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Problems and Prospects of Salt Industry in Kanyakumari District

KEYWORDS: cosmos, commodities, industry, production, backwater and sick etc.

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ABSTRACT *The abstract entitled "Problems and Prospects of Salt Industry in Kanyakumari District" was undertaken to salt workers and producer in kanyakumari district. This study helps to suggest suitable recommendation to improve the salt industry in Kanyakumari district. The primary data were collected with the help of a questionnaire from the salt workers and producer in Kanyakumari district. Random sampling method has been adopted for choosing the sample from swamythoppu, kovalam, puthalam, rajakkamangalam. The collected data were analyzed by using relevant statistical techniques. The study concludes that the Government has not against any interest on growth and declines of salt industry, it became sick and overlaid. Though in which salt pans have been located originally belong to government salt production in these region are being carried on by private parties.*

INTRODUCTION

Salt is absolutely essential for the existence and growth of the plant and animal kingdoms in this cosmos. All perishable commodities are preserved for future use with an admixture of salt. The economic significance of salt and salt industry has been a subject for innovative and explorative researches. This study on salt industry is purely explorative in nature and it is confined to Kanyakumari district which is one of the reputed centers of salt productions in Tamil Nadu. Salt is a compound of sodium and chloride i.e., Sodium Chloride – NaCl commonly known common salt. Seawater is the main source of common salt. Seawater not only contains Sodium Chloride but other salts such as Calcium Carbonate, Calcium Sulphate and Chlorides of Calcium, Magnesium and others. Production of salt involves separation of each one of these salts from seawaters, Captured in salt pans. Salt production is a central subject so licenses are issued for salt production by the Central Government. As the salt industry is labour intensive in nature both men and women were engaged in manufacture of salt.

OBJECTIVES

1. To undertake a statistical survey of the salt industry in Kanyakumari district with a focus on the quantity of salt produced.
2. To analyses and find out the extent of private sector participation in the salt industry in Kanyakumari district.
3. To study in detail the processes involved in salt production.

METHODOLOGY

This study through apparently elementary in nature would require a very huge mass of both primary and secondary data. The secondary data would be collected from the research monographs has available in salt industry and the records maintained by the salt inspectors involved both directly and indirectly in the day to day activities of the salt industry. The primary data on the other hand have to be collected by the investigator herself by visiting salt pans with a carefully prepared schedule. As far as Kanyakumari district is concerned salt is produced in places like Swamythoppu, Kovalam, Puthalam,and Rajakkamangalam.

TOOLS FOR THE STUDY

The statistical models which the investigator intends designing are noting but linear trend models. These models would be useful to find out the rates at growth of salt production and price of the salt over the years. The equation which they would constitute the basis of these models could be written as follows.

Y= a+bx

In which

B represents the rate of growth on phenomenon under study.

SAMPLE DESIGN

As far as Kanyakumari district is concerned salt is produced in places like Swamythoppu, Kovalam, Puthalam, and Rajakkamangalam. There are 180 salt workers and 70 salt producers in Kanyakumari district. The investigator proposes to take proportionate stratified random sampling method. The sample respondents were surveyed by using carefully prepared interview schedule.

Table 1
Selection of Sample Size

Area of Salt Production	Total Salt Producers	Sample Size	Total Salt Workers	Sample Size
Swamythoppu	33	16	86	43
Kovalam	8	4	28	14
Puthalam	28	14	60	30
Rajakkamangalam	1	1	6	3
Total	70	35	180	90

Source: Primary data

1. SALT INDUSTRY IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

Facts reveal that salt production in Kanyakumari district is carried on in a number of important places which are noted for their proximity to backwaters industry. So production is virtually impossible in any other region where backwater is conspicuous for its absence. The investigator has find out in the course of the survey that backwater is available in places like Swamythoppu, Puthallam, Rajakkamangalam, Kovalam Vattakottai and Colachel. A point which deserves an emphatic mention in this context is that salt production in places like Colachel and Vatakottai has been stopped because the profit margin available for salt producers in these regions has been reported to be hair thin.

2. SALT PRODUCTION AREA IS KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

In Kanyakumari district salt is produced in places like Vattakottai, Kovalam, Swamythoppu, Puthallam, and Rajakkamangalam. The salt produced in kanyakumari district is transported to the state Kerala from where it is exported to foreign countries. The area under salt production in Kanyakumai district are clearly shown in table 2

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TABLE 2
The salt production centre of kanyakumari district

Particulars	Numbers
Swamythoppu	350
Kovalam	68
Puthallam	300
Rajakkamangalam	14
Total	732

Source: Salt department statistics

3. METHODS OF SALT PRODUCTION

The salt industry depends exclusively on backwater. There are two methods of salt production. They could be explained as follows.

2.1 The first method is very simple. What are usually done in backwater is allowed to flow directly into the salt pans through canals specially dug ort this purpose. The cost involved in using backwater by this method for salt production is virtually nil. However most of the salt producers have abandoned this method because the degree of salinity found in backwater is susceptible changes. Once the salt producers are not sure of the exact degree of salinity of the backwater obtained, they cannot produce salt without compromising on quality; this will result in heavy losses. So they tend to go in for the second method of salt production.

2.2 The second method of salt production is a bit expensive. The salt producers have their own born wells in places very close to backwater regions. They have fitted with pump sets energies either by diesel or electricity. The water obtained from such bore wells are known for its stable degree of salinity. Normally the degree of salinity in bore wells remains always stable. Consequently salt producers can carryon salt production without any fear.

4 PROBLEMS OF WORKERS AND PRODUCERS IN SALT INDUSTRY

These parts are designed to analyses and evaluate the data relating to producers and workers of salt industry. The first part deals with the problems of workers in salt industry. The second part deals with the analyses of problems of producers in salt industry. The analysis is totally based on the statistical tools as frequency and percentage.

3.1 NATURE OF ENPLOYMENT

The nature of employment of workers in salt industry are shown in table 3

Table 3
Nature of employment

Nature	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Regular	-	-
Temporary	47	52.22
Seasonal	43	47.78
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 3 shows that the labourers are not regularly employed. The sample respondents i.e., 47(52.22) workers are temporary and remaining workers are seasonal.

3.2 DAYS OF EMPLOYMENT

The average day they work for 200 to 250 days. The remaining day that is due to raining season and festival periods they are unemployed.

3.3 SUBSIDIARY WORK

The subsidiary work chosen by the salt workers are shown in table 4

Table 4
SUBSIDIARY WORK CHOSEN BY THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Subsidiary work	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Agriculture	31	34.44
Non- Agriculture	52	57.78
No other Employment	7	7.78
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

Table 4 clearly shows that 57.78 percent of sample respondents choose non- agriculture work and 34.44 percent of respondents choose the agricultural work as subsidiary work.

3.4NATURE OF WORK

The nature of work of sample respondents are shown in table 5

Table 5
Nature of work

Nature of work	No. of Respondents	% of respondents
Part- time	72	80
Full- time	18	20
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

Table 5 indicates that 80 percent of sample respondents are part- time workers. Only 20 percent of respondent are full-time workers.

3.5 TYPE OF WORK

In the study area, 74.44 percent of sample respondents do all type of work. Remaining 25.56 percent of sample respondents do the work the lifting of salt, packing and loading.

3.6 METHOD OF WAGES PAYMENT

Method of wage payment to the sample respondents are shows in table 6

Table 6
Method of wages payment

Wage payment	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Time Wage	73	81.11
Piece Wage	17	18.89
Contract Wage	-	-
Total	90	100.00

Source: Primary data

The table 6 shows that 81.11 percent of sample respondents get their wages on the basis of time rate and no respondents get wages on contract basis. 4.7 WAGE DISTRIBUTION

The wage distribution to the workers are clearly shown in table 7

Table 7
WAGE DISTRIBUTION

Wage Distribution	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Daily	37	41.11
Weekly	53	58.89
Monthly	-	-
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

Table 7 clearly shows that majority i.e., 58.89 percent of respondents get their wages at the end of the week days.

4.8 YEARS OF WORKING IN SALT INDUSTRY

The table 8 shows those years of working in salt industry by salt workers

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Table 8
YEARS OF WORKING IN SALT INDUSTRY

years of working in salt industry	No. of Respondents	% of respondents
Below 5 years	19	21.11
5- 10 years	37	41.11
10- 15 years	23	25.56
Above 15 years	11	12.221
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 8 clearly shows that 37 (41.11 percent) respondents are working in this industry from 5 to 10 years.

4.9 INCOME PATTERN
The monthly income of sample respondents are shown in table 9

Table 9
MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS

Monthly income	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Below 2000	44	48.89
2000-4000	40	44.44
4000- 6000	6	6.67
6000 - 8000	-	-
Above 8000	-	-
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 9 shows that out of 90 respondents 48.89 percent get monthly income below 2000. 44.44 percent of the respondents get monthly income ranging below 2000-4000.

3.10 SAVINGS
The modes of savings of respondents are shown in table 10

Table 10
SAVINGS

Mode of savings	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Bank	10	11.11
Post office	13	14.44
SHG	60	66.67
Chit fund	-	-
NO savings	7	7.78
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 10 reveals that most of the respondents' save through SHG .Among 90 respondents 60 (66.67 percent) respondents save through SHG. Only 7 (7.78 percent) respondents have no savings habits.

3.11 JOB SATISFACTION LEVEL
The job satisfaction level of sample respondents are shown in table 11

Table 11
JOB SATISFACTION LEVEL

Job satisfaction level	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Satisfied	35	383.89
Not satisfied	55	61.11
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

Table 11 reveals that 61.11 percent of respondents are not satisfied with this job.

3.12 DISEASES AFFECTED
The physical conditions of the salt workers are affected to a greater extent due to the unsuitable industry environment. The unsuitable industry environment is the main cause for various diseases which harms him health of the workers society.

Table 12
DISEASES AFFECTED TO RESPONDETNS

Diseases	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Itch sores	8	8.89
Kidney diseases	-	-
Breathing problems	31	34.44
stomach diseases	45	50.00
No any diseases	6	6.67
Total	90	100.00

Source: primary data

As seen in table 12shows clearly in 50 percent of the sample respondents are affected by stomach diseases.

3.13 WELFARE SCHEMES
There are many welfare schemes offered by Government to the salt workers, But the sample respondents did not have any awareness about the welfare measures offered to them..

5. PROBLEMS OF PRODUCERS IN SALT INDUSTRY
5.1 OWNERSHIP PATTERN OF SALT PANS TO PRODUCERS
The table 13 clearly shows ownership pattern of sample respondents' pans.

Table 13
OWNERSHIP PATTERN OF RESPONDENTS

Acres	No. of respondents	% of respondents
up to10 acres	5	14.29
10 to 20 acres	15	42.86
20 to 30 acres	7	20.00
30 to 40 acres	4	11.43
40 to 50 acres	3	8.57
Above 50 acres	1	2.85
Total	35	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 13 reveals that 42.86 percent of respondents have the salt pans up to 10to20acres. And only 2.85 percent of respondents have salt pans above 50 acres.

5.2 SOURCES OF FINANCE
The source of finance of sample respondents are clearly shown in table 14

Table 14
SOURCES OF FINANCE

Source of Finance	No. of respondents	% of respondents
owns savings	2	5.71
Friend and relatives	1	1
commercial banks	19	54.29
private finance	13	37.14
Total	35	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 14 clearly shows that 54.29 percent of respondents get their finance from commercial banks. And 37.14 percent of responds get their finance from private.

5.3 NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED
The table 15 clearly shows the number of workers employed under each producer.

Table 15
TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED

Workers	No. of producers	%
Below 10	8	22.86
10 to 20	20	57.14
20 to 40	6	17.10
40 to 50	1	2.68
50 and above	-	-
Total	35	100.00

Source: primary data

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The table 15 clearly indicates the number of workers under each producer.

5.5 TYPES OF WAGES PAYMENT

The table 16 clearly shows that type of wages payment to the workers by sample respondents. Table 16

TYPES OF WAGES AYMENT

wages	No .of respondents	% of respondents
Time wage	23	65.71
piece wage	12	34.29
contract wage	-	-
Total	35	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 16 it is clearly seen that 65.71 percent of respondents paid wages on basis of time wage and no respondents for contract wages.

5.6 INCOME FROM SALT INDUSTRY

The income is a reward by the factor of production for the service rendered. The annual incomes of sample respondents are shown in the table 17.

Table 17
INCOME FROM SALT INDUSTRY

Income	No. of respondents	% of respondents
18000- 21,000	22	62.86
21000- 24000	6	17.14
24000-27000	4	11.43
27000 - 30000	2	5.71
Above 30000	1	2.86
Total	35	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 17 shows that out of 35 sample respondents 62.86 percent of their annual income range between. 18000 – 21000. And only one respondent have above 30000 of annual income.

5.7 LABOUR COST

The labour cost of sample respondents are shown in table 18

Table 18
LABOUR COST OF RESPONDENTS

Type of labour	cost	%
pumping of water	70000	11.39
pudding	166100	27.03
scraping	189400	30.82
lifting of salt	93000	15.12
packing and loading	96100	15.64
Total	614600	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 18 indicates that total labour cost of 35 sample respondents in 614600.

5.8 SATISFACTION LEVEL

In the present study 97.14 percent of the producers are not satisfied with this job.

5.9 REASON FOR DISSATISFACTION

The table 19 shows in dissatisfaction of the producer in manufacturing of salt.

Table 19
REASON FOR DISSATISFACTION

Reason for Dissatisfaction	No. of respondents	%
low price for product	5	14.71
high cost and production	8	23.53
No demand for product	12	35.29
Agencies Malpractices	-	-
NO Government support	9	26.47
Total	35	100.00

Source: primary data

The table 19 clearly shows that reason for dissatisfaction is mainly due to no demand for the product.

5.10 CONCLUSIONS

The Government has not against any interest on growth and declines of salt industry, it became sick and overlaid. Though in which salt pans have been located originally belong to government salt production in these region are being carried on by private parties. Salt industry was taken due care of by the state and central government but in recent years the workers in salt industry have been due selected lost. As a result the workers are not come forward to work in salt pans. Working in salt pans is period of 10 -20 years becoming very sick. As a salt industry does not provide medical facilities for this worker they are afraid for taken up work available in salt industry. If proper steps are taken by the government for increasing the local demand for salt there is scope for further development of the salt industry in Kanyakumari district.

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