
Current Scenario of Marine Fish Marketing in Tamilnadu

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Abstract

Seafood is an excellent food because it is rich in nutrients. It has the best and notch protein which supplies essential amino acids. It is easily digestible as it has very little connective tissue. It gives many nutrients which the human beings need, without worrisome amount of fats. The small amount of fats present in seafood is not the surprising one if any one says that the intake of seafood is the nutritional insurance, the problem of protein gap in food is much more acute in populous country like India with *chronic food shortage and malnutrition* and the diet of a large number of masses constitutes cereals which contains carbohydrates to a major extent and other inferior type of food. Fisheries have been the traditional avocation of the coastal fishing communities and a source of income for over 100 million people across the world. The sector is expected to play a major role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)- a set of goals aimed at halving the number of people living below poverty line by 2015 (FMSP, 2006).

Keywords

Definition, marketing practices, Marine Fish Marketing, seafood, Fisheries in Tamilnadu and Marketing channels.

Introduction

“Until recently in the balance between productivity of fish populations and people’s ability to catch fish, the fish were favoured.” (Iudicello, 1999)

Demand for animal protein in developing countries has been gradually increasing due to rapid human population. Relatively few studies have focused on consumers’ fish quality perception and public opinion towards the consumption of farmed fish is poorly understood (Pohar, 2011). Fisheries form an important sector of the Indian economy. Both as a nutritive food item for internal consumption and as a commodity that can earn foreign exchange, its importance is well known. Fisheries contribute about three per cent of our GDP (1993). Surrounded by sea on the three sides of mainland, India has a vast potential of marine resources.

Definition:

The following definition was approved by the *American Marketing Association* Board of Directors. *“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.”*

Marketing

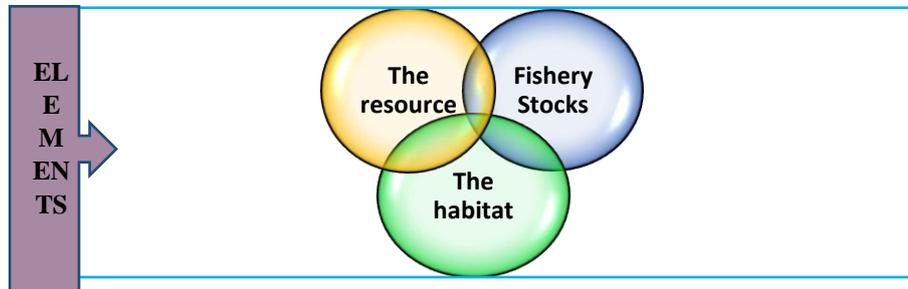
- Overview of marketing practices; market structure and channels marketing margins; credit; insurance schemes in aquaculture; ownership structure (private, co-operative, municipal, state, etc.); short section on retail developments.
- Obstacles to market access; deficiencies in market access which may be due to low volume; lack of buyers; inadequate infrastructure and marketing facilities; economic factors such as weak competitive position and lack of bargaining power in setting prices; financial constraints; consumer attitudes.

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What is a fishery?

A fishery is composed of three elements the resource (e.g., swordfish, squid, halibut), “fishery stocks, “the habitat and the people who are involved in the capture, processing, and sale of the resource



Modern fisheries management focuses on:

1. Regulation and conservation of the harvested resource
2. Protection of the habitat associated with the resource

Marine Fish Marketing in India

The *Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)* of India which extends up to 200 nautical miles, covers an area of 2.02 million sq.km. against its land area of 3.29 million sq.km. In the marine sector, fish are procured from 2244 landing centres located all along the 8085 km of coast line. The supply from inland sector is also scattered which is obtained from 27,000 km of rivers, 1,13,000 km of canals, 1.75 million hectares of tanks, ponds and derelict water spread area. The total fish production during 1992-93 was estimated at 4.04 million tonnes, 2.24 million tonnes from marine sector against the estimated potential yield of 3.9 million tonnes and 1.8 million tonnes from the inland sector against the estimated potential of 4.0 million tonnes. The growth of fish production and development of fishery sector is highly dependent on an efficient fish marketing system. Further, the survival and sustenance of different harvesting techniques of capture fisheries solely depends on their profitability which is interlinked with the market demand and price of different varieties of fish.

An efficient *Price Policy of fish* or any other commodity aims at to ensure the services of middlemen at minimum cost. In other words, the pricing efficiency is concerned with improving the operation of buying, selling and other connected aspects of marketing process so that it will remain responsive to consumer behaviour. Further, modern fish marketing policy should envisage not only meeting the existing demand for fish but also tapping the potential demand. The objective of this study is to provide the main elements that need to be considered when analysing a fish marketing chain from a livelihoods perspective.

Both inland and marine fish marketing are more or less identical on many aspects. However, marine fish marketing is more complicated due to its high degree of uncertainty and other special features. Hence, more emphasis is given for marine fish marketing in the present analyses. The present level of exploitation of marine fisheries is about **66.7 per cent** of the total estimated potential of 3.9 million ton.

Fisheries in Tamilnadu-An overview

Fishery resources of Tamil Nadu are categorised as Marine, Inland and Brackish water. Marine fishery resources available in the near shore areas extending up to 50m depth are almost fully exploited in India. The unexploited and under-exploited resource beyond 50m depth is estimated to be 1.7 million tonnes.

Marine Fisheries

Tamil Nadu has 1.9 lakh sq. km of *Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)* and a continental shelf of 41,412 sq.km. The marine fisher population in Tamil Nadu is 9.43 lakh, living in 608 fishing villages in the 13 coastal districts. The inshore waters of 1,016 km length of the coast on the eastern side and 60 km length of the coast on the western side are overexploited, whereas the offshore and deep sea resources are yet to be exploited to its optimum levels. The marine fish production of the State presently is estimated as 4.57 lakh tones against the estimated potential of 7 lakh tones.

-  **Marine Fish Production** - (14-15) 4.57 lakh tonnes
-  **Marine Products Export-** (2014-15) 93,477 MT

 **Value** Rs, -5038.17 crore

Fishery Trade

Fishery trade plays an important role in the India, with special reference to Kerala. It is estimate that around US\$ 70 billion worth fish and fishery products were traded internationally during 2006-07 of which India accounted for 2.64% only. India's share in this trade was US\$ 1.85 billion (Rs. 8,363 crores).

Area of study

The present study on fish marketing was carried out in Tamilnadu.

Objective of the study

The main objectives are,

-  To carry out a comprehensive study of pricing of marine fish.
-  To find out the relationship between prices at different levels of fish marketing channels and
-  To study various problems relating to fish marketing system.

Characteristics of Marine Fish Marketing

1. Greater Uncertainties in fish production and hence in the supply of fish.
2. High perishability of fish.
3. Assembling of fish from too many coastal landing centres.
4. Too many varieties and hence too many demand patterns.
5. Wide spatial and temporal variations in market arrivals and prices.
6. Dis-equilibrium of demand and supply.
7. Difficulty in maintaining the quality of fish.
8. Lack of proper infrastructural facilities for storage, preservation, processing and transport at various stages of marketing and
9. Lack of information on fish price and production

Price Determination for Fish

The price of fish fluctuates far higher than any other agricultural commodity. The price changes may be due to changes in supply besides due to the prices of other fish varieties in the market. *“The variation of fish prices at all stages of transactions is attributed to the uncertain nature of fish production and perishability”*. Price is determined by the *interaction of demand* and supply at both producing centres and consumer markets. At landing centres, the market demand is the aggregate demand from wholesalers which is indicated by the number of trucks. cycle vendors, retailers and individual purchasers arrived at the centre.

Price behaviour

A fisherman, as a seller, cannot negotiate favourable prices for himself mainly because:

- ❖ he meets buyers (intermediaries) one at a time and at different times,
- ❖ he cannot keep fish for a long time because the product is highly perishable, and
- ❖ he has no specific place to sit in the market to sell his fish.

Price is determined by the interaction of demand and supply at both producing centres, primary markets and consumer markets. The price behaviour of fish is mainly characterized by wide fluctuation at all stages of transaction in the marketing chain, which results from the highly perishable nature of fish and the high variation in its short run supply. At landing centres (primary markets) the market demand aggregate demand from wholesalers which is indicated by the number of trucks arrived at the centre and also from cycle vendors, retailers and individual purchasers. There will not be much variation in the day to day volume of transactions by these purchasers. Usually the short run demand is more or less stable. However, the level of supply on any day is completely unpredictable and short run supply is highly inelastic. Hence on any day a bumper catch at a landing centre will slash down the fish and a small catch will boost the prices to very high level. Though the short term fluctuation in fish price is very wide, the average annual prices of all commercially important fishes is continuously increasing. For any commodity, price stability is a major factor which induces the producer to increase the level of production.

Market Infrastructure and Physical Facilities

The market for fish is crowded at any level. Infrastructure facilities are important for marketing fisheries products domestically and for the physical development of markets. In cities, towns and river ports, city corporations and municipalities often provide infrastructure facilities in the form of roofs, tin shades, platforms, raised selling places and water connections. These physical facilities are emerging even in primary and assembly markets in rural areas through the initiatives of local governments and market management committees. However, washing and cleaning of spaces dedicated to selling fish, and disposal of wastes and residues do not meet hygienically acceptable standards. Physical facilities need to be improved. Fish traders and market managers need to be educated in maintaining sanitary and hygienic places for handling fish. During the summer and rainy season, fish spoil quickly. This results not only in lower prices but also poses health hazards.

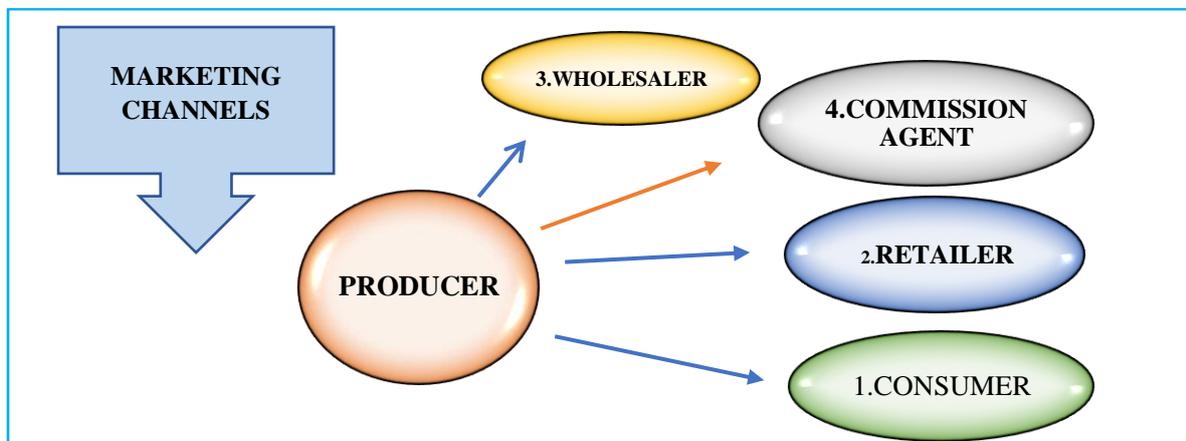
Innovative Products and Ideas

- Selling and promoting sea fish;
- Educating fishermen on how to handle, preserve and ice fish for transport;
- Teaching the private sector how to freeze and store fish; and
- Introducing new fish products such as fish fingers, fish burgers, fish balls, fish cakes, and fish cutlets, which may open new possibilities for export by the private sector of value-added fish products in the near future.

Marketing channels

Because of the monopolistic situation at the wholesale level, the wholesale and retail prices are maintained at a higher level at even at the time of glut either by controlling the supply by making use of the processing facilities or by diverting it to retail markets.

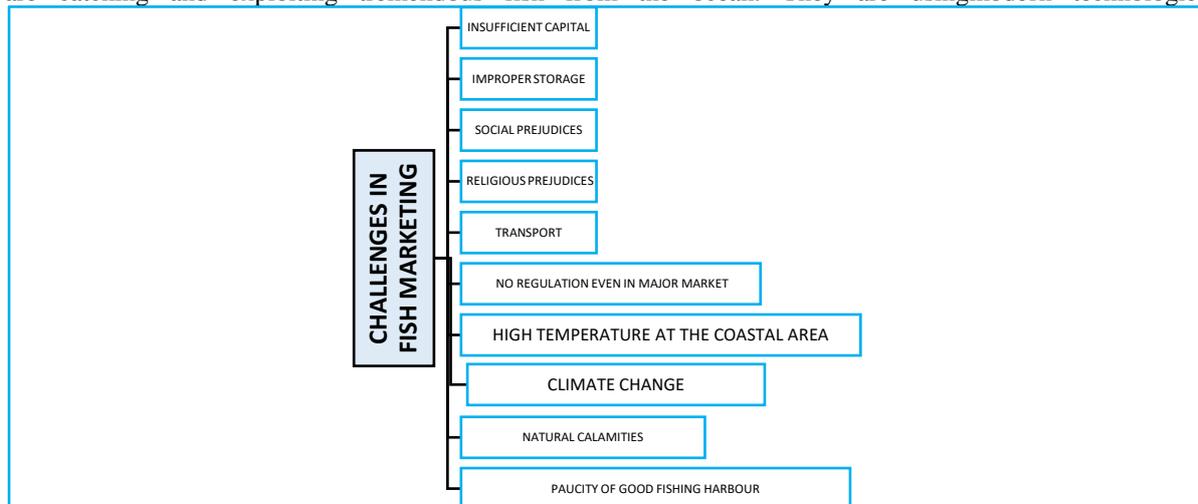
Following figure depicts the fish marketing channels usually followed



The marketing costs over the recent years showed an increase mainly because of the increased cost of packing materials, transportation and labour charges for packing, loading and unloading of the fish.

Challenges in Fish Marketing System

The adoption of the New *Economic Policy*(NEP) since 1991, the big capitalist and foreign companies are catching and exploiting tremendous fish from the ocean. They are using modern technologies.



Causes for Marine Fishery Declines

- ✚ Overfishing
- ✚ Highly efficient technology
- ✚ Bycatch
- ✚ The capture of non-target fish or other marine animals in fishing gear and
- ✚ Lack of Adequate Fisheries Data

Climate change is transforming the context in which the world's 55 million fishers and fish farmers live and work, posing a major threat to their livelihoods and the ecosystems on which they depend. For millennia, small-scale fisheries and fish farmers have drawn on their indigenous knowledge and historical observations to manage *seasonal and climate variability*, but today the speed and intensity of environmental change is accelerating, outpacing the ability of both human and aquatic systems to adapt.

Conclusion

- Sometimes fishermen catch enough quantity of fish. But due to lack of storage facilities and processing facilities they are compelled to sale immediately in the nearby market. The result is that the fisherman gets very low price to their fish products.
- For transporting the fish, availability of cheap means of transport are limited. Sometimes the coastal transport is very high. The result is that the price of fish remains very low, which results in loss to the fishermen.
- Climate change is transforming the context in which the world's 55 million fishers and fish farmers live and work, posing a major threat to their livelihoods and the ecosystems on which they depend. For millennia, small-scale fisheries and fish farmers have drawn on their indigenous knowledge and historical observations to manage seasonal and climate variability, but today the speed and intensity of environmental change is accelerating, outpacing the ability of both human and aquatic systems to adapt.
- For the coastal and deep fishing, it is essential to use very advanced and modern techniques for catching the fish, but this industry is suffering from lack of technical knowledge.
- Due to prejudices and social and religious values there are number of people at the coastal and outside the coastal areas, who are not eating fish and fish products during certain months in a year.
- Sometimes sudden changes take place in the sea due to strong trade winds, monsoons and cyclones etc. This makes fishing difficult and risky especially in certain months i.e., from **June to September** in Western part of India.
- The value of the marine fish landings has been estimated at 22,648 crores at point of first sales and at 36,964 crores at point of last sales in 2010, which underscores the potential earning capacity of the sector. The sector has earned a foreign exchange of 10,000 crores (2009-10) through the export of 6 lakh tonnes of sea food products.

To make fish available to consumers at the right time and in the right place requires an effective marketing system. Fishermen who catch fish by labouring overnight (from common-property water bodies) do not usually sell fish in retail markets.

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