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A study of Birla Jute Mill of West Bengal

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Abstract

Jute is one of the strongest natural fibers. Jute industry holds an important position in the history of Bengal. So far as the importance of jute industry is concerned, it is one of the important industries with large employment. This survey seeks to explain i) the growth, development of jute industry with special reference to Birlapur Jute Mill. ii) The present status and problems of the industry. iii) The study of industry profile and workers. iv) It also analyses the impact of the mill on the surrounding villages. v) The study of socio economic structure of villages is made.

Keywords: Jute, natural fibre, profile of jute mill, problems, revival, diversification of jute products

Introduction

Jute as a fibre and its significance

- Jute is the cheapest fibre in commercial use (as packaging material).
- Its low cost due to large yields per acre and splendid adaptability to modern methods of manufacturing is the most significant factor in its enormous consumption.
- It is suitable to use as bags and covers, jute does not command high price.
- Many commercial products are shipped in jute bagging. Most of the mill manufactured jute is used for packaging.
- Jute is also used in the manufacture of carpet, rags and to some extent as textile material in combination with other fibre.

Importance of Jute Industry

- It is one of the important industries with large employment.
- Jute products are important earners of foreign exchange resource.
- Hence the industry has an importance in the economy of the country.
- This survey seeks to explain the growth, development of jute industry with special reference to Birla Jute Mill. It also analyses the impact of the mill on the surrounding villages.

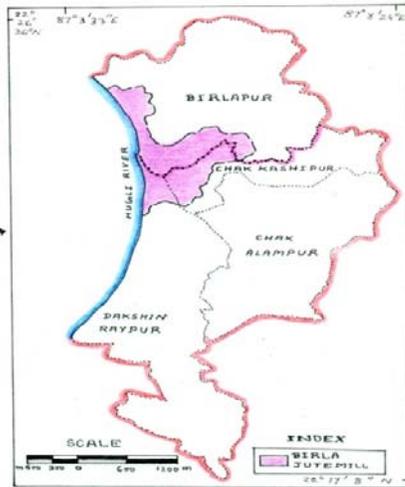
Aims and Objective

- The growth and development of jute industry with special reference to Birla Jute Mill.
- The present status and problems of the industry.
- The study of industry profile and workers.
- It also analyses the impact of the mill on the surrounding villages.
- The study of socio economic structure of villages is studied.

Study Area

- Birla Jute mill is selected for study. The surrounding four villages are also surveyed to study the impact.
- The latitudinal extension of the study area is 22° 17' 08" N to 22° 26' 36" N and longitudinal extension is from 87° 03' 33" E to 87° 08' 24" E..

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Present Distribution of Jute Industry in Bengal

- The industry has developed as a linear belt stretching across river Hugli For about a distance of 60 miles and can be divided into 5 zones:
 1. Bhatpara – Jagatdal
 2. Titagarh - Khardah
 3. Budge Budge - Birlapur
 4. Champdani
 5. Howrah
- These industries are mainly raw material based industries

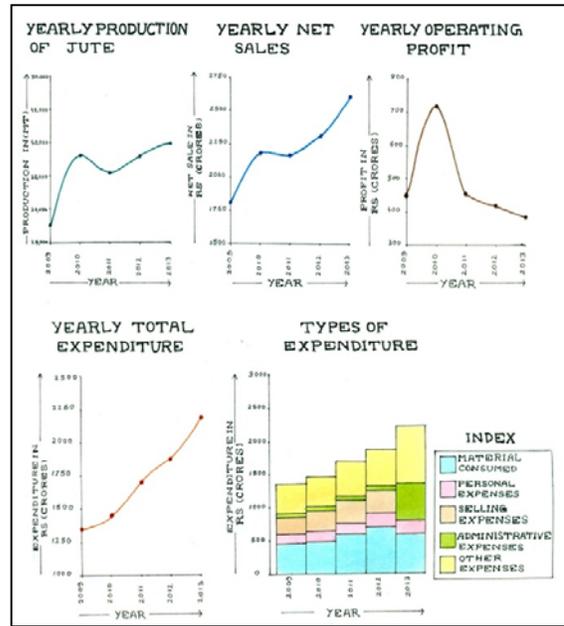
Location Factor for Birla Jute Mill

- (i) Raw Jute is locally available.
- (ii) Coal is available from Raniganj and Asansol Coalfields, which are situated close by.
- (iii) Humid climate favours manufacturing of jute yarn.
- (iv) Availability of cheap labour. Labour is also available in the region on account of dense population.
- (v) Availability of port facilities for import of machinery and export of finished products.
- (vi) Development of means of transportation particularly water transportation.
- (vii) Developed banking and marketing facilities.
- (viii) Availability of capital for investment in jute textile industry from local business men.
- (ix) Hydro-electricity from Damodar Valley Corporation.

Profile of Birla Jute Mill

- Incorporated as Birla jute manufacturing company limited in 1919 (Ghanashyam Das Birla) it was late Mr. Madhav Prasad Birla who gave shape to it.
- As chairman of the company, Mr. Madhav Prasad Birla transformed it from manufacturer of jute goods to a leading multi –Product Corporation with widespread activities.
- Birla corporation limited is the flagship company of the M. P Birla group.
- Birlapur was founded by Mr. MP. Birla. He established different factories here. Birlapur is famous for the Birla jute mill.
- There is co-educational high school named Birlapur Vidyalaya with both Hindi and Bengali medium. There is permanent market also. The factory has its power house. Most of the employees stay in company provided quarters.

- In the recent years, Birlapur has seen lots of financial crisis as most of the factories are closing down.



Export and Import Zones of Birla Jute Mill

Jute Trade
 The countries, where the Birla Jute mill exports, are parts of USA, Soviet Union, France, Germany, England, Japan and Nepal.

Raw material regions

The raw materials for Birla jute mill are brought from different parts of West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Jharkhand and Bangladesh.

Economic Profile of Birla Jute Mill

- The trend of change in recent years of Birla jute mill can be discussed on the basis of the following heads Production, Net sales, Total expenditure, and Profit.

Reasons for Poor Performance of Birla Mill

1. The increasing competition of the jute production in the international market.
2. The increases in the cost of raw materials.
3. Poor quality of raw jute
4. Labour related problems. For example in 1995, 2009 and 2012 the jute mill was closed for several problems
5. There are problems of electricity due to which the production is hampered This has resulted in increase in the cost of production
6. There are certain problems due to fire. For instance there was an accident in the Loom section due to fire.
7. Absence of labour is another problem of the industry
8. Competition of jute products with polythene, synthetic etc.

Other Problems of the Industry

1. Shortage of raw jute.
2. Competition with substitutes like synthetic materials.
3. Old and obsolete machinery.

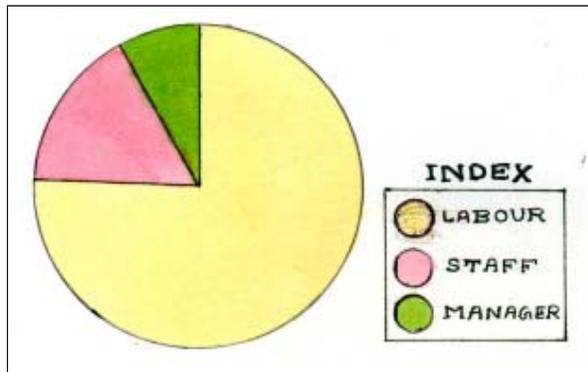
4. Stiff competition from mills in Bangladesh that produce better quality goods.
5. High prices due to inefficient and uneconomic units.
6. Labour strikes and lockouts,
7. Emergence of Thailand, Myanmar, Philippines and Brazil in the field of jute production and jute manufacturing's.
8. In the recent years cut in power supply has become another problem for the industry.

Profile of Workers of Jute Mill

- **Types of worker:** The total number of workers of the jute mill is about 7000. Out of these 5500 are permanent workers and 1500 are casual workers. The daily number of workers is about 3415.

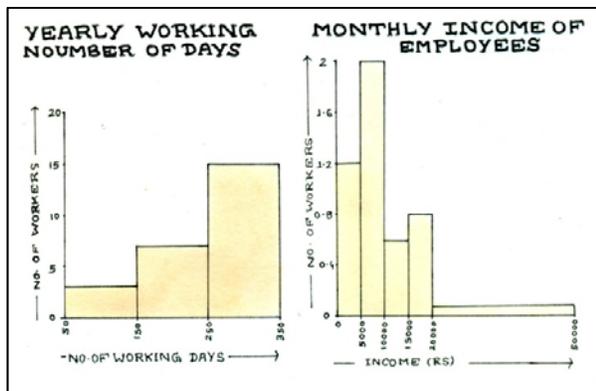
- **Demography and Educational**
- **Profile of Workers**

The number of workers in the age group of 30-45 years and 45-60 years is more. The Education level of the workers varies between class 5 to 10. The workers belong to different religion and caste



Economic Profile of Worker

- **Monthly salary:** The monthly salary of the workers varies between 3,000 rupees to 12,000 rupees. The salary of the higher officers varies between 8,000 to 60,000 rupees per month.
- **Type of worker:** The worker work for 250 to 350 days per years.



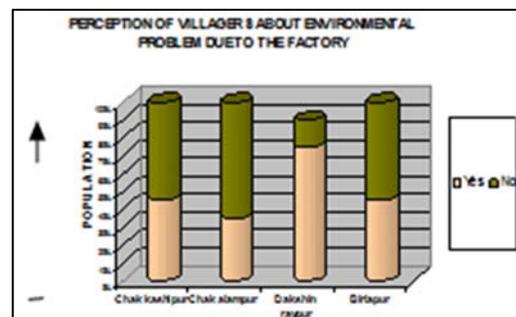
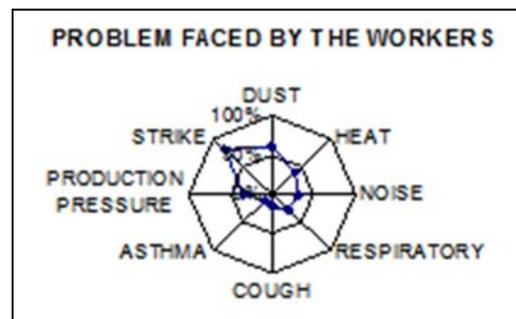
Facilities of Workers

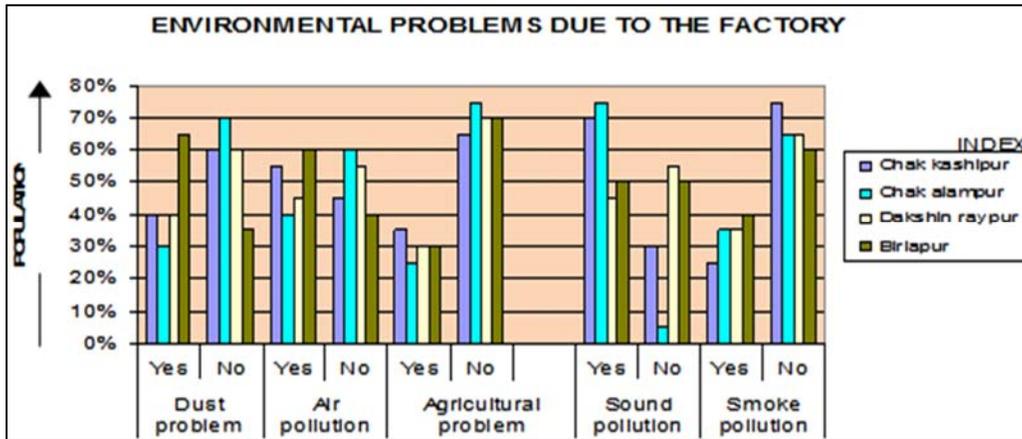
- The facilities provided to the workers include ESIC, Pension, Loan, Residential quarter, ATM etc.
- There are facilities of Ambulance, Doctor, Medicine in case of any accident during the duty hours.
- Most of the workers get payment during holiday
- The workers take loan for various reasons

Problems of Workers

- Potential risks of health hazards and diseases at workplaces.
- Jute processing yields dust.
- Respiratory symptoms are common among workers exposed to high dust area. The workers are involved in jute processing departments like batching, drawing, spinning, winding, twisting, beaming, reeling, weaving and finishing yielding final products. The monitoring of the environmental conditions suggested that the softening and batching processes were dusty and the mean dust concentration was high.
- Workers face cough, expectoration, breathlessness, headache and nasal blockage.
- Jute dust could deteriorate pulmonary function.
- Other problems of workers include strike, production pressure, etc.

Prevention: Practice of personal protective device could prevent respiratory morbidities among jute mill workers.





Conclusion

Steps for revival of jute mill

1. Government of India has launched the Jute Technology Mission (JTM) as a major initiative for overall development of the jute industry and growth.
2. Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute and mesta is fixed every year to encourage farmers to grow more jute.
3. In order to encourage jute production, Government provides for compulsory packaging of certain percentage of food grains & Sugar in jute under Jute Packaging Material.
4. National Jute Board and Jute Corporation of India are working on projects with National Institute of Research on Jute & Allied Fibre Technology (NIRJAFT) and Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (CRIJAF) to develop better jute seeds and to improve agronomical practices for jute cultivation.
5. Jute Corporation of India and National Jute Board work together to distribute high-yielding certified seeds to farmers at subsidized rates for increasing productivity. In order to protect the interest of the jute growers and to ensure that the raw jute producers receive Minimum Support Price (MSP)
6. More diversification of jute products have to be encouraged.

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