

Fish Marketing Problems in Pudukkottai Coastal Area

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ABSTRACT

India is a vast country with a long coastline and it is bounded seas and ocean on all the three sides. It has many lakes, rivers, streams, tanks and innumerable ponds different types of perennial and seasonal water sources. Capture fishery from all these resources has been in vogue from time immemorial. Hence the fishing industry of India is ancient in quality and therefore is influenced by customs and traditions, which are inherited from generation to generation. Fish is closely associated with mankind as our ancient literature, sculptures, and paintings.

1. INTRODUCTION

Portray tales and in the legends of our religion the flag of the Pandiya kingdom had a fish symbol in it. Old records show that even temple tanks were periodically stocked with fish and fishing rights were annually leased out. But due to religious dogmas, superstitions false pressing of vegetarianism, which interfered with the dietary habits of the people, absence participation of the entrepreneurs, and the lack of interest the foreign rules, our fisheries did not develop further. However, after independence we have made considerable progress in developing our fisheries in general and marine fisheries in particular. The marine products have very good export potential for earning considerable amount of foreign exchange for the nations. In 1998, in the world fish export Japan's share was 41 per cent followed by U.S.A. 18.6 per cent whereas the European Union's share was 15.3 per cent. Thus, fisheries sector play an important role in achieving the economic objectives of the countries.

SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE

Fishing is no longer the traditional occupation of a fishermen living along the sea coast. Fishing and allied activities constitute an industry and have created employment opportunities for more people having different skills in different fields of fisheries. It offers a wide scope to fulfill the objective of production cum full employment envisaged in the development plans in India. It provide direct employment to millions of people and indirect employment through associated activities like net making, boat making, boat repairing, fish processing, fish trades, fish trades, fish transportation etc., in this context. The fisheries sector desires high priority since it has the potential of employment and income generation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

The fishing is one of the occupations in India. Fishery sector is an important sector from the point of view of employment, food supply, and export earnings. The growing trend of

consumption of fishery products of the world has not kept pace with the production. The emergence of the WTO

and the changing scenario in the global trade has made the export trade more risky, challenging and competitive. The study includes the marketing problems faced by the owner fishermen in the coastal area of Pudukkottai District.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the role of middlemen in marketing of fishes.
- To study the cost and expenditure pattern of owner fishermen.
- To suggest appropriate measures for improving the fishing trade.

METHODOLOGY

Interview technique was adopted for collecting data from the Fish marketing area 50 middlemen was undertaken using random sampling.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

The research scholar relied more on primary data than on secondary data. The collected data were scrutinized, edited and tabulated, statistical methods of analysis like, multiple regression, ratio analysis, standard deviation and ANOVA were used to analysis the data in an effective manner

2. FISH MARKETING PROBLEM

WOMEN IN THE POST-HARVEST SECTOR

Women in fishing villages are mainly involved in shore – based “Post – Harvest” activities such as fish handling, including sorting, grading, weighing, gutting, icing, drying and processing, and marketing: as agents, auctioneers, retail stall holders and itinerant stall holders. Almost all these women are middle – aged or old. Normally young or unmarried women do not get involved in marketing of fish.

Rosen (1988) studied the role of the fisherwomen in fish marketing and its implications in their lives in one fishing village. The fisherwomen take part in the fish auction, buy fish and later take it to the market to sell it. Marketing fish means being away from home for about half a day. Women who have small children or one to take care of the house cannot go for marketing fish. The women also take care of preservation of the fish that is not sold fresh. Majority of the women also take care of preservation of the fish that is not sold fresh. A majority of the women were seen to be in charge of the economy in the fishing house hold.

Bostock et al (1993) noted that the situation is further compounded by widespread indebtedness and the fact that the marketing of fish is considered a very low status occupation for both cultural and practical reasons.

Burden of being women in traditional and highly prescriptive society and engaged in a form of employment, which is considered being suitable only for old women, widow and the destitute.

Some of the women involved in both fresh fish marketing and processing also migrate from one place to another during certain seasons of the year. In Tamil Nadu, women from Pudukkottai and

Pudukkottai Districts seasonally migrate to Ramanathapuram District and women from Kanyakumari district to Kerala.

Mathew (1996) in a study of WC .Kuttiyandiyur, Pudupettai and Tranquebar fishing villages classified the petty fish traders on the basis of the value of their transactions and the market accessed. The first category, who form the vast majority, deal with low – value fish (turnover between Rs. 100 to 750) and reach markets located within 25 km radius from the fishing village. These are mainly women from nuclear families with small children and are unable to spend long periods in market. Lack of capital is another problem that they face. Traders belonging to this category formed about 80 percent of the local Sangam population. The second category of traders procured high value species such as prawn and seer fish valued between Rs. 1000 and Rs. 10,000 from the trawlers transported them to distant markets in Mayiladuthurai and Sankaranpanthal located 60 km from their fishing villages, using ice to preserve the fish during the journey. Women in this category were generally over 45 years old and had grown – up children who managed the households while they are away marketing fish.

The third category of women dealt in dried fish. They were old (60 years and above), mostly heading a joint family. They accessed markets such as Trichy located 140 km from their villages. The value of fish handled ranged between Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 and they constituted only 3 percent of the Sangam population indicating their relative financial security. During the study, only a small percentage of the head loaders reported possession of consumer durables such as bicycles, radios or cassette players. This suggests a low level of surplus generated by head loader households.

The problems faced by the petty fish traders/processors as being; lack of access to working capital at rates of interest prevailing in the formal sector, lack of access to fish at the landing centre during the lean season, and when large traders enter the market; poor access to public transport; secured entry and finding a suitable location in the market place; religious taboos and practice that constrain demand; increased use of ice, leading to fall in availability of fish for processing; increase in the price of high-value and low value pelagic species (mackerel and sardine) because of the opening up of the markets; delays in repayment on credit sales etc. Also, over the course of time men have started entering into this area. The men's investment capacities and volumes of operation being much higher resulted in the fisherwomen being confirmed to retailing.

AUCTIONEERS

Rosen (1988) mentions that all active fishermen in the village take turns to work as auctioneers for a day according to a special rotation system based on the house numbers. The auctioneer was paid a certain amount for the job, as he had to forego fishing that day. From every catch

that is sold at the auction a fixed percentage was given to the village, except when the catch was worth less a certain amount. At the end of the auction the village share of the catch was also sold.

Anbarasan and Fernandez (1986) describe a widely prevalent system in the north zone, whereby the right to auction the fish on shore is conferred on a person from within the community who's the highest lease amount. The lease amount, which ultimately goes to the village fund, ranges from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 5,000 per month, depending on the season and the landings. This lease amount is in lieu of the auctioneer collecting a toll on the bullock carts, which transport the fish from the

landing site, and a toll on cycle traders. The auctioneer also takes his share of fish from all those who bring fish to be auctioned, and from the fish traders who bid in the auction. Large fresh fish is auctioned piece by piece. The smaller –sized fish are auctioned in baskets.

However, the field research has indicated that the auctioning system had undergone a change in the meantime, and that auction was nowadays done by professional auctioneers – who could be widows or other marginalized section of the community – and they were paid a share of the catch or a fixed salary by the fishers themselves. The practice of the village claiming a part of the proceeds of community purposes too was seen to be rapidly fading in most areas.

The role that the auctioneers play at the landing centers is often seen to be detrimental to the interests of the producers, and is mostly parasitical (Rajendran et.al.1992). At the same time, although their role was viewed mainly as middlemen for traders, it is possible that the emergence of auctioneers in the fishing villages also stabilized the trade relationships to some extent, and provided a buffer between the producers and traders.

In recent times, fisher folk organizations such as decided to bypass the traditional auctioning systems and started conducting their own auctions in mid-1980s, employing their staff for the purpose. They found that this has increased the fisherman's control over the catch at the first point of sale, curtailed many market malpractices and obtained the best prices for their produce.

CYCLE TRADERS

Cycle traders play an important role in fish marketing. They buy fish directly from the fishermen, offering them a better price than the local agents or the head loaders. For other types of fish, they bid in the auction. As one fisherman's catch is not sufficient, a cycle trader bids for the catch of at least 3 or 4 fishermen. Payment is normally made in the town in the evenings. The entire transaction is very informal and is based on mutual trust. Cycle traders market the fish in surrounding village up to a distance of 30 km. They either sell it house, or retail it in surrounding village markets.

PROCESSING AGENTS

Traditionally, processing fish into dried and sub-dried varieties is widely practiced in Tamil Nadu, and it is mostly the women who have been involved in the processing operations. In some coastal village many women were involved exclusively in dry fish production and they

claimed that dry fish trade is more profitable than the fresh trade. The general processing methods are curing, salting and / or drying. The southern zone - i.e., Tuticorin – Kanyakumari area – is an important dry fish production centre and fish drying in the northern zone is comparatively less.

Most traditional fish processors generally belong to the fishing communities, though in some areas such as Tuticorin, it is possible that some non-fishing castes too have entered the export-based dry fish industry in more recent times. The processors mainly depend on small pelagic, such as sardines and mackerels, ribbon fish etc., for processing purpose, the products are sold either in the local markets or in markets within 50 – 100 km from the processing areas. While quantitative estimates are not often reliable, it can be assumed that traditional processing provided livelihoods for a

significant number of people, particularly widowed women, old – aged people and other marginalized sections of the society.

The poorer processors used mostly spoiled and trash fishes for making dry fish. During the field research it was observed that most of the dry fish traders were old women. The state that the Northern coastal zone, the Tamil month, Aadie (April) is considered as the best season for dry fish sales, because a Hindu religious festival is being celebrated during the month.

The glut landed catches, which are too spoiled for sale for human consumption, are often converted into fishmeal. No information is available on the number of people dependent on the fishmeal trade, but several of the traditional fish processors for human consumption are also involved in production of fishmeal whenever the conditions favour it.

The field research indicated that, in different parts of Tamil Nadu, dry fish processing activity is less now than 10 years ago, and the women attributed this decline to the dwindling catches of specific varieties of fish used in processing. It is estimated that the dry fish trade constituted only about 10 to 15 percent of the total fish trade as against a much higher percentage in the past (Vivekananda, MPEDA pers. comm.). The processors consequently have to travel longer distances for procuring the raw material. The supply of by catch from the mechanized sector increased substantially over the period even though its value is relatively less. Through advance transactions, possibly by fishmeal manufactures, and consequently its availability to small – scale processors is limited.

There are a large number shrimp peelers and sellers in many coastal areas. In Chennai, there were more than 100 shrimp peelers and sellers operating at the Harbour.

CONSUMERS

Consumption of fish in the fishing village depends upon varieties caught, because the fishers preferred to sell for profit rather than take the high value varieties for own consumption, certain communities, e.g., Muslims, are considered to be good consumers of dried fish round the year. Consumer demand for different species also was reported to be varying at different times, which places a burden on the producer groups. Generally, in the local markets, it was observed

that only low-priced varieties of fish and prawn were sold, as the more expensive ones were all directly exported to distant markets from the landing centers. Festivals, seasons, and many other variables determine the consumer preferences for fish and fishery products and more information on this aspect of the sector would be helpful.

It does appear that fish still continues to be the poor man's protein in many parts of coastal Tamil Nadu, although it was also apparent that more of the fish were either going out of the state or were too expensive for the poorer consumers to obtain.

Quality consciousness among the urban consumers is on the increase. Iced fish was considered to be inedible until a decade ago, as now being demanded by the consumers, indicating changing perceptions. The question of declining per capita fish consumption in the state needs to be investigated. Interviews with different stakeholders indicated that this could be a result of

increasing value of fish. For example, several species have become quite unaffordable to poorer sections of the society.

ROLE OF MIDDLEMEN IN FISH MARKETING

Marketing of fish in the country has been neglected over the past decades and although there is some development in the two or three states, in many others, fish marketing is not at all developed. Marketing of fish is poorly developed and there is much room for improvement. The study of marketing of fish needs the study of channel of distribution. The method by which the distribution of fished products has been effected from producer to consumer is the channel of distribution. Traditional fishing is completely in the clutches of middlemen and financiers. Co-operatives have not yet started marketing operation lest the craft owners should get reasonable return for their catches. There is predominant role of private sector in catching, processing and marketing.

The present problem of fishery sector is the presence of too many middlemen between the producer and the consumers. In spite of the National Federation of Fisherman's Cooperatives (NFFC) state level cooperatives, district level cooperatives, and primary cooperatives, middlemen and powerful businessmen retain their strong hold on the fish trade.

The entire marketing, transportation, storage, processing of fish and shrimps in India are undertaken by private sector units. This chapter presents marketing system for marine fisheries. The marketing system could study in terms of the use flows, the physical flows, the channel flows and share of producers in consumers – rupee, the price spread and the margins.

An attempt is made to study the different channels through which fisher domestic and international consumers, its price spread under different channels and the economics of middlemen's functions. This chapter as well as flies the role of middlemen involved in the flow of domestic and export of shrimp and the market efficiency. For this purpose a total of 50 middlemen was selected from the Pudukkottai District Coastal Area. The data collected through the survey analyzed in this chapter.

An efficient market is one where all new information is quickly understood by market participants and becomes immediately incorporated into the market. Any economic activity involves a certain amount of input (scarce resources/efforts) and a corresponding output (reward/benefit). If the latter exceeds the former, we mean the activity is efficient. The efficiency in trading of shrimp is studied in the succeeding pages in this context.

Fish marketing can be broadly divided into two categories namely,

- The domestic market, and
- The export market.

MARKET MIDDLEMEN

There are five principal types of market middlemen with different functions in the fishing trade. These are the auctioneers, the wholesalers, the retailers, the mobile retailers and the exporters. A few of these middlemen undertake multiple functions; wholesale-cum-retail is the predominant multiple function.

3. PERSONAL BACKGROUND OF MIDDLEMEN

AGE OF MIDDLEMEN

In any trade, the age of traders is considered to be a vital factor influencing the efficiency and profitability as a whole as well as the earning capacity of the individual. The new trader may be young and energetic but relatively inexperienced. On the other hand, elders and seniors in the trade may be richly experienced but relatively less motivated and less enterprising. Age does influence significantly the efficiency and earning capacity of the individual as well as the occupation as a whole.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION PROBLEMS OF FISH MARKETING

In Pudukkottai coastal area, there are 36 fishing villages extending from Kattumavadi to Muthukudal along the Coromandel coast. In view of this, there is a prominent market in this area. Like Kattumavadi, Kottai Pattinam, rest of the fishing villages also make use of these coastal markets as their market place. In this chapter, an attempt is made to analyse a few problems such as transport, cold storage, price and financial aids. Concerned with fishing in this area.

PRICE

ANALYSIS OF FISH MARKETING – TRADITIONAL SECTOR

Types of Fishes	Fishermen sold Price per kg Rs. q1	Middlemen sold Price per kg Rs. q2	Export Market price per kg Rs. q3	Mean Table
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P1	50.00	75.00	110.00	78.33
P2	40.00	60.00	100.00	66.66
P3	30.00	40.00	90.00	53.33
P4	70.00	100.00	160.00	110.00
P5	70.00	100.00	180.00	116.66
P6	200.00	300.00	400.00	300.00
P7	70.00	130.00	160.00	120.00
P8	50.00	110.00	170.00	110.00
P9	90.00	140.00	200.00	146.66
	SED	CD(0.05)	CD(0.01)	
P	15.87	44.08	73.10	
q	08.92	19.44	27.25	
P at q	20.28	51.61	81.21	
q at p	15.45	33.67	47.21	

Source: Primary data computed

TABLE NO 1

P1: Hemirhamphussp

P4: Portunuspelagicus

P7: Polynemussp

P2: Latescalcarifer

P5: Sepia

P8: Psammopoccasp

P3: Cymbiumsp

P6: Zamma crab

P9: Carangoidessp

q1: Fishermen price, q2: Middlemen price, q3: Export market price

Low price and the lack of market information are the main problems for fishermen. A large of number middleman is involved in the process of marine fish marketing in coastal district of Pudukkottai. Some money lenders are also play the role of middlemen. The price received by the fishermen is not attractive when compared to the price paid by the consumers as well as exporters. ANOVA test was performed to understand the relationship between the two variables the Price inequality of fish landed. The two factors ANOVA for price and different type of marketing have been analyzed. In the study 'P' shows verities of fish's marketer in the landing point. The q1, q2, q3 three different types of market price have been analyzed 'q' is market price. Normally traditional sector like canoe boat and fiber boat fishermen market their fishes' to direct money lenders through auctions, the auction sale processing in landing point morning peak hours only. Some fishermen it not gets to money from moneylenders directly market to fish's whole sealers and exporters that fisherman get higher price.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED IN DISCRIMINATING FISHERMAN NET SHARE:

The net share of the fishermen and the price paid by the consumers varied from (Fishermen sold price to Mean table price) Rs. 50.00 to Rs. 78.33 and Rs. 40.00 to 66.66, Rs. 30.00 to 53.33, and Rs. 70.00 to Rs. 110.00 Rs. 70.00 to 116.66 and Rs. Rs.200 to Rs. 300.00, Rs. 80 to 120 and Rs. 60 to Rs. 110, Rs.40 to Rs. 70 per kg respectively for canoe and fiber boat fishes. It is mainly due to that fact the middlemen dictates the price for fish in the absence of intervention of the

government in the trade and they appropriate the margin which is unduly high. The no. of middlemen in the market channel play a crucial role in discriminating the net share of the fishermen.

ANALYSIS OF FISH MARKETING – MECHANIZED BOAT

Types of Fishes	Fishermen Sold Price per kg Rs. q1	Middlemen Sold Price per kg Rs. q2	Export Market price per kg Rs. q3	Mean Table
P1	60.00	100.00	300.00	153.33
P2	40.00	70.00	100.00	70.00
P3	15.00	30.00	50.00	31.66
P4	10.00	30.00	40.00	26.66
P5	45.00	75.00	100.00	73.33
P6	70.00	110.00	300.00	160.00
P7	20.00	30.00	50.00	33.33
P8	30.00	45.00	55.00	43.33
P9	60.00	80.00	100.00	80.00
	SED	CD (0.05)	CD (0.01)	
P	18.21	50.56	83.85	
Q	23.05	50.24	70.43	
P at q	37.35	86.68	127.85	
q at p	39.93	87.01	121.99	

Source: Primary Data Computed

TABLE NO 2

P1: Ray fish

P2: Stolephorus sp

P3: Psethodeserumei

q1: Fishermen price, q2: Middlemen price, q3: Export market price

P4: Thryssasp

P5: Johnius sp

P6: Woal

P7: Siganus sp

P8: Scoliodon sp

P9: Mugilcephalus

From the above table we can infer the huge investment invested by the fishermen for operating the mechanized boats fishing is done for and the fishers are marked. Different types of gears are employed for the exploitation of variety of fishes.

ANALYSIS OF SHRIMP MARKETING

Shrimp marketing play a dominant role in the fish market. From economic point of view the cost of shrimp is high when compared to fish. Shrimp has 200 per cent market potential for exports. Both traditional and nontraditional sector fishermen exploit the resources. Fishermen market their catches at varied prices. Some fishes thirukkai fishermen get Rs. 60 and mean average Rs. 153.33 and for comfits fishermen get a price Rs. 70 and mean average Rs.160 more different between fishermen get a price and mean average price for the reason of exporters and middleman established transport facilities and cold storage facilities. So, stocking the fishes

and packing etc. availing in the marketers only fishes we perishable product fishermen catching the fishes and marketed the fishes immediately due to lack of freezer and transport facilities. Maintenance of modern craft and gears are very high when compared traditional sectors. Mechanized boat fishermen are formed get money from private financial sectors like money lenders, commission agents and middleman, some private financiers every fish marketing day to day to lending point to collect fishes against loan. The price fixation is directed by the financiers. So, the fishermen are at a loss in every day marketing the fishes.

From the below table the mean average indicates the price received by the fishermen is very low compared to mean average price. Even in shrimp marketing lending the shrimp is after processing stocking the shrimp differentiate with size and quality and stacking and packing technology is performed by exporters and if the process is performed by the fishermen by him, they will be able to earn better price.

ANALYSIS OF SHRIMP MARKETING

Types of Fishes	Fishermen Sold Price per kg Rs. q1	Middlemen Sold Price per kg Rs. q2	Export Market price per kg q3	Mean Table
P1	80.00	160.00	210.00	150.00
P2	60.00	120.00	180.00	120.00
P3	50.00	110.00	180.00	113.33
P4	120.00	200.00	300.00	206.66
P5	70.00	100.00	170.00	113.33
P6	40.00	70.00	140.00	83.33
P7	80.00	140.00	200.00	140.00
P8	70.00	100.00	140.00	103.33
P9	50.00	110.00	180.00	113.33
	SED	CD (0.05)	CD (0.01)	
P	6.72	18.68	30.97	
Q	7.93	17.28	24.23	
P at q	13.08	30.57	45.32	
q at p	13.74	29.94	41.98	

Source: Primary Data Computed

TABLE NO 3

P1: Giant Tiger
P2: Indian White
P3: Green Tiger

P4: SN Tiger
P5: Thelly
P6: Kuruma

P7: Kiddi
P8: Rain bow
P9: White

q1: Fishermen price
q2: Middlemen price
q3: Export market price

4. CONCLUSION

Fisheries in Pudukkottai district are a traditional industries and providing livelihood for 36000 fishermen population. The fishery is having a linkage effect with agriculture which is main occupation of majority of the people in the district and fishery is related with other economic activities and fish marketing problems.

Despite the various measures the government has not been able spare the fishermen from the clutches of the middlemen whose practices have reduced the fishermen, just to the status of a wage earner.

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