SUMMARY OF

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS
CHAPTER VI

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From the study of primary data collected from 150 respondents selected at random from 15 villages in Agasteeswaram Block, the researcher has made the following findings.

6.1 Findings

There is no men workers in the beedi rolling while 100 percent of women are engaged in the beedi making activities.

Majority of the women beedi workers in the age group of 35-40 years.

69.4 percent of the respondents belong to Hindu religion and less number of Muslim women engaged in beedi making activities.

Majority of the women beedi workers belong to the nuclear family system (65.3%).

Majority of the respondents are married (58.6%) and it reveals that married women are more concentrated on this job.
Eight percent of the respondents are illiterate and thirty six percent had studied upto Middle School level.

Majority of the beedi workers belong to Backward Class and Scheduled Tribes are nil.

Fifty two percent of the respondent’s family six consist of 2-4 persons and the remaining respondents have more than four.

All the respondents (100%) have a reported that this occupation is non-traditional occupation.

About 42.6 percent of the respondents are undertaking beedi activity for more than 15-20 years.

Over sixty four percent of the respondents are involved in beedi activity on full-time basis.

Both registered companies (56%) and unregistered companies (44%) are operating.

Seventy two percent of the respondents are given Identity Cards.
All the respondents are not having membership in any one of the Trade Unions.

Fifty six percent of the respondents reported that this occupation is main occupation and Twenty Five percent of the respondents consider as secondary occupation.

Majority of the respondents have selected this occupation because of poverty and 2.6% of the respondents were engaged due to family profession.

Majority of the workers are working for the period of 5 to 10 hours per day.

Thirty six percent of the respondents are rolling 750-1000 beedies per day and remaining respondents are rolling beedies less than 750.

52 percent the respondents are receiving Rs.60 for 1000 beedies being rolled and remaining 48 percent of respondents Rs.58 for the rolling of 1000 beedies.

Majority of the respondents (22.6%) are rejected for beedies rolling and remaining 77.4 percent of respondents are not rejected for beedies rolling.
Majority of the respondents (29.4) suffer a loss of Rs.30-40 of rejection of beedies rolled and remaining 11.8 percent of them obtain a loss of Rs.40 of rejection of beedies rolled.

44.6 percent of the respondents are living in tiled houses and 11.3 percent on other houses.

57.3 percent of the sample respondents are living in their own houses.

All the respondents undertake beedi work at home and do not have a separate room for beedi rolling.

62.7 percent of the respondents are reported that, on account of beedi activity the household members were adversely affected.

Regarding the nature of problems faced by the household members, 68 percent of the respondents reported that beedi activity adversely affected the studies of children and another 8 percent reported inconvenience of the family members, irrelevant climate for beedi rolling and ill-health.

43.3 percent of the households have electricity, Majority of the respondents (43.3%) have connections in more than two rooms.
21.3 percent of the sample respondents are using the water of public wells and 50 percent in public taps.

Majority of 128 respondents reported that their household members suffered from health problems on account of beedi activity. They also faced problems such as backache, eye sore, headache, rickets, thyroid, tuberculosis, and Throat infection and remaining 22 respondents are not affected in terms of health.

85.3 percent of the sample respondents are having medical facilities and 14.7 percent are not having medical facilities.

Majority of the sample respondents (61%) are availing treatment in Government hospitals.

52 percent of the sample respondents are having medicines of government hospitals and the remaining 48 percent at their own expenses.

90.7 percent of the sample respondents receive occupational income and remaining 0.3 percent secure from other sources.

Majority of the sample respondents 35% have land worth Rs.37,50,000 84.7 percent of the respondents have the habit of saving.
Majority of the sample respondents are saving in the chit funds.

Majority of the annual expenditure of the sample respondents is made on food items (57.7%) and remaining 5.1 percent in festival ceremonies.

Majority of 77.1 percent of the sample respondents borrow from moneylenders.

52.7 percent of the respondents are having fully job satisfaction of the beedi workers rolling activity.

40.8 percent of the respondents are different to rolling of beedies due to low wage and remaining 25.4 percent are not in this field.

6.2 Conclusion

In the unorganised sector, beedi manufacturing provides employment opportunities, particularly for the women in Tamil Nadu. The Government has enacted several Acts and implemented various kinds of social security schemes, including minimum wages, pensions, wage for holidays, medical facilities, scholarships for their children, housing loan, dearness allowances, bonus for the beedi workers in general and women in particular. But the benefits have not reached them. Most of the female workers do not have direct contact with the agents. Even if they have, they are unable to assert their rights,
not only due to the ignorance about the available social schemes, but also because of non-availability of other employment opportunities.

6.3 Suggestions

Based on the study, some suggestions are made as the part of policy initiatives for the beedi workers. There are:

Existing ‘contract’/ ‘agent’ system should be abolished because the contractors not only exploit the women beedi workers by providing low wages and low quantity of raw materials but also keep them away from availing the benefits from government social security initiatives;

All the workers, who are associated with the different stages of beedi works should be recognised by the government;

Beedi workers should be brought under the co-operative system at the village level so that every worker could be reckoned with and avoid different forms of exploitation;

These forms of arrangements will not only be helpful to the workers but also for the government to make appropriate policies, in the future.
The facilities for better working conditions and welfare measures provided in the legislation are the major determinants of the standard of living of workers in beedi industry.

Legislative protection to ensure security of job and fair wages would further improve savings and investment, with little fear about insecurity in the flow of income.

Consumption pattern of the beedi worker households shows nutritional deficiency. Therefore they need nutrition education.

Legislations covering beedi industry are comprehensive and have well defined provisions to ensure decent working conditions and living conditions to the beedi workers with bonus, provident fund, leave with wages etc. The findings of this study show clearly that all that is needed to help beedi workers is the strict enforcement of the legislation. It has to begin with organisation of workers for collective bargaining industry. Therefore, strict enforcement of legislative provisions is both essential and urgent.

Low wages and exploitative buyer dominated market and keep wages low. In the absence of other source of supplementary income, workers had to work long hours and more days even to earn their subsistence. It is a source of
encouragement to child labour too. Therefore, family welfare programmes selectively implemented to household would be very useful to improve per capita income and their standard of living.

The study shows that even at low levels of income, the households saved. Saving was considered by them as a protection against unexpected loss of income due to ill health or want of work. Therefore mobilization and investment of savings in productive assets with easy access to dis-save or dis-invest at times of emergency would be the best strategy to help.