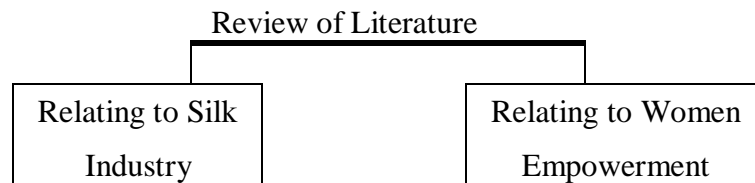


CHAPTER-II

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

Various attempts have been made to examine women empowerment through various economic activities like as of with silk industry in Assam and in India. There are numbers of literature relating to women empowerment and silk industry. Both male and female weavers' socio-economic status, weaving as a means of empowerment, wage differentiation, importance of weaving as a means of poverty alleviation programme etc are studied by various research scholars on different times. in this chapter consists two sections. Section one deals with review of literature on women empowerment and section two deals with review of literature on silk industry. Reviews of some of the article and books are mention below.



2.2 Review of Literature relating to Silk Industry

Dutta (1988) in his Ph. D. thesis entitled “Problems and Prospects of Silk Production in Assam with Special Reference to Sibsagar District”. Dutta (*op. cit.*) discussed the problems and future prospects of Eri, Muga and Mulberry silk industry in Assam with special reference to Sibsagar district. However, the most important drawback of that study was that he did not take into account transport cost associated with the collection of leaves in case of ericulture and imputed labour cost in the estimation of income and profit while explaining the prospects of it.

Medhi S.B. (1999) in his article “Sericulture in Twenty First Century” discussed that Assam is the only place where Muga can be produced. The number of families engaged in Muga culture was 29,400 in the year 1995-1996. The total area under Muga silk warm food plant was 2624 hectok in the same year. Medhi expects that there may

be an increase in the amount of land used for the activation of silk worm plant with the rise of demand for silk.

Pusps and Netaji (1999) conducted a study on income and employment of farmers in various integrated farming system in Rasipuram and Namakkal taluks of Salem district in Tamil Nadu. They found that maximum additional employment generated 515 man days was in sericulture compared to poultry (160 man days), and dairy (170 man days).

Das (2000) in his article also analysed the importance of ericulture in the economy of Assam and its related problems in his study “Problems and Prospects of Ericulture in Assam:A case study in Barpeta district. His analysis was completely based on secondary data that suffers from the limitation of incompleteness. Later, Das (2006) in his paper entitled “Empowerment of Women through Ericulture: A case study in Sarukhetry Community Development Block”, studied the importance of ericulture as a means of women empowerment in rural areas dominated by the tribal Bodo population. In his study, he found that literacy rate as well as social status of women was relatively higher among the women who have been practising ericulture than those who do not practice ericulture.

Siddique (2000) also discussed about the potentialities of sericulture (mulberry,eri and Muga) in the employment and income generation in Assam. But he has not discussed the various problems that the sericulture has to face, like technological problem, marketing problem etc and thus he has not given any suggestion for the solution of these problems. Again, in his discussion he used only the secondary data.

Boulnois L. (2001) in his article “The Silk Road”, the Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th edition discussed about certain important aspects of cocoon production and silk worm rearing. Many varieties of silk-spinning worms and insects are known, but the silk worm which has commercial importance is the larva of the bomby mori or mulberry silkworm. Wild silk is the product of the tussah worm of India and China, which feeds on oaks. It is now semi-cultivated, as groves of dwarf trees are provided for its feeding. It spins a coarser, flatter, yellowish filament than the Bombyx mori and the colour does not boil out with the gum. Tussah silk is a rough, durable, washable fabric known as

shantung or pongee. Boulnois highlights through this analysis the huge employment prediction with the development of this industry.

Bisen E.L. (2005), studied the economics of cocoon production in Balghat district of Madhya Pradesh and conducted that approximately 51% of the cost was spent for human labour in sericulture industry. 49% expenditure are involved on raw material, machinery etc.

Lakshmanan and Devi G. (2007), reported that one acre of mulberry sericulture had generated 532 man days in various activities in Gobichettipalayam and Udumalpet taluks of Tamilnadu. Of this, 319.20 man days were from own family source and 212.80 man days were hired.

Das (2007) in his PhD thesis analysed that there is a good prospect for the development of ericulture activities in Assam that may provide larger scope for the generation of employment and income in the rural areas and also thereby help alleviating poverty. He also mentioned that for the adequate progress of it necessary to take steps by the government so far is found to be not much productive and there is also the lack of persistent cooperation. Finally he mentioned that the co-operation of various sections like officers, artisans, traders, rearers, weavers etc engaged in activities related to eri silk industry is necessary for the successful growth of this sector.

Agarwal (2013), “A Study of the Breathing Problems among Silk Industry Workers in India” studied about the physical condition of the workers employed in silk and textile sectors. The sample consisted of 345 above the age of 20 years and 335 non-silk industry workers of same area were studied. All the respondents were interviewed and an analysis made through statistical tools such as chi-square and odds ratio. He found that there were large amount of dust produced at the time of weaving. The lung function affected for a prolonged exposure to the industrial environment, the nutritional status and body’s soft tissue stores are also affected, thus affecting the health status of the industrial workers. He emphasized that a need for textile mills to reduce the dust level in the scouring, spinning and weaving sectors. Workers should be use to encouraged to use protective measures such as face-masks. His study mainly based on the area of Kanpur, Mumbai and Shanghai (China).

Sarmah, Sarkar, Ahmed and Deuri (2013) in their entitled *Ericulture* mentioned that “silk is a finest natural and earliest discovered fibre by man amongst wool, linen and cotton”. They discussed about the history of silk, various types of Indian silk, trend of silk production in India and the process of harvesting and assessment of cocoons. They also discussed about the demand for Eri products and marketing sector of this product. They concluded from their analysis that the cost, investment, employment generation and return from Eri culture have been established as a profitable venture.

Barua, S. (2016) in his article “*Assam Silk Market: Problems and Probable Solutions*” mentioned that the silk industry of Assam is an indispensable part of Assamese people with their tradition and culture. He mentioned that though there are various government schemes apart from traditional technology, but still there is a huge gap among the demand and supply of silk cloths. Silk market is also not suitable for domestic and foreign earnings. Apart from that, there are lots of silk industry related problems are there such as: threat of cheap imported yarns, traders selling garments made out of low price etc. again, some of the froth businessman ruins the faith of silk customers. Now days, various cheap and low quality cloth are sale in the market by the name of “pure silk” and it deprives the genuine silk businessman. He suggested building such organization that will protect the silk market and silk industry from such faults. He discusses about the Economic Survey Reports of 2012-13 and mentioned that in the state there were 13 lakhs of handlooms which provided a direct and indirect engagement of 25 lakh people. He concluded by the statement that ‘It is believed that revitalization of the Assam silk industry with adequate planning and effective implementation will help transformation of the economy of Assam.’”

2.3 Review of Literature relating to Women Empowerment:

Sahaya, Kaisth and Patel (2001), in their book *Gender & Development* discussed about the inequality in gender i.e. male and female ratio. This book reflected the innovative thought processes of women across the world and the courage and determination manifested by them as they address the challenges that have come their way. Their study area is in South Asia.

Doepke and Tertilt (2010), “Does Female Promote Economic Development” found that money in the hands of women appears to lead to higher spending on public goods and in particular to higher spending on child related goods. In this respect they explained that in particular model such as the unitary model or the collective model implying a relationship between parents education and children health. At some educational level, he finds a significant difference in the impact of mother’s and father’s education on girl’s and boy’s height. They found empirical evidence on the effect of women’s empowerment on public good provision. They made a study about the risk taking difference between male and female. They found that female is more risk averter than male.

Gonsalves (2011) in her book *Women and Human Rights* discussed about the lack of attention to the human rights of women, and indicated a range of issues where equal rights for women are still denied. She discussed about Dowry deaths, sexual harassments, violence against wives, prostitution problems, sexual assaults etc. She mentioned various solutions about the above problems and said a strong punishment and law against the violence will decrease these types of problems. She mentions various acts and articles against such crimes. She also discussed various crime records and the factors which are responsible to such crimes. This book will provide a better understanding of the human rights concept and help women to realise and protect their rights of which they are unaware of.

Selvam (2011) in his book *Employment of Women* discussed about the various sectors of women empowerment. His book made a study over the problems of Indian women. He discussed about the problems of women related to the topics like – educational problems, Chronic Hunger and status of women, economical problems etc. He found out that women’s work is statistically less visible non-monetized worked.

They mostly engaged in subsistence activities like gardening, feeding farm hands, live stock maintenance etc.

Census estimates 51.93% men and 25% women workers while NNS estimates 52.7 male and 25.68% female workers among the total economic work force. He mentioned that through the employment of women we make gender equality.

Meena and Meena (2011), *Women Empowerment and Self Help Group* explained about Gender disparity and democratic safety. Their study shows that one of the best predictors of inters and intentional violence is the maltreatment of women in the society. The study mentioned about various laws against the crimes like- Acid thrown, bride burning, sati, dowry death, honour killing, murder of pregnant women, human trafficking, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, sexual violence, rape etc. The Self Help Groups and the NGOs can take an active part to remove such problems from the society. These types of institutions are always ready to help the affected women.

Dutta P. (2012), while studying about the women's of North-East India, he noticed that the women in the North-East India have always played a major role in the political, cultural and socio-economic life of the region though he mention since time immemorial women have been subjected and spoiled in the patriarchal society. According to him the North-East women enjoy greater mobility and visibility than women of other region of the country. He mention about Dr. Mamoni Raisom Goswami (1942-2011) one of the most influenced writers and commendations in Assamese culture. Due to the circumstances that women are compelled to embrace on unequivocal femininity, women remain underdeveloped in this domain and are continually dependent on the aid of men. He concluded that until and unless we ameliorate the damages particularly causes and the suffering it creates, people should not think about economic empowerment of women in the North-East. After all, women's economic empowerment requires the over throwing of the patriarchal values.

Sarmah(2012), in his book *Status of Women Engaged In the Handloom Industry in Assam* analyzed the empirical data based on the sample survey provided effect of employment on the status of married and un-married weavers within their households in the district of Kamrup (rural). He mentions that after employed their relative status within household increased. The rise in the socio economic status of the gainfully employed women will contribute towards reduction in gender inequality and will finally

help in human resource development. He finally mentioned that the Government agencies, self-help groups and NGOs can play an important role in this regard.

Geetha and Vindhy (2012), examined empowerment theory and concept advocated by Antony Giddens in case of women involved in silkworm rearing in Rural India. She emphasized on self employment of women. She found women involved in sericulture activities had shown presence of strong agency and adaptability to any fluctuations in the industry. Participation in silkworm rearing had created networking amongst themselves as well as an access to resources such as land, credit and market thereby increasing their control over decision making particularly on their earning and spending.

Sarma (2012) discussed about the meaning of the “Women Empowerment”. She mentioned that Indian Constitution give equal right to both male and female. The constitution grants equality to women and also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. In accordance with the constitutional guarantee for gender equality, women’s issues have been incorporated also in the Indian planning process. She said, women do unpaid work within the household, they are mostly engaged in low paid jobs outside the home or the works generally done by women are less paid. According to her, a women is poor because she is poor, women are trapped by the vicious cycle of poverty. Economic empowerment of women tries to balance the power equation; but it is a difficult task because in the process the very gender relationship prevailing in the society is questioned.

Devi (2013), in her PhD thesis discussed about women empowerment. She mainly gave emphasized to empowered women through self-dependency in financial sector. She discussed about the male and female participation in various activities in different sectors of Muga-silk and studied the relationship among weavers and owner.

Das, B. (2013), “A Glimpse on the status of plains Tribal women of Assam in the perspective of women Empowerment” compare about the ancient Indian society with present. She mentioned that ancient women enjoyed almost equal status with men. In medieval era the status of women went down considerably. She found that education i.e. vocational, technical and professional education and government policies can make the position of tribal women strong in the society. She emphasized both formal and non-

formal education. She suggested that the rural tribal women need to make close study while formulating any programmed for them.

Hazarika (2013), “Problems and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurship in Sonowal Kachari Society” mention that due to educational qualification, lack of capital, lack of available market facility, poor transportation system etc women are not interested to become entrepreneur. To remove this problem both government and non-government organization should take active part to mobilizing women to become entrepreneur. In the present time, the Sonowal women are increasingly taking part in entrepreneurial carrier for improving their economic status in the society.

Gupta, V.P. (2018) “Essay on women Empowerment India” said that women empowerment is nothing but it is the social rights, political rights, economical stability, judicial strength and other rights should be also equal to women as men. There should not be any discrimination between men and women. According to him women should get more respect on the society. They should have their own economic and financial choices by their own.

2.4 Research Gap

From the above study and discussion it is clearly viewed that women empowerment is a burning issue in recent time periods. A society cannot move if the women are deprived from their rights. From the study of this chapter, it is observed that lots of work has been done regarding both silk industry and women empowerment. But, on the topic of research, the researcher’s aim is to combine both silk industry and women empowerment. Silk is the labour intensive sector and investment cost is very low. So, anybody can easily engage on this sector. To get engagement on this industry, educational qualification is not required. It is observed that most of the areas especially in rural areas female are not so much educationally qualified. So, they can easily engage on this sector and can be financially independent. Financial independency is the foundation of women empowerment.

There are a huge number of literatures and research work completed relating to silk industry. Socio-economic conditions of silk workers, impact of silk industry on environment, health issues relating to silk industry, income of the weavers, problems of

silk industry etc has been studied by various scholars. But there has been found no research works done on “Silk Industry and Women Empowerment: A Study on Mulberry and Muga Silk of Sualkuchi Village, Kamrup (Rural) District of Assam”. So, the proposed research study is an attempt to bridge the research gap.

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