SUMMARY

The findings of the present study reveal that women beedi workers suffer from poor socio economic status even though this occupation provides a crucial source of employment and income. Poverty, debt and lack of worker status forces people into beedi rolling and thus it in a compulsion rather than a choice. The exploration of the data reveal that families are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty, exploitation and helplessness by this highly unorganised home-based industry. Women and children are major working force of the beedi industry and are thus deprived of education and good health. There is a high incidence of musculoskeletal pains, joint pains, back pains, head aches and respiratory diseases. Apart from these occupational illness reported by them, they have physiological disturbances which was evident through haematological analysis of their blood. Routine analysis of the blood revealed that the TEC and TLC levels, Hb content PCV decreased in beedi rollers and smokers compared to non beedi rollers who are non smokers too. SGOT and SGPT increases beedi rollers and smokers when compared with normal humans. Thyroid profile of women beedi rollers show decreased T₃ and T₄ levels when compared with non beedi rollers. But the smokers had high T₃ and T₄ levels. Similarly contrary results were found with regard to TSH in beedi rollers and smokers. FT₃ and FT₄ of beedi rollers and smokers showed a similar decreasing trend compared to non beedi workers/ smokers. Anti microsomal antibodies and anti thyroglobulin exhibited marginal decrease in beedi rollers whereas smokers showed much decrease. Thus it is evident that the unburnt tobacco dust may have a serious impact on thyroid gland and its products as reported in smokers. Like smokers who inhale tobacco smoke women beedi rollers who are exposed to raw tobacco dust for prolonged hours have the risk of developing hypothyroidism and affect human generation.
RECOMMENDATION

- Periodic Health checkup should be made compulsory through agencies.
- Create awareness among the workers regarding causes of how they are being affected physically how could they are able to overcome the problems.
- Masks should be works by the beedi rollers during work to minimize inhalation of tobacco dust.
- Awareness is to be created among the beedi workers regarding the health care facilities available in the government hospitals, which is free of cost.
- To ensure education for workers children and children should be discouraged in taking up beedi rolling.
- The government should initiate suitable action to protect the benefits and provide healthy service conditions for the women beedi workers. The system of middleman should be abolished as it leads to exploitation of the workers. All the companies must be registered and identity cards must be issued to all the workers working both in organized and un-organized sector.
- The health department should initiate measures to start special dispensaries to treat problems arising out of hazards in the industry.
- Ensure the availability of health care centers and proper sanitation facilities by the industries. Portion of profits gained from the sale of
tobacco products should be evenly distributed among these involved in the work education to bring about a lasting impact on the overall health condition of the tobacco workers. Since the magnitude of the health problems is seen more among non passbook holders, efforts should be made to provide passbook to the non passbook holders.

➢ The labour department should take initiative to provide medical facilities to the most affected beedi rolling sector. Creates and child centers should be established to look after female workers children so that the children are not exposed to the hazards.

➢ Along with the triple benefit scheme like provident fund, pension and gratuity which is recommended, insurance schemes may be promoted to the beedi companies.