



## A SHORT ESSAY ON SERICULTURE INDUSTRY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### RESEARCH ARTICLE



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#### Abstract

The sericulture industry is one of the oldest cottage industries in the world. Silk products are famous all over the world for its natural beauty, bright colours and softness. The beauty of silk cannot be compared with any other fiber. Perhaps because of this mesmerizing beauty of silk, it is called the queen of textile. The role of cottage industries, especially silk industry, in the rural economy is immense. At present, millions of people in rural areas of India are earning their livelihood from silk industry activities. The development of the country is possible only when the rural areas move towards development. The development of rural areas is possible through the development of cottage industries. Therefore, in this study, we have tried to show that silk industry is a very important cottage industry and the economic importance of this industry is considerable. Therefore, the economic development of the country is also possible through the development of this industry.

**Keywords:** *Sericulture, silk, Economic, Development and Rural area*

#### Introduction

The word sericulture is made up of two words, one is the Greek word 'sericus' which means silk and the other is an English word 'culture' which means to Rearing. Therefore, sericulture means that cultivation of silk through rearing of silk worms. The technique of sericulture involves planting of plants on which the silk worms grow, production of cocoon from silk worm, cocoon collection, reeling and spinning of cocoon for production of silk yarn. Today China and India these two countries are the major producers of raw silk. Although India is the second largest producer in the world but it lags far behind China in terms of production quantity. India produces a total of four types of silk namely mulberry, tasar, eri and muga. In India, mulberry silk is produced in the largest quantity among these four types of silk. According to the Central Silk Board's report dated January 1, 2023, the total silk production in 2021-22 was about 34903 metric tons and out of this, the production of mulberry silk was about 25818 metric tons. That is, about 73.97% of the total silk production is mulberry silk. Besides, the export earnings from silk in 2021-22 were around Rs.1848.96 crore. The importance of this silk is also immense in terms of employment generation. In 2021-22, 8.8 million people were employed in the silk industry in the country, whereas in 2020-21 this number was 8.7 million. It is clear that the silk industry is providing employment to millions of people.

**Methodology:** This is a short essay study. This study is done completely based on secondary data. Secondary data has been collected from various published books, research articles, thesis, annual reports etc.

**Objective:** The main objective of this study is to highlight the importance of the sericulture industry in economic development. Sericulture industry is a rural cottage industry and this industry plays a significant role in the rural economy along with the agricultural sector. The development of rural areas is essential for the overall development of the country and the development of rural areas cannot be achieved only by developing the agricultural sector. In addition, rural cottage industries should also be developed. Among these cottage industries, sericulture industry is a noteworthy cottage industry. This study discusses the importance of sericulture industry in economic development.

#### Importance of the silk industry in economics

At the inception of India's socio-economic progress, more than half of the country's total population resided in rural areas. To achieve the holistic development of India's socio-economic landscape, the improvement of the economic conditions of rural regions is, first and foremost, absolutely essential. The overall development of the country is not possible without the development of rural areas. The main source of livelihood in rural areas is agricultural activities and agro-based cottage

industries. To improve the economic condition of rural areas, it is not sufficient merely to enhance the agricultural sector; alongside this, the rural cottage industries must also be developed. Since agriculture is a sector dependent on seasonal cycles, it is unable to provide consistent income and employment; conversely, production in rural cottage industries is feasible throughout the year. Consequently, this sector is fully capable of generating regular income and employment opportunities. Therefore, with the objective of achieving rapid development in rural areas, the accelerated growth of rural cottage industries is indispensable. Among the various rural cottage industries, the silk industry stands out as particularly significant, playing a highly instrumental role in enhancing the quality of the rural economy. Given the potential for generating rapid and high returns with minimal investment, this industry is regarded as an exceptional sector; for this very reason, it is considered an ideal industry that aligns perfectly with India's socio-economic fabric. At the inception of India's Five-Year Plans, greater emphasis was placed on heavy industries compared to rural small-scale and cottage industries; but despite that, the importance of the silk industry in the economic sphere has not diminished in the slightest. Silk industry is of immense importance like other heavy industries in the context of Indian economy. As silk industry is a labour-intensive industry, so the potential for employment generation in this industry is very high. There is a need for rapid and rapid expansion of the silk industry as there are employment opportunities and potential avenues of additional income generation for the fully-unemployed, part-unemployed and seasonal unemployed, especially in rural India. The income of most of the farmers in India is not very satisfactory as they are unprofitable and small scale farming. Although agriculture is their main livelihood, it is not enough for them to survive on the income earned from agriculture alone. When there is no farming season, these small and cottage industries become their second source of livelihood. The rate of unemployment in India is steadily increasing, especially in rural areas, which is identified as one of the major problems of the Indian economy; and if the silk industry is properly developed and expanded, this problem can be partially solved. The expansion of heavy or semi-heavy industries constitutes an excellent proposal for eradicating unemployment and generating income in rural areas. However, the expansion of heavy industries is a time-consuming process; furthermore, it necessitates not only substantial capital but also foreign investment. Consequently, it goes without saying that, in order to foster the economic development of rural regions within a short timeframe, the growth and development of rural cottage industries must be prioritized.

**Scenario of sericulture in India**

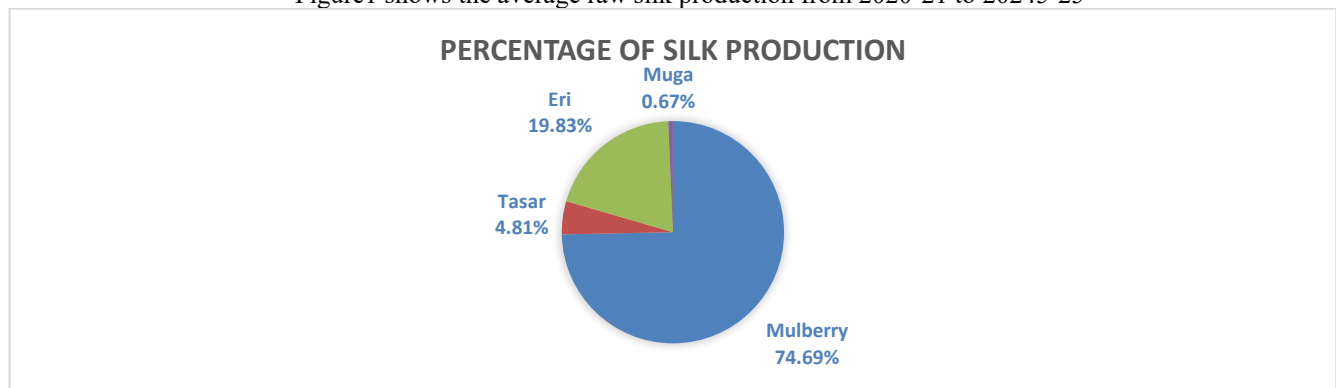
We have already mentioned that India is one of the leading silk-producing countries and it ranks second globally in raw silk production. Furthermore, we have also mentioned that all four types of silk are produced in India. In this research paper attempts to outline the trends in silk production over the last five years—specifically, from 2020–21 to 2024–25 and additionally, it presents the volume of silk imports and exports during this specified period. Furthermore, an effort has been made to illustrate the employment trends within the silk industry. We have attempted to present a statistical overview of sericulture from 2020–21 to 2024–25 through Table 1.

**Table 1: Production of Raw Silk in India**

Year					Unit MT			
	Mulberry	Tasar	Eri	Muga	Total	Export (US\$)	Import (US \$)	Employment (Lakh)
2020-21	23896	2689	6946	239	33770	198	77	87.3
2021-22	25818	1466	7364	255	34903	249	110	87.8
2022-23	27654	1318	7349	261	36582	221	214	92.2
2023-24	29892	1586	7183	252	38913	244	152	94.8
2024-25	31119	1884	7886	232	41121	279	119	97.3
Average	27675.8	1778.6	7345.6	247.8	37057.8			

Source: <https://www.texmin.gov.in/static/uploads/2025/07/ba938e7603ae5b51473d9bdf67af8dac.pdf> 27.05.25 23:24

Figure1 shows the average raw silk production from 2020-21 to 2024-25

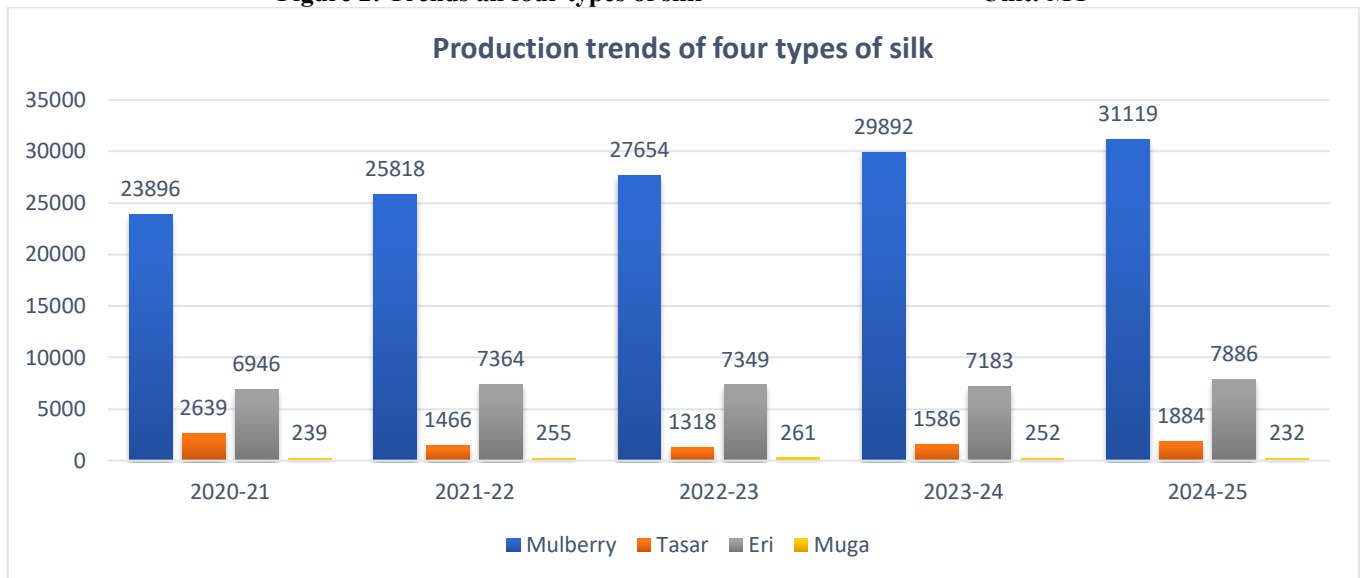


Source: Table 1

Although four distinct types of silk are produced in India, Mulberry silk dominates the total output to such an extent that the production volume of the other varieties is extremely negligible in comparison. Determining the average production of each type of silk over the aforementioned five-year period reveals that Mulberry silk accounts for approximately 74.69% of the total silk production, followed by Eri silk at 19.83%, Tasar silk at 4.81%, and Muga silk at 0.67%. A glance at the total silk production during the aforementioned period reveals that it has increased continuously. In 2020–21, the total volume of silk production was approximately 33,770 metric tons and in 2021–22, it increased to approximately 34,903 metric tons; and in 2022–23, it rose once again to approximately 36,582 metric tons. The following year, 2023–24, saw a further increase in silk production, reaching approximately 38,913 metric tons; and in the final year—that is, 2024–25—the production volume rose to approximately 41,121 metric tons. Now, let us shed light on the production trends of the four types of silk.

**Figure 2: Trends all four types of silk**

**Unit: MT**



Source: Table 1

From the table above and Figure 2, it is evident that during the specified period, only the production of Mulberry silk increased consistently. During this timeframe, the total production of Mulberry silk rose by approximately 7,223 metric tons; additionally, the production of Eri silk has increased by approximately 940 metric tons, although it had experienced a slight decline during the years 2022–23 and 2023–24. On the other hand, while the production of Mulberry and Eri silk is increasing, the production of Tasar and Muga silk has declined. During this period, the total production of Tasar silk declined by approximately 805 metric tons. During the first three years of this period, the production of Tasar silk declined continuously, while in the final two years, production increased. However, the magnitude of this increase in production was very slight. The trend in Muga silk production is quite similar to that of Tasar silk production. Although Muga silk production began to increase consistently during the first three years, it declined over the final two years and during this mention period the production of Muga silk decreased by about 6 metric tons. Let us discuss the economic significance of the silk industry. In this research paper, to examine the economic importance of the silk industry, we will present data regarding the import and export of silk products and analyse the role this industry plays in generating employment.

**Figure 3: Export-Import from silk from 2020-21 to 2024-25**

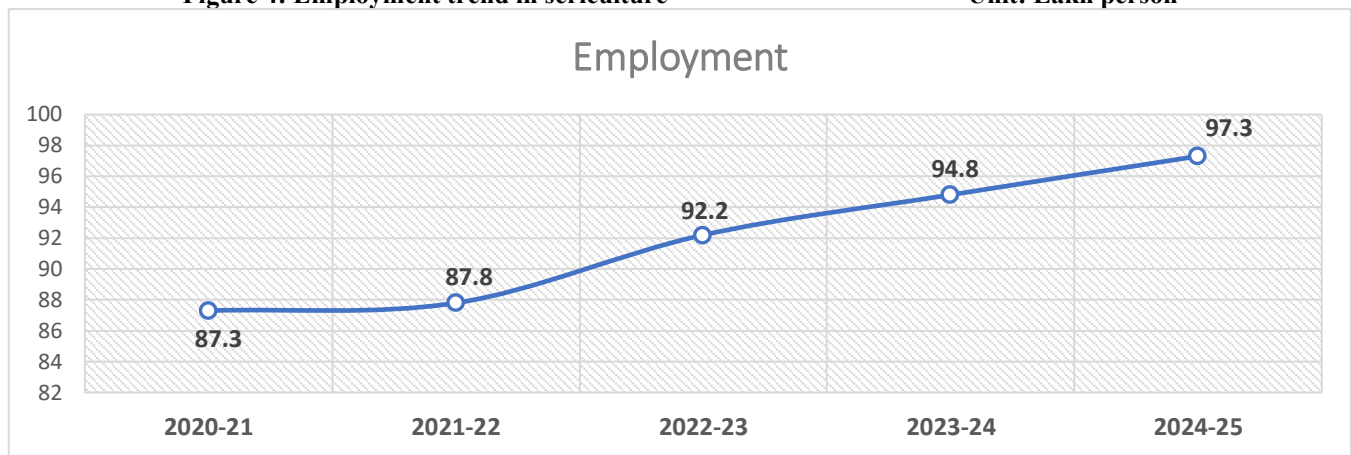


Source: Table 1

Imports and exports play a pivotal role in the economy of any country. Economic prosperity is fostered when exports exceed imports. In this context, we observe that throughout the specified period, export earnings from silk have consistently surpassed import expenditures in every single year. In 2020–21, export earnings amounted to approximately US\$198 million, and import expenditures were approximately US\$77 million; that is, net export earnings stood at approximately US\$121 million. In 2021–22, both export earnings and import expenditures increased, and net export earnings for the year amounted to approximately US\$139 million. Furthermore, net export earnings for this year showed an increase compared to the previous year. In 2022–23, net export earnings experienced an abnormal decline. During this year, the value of net export earnings stood at approximately US\$ 7 million. While export earnings decreased, import expenditures rose abnormally, resulting in a significant reduction in net export earnings. In 2023–24, export earnings rose once again while import expenditures declined; consequently, net export earnings increased to approximately US\$ 92 million. In 2024–25, net export earnings witnessed a remarkable surge compared to the previous year, reaching a total of approximately US\$ 160 million. The silk industry is a labor-intensive, rural-based cottage industry. It plays a significant role in generating employment, particularly in rural areas. In the figure below, we have illustrated the nature of employment generated within the silk industry over the aforementioned five-year period.

Figure 4: Employment trend in sericulture

Unit: Lakh person



Source: Table 1

As illustrated in the figure above, employment in the sericulture industry witnessed a continuous upward trend over the specified five-year period. While employment increased modestly during the initial years, it experienced a significant surge in the later years. Over this entire period, total employment rose by approximately 10 Lakh persons. It became evident that the sericulture industry plays a highly significant role in creating employment.

### Conclusion

Among cottage industries, the silk industry is one of the most ancient. Alongside heavy industries, the importance of this sector in the national economy is immense. One of the major problems facing of an economy is excessive unemployment and if this level of excessive unemployment rises, then the economic situation will increasingly deteriorates. This industry holds immense significance in the eradication of unemployment, particularly in rural areas. The expansion of this industry is absolutely essential for improving the economic standing and fostering financial progress in rural regions. In this research paper, we have highlighted the invaluable role that this industry plays in earning foreign currency and generating employment. Therefore, the expansion and development of this industry are absolutely essential.

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**Competing Interest:** No

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