AN OVERVIEW OF WOMEN FISHNET WORKER IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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Abstract

Women workers, as it has been found out from the foregoing discussion, have a vital role to play in the economic development of a country. Thus, potentials for hard work, innovative skill and dynamism have been acknowledged in growing terms by social scientists in countries both developed and under developed. In India too, women workers have been able to find a place of prominence in the private, public and service sectors. This study has attempted to portray the role of women workers in the fishnet industry and their income and employment pattern with special reference to Kanyakumari district.

Keywords: Fishnet, Women workers, Globalisation, Economic Impact.

Introduction

"To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened, once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves and the nation moves"-Nehru. Mahatma Gandhi referred to woman as the nobler sex. According to him, "If she is weak in striking, she is strong in sufferings". In Indian society woman is one of the two wheels of the life-cart. Responsibility of the family, society and nation rests upon both men and women equally. With a rapid increase of population in India, unemployment is the cause of social and economic problem of the country (Khanka 1984). The traditional outlet for this problem is to increase employment opportunities in khadi, village and cottage industries. These industries are labour-intensive requiring small additional to the skill of the workers and high investments. Among the small scale industries, fishnet industry is the important sources of rural employment especially to the women. Women's work participation rate in the country as a whole has been significantly lower than that of men. In the last three decades women's work participation rate has declined.

Fishnet Industry in Kanyakumari District

According to the report published by Directorate of Labour Welfare Department, Madras(1990) there were 140 fishnet units in Kanyakumari district, which accounted for 73.2 percent of the total of 1419 units in the state. Kanyakumari district alone provided employment for 6552 persons, both male and female and it accounted for about 56 percent of state employment in fish net industry.

Importance of the Study

The fishnet industry provides gainful employment to the rural women. Employment

gives social and economic status of women. Fishnet industry provides bare minimum amount for their livelihood.

Statement of the Problem

In India the study of labour problems is of recent origin. Labour problems are associated with industrialisation. In general, labour problems consist of social security, minimum standard of living, working hours, working conditions, protection from accidents, sickness, old age benefit, health care, education, and culture and recreation facilities. Many studies have been carried out on the socio-economic conditions of women workers in fishnet industry. The study attempts to analyse the problem of fishnet workers and to find possible ways to increase the welfare of them in Kanyakumari district. The spread of fishnet industry to rural areas is a welcome feature to relax the problem of unemployment in villages. Its benefits to rural women had added significance to their life. This industry provides livelihood for many among the poor in rural areas. Thus the real cause for inviting government support to this industry in regulating and ensuring fair wages and income with emphasis on welfare of the workers. To sustain fishnet industry in this area, many-fold activities regarding wage, income consumption expenditure and financial conditions of workers should be regularized. The problem of this study is to find possible ways and means to increase the welfare of the households of fishnet women workers in general and standard of living in particular to a reasonable level.

Objectives

1. To study workers satisfaction about welfare facilities provide by the fish net industry.
2. To study relationship between income and expenditure pattern of the sample households
3. To analyse the problem faced by the women fish net workers in Kanyakumari district.

Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between income and savings among the sample households.

Methodology

This study requires both primary data and secondary data. The primary data were collected from fishnet women workers from Kanyakumari district. The data pertaining to the women workers who are employed there was collected by applying the random sampling technique. 300 samples are selected for the analytical purpose. The secondary data required for the study were collected from number of wellknown books, research articles newspapers and statistical investigation office, Nagercoil.

Analysis of Data

The Fishnet industry provides more employment opportunities and livelihood for a large number of women workers in Kanyakumari district. It includes worker opinion about welfare facilities and problem faced by women fish net workers in the study area.

Opinion about welfare facilities

Table.1

Workers satisfaction about welfare facilities provided by the industry

Welfare Facilities	HS	S	M	D	HD
Salary	40 (13)	57 (19)	104 (35)	71 (24)	28 (9)
Bonus	65 (22)	101 (34)	85 (28)	30 (10)	19 (6)
Incremental facilities	25 (8)	40 (13)	80 (27)	104 (35)	51 (17)
Promotion policy	39 (13)	54 (18)	68 (23)	92 (31)	47 (16)
Canteen facilities	72 (24)	78 (26)	120 (40)	18 (6)	12 (4)
Safety facilities	43 (14)	117 (39)	84 (28)	35 (12)	21 (7)
Rest room	12 (4)	29 (10)	62 (21)	120 (40)	77 (26)
Recreation facilities	15 (5)	42 (14)	54 (18)	90 (30)	99 (33)
Accidental insurance	75 (25)	95 (32)	86 (29)	24 (8)	20 (7)
Medical facilities	42 (14)	71 (24)	115 (38)	42 (14)	30 (10)

Source: Primary data (Figure in brocket represent percentage)

The table.1 shows that the welfare facilities proved by the fish net industry, out of 300 workers, 35 per cent of the workers were in moderate level of satisfaction with the salary. 34 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the bonus scheme. 35 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the incremental facilities. 31 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied with promotion policy. 40 per cent of the respondents were in

moderate level of satisfaction with the canteen facilities. 39 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the safety facility. 40 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the rest room facilities. 33 per cent of the respondents are highly dissatisfied with the recreation facilities. 32 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the accidental insurance facilities. 38 per cent of the respondents were in moderate level of satisfaction with the medical facilities.

Analysis of Income and Expenditure Relationship

Ho: There is significant relationship between income and expenditure pattern of the sample households.

In order to, analyze the relationship between income and expenditure pattern of women fish net workers sample households, the investigator is using simple correlation.

$$r= \frac{\Sigma xy}{\sqrt{\Sigma x^2 \ x \ \Sigma y^2}}$$

Here, r = Karl Pearson's co-efficient of correlation

x = Stands for income

y = for expenditure

$Exy = 7920.6 \quad Ex^2 = 8570.7 \quad Ey^2 = 8583.9$

$$r = \frac{\Sigma xy}{\sqrt{\Sigma x^2 x \Sigma y^2}}$$

$$= \frac{7920.6}{\sqrt{8570.7 \ x \ 8583.9}}$$

$$= \frac{7920.6}{\sqrt{73570031.73}}$$

$$= \frac{7920.6}{8577.30} = 0.923$$

The value of Karl Person's Co-efficient of correlation is 0.923. This shows a high positive correlation between income and expenditure pattern of the sample households. It can be clear that the income of the sample respondents increases the expenditure also increases and on the other hand the income decreases the expenditure also decrease.

Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between income and expenditure pattern of the

sample households.

Result: The analysis and test reveals that there is close relationship between income and expenditure. Most of the women fish net workers spent a small percentage of their income, if the income will increase, expenditure will also be increased. So there is a close relationship between income and expenditure of women fish net workers households.

Factor Analysis of the problem faced by the Women Fish net workers

There are various problem faced by the women fish net workers in Kanyakumari district. The study analyzes the most important women centred constraints after carefully referring the journals and books and after having serious discussions with experienced women fish net workers. Long time work, low wage, lack of safety facilities, low social status, health problems, poor working conditions, transport problem, sexual harassment, absence of welfare facilities and no job security are the constraints faced by the women fish net workers.

Table.3
Factor Analysis of the Constraints

Factor	Variables	Loading
Problems faced by women fishnet workers	Long time work	0.934
	Low wage	0.930
	Lack of safety facilities	0.471
	Low social status	0.283
	Health Problems	0.935
	Poor working conditions	0.929
	Transport problem	0.856
	Sexual Harassment	0.910
	Absence of welfare facilities	0.911
	No job security	0.923

Source: Computed data

The factor of constraints of women fish net workers consists of ten variables namely, Long time work, low wage, lack of safety facilities, low social status, health problems, poor working conditions, transport problem, sexual harassment, absence of welfare facilities and no job security. These variables have loadings of 0.934, 0.930, 0.471, 0.283, 0.935, 0.929, 0.856, 0.910, 0.911 and 0.923 respectively. These variables have high loadings on factor of constraints except low social status and lack of safety facilities.

Findings

The study express that welfare facilities proved by the fish net industry, out of 300 workers, 35 per cent, 40 per cent and 38 per cent of the workers were in moderate level of satisfaction with the salary, canteen facilities and medical facilities respectively. 34 per cent, 39 percent and 34 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the bonus scheme, safety facility and accidental insurance facilities respectively. 35 per cent, 31 per cent and 40 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the incremental facilities, promotion policy and rest room facilities respectively. 33 per cent of the respondents are highly dissatisfied with the recreation facilities.

The value of Karl Person's Co-efficient of correlation is 0.923. This shows a high positive correlation between income and expenditure pattern of the sample households. It can be clear that the income of the sample respondents increases the expenditure also increases and on the other hand the income decreases the expenditure also decrease.

The analysis and test reveals that there is close relationship between income and expenditure. Most of the women fish net workers spent a small percentage of their income, if the income will increase, expenditure will also be increased. So there is a close relationship between income and expenditure of women fish net workers households.

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Suggestions

Based on the findings, the following suggestions had been made to improve the employment, welfare measures and socio-economic conditions of women workers in the fishnet industry.

Recommendations to Owners

❖ Bonus and incentive must be given to the workers.
❖ The fishnet industry owners must provide medical care to work force.

❖ The owners must take steps to improve the working conditions of fishnet industry by adopting suitable policies.
❖ The owners must provide the facilities like, rest room, drinking water, toilet facilities, canteen facilities, etc for the workers of the fishnet industry.
❖ The workers should be allowed to organize workers union to materialize their fair demands with bargaining power.

Recommendations to Government

❖ The wages of the workers are low. The government must fix minimum wage to the work force.
❖ The government should provide provident fund facilities to the workers, which will be helpful to the workers at their old age.
❖ The labour welfare officers should make frequent visits to the Fishnet industry and see that workers are provided safety measures and masks to protect their lungs and hands.

Conclusion

This study has given a clear picture about the income and employment pattern of women labourers in fish net industry at Kanyakumari district. The government should strictly implements the minimum wages act, welfare measures, and takes necessary steps to remove the evils of factory system, no doubt, the socio-economic status of workers will be better off.

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