



SMALL TEA GROWERS: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE REVIEWS

R.Kalaichelvan¹

¹*Research Scholar, Department of Cooperation, Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed to be University, Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Dr. B Tamilmani²

²*Professor, Department of Cooperation, Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed to be University, Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu, India.*

ABSTRACT

In Nilgiris, the Cooperative Factories had a positive impact in helping the small tea growers, particularly those with very smallholdings. At the same time, considering their financial and technological constraints, small-scale growers have expanded their holdings and their productivity over the years. It indicates that the smallholders were more enterprising in growing production than the vast estates whose production got stagnated. In areas where there are no cooperatives, the cooperative factories have ensured not only equal prices for their members but also other tea leaf suppliers. In these areas, the Cooperative Tea Factories ensured to pay the market prices to their members. This article is a summary of the studies conducted in India with particular focus on the influence of the restriction of small tea growers, the factors influencing tea growers to engage in tea cultivation, and the environmental effects of using chemical fertilisers and pesticides in the Small Tea Gardens.

KEYWORDS: *Small Tea Growers, constraints, environmental effects, chemical fertilisers*

INTRODUCTION

The Nilgiris District is one of Tamil Nadu's central districts with its larger portion of the mountain chain known as the Western Ghats. This district's entire economy is mainly dependent on tourism; most of the land surfaces are cultivated with crops such as tea, more specifically mountain-based agro cultivation. In India, there are tea plantations, Darjeeling in Assam, Terai & Dooars in Northern Bengal, Mysore and Coorg in Karnataka, Manjolai, Anamallais and Nilgiris in Tamilnadu. India's tea industry is geographically distributed mostly in North and South India. Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnataka these three states in South India, produce a fair amount of Indian tea.

These southern states are very distinct from North India in their geographical location, climate, rainfall, etc. The Indian Tea Industry is giving major support for the primary labour force of India. The Nilgiris separately accounts for about 9000 hectares out of the a total of 172000 hectares of tea cultivation in South India, resulting in 30 million kg of tea production annually, which is almost 60 per cent of the total output of tea in South India (Shyamsundhar

k et al., 2004). In Nilgiris District, however, plantations account for only about 30 per cent of tea production. Small growers are responsible for the vast majority of production in the Badagas, a local agricultural tribal group.

SMALL SCALE TEA CULTIVATION IN SOUTH INDIA

Tea cultivation at a small scale level was initiated during 1930s in the Nilgiris of South India. Earlier the farmers of this region grew only vegetables like potato, carrot, garlic. But now, the following opportunities were given by small tea cultivation in South India, such as direct and indirect employment opportunities for about five employees per hectare, employment for women who specialise in hand plucking. Many small producers have used the production of tea as a family enterprise. South India's tea growth has brought economic revolution among the farmers with small land holdings. Their quality of living is significantly enhanced. South India's small tea growers could achieve the highest production and price in 1997, afterwards a significant drop in the price of tea leaves had occurred. Nilgiris



district has a total area of 2,54,055 hectares. The district includes six taluks viz. Coonoor, Gudalur, Kundah, Kotagiri, Ooty and Pandalur. In the Nilgiris district, approximately 50,000 hectares of land is cultivated tea of which small tea growers own nearly 30,000 hectares of tea plantation.

AIM OF THE STUDY

This research wants to find out the basic problems and prospects of the Small Tea Growers in Nilgiris. From the review of other literature it is very useful to fill the gap and what are all the important aspects to improve the industry and to suggest suitable strategy for the small tea grower's development and to use the unproductive land which in turn reduce the unemployment problem.

REVIEWS FROM INDIAN PERSPECTIVE OF SMALL TEA GROWERS

From the view of Kavitha and Jamuna (2014) and with the purpose to define the constraints of small-scale tea growers and to study the factors influencing tea growers to include tea growers in Nilgiris. The analysis was carried out in Nilgiris. With the aid of both open and close-ended questionnaires, primary data were collected from the small tea growers. The sample size is 150. In choosing the sample, the convenience sampling approach is used. Simple percentage analysis and the weighted average method were used for analysis. The study also brought out some ideas: how small tea growers need to increase the quality of tea. Small tea producers should reduce the cost of production and increase the efficiency of the worker through various reforms. It was suggested that some promotional campaigns be launched in abroad to raise awareness of the quality of Indian tea and added value items may also be made available to increase the market. M.G. Srinivasan (2016), in his analysis he reviews the problems of tea plantation workers in the district of Nilgiris, the working conditions of the plantation workers their wages, the maximum welfare measures available in the tea industry, the failure of trade unions in the planting sector to handle wage disputes and the creation of a good relationship between the planting and laboratory. Area sampling is applied and it is very similar to cluster sampling and is often spoken of when the total area of interest in Nilgiris District becomes high. The tea plantation workers in the district of Nilgiris are the target population. In this analysis, the total population taken was 245. The study concluded that small tea growers are offered very less and least beneficiary measures.

The objectives of Amsaveni, Ilavarasi and Gomathi (2013) were to determine the factor affecting the degree of job satisfaction of women workers working in tea estates in the Nilgiris District

of Tamil Nadu. The data was gathered from 300 respondents by using the convenience random sampling approach via a standardised interview schedule. To analyse the collected data, the methods used for analysis were applied, that is, simple percentage, chi-square analysis, and factor analysis. The study results showed that the factor analysis found that variables such as work allocation and peer relationships, encouragement and incentive, healthy climate, pay, and training and growth had a substantial effect on job satisfaction levels. Furthermore, four variables, i.e. Disability, Working Climate, Pay and Conveyance, and Job Timings, were also found to be the highly problematic factors that triggered discontent among the women workers employed in the tea estates. By Kaberi Borah (2013) in his research, he has made an attempt to explore the possibility of tea entrepreneurship and its effect on the state's rural economy. The growers' evolving small holding regime could be seen as a benefit for the Indian tea market. Setting up small production units will provide abundant opportunities for the self-expression of local rural youth and improve their material well-being. Younger generations in Assam are feeling dissatisfied because they have no guarantee for their education and development of other skills, talents and think they will be completely exploited. Therefore, encouraging these young people to take up the cultivation of small / medium-level tea will improve the rural economy's backbone and also curb social unrest. This will empower people of Assam to live a life with dignity. This sort of quiet economic movement by small tea growers in rural areas across Assam has helped to tackle the problem of unemployment aside from the environmentally friendly use of unproductive land. Therefore support for this socio-economic revolution should come from every quarter.

Prarthana Barua (2015) the purpose of her research is to provide a brief account of the problems faced by the state's small tea growers, drawing insights from the fields. The paper explores the growth of small tea growers in a few pockets of the Assam district of Sonitpur. It addresses the significant challenges facing growers in their process of consolidation. The shortcomings in organisational infrastructure and the lack of some regulatory supports have only accentuated the smallholder's reliance on several outside factors. On the one hand, the yield in their plantations is affected by unpredictable weather and lack of irrigation facilities, and the absence of price front regulations generates anxiety about selling their goods. In addition to these two collections of factors, such factors affect production costs and yields on the operational front. On the institutional front, it seems, assistance is mainly on the organisational side. In the research of Gupta and Dey (2010), they made a reasonably simple model for calculating productivity which is suitable for the tea industry. A case study is



presented, conducted in a tea sector in Assam, India, to evaluate the model's efficiency. The analysis shows that the model is systematic and meets the six measurement theory standards such as validity, comparability, comprehensiveness, timeliness, inclusiveness and cost-effectiveness. In addition, the analysis showed a proposed model which identifies the areas of low resource utilisation responsible for the tea industry's measured overall decrease in productivity.

From Suparna Roy (2011) research, she aims to examine the trend of the discovery of tea in Assam, India's first tea-growing province. The paper also sheds light on the chronological growth in the state of tea cultivation and the steps that the British government has adopted in this respect. The paper also examined the progress made, and the crisis faced by the tea industries. The research is based on secondary data and material sources which are obtained from various official and individual publications. Annual growth rates of compounds were calculated using the least-square process. They are modernising the tea industry with a shift in plantation methodology, enhancing the electronic tea auction. Deba Jyoti Goswami (2013), in her thesis on the environmental impacts of the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in the Assam Small Tea Gardens. Two small tea garden concentrated blocks of Golaghat district have been selected intentionally for the collection of primary data on the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, one is central development block, and the other is kalthaguri block. A questionnaire was prepared to gather randomly selected primary information from 100 sample respondents from each block. Gathering accurate information was taken utmost care. Whenever possible, secondary sources were also used. They are gradually turning the tea cultivation process into an ecological one that has an excellent international demand to save the earth and save human life and to preserve an environmentally friendly atmosphere for sustainable growth. In addition, in the case of the use of fertilisers and pesticides, proper education and training should be provided to small tea growers and staff. The government should entrust technological know-how to both growers and staff.

Debabrata Sen and Sudarshan Nath (2012) has investigated the role of small tea growers in the Assam district of Udalguri. The analysis is based on primary data. The data were collected with the aid of schedule cum questionnaire from the "Udalguri district." Small tea growers can be instrumental in the district's socio-economic growth. The standard of living of the people can be improved by growing the income of the people of the district; poverty can be reduced to a great extent. It is possible to introduce the anti-social elements of society to the mainstream line, and to a great time, it can address various social problems of the district. Realising the importance of

small tea growers in Assam's economy, the Tea Board, the State Government, the financial institutions linked to the tea industry's supply of finance, and small and large tea growers should make concrete efforts to develop the district's small tea plantations rapidly. From the view of Kakali Hazarika and Kaberi Borah (2013), the prospects of small tea cultivation in Assam as a source of self-employment are highlighted in their report. The research is based on secondary data and material sources which are obtained from various official and individual publications. The first generation tea growers who took up commercial tea cropping are a progressive step towards a new Assam social structure. This quiet economic movement by small tea growers in rural areas across Assam has helped to tackle the problem of unemployment aside from the environmentally friendly use of unproductive land. Help for this socio-economic revolution should come from every quarter.

Partha Ganguli (2014), in his study paper, he hypothesised the economic feasibility of small-scale tea cultivation, as has been proved to be the case. To emphasise the significance of a self-spring and grassroots variety of native entrepreneurship, the paper aims to examine this astonishing phenomenon of the escalating expansion of small tea growers in Assam. The article is based on the findings and experience of living in the tea plantation valley in Assam. The Dibrugarh district is covered with tea gardens, big as well as small. In addition, the field experience gained in gathering primary data over two decades during a research project has contributed to the writing of this article. The tea plantation industry is under immense pressure to pay the workers' salaries and other benefits. The constant tussle between the union of workers and existing firms will cause them to reconsider their willingness to stay in the tea estates. They can try to avoid the risks involved in the maintenance and operation of plantations and continue to sell made tea in the market.

The researcher M.G. Srinivasan (2016) has studied the problems of tea plantation workers in the district of Nilgiris. The Tea Plantation employees employed in the neighbourhood of Nilgiris are regarded as the target audience for the research. The primary data collection is carried out for review and interpretation by person-administered survey; the secondary data collected from different magazines and journals mentioned earlier related to the research report. Far less is charged to the Tea-Workers in the district and the least benefit initiatives are offered to them. The Tea-Plantation Industry must be brought under one Ominous Law, and a separate jurisdictional committee must be established to control it, on the other hand, the government must be allocated to conduct study, training, re-planting in this district. For the welfare of workers and helpful international methods, a separate board must be



formed, and comparison of the same must be implemented with immediate effect.

C.Pitchai and S.V. Akilandeswari (2016), In their study, the historical history within which the cooperative tea factories were started and the functioning of the cooperative tea factories were studied, and the degree of social and economic growth of the members of the small tea growers through the cooperative tea factories was explored. The researcher had personally visited four factories. Twenty-five members were randomly selected from each factory and a total of 100 members were contacted, and their views on the overall functioning and variety of services they used and the improvement in their livelihood status were ascertained. Primary and secondary data were both obtained, and basic statistical analysis methods were used. The shared trust between the member tea growers and the tea cooperatives can be witnessed to date. The subsistence of the cooperative tea factories depends on the scale of the members' support and successful use of the facilities. At the same time, factories can continue to deliver, as they do now, better services in the future. The founders should also really own the cooperatives and be active in all of the activities. Until the shared bond is restored, for both the participants and the cooperative tea factories, sustainability will not be a bother. Korrakot Y. Tippayawong, Punnakorn Teeratidyankul, and Sakgasem Ramingwong (2017), In their research, they used value chain analysis, the goal was to enhance the efficiency of a tea company. The definition of the value chain is to explain better the positions in the supply chain of each operation in the business. Supply chain management should recognise aspects of the activities in the supply chain that are influenced by internal and external influences. There were five main activities and four supporting activities in the case study. Using value chain analysis, these activities of the organisation have been analysed. For each block, the risk was determined using FMEA. The risk evaluation was used by FMEA to define manufacturing process vulnerabilities or shortcomings. The operation in the warehouse storage was chosen for enhancement for the case study. The proposed solution consists of a modern warehouse layout, where it is possible to increase the usage of space by 30 per cent. The linear programming method based on the fast-moving product principle was successful as a tool for calculating a suitable storage model that can accommodate future expansion and ordering of goods. Transport distances can be decreased by twenty-two per cent. S.Revathy (2016), in her research, tried to understand the essence of small tea growers' land ownership. To determine the variations in the profitability of own holding small tea growers and various tenancy bearing types. Using a questionnaire exclusively prepared for the study,

primary data is obtained. The study revealed that the numerous problems that tea growers face, such as lack of cooperation, unavailability of loans, lack of facilities for transport. The study also brought out some ideas as to how small tea growers need to increase the quality of tea. Small tea producers should reduce the cost of production and increase the efficiency of the worker through various reforms. It is proposed that some advertising campaigns be launched in order to raise awareness of the quality of Indian tea abroad, and added value items can also be sold in international markets.

CONCLUSION

Setting up small production units will provide more opportunities for self-employment and improve the physical and social well-being of local rural youth. The younger generation is dissatisfied because they have no guarantee that their schooling and other talents and skills are exploited. Hence, encouraging these youth to take up tea cultivation at the small and medium level will support the backbone of the rural economy in the Nilgiris district. After independence, outsiders are now enjoying the economic advantages of the tea industry enjoyed by the British before independence. The growth of the tea industry does not give indigenous people their due share. In addition to using unproductive land in an environmentally friendly manner, this quiet economic movement by small tea growers in rural areas across Nilgiris has helped tackle the issue of unemployment. Therefore support for this socio-economic revolution should come from every quarter. There should be modernised tea industry with a shift in plantation methodology, enhancing the online tea auction. The government should entrust technological know-how to both growers and staff.

The constant tussle between the union of workers and existing firms will cause them to reconsider their willingness to stay in the tea estates can be solved by forming Cooperatives which can retain the benefits of the members. Additional credit facility helps the members to adopt new technology and improve the business. Future, research is recommended to extend the reach of this analysis by conducting investigations focused on the impact of small tea growers' restrictions, the factors affecting tea growers' participation in tea growing, and the environmental impact of small tea growers' use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in India.

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