

Study on Wholesale Fish Market of Surat, Gujarat



Biology

KEYWORDS : Wholesale fish market, fish production, fish quality, hygienic condition.

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ABSTRACT

Present study was conducted at Nanpura wholesale fish market of Surat to assess the present market structure, infrastructure facilities and hygienic conditions of market. Surat has lots of potential in fisheries. Fish production of Surat was recorded as 1.67 lakh ton during the year 2011. Surat contributing 8% of total South Gujarat's fish production but compared to fish production, wholesale fish market was found unorganized and unregulated. The study has shown the less developed infrastructure and poor hygienic conditions of wholesale fish market. The study recommended that developing the wholesale market with basic facilities such as platform, proper flooring, drainage system, lavatory and establishment of cold storage and preservation facilities.

Introduction

Fish market is a place where the fishes and fish products of commercial importance are subjected to sale. Regulation of fish production and consumption through sale is known as fish marketing (Shammi and Bhatnagar, 2002). Market infrastructure includes wholesale market, retail market and fish retail outlets. In wholesale markets, large quantity of fishes are collected from the surrounding places sold to other wholesalers and retailers. Biswas (2006) reported that demand and consumption patterns of fish are determined by geography, feeding habits of the locality, traditional and nutritional standards. Demand of fish may be either domestic or for export purpose. Olubunmi and Bankole (2012) reported that marketing and fish distribution is done through various channels which are important characteristics in the process of getting products from source to consumers and known as marketing channels. Marketing of fish and fish products adds to the foreign exchange earning of the country in international markets (Kumar, 2004).

South Gujarat has 300 km coastline constituting 19% of Gujarat's coastline. Fish production of South Gujarat was recorded as 1.67 lakh ton during the year 2011 while 0.13 lakh ton was recorded only from Surat in the same year (GFS, 2011). Surat contributing 8% of total South Gujarat's fish production (GFS, 2011) has lots of potential in fisheries but compared to achievements in fish production, fish marketing system is very poor and highly inefficient (Kumar et al., 2008). Traders sell their fish without proper storage facilities. Most of fish sellers sell their fishes on road without maintaining the quality and hygiene. Facilities and infrastructure in all types of fish markets are far from satisfactory level.

Aim of the present study was to find out the status of wholesale fish market of Surat city. Attempts were also made to know the hygienic conditions of wholesale market of Surat city.

Results obtained from present work would be helpful to Fisheries Department to develop strategies, policies and plans for training and extension work in marketing. The result would also help to improve the status of fish marketing. This work would provide information to researchers, traders and fisherfolks regarding the status of fish markets to improve the quality of fish for better earning.

Materials and Methods

Personal visits were made to wholesale fish market located at Nanpura area of Surat city. Wholesalers engaged in fish marketing from Surat city were chosen applying convenience sampling technique from the study area (Kothari, 2004). Information on wholesale market regarding fish collection, distribution, fixation of price and hygienic condition of fish market were collected from wholesalers through structured interview schedule

to know the present status of fish market.

Results

The only wholesale fish market located at Nanpura area of Surat city was studied. The market was constructed in 1950 by Surat municipal corporation (SMC). Total 68 traders were enrolled and allotted fixed place by SMC for fish trading from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The market was dominated by women wholesalers.

Trucks loaded with fishes were brought to fish market early in the morning without cooling facility. Fishes sold in the wholesale market were brought from villages of Choryasi taluka, outside Surat city (Porbandar, Veraval, Jamnagar, Junagadh, Jakhao and Golai) and other states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala by road and railways. Approximately 40 ton fishes were marketed daily by wholesalers of Nanpura fish market.

Fish distribution was at local and district level. Traders of Nanpura wholesale fish market sold their fishes to retailers of various local fish markets (Nanpura, Golwad, Navsaribajar, Saiyadpura, Dilligate, Rander, Bhimpore, Dumas, Suvali and Hazira), fish markets of Valsad and Navsari, retail outlets, vendors, also to hotels and restaurants of Surat district.

Variety of freshwater fishes such as Catla sp. (catla), Labeo sp. (rohu), Cirrhinus sp. (mrigal), Pangasius sp. (pangas), Oxygaster sp. (chaliya), Mystus sp. (singala) and Macrobrachium sp. (sondhiya) were found to be sold in the market. Among marine water fishes viz., Dasyatis sp. (patara), Atropus sp. (bangda), Stromateus sp. (paplet), Harpodon sp. (bumla), Parastromateus sp. (halwa), Polynemus sp. (rawas, cheriyu, dara), Muraenesox sp. (vam), Protonibea sp. (ghol), Scylla sp. (karachla) and Penaeus sp. (zinga) were commonly sold in Nanpura wholesale fish market. From these fishes, only freshwater fish Clarius sp. (magur) was found to be sold in live condition and fetched better price.

The wholesale market was centrally located in Surat city. There was no proper building for marketing, the selling of fish was on the road without facility of electricity, water, drainage, storage room and proper flooring. Small platform was constructed in the market but wholesalers did not use for fish selling. There was no lavatory and washing facilities. Hygienic conditions were very poor. Fishes were piled up on the floor. Most of the fish merchants did not use ice or any chilling facilities while very few of them used meagre amount of crushed ice during selling the fishes. As a result, fishes tend to deteriorate the quality and traders sold at lower price.

Fish auction was not observed in Surat city. Price was fixed by wholesalers of Nanpura fish market. Wholesalers earned commission from traders who sent their fishes from different parts of India to Nanpura wholesale fish market. They also earned

money by selling fishes to retailers.

Discussion

An organized fish marketing system provides remunerative price to the producer the interest of the consumer is also protected. It is known that Tsukiji fish market of Tokyo is the biggest wholesale fish market of the world. This fish market has cold storage rooms, non slippery floor, continuous temperature control, adequate light and auction facilities. Floor of markets in Bobigny (France) and Bielefeld (Germany) were covered with tiles. Automatic doors were used in the markets. Restrooms were located away from the seafood Departments with the hand washing facilities and lavatory. Workers had to wear plastic boots, coats, caps and gloves in the fish market. Chemical solutions were available for the disinfection of boots, coats, caps and gloves. Routine health checkups of workers were carried out by the administration in all markets (Mol and Saglam, 2004). On the other hand, Olalusi et al. (2010) found the erratic supply of electricity, inadequate cold storage facilities and stalls in the markets of Nigeria. The fish sellers of Okavango delta, Botswana were constrained by several factors including lack of preservation facilities and transport (Jagger and Pender, 2001; Adekun et al., 2006). Findings of present study showed that even basic facilities like electricity, water, drainage and proper flooring were not found in the fish market of Surat city. Hygienic conditions were found to be very poor. Mol and Saglam (2004) reported that all the vehicles carrying fishes to the wholesale market of Rangis (France) and Madrid (Spain) were not equipped with any cooling system. Similar results were found in present study showing poor infrastructure and less developed wholesale market.

Olalusi et al. (2010) reported that the Liverpool fish market in Lagos state of Nigeria was mostly dominated by women and only few men were found to be involved in the market. Omezzine (1994) described that Masirah fresh fish market was handled by fishermen and processors. The work of Madugu and Edward (2011) showed that both men (50%) and women (50%) were involved in fish marketing. In coastal area of Bangladesh, largely women were seen in marketing of fishes for self employment (Sabur and Rahman, 1979; Ahmed et al., 1993). Lawel and Idega (2004) found that 90% of women participated in fish marketing in Benue state. Jim-Saiki and Ogunbadejo (2004) revealed that in Lagos state of Nigeria, fishing was undertaken by males while marketing was carried out by female. Similar observations were made in the current study. Fishing was carried out by male whereas wholesale fish market of Surat city were dominated by women indicated active participation in fishing sector.

Conclusion

The study revealed that Nanpura wholesale fish market has unsatisfactory structure and poor hygienic conditions still it is regard as an important wholesale fish market in Surat city due to wide distribution of fishes. Thus, serious efforts should be made as soon as possible to develop infrastructure, use of preservation facilities and to maintain the hygienic conditions in the market.

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