Chapter - II

Research Design

• Introduction

• Need for the Study

• An Overview of Literature

• Statement of the Problems

• Objectives of the Study

• Hypotheses

• Scope of the Study

• Source of Data, Sampling and Analytical Tools

• Chapter Scheme

• Limitations of the Study

• Notes and References
Introduction

Beedi manufacturing is one of the traditional and largely home-based industries in India. Though beedi rolling began in the organized sector during 20th century, it gradually shifted to unorganized sector consisting of households, small corporate units and work sheds. At present, hardly 10% of beedi manufacturing work takes place in the organized sector. Moreover, the bulk of the production takes place through sub-contracting system. It is highly labour intensive and engages about 5 million workers – of them, nearly two-thirds are women and children. However, the unofficial sources such as trade unions put the figure pertaining to the number of persons working in Beedi Industry at 8 million. If those engaged in tendu leaf collection were also included, the number of workers depending on Beedi Industry would be much higher. Since the middle of 19th century, Beedi Industry in India has been growing very steadily on account of organisation and it is contributing heavily to the national income.

Industrial labour occupies an important place in the economy of the country. It may be noted here that a contented industrial labour is boon to the industrial and economic development. However, beedi workers are facing many problems like occupational diseases, lack of health care services, low wages, insecurity, etc. Since majority of the beedi workers are poor and illiterate, they do not understand the problems faced by them. Therefore, there is need for radical reforms in the beedi sector. In home-based production, the direct
employer-employee relationship is generally denied on technical grounds. Home workers are vulnerable and they, being unorganized, are easy targets for exploitation. The problems of unprotected and unorganized are many and acute.

There is a wide gap from the point of view of benefits between workers in the organized and unorganized sectors, and between the workers in developed and developing countries. This has led to various attempts at providing legal, social and economic security to the employees in the unorganized sector in order to narrow the gap. It is a fact that various benefits of growth have accrued only to a small segment of the society. The other segments of the society comprising of crores of persons have been socially excluded. They are suffering from persistent deprivation associated generally with low standards of living and various kinds of social insecurities.

Unfortunately, the social security system in India has taken the form of a dualistic pattern in which a small segment of the work-force has been able to obtain the protective clauses and benefits while a large segment has remained unprotected. This is true even in the case of beedi workers in unorganized sector.
Need for the Study
According to the census, the unorganised sector provides employment opportunity to nearly 90% of India’s work-force and contributed about 66.5% to the National Product. Inspite of its substantial contribution to the Indian economy, no serious attempts have been made to provide the social security to the persons working in the unorganized sector including Beedi Industry. The Beedi Industry is facing the following problems.

01. Payment of wages is predominantly through Piece Rate basis and at very low wage rates,

02. A poor growth of trade union movement,

03. Superior strength of employer operating singly or in combination,

04. Inadequate social security cover,

05. Scattered production processes connected through intermediaries,

06. No clear differentiation between contractor, sub-contractor and employer, and,

07. Very low capital investment.

Theoretically, the urban conglomeration emerges out of the growth of formal sector and the informal sector emanates from the formal sector as a supplementary phenomenon. On the other hand, the rural areas are dominated by the informal sector. The differences between rural and urban areas and between organized and unorganized sectors can be found in employment
opportunities, quality of employment, wages, security measures (to some extent, more in the urban areas because of the co-existence of the formal and informal sectors than in the rural areas), etc. Generally, beedi workers who are working in the unorganised sector are unprotected workers and are being victimized socially and economically as well by their powerful employers in various forms. The beedi workers are not in a position to avail of the facilities provided by the Labour Laws and Protection Clauses provided by the Constitution of India. Due to the compelled circumstances, such type of workers are being deprived of basic amenities of life.¹

The work of beedi rolling is injurious and dangerous to the life of workers. Most of the workers are victims of Tuberculosis, Asthma and other work related diseases. Beedi workers are not aware of their legal rights and privileges on account of poverty, illiteracy and compelled circumstances. Due to starvation, they are willingly or unwillingly working under this system inspite of apprehensions of diseases causing threat to their life.

There are distinctive features of formal vis-à-vis informal sectors. The formal sector is relatively more organized, employment is more skill-oriented and conditions of employment are more rigid and defined.² Contrarily, the informal sector is dominated by low skill, flexible pattern of mobility, low security and free individual bargaining. This sector represents the needs and aspirations of people in peripheral activities by accommodating the low skill and by ensuring
steady source of livelihood. In this background, the prevalence of beedi workers in large number is found out in the informal sector than in the formal sector. The low skill, lack of bargaining power, low financial commitments in employing workers, etc suit the informal sector.

Beedi workers suffer from poverty which is more pinching. When the relative poverty is high, the motivation for the low income groups to enhance the family income to have sustainable growth becomes more imperative. As a result, women and children are also engaged in beedi rolling to supplement the meager income of the family.

The post-economic reforms scenario is bringing about some typical features in dichotomy of organised and unorganised sectors. The organised sector is facing tough competition in the market, and finding even cost effective and quality output difficult to achieve. This is because of an overall capital crunch and inability to ensure technological upgradation. As a result, in all third world countries including India, the organised sector is shrinking. On the contrary, the unorganised sector is expanding because of low cost, moderate quality and steady output serving a limited yet steady market. Therefore, employment opportunities are expanding more in the unorganised sector than in the organised sector with all the associated characteristics of low wages, long hours of work, low skill requirements, etc. This leads to the provision of more opportunities for women and child workers.
The social security legislations could not control the social evils like contract labour system and the fact remains that the abuse of workers in unorganised sector is still rampant in the country. Despite various security legislations, unorganised workers are being exploited by the powerful employers. They (workers) are not at liberty to enjoy their fundamental rights provided by the Constitution.4

Being in the informal unorganised sector, it has been very difficult to organise the workers with the result that the majority of beedi workers work and live in extremely vulnerable conditions. This is due to multiple sub-contracting of work by the employers or contractors, often under exploitative conditions, high mobility of beedi rolling activities, non-issuance of identity cards to home-based beedi workers, lack of requisite skills, growing concern for the livelihood of beedi workers, etc.

The Constitution of India provided to the all the citizens of the country justice – social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; as well as equality of status of opportunity irrespective of their caste, religion, race, sex and nature of their work.5 Yet the gap which existed between the organised and unorganised workers in the country is very wide which made out system unequal in the eyes of Law.
Presence of the problems as presented above necessitate a thorough study/investigation to find out the extent to which these poor beedi workers are legally protected and also the extent to which the economic status of beedi workers has improved.

**An Overview of Literature**
An analysis of the works already done on the related topics of the present study is made in the following paragraph. This is made with two important objectives. One, to obtain a clear idea about the theoretical framework of the topic selected for the present study. And two, to identify the research gap that exists at present.

The contribution of beedi workers for the development of both the rural and urban sectors, and for the development of national economy has been one of the most neglected, under-estimated and overlooked aspects. In India, some of the vital aspects of unorganised sector are totally neglected in research. Moreover, most of the studies in India have been carried out in metropolitan cities such as Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Kolkatta, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, etc. Further, a very few studies have been completed on beedi workers.

A study conducted by ILO shows that, world wide, only 27 out of every 100 women were found to be economically active. Further, the participation of
women in economic activities is controlled by the socio-cultural conditions prevailing in particular regions. The ILO Office for India (in collaboration with the Gender Promotion Programme at the International Labour Office, Geneva) has done a pilot action project to promote decent work opportunities for woman-workers in the Beedi Industry funded under the Netherlands Partnership Programme. The long term objectives of the project are to improve the socio-economic opportunities for the woman-beedi workers which also lead to their empowerment as well as an improvement in the welfare of their families. After consultations with the Union Ministry of Labour and the State Departments for Labour, the pilot project is being implemented in three places in the country viz., Mangalore (Karnataka), Yellore (Tamil Nadu) and Sagar (Madhya Pradesh). ILO Pilot Project provides a critical learning which can benefit many woman-beedi workers in times ahead. In this endeavor, the project has received good support from Beedi Workers Welfare Fund, Ministry of Labour and the State Departments of Labour.

The Centre for Women's Studies of University of Mysore completed a research project on child labour in beedi manufacturing industry. This research study laid emphasis on the involvement of child labour in the beedi units in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka state.

A few other studies have been completed in the past covering the unorganised sector. These studies show that the ignorance, tradition bound attitudes, lack
of skill, heavy physical work, long hours of work, lack of minimum facilities at work place, health hazards, etc are some of the features of employment of women and children in beedi units.

The foregoing analysis clearly shows that no study on legal and economic status of beedi workers has been undertaken so far by either the individual researchers or by the institutions. In the light of this, the present study on the legal and economic status of beedi workers in Karnataka with special reference to Davangere district is first of its kind and therefore, seems to be justifiable. Obviously, this study is an attempt in the direction of filling the research gap that exists at present focussing on various dimensions of legal and economic status of beedi workers. The present study addresses the problems and privileges of beedi workers in informal sector in both urban and rural areas. Further, proper care has been taken to view the problems of woman and child beedi workers from all angles viz., social, economical, legal and ethical. Besides, the strategy for empowerment is given importance in this study.

**Statement of the Problems**
Currently, the problems of beedi workers have attracted the attention of both national and international agencies. This is evident from the concerns expressed by the nations at the International Labour Organisation and the impending social clause in the WTO document.
Beedi Industry in India has been growing very steadily on account of organisation and it is contributing heavily to the national development. Hence, the industrial labour occupies an important place in the national economy. A contented industrial labour will be the great asset not only to the organisation but also to the country. On the other hand, dissatisfied industrial labour is the bane to the development of the country.

A large number of beedi workers have left their traditional occupation and migrated to urban area in search of employment. Most of the beedi workers are illiterate and they do not understand the problems which they themselves are facing. This study is designed to investigate into the causes and consequences of problems of beedi workers.

There have been a few attempts to highlight the causes of problems of beedi workers. These causes can be enlisted under historical, social and economical categories. The historical causes of beedi workers may be traced from almost all the civilizations of mankind. Assisting the elders in the family thereby learning and earning by doing, and subscribing to the family’s income has been accepted as the natural trend of growth in the absence of formal systems of education and training. The unorganised sectors continue to exist with low technology, low skill and manual job. The post-industrial society gave rise to many subsidiary and peripheral activities as a sequel to the main productive activities. Varieties of traders, middlemen and commercial activities
demanding low skill and manual type of jobs emerged. Beedi workers fitted into this slot. Against this historical background, the study has selected the unorganised sector because it is in this sector wherein the beedi workers are subjected to greater exploitation.

Reflecting on the social causes, children and women obliged to the directions of the elders in the family. Paternalism and benevolence provide the logic behind directions of the elders in the family. The beedi workers accept the exploitation associated with the work entrusted either by parents or by employers. There is a lack of social empowerment for beedi workers.

Family is the basic institution which provides the much needed protection to human beings starting from cradle till the grave. The social ties between parents, and women and children are not only emotionally determined but also embedded into the very fabric of social values. These social values under the influence of modernity are getting disturbed giving rise to disorganised families. In India, the joint family system which was acting as an agent of social security for the child, woman, infirm, sick and the old has almost disappeared thereby leaving these dependants almost unprotected and uncared for which the nucleus families get disorganised.

The most distinct causes of beedi workers are poverty, lack of skill, education, ill health, etc. Both the abject poverty and relative poverty can be considered
as causes for child labour. **Abject poverty** is a condition wherein an individual family does not have the means to meet the basic requirements of life viz., food, clothing and shelter. Lack of skill and education, ill-health, malnutrition, large family size, unemployment and such other causes conjure up to create a situation of object poverty. Even the families caught in the web of object poverty find it imperative to send their children for work. The **relative poverty**, on the other hand, is a condition in which an individual family has the means to just satisfy its basic needs but not having the means to satisfy the need for recreation, education, health, etc which are basically essential for a civilized way of living.

Families in the condition of relative poverty are also required to subject their children to work in order to augment their inadequate income. While the incident of abject poverty might be prevailing in urban unorganised sectors, the relative poverty is an important economic condition characterizing the urban unorganised sector. The unorganised sector is itself a poverty-stricken sector because of lower capital and technical base. It sustains with the help of a restricted market and less qualified and low skilled man-power. There is no need for searching for manpower through the labour market, no need for formalizing employment, or for offering competitive wages as there is a constant supply of man power for the marginal demand. It is not a fact that the beedi workers dominate the employment only in the unorganised sector. Lack
of opportunities for entering into the organised sector is the important factor as to why the beedi workers find it easier to enter into the unorganised sector. The organisation, on the other hand, finds it beneficial to employ the beedi workers in the peripheral activities and indulge in core activities of this sector. As a result, the beedi workers are required to play an assisting secondary and supportive role.

The low bargaining strength of beedi workers engaged in the unorganised sector in general and Beedi Industry in particular is an advantage for the employer and a disadvantage for the employees. The poor bargaining power of beedi workers subject them to long hours of work, low wages and poor working conditions. Therefore, this study analyses the condition of beedi workers - both from the angle of family environment as well as the work environment.

The choice of unorganised sector in both the urban area and rural area as the area of the present study has its own logic. The unorganised sector is a symptom of dual economy. It partly precedes the formal or organised sector and partly succeeds it. It represents the traditional and relatively unorganised segment of the economy. As a residual labour market, the unorganised sector provides scope for low income. The beedi workers find the entry into this sector easier.
There are a few ethical questions in the system of beedi workers in unorganised sector particularly relating to child labour. The most important question is the ethical propriety of subjecting a child to the hard toil of labour when it needs the protection and nurturance. Child labour is mostly physical in nature. Physical labour has been condemned as the sin. Why should the child be subjected to physical labour? and why does the family, as an institution of love and care, allows the child to work hard? - are the important ethical questions. Moreover, when the child will be the asset of the country, is it fair on the part of the employer or government to exploit the child labour? The Indian moral values accept the present life as a redemption of the past deeds thereby providing the motivation for compromising with the most miserable conditions of life including that of child labour. Another ethical question which is of paramount importance is that the socio-economic empowerment is not extended to the child on the pretext of immaturity. But when the child labour is put to use mentally and physically, immaturity is not taken into account. This sort of dual standards of moral values in the treatment of child labour form an important issue for study.

The society's response to the child labour through social action, legislation and governance has many loopholes. It is hard to believe that there has been genuine concern for the problem of child labour. Either it has become an agenda of the political parties to use the issue as a political play for propaganda
and vote catching or it has become a global compulsion on the governments. The legislations enacted so far have been institutionalizing the system of child labour by making regulative clauses. There is adhocism in the government policies to tackle the issue of child labour. Therefore, the child labour system is almost defying all measures for containing it.

Another ethical question is relating to various Personal Laws in India. There are now a Hindu Law, a Christian Law, a Persian Law and a Muslim Law – all legally recognized and judicially enforceable. None of these is, of coverage exempt from the states legislative powers and social reform obligations as laid down in the Constitution, in exercise of which these have in fact already codified and reformed to varying extents. I spite of all these reforms, the problems of population and unemployment in the society lead to dominate the employment in unorganised sector.

The present study is an attempt to evaluate the above problems in the light of the Legal Provisions and Protection. Further, the study aims at finding out whether the economic condition/status of beedi workers has improved due to their employment in beedi rolling activity.

**Objectives of the Study**

Important objectives of the present study are presented below.
01. To evaluate the social, economical, legal and physical conditions of beedi workers in the unorganised sector of rural and urban areas of Davangere district;

02. To study and analyze the social, economical, political and ethical factors which compel the women and children to accept employment in Beedi Industry;

03. To assess the extent participation of women workers in beedi manufacturing;

04. To analyze the extent of child labour in beedi manufacturing;

05. To study the various benefits available to beedi workers under various Schemes;

06. To evaluate the socio-economic problems of beedi workers;

07. To analyze the legal and economic status of beedi workers; and

08. To suggest suitable measures to overcome the problems of beedi workers and to give effect to the welfare schemes more effectively so that the economic status of beedi workers is improved.

Hypotheses
The present study is centered around testing the following hypotheses.

01. Beedi workers in unorganised sector are illiterate, less skilled and have weak social capabilities and unable to avail of the benefits of social security;

02. The socio-economic conditions of women and child labour are as miserable as their conditions of work and employment;
03. The child labour is caught in a situation in which it lacks personal, social, economic and political power as a result of which it is subjected to exploitation by the family and by the employer; and

04. The introduction of western style cigarettes threatens to the survival of Beedi Industry.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the present study extends to cover two important aspects pertaining to beedi workers. One, the facilities, security cover, rights, etc to which the beedi workers are entitled as per the Provisions of relevant Acts such as Minimum Wages Act, 1948; Payment of Wages Act, 1936; Maternity Benefit Act, 1961; Factories Act, 1948; Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act, 1976; Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986; Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1986; etc. In the light of these Legal Provisions, the second aspect of the study is to evaluate the actual benefits provided to the beedi workers (to assess the economic status of beedi workers).

Source of Data, Sampling and Analytical Tools

The relevant data are collected from both the primary and secondary sources. Therefore, the present study is based on field as well as documentary sources. Field sources comprise of beedi workers including women and child workers, their parents, guardians and employers from the selected areas of Davangere district. For collecting the data from the respondents, a well structured questionnaire was used. The questionnaire contained several items like a brief
profile of respondents (such as age, education, marital status, size of the family, etc), and income, indebtedness, wage payments, working hours, nature of job, behaviour of the employer, social security awareness, etc.

After the questionnaire was finalized, it was translated into the regional language (viz., Kannada) and the respondent-workers were allowed to provide their response according to both the text of the questionnaire and the spirit of the investigation.

After finalising the list of respondents (after contacting them in their work place), the houses were identified to conduct the interview confidentially and exclusively for the purpose of collecting the data for the study. The data were collected through questionnaire, interviews, observations and field notes by visiting, several rounds, to the work sites and their native villages.

Besides the respondent-workers, data have also been collected from a few other key persons through discussions and this enabled the Researcher to obtain necessary inputs on various aspects relating to families involved in beedi rolling. The key persons with whom discussions were held to collect the necessary data and to gain an insight into the problem include (a) Assistant Labour Commission and their colleagues, (2) Trade union leaders of different trade unions, (3) Activists of NGOs working in the area,
(4) Taluk level officers, (5) A couple of contractors, and (6) Group discussions with woman-beedi rollers.

During the interview/discussion with the respondents, it was quite common that, other than the person interviewed, there were a number of on-lookers including other members of the family who were present. Therefore, the response of the person who was interviewed were influenced by other members. However, in order to overcome this, proper care was taken in the form of error-checking.

The published material available on the subject in the form of books, journals, reports, newspapers, websites, etc are the important sources for the secondary data.

The respondents for this study comprise of 200 beedi workers from five taluks of Davangere district. While selecting the respondents, care was taken to give representation to different sections such as caste, gender, religion, etc. Davangere district is selected for one important reason viz., there are about 25,000 beedi workers and 30 beedi units functioning in the district.

For the purpose of analysis of the data collected, simple statistical tool viz., percentage is used. And the method of analysis followed in this study is purely analytical in nature.
Chapter Scheme

The report is presented in six chapters as presented below.

Chapter - I: Introduction

Chapter - II: Research Design

Chapter - III: Study Area and Respondents - A Brief Profile

Chapter - IV: Legal Status of Beedi Workers - An Analysis

Chapter - V: Economic Status of Beedi Workers - An Evaluation

Chapter - VI: Summary of Major Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

The First chapter focuses on introduction to the economy with an emphasis on occupational structure - concept, growth, analysis of features of unorganized sector, work-force in organized and unorganized sectors, etc. Further, this chapter covers the nature of Beedi Industry and its activities, production, marketing and economic linkages of unorganized sector and also tendu leaves and beedi making and background of Beedi Industry.

The second chapter deals with Research Design which includes the need for the study, an overview of literature, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypotheses, scope of the study and analytical tools, chapter scheme and limitations of the study. The third chapter presents a brief profile of Davangere district and respondent-beedi workers.
The fourth chapter deals with the Legal protection and Legal status of beedi workers which is evaluated on the basis ILO conventions, Constitutional Provisions, few Legal Legislations and the impact of legislations on beedi workers, impact of government policies, schemes, etc and the outcome of government policies and schemes are also presented in this chapter.

The fifth chapter analyses the economic status of beedi workers including social status of beedi workers (such as caste system, size of the family, unemployment, income, illiteracy and ignorance of parents, education and migration, etc). This chapter analyses the economic status of beedi workers assessed on the basis of their daily wages, employment, assets owned by them, annual income, reasons for borrowing loans, amount of loan borrowed, marital status, number of children, etc. The sixth chapter presents the major findings of the study, suggestions and conclusion.

Limitations of the Study
Though the Researcher has taken the necessary care to present a comprehensive report, it suffers from a few limitations which are identified below.

1. Though attempts have been made to obtain the accurate response from the respondent-workers, some errors might have crept in. Hence, the conclusions drawn are subject to these errors in the responses provided by the respondent-workers;
02. The present study is addressed to only one segment of the economy viz., the unorganized sector in both urban and rural areas. And the area itself is limited as it is confined to Davangere district; and

03. Though some of the respondent-workers were not able to comment to the reality relating to their awareness of Legal Provisions and Policies, conclusions are drawn on the basis of the opinion of their family members.

However, inspite of the limitations which are inherent in the very nature of this type of study, care was taken to minimize their impact on the outcome and conclusion them.

Notes and References

01. Article 21 of the Constitution of India
02. According to the Provisions of Labour Law
03. Workers in an Integrating world - The World Wide Report, June 1995
04. Part - III of the Indian Constitution
05. Preamble of the Indian Constitution
06. Project on 'Improving Working Conditions and Employment Opportunities for Women in the Beedi Industry in India, 2003'.
08. The villages and towns surveyed in Mangalore district are Jappinamogaru, Ullala, Bajpe, Mannuru, Scolithur and Bantwal.
09. Supra Note 6