

ROLE OF SERICULTURE IN WOMEN EMPLOYMENT IN DROUGHT PRONE DISTRICT OF ANANTAPUR (A. P.)

G. Venkata Naidu And C. Siva

Associate Professor, Dept of Economics, S.K.University, Anantapur, A.P
Research Scholar Dept of Economics, S.K.University, Anantapur, A.P

Abstract:“Just as a bird could not fly with one wing only, a nation would not march forward if the women are left behind” -Swami Vivekananda.

Women is said to be equal to the man in the present society. But, this situation is far from the reality. The unequal status of women is owing to a vicious circle in which they have caught up with low levels or absence of literacy coupled with low levels of skills leading to low level of employment and low wages , containing them very often to marginal categories of work or unpaid work . With the result their economic status gets miserable. Evidently, women constitute one –third of labour force, their share in the world 's working hours is two –third and Yet , earning one – tenth of the income (UN 1975) . It is mainly due to the unpaid economic activities that women's work is not reported in the census. An ILO study estimated that the value of unpaid household work constitute 25 -39 percent of the total GNP in a developing country.

Keyword:sericulture , Drought Prone , Women Employment , Society.

INTRODUCTION:

Women labour force participation in the organized sector has increased only marginally from 11 percent in 1971 to 12.4 per cent in 1979 and to a meagre 19% in 2011 .only urban women in all walks of life have reached top positions. on the whole , women continue to toil in labour-intensive jobs such as wage labour, carry water , cleaning and storage of grains , hand shelling of groundnuts, picking of leaves and fruits etc . , More than 90 per cent of working women are still employed in the unorganized sector. According to the report Shram Shakti there is no doubt that the women's contribution to the family and national economy is much more than their actual earning.

However, in the context of national development women's participation in the economic activity is predominant. The economic role played by women cannot be isolated from the frame – work of development. In rural areas, their work in the context of socio – economic setting includes a number of activities. It is universally accepted that farm women play an important role. in carryout agricultural activities , household industry and the services sector . In agricultural sector, sericulture occupies predominant place so as to provide more employment opportunities to the rural women. The present paper is focused, mainly, on generation of employment, Income for women through sericulture in a drought hit district like Anantapur.

Sericulture is a labour intensive agro –based non –farm activity ideally suited to a predominantly agricultural state like Andhra Pradesh. The state has the vast potential for sericulture development. The main development has been in the Rayalaseema region of the state where climatic conditions are suitable for sericulture development. on an average, during one year , five crops of cocoons can be

harvested in the traditional areas and four crops in the non – traditional areas like Telengana and coastal Andhra . Sericulture offers tremendous scope for improvement of socio – economic conditions of the small and marginal farmers and provides gainful employment to rural people especially for women of small and marginal farmers. At present in Andhra Pradesh around 6 .90 lakh people are employed in sericulture directly and its ancillary industries.

The area under mulberry cultivation in the state was only two hectares in 1953, and it went up to 16, hectares IN 1956. At phenomenal increase work place in the mulberry area from 1975-76 to 2011-12, which accounts for 1214 hectares to 73, 807. 86 hectares in the state.

It is worth mentioning that, sericulture is concentrated in the Rayalaseema districts of Anantapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah and Kurnool. Especially, Anantapur and Chittoor districts, sericulture is highly concentrated. These two districts are adjoining to Karnataka State which is often called the 'silk state of India. Around 80 percent of the area under mulberry cultivation in the state is found in the four districts of Rayalaseema region.

STUDY AREA:-

Anantapur is one of the most backward and drought prone districts among six districts in the country, which is situated in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. Here the average rain fall is less than 500 m.m per year. Hence Sericulture is a boon for poor farmers of Anantapur. Mulberry being a drought resistant plant and ensuring high returns and with the implementation of DPAP and six point formula from 1975 -76 onwards, mulberry acreage has increased rapidly in Anantapur district. The district occupies first place among mulberry raw silk producing districts in

Andhra Pradesh. The mulberry acreage of Anantapur district was 500 acres during 1976-77 and it rise 78,950 acres by the end of 2011-12. Engaging about 41,325, Farmers and getting net annual income of 30,000/- to Rs. 40,000/- from one acre of mulberry garden. In order to place the sericulture industry on the lines of expansion, varies infrastructural facilities such as seed Farms, chawkie rearing unite, Grainges, silk warm Hatchery centers, cocoon markets and research centers have been provided. With all these facilities unemployment is reduced. Especially women unemployment is reduced with the initiation and development of this rural non – farm activity with its various programmes and schemes.

METHODOLOGY:

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was colleted with the help of structured schedule through the fixed survey. And the secondary data was collected from the sericulture department of Anantapur district, published and unpublished books, reports etc.

SAMPLE DESIGN:

The present study is confirmed to Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh. Out of 4 circles in the Hindupur sericulture division of Anantapur district .Two village where selected for the study viz Maluguru village from Hindupur circle and Lepakshi village from Lepakshi circle.

From each village a sample of 20 farmers were selected on the basis of random sampling method. Thus the sample design consists 2 villages and 40 farmers in the district, belonging to different communities.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION IN SERICULTURE IN ANANTAPUR DISTRICT:

At present the sericulture industry is providing direct livelihood for more than 3.10 lakh persons in Anantapur district. The involvements of hired labour are high and the demand for labour is increasing every year. Family lab our involvement is decreasing in sericulture activities as there is an improvement in the living standards of the sericulturists. The Table I represent the number of persons engaged in sericulture in the district.

TABLE .I
EMPLOYMENT GENERATION THROUGH
SERICULTURE IN ANANTAPUR DISTRICT

S.NO.	Name of the region	SC	ST	BC	OC	TOTAL
1.	Dharmavaram	193	195	2335	3500	6223
2.	Hindupur	760	450	8150	6870	15230
3.	Kadiri	266	448	2347	4092	7153
4.	Madakasira	783	305	2468	5335	8891
5.	Anantapur	623	89	1302	1814	3828
		2625	1487	16602	18722	41325

Source: office of the Deputy Director, Dept. of Sericulture, Anantapur.

It can be seen from the table I the number of persons engaged in sericulture was high in Hindupur with 36.85% of the total families engaged in the district. It is followed by Madakasira (21.51%). kadiri, Dharmavaram and Anantapur regions occupy third, fourth and fifth place respectively.

With regard to category wise number of persons engaged in sericulture, Madakasira has highest number of 783 persons in the SC category where as Dharmavaram with the lowest number of 193 persons. While in the case of ST Category Hindupur with highest at 450 persons and the lowest at 89 persons in Anantapur region. In the case of BC and other category, Hindupur region accounted at 8150 and 6870 persons where as Anantapur region has the lowest at 1302 and 1814 persons respectively. So it can be concluded that in Anantapur district sericulture is being practised by all communities though it is predominately in the hands of upper castes and Backward classes.

WOMEN EMPLOYMENT THROUGH SERICULTURE IN ANANTAPUR DISTRICT:

In Anantapur District, for each farm the nature and intensity of farm work done by family members as well as hired lab our of all categories has been analyzed in the study. Employment in sericulture has been divided into two heads viz. 1. Mulberry cultivation-ploughing, plantation, weeding, irrigation, pruning, carrying, the leaves, leaf harvesting etc., 2. Silk-worm rearing-preparation of chawkie, silk worm rearing, cocoon harvesting, silk twisting and reeling and marketing etc., Details of labour involvement both men and women in sericulture have been collected through field study and presented in the following paragraphs.

Labour requirements for limited establishment of one acre mulberry garden are nearly 160 men days. During the second year onwards the requirement of labour on one acre mulberry farm increases slightly up to 170 man days. But the rearing of 1,200 DFLS generates 450 man days per annum. An important finding is that the percentage of family

labour is gradually decreasing and dependence on hired labour has been increasing with an added demand for skilled labour.

TABLE.II
FAMILY LABOUR INVOLVEMENT IN
SERICULTURE ACTIVITIES
(Mandays on one acre per annum)

S.NO.	Activity	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of female labour in the total
1.	Soil Preparation	23	10	33	30.3
2.	Mulberry cultivation	201	184	385	47.8
3.	Weeding operations	6	34	40	85.0
4.	Irrigation to the mulberry crop	53	12	65	18.5
5.	Cocoon rearing	141	144	285	50.5
	Total	424	384	808	47.5

Source: Field Data

It can be seen from the Total II that the percentage contribution of female labour in the sericulture activity is the highest at 85 in weeding operations. It is followed by cocoon

rearing activity at 51 per cent, mulberry cultivation at 48 per cent, soil preparation at 30 per cent and the lowest at 19 per cent in providing irrigation to the Mulberry activity. It is understood that weeding operations are mostly done by female labour and arrangement of irrigation to the mulberry crop is done by male family labour. On the whole, about 48% of the total days of family labour employed in sericulture activity comes through female labour of the family. This is significant so far as generation of more number of working days for female labour in rural sector through sericulture.

TABLE.III
HIRED LABOUR INVOLVEMENT IN
SERICULTURE ACTIVITY

S. NO.	Activity	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of Female labour in the total
1	Soil Preparation	25	24	49	49.0
2	Mulberry cultivation	178	197	375	52.5
3	Weeding operations	3	43	46	93.5
4	Irrigation to the mulberry crop	17	-	17	-
5	Cocoon rearing	182	92	274	33.6
	Total	405	356	761	46.8

Source: Field Data

Table III represents the participation of hired labour in sericulture activity for one acre per annum. The contribution of hired women labour is highest at 94 percent in weeding operations in the total mandays of weeding operations. It is followed by mulberry cultivation activity (53%) soil preparation (49%) and the lowest at 34% for cocoon rearing activity. On the whole, about 47% of the total days of female labour were used in the sericulture activity.

The foregoing analysis states that the generation of employment for women is more in weeding operations (both family labour and hired labour). This is because women labour is more suitable than male labour, although irrational facilities to the mulberry crop are mostly done by male workers. However, about 47% of the total mandays required for sericulture activity on one acre crop is generated to the female workers in the district. Sericulture is significantly contributing for generation of employment to women labour compared to any other commercial crop in the rural areas of this region.

CONCLUSION:

It is worth mentioning that the sericulture has been perceived as a boon because of its prospects in the drought-prone areas of Anantapur district. It has made a dent in employment the agricultural labour especially women labour because of its potentialities resulting in higher income to the sericulture family with less capital in a short period of time. However, it is still missing the scientific approach and modern outlook by the labour especially the women labour because of their illiteracy and pre-occupation with the domestic work. As it is sericulture has been contributing a lot

by providing employment opportunities leading to income generation to the agricultural labour especially for women. Sericulture should enable them to free themselves from the shackles of ignorance and dependence by providing them institutional support, periodic training and constant and continuous persuasion with up to date scientific information.

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