PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF COCONUT INDUSTRIES IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT OF TAMILNADU

Dr. R. Sivanesan¹, Mr. S. Prabin²

Asst. Prof. in Commerce, St. Jerome’s College of Arts and Science, Anandhanadarkudy, Kanyakumari District, Tamilnadu, India

ABSTRACT

This paper is attempted to study the problems and prospects of coconut industry in Kanyakumari district of Tamilnadu. Coconut is an important source of food and vegetable oil. Coconut plantations and processing industries provide income to the farmers and employment to rural population. Coconut is the most popular palm grown in about 90 countries of the world occupying about 10 million hectares of land and producing nearly 42 billion of nuts per year. In India there is 1.514 million hectares of land under coconut from where 9.7 billion nuts are produced annually. Coconut is one of the most important oil seed crops in the tropics. It is a multi-product tree crop. The coconut trees generally grow in coastal areas. Coconuts are used for direct consumption. However, a major part is converted into copra from which oil is extracted. With the advancement of science and technology it has been possible for mankind to produce coconut powder also. Coconut powder is used for making excellent dishes for domestic purpose. The present study covers the objectives of socio economic back-ground of the coconut cultivators in Kanyakumari District, the problems faced by the coconut cultivators in Kanyakumari District.

Keywords: Coconut, Cultivation, Plantation, Market, Problems.

INTRODUCTION

Coconut is an important source of food and vegetable oil. Coconut plantations and processing industries provide income to the farmers and employment to rural population. Coconut is the most popular palm grown in about 90 countries of the world occupying about 10 million hectares of land and producing nearly 42 billion of nuts per year. In India there is 1.514 million hectares of land under coconut from where 9.7 billion nuts are produced annually. Coconut is one of the most important oil seed crops in the tropics. It is a multi-product tree crop. The coconut trees generally grow in coastal areas. Coconuts are used for direct consumption. However, a major part is converted...
into copra from which oil is extracted. With the advancement of science and technology it has been possible for mankind to produce coconut powder also. Coconut powder is used for making excellent dishes for domestic purpose. It can also be used for making ice-cream. Tender coconut water is the purest refreshing drink. From the coconut shell a number of decorative articles are made. The leaves are used for thatching. The midribs of leaflets are made into brooms. Coconut husk gives a good fibre used in manufacturing of matting, mats and yarn ropes and is a valuable export commodity. Enterprising farmers often adopt novel methods to maximize income from coconut holdings. The coconut is one of the most important oil seed crops in the tropics which gives coconut water, kernel, oilcake for cattle. Day by day the number of tender coconut water consumers is increasing and hence more tender coconut water consumers is increasing and hence more tender coconut shops are seen in most of the cities and towns. The vitamins B and C minerals like potash followed by chlorine and traces of phosphorus, magnesium, iron, copper and calcium are also present in tender coconut water. Fresh tender coconut water is also being administered intravenously to ailing patients as that of saline glucose. Coconut is important as the major source of fatty acids in the world markets for oil seeds, oil and fats. Coconut oil contributes nearly 7 per cent of the total suppliers of oil in the world.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following are the important review regarding the problems and prospects of coconut cultivators.

Ramakrishna Pillai K5 (1994) “Role of Co-operative in Processing and Marketing of Coconut in Kerala with special Reference to Market fed”, Processing and Marketing of Coconut in India, says that production and productivity of agricultural produce are very much linked with marketing of the same in raw as well as processed form. When there is an efficient marketing system, farmers are assured of reasonable or attractive prices for produce and wastage of produce and expenses in different stages of marketing are minimized. The surplus production can be utilized for export and value added products. It will also help to increase employment opportunities. Narayan6 (1992) “Maximizing Coconut Yield”, Kisan World, says that India is one of the largest producers of coconuts in the world, next only to Philippines with about 155 lakh hectares under cultivation with a production of about 10,000 million nuts annually and most of the rural areas face scarcity of labour and farmers are unable to adopt a multiple and sequential crop system by taking 2.3 crops annually. Nair M K and Rajesh M K7 (2001) “Coconut Production and Productivity”, Indian Coconut Journal, says that world production of coconut during the year 1999 is estimated at 54,129 million nuts from an area of 12 million hectares. Nearly three-fourth (72.7 per cent) of the world production is contributed by India, Indonesia and Philippines. India ranked third in the world in area and production among 86 coconut growing countries. Halir8 (1996) “New Horizons in Coconut Productivity”, Kisan World, says that it is significant and surprising to learn that during the last six decades the coconut growers never got the high yielding hybrid planting materials and coconut is grown in more than 21 State. Narayan R S9 (1994) “Coconut-The KarpagaVriksha”, Kisan World, says that Coconut is an important cash crop. It came to the coast of Andhra Pradesh towards the beginning of the first century B.C. and very soon it became very popular in places like Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Tamil Nadu. To start with it ideally suited the needs of the people who lived on the coasts. The fruit gave them food and drink. The dried coconut gave them excellent edible oil. AlikhanSadath H A and Raja GopalanV10(1979) “An Economic Analysis of Coconut Production in TipturTaluk of Tumber District “, The Madras Agricultural Journal , disclosed that, establishment cost and maintenance cost of coconut production is very high. The annual share of establishment cost constituted 3.04 per cent and 2.46 per cent of the total cost of production in small and large farms respectively. There are some indirect costs incurred in cultivation and marketing that is not focused
by the above studies. Singh H. P. Markose V. T, Remany Gobalakrishnan (1999) “Coconut Industry in India”, Coconut Development Board, disclosed that Adoption of any cropping system by the farming community will be decided by its economic advantages. The micro cropping of coconut provides employment opportunities for only around 150 man days per hectare per year and gives a net income of Rs.10,400. The coconut-based High Density Multi Cropping Systems have been enabled to generate additional employment to the tune of 130 to 606 man days per hectare per year and the net returns range from Rs.18670 to Rs.50000 per hectare. Singh H. P. Markose V. T, Remany Gobalakrishnan (1999) “Coconut Industry in India”, Coconut Development Board, disclosed that, 10 million people in the country are engaged in coconut cultivation, processing, marketing and trade related activities. This Multi-stage High Density Cropping System increases employment opportunities of family labour and hired labour.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Coconut is an important oil seed crops in the tropics which gives coconut water, kernel, oilcake for cattle, since it is one of the leading commodities in agricultural exports. Hence, the production performance of the crop is of critical importance in improving the efficient use of resources. The cost of production and net returns obtained per unit would determine the profitability of the crop. The profitability of an enterprise of an enterprise depends upon the efficient use of the resources in production. Though production is the initiation of the developmental process, it could provide less gain to the producers unless there exists an efficient marketing system. For this, they depend upon the market conditions, which are not very conducive to fulfill their hopes and expectations. Forced sales, multiplicity of market charges, malpractices in unregulated markets and superfluous middlemen are the problems faced by the cultivators. The market imperfection and the consequent loss in marketing efficiency are more pronounced in markets for perishable commodities which require quick transportation and better storage facilities, involving large number of intermediaries who take away high margins from the price paid by consumers. Coconut has a pride not only for its diverse uses but also for its special preference by consumers rich and poor, while it is also subjected to the above stated production and marketing problems. Hence, the present study is an attempt to analyse the problems and prospects of coconut industries in Kanyakumari district.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study includes the following objectives

- To analyse the cultivation problems of coconut cultivators in Kanyakumari District.
- To analyse the marketing problems faced by the coconut cultivators in Kanyakumari District.
- To study the socio-economic conditions of the Coconut cultivators in Kanyakumari District.
- To bring out the role of intermediaries in Coconut marketing and to find out the level of satisfaction of coconut cultivators.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

In the present study the researchers frame three hypotheses to test the goodness of fitness. In this regard the following hypotheses are framed:

H1 = There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and level of satisfaction.
H2 = There is no significant difference between educational qualification of the respondents and level of satisfaction.
H3 = There is no significant difference between Marital status of the respondents and level of satisfaction.
SCOPE OF THE STUDY

All coconut cultivators are working without rest but the reward are not convincing. In coconut cultivation also they do not get a fair rate of return. The reasons are many and varying price of coconut. It is imperative to find out the causes for their backwardness. Through this study the researcher is able to focus the problems of the coconut cultivator's inch-by-inch and suggesting measures to overcome from their difficulties and their overall development.

METHODOLOGY

Following method is followed in this study

Sources of data
This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The data which is collected in a fresh manner and which is not available is termed as primary data. For the purpose of collecting primary data the researcher has carefully designed an interview schedule presented the same and administrated it to the sample respondents in Kanyakumari District. The prevailing data is termed as the secondary data. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, magazines, and websites.

Sampling design
Since the objectives of the study is to find out problems faced by coconut cultivators, the researcher have adopted random sampling technique for data collection. The researcher has taken 120 coconut cultivators in Kanyakumari District.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The collection of data are analysed with the help of percentage analysis, Likert scaling techniques, Garrett Ranking Technique and hypothesis analysis.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the limitations of the present study

- The present study covers only problems faced by coconut cultivators; it does not cover others areas.
- The researcher study only in Kanyakumari District.
- The researcher selects only 120 coconut cultivators.

ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF COCONUT INDUSTRY

Most of the coconut industry workers in Kanyakumari District of Tamilnadu are living under the verge of extreme poverty. Their socio-economic conditions are pathetic. Hence they are degraded among the other societies. This part deals with problems and prospects of the coconut industry in Kanyakumari district. Data are tabulated for easy understanding and good presentation

Age composition plays an important role in determining the child labour. It is clear from this study, 40 workers (33.35 percent) are in the age group of above 45, 30 workers (25 percent) are in between 35 – 45 age group, 25 respondents (20.85 percent) are in between 18 – 25 age group, 15 respondents (12.50 percent) are between 25-35 age group. It is note worth none of the sample respondents belong to the age group of below 18 years. It shows majority of coconut industry workers belong to the age group of above 40 years.
Education is the basic necessity to human development if the people in a society are well educated, there will be prosperity and growth. People give respect to the educated people. It is clear from this study, 55 workers (45.85 percent) have middle school education, 30 workers (25 percent) have primary education, 20 workers (16.65) have high school education and only 15 workers (12.50 percent) are illiterate. From the sample respondents there is no degree holder. It shows majority of coconut industry workers have educational qualification of middle school.

Marital status of the selected respondents is one of the indicators of the social conditions of the coconut industry workers. It is clear from this study, 85 workers (70.85 percent) are married and 35 respondents (29.15 percent) are un-married. It shows majority of coconut industry workers are un-married.

Experience makes a perception of work. It is clear from this study, 40 respondents (33.35 percent) have been working in coconut industries for the period of 10 to 15 years, 30 respondents (25 percent) have been working in coconut industry for the period of 5 to 10 years, 20 respondents (16.65 percent) have been working in coconut industry for the period of 15 to 20 years, 18 respondents (15 percent) have been working in coconut industry for the period of less than five years and only 12 respondents (10 percent) have been working in the industry for the period of more than 20 years. It shows that majority of coconut industry workers have been working for the period of 10 to 15 years.

Daily wages refers to the wage obtained for the daily work in the industry. It is clear from this study, 85 respondents (70.85 percent) have the daily wages between Rs.300 to Rs.500, 20 respondents (16.65 percent) have the daily wages between Rs.500 to Rs.700, 10 respondents (8.35 percent) have the daily wages below Rs.300 and only five respondents (4.15 percent) have the daily wages above Rs.700. It shows majority of the respondents have the daily wages between Rs.300 to Rs.500.

Income includes wages from the job, agricultural income, business income and other family income of the sample respondents. It is clear from this study 80 respondents (66.65 percent) have monthly income ranging between Rs.9000 to Rs.12000, 25 respondents (20.85 percent) have monthly income at the range of less than Rs.9000, 10 respondents (8.35 percent) have monthly income at the range of Rs.15000 to Rs.18000 and only five respondents (4.15 percent) have monthly income at the range of Rs.18000 to Rs.21000. It shows majority of the coconut industry workers have monthly income at the range of Rs.9000 to Rs.15000.

A study on the expenditure pattern of coconut industry workers will throw light on their living conditions. The pattern of consumption expenditure determines the economic status of the people. It is clear from Table 9 that, the monthly expenditure pattern of coconut industry workers. A large portion (64.3 this study 30 percent) of the income is spent for food, 11.70 percent of the income spent for cloths, 8.25 percent of the income spent for education, seven percent of the income spent for medicine and only 2.90 percent income spent for electrical. It shows a large portion of income spent for food.

It is clear from this study 85 respondents (71 percent) are selling coconuts to only one party, 20 respondents (17 percent) are selling coconuts to different parties and only 15 respondents (12 percent) are selling coconut to local market. It shows that majority of respondents are selling their coconuts to only one party.

Marketing channels for coconuts are similar to those of agricultural products. The marketing channels are linking producers and consumers. It is clear from this study 90 respondents (75 percent) are selling their coconut through wholesaler, 20 respondents (17 percent) are selling their coconut through retailers and five respondents (4 percent) are selling their coconut through agent. It is clear that majority of growers are selling their coconut through wholesalers.

Fluctuations in price are due to the fluctuations in the production of coconuts. It is clear from this study 80 respondents (67 percent) feel that the fluctuations in price is normal, 15 respondents
(12.50 percent) feel that the fluctuations in price is high, 10 respondents (8 percent) feel that the fluctuations in price is very high, eight respondents (7 percent) feel that the fluctuations in price is low and only seven respondents (5.50 percent) feel that the fluctuations in price is very low. It is clear that majority of respondents feel that the fluctuation in price is normal.

The following table shows the reason for cultivating coconut trees in Kanyakumari district. In this regard the researcher use Garrett Ranking Technique. It is clear from this study first rank (Mean Score 58.26) has attained heredity business, second rank (Mean Score 57.85) has attained no need for education, third rank (Mean Score 52.01) has attained availability in own village, fourth rank (Mean Score 50.36) has attained well known business and last rank (Mean Score 46.88) has attained high profit. It is clear that majority of respondent choose the coconut cultivation business reason for heredity business.

It is clear from this study 90 respondents (75 percent) feel that coconut market competition is normal, 12 respondents (10 percent) feel that coconut market competition is high, 10 respondents (8 percent) feel that competition is very high and only four respondents (3.50 percent) feel that competition is low. It is clear that majority of respondents feel that competition is normal.

Problems in production of coconut is analysed with the help of Garrett Ranking Technique. It is clear from this study first rank (Mean Score 62.15) has attained high labour cost, second rank (Mean Score 60.88) has attained Financial problems, third rank (Mean Score 58.10) has attained lack of bank loan and government subsidy, fourth rank (Mean Score 57.30) has attained non-availability of bulky organic manure, sixth rank (Mean Score 50.01) has attained loss due to climatic conditions and last rank (Mean Score 45.20) has attained lack of production. It is clear that majority of respondents feel that high labour cost is the important production problem.

Problems of marketing of coconut is analysed with the help of Garrett Ranking Technique. It is clear from this study first rank (Mean Score 68.20) has attained inefficient regulated market, second rank (Mean Score 66.28) has attained instability of coconut price, third rank (Mean Score 65.01) has attained increased cost of marketing, fourth rank (Mean Score 55.20) has attained high transportation cost, fifth rank (Mean Score 54.89) has attained irregular and insufficient payment, sixth rank (Mean Score 54.22) has attained high commission and brokerage and last rank (Mean Score 46.29) has attained inadequate storage facilities. It is clear that majority of respondents feel that inefficient regulated market is the major marketing problem.

The coconut industry worker satisfaction depends on a working conditions and wages. It is clear from Table 17 that, 70 respondents (58.35 percent) level of satisfaction is moderate, 20 respondents (16.65 percent) level of satisfaction is low, 18 respondents (15 percent) level of satisfaction is satisfied, 10 respondents (8.35 percent) level of satisfaction is very low and only 2 respondents (1.65 percent) level of satisfaction is high. It is clear that majority of coconut industry workers are satisfied with their work.

**ANALYSIS OF HYPOTHESES**

The primary data were collected from the respondents tabulated for analysis and interpretation. The data analysed and interpreted are tested by using the chi-square test. The chi-square test is applied in statistics to test the goodness of fitness to verify the distribution of observed data with assumed theoretical distribution.

In the present study the researcher frame three hypotheses to test the goodness of fitness. In this regard the following hypotheses are framed:

H1 = There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and level of satisfaction.

H2 = There is no significant difference between educational qualification of the respondents and level of satisfaction.

H3 = There is no significant difference between Marital status of the respondents and level of satisfaction.
I. \( H_1 = \) There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and level of satisfaction.

The age and Level of satisfaction are analysed with the help of chi-square (\( \chi^2 \)) test which is represented as follows.

\[
\text{Calculated value} = 28.5959 \\
\text{D.F.} = (c-1) (r-1) \\
= (3-1) (3-1) \\
= 2 \times 2 \\
= 4 \\
\]

Table value of chi-square at 5% level of significance (4 d.f) = 9.49

**Result**

The calculated value is greater than the table value, so we reject the null hypothesis. Thus there is significant difference between age of the coconut industry workers and level of satisfaction.

II. \( H_2 = \) There is no significant difference between educational qualification of the respondents and level of satisfaction.

The educational qualification and Level of satisfaction are analyzed with the help of chi-square (\( \chi^2 \)) test which is represented as follows.

\[
\text{Calculated value} = 7.1379 \\
\text{D.F.} = (c-1) (r-1) \\
= (3-1) (3-1) \\
= 2 \times 2 \\
= 4 \\
\]

Table value of chi-square at 5% level of significance (4 d.f) = 9.49

**Result**

The calculated value is less than the table value, so we accept the null hypothesis. Thus there is no significant difference between educational qualification of the coconut industry workers and level of satisfaction.

III. \( H_3 = \) There is no significant difference between Marital status of the respondents and level of satisfaction.

The Marital Status and Level of satisfaction are analyzed with the help of chi-square (\( \chi^2 \)) test which is represented as follows.

\[
\text{Calculated value} = 9.1533 \\
\text{D.F.} = (c-1) (r-1) \\
= (2-1) (3-1) \\
= 1 \times 2 \\
= 2 \\
\]

Table value (at 5% level) = 5.99

**Result**

The calculated value is greater than the table value, so we reject the null hypothesis. Thus there is significant difference between marital status of the coconut industry workers and level of satisfaction.
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following are the important findings of the present study.

Majority (33.35 percent) of coconut industry workers belong to the age group of above 40 years. Majority (45.85 percent) of coconut industry workers have educational qualification of middle school. Majority (90 percent) of coconut industry workers are male. Majority (70.85 percent) of coconut industry workers are married. Majority (70.85 percent) of coconut industry workers belong to the nuclear family. Majority (33.35 percent) of coconut industry workers have been working for the period of 10 to 15 years. Majority (48.50 percent) of coconut cultivators owned one to three acres. Majority (70.85 percent) of the respondents have the daily wages between Rs.300 to Rs.500. Majority (66.65 percent) of the coconut industry workers have monthly income at the range of Rs.9000 to Rs.15000. A large portion (64.30 percent) of the income is spent for food. 110 respondents (92 percent) harvest coconut for copra purposes only. This type of harvesting is done once in 45 to 60 days. Majority (75 percent) of growers are selling their coconut through wholesalers. Majority (67 percent) of respondents feel that the fluctuation in price is normal. Majority (Mean Score 58.26, first rank) of respondent choose the coconut cultivation business reason for heredity business. Majority (75 percent) of respondents feel that competition is normal. Majority (Mean Score 62.15) of coconut producers feel that high labour cost is the important production problem. Majority (Mean Score 68.20) of respondents feel that inefficient regulated market is the major marketing problem. Majority (58.35 percent) of coconut industry workers are satisfied with their work. There is significant difference between age of the coconut industry workers and level of satisfaction. There is no significant difference between educational qualification of the coconut industry workers and level of satisfaction. There is no significant difference between educational qualification of the coconut industry workers and level of satisfaction.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the suggestions of the present study.

In Kanyakumari district, there are a lot of uncultivable lands. The government can encourage the coconut growers to cultivate the coconut trees by explaining clearly about the production and marketing activities of coconut. Liberal export policy can be enforced in order to make coconut and coconut products popular in foreign markets. The coconut farmers in rural areas should be given a better exposure to the properties of certain fertilizers by conducting periodic agriculture camps. The Government can provide fertilizers, pesticides which is suitable to crop at reasonable cost with proper guidelines. Insurance should be given for the crops in order to get compensation for the loss due to diseases. Government should reduce transportation cost for selling coconuts in the market. Most of the farmers are uneducated. They must be properly advised about the marketing of coconut in present and in future. For that an office can be opened in order to get correct information whenever the farmers needed. The Government can establish some factories to increase the production of coconut. It will create more foreign exchange to our nation. Government should set up procurement centres in important places. This organisation must have the capacity of speedy disposal of the procured commodity to either consumer markets or processing centres. Organisation must make speedy payment to the growers on receipt of their commodity. Proper grading techniques must be adopted to fix the price for each grade. Sufficient steps must be taken to avoid the unnecessary marketing charges. Only a reasonable amount can be collected from the sellers. The state and central Government may extend all financial and other helps such as provision for soft loans to various societies. The Government may take necessary steps to regulate the coconut market.
CONCLUSION

The study about the problems and prospects of coconut in Kanyakumari district of Tamilnadu showed that there is a remarkable growth in area, production and productivity of coconut. But the growth is not up to the requirement to earn sufficient revenue for the growers. It is possible to earn more revenue if the suggestions in the study are properly executed.

REFERENCES


