority (66 per cent) of women entrepreneurs have qualified HSc level and remaining 20 per cent were graduates. More than half (56 per cent) of women entrepreneurs have experienced below 5yrs and remaining 26 per cent were 6 to 10yrs.

Percentage analysis of problem



■ Transportation ■ Perishability □ Storage □ Finance ■ Fluctuation of market ■ Commissions agents

Association between production problems and their marketing problems

Problem of marketing	Problem of Production			Statistical inference
	Low	High	Total	
Low	02	10	12	$X^2=9.742$ Df=1 $0.001<0.05$ Significant
High	04	34	38	
Total	06	44	50	

The above chi-square tested table indicates that there is significant association between production problems and their marketing problems. Hence the calculated value greater than table value ($p<0.05$)

Suggestions and Conclusion

Government fails to keep a check on the fake embroidery accomplishments that exist in the market especially deceiving the outsiders. An action committee needs to be appointed to keep a close vigil on the market practices in regard to local art and craft so as to bar the sale of fake artwork. Government fails to promote the local craft in the desired way inside and outside the valley which could otherwise boost the work. The government needs to promote art and craft through tourism and media so as to enhance the market for the same. These women lack awareness about governmental schemes and aides that might help them in establishing their small-scale business. The government should take the help of print and electronic media to aware the people about the different schemes and aides available for the establishment of small scale business.

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