

Socio-Economic Status of Textile Workers with Special Reference to Puthiyamputhur Village of Thoothukudi District

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Abstract

In the world of textiles, India stands out thanks to its vast manufacturing capacity and plenty of raw materials. The textile industry, along with other significant sectors, not only forms the backbone of the economy but also makes significant contributions. It is worth mentioning that around 27 percent of the country's total foreign exchange earnings come from textile and apparel exports alone. The success and sustainability of the textile industry are greatly affected by how satisfied the employees are. The economic and social standing of the textile workers in the Puthiyamputhur hamlet of Thoothukudi District is the primary subject of this research.

Keywords: Textile industry; Socio-economic development; Garment production; Auxiliary industries; Livelihood manpower; Infrastructure and housing sectors.

INTRODUCTION

Apparel is the main focus of the textile industry, which also includes garment design, manufacturing, and retail sales (Cimatti, Campana, & Carluccio, 2017). Textiles, also known as yarn or thread, are pliable materials composed of interwoven filaments of manufactured or naturally

occurring fibres (Castano & Flatau, 2014).

Another sector that has a major impact on national economies is the textile industry (Amutha, D., 2021). As an example, 4% of India's gross domestic product and 11% of the country's exports come from the textile industry (Gulhane & Turukmane, 2017). The textile industry has its roots in the Palaeolithic era when weaving was first discovered (Riegl, 2018).

Companies can now lessen their reliance on manual labour, speed up their production, and come up with a wider variety of clothing styles and designs thanks to technological advancements (Nayak et al., 2015). As a whole, India's garment industry relies on a network of production hubs dispersed across the nation; these hubs focus on different products and employ different types of people (Mezzadri, 2014). This study examines the economic and social standing of textile workers in the Thoothukudi District's Puthiyamputhur village.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is the individual's labour that determines their economic wealth. Men gain financial independence, a sense of accomplishment, and self-respect when they work outside the home (Amutha, D., 2012). If women want to rise in the ranks and improve their social standing, they must take part in the economy (Amutha, D., 2021).

The textile industry played and played a crucial role in the nation's wealth creation. It opens up more chances for the hiring of workers without specialised training. Thoothukudi is one of the main industrial districts in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The district was an early leader in the country's textile industry's expansion, and now, most people living here make a living from textile mills and related businesses. Those who work in the textile industry and related fields make up the bulk of the district's workforce.

In 2015, all male labourers were employed by the 203 registered industries in the district, which accounted for 90% of the total.

Working in the textile, beedi, fishing, salt, and seafood based industries; working in the household goods industry (such as matches), and so on. For their financial security, the women of the district favour this type of work because it offers regular employment and payment. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to shed light on the economic situation of workers in Puthiyamputhur village, as well as their family status, the nature of their appointments, the working conditions in the textile industries, and their satisfaction with their wages.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the study,

1. To examine the socio and demographic background of the textile workers in Puthiyamputhur village.
2. To analyse the reasons for going to job in textile work industries.
3. To find out the mode of conveyance, mode of payment, nature of appointment and working conditions of the textile industries and
4. To understand the satisfaction of the respondents on wages.

METHODOLOGY

Only the Puthiyamputhur hamlet in the Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu was the subject of the research. Data for this study came from a combination of primary and secondary sources. The study's universe is the Thoothukudi district. The primary data for the study came from 50 employees, 14 of whom were men and 36 of whom were women. A component of the personal interview approach was a previously tested timeline. Data was mostly collected for the fiscal year 2022–2023. The government reports the Thoothukudi district office of labour and employment, academic journals, books, libraries, magazines, newspapers, and the internet were among the secondary sources from which the data for this study was gathered. To analyse the data gathered from both primary and secondary sources, statistical tools such as averages, percentages, standard deviations, etc. will be utilised.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This is the biggest and most significant handloom industry in India, according to Sunita G. Shejwadkar and Geeta Mahale (2001). Handloom weaving has been around since ancient times, and many people continue to make a living at it today.

A major concern that Rao and Nagaraj brought up was the marketing of handloom items in Andhra Pradesh (2008). Many intermediaries exist between producers and consumers, which is another major cause for concern.

Dr Prema Valli P.V. (2015) found that the handloom industry is facing a crisis due to competition from cheaper power loom cloth from other states, an increase in the price of yarn, dyes, and chemicals, as well as a shortage of high-quality yarn. The high production costs exacerbate this problem, the limited product variety and the decreasing demand for handlooms in the Kerala market.

When it comes to exporting handicraft items, Khan and Ghouse (2017) delve into the different obstacles that MSMEs face. The context of developing economies has been the focus of the research. A total of 210 MSMEs engaged in exporting have been polled by him. The findings show that export SMEs were dealing with complex issues. Low export subsidies, infrastructural issues, regulatory hurdles, and a lack of market awareness

were some of the macro-level problems highlighted in the study. On the micro-level, geopolitics, exchange rates, technical issues, and export paperwork were also examined.

Investigating the challenges encountered by micro-entrepreneurs in the handloom weaving and fabric dying industries, Khan and Fatima (2017) propose policy solutions. Eighty micro-enterprises were the subjects of their primary survey. The statistical significance was ascertained by utilising the outcomes of an analysis of variance (ANOVA). The findings demonstrated that banking product terms and conditions would not inform consumers. Customers of private banks were severely impacted by the collateral problem, which micro-enterprises were also facing when trying to get loans.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Sex-Wise Classification of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Sex | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|--------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. | Male | 14 | 28.00 |
| 2. | Female | 36 | 72.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 1 shows that there are more females than males among the total respondents; 72.0 percent are female. Women make up the bulk of the respondents in the textile industries in Thoothukudi district's Puthiyamputhur taluk.

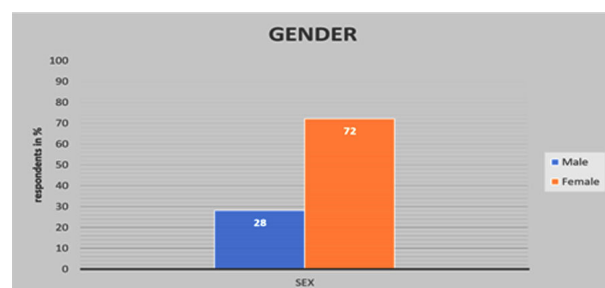


Table 2: Age-wise Classification of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Age | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. | Below 30 | 7 | 14.00 |
| 2. | 31 - 40 | 10 | 20.00 |
| 3. | 41 - 50 | 13 | 26.00 |
| 4. | 51 - 60 | 17 | 34.00 |
| 5. | Above 60 years | 3 | 6.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data.

According to Table 2, the age groups of respondents between 41 and 50 and 51 and 60 are the most significant. 34.0 and 26.0 percent, respectively, are their contributions to the total. The next age groups are those under 30, those over 60, and those between the ages of 31 and 40, who account for twenty percent, six percent, and fourteen percent of the total, respectively. It was discovered that most of the respondents in the study area are in the 41-50 age range. The average age of workers in the textile industry was forty-five.

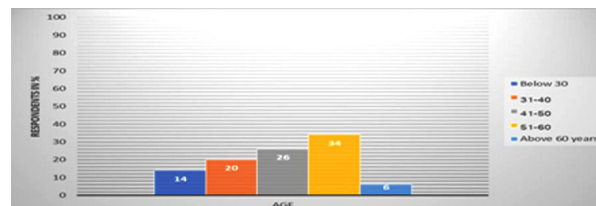


Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents

| Sl. No. | Marital Status | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. | Married | 42 | 84.00 |
| 2. | Unmarried | 14 | 28.00 |
| 3. | Widow | 4 | 8.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Based on the data in Table 3, it appears that most of the respondents are married. Of the total, they make up 84.000 percent. Next came the unmarried, who made up 28.00% of the total, and the widows, who accounted for 8.00%.

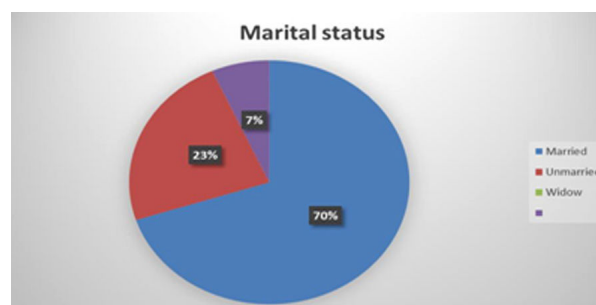


Table 4 : Level of Education of the respondents

| Sl. No. | Level of Education | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. | Illiterate | 9 | 18.00 |
| 2. | Primary | 12 | 24.00 |
| 3. | Secondary | 16 | 32.00 |
| 4. | Higher Secondary | 8 | 16.00 |
| 5. | Collegiate | 5 | 10.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data.

Table 4 shows the respondents' educational attainment. Among them, 18.00% are illiterate, which is a significant level of education. A total of 24.00%, 32.00%, 16.00%, and 10.00% of the respondents have completed elementary, secondary, or tertiary education, respectively. Based on the data collected, it appears that most of the people living in the study area have completed secondary school.



Table 5: Nature of Family of The Respondents

| Sl. No. | Nature of Family | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. | Nuclear Family | 36 | 72.00 |
| 2. | Joint Family | 14 | 28.00 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data.

Table 5 shows that out of all the respondents, approximately 72.0 percent are part of nuclear families, while the remaining 28.0 percent are part of joint families. The results show that in the town of Puthiyamputhur in the Thoothukudi district, nuclear families make up the majority of the respondents.

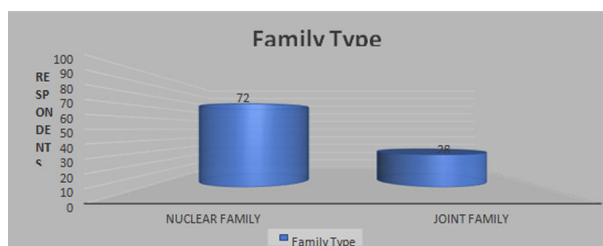


Table 6: Monthly Income of the Employees

| S. No. | Monthly income of the employees | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Below Rs. 3,000 | 5 | 10.00 |
| 2. | Rs. 3,001 and Rs. 6,000 | 7 | 14.00 |
| 3. | Rs. 6,001 and Rs. 9,000 | 18 | 36.00 |
| 4. | Rs. 9,001 and Rs. 12,000 | 12 | 24.00 |
| 5. | Above Rs. 12,000 | 8 | 16.00 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 6 shows that 18 respondents (36.00%) have a monthly income of 6,001 to 9,999 rupees, 12 respondents (24.00%) have an income of 9,001 to 12,000 rupees, 8 respondents (16.00%) have an income of more than 12,000 rupees, 7 respondents (14.0%) have an income of 3,001 to 6,000 rupees, and 5 respondents (10.00%) have an income of less than 3,000 rupees. It comes out to a mean monthly income of 8160.5 rupees for the households.

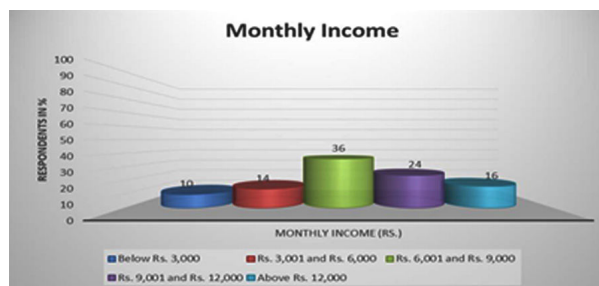


Table 7: Habit of Savings Among the Textile workers

| S. No. | Habit of savings | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | No savings | 17 | 34 |
| 2. | Below Rs. 1000 per month | 24 | 48 |
| 3. | Above Rs. 1000 per month | 9 | 18 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

The data in Table 7 suggests that 17 respondents (or 34.0 percent) do not save anything, 24 respondents (or 48.0%) save less than Rs. 1,000 per month, and 9 respondents (or 18.0%) save more than Rs. 1,000 per month.

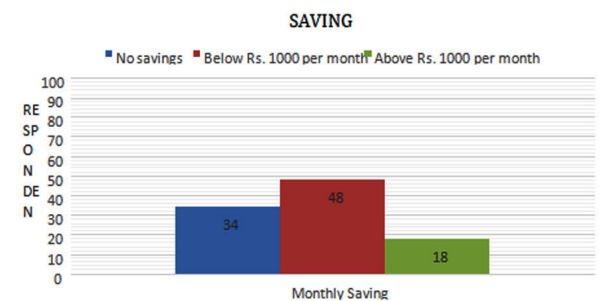


Table 8: Number of Respondents in Debt

| S. No. | Number of Respondents in Debt | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | No debt | 24 | 48.00 |
| 2. | Debt owes to the employer | 19 | 38.00 |
| 3. | Debt owes to money lender | 7 | 14.00 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

There are a total of 24 respondents (48.00%) who do not have any debts, 19 respondents (38.00%) who have borrowed money from moneylenders, and 7 respondents (14.0%) who have borrowed money from their employers.

Table 9: Number of Respondents Getting Advances

| S. No | Respondents Getting Advances | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1 | Yes | 38 | 76.00 |
| 2 | No | 12 | 24.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Salary advances are received by 76.0 percent of respondents, as shown in Table 9.

Table 10: Years of Experience in The Same Textile Units

| S. No | Experience in the same Textile Units | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Below 3 years | 6 | 12.00 |
| 2. | Above 3 years and up to 6 years | 11 | 22.00 |
| 3. | Above 6 years and up to 9 years | 13 | 26.00 |
| 4. | Above 9 years and up to 12 years | 8 | 16.00 |
| 5. | Above 12 years and up to 15 years | 7 | 14.00 |
| 6. | More than 15 years | 5 | 10.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 10 shows that 6 respondents (12.00%) have less than 3 years of experience in the same units, 11 respondents (22.00%) have 3 to 6 years of experience, 13 respondents (26.00%) have 6 to 9 years of experience, 8 respondents (16.00%) have 9 to 12 years of experience, 7 respondents (14.0%) have 12 to 15 years of experience, and the remaining 5 respondents (10.00%) have more than 15 years of experience.

Table 11: Reasons for going to Job in Textile Industries

| S. No. | Reasons for going to a Job in Textile units | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|---|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | To earn an income | 17 | 34.00 |
| 2. | To meet the family expenditure | 13 | 26.00 |
| 3. | To supplement the family income | 11 | 22.00 |
| 4. | To provide education for their children | 9 | 18.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Based on the data in Table 11, we can deduce that 34.00% of respondents are in the textile industry for financial reasons, 26.00% are trying to supplement their family's income, and 18.0% are working in the textile industry so that they can send their children to school.

Table 12: The Nature of the Appointment

| S. No | Nature of Appointment | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Permanent employees | 34 | 68.00 |
| 2. | Temporary employees | 16 | 32.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

According to Table 12, 34 respondents (or 68.00%) are permanent employees, while 16 respondents (or 32.00%) are temporary workers.

Table 13: Working Conditions

| S. No | Working Conditions | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|--|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Noise | 38 | 76.00 |
| 2. | Poor or glaring lighting | 22 | 44.00 |
| 3. | Difficult or uncomfortable working positions | 28 | 56.00 |
| 4. | Heat | 37 | 74.00 |
| 5. | Inadequate ventilation | 31 | 62.00 |
| 6. | Hazard of infectious diseases | 32 | 64.00 |
| 7. | Dust | 14 | 28.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

***Multiple responses**

Table 13 displays the results regarding the workers' attitudes towards their working conditions. Many people are complaining about the noise level (76.00 percent), the lighting (44.00 percent), and the difficulty or discomfort of the working conditions. Sinadequate ventilation (56.00 percent), excessive heat (74.00 percent), hazardous infectious disease conditions (62.0 percent) (64 percent). Workers also report that dust is a major issue for them on the job (28.00 percent).

Table 14: Distance of Factory from the Residence of the Employees

| S. No | Distance of workplace | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | 1 km. away from the residence | 13 | 26.00 |
| 2. | 2 km. away from the residence | 9 | 18.00 |
| 3. | 3 km. away from the residence | 8 | 16.00 |
| 4. | 4 km. away from the residence | 7 | 14.00 |
| 5. | 5 km. away from the residence | 6 | 12.00 |
| 6. | 6 km. away from the residence | 4 | 8.00 |
| 7. | More than 6 km from the residence | 3 | 6.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

The following information is provided by Table 14: 13 respondents (26.00%) live one kilometre away from their factory, 9 (18.00%) live two kilometres away, 8 (16.00%) live three kilometres away, 7 (14.0%) live four kilometres away, 6 (12.00%) live five kilometres away, 4 (8.00%) live six kilometres away, and 3 (6.00%) live more than a kilometre away from their job.

Table 15: Mode of Conveyance used by the Employees in textile works

| S. No | Mode of conveyance | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | By Staff Bus operated by the factory | 18 | 36.00 |
| 2. | By Town Bus /Mini | 12 | 24.00 |
| 3. | By Motorbike | 5 | 10.00 |
| 4. | By Cycle | 11 | 22.00 |
| 5. | By Foot | 4 | 8.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

The data in Table 15 shows that 18 respondents (or 36 percent) take the factory operated staff bus to work, 12 (or 24 percent) use a town bus or minibus, 11 (or 22 percent) ride bikes, 5 (or 10 percent) ride motorcycles, and the remaining 4 (or 8 percent) walk to work.

Table 16: Provision of Traveling Allowance

| S. No. | Provision of travelling allowance | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Yes | 36 | 72.00 |
| 2. | No | 14 | 28.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 16 shows that while 14 respondents (or 28.00 percent) do receive a travelling allowance, 36 respondents (or 72.00 percent) do not.

Table 17: Total working hours Per Day

| S. No | Total working hours per day | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Below 8 hours | 11 | 22.00 |
| 2. | More than 8 hours | 39 | 78.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 17 shows that 39 percent of the respondents work more than 8 hours per day, while 11 percent work less than 8 hours per day.

Table 18: Mode Payment given to the Employees

| S. No | Mode of Payment | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Piece rate | 36 | 72.00 |
| 2. | Time rate | 14 | 28.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 18 shows that 72.0% of the respondents get paid based on the number of pieces they have finished, while 28.0% get paid based on the total number of hours they have worked. 34 respondents fall into this second category.

Table 19: Periodicity of Payment

| S. No. | Periodicity of payment | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Weekly | 42 | 84.00 |
| 2. | Monthly | 8 | 16.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Based on the data in Table 19, we can deduce that 42 respondents, or 84%, receive their wages once a week, while 8 respondents, or 16%, receive their wages once a month.

Table 20: Satisfaction of the Respondents on Wages

| S.No | Opinion of the respondents on wage payment | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|------|--|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Satisfied | 38 | 76.00 |
| 2. | Not satisfied | 12 | 24.00 |
| - | Total | 50 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data

Table 20 shows that most respondents are happy with their current salary; however, 12 respondents (or 24.00%) are unhappy with their current salary.

CONCLUSION

Researchers in this study looked at the respondents' socio-economic and educational backgrounds and discovered that they had low wages and unsafe working conditions. One of the major determinants of textile workers' income, social standing, and employment opportunities is their level of education. It also helps the people who work in informal textile shops by giving them the tools they need to get better jobs and advance in their careers.

The pay is significantly lower than the minimum wage, and they are required to stand for long periods and do heavy labour. The current study also found that workers in the textile industry are receiving social security benefits. Primary sources show that people who work in the textile industry are more likely to experience a variety of occupational health issues, including but not limited to varicose veins, back pain, and knee pain.

The purpose of this research was to examine the wage compensation that knitwear units in Puthiyamputhur village pay their employees. Workers report high levels of job satisfaction, organisational affinity, and amenity use, but they are unaware of the financial and non-financial benefits that are available to them or how to access them, according to the study's findings. This industry's inherent weakness and the biggest problem facing it is that factory owners deceive temporary workers or subcontractors during peak seasons into thinking they are getting these benefits.

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