

**S.S.e.10. RAMAKRISHNAN KORAKANDY—Technological change and the Development of the Primary Marine Fishing Industry of Kerala—A study of Limited Growth—1988 – Dr. K.C. Sankaranarayanan.**

**Introduction**

The primary marine fishing industry of Kerala is one of the premier natural resource industries of the State which provides employment and earnings to a large section of the population. It is also a major foreign exchange earner to the state.

The marine fishing industry of Kerala has been given a pride of place in the five year plans of the state. But it seems that, after some initial expansion, the industry has failed to gather momentum. The output of the industry which reached the peak in the first half of the seventies dwindled thereafter. The declining trend in output has caused serious concern in all quarters connected with the industry. The present study is an attempt to unravel the process of growth and decline in the primary marine fishing industry of Kerala since 1951.

**Objectives**

The specific objective of the study is to identify the factors that contributed to the growth of the primary marine fishing industry in the initial stages of development and the factors that led to its decline in the later stages. The study is limited to an analysis of the process of growth in the primary sector or the catching branch of the marine fishing industry.

**Hypothesis**

The major hypothesis of the study is that the development achieved by the primary marine fishing industry of Kerala since 1951 is primarily the result of various technological changes that took place in the industry during this period. However, the development achieved by this industry during this period is limited.

**Methodology**

The study is based on historical data.

## **Scheme of the Study**

For the purpose of analysis the thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 presents a brief outline of the research problem, objectives and scope of the study. Chapter 2 makes a general review of the classical, neoclassical and current literature relating to the fishing industry. Chapter 3 discusses the conceptual framework and methodology. Chapter 4 gives an account of the traditional sector of the primary marine fishing industry of Kerala. Specifically it discusses the research and development efforts for fishery resources, fishing craft, fishing harbours, fishermen training etc.. Chapter 5 furnishes a detailed account of the various effects of the technological changes in the industry. Chapter 6 makes a detailed study of the 'indicators' of technological change and development in the primary marine fishing industry of the state. Chapter 7 discusses the characteristics and impact of technological change in the primary marine fishing industry of the state. Chapter 8 presents the conclusions of the study.

## **Major findings**

1. The output of the primary fishing industry of Kerala grew at an average annual compound rate of 2.08% during 1950-75 and 0.62% during 1976-1984.
2. The observed growth in the output of the industry from 1950 to 1975 is associated with the major technological changes that took place in the industry.
3. A major characteristic of this growth is the relatively higher growth rate achieved in the output of the demersal (bottom living) and high priced varieties of fish.
4. A large part of the increase in the output of the industry during this period is due to the increase in the output of the mechanised sector.
5. The relative share of the non-mechanised (traditional) sector in the total output of the industry has declined over the years and this decline has been primarily responsible for the decline in the total output of the industry after 1975.
6. The output of the northern districts of the state has declined significantly over the years.
7. The fall in the output of the non-mechanised sector is primarily because of the 'limited growth strategy' followed by the administration during the whole period and the poor market linkages that developed during this period.
8. Restoration of growth in the primary marine fishing industry of Kerala demands major and continuous technological changes in the catching, processing and marketing branches of the industry.

## **9. Suggestions of the researcher**

1. The technology prevailing in the traditional sector should be upgraded to promote efficiency and to enhance production.
2. The performance of the mechanised sector should be improved through rationalisation.
3. The decline in the catches of the northern districts of the state should be prevented by providing the fishermen of those districts with necessary capital (fishing craft and gear) and knowhow.
4. The various schemes being implemented through the Kerala State Cooperative Federation for Fisheries Development (Matsyafed) should be geared to achieve the targets for marine fish production in the state. Each primary society should

be assigned a certain target for fish production each year.

5. Exploitation of the fishery resources of the exclusive economic zone of India, adjacent to the state should be intensified by developing the deep-sea fishing fleet of Kerala.
6. Fishing harbour/landing facilities should be provided for all types of vessels operating in the state. These facilities should be evenly distributed along the coastline of Kerala to avoid regional concentration of landings and for fair distribution of benefits to all regions.
7. The domestic and national market for marine fish should be developed to provide proper market linkages for development.
8. Development of fisheries should be recognised as the chief objective of (fisheries) management. Fisheries Administration in the state should take special care to see that the plan-objectives are fulfilled in time under all circumstances.
9. Conservation measures should be inlaid in the development plans to work as an automatic break to regulate the speed and direction of development.
10. The Department of Fisheries should collect or arrange to collect in cooperation with the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, regular statistics of catch and effort, costs and earnings and other economic data of mechanised and non-mechanised vessels using different craft-gear combinations in the state. This is important for technology assessment and planning.