

A Study on
Women Workers
with Special Reference to Beedi Industry
in Palladam Taluk

by

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

1. Importance of Women in Economic Development:

Growing interest in women studies with feminest perspective in one of the striking features of the last few years. Women have been regarded as the Nuclei of a Nation. Just as the body is made up of Millions of cells controlled by their Nuclei, a Nation is made up of Millions of families depending on the women house wives and mothers for their progress and wellbring. The health and the growth of the body depends on the vitalits of it cells; So also the health and growth of the nation depends on the vitalist of its women.

Jawaharlal Nehru expressed that "In order to awaken the people, it is the woman who has to be awakened; once she is on the move, the household moves, the village moves and the country moves and...Thus we build the India of tomorrow.

The University Education Commission had boldly asserted that "If General Education had to be limited Men or Women, the opportunity should be given to women, for them it would be most certainly passed on to the next generation."

The Indian Education Commission observed that the realisation of the country's aspiration involves changes in the knowledge, skills, interests and values of the people as a whole.

According to Ashok Mitra, the women constitute half the world's population, perform nearly two third of work hours, receive one tenth of the world's income and own less than one hundredth of the world's property.

A very significant aspect of women's role as a worker is that one can never separate her work from her responsibilities in the family. The employer, the Government the trade unions, main stream women's organisations, as well as the value system, look upon women as a secondary worker, whose primary role is in the family, the attitude of considering women as an adjunct to the main bread winner-man, has led many a times economics to look more closely, at the supply characteristics of women workers. It may be remembered that employment outside for woman is not to be viewed merely from nature, conditions and remunerative of work but her conditions at home. The tyrannical family setting may force women not only to accept wage work, but may compel her to accept adverse terms of employment, as this work atleast temporarily liberates her from patriarchal atmosphere of the family.

Most of the developing countries are corruption-ridden. There is lack of integrity, honesty and devotion to work from top to the bottom in the society. This hinders the process of economic development. Woman can play a significant role in rooting out corruption from the society. They can pursue their husbands and other relatives to uphold the moral values in life. Since woman constitutes the core of the family, their influence in this direction can be very effective. If the corruption is reduced from the economy, it can accelerate the pace of economic development.

Economic development in our times has come to be associated with the 300 years old Western Industrialism. The major feature of this type of Economic development has been, as Karl Polanyi says: a new method of allocating resources based on a national system of "Free markets". This is a significant departure from the past, because in the past, resource allocation was based on reciprocity and redistribution; markets had existed before but were local and based on barter rather than on cash transactions. In these local markets woman could also participate even while looking after their children. But in the present system they are substantially left out. Women have been mainly producers of goods which have greater 'Use value'. However, with increasing importance being attached to 'Exchange value' the goods produced by woman have been overlooked and undervalued.

After the second world war, in almost every industrialized country not only has the female labour force gone up but it has also undergone far reaching structural change. The age and composition of the female labour force has changed and there has been a shift from agricultural and industrial occupations to the service sector white-collared jobs (see table I) The percentage of woman in the labour force in these countries ranges from approximately 30 percent to 48 percent being the highest in the centrally planned economies (see table I)). Since 1950, the increase has been from 30 to 50 percent.

TABLE IWOMAN'S SHARE IN THE LABOUR FORCE IN SELECTED INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES
1982

Countries	Women's share of the Labour force (in percentage) (1982)
Finland	47.1
Sweden	46.3
Denmark	44.1
U.S.A.	42.7
Norway	41.7
Portugal	41.5
Canada	40.6
France	39.3
U.K.	39.1
Japan	38.7
Austria	38.6
F.R.G.	38.5
Australia	37.6
Belguim	37.2
Switzerland	36.3
Italy	34.3
New zealand	34.2
Netherlands	33.4
Greece	31.9
Luxemburg	29.3
Spain	28.5
Planned economics	
U.S.S.R.	47.7
Other socialist countries	43.8

However, despite industrialisation and mechanization, there are certain spheres of the economic which are heavily dependent on the labour of unskilled or semi skilled women. Certain jobs are unlikely to be taken over either by machines or by men. An investigation of one such area which employes women in large numbers is the subject matter of the present study. It is important to note over here that continued female employment at certain levels does not necessarily mean an enhancement of personal status.

Equal status:

The early primitive sculptures found in Europe and Asia represent God not as an anthropomorphic male form, but as Earth-mother depicted as a woman. Female characteristics are visibly enlarged in such a way as if to accept the fact that she brings forth, and sustaining generations of human beings.

According to the Brihaddevata, (vii, 41-48) ahosha was the daughter of Kakshivan and grand-daughter of Dirghatmas, born renowned sears the atmosphere in which she grew up contributed to her development.

The Goddess saraswati was the personification of learning and fine arts to her was attributed the genesis of the sanskrit language. At this stage a philosophical concept was evolved which reached fuller expression later, the idea of woman as shakti, the creative force in the universe.

At this time, the Aryans were predominantly an agricultural and not a madic race. Women shared in the economic life of the tribe, gathering food and making shelters. They were not confined to the domestic hearth. They participated in religious and other studies and enjoyed equal status.

One of the philosophers of repute of these times was Gargi, daughter of another great sage. She participated in the philosophic Congress convened by King Janaka of Videha and challenged Yajñavalkya with several unanswerable questions.

Buddhism kept up the tradition of giving a place of honour to women. They could join religious orders, like the Bhikshuni Sangha. Vedic period also stretched from 2000-700 B.C. Epic literature though written later (400 B.C.-400 A.D.) reflected the social life of the people of this time.

INFLUENCE OF ISLAM (700 A.D. 1857 A.D.):

The Muslim period in India left its mark in several ways, particularly on women. Essential to keep the hearth going. Again, in an environment of expanding opportunities for the working class male, the woman sustains the family whilst the man tries to move into the modernizing economy.

WOMAN'S EXALTED POSITION:

Rig veda (composed sometime between 1500 and 900 BC) is the oldest extant religious book in the world. This Book and some other Hindu "Shortras" till us that women enjoyed great respect in the society. The wife and her husband being the equal halves of the substance, are equal in every respect. They were even exalted to the position of goddesses and given different celestial names like, Prithvi, a vague personification of the Earth, Aaditi, the great mother of the gods; usha the goddess of the dawn; Ratri, the spirit of the night; Aranyani spirit of the forest, and so on.

Reverence for women

The great and respectful affection evinced by the Hindus for then women can be seen from the fact that they often prefix a feminine name to their own. Thus we have masculine names like Durga Dass, Lakshmi Narayan, Kalicharan, Sitaram, Radha sham, Prithvi Nata, Kamalpathi, Janpi Nath etc. Most of the sacred rivers of India bear the female name, Ganga, Jamuna, Vitasta, Chandrabhaga, Saraswati etc.

Women's Role in freedom struggle at National Level:

The first step was that he encouraged Gandhiji's wife Kasturibal to participate in the Political activities in South Africa. Gandhiji sought the co-operation of women in his non-violent struggle for freedom of the country.

The women in India helped Gandhiji in the implementation of his constructive programme. Smt. Basanti Devi, Urmila Devi, C.R. Sunity Devi were the first women to offer civil resistance to the Government.

It is a matter of pride to state that Tamil Nadu was a Pioneer State where the women's Indian Association was established under the Presidentship of Dr. Annie Besant at Adayar on 8th May 1917.

One special feature noted here is that most of the women who entered public life were supported and encouraged by the men in their family. For example Perin Captain the grand daughter of Dadabhai Navroji, Manibehn Patel, daughter of Vallabbhai Patel, Swarup Rani, Nehru wife of Pt. Motilal Nehru and a host of others.

The civil disobedience movement came as a golden opportunity for the woman of India. The women of India were eagerly awaiting the call of Gandhiji. When the time came, he nominated Smt. Sarojini Naidu to lead the raid on Darshana salt field.

In the year of civil Disobedience movement, the British Government made an attempt to action liquor licence in Bombay which did not succeed because of the obstruction of women. Again Gandhiji was arrested following that Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi resigned her membership of the Madras Provincial Legislative Council.

During the 1931-32, countless were the number of women who participated in the freedom struggle. Especially, Delhi, Bengal and Bihar women's roles were extreme and it is proved from the jail records that the Lahore Female Jail was full of Delhi women. Tamil Nadu did not lag-behind. The women in the state played a prominent part in organising the young people into what was called the vaanasena.

Indira Gandhi at the tender age of 12 had organised 6,000 children in Allahabad.

Freedom struggle in India was unique in many ways. It offered an opportunity for the women of India to assume leadership. The Indian National Congress had a branch of volunteers for political and social work. Women also had joined the rank of volunteers in a large number.

So in this context, it will be relevant to study some of the important women in India.

Aas Kurl d.1827 Sikh princess Daughter of Gurder singh of Chattan in punjab, She was married to Sahib singh, the ruler of pariala in 1792. She was a very ambitious lady and succeeded in ousting Sahibkavr, the sister of the Maharaja, then in favour. After the death of her husband in 1813, she again came in power at the request of her son, but she quarrelled with her son too, (and was ultimate retired to her jagir in 1823)

Aghomani Devi 1822-1906

Mystic and associate at Ramakrishna and when he died in 1896 she was greatly affected and spent all her later life in the cause of the Ramakrishna Mission.

Ahalya Bain Hol Kar, d 1795

Maharani of Indore, 1765-95. One of the most famous rulers of India.

Badi Baheba Fl mid 17th century

Queen regent of Bijapur. Widow of Sultan Mohammad Adil Shah (d.1656) she look over the management of the state in the name of her son Ali Adil Shah II.

Bahina Bai, 1628-1700,

Maharathi sain and poet, Daughter of a Brahmin, Aooji Kulkarni and his wife Janakibai.

Captain, Perin, 1880-1958, political

Worker since 1910. she started wearing Khadi in 1920, and was a leading Congress worker during the Civil Disobedience movement, for which she was imprisoned on many occasions.

Chew vamba, fl Ca.1725

Kannada poet and writer. Queen of Dodda Krishnaraja, the ruler of Karnataka, She is known as the author of the long poem Varanandi-Kalyana. She is also the author or some eullabies and prose works.

Das, Santi, b.1916, revolutionary.

Daughter of Devendranath Ghose, she joined the Jugantar party or Bengal while in her teens. She along with her colleague, Suniti, shot dead stevens the notorious district magistrate of Comilla in December 1931, For which both of them were sentenced to transportation for life she was however, released in 1937.

Diwanji Begum, f1, early 17 cent.,

Mughal princess. Daughter of a persian nobleman, she was the wife of Nur Jaban's brother, Asaf Khan. Her daughter, Arjumand Banu Begum, Famous as Mumtaz Mahal, was married to prince Khurram (later Emperor shah Jahan) in 1612.

Fakhr-un-Nisa Begum, f1, 1564,

Afghan princess, she was the daughter of Man chuchak. Begum of Kabul, and was married by her mother to Abu'l-Mali, a fugitive who had escaped from the Mughal prison in Lahore in the time of Akbar, and was favourably received by Mah chuchak. Her husband was captured by the army of the Emperor, and hanged on 13 May 1564.

Fatima, or Fakh-un-Nissa, f1, mid 18th cent.,

Wife of Hyder Ali of Mysore, Daughter of Mir Muin-ud-Din, a governor of Cuddapah, she married Hyder Ali of Mysore, after the death of his first wife. when she became pregnant, she and her husband prayed at the tomb of Tipu sultan Aulia at Arcot, and when a son was born to them (20 Nov.1750) he was named Tipu Sultan.

Ganga Devi f1 1361-71,

Sanskrit poet. She was the wife of Vira Kampa Raya of Vijayanagar and accompanied her husband on his expeditions against the neighbouring states. She wrote the Sanskrit epic, Madhura-Vijayam on the exploits her husband.

Gangi, f1, Ca 1000-500 B.C., Woman Sage, she was a famous vedic teacher of ancient times to whom tribute had to be paid at the time of the vedic rite of Brahmajajna. She also participated in philosophic and religious disscussions with the sage Yajnavalkya.

Hayat Baksh Begum, d.1667,

Princess of Golconda. Daughter of Sultan Muhammad Qulf Qutb shah (d.1612) she was married to his nephew Muhammad Qutb shah (d.1626) who became the Sultan of Golconda after his father's death. Her son, Abdullah Qutb Shah who became the Sultan after her husband's death was quite incapable, and she was practically the ruler of Golconda till the end of her days.

Hemalata, fl, early 17th cent.,

Vaishnava devotee Daughter of the Vaishnava scholar, Srinivasa Acharya of Budhaipara, She was married to Ramakrishna Chatta of Budhaipara. She was married to Ramakrishna Chatta of Budhaipara, on Hugli. After the death of her father, she became his spiritual successor, and had a number of disciples. She was interested in Tantrik form of Vaishnavism.

Indira Gandhi-Prime Minister by Nagamani Rao

Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India was born at Allahabad on November 19, 1917. She was the only child of Pandit Jawaharlal and Kamala Nehru. Her grand father, Motilal Nehru, and her future were well-known political workers.

Stimulating childhood

Indira's childhood was very different from many others of her age and time.

Party President

In 1950, Indira Gandhi became the Fourth Woman to be elected President of the Indian National Congress.

Achievements

India in a vast country with a large and mixed population, having many needs and problems, when Indira Gandhi became prime minister, many thought that she would not be able to handle her many responsibilities and the pressing problems in the country. Yet, she has proved to be one of the most successful women leading a Government.

Perhaps, the strongest proof of her popularity with the Indian people is the fact that she and her party have been elected to lead the country in three general elections.

During her life time, Indira faced many obstacles and personal tragedies, yet she came out with determination and remarkable will power.

She continues to govern the country with firmness, inspite of tremendous difficulties. Her power and success have done much to raise the respect for not only Indian women, but for women in general. She has shattered the image of women as weak and helpless creatures, by governing a large country like India, for over a decade and a half. One may not agree with Indira Gandhi's ideologies or actions, but one cannot help admiring her abilities to handle the many tasks involved, in tackling the problems of nearly seven hundred million people.

Indar Kunwar, Rai, f1, 1715-19, Rajput princess. Daughter of Ajit Singh of Jodhpur. Her marriage to Emperor Farrukhsiyar on 27 September 1715 was the most glittering event of his reign, though the marriage was consummated about two months later because of the illness of the Emperor. After the Emperor was deposed and murdered (29 April 1719) in which her Father also joined as a conspirator, she was brought out of the harem and handed over to her father on 16 July 1719, with all her property. She returned to Jodhpur and was again taken into Hindu fold after purificatory rites. She had no issue.

Khadija Zaman Begum, d, 1797,

Princess of Mysore. Daughter of Syed Saheb of Mysore, she became one of the wives of Tipusultan in 1795. She however died in child-birth in 1797, two years before the fall and death of Tipu Sultan (4 May 1799)

Khas Mahal Nawab, f1, 1856,

Princess of Avadh. She was the principal consort of Wajid Ali shah (deposed 1856) the last ruler of Avadh, who bought a big mansion, chaur La Khi (worth-hour-lakhs) for her. During the great mutiny of 1857, his other consort Hazrat Mahal held court here. This title of Nawab and Mahal was conferred upon her by the king. Ladli Begum, F1, early 17 cent., Mughal lady sister of Abul Fazi, the famous minister of Akbar, She was married to Islam shah who was governor of Bengal, in about 1608. She was held in high regard for her learning and piety. She died at Agra and is buried in a tomb called Ranza Ladli.

Lalita, A, 1919

Engineer. Daughter of a professor of electrical engineering in Madras. She qualified as a civil engineer in 1937, and was the first woman engineer in India. She later joined Associated Electrical Industries, Calcutta, and attended many international Conference relating to engineering.

Lilavati, Fl, Ca, 1150

Mathematician. Daughter of the astronomer - Mathematician, Bhaskara, she is reputed to be the real author of the great mathematical work known by her name and written in about 1150. The tradition, however, does not appear to be correct, and Bhaskara wrote the book apparently to teach the subject to her daughter.

Maitreyi, Sulabha, fl.ca.14th cent., B.C.,

One of the greatest vedic teachers of ancient time to whom tribute had to be paid at the time of Brahmajyana. She also took part in a public debate with the philosopher. Yajnavalkya on religion and philosophy.

Masuma, Sultan Begum, Fl, early 16th cent.,

Mughal princess. A first cousin of Babar, whom she married in 1507. It was a love match on both sides. She was also the half-sister of his first wife Ayesha. She died in child birth and her daughter also received her name.

Nehru Rameshwari, 1886-1966,

Feminist and social worker. Daughter of Raj Narendranath, She was the wife of Brijlal Nehru, a well known political figure. She was very closely connected with the women's movement and was the president of the women's committee of the India league, London (1931-33) She was also the editor of Istri Darpan (Mirror of Women)

Nehru, Uma.B.1882

Political and social worker. One of the founders of the All India women's conference, she was born at Agra on 8 April 1882 and was very intimately connected with many civil and political organizations of U.P. including the Home Rule League and the Congress. She was also imprisoned many times for participating in the civil disobedience movements.

Prabhavati Gupta, d.ca.455

Gupta princess. Daughter of Gupta emperor, Chandragupta Vikramaditya (376-414) she was the wife of king Rudrasena II of Deccan. She ruled the Kingdom as a regent for her minor son Divakarsena on the death of her husband.

Putla Bai d.1680, Mahratha Princess:

One of the eight wives of Shivaji she was married to him in 1653 She became a sati on the death of her husband (April 1680).

Qandhari Begum.F1.1610.

Mughal Princess, first wife of Emperor Shahjahan. Daughter of Muzaffar Hussain Mirza Safwi, of the royal house of persia, her family came to India in about 1592 and was hospitably received by Akbar.

In September 1610 she was married to prince Khurran (afterwards Shahjahan, the son of Jahangir. She is buried at Agra, in Qandhari Bagh, She is so called because she hailed from Qandhar.

Outlug Nigar Khanum, d. 1505,

Mughal Princess, Mother of Emperor Babar (d. 1530). A descendent of Chingiz Khan, she was married to Umar Shaikh Mirza of Ferghana, Central Asia, and gave birth to Babar in 1483. She exercised great influence over the emperor, and accompanied him in all his war and wanderings and lived to see her son victor and master of Kabul (1504). Babar in his autobiography, wrote "few of her sex excelled her in sense and sagacity."

Raj Kaur, fl. early 19th cent.,

Sikh princess, second and favourite wife of Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) she was the mother of his successor, Kharak Singh.

Rangajamma, fl. 1633-73.

Telugu poet. Queen of Vijayara-ghava Nayaka, She mostly erotic poetry. Her greatest work in Usa-parinayam.

Savitri Bai, fl. 1719,

Maharatha princess. One of the wives of Raja Shahu, she had remained under Mughal captivity for 12 years, and was released along with others of the family in March 1719.

Subhadra, fl. 600-1200, Poet.

A Sanskrit poet, who lived some-where between 600 to 1200, she is the author of many celebrated lyrics.

Teresa, Mother.1910-Social Worker.

Born in Yugoslavia, She was originally named Agnes Bojaxhiu. She did commendable work for the poor and the destitute of India since 1946. She was the recipient of the Magsaysay Award, and of the Padma Shree (1962).

Tai, fl.17th cent., Hindi Poet.

She was a native of Karoli, a village in U.P., and though she was a Muslim, she was a worshipper of Krishna. She wrote many verses in Brij-bhasha, and as a poet she is rated next to Meera Bai. Umayamma d.ca.1684, Queen of Travancore originally the rani of Attingal in Kerala. She was requested to become the ruler of Travancore when its king, Aditya varma died in about 1678 without leaving any heir. She took over as the ruler, and with the help of her minister, Kerala varma, she brought order in the strife-torn state. She was succeeded by her son, Ravi varma.

Umda Begum, fl.1757, Afghan Princess:

Daughter of Muin-ul-mulk, the last Mughal governor of Punjab and Mughalani Begum, she had been betrothed to Imad-ul-Mulk, Suwazi of Delhi by her father. He, however, married another lady, Ganna Begum, which infuriated Mughalani Begum. The Afghan invader forced Imad-ul-mulk, to divorce his wife, and to marry Umda Begum on 21 February 1757, at the instigation of Mughlani Begum, and his former wife was made a maid servant to her.

Verma Mahadevi, b. 1917, Poet.

One of the most famous Hindi poets of the century, she was born at Farrukhabad, U.P., but spent most of her life at Allahabad, Amongst her most famous works are Deep Shikha, and Niraja.

Vijayalakshmi: Pandit's story in that of a woman imbued with courage and patriotism.

Motilal Nehru, her father was educated in England and was a barrister. Her mother, Swarup Rani came from a conservative family. From the Ramayana, she got values important to her as an Indian woman. Later, Mahatma Gandhi had a profound influence on her.

She married Ranjit Pandit who renamed her Vijayalakshmi, meaning "Conquering Goddess" they both joined Mahatma Gandhi's national movement. Contact with people like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Annie Besant and Sarojini Naidu, who were visitors to her home, infused in Vijaya a strong ambition to be a great orator.

Political involvement:

Her encounter with political issues came when she attended a women's meeting. She then enrolled as a volunteer of the Home Rule League. With growing unrest after World War-I and Mahatma Gandhi's return from South Africa, the Nehru family joined the Satyagraha movement in 1920. Gandhiji invited Vijaya to his Sabarmathi Ashram for a few days.

Being rooted in Indian tradition, Vijaya Lakshmi soon understood the simplicity of Gandhiji's life and philosophy.

When Gandhiji first visited Allahabad, his public speeches evoked much interest. On June 26, 1932, Vijaya Lakshmi faced her first arrest in Allahabad when addressing a Congress meeting, she was taken to the district Jail.

Vijayalakshmi held several important assignments. She was the only woman member of the Allahabad Municipal Board, and was later elected Chairman of the Education Committee.

Under the Government of India Act of 1935, when elections were held, Vijayalakshmi was elected from Kanpur. At the request of Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant, the Uttar Pradesh Congress leader, Vijaya joined the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet. Her portfolios were local self-Government and Medical and public health. Thus Vijaya became India's first woman Cabinet Minister. Shortly thereafter, the "Quit India Movement" started and jail was like a second home for Vijayalakshmi and her family.

As president of the All India Women's Conference, resolutions were passed by her organization, demanding immediate codification of Hindu Law giving Hindu women the right to inheritance and divorce.

Informal Ambassador

After the second world war, the Government of India announced elections, Vijayalakshmi was again elected and became a Minister in the Uttar Pradesh Government. At that time, racial problems in South Africa were growing and Gandhiji wanted to see that the UN included on its agenda, a protest against discrimination of Indian's in South Africa. Vijayalakshmi led the first delegation of our "about-to-be-Independent" India.

Foreign Assignments

After the British transferred power to India, Vijayalakshmi was appointed India's first Ambassador to Moscow.

Vijayalakshmi's other assignments included Washington in the United States, where she made known very successfully. India's foreign policy.

Vijaya contested the 1952 elections and this time entered parliament. India, at this stage, decided to send a good will mission to China. Vijayalakshmi was chosen its leader. The outcome of her visit was viewed as a great landmark in sino-Indian friendship.

Vijayalakshmi's greatest hour of glory came when she was elected President of the United Nations, in recognition of her country's strategic and democratic position in Asia. She was one of the most brilliant and dynamic presidents the UN ever had.

Time Magazine of New York, rated Vijayalakshmi as one of the "Ten most beautiful women of the world".

India is indeed proud of a daughter, who not only reflected the glory of her country, but is a shining example of the best in womanhood.

Waddanar Preeti, d.1930 revolutionary.

She was very closely associated with the chittagong Armoury Raid, in April 1930. She led an attack on Pahartjli Railway Officers' club but killed herself by swallowing poison when captured.

Yakini Mahattara, fl.7th cent.,

Taina scholar, She defeated a Brahmin scholar, Haribhadra in arguments, who there upon became her disciple and accepted the Jaina faith. She was vastly learned and did more than any other woman to disseminate Jaina scriptures.

Yasoda Bai, d.1811

Mahratha lady, Wife of Deshwa Madhavrao II (d.1795) she was hardly fifteen when her husband met with an accidental death. She was induced to adopt Chinnaji Appa as her son on 25 May 1795, who was proclaimed the Deshwa on 2nd June, but was removed in December following a bitter controversy. She was later confined in close custody at Raigarh by the new peshwa, Bajirao II.

Zudat-un-Nissa, 1651-1707, Mughal princess.

Daughter of Emperor Aurangzeb, she was married on 30 January 1673 to Siphir Shukoh the youngest son of the unfortunate Dara Shukoh-the bridegroom was released from captivity only on 8 December 1672, and presented to the emperor. A son Ali Tahar, was born to her in 1676, but he died after six months. Her subsequent history is not recorded.

Zutshi, Lado Rani, 1882-1968.

Political worker. Wife of Ladli Prasad Zutshi, Sister's son of Motilal Nehru, She was closely associated with women's movement at Allahabad, U.P., and Lahore. She lounded the Mahila Sammelan at Allahabad, and the Kumari Sabha at Lahore, and activity participated in the freedom movement. Her daughters were also active political workers.

2 Woman and the Theory:

Several theoretical explanations have been offered for some of the special features about woman and work in the advanced countries. The most important question taken up first for a theoretical investigation was, why women go out for paid employment. These theoretical explanations can be classified as (i) neo-classical (ii) institutional (iii) Marxist and (iv) radical.

According to Backer, "Women hire men as bread winners because men earn more than woman in the market and men time woman to bear and rear the children as women have superior skills for this task".

The neo-classicals do not consider the lower earnings of woman to be due to social injustice but attribute it to small investments in human capital voluntarily made by women which in turn leads to their lower productivity. This happens because (a) Women are out of the market during child bearing and rearing.

(b) They chose jobs which provide lower opportunity for on the job training.

(c) They avoid jobs which require training.

(ii) The institutional school: Instead of starting from the side of the individual the institutionalists start from the side of the family and they to look at the connection between women's non-market and market work. Higher entry of women in the market is associated with growing availability of 'Women's Work'. This is to show that women have no choice, it is the market which decides what jobs they would do. However, the dichotomy between home and market work of women should not be carried too far since home is as much conditioned by the market as the market by social factors.

Division of labour by sex has always been there but at certain stages of economic development the reward of specialization are more equitably distributed between the sexes than at others. Thus, women's position deteriorated with the invention of plough.

The Marxist approach can be traced back to Engels, 'Origin of Family', private property and the state? Thus Engels says that, "as wealth increased, it on the one hand gave the man a more important status in the family than Women....the overthrow of the mother right was the world historic defeat of the female sex. The man seized the reins in the house also, the woman was degraded, enthralled, the slave of the man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children."

The radical Approach, they consider that family survives because it serves the interests of the capitalists and show that sex inequality in the market is based on sex-inequality at home. Thus, there is a "Reciprocal relationship between economic development and the development of the household. Sources of modern economic life can only be fully understood by historian by examining the development of the household with particular reference to the role of women."

It is increasingly being realised that 'lack of effective linkage between local' and national levels, or between specific programs and macropolicies. Usually prevents the achievement of women's integration in development. Women must be integrated into the development progress not only symbolically and through concrete local projects, but in the most central processes of resource allocation in development planning".

3 Women and Economic Development via changes in Women Employment:

John D. Durand, in his "The labour force in Economic Development" studied in U.K. which relates economic development with the changes in women's employment argues that in the early stages of capitalist development a large number of women were in the work force, with economic advancement, women withdraw from working and became primarily house-wives, and with still further economic advancement more and more women were drawn back into the labour force.

International analysis indicates that the decline of women from the workforce with economic development is not a universal feature. Thus, economic development does not necessarily mean that there will be a decline in women workers. This occurs only under certain conditions this study seeks to identify and analyse under the role of women in the Palladam Beedi Industry.

Tamil Nadu:

Tamil Nadu has 23.9 million females in its population of 48.4 million (1981) of India's 321 million females. One in fourteen resides in this state. Every third woman of the Southern region, comprising the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka lives there.

Slow growth

Tamil Nadu population has grown at a slower pace than the rest of the southern region, and the nation, over the years, the pace has slackened significantly in the most recent decade.

The growth in female population has consistently lacked behind males in the state. By 1981, the state has a female deficit of over 5 lakhs. This lagged growth of female population Tamil Nadu has more woman per sq.km. at 184 almost twice the national average as also that of Karnataka and Andhrapradesh In the region, only Kerala has a higher density of Female population at 333 per sq.km.

CBE, PALLADAM:

Palladam is a Major Panchayat. The area of this Panchayat is 19.49 sq.km. According to the 1981 census the population, of this town is 16,528. The population of women is 7949. The density of population per sq.km. is 848. The women folk per sq.km. is 40.8.

4.Salient features of the Beedi Industry:

The present study, though cannot be claimed to be a pioneering one in the field, still makes a humble begining to high-lights the problem of women in unorganised sector. The socio-economic condition, their work situations and other aspects related to their development are examined in the course of discussion.

Beedi, a poor man's substitute for cigarete is widely sold in both urban and rural areas. A recent estimate indicates that there are about 2.5 million workers employed in the beedi industry, though spread all over India, widely concentrated in the states of Andhrapradesh, Maharashtra, Madhyapradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Kerala, Karnataka, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa. Though the Industry is predominantly confined mostly to cottage industry, there in a wide network of big industry, which clandestinely controls the entire

Production. The significant features of the industry are employing large number of women and children around ninety percent of the work force in the Beedi industry are women, requirement of only simple skills- even children can learn the skills by simple observation, adoption of labour intensive process with little use of Machinery and tools and little infrastructural arrangements. There in perhaps no other industry which employs so many and demand so little of resources for beedi manufacture. Apart from it, beedi industry directly converts its raw material into a straight use, with little effort of finishing touches.

It is reported, that, the beedies were first manufactured in India in 1902 in Madhya pradesh and entered into Andhrapradesh in 1938 with the establishment of an industry at Nizamabad. In Andhra Pradesh the beedi industry is concentrated in Nizamabad district and spread over to the neighbouring districts.

The present study on beedi workers is undertaken from a sample chosen from Palladam, Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. The reason for the concentration of beedi industry in these districts, which are neither major tobacco producers nor possess any rich natural resource in regard to the availability of beedi leaf (locally known as tunki leaf' in the region) can be traced back into the pages of history.

Since more than ninety percent of the labour force in the industry in homebased only a small number of workers are regularly employed or work at factories. Thus in actual operation, a factory does not require the heavy accommodation. It needs godowns to store the leaf and one or two rooms for the purposes of packing the finished products. Thus, the owners can produce lakhs of beedis with little accommodation.

In few cases, these factories have branch offices to supply the leaf and collect the finished beedies from the workers though several of the factories exist, ultimately only few beedi companies collect those bundles, give their respective labels to it and introduce them into market, ultimately monopolising the whole trade. The workers are only concerned with the collection of raw material, submission of finished beedies and collection of their wages - nothing they can know and understand further (it continues work situation)

Work Situation: (See Photographs)

It is more a role than a precept that all types of workers in the unorganised sector have to invariably depend upon physical labour there is also little scope for skilled work and people here have very little chance of adopting more skills to improve the quality of their work. This sector, by its very nature also does not offer any new avenues for skill improvement. Thus, most of the work discharged by them is routine in nature, involving heavy physical work.

Since the process of making beedis is highly labour intensive, a common pair of scissors for cutting the leaves in which tobacco is rolled, a card-board cut-out for giving them the right shape and a simple wooden work for holding in the two ends of rolled beedi many women would do all these jobs but few women were also doing the other jobs of manning, sorting, and as the pillars, gampawallahs, batti-wallaha, beedirollers and packers.



SIEVING
&
SIFTING



CUTTING
THE
SEEDS
LEAVES



ROLLING
THE
BEEDIES



REPAIRING
THE
BEDDING



SPREADING
IN THE
HOT SUN



ROASTING
THE TIP



LABELLING



SAMPLING

The nature of work of beedi workers is entirely different from the nature of work of women workers in other unorganised sectors, women beedi workers get up at about 4 O'clock for cutting beedi leaves a day before to prepare it for rolling it the next day. For that they had to soak the leaves over night. Torn leaves are discarded and the remaining leaves are cut according to a model given by the contractors. This work is done in the early hours. If the leaves are not of good quality preliminary work would be wasted. In such cases beedi workers had to purchase leaves outside to fulfill the required quota of at least one thousand beedis otherwise she is paid only for the finished product and not for the whole work including cutting etc.

Rolling beedis require a little skill and talent. Accurate pinch of tobacco should be rolled into a beedi. If it is not accurate there would be delay in making the beedis as well as more number of beedis cannot be made out of it. And if it is too little, it makes beedis loose since payments are made according to the number of beedis rolled they had to be very careful at the time of rolling. After rolling of beedis is over, two ends of beedi leaves has to be pressed to peel it. 74 cotton thread, supplied by factory has to be wound around the beedi and knotted. The beedis have to be measured with the model provided by the factory, longer or shorter beedis are rejected, finally the finished beedis are bound up in bundles of specified number and delivered to the contractor for payment.

In the district out of the sample, were involved in rolling beedis and very few beedi workers are entrusted with the other jobs.

To almost all women, there is no specified and restricted working hours. Their work generally starts from early hours of morning and is over by around 12(P.M.) in the night. Since their returns depend upon the number of beedis they make, most of the beedi workers work for many hours to earn their livelihood. Nearly 6 percent of beedi workers work for 4 to 6 hours, and a largest number of beedi workers, (6 percent) roll the beedis for 6 to 9 hours a day, whereas 30 percent of them work for 9 to 12 hours. Though these women had flexibility of working hours both in the spell of a day as well as a period of time as they are engaged in personal business, they nevertheless work even during odd hours to earn few more bucks. Thus the nature of work indicates that the women in this sector work even during odd hours to earn few more bucks. Thus the nature of work indicates that the women in this sector work for longer hours straining themselves both physically and mentally.

The daily production of beedis is varied between 250 to 2000. 39 percent of beedi workers produce 250 to 500 beedis, 58 percent of beedi workers produce 600-1000 beedis, 3 percent of beedi workers produce 1000 to 2000 beedis. It is observed during the field investigation that women who produce more than 500 beedis invariably take the help of either their children or other members of the family. Those who cannot get the support of family members can make only little number of beedis.

In every beedi industry the system of wage payment is generally on the piece-rate basis. Time-rate system was not adopted. Though minimum wage is fixed as Rs.13.00 per thousand beedis, 29 percent of the beedi workers were paid less than Rs.10 for 1000 beedis and only 71 percent of beedi workers paid between Rs.10.00-13.00 per 1000 beedis. This would indicate that the minimum wages were not paid in the beedi industry. There is also discrimination of wage-payment between one worker and the other. In such cases generally women get less payment than the value of work she has turned out. There is also little increase in the wages over the years. Though the minimum wage is amended and special legislations were passed to cover the beedi industry they were respected more in breach than in compliance.

Regarding the mode of payment about 77 percent of the beedi workers were paid their wages fortnightly and 13 percent of the beedi workers were paid monthly. However most of the beedi workers opined that there is no certainty in receiving their wages regularly as prescribed.

Besides the non-payment of minimum wages and maintaining irregularity in making payments, the actual calculation of wage and other dealings also smacks of systematic exploitation. The factory supervisor or masteries check the size of beedis. If they do not tally with the suggested model they would be outrightly rejected. At the time of counting, beedis were rejected for being thin, longer, or for not knotting properly. However after the transactions are over and the workers are left the places, the

remaining ones and make money on them. But the beedi workers are not paid for such beedis. Twenty seven percent of the beedi workers are of the view that daily at least 50 to 100 and sometimes even more beedis were rejected in each case.

It is due to the pathetic socio-economic conditions of the beedi workers, that they are compelled to work to keep the welfare from the door. Sixty-four percent of the beedi workers said that they roll beedies even during holidays and on Sundays. The change in the work place is also one of the remote possibility as during the past years only thirty seven percent of the beedi workers have changed the factory because of unpredictable job situating and due to either the closure of the factory or shifting of the factory. A few respondents however reported that it has due to some temptation they had changed the factory for more monetary benefits. The remaining did not experience any change in their factory because they have been staying in that factory for longer periods. However in large number of cases, despite the inconveniences they met at the work place, they do not change the work place for the fear of not getting any work in other industries. The contractors also do not encourage such practices.

Most of the respondents felt that factory is a comfortable place for the production of more number of beedis but sixty percent of them preferred to work at houses because they can take the help of the children and also can look after household assignments. However, it is also observed that contractors also prefer these women to work at homes, because they can not provide more accommodation at the factory premises and also do not like to bring these workers together for want of various-legal and personal reasons.

No facilities are provided to the beedi workers at the factory premises. There would be neither proper ventilation and nor sufficient drinking water supply. Lavatories and urinals are conspicuously absent at every industry. Most of the factories are located in slum areas and congestion and darkness also found as a distinct feature of the factories. Due to this, the incidence of diseases is very high among the workers. Except eleven percent of the respondents, remaining had reported some complaint or the other. Inhaling the tobacco cause TB (Tuberculosis) and Asthama to the workers and thirty-four percent of the respondents of Palladam seven percent of the respondents were suffering from above complaints. Thirty-six percent of the respondents reported nerves weakness' and Edima and others have reported to be suffering from different diseases such as beackache, stomach-ache, gas-trouble, rheumatic complaints.

Although ESI hospitals come to the rescue of workers in some places, it is due to the lack of funds the medicines were neither properly supplied nor they were cared by the hospital authorities and the management. Most of the workers were left to their own fate and no one would come to their rescue. Thus a review of the health conditions of all women workers indicate the conspicuous absence of medical facilities.

There is no weekly holidays for the workers. Although the factory is closed on Sunday, beedi leaves and the tobacco would be supplied to the workers in order to make them work at home. Paid holidays were not given during the festivals.

In regard to employer-employer relations and personal dealings, there were several misunderstandings and suspicions. Most of the contractors and supervisors do not behave properly with the workers. They use filthy language and treat the ladies obnoxiously. Since the beedi workers spend most of their time in factories rolling beedis, they were subjected at times to both good and bad behaviour of their employers. Forty-two percent of the respondents of Palladam reported that they were personally victimised by the rude behaviour of the bosses. Several of them were also narrated the cases of indecent behaviour. Several cases of abduction and seduction were also found, but most of the women did not like to discuss about them.

Although different political parties have their own trade unions in this sector, they were not properly organized. Multiplicity of unions. Collusion with the management or inactivity, activating the unions for personal ends etc., were the reasons for their failures. In some cases strikes were organized unsuccessfully. However, majority of the respondents, particularly in Palladam felt that unions were essential to maintain unity among the workers and fight for a commoncause. They claimed that they could achieve some benefits due to the unions.

Besides their problems at the work spots and outside the house, they also suffer from the routine household problems. As a result, they were burdened heavily with domestic work as well as wage earning work. Most of the respondents were of the view that their problems increased both at work spot and also at home over the years.

Apart from the heavy physical work, their problems were extended even to their socio economic self. They felt that service conditions were not conducive for happy career and good status on the eyes of public. Strained family relations due to maladjustments in the family aksi resulted in unhappiness. Liquor consumption, smoking, and wife-beating, were common in all families. In all these cases, however, women were the victims.

The status and position of the respondents in their respective facilities, however, despite their economic independence is mostly dependent. Though they share a large percentage of their family responsibility they continue to be less privileged. Most of the respondents said that large number of decisions pertaining to family were taken by their men-folk and they think that they cannot disrespect their elders and men by taking decisions simply because they too earn some money.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

To hilights the socio-economic background of women beedi workers their work situation, life pattern and their general awarness.

REVIEW OF



LITERATURE

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the following section studies conducted by various scientists, social scientists are analysed which could provide the resource base, analysed which could provide the resource base, the data Bank for facilitating those who would like to attempt some exercises. Women studies are significant because they are critical instruments to understand adequately the social reality. Women studies have to be relevant for academic contribution for better understanding. Those who have been studying the condition of women especially amongst poor in India, feel a sense of urgency as they perceive the survival crisis in the lives of these women. They see that these women are loosing their place in the job markets. They are often nutritionally deprived and they are not yet sufficiently organised to make a notice about the condition.

In order to improve the women workers in India, the Government of India from Sixth Five year plan onwards has made a modest beginning in the direction of women's development programme. Some of the important programmes are listed below:

1. All India Women's Conference
2. Young women's christian Association.
3. Self-Employed Women's Association.
4. Annapoorna Mahila Mandal.
5. Working women's forum
6. Papped Rollers of Lijjat
7. Mahila Jagran Samiti.

8. Emancipation of women.
9. Night patrollers of Manipur
10. Non-formal Education for women.
11. Employment Bureau for Domestic workers.
12. Mobilization of women after a Disaster.
13. Programme for Women's Development.

The All India Women's conference and the young Christian Women's Association are pioneer efforts to organize women to undertake services for other women. While the self-Employed Women's Association, Annapoorna Mahila Mandal, and the working Women's Forum are attempts to use the trade union approach to mobilize small entrepreneurs to improve themselves. The papped rollers of Lijjat is a large economic venture, to provide income for women who can work in their own homes. Using modern advertising and sales techniques this effort is a boon for thousands of women in several parts of India. The Mahila Jagran Samiti and the Emancipation of women are attempts on very local levels to awaken women living in the slums. The former enables its members also to supplement family income.

The Night patrollers of Manipur organized themselves spontaneously to try and curb drunkenness among men and boys and thus save them and their families from misery. Non formal Education for women, also called the Grihini Training Programme, originated as an effort for illiterate tribal girls of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. It aims to prepare young women for their various functions in the homes, as well as for community leadership.

Mobilization of women after a disaster, highlights the neglect of women by male volunteers from outside. It also describes the women's dramatic responses when their internal resources are stimulated to react and take hold of themselves and their community.

Illiterate and unskilled girls and women have few options for jobs. But the job market for domestic help is very large. Change of negative attitudes on the part of employers and some preparation of rural migrants to the city, can mean a decent livelihood for many families through the employment bureau for domestic workers.

The programme for women's development used the written and spoken work, training and consultancy services, to focus attention on the plight of poor women and girls, so that action programmes could result in improving their situation.

Despite of the various programmes implemented by the Government of India. Our present study shows that still some of the women labourers who are employed in the Beedi Industries in the Palladam Taluk are not much aware of the above mentioned programmes.

The following are the important studies which mainly highlights the Socio-economic conditions of the women in Beedi Industry.

The studies are analysed under the following heads.

1. Women workers studies by occupation/Industry
2. Women in Industries
3. Women in the Informal sector.

1 Women Workers studies by occupation/Industry Beedi Industries:

Abraham A in his Beedi worker of Bombay analysed the struggle of Beedi workers regarding the supply of tendu leaves and minimum wages.

Baxi U Presented a paper at the Asian Regional Conference on women and house-hold which describes the struggles and the problems of women Beedi workers when they participated in the activities of the Andra Pradesh Beedi Workers Union. His another study Beedi workers of Sinnar describes the working conditions of workers in Sinnar taluk of Nasik district in Maharashtra.

Bhatty Z Economic role and status of women was studied by Bhatty. His paper is based an intensive study of women beedi worker in three tehsils of Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh regarding the organisation of the industry women's contribution to house-hold income as a result of Beedi making and house-hold income as a result of Beedi making and house work.

Jaya Singh's J Report of women Beedi workers of vellore has clearly examined the Socio-economic conditions, the difficulties and the problems of Beedi workers in Vellore.

Murali Manohar K and host of others have presented paper at the conference on women's status and development, warangel. These study undertaken in the Nizamabad and warangel district of Andhra Pradesh. They have beautifully high-lighted the socio economic background

work situation and the right pattern of Beedi rollers in the about two districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Omvedr G Women roll beedis factory owners roll in wealth was analysed by omvedr. He describes the struggle and the suffering women have to go through in Nipani while the factory owners make money by exploiting these women.

Women Beedi workers in a Kerala Village was studied by Pillai and Lakshmi Devi K.R. They compare the situation of women Beedi workers working in the factory system with those working at home in relation to employment, work output of production, wages, working and health conditions, benefits etc.

Socio-economic survey of chipa women was analysed by Bhatt R. He has conducted a survey of chipa women that is (women who engaged in hand printing) in Ahmadabad. His study clearly analyses the socio-economic problems of the chipa women of Ahmadabad. He has suggested some measures to make these women's economically stronger.

Krishnaswamy L. In his workers become entrepreneurs studied self-employed women association, Ahmadabad. He highlights the efforts made by (SEWA)

1. Bargaining and representation in matters related to the trades and occupations.
2. Legal aid and attention to grievances on an individual basis is given through the legal aid cell of SEWA.

3. Membership is open to any working class woman above the age of fifteen years, residing in Gujarat. The annual membership fee is Rs.3 payable in instalments of 25 paise. Decisions are made through representatives of various groups.

4. Credit and saving facilities are given through the Mahila SEWA Sahakri Bank - a registered co-operative Bank. Loans are given to members on the basis of mutual guarantee. For many members the experience of borrowing from the bank was new. The rate of interest was low and the period of repayment long. At the same time, there was less flexibility in the arrangement; the period of repayment of instalment was fixed.

5. To train women and block printers in new designs and selling techniques.

2. Women in Industries:

Role of small scale industries in feeding large industries and women's part was analysed by Desai S.F. He gives statistics of women employed in small scale industries and compares it with the situation in Japan and America. He also emphasised the need for training women in business management and in the use of machines.

Status of women in public sector industries impact of national policy training facility and special programme was studied by Hussain S and Rao V.R. They present an analysis of the Secondary data on employment in public sector industries. Such as coal, textiles, pharmaceuticals, electronics, heavy electrical and watch making regarding employment opportunities, training facilities, management policies and impact of technology on women.

Kalpagam U studied the Labour market segmentation in a multi-structural context and its implications on the female labour force. The paper is in two parts. The first part deals with the nature of industrial structure and the characteristics of female industries labour for in India, the second part deals with the implications for an analysis of the class dimensions of labour market, job satisfaction hierarchies and occupational segregation and how they affect the division of labour between men and women.

Special problems of women in industries was dealt by Sahay T. He deals with the special problems of women in industries particularly the ones relating to health and extend to which the welfare measures adopted by the Government have helped them.

Women in unregulated and miscellaneous industries was studied by Sengupta P. He deals with the working conditions and wages of women working in unregulated industries such as cashewnut and chemical Industries, rice mills and tobacco Industries.

Working conditions and job satisfaction among industrial women workers was studied by Sharan R. His studies show that the working conditions and women do not have job satisfaction whether in public sector or in private sector.

III Women in the Informal sector:

Banerjee N In his women workers and development deals with some aspects of role of Women Workers in India's development. The growth of women's work in the unorganised sector does nothing to reduce poverty and contains within the seeds of a state of increasing misery.

In another study he analyses the conditions under which women seek employment and observes that women have been conditioned to accept low wage. They are primarily wives and mothers, not workers. This mental attitude only makes them more vulnerable to exploitation by employers.

Women workers in the unorganised sector in Kerala was presented by Eapen M. He focusses the pattern of women employment in the unorganised sector by detailed industrial categories. In order to identify those activities in which women are pre-dominant and discusses some issues concerning the organisation of women workers in the unorganised sector.

Gangrade K.D. and Gathia J analysed the problem of working women in the unorganised sectors. The problems are discrimination and differentials in wages. This is due to lack of marketing links, lack of capital and non-availability of raw material.



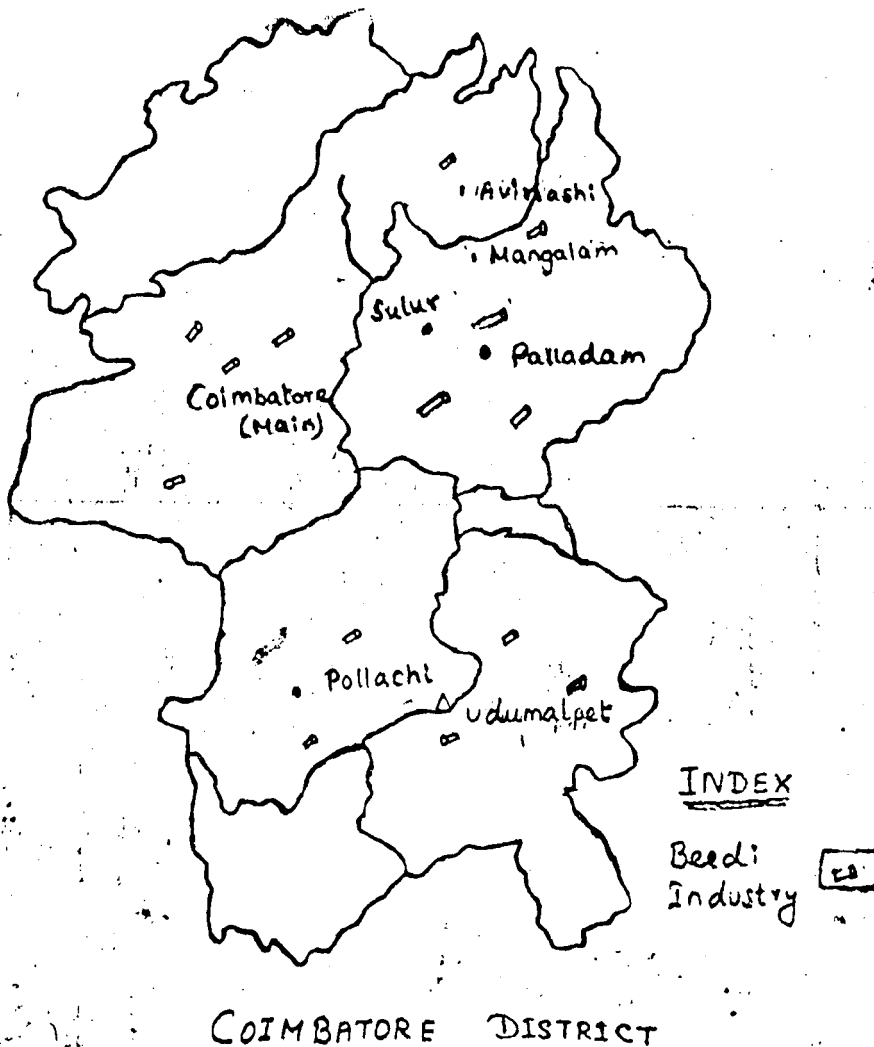
METHODOLOGY

III. METHODOLOGY

The Methodology followed for the socio Economic Conditions of women workers with reference to Beedi Industry in Palladam Taluk, can be categorised as follows:

1. Selection of the Area
2. Collection of studies
3. Analysing and Categorising the studies.

1. Selection of the Area:



1. Selection of the Area:

Coimbatore Revenue district comprises five taluks viz., Coimbatore Taluk, Pollachi Taluk, Udumalpet Taluk, Palladam Taluk, and Avinashi Taluk.

Tirupur is the capital city of Palladam Taluk. The area of this taluk is 1515 sq.Kms. The population is 4 lakhs. It is situated in a very comfortable place to reach the District Head - Quarters. Some places of this taluk is 300m above sea-level whereas some other places are 180m. above sea level.

Mostly there are dry lands. Maise, Ragi, ground nut, tobacco and cotton are mainly produced in this taluk.

Palladam town is famous for tobacco and beedi factories. In the surrounding villages poultry keeping and powerlooms are famous. The small scale industries are widespread. The enterprises are at full bloom. The famous Beedi factories like 'Gopal', 'Kuil', 'Nari', 'Kathari', 'Bison', 'Minor Majeed' and 'Prakasam' are here. Both men and women are working in the factories. Mainly the ladies look after the enterprises. Men workers roll the beedies. An efficient male worker can roll 3000 beedies per day. The lady workers are engaged in cutting the beedi leaves, bundling and labeling etc.

This town has more self employment opportunity. Both men and women are engaged in work. Comparing with other taluks Palladam provides more employment opportunity. The employment rate is higher than the other taluks.

2. Collection of studies:-

The investigator with the help of direct personal interviews (questionnaire) method collected the primary data.

3. Analysing and Categorising the studies:

The various studies on women, and their socio economic conditions of work are analysed under the following heads.

1. Women workers studies by occupation/Industry.
2. Women in Industries
3. Women in Indian History

The findings on women studies were summarised and the areas for further studies were discussed. The following areas were found suitable for further studies.

- a. Women & literacy Education
- b. Women & population-problems
- c. Women in child nutrition and Child rearing.
- d. Women & health

**RESULTS AND
DISCUSSION**



IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE I CASTES OF WOMEN WORKERS

Total number of Female Workers	Name of the Castes					
	Forward		Backward		Scheduled	
	Total	Percent- age	Total	Percent- age	Total	Percent- age
100	15	15	63	63	22	22

There is a significant correlation between the women's occupation and their caste, Around percent of the workers are from backward caste. Among the backward castes, a large number of them (63 percent) are Muslims. It is significant fact to note that at least a member from each workers in the Beedi Industry in the Palladam taluk. Only 15 percent of the respondents belong to forward castes and the remaining 22 percent belong to scheduled castes. This would indicate that the forward caste have little representation in the Industry.

TABLE II
AGE GROUPS OF WOMEN WORKERS

Years	Number of the Workers	
	Total	Percentage
1 - 18	25	25
above - 18	75	75

Women workers generally start work at an early age and this is more true in the case of women in the Beedi Industries. As this industry employ women and children irrespective of their age people from different age groups are found fo work in the industry. The sample indicates that around 75 percent of women were above the age of 18. The remaining 25 percent were from 8-18 age group. This indicates that more number of young and middle aged women are found in the industry.

TABLE III
CIVIL STATUS OF WOMEN

Total Number of Female Workers	Civil Status							
	Married		Unmarried		Widows		Diverse	
	Total	Per- cent	Total	Per- cent	Total	Per- cent	Total	Per- cent
100	69	69	4	4	10	10	17	17

In regard to marital status, nearly 69 percent of the respondents were married, 10 percent were widows; 17 percent were divorced and the remaining 4 percent were unmarried. There was no correlation between the age and marriage as large number of child marriages could be observed among the families. Paradoxically is an equally significant number (around 32 percent) of cases, marriages were considerably delayed. Due to the fact of dowries and other expenditures and non-availability of bridegrooms, marriages were considerably delayed. In those cases, where child marriages were taken place, bridegrooms were generally drawn from maternal or paternal side of relations.

Education:

Education is universally regarded as an instrument of improvement in the status of women. It is considered as a step-ladder for occupational and social mobility. Even after independence, we witness a less significant improvement in women's education in India.

Education is the key that opens the door in life which is essentially social in character. The level of education of women is an important indicator for the understanding of the present and future status of women in the country.

TABLE IV
EDUCATION STATUS OF WOMEN

Educated			Uneducated
Primary school level	Higher School level	Secondary and above	
60%	2%	-	38%

Around 38 percent of the respondents are illiterates only 60 percent of respondents have had pre-primary and primary education in their early ages and dropped out of education, the remaining 2 percent had dropped out at upper primary level.

TABLE V
EDUCATION STATUS OF CHILDREN

Educated Children			Uneducated Children
Primary	High School	Secondary and above	
33%	12%	6%	49%

The education of the children and the male members in these families also present the same picture. Only 40 percent of male adults in the families were literates and several of them (53 percent) were dropped out at different levels of education. Only 7 percent of male adults have crossed high school education.

With regard to children 49 percent were not attending schools and 33 percent were dropped out after primary education. The remaining 18 percent were attending school at different levels. Although the parents expressed that their children need education, they expressed their inability to carry forward their education due to poverty and economic backwardness.

Though educational facilities were available to them, a large number of respondents said that they cannot offered such a time consuming system of education, which does not provide them any immediate benefits. Hence, most of them said that several of their children were put into the work to earn some livelihood and assist the family.

Family Planning:

Family Planning helps women workers achieve freedom by providing them with an opportunity to avoid or reduce unwanted pregnancy and increase the birth intervals between children. The latter is crucial in improving the health status of women as it is stated that where the gap between pregnancies is less than a year the mother stands twice as much risk of dying as where the spacing between births is two years or more. Woman can also lengthen their lifes by reducing the number of years spent in pregnancies and child rearing by judicious planning.

The rise in the proportion of younger women among the acceptors and increased interest witnessed among women with one or two children are encouraging signs. This has been clearly shown in the following table.

TABLE VI
FAMILY PLANNING AND THE SOURCE

Knowledge on Family Planning		Source			
Yes	No	Pills	Contra-ceptives	sterill-ization	Any Other
92%	8%	42%	30%	15%	5%

From the above table, it is interesting to note that 92 percent of the women worker have knowledge on family planning. Majority 92 percent of the women workers have small family which shows they are aware of the method available to control the size of the family. This implies they have faith in small size, which will help them to have a happy and healthy family life.

As far as the delivery is concerned 40 percent of the women go to ESI hospital which indicate that they are aware of the medical facilities in and around their place. There are very few cases (21 percent) where we see abortion and still births.

Almost all families of the sample depend on unorganised sector and on daily wages. The income particulars of the families indicates their low level of living which is mainly due to meagre and irregular incomes. This has deteriorated the economic position of these women and their families. The average daily income of the families range from Rs.13-15, depending upon the number of persons employed in the family. Since most of these persons depend upon daily wages, Sometimes they do not get any work and hence no wage. Most of the men in these families were employed in Beedi Markets, cloth stores, general stores, cloth mills, vegetable farms, and other private establishments. Due to such an unpredictable job-situation, there is a fall in the incomes of the families.

The following table clearly shows the income particulars of the women workers.

TABLE VII

INCOME OF WOMEN WORKERS

Income	Percent
100 - 200	3
200 - 300	27
300 - 400	52
400 - 500	12
500 - 600	4
600 & above	2

Since the employment is not always available, on an average, women workers do not get employment for one to two months in a year.

In the above table we find that 52 percent of the families receive Rs.300-400 as their monthly income. 27 percent of the families receive a low level Rs.200-300 as their monthly income 12 percent of the families are in a position to receive Rs.400-500. Very few (6 percent) families receive Rs.500 and above. On the whole only 3 percent of the families receive Rs.100-200 as their income. This is low level of income is responsible for the poor economic position of their families.

House-hold Consumption:

The following table gives us an idea of house-hold consumption and expenditure pattern per month of the women workers in Palladam taluk.

TABLE VIII

HOUSE-HOLD CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE

Consumption		Expenditure	
Number of Vegetarian	Number of Non-Vegetarian	Meat, Fish, Egg (non-vegetarian exp)	Milk, Milk Products Pulses, Cereals fruits, beverages
30%	70%	95%	90%

Regarding their consumption-expenditure of the women workers 70 percent of the families come under the non-vegetarian group and they spend 95 percent of their income on food items, That is they mainly take, meat, fish, egg as their main food. Only 30 percent of the women workers are the vegetarians who spend 90 percent of their income on milk and milk products, pulses, cereals, fruits, beverages as their main food which shows that very few (30 percent) are the vegetarians.

Assets:

Along with the poor economic position and irregular income the low level of asset position has also added to their poor living. This has been explained in the following table.

TABLE IX

Number of families possess Assets		Forms	
Yes	No	Tiled-flats	Hut like houses
30	70	18	12

Regarding their assets only 30 percent of the women workers own some property and the remaining 70 percent of the workers do not possess any assets of their own either in the native place or in other places or where they live at present. Among the 30 percent who have assets possess only single room tiled-flats or hut-like houses. Further, most of the respondents expressed that several of them (28 percent) had lost agricultural lands and houses during the last 20 years.

Added to the lack of assets, indebtedness further ruined the economic life of these beedi workers. Most of the beedi workers (75 percent) have taken loans from money lenders or from their earlier landlords for various reasons. This can be seen from the following table.

TABLE X
SOURCES AND PURPOSES OF BORROWINGS

Sources			Purpose of borrowings					
Friends and Relatives	Money lenders	Bank and other financial institutions	Consumption	Children's Education	Celebrate Festival and rituals	Purchase Lands	Construct Houses	Medical Expenses.
45%	3%	-	69%	4%	3%	1%	3%	-

About 85 percent of the respondents indicated that they had taken loans ranging from Rs.200-3000. Among them, 40 percent owed more than Rs.1000. Only 20 percent had no debts. 35 percent depended on money lenders and remaining took loans from their land lords friends and relatives. A large number of these are consumption loans and which stayed with them throughout their lives. Large amount of earnings and loans have been spent on consumption and repayment of interests and principle amounts. Few (7 percent) taken loans for their educating children, to purchase lands, to celebrate festivals and other ceremonial functions.

Only a very few (4 percent) families have borrowed loans for house construction and to meet medical expenses. This is a regular phenomenon in their lives and they continue to suffer from such a state of affairs.

It is because of these loans and debts their economic position suffer badly despite their incomes. Due to the present economic backwardness, women in their families, are compelled to be sub-servient and dependent on others. Eventhough they work hard day in and day out to gain some livelihood.

General awareness:

From the general awareness the investigator is in a position to conclude the following points.

1) 86 percent of the women workers have the habit of reading news papers and weekly magazines. Only a very few 14 percent of the women workers have not cultivated the habit of reading magazines. Due to their tight home work, they do not find time to spend for the magazines.

2) It is interesting to note that the majority of the women workers (96 percent) have got the habit of listening to radio as an entertainment. So the women workers are also aware of Tamil and Hindi news and also enjoy some interesting dramas and cine-songs.

3) Since the Palladam panchayat Government has provided Television at each block, most of the families do not possess television at home. But a very few 4 percent of the families do possess portable television which they have purchased in an instalment basis.

4) Seeing movie is supposed to be the best entertainment for the women workers. Majority (84 percent) of the women workers have expressed that movies give them a sort of mental happiness and they are able to forget their family worries. So they have made it as a habit to go for a movie once a week.

5) Since most of the women workers are Muslims, they are prevented from entering into mosque so the women workers worship their God five times a day at home. Very rarely they go to Chinnakarai which is a religious place for the Muslims where women workers are allowed to go in.

6) To almost all women there is no time to visit either their relatives or friends.

7) It is interesting to note that the Indian women since the later part of the nineteenth century and post-independence period were active in political affairs. Currently they participate as well as in voting. In the previous election majority (82 percent) of the women workers have exercised their franchise. 82 percent of the women expressed the feeling that the exercise franchise with faith that they would get better government than that was in power. Most of them seem to have satisfied to remain as voters than to enter as contestants. 18 percent of women expressed on the basis of their experience that actual participation in politics prevented them from doing full-justice to their family.

8) But a very few (18 percent) of the women workers have expressed their inability to exercise their franchise. Some of the constraints on women are analysed since they form the main cause for the low participation or non-participation by women in the field of politics. Psychological, Cultural, Social, Male dominance are the important constraints faced by the women workers.

9) In short, women perform a traditional role in our society very rarely attracted to a serious political carrier. So they are not interested in attending political meetings.

10) There is a growing awareness among women of all categories of the atrocities being committed against women, often dowry is the cause of friction, jealousy and increasing avarice that sees completion in another human sacrifice at the alter of dowry.

11) The dowry system is prevalent among all communities. It is the dowry i.e. the reality, the Marriage negotiation and the haggling revolving around it. As far as the women workers are concerned almost all of them know about the existence of dowry system and divorce law.

12) 90% of the women workers have expressed that women should work to supplement the family income. From the study we understand that a large majority 90 percent of women has no control over the earnings and cannot decide the manner in which it is spent. Thus, the influence of women is very little on the family budgets and they are not in a position to keep any of their earnings for themselves.

13) Poor economic condition do not allow them to have savings either in the bank or in the post office.

14) Since the nature of beedi work indicates that the women in this sector work for longer hours straining themselves both physically and mentally most of the women percent do not want their children to go for the same work. 90% of the women are not interested in training their children in their same field since the nature of the work involve strain and time consuming.

15) Despite of their poor economic condition 95 percent of the women want that their children should be educated and get a better job.

16) Though the women workers are aware of better wage in Kerala and Tiruchy for the same work the women workers are not interested to move from the Palladam Taluk because of better climatic condition and good business from the factory.

17) It is being observed that there is no difference in wage rate among the workers in the factory. The amount of wage is determined on the basis of the number of beedies they roll.

18) 95 percent of the women felt that rolling beedi does not require much skill and talent because the pinch of tobacco should be rolled into a beedi. Since they are experienced in this field the women workers prefer to work in the same industry.

19) 90 percent of the women felt that technical qualification would have helped them to earn more wages.



SUMMARY AND
CONCLUSION

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The above Socio economic analysis of the beedi workers indicate that women in these industry were invariably drawn from low-caste, low-class and ill-educated sections of the society. Unpredictable job situation, irregular wages, high rate of indebtedness etc. are the other characteristics of the women in the Beedi industry.

It is evident from the analysis of Socio economic conditions of the women workers in the beedi industries have not visualised any change for the better life styles over the years. They remain poorer and poorer over the years. On the other hand, their conditions have become worse, Illiteracy, ignorance, more number of children in the families, lack of Minimum amenities, meagre wages, ever increasing debts, their low caste class dimension explicitly indicate the general low level of living.

The work situation and living condition of women workers of Beedi Industry were deteriorating day by day with declining earnings. Nature of work has become burden-some; more hours of work, lack of availability of work and minimum facilities at the work spot, arbitrary nature of employee employer relations made their life unconceivable.

Depressive work situation manual nature of job affected the morale of the workers, Coupled to it, the nature of work is such that it has a wild effect on their health conditions. Despite working hard and undertaking difficult jobs, women workers receive no social treatment and on the contrary they were discriminated at work spots

and in the payment of wages. Illiteracy, ignorance made them to lead a secondary role both in the family and at workspot. The existence of feudal relations at all levels further deteriorated the status of women workers to lead a sub-human life. As a result of all these, the socio-economic conditions of the women workers in the Beedi industry continue to be deteriorated over the years.

Women face many afflictions due to mal-nutrition, ill-health, poverty and ignorance. They are faced with a larger share of problems than men because of their sex.

Their contribution in homemaking, child-rearing, foodgathers, cooking and feeding the family is ignored. Even when they earn and their wages mean better food, clothing, shelter and education to the children, their importance is never acknowledged. Their fathers, husbands or sons still dominate over them.

To conclude, we need an economy, a social structure to bridge the gulf between the rural and the urban. The haves and the have nots. Illiteracy should be eradicated. Education must be self-generative. The rural poor should not be added to the unemployed, Rural education should be rural economy oriented. India still lives in its villages. Villages should get the benefit of civilisation but the rural women must be absorbed into a better rural structure. The Gandian concept of basic education harmonised with village Industries with a productive Market for rural skills must become a reality. Adult education, need based education productive literacy and family planning should make villages the strong backbone of our nation.

In order to improve the Socio-economic conditions of women workers in India, the Government of India from sixth five year plan onwards has made a modest beginning in the direction of women's development programme.

1. All India Women's Conference
2. Young Women's Christian Association
3. Self-Employed Women's Association
4. Annapoorna Mahila Mandal.
5. Working Women's Forum
6. Papped Rollers of Lijjat
7. Mahila Jagran Samiti.
8. Emancipation of Women.
9. Night patrollers of Manipur.
10. Non-formal Education for women
11. Employment Bureau for Domestic Workers.
12. Mobilization of women after a Disaster.
13. Programme for Women's Development.

But much more needs to be done. Proper working conditions have to be created for them; economic and social impediments have to be removed if women are to play important role of equal partners in the developmental process.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A study on women worker with special reference to Beedi Industry
in Palladam Taluk.

Date:

Address:

Name of the Worker:

Caste:

Religion:

Family background:

Sl No	Member's relation to head	Sex	Age	Civil Status	Education	
					Edu- cated)	ill- eterate

Code for Civil status

Married - 1

Unmarried - 2

Divorced - 3

Widowed - 4

Other - 5

Code for Education Status

Illiterate -1

Can read - 2

Can readn and
write - 3

Primary level - 4

Secondary
level and
above - 5

5. Family Planning:

1. Do you have knowledge on family planning

Yes

No

If yes what method you adopt?

- 1.Pills
- 2.Contraceptives
- 3.Sterilization
- 4.Any other method

Total number of children living

Total number of children dead

Nature of delivery: Normal

Scissarian

Total number of abortion

Total number of still births

6.Work sheet for assessment of income of the labour household

Income from wage/Salary (Rs.)

Activity	No.of workers in the family		Wage rate in Rs.	No.of Working days	Total income
	Male	Female			
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

7. House-hold consumption and Expenditure per month.

Major items	Amount	Price	Remarks
1. Cereals and substitutes			
2. Pulses			
3. Milk and Milk Products			
4. Edible oils			
5. Vegetables fruits and nuts			
6. Meat fish, egg			
7. Sugar salt and spice			
8. Beverages			
9. Pan Tobacco intoxicant			
10. Clothing			
11. Fish, egg			
12. Miscellaneous goods & Services			
13. Durable goods and non food items			

9. How do you manage your family expenditure:

1. Borrowing

- (a) Friends and neighbours
- (b) Relatives
- (c) Money lenders
- (d) Bank and other financial Institution
- (e) Any other.

Purpose of borrowing:

1. For the education of children
2. To purchase lands
3. To celebrate Festivals
4. To celebrate rituals
5. To construct house
6. To meet medical expenses

8. Assets: Do you have assets

Yes

No

In what forms?

1. Land
2. Filed flats
3. Hut-like houses
4. Vacant Land
5. Agriculture Lands
6. Concrete houses
7. Cattle
8. Any other assets

9. Are you aware of the following? Woman organisation

Yes

No

1. All India Women's Conference
2. Young Women's Christian Association
3. Self-Employed women's Association
4. Annapoorna Mahila Mandla
5. Working Women's Forum
6. Papped Rollers of Lijjat

8. Do you visits to relatives, friends, others.
9. Did you exercise franchise in the last election
10. Do you attend meetings?
- Social
 - Political
 - Religious
11. Any knowledge of the
- a) Dowry system
 - b) Divorce law
12. Do you think women should earn?
- As a normal routine
 - To supplement the family income
 - In the absence of husband
13. Do you keep any of your earnings for yourself?
- Yes
 - No
14. If yes, in what form?
- Bank
 - Post Office
 - Other
15. Do you expect your Son/Daughter to work the same field
- Yes
 - No
16. Do you get the same/or higher/lower pay for the same work in the other Beedi industries.
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know

If you feel that the other Beedi Industries provide higher wages, are you interested to move to those area.

Yes

No.

17. What are the jobs that are easy to get for a women of your qualifications?

Cutting

Rolling

Labelling

Packing

18. Do you get the same pay/higher/lower as generally given for such work

a) in your area

b) in other area

Yes

No

Don't know

19. What factors would have helped you to get a better job?

1. being a male

2. being generally educated

3. being technically qualified.