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**SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF SMALL SCALE COIR MANUFACTURERS IN
POLLACHI, COIMBATORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.**

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ABSTRACT

The Research study focuses to examine the Socio Economic Status of Small Scale Coir Entrepreneurs in Pollachi Taluk, Coimbatore. Coir industries locating at Pollachi is the leading hub in Tamilnadu, India. Pollachi is blessed with Coconut cultivation where we get abundant raw material for manufacturing coir and its allied Products such as Coir carpets, Coir Rope, Coir Mats Coir rugs and Bricks. Coir industry in the region benefits from an abundant supply of materials, skilled labour and a supportive entrepreneurial culture, there remains a significant need for modernization in production techniques, diversification of product lines and enhancement of marketing strategies. The Socio economic Profile of Coir Entrepreneurs in this sector reflects the Problems and Prospects of the particular Sector. The study is based on primary data collected through Questionnaire and 220 coir units have been selected as the sample for the current study.

Keywords:

Socio-Economic Status, Coir Industries, Coconut cultivation and Small Scale Coir manufacturers.

INTRODUCTION

The coir industry is one of the oldest agro-based industries in India, deeply rooted in the rural economy and closely linked with coconut cultivation. Pollachi, located in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, is widely known as the Coconut City and serves as a major centre for coir production due to its abundant availability of raw material. Small-scale coir manufacturing units in this region not only preserve traditional skills but also provide livelihood opportunities to thousands of rural families, particularly migrated women. Understanding the socio-economic status of these manufacturers is crucial as it reflects their living standards, income levels, employment opportunities and overall quality of life. Such an analysis also highlights the challenges faced by small-scale entrepreneurs, including fluctuating raw material prices, limited access to modern technology and financial constraints, while underlining the sector's contribution to rural development, women empowerment, and sustainable livelihoods. The Present study is based on primary data collected through Questionnaire and 220 coir units have been selected as the sample for the study. The findings indicate that while the coir industry in the region benefits from an abundant supply of raw materials, skilled labour, and a supportive entrepreneurial culture, there remains a pressing need for modernization in production techniques, diversification of product lines and enhancement of marketing strategies. Moreover, infrastructural constraints, limited access to credit, and inadequate market linkages continue to hinder the full realization of the sector's growth capacity.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study aims to exhibit the Socio Economic Status of the Small Scale Coir Industries in Pollachi Taluk, Coimbatore District.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector plays a crucial role in the economic development of any region. In the context of the coir industry in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, the market potential of MSMEs has gained significant attention due to its potential for generating employment, promoting sustainable practices and contributing to the overall socio-economic growth. This literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research and insights into the market potential of the coir sector from MSMEs.

Historical Evolution of Coir Industries: Coir, derived from coconut husks, has a long history in India. The coir industry has been a traditional occupation in Coimbatore District. Studies by Narayanasamy

(2016) and Rao and Ramanathan (2019) trace the historical development OF particular sector in native land highlighting its evolution from cottage industries to modern production units.

Economic Contribution and Employment Generation: The coir sector creates employment and revenue generation for the rural populace, making it a major contribution to the local economy. Research by Krishnan and Thilagaraj (2018) and Rajan and Kumar (2020) emphasize impact of the particular coir sector in providing livelihoods and boosting the rural economy, especially in regions like Coimbatore District.

Value Chain and Product Diversification: MSME Coir units have evolved from producing traditional products like mats and ropes to a diverse range of value-added products. Studies by Thomas and George (2017) and Menon and Nair (2021) discuss the expansion of the coir value chain, including innovations in products such as geo-textiles, coir pith and handicrafts.

Challenges Faced by Coir Industries: Despite its potential, the coir industry are in situation to envisage Research by Sharma and Patel (2018) and Kumar et al. (2021) highlights issues like outdated technology, lack of skilled labor, market competition, and environmental concerns related to waste disposal. These challenges need to be addressed to ensure the industry's sustainable growth.

Government Initiatives and Policies: Government initiatives and policies play a crucial role in supporting and promoting the coir industry. Studies by Reddy and Gupta (2019) and Singh and Verma (2022) discuss policy measures like technology upgradation, financial support, and export promotion schemes that impact the growth and competitiveness of coir industries.

Sustainability and Future Prospects: The coir industry's potential for sustainable and eco-friendly products aligns well with global trends. Research by Nair et al. (2020) and Das and Mishra (2023) highlight the prospects for coir industries in contributing to a circular economy, reducing waste and catering to environmentally conscious consumers.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study on the socio economic status of small scale coir manufacturers in Pollachi, Coimbatore District, holds great significance as it sheds light on the livelihood conditions, challenges and opportunities of one of the region's traditional industries. Coir manufacturing has long been a vital source of employment and income generation, particularly for rural households and women workers. Understanding the socio-economic profile of these small-scale manufacturers provides valuable insights into their standard of living, educational background, income levels and access to resources. Such findings will not only help policymakers and development agencies design effective schemes for their upliftment but also assist financial institutions in extending suitable credit facilities. Moreover, the study highlights the contribution of the coir sector to sustainable rural development and emphasizes the need for technological support, training and market expansion to ensure the long-term viability of the industry. Thus, this research is significant in bridging the gap between traditional livelihood practices and modern economic growth strategies in the region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research study was mainly depends simple random sampling method. Primary data was collected by issuing the questionnaire directly to 203 coir industrialist of interview schedule method in field survey.

The secondary data was collected from published records, newspapers, websites, report of researchers etc., The study area is limited to Coimbatore district. There are around 1000 small and medium scale coir industries are functioning. It is well known for coconut forms, coir products and coir related industries. Present study has been focused on the coir units in Coimbatore district. There are 1694 coir units are functioning in Coimbatore District out of which 1000 coir units are registered with coir board of them, 220 coir units have been selected as the sample for the current study. Through descriptive Table analysis Socio Economic Status has been found.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table: 1 Age of entrepreneur

Age	Frequency	Percent
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Below 30 years	37	18.20
30 to 40 years	86	42.40
40 to 50 years	60	29.60
above 50 years	20	9.90
Total	203	100.00

The table – 1 shows the frequency distributions of age of the respondents. The age-wise distribution of respondents reveals that the majority of entrepreneurs (42.4%) are between the ages of 30 and 40, suggesting that coir entrepreneurship is primarily dominated by individuals in their prime working years. A substantial proportion, 29.6%, belongs within the age range of 40 to 50, while only 9.9% are over the age of 50, indicating a decline in participation as one ages. 18.2% of respondents are under the age of 30, indicating that there is a growing interest among young people in this industry.

Table: 2 Gender of entrepreneur

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	189	93.10
Female	14	6.90
Total	203	100.00

The table – 2 shows the results of frequency distributions of the gender of the respondents. The gender composition of the respondents indicates a substantial gender disparity, with 93.1% being male and only 6.9% being female. This highlights the necessity of policy interventions to increase female participation in the Entrepreneurship.

Table: 3 Marital Status of entrepreneur

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	194	95.60
Unmarried	9	4.40
Total	203	100.00

The table – 3 displays the results of frequency distributions of the Respondents' Marital Status. The majority of respondents (95.6%) are married, while only 4.4% are unmarried. This indicates that those who are responsible for their families are the most likely to pursue a career in coir entrepreneurship. This might be because of the stability and community networks that this line of work provides.

Table: 4 Educational Qualification of entrepreneur

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Up to SSLC	2	1.00
Up to HSC	41	20.20
Under Graduate	111	54.70
Post Graduate	31	15.30
others	18	8.90
Total	203	100.00

The Table 4 displays the results of frequency distributions of the Educational Background of the respondents. More than half of the respondents (54.7%) are undergraduates, with 20.2% having completed up to higher secondary education (HSC). A minor percentage (1.0%) have only completed SSLC, while 15.3% are postgraduates. An additional 8.9% possess alternative qualifications. These figures suggest that coir entrepreneurs typically have a basic to moderate level of education.

Table: 5 Nature of the family

Nature of family	Frequency	Percent
Joint Family	112	55.20
Nuclear family	91	44.80
Total	203	100.00

Table 5 illustrates the type of the family where the respondents belonging.. It shows that joint families comprise a minor plurality (55.2%) of respondents, while 44.8% reside in nuclear families. This shows that the traditional family structures continue to be crucial in the support of entrepreneurial activities.

Table: 6 Number of members in the family

No. of Members in the family	Frequency	Percent
Up to Two	9	4.40
Three	17	8.40
Four	66	32.50
Five and Above	111	54.70
Total	203	100.00

Table 6 illustrates the number of family members present. The data on family size depicts that over Majority of the respondents (54.7%) reside in families with five or more members, while 32.5% are members of four-member families. This indicates the existence of larger family structures, which may influence the availability of labour and the distribution of responsibilities in coir business.

Table: 7 Area of Residence

Area of Residence	Frequency	Percent
Rural	160	78.80
Semi-urban	32	15.80
Urban	11	5.40
Total	203	100.00

Table 7 illustrates the Residence Area of respondents majority of the respondents (78.8%) are belongs to rural places, with 15.8% hailing from semi-urban areas and only (5.4%) respondents from urban areas. This highlights the rural-centric character of coir production and underscores its significance in the development of rural economy.

Table: 8 First generation entrepreneur

First Generation Entrepreneur	Frequency	Percent
No	10	4.90
Yes	193	95.10
Total	203	100.00

Table 8 indicates the Entrepreneurs of the First Generation. High Majority 95.1% of the respondents designated themselves as first-generation entrepreneurs, suggesting a significant influx of new entrants into the coir industry. This is indicative of the increasing interest and opportunities in this conventional sector for individuals who are not from a family business background.

Table: 9 Location of Coir unit

Location of Coir unit	Frequency	Percent
Rural	145	71.40
Semi-urban	20	9.90
Urban	38	18.70
Total	203	100.00

Table 9 illustrates the location of the coir unit. The majority of coir units (71.4%) are located in rural areas, with only 18.7% concentrated in urban areas and 9.9% in semi-urban regions. This shows the coir industry is a rural-based industry, which further emphasizes its importance for rural development and employment.

Table: 10 Nature of coir unit

Nature of coir unit	Frequency	Percent
Only Manufacturing	87	42.90
Manufacture and Export	41	20.20
Trading	20	9.90
Others	55	27.10
Total	203	100.00

Table 10 illustrates the distribution of business operation types among coir producers. 42.90% of participants are engaged in only manufacturing activities. 20.20% participate in both manufacturing and export activities. 9.90% participate in trading activities. 27.10% are classified as "Others," encompassing a diverse range of business models. The data reveals that a substantial majority of coir producers, accounting for 42.90%, concentrate solely on manufacturing, 20.20% engages in both

manufacturing and exporting activities. The trading and various other business types represent smaller segments within the industry.

Table: 11 Type of coir unit

Type of coir unit	Frequency	Percent
Sole trader	95	46.80
Partnership	58	28.60
Company	50	24.60
Total	203	100.00

Table 11 illustrates the distribution of business structures among coir producers: 46.80% of participants function as Sole Traders. 28.60% function as a Partnership. 24.60% function as a Company. The data indicates that the largest segment of coir producers, accounting for 46.80%, are sole traders. This is followed by partnerships at 28.60% and companies at 24.60%. This suggests that a significant segment of the industry consists of independently operated enterprises.

Table: 12 Capital Invested

Capital Invested	Frequency	Percent
1 to 10 Crores	137	67.50
10 to 50 crores	65	32.00
Above 50 crores	1	0.5
Total	203	100.00

Table 12 illustrates the capital investment by the coir entrepreneurs. The findings indicate that 67.50% of participants have made investments ranging from 1 to 10 crores. 32.00% have allocated investments ranging from 10 to 50 crores. Only 0.5% have made investments exceeding 50 crores. The findings indicate that a significant portion of coir producers, specifically 67.50%, have made investments within the range of 1 to 10 crores, whereas a minimal percentage, just 0.5%, have invested over 50 crores. This shows that most of the coir units are functioning with a fairly moderate level of investment.

Table: 13 Bank Loan Availed Details

Availed Bank Loan	Frequency	Percent
No	113	55.70
Yes	90	44.30
Total	203	100.00

Table 13 demonstrates the accessibility of bank loans. More than fifty percent of the respondents have not availed themselves of bank loans. (55.7%), while 44.3% have. This could suggest either a dependence on personal funds and informal lending sources or restricted access to formal credit.

FINDINGS

The study on the socio-economic status of small-scale coir manufacturers in Pollachi, Coimbatore District, has revealed several important insights. The findings indicate that a majority of the respondents belong to lower and middle-income categories, reflecting the limited profitability of small-scale operations. This suggests that while the coir industry continues to be a vital source of livelihood, it has not significantly elevated the economic conditions of the manufacturers. Educational attainment among respondents was found to be relatively modest, which has a direct impact on their ability to adopt modern business practices, access financial assistance and explore new markets. The study also found that many manufacturers face challenges such as lack of access to credit, fluctuating raw material prices and heavy dependence on middlemen for marketing their products. These constraints limit their income stability and growth potential. Despite these challenges, the resilience of the coir manufacturers in continuing their traditional occupation is noteworthy, which underscores the cultural and economic importance of the sector in Pollachi. The findings call attention to the urgent need for targeted interventions—such as skill development programs, better financial inclusion, introduction of modern technology, and stronger cooperative movements—to strengthen the socio-economic position of these manufacturers. By addressing these gaps, the coir industry can not only sustain its traditional identity but also evolve as a stronger contributor to rural development and sustainable livelihoods.

CONCLUSION

The study on the socio-economic status of small-scale coir manufacturers in Pollachi, Coimbatore District, demonstrates that while the coir industry continues to provide essential employment opportunities and sustains the livelihood of many rural households, its potential remains underutilized due to persistent socio-economic and structural challenges. Limited income levels, modest educational backgrounds, lack of technological advancement and dependence on middlemen restrict the overall growth and stability of the manufacturers. At the same time, the significant role played by women and the resilience of the workers reflect the enduring importance of the industry to the local economy.

The findings emphasize the need for comprehensive support through government policies, financial inclusion, training and marketing assistance to uplift the socio-economic conditions of these small-scale manufacturers. Strengthening cooperative structures and promoting value-added coir products can further enhance their competitiveness in both domestic and global markets. Thus, the study concludes that with targeted interventions and sustainable development strategies, the coir sector in Pollachi can evolve into a more vibrant, profitable, and socially empowering industry.

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