EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY THE AGRO BASED INDUSTRY IN ASSAM. A CASE STUDY OF TWO RICE MILLS OF TENGAKHAT OF DIBRUGARH DISTRICT.

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ABSTRACT

Agro-based industry would mean any activity involved in cultivation, under controlled conditions of agricultural and horticultural crops, including floriculture and cultivation of vegetables and post harvest operation on all fruits and vegetables. The development of agro-industries has assumed crucial importance in the economic planning and progress of the country. This paper mainly highlights the employment opportunities provided by the agro- based industries of the studied area. This study also suggests that there is a need to develop the processed food industries throughout the country in order to provide more employment opportunities and to reduce the emotional imbalances. Considering the importance of agro-processing industries in the development perspectives of overall rural development in general and realizing the expected role of expanding this sector for achieving increasing employment opportunities and income level and thus to overcome the emerging challenges of unemployment and poverty in rural areas of the State.

Key word-employment opportunities, rice mill, agro based industries.

1. Introduction:

In the process of reaping advantages of establishing agro-based industries for Achieving increasing employment and livelihood opportunities in rural areas it would be necessary to adopt a comprehensive long term approach towards the development of various food processing activities. Such planning exercise should be aimed firstly to examine the overall situation and pattern of existing industrial enterprises and then attempt should made to identify most niche based product groups of enterprises which possess certain location specific advantages in its sustainable development. This would not only provide a strong base and alternative option for creation of additional employment opportunities and avenues of income for rural households owning very small size of cultivated land and landless labourers within the rural areas itself but it would help in reduction in the rate of rural-urban migration of population.

Considering the importance of agro-processing industries in the development perspectives of overall rural development in general and realizing the expected role of expanding this sector for achieving increasing employment opportunities and income level and thus to overcome the emerging challenges of unemployment and poverty in rural areas of the State.

2. Objective of the study:

1. To find out the Employment opportunities provided by the Agro- Based industry of the two Rice Mills of Tengakhat.
2. To find out the present employment status of the employees working in the agro-based industry of two Rice mills of Tengakhat.

3. Methodology:

Methodology is an important part of research study. In the present study, methodology has been presented under the following heads.
1. Research Design.
2. Population and Sample.

3. Tools for data collection.
4. Analysis of data.

Each of this is discussed below:

3.1 Research Design

For the present study, the investigator was employed "Descriptive Method". The method has been used as a most widely used research method. It is a method of investigation which attempt to describe and interpret what exist at present in the form of conditions, practices and process etc.

3.2 Population and sample:

The two rice mills of Tengakhat i.e. Saikia Rice Mill and Gauri Sankar Rice Mills is taken for study. All the employees of the two rice mills including male and female are taken as sample for study.

Sample coverage a group of representation items. A sample must be as nearly representation of the entire population as possible and ineptly it provides the whole of the information about the population from which the sample has been drawn. The researcher always selects some items from the universe or population for his study purpose that is technically called a sample. Sampling is the process of selecting a sample from the population. A sample is a small proportion of a popular selected for observation and analysis.

4. Collection of data:

Data was collected through personal interview. Investigators met the owner of the two mills and tried to collect the data from them. Apart from these also, the investigator collected the data from the employees through indirect oral investigation

5. Structure of Employment:

The agro processing industries of both the Rice mills of Tengakhat were seen employing different skilled and unskilled workers as paid workers and unpaid family workers as well as men and women workers in different stages of production functions. There are also educated workers who are mainly employed for various calculations, to sold goods.

5. **About the Mills**: The two mills mainly Saikia rice mill and Gauri Sankar rice mill are taken for study. These two mills are situated in the Tengakhat. Both the mill is small and it is covered by an area of not more than 4 bigas. These mills produced cheera, kumal chawl, bora chawl, iajun chawl etc. The kumul chawl of the Saikia rice Mills is famous in all over the Assam. Saikia Rice Mills is located in a village area i.e two kilometre away from Tengakhat town and Gauri Sankar Rice Mills is located by the main road and 1.5 km away from Tengakhat Town. Both the mills are small and private.

7. Analaysis and interpretation of data:
Table-1-

Category wise daily number of employees working in the two rice mills of Tengakhat including men and women.

Year	RICE MILLS		Total
	Permanent	Outside	
2015	20	5	25
2016	32	12	44
2017	40	25	65
2018	52	30	82
2019	60	40	100

Source: Owner of the two rice mills of Tengakhat.

It is seen from the above table that though the two rice mills is very small, but it provides 20% of the employment opportunities to the local poor people. Both the male and female workers work together in the mills. However, the labour force in this sector has been highly dominated by male workforce. Even the share of men workers has been on the increase on the cost of declining share of women workers in the total workforce over the years. The remarkable signs are that the size of employment per unit in this sector both organized and un-organized industries have been increasing during the recent past.

The size of employment per unit has increased from 20 workers in 2015 to 32 workers in 2016.However, it been significantly varying across the different product groups of industries in both un-organized and organized as well.

It is also seen that the employees is also increased to 40 in the year 2017, 52 in 2018 and 60 in the 2019. That mean now at present there are 60 employees are there working in the two rice mill of Tengakhat.

In accordance with that it is also seen that temporary workers are also increasing year by year. More numbers of employees are employed during the season that means during the bihu season they produced more amount of production and therefore they employed more number of temporary workers.

The share of un-skilled workers constituted over 49 percent as against 8 percent office workers and 18 percent skilled workers in the total workforce employed in this sector.

Exception was only in the case of declining size of family workforce per unit in both the categories of units.

Altogether, the size of employment has been growing at the rate of nearly 4 percent, though the concerned increasing trend has been relatively much higher in temporary base.

Conclusion:

The place of the agro-based industries in the development of Assam is widely recognized. Agro-industry has been emerging as an important option to overcome from the increasing challenges of creating employment opportunities for increasing labour force and sustaining the livelihood of households in rural areas. It has a very high employment potential with significantly lower investment. Agro-industry generates new demand on the farm sector for more and different agricultural outputs, which are more suitable for processing. In this context there is a need for improving the capacity of the agro-industries to harness backward linkages with agriculture and allied activities in order to efficiently convert part of the output to value added products acceptable to the domestic and international markets. This would generate employment opportunities for different types of skills through food processing, packaging, grading and distribution. At the same time this will transfer a size margin to farmers through market linkages.

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