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Analysis of Demographic and Work Profile of Rural Bamboo Handicraft Workers

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: The present study aims to analyze the demographic and work profile of the workers involved in bamboo handicraft work in rural region and it is noteworthy to mention that bamboo cover in India is 13.96 million hectare.

Study Design: The study comprises a descriptive research design.

Place and Duration of Study: The study was conducted in three villages of Pusa Block of Samastipur District of Bihar from February to May 2022.

Methodology: For this study a survey was conducted on 120 randomly selected bamboo handicraft workers in Harpur, Waini and Gangapur villages.

Results: The findings of study revealed that majority of bamboo handicraft workers were of 34 to 41 years of age with more than 15 years of work experience. Most of them were illiterate and more than three fourth of them belonged to SC community. They were engaged in semi-skilled work and were earning only Rs. Rs.9843.33±379.82 per month from this work. Most of them are self employed and work for long hours about 6-10 hours a day with frequency of 2-3 times a day.

Conclusion: Majority of bamboo handicraft workers were belonged to middle age and were illiterate with more than 15 years of experience of bamboo craft. They have a large family to feed with having only one source of income and were struggling for better living condition. They were working for long hours without having any proper facilities which reduces their efficiency of work.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Bamboo is commonly known as, "poor man timber" as it provides employment to the workers. It is used for a variety of purposes depending on its nature. It is used in many aspects of people's daily lives, including for house construction, for agricultural tools and implements, for food, for many other products of household use and mainly for handicraft products. Handicrafts made from bamboo are one of the eco-friendly crafts in India. The origin of this rural craft is traced from the beginning of the civilization when man started cultivation of food crops thousands of years back. People started making baskets, mats and many other products of household use with bamboo that was abundantly available in nearby forests. Later, tribal and rural people in the vicinity of bamboo forest took up this as a means of livelihood [1-3]. Now bamboo craft is spread in all the rural areas of the country and it feeds millions of traditional workers (Sreekumar, 1999). The bamboo handicraft workers in our country are still unorganized, un-cohesive, socio-economically backward and semi-skilled. They are not getting regular employment, meaningful wages and they still experience some notable social discrimination [4,5]. There is a need to educate craftsmen and enhancing their skills in crafts and other utility products in order to improve their living conditions and generating better income. This sector has a vast potential to generate self-employment, which is not known widely and quantified. Besides it will also strengthen the force of self-reliance. There is a lack of income and education (Gangopadhyaya et al. 2014; Lehtinen, 2012) which limits the workers to approach new technologies, good workstation and good working practices. There are various bamboo handicraft products out of which major products i.e prepared by the workers in the study area includes baskets, furniture, utility items, jewellery, musical instruments and toys. They were working for long hours without any facilities to prepare these products [6-8]. So, this research studied about the demographical characteristics (like age, education, occupation, monthly income, type and size of family, type of house and their social participation) and working details (like family members involved in handicraft work, work experience, duration of work, type and frequency of work) of the bamboo handicraft workers in rural region of Samastipur district of Bihar.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive research design had been chosen in order to fulfill the objectives of the study. The study was conducted in Pusa block of Samastipur District, Bihar. This study area was chosen because bamboo grows naturally here. Purposive sampling procedure was adopted to select the study area and simple random sampling was adopted to select the total sample for the study. Total 120 workers from three villages namely Harpur, Gangapur and Waini of Pusa block were selected as the final sample to collect the required information. Data was collected with the help of interview schedule consisting of structured questions through personal interview technique. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed in terms of frequency, percentage and mean with the help of SPSS software.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic Profile

The present study analyzed various demographic characteristics of the workers like age, education, occupation, monthly income, marital status, type of family, number of family members, type of house and social participation.

The data related to demographic profile is depicted in Table 1. The mean age of the bamboo handicraft workers was 39.083. A major fraction more than fifty per cent (57.5%) of the study population was found to be in the age group of 34-41 years while a small fraction was in the age group 18-25 years. Similar observation was made by Kamrul and Nayeema (2015) in their study, which shows that more than fifty per cent (56.00%) of the respondents belonged to middle age group (30-50 years) and only one forth (25%) respondents belonged to young age group (15-30 years). Literacy was found to be low in the study population. Majority of the workers (75%) were illiterate whereas only 7.5 per cent have secondary level of education. Most of the workers (76.67%) were belonged to schedule caste while only 10.83 per cent were schedule tribe.

Table 1. Demographic distribution of rural bamboo handicraft workers

Demographic characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Age (in years)	18 to 25 years	9	07.50
	26 to 33 years	19	15.84
	34 to 41 years	69	57.50
	Above 41 years	23	19.16
	Mean \pm SD	39.083 \pm 0.896	
Educational status	Illiterate	90	75.00
	Primary school	21	17.5
	Secondary school	9	7.50
	Senior secondary	-	-
Caste	General	-	-
	Other Backward Caste(OBC)	15	12.50
	Schedule Caste(SC)	92	76.67
	Schedule Tribe(ST)	13	10.83
Occupation	Unskilled	15	12.50
	Semiskilled	96	80.00
	Skilled	09	07.50
Monthly Family Income (in Rs.)	Up to Rs. 10000/-	48	40.00
	Rs. 10001 to Rs. 15000/-	60	50.00
	Rs. 15001 to Rs. 20000/-	12	10.00
	Above Rs. 20000/-	-	-
	Mean \pm SE	9843.33 \pm 379.82	
Marital status	Unmarried	5	4.16
	Married	110	91.67
	Widow/widower	5	4.17
	Divorced	-	-
Type of family	Nuclear	16	13.33
	Joint	92	76.67
	Extended	12	10.00
Number of members in family	Up to two	16	13.33
	3 to 5	45	37.50
	6 to 8	43	35.84
	Above 8	13	10.83
Type of house	Pucca house	70	58.33
	Semi-pucca house	45	37.50
	Kaccha house	5	4.17
	No house facility	-	-
Social participation	No participation	115	95.83
	Member of one organization	5	4.17
	Member of more than one organization	-	-
	Any other	-	-

Table 2. Distribution of Working details of rural bamboo handicraft workers

Attributes	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Family members involved in bamboo handicraft work	Only one	22	18.33
	Two	70	58.33
	Three	22	18.33
	Everyone	6	5.00
Work experience (in years)	Up to 5 years	8	6.66
	6-10 years	12	10.00
	11-15 years	35	29.16
	More than 15 years	65	54.16
Working basis	Self employed	87	72.50
	Daily wage basis	13	10.83
	Piece rate basis	18	15.00
	Contract wages	2	1.67
Duration of work (in hours per day)	Up to 5 hours	9	7.50
	6 to 10 hours	70	58.33
	More than 10 hours	41	34.16

Attributes	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Frequency of work	Once in a day	11	9.17
	Twice a day	94	78.33
	Thrice a day	15	12.50
	Whole day	-	-

A good number of workers involved in bamboo handicraft work were found to be engaged in semiskilled (80%) work while only 12 per cent of the workers were unskilled. Half of the workers were having monthly income of Rs. 10000 to Rs 15000 (50%) followed by 48.34 per cent were having monthly income only up to Rs 10000. Reasons may be that they work only during summer and they cannot work and sell their bamboo products during rainy season. It was found that 91.67 per cent of the workers were married while only 4.16 per cent were unmarried. These results are in par with the results of Nwaihu et al. [9] which shows that 76.00 per cent of the women were married and 24.00 per cent of the respondents were single.

The data pertaining to type of the family revealed that more than three forth of the workers (76.67%) were belonged joint family having 3-5 members (37.50%) in their family. The study conducted by Rahman [10] in Rangpur district of Gujrat shows that 30.5 per cent of the respondents had 4-6 members in their family. The data further revealed that a good number of worker were living in pucca house (58.33%) followed by semi pucca house (37.50%) while only 4.17 per cent were living in kaccha house. The study by Gangopadhyay (2019) reported that 26 per cent of the respondent have pucca house while rest of them had kaccha house. Majority of the workers (95.83%) have no participation in any social organization while rest of them have participation in only one organization.

3.2 Work Profile

The work profile of the bamboo handicraft workers includes working details about their work such as family members involved in handicraft work, work experience, duration of work, type and frequency of work.

The data obtained from Table 2 shows that mostly two family members (76.67%) were involved in bamboo handicraft work. More than fifty per cent (54.16%) of workers were having more than 15 years of experience of bamboo handicraft work followed by 11-15 years (29.16%) of work experience. The data pertaining to type of work revealed that majority

of the workers (72.50%) were self employed while 15 per cent of them work on piece rate basis and 10.83 per cent of them were working on daily wage basis. Most of the workers (58.33%) were working for long hours about 6-10 hours in a day followed by more than 10 hours (34.16%). The data related to frequency of work revealed that majority of bamboo handicraft workers work with a frequency of twice in a day.

4. CONCLUSION

Analysis of demographic and work profile of rural bamboo handicraft workers revealed that they had to work continuously to accommodate their basic needs. A workers socio-economic status showed their economic and social situation which highlights their needs. According to the present study the majority of the respondents fell in the age group between 34 to 41 years. Most of them were illiterate but manages to earn up to Rs. 10000 monthly with no social participation. The majority of the respondents were living in pucca house and having two earning members in the family. Further, 91.67 per cent of the respondents are married and having joint family. The workers have individual families. It was further revealed that these are the common factors which affect their working conditions. Only one source of income and large family to feed suggested additional source of income to rural bamboo handicraft workers.

CONSENT

As per international standard respondents' consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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