

Analytical consideration on existing relationship between Gender Differentiation among tribal coffee plantation workers in Araku Valley Mandal, Visakhapatnam District

Buridi Surendra

Research Scholar, Department of HRM, Andhra University

Prof. K. John

Head- Department of HRM, Andhra University

Abstract

The first economic activity undertaken by man in the civilized world was agriculture and till date agrarian economy dominates the economies of many countries and Labour is an important factor in agricultural production especially in our country where mechanized farming is still in its infancy. Plantation sector is a part of the general agricultural sector and consists of cultivation of high value commercial crops such as tea, coffee, rubber, cardamom, coconut and cashew. This sector in particular is a major contributor to the national income as it is mostly export oriented and accounts for fifteen percent of total agricultural export earnings. It employs around two million people directly and six million indirectly including largely women and hence this sector is accorded critical importance in the social and economic planning of the country. In plantations both male and female workers are working facing some differentiation and discrimination like wage differentials, work hours at work place. This is an empirical study based on primary data and secondary data collected through a well-structured Schedule. The study would highlight the gender differentiation among the tribal workers in plantations of Araku valley of Visakhapatnam District.

Key Words: Coffee Plantation, Agricultural Product, Gender differentiation, Tribal workers.

Introduction:

Coffee is the most valuable agricultural product exported by developing countries and coffee farming is not an easy task, it involves a whole chain of processes, from soil preparation, sowing and transplanting, irrigation, weeding, pruning, pesticide application, picking and field processing which can be done in two ways: the wet method, and the more labour intensive dry method and the coffee plantation worker is responsible for carrying out the ground level activities involved in a coffee plantation right from nursery preparation to harvesting and storage. This entire module assesses a worker on various aspects like seed preparation in coffee plantation, land preparation, nutrient management, training and pruning, harvest and post harvest management etc and the entire process requires huge number of people to work (**Setty A.S. 1958**). As a result, the coffee plantation is considered to be a highly labour incentive crop that requires large number of workers during the harvest season, between the months of November and March. Therefore, seasonal labour is usually the norm. In addition, Women and even children form a large proportion of the workforce in coffee plantations worldwide.

Review of Literature

Srinivasan M. G. (2016) studied the problems of tea plantation workers in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. The study focused on the working conditions, wage levels, welfare measures and scope of trade union activity in the plantations. Most of respondents in the study reported low wages, wage discrimination based on gender, physical and mental harassment at the work place resulting in human rights violation, lack of welfare measures including transportation and schools for children, non-provision of social security measures, poor adherence to the provisions of Plantation Labour Act, 1951. To conclude the working and living conditions are miserable and the researcher suggests government intervention through supervision of welfare measures, amendment of laws to ensure that the workers minimum needs are met and they enjoy a decent standard of living.

Nirmala K.D &Anand D. (2015) their study attempts to find the gender differences on perceptions of workers on the quality of work life in coffee plantations of Kodagu district of Karnataka. It reveals that the female workers have a favorable perception towards quality of work life when compared to the men. Using an independent t-test, significant gender differences were investigated on perceptions of workers' quality of working life. The study results suggest that female workers reported significantly higher mean scores in all the quality of work life parameters studied.

A report on the livelihood and employment of workers in rubber and spice plantations in Kerala by **D. Rajasenan (2010)** deliberates on seven livelihood assets of plantation workers which are essential for poverty mitigation and for a sustainable livelihood. The first asset physical asset of the plantation workers are minimal, the natural assets are restricted to the usage of well water and timber for fuel, human assets index is low marked by low levels of education and vocational skills thus limiting their employment options. The financial assets are poor in terms of savings and financial inclusion. Gender based wage discrimination is prevalent. Welfare measures too are inadequate and to summarize a study of the livelihood assets gave a dismal picture of the quality of living in the rubber and spice plantations. India is the 6th largest coffee producer of the world and Karnataka accounts for 38.5% and more than 53% of Karnataka's coffee comes from the plantations of Kodagu. But Kodagu is facing problems of labour shortage and this has led to planters depending on migrated labour especially from the states of Bihar and Assam.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study the working hour differentiation between Male and female labourers in coffee plantation of Araku Valley, Visakhapatnam District.
- To study the discrimination of women workers in wage system in coffee plantations of Araku valley.
- To study the other existing aspects of gender differentiation in the coffee plantation of Araku valley.

Need for the Study

As Araku valley is one of the highest coffees producing areas in the state of Andhra Pradesh, the people residing in this region are mostly tribes, and they depend mostly on agricultural activities. The agricultural activities prevailing in this region is mostly coffee

plantation, pepper and millets. Among all these, the coffee plantation is mostly carried out so the requirement for Tribal workers is accelerating day by day but they are hardly taken care off. Tribal people depended upon the forests for their livelihood. Now their main source of livelihood is wage labour in the coffee plantations and farmlands. Employment is seasonal, working environment in plantation is very much rigid and apart from daily wage, they do not receive any social security benefits from employers. The women workers are also works equal with male workers. Their exists the gender differentiation and They face lot of discrimination in working hours, wages and work allocation.

This has generated a need for the study for this segment of population. Thus, the present study will focus on these tribal workers in the Araku valley district of Visakhapatnam Very limited studies have been conducted on the tribal workers in plantation and their common and unheard problems in Andhra Pradesh state of Visakhapatnam district. Out of which a little has been worked out in Araku valley. As Araku valley is one of the highest coffee producing areas in the state of Andhra Pradesh the requirement for Tribal workers is accelerating day by day. Hence, the present study is intended to investigate the gender differentiation among tribal coffee plantation workers with special reference to Araku valley Coffee plantation of Visakhapatnam district as very few studies were made in this area. Thus, the current study will be extremely beneficial to the Tribal workers community as a whole since knowing the situation of these workers in the informal sector the government can advance to take some effective and creative steps for the overall improvement of this trodden and discarded workforce.

Scope of the Study

The present study is confined to the tribal coffee plantation workers employed in Araku Valley, Visakhapatnam district. The present study focuses on the gender differentiation based issues of tribal coffee plantation workers with reference to the above said study area. The data was specifically collected from the tribal workers who are working in the Coffee Plantations in Araku Valley, Visakhapatnam using two stage sampling method.

Method of Study

The present study is a survey method. Survey method is used to elicit appropriate and reliable information including the responses of the sample respondents from Coffee Plantations of Araku Valley Mandal, Visakhapatnam.

Universe & Sampling

This study related to gender based differentiation and discrimination f tribal workers in who are working in coffee plantation in tribal area of Visakhapatnam District are considered since Araku Valley Mandal is producing highest amount of quality coffee. The research is concentrated on the tribal workers working in the coffee plantation situated in Araku Valley only. As per 2011 census it is observed that there are 169 villages existing in Araku Valley Mandal. Out of those 169 villages it is observed that the coffee plantations exist only in thirty-five villages. Keeping the time, money, manpower and other difficulties in approaching and eliciting information from the tribal people, only 50 percent of those 35 villages i.e. 17.5 approximately 18 villages are selected using systematic Sampling Method

(Every alternative village/ coffee plantation were selected).The total no. of coffee plantation workers existed in these eighteen selected coffee plantation villages are about 5812 in number (at the time of survey), these 5812 workers sometimes move from one plantation to another plantation but ultimately the total is more or less same. As this is high in number, it is decided to collect information from 10 percent of those workers selected using purposive sampling method from each plantation. These purposively selected workers together give 581. However, besides the care taken by Researcher, 33 schedules are discarded, as they are not completely filled. This gives 548 completely filled schedules selected through two-stage sampling. The first stage is selection of 50 percent coffee plantation villages and the second stage is 10 percent selection of coffee plantation workers existing in all the eighteen coffee plantation villages selected in first stage.

Data collection and study instrument

The study is mainly based on primary data. Secondary data has been procured to substantiate the primary data. To seek the opinions of the respondents from the coffee plantations a structured schedule covering the Gender based issues of the respondents.

Data Analysis

The attempt has been made, to analyze and understand the perceptions of sample respondents with respect to their gender differentiation in coffee plantations, Araku Valley, Visakhapatnam. The information collected from the sample respondents has been systematically analyzed through Simple Percentile Method. Below is the description of gender differentiation of Tribal Coffee Plantation workers in Araku Valley, Visakhapatnam of the present study.

Distribution of respondents basing on responses related to Gender Differentiation.

The distribution of respondents basing on their Gender Differentiation variables namely Working hours differentiation between male and female workers, Discrimination for women workers in wage system, Reliable working conditions for women workers at workplace are presented in Tables 1 to 3. The opinions of the respondents on four statements under Harassment at workplace are presented in Tables 4 to 11 respectively. The classifications of each of their variables relating to Gender Differentiation variables are also presented in the respective Tables.

Table 1
Distribution of respondents basing on their working hour differentiation between Male and female labourers

Working Hour Differentiation	Frequency	Percent
Yes	79	14.4
No	469	85.6
Total	548	100.0

Table 1 depicts about the working hours differentiation between male and female labourers of the respondents. Out of the total respondents, majority of respondents i.e. 85.6 percent are stated that there is no differentiation; only 14.4 percent stated that there is a differentiation between male and female labourers in case of working hours.

Table 2
Distribution of respondents basing on their discrimination of women workers in wage system

Discrimination in Wage System	Frequency	Percent
Yes	469	85.6
No	79	14.4
Total	548	100.0

Table 2 is on discrimination of women labourers in wage system. Out of the total respondents 85.5 percent of them stated that there is discrimination on women workers in wage system and the remaining said there is “No” discrimination.

Table 3
Distribution of respondents basing on their proper working conditions for women Labuorers at work place

Proper working conditions	Frequency	Percent
Yes	90	16.4
No	458	83.6
Total	548	100.0

Table 3 is on Proper working conditions for women Labuorers at work place. Out of the total respondents, 83.6 percent of them stated that there are no proper working conditions for women labourers at workplace and the remaining said they exist reliable working conditions for women.

In the process of assuming the harassment level at work place, different statements were possessed to the respondents and responses are obtained in the different options Namely, Always, Sometimes and Never. The opinions against those statements are presented in Tables 4 to 11.

Table 4
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers are treated with respect at work place” with respect to harassment at the workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	76	13.9
Sometimes	411	75.0
Never	61	11.1
Total	548	100.0

Table 4states that, 13.9 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Never” with 11.1 percent and “Sometimes” opinionated by three fourth of them towards the statement “Women workers are treated with respect at the work place”.

Table 5
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers are made to do work beyond their capacity” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	71	13.0
Sometimes	415	75.7

Never	62	11.3
Total	548	100.0

Table 5 states that, 13 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Never” with 11.3 percent and “Sometimes” opinionated by three fourth of them towards the statement that “Women workers are made to do work beyond their capacity”.

Table 6
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers are frequently abused verbally by the owner” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	23	4.2
Sometimes	109	19.9
Never	416	75.9
Total	548	100.0

Table 6 states that, 4.2 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Sometimes” with 19.9 percent and “Never” opinionated by three fourth of them towards the statement that “Women workers are frequently abused verbally by the owner”.

Table 7
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers physically assaulted by owner” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Never	548	100.0

Table 7 states that all the respondents are opined “Never” towards the Statement that “Women workers physically assaulted by the owner”.

Table 8
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers are made to work for long hours” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	68	12.4
Sometimes	414	75.5
Never	66	12.0
Total	548	100.0

Table 8 states that, 12.4 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Never” with 12 percent and “Sometimes” opinionated by three fourth of them towards the statement that “Women workers are made to work for long hours”.

Table 9
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “There are no humane conditions at the work place” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	47	8.6
Sometimes	86	15.7
Never	415	75.7
Total	548	100.0

Table 9 states that, 8.6 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Sometimes” with 15.7 percent and “Never” opinionated by three fourth of them towards the statement that “There are no humane conditions at the work place”.

Table 10
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers are sexually abused by the household members of the owner” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	53	9.7
Sometimes	73	13.3
Never	422	77.0
Total	548	100.0

Table 10 states that, 9.7 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Sometimes” with 13.3 percent and “Never” opinionated by more than three fourth of them towards the statement that “Women workers are sexually abused by the household members of the owner”.

Table 11
Distribution of respondents basing on the opinion on the statement that “Women workers are allowed to go out on their personal works during work time” with respect to harassment at workplace

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	103	18.8
Sometimes	318	58.0
Never	127	23.2
Total	548	100.0

Table 11 states that, 18.8 percent of respondents had the opinion of “Always”, followed by “Never” with 23.2 percent and “Sometimes” opinionated by majority 58 percent towards the statement that “Women workers are allowed to go out on their personal works during work time”.

Findings based on Gender Differentiation among Plantation Workers

The study reveals that with regard to working hours most of them stated that there is not variation with regard to male and female, however there is a vast variation in terms of wage system as opined by majority of the respondents. The study further reveals that majority of the female workers are not provided with proper working conditions and sometimes they are treated with respect at the workplace however a considerable number (11 percent) of them stated never, moreover it has been identified that many a times women workers are made to the work which is beyond their capacity but they are not abused verbally nor sexually and the humane conditions at the workplace is good further the women workers are never assaulted by the owner physically however they are made to work for long hours for most of the time and the other noticing fact about these workers is they often go out with their personal work during their work time. The above finding reveals that most of the women workers are differentiated in terms of wage system but they are never abused or being sexually harassed at the work place which is a positive sign.

Conclusion:

The results of this study reveal that Gender based issues. The labour department and owners of the plantations neglect the labour rights of women workers, safety measures and occupational health hazards.

From the present study, it enlightens the gender differentiation aspects among the tribal coffee plantation workers. There are many shortcomings in their gender-based issues. To improve the women workers' living standards and status in society, the Government & Owners of the coffee plantation should take steps to eradicate the women coffee plantation workers. The living standards of Tribal Coffee Plantation Workers are far worse. Proper wages and welfare facilities must be provided to overcome them. Governments must come forward and ensure that the various acts of coffee plantation workers are implemented, and that the plans introduced for them are strictly monitored. This study will be useful to the farmers, large and small growers, processors, researchers and policy makers, and would serve as a base for further study related to labourers and Coffee plantation.

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