

THE PROBLEMS OF COIR WORKERS IN CHERTHALA WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NEDUBRAKKADU.



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THE PROBLEMS OF COIR WORKERS IN CHERTHALA WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NEDUBRAKKADU

A Thesis submitted to the Mahatma Gandhi University in Part Fulfillment of
The requirements for the Degree of
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DECLARATION

We, hereby declare that the thesis titled," THE PROBLEMS OF COIR WORKERS IN CHERTHALA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TONEDUBRAKKADU ", submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in sociology is a bonafide work carried under the guidance of Guest Faculty Smt. Juwel Susan Jacob ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE, ERNAKULAM, and that it has not found the basis for award of any degree or diploma course.

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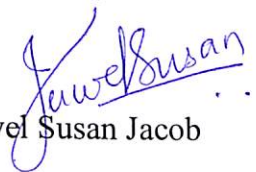
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the thesis prepared and submitted THE PROBLEMS OF COIR WORKERS IN CHERTHALA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NEDUBRAKKADU' is the original investigation which she and her team carried out under my guidance and supervision.

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CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Thomas Treloar, founded the well-known carpet firms of Treloar manufacture of coir into various fabrics suitable for floor coverings.

The coir manufacturing industry producing coir mats, matting and other floor covering, was started in India on a factory basis, over a hundred year ago when the first factory was set up in Alleppey IN 1859 By the late Mr. James darragh, an adventurous Irish born American national. Enterprising Indians followed the trail blazed by

HISTORY OF COIR WORKER

The first recorded history of coconut in country dates back to Ramayana period. In the Valmiki Ramayana there are reference of coconut in the Kiskindha Kanda and AryaKandr. It I reported that Ramayana was written by valmiki sometimes in 3rd country B C. generally it is believed that coconut was introduced in India during the port-Vedic period.

Rope and cordage, made out of coconut fiber have been in use from ancient times .Indian navigators who sailed the seas to Malayar, Java, China, and to the Gulf of Arabia countries ago, had been using coir as their ship's cables. Arab writers of the 15th century AD referred to the extensive use of coir as ship's cables, fenders and or rigging. F act record that there was coir industry in UK before the 2nd half of the 19th century during the year 1840, Captain Logan and this foreigner

KERALA AND THE COIR INDUSTRY

The history of coir and its association with the state of Kerala dates back to 19th century Sandwiched between the Western Ghats on the east.

And the Arabian Sea on the west, Kerala is one of the most beautiful stat in India. A tropical paradise of waving coconut palms and wide sandy beaches, time thin strip of coastal territory slopes down from the mountain Ghats in a cascade of lush green vegetation and varied fauna .One of the most commonly seen tropical tree. In fact even the name Kerala ("Kera" in Malayalam language means coconut and "Alam" means land, thus Keralam land of coconut) everything from Kerala's culture to its dishes is evolved around the coconut tree.

HUSK OF COIR

Coir made with the fiber separated from coconut husk, using traditional method. Fresh husk is left to rot in salty water to lakes or pond for about two to ten month. The rotten husk is beaten up using wooden mallets and the fiber pinched off. The separated fiber of stand is then twisted by hand or ratto form coir. Thin strand of coir are again twisted together to form thick rope, vadam, etc. Muppirikkayar is made of three strands twisted together. Various products are made using coir.

Coir has been commonly in use from ancient times. Foreign travellers have recorded that coir had been used extensively for ship – building in the beginning of 11th century A.D coir used to be taken from here to foreign countries. The easy availability of coconut husk as raw material, the natural facilities available for setting and hardworking laborers were the factors favorable for the growth of coir industry.

Kerala stands first in the production of coir in India. Alappuzha district produces most of the coir. Coir making is prevalent in the district of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Ernakulum, Trissur and Kozhikode. Instead of hand ratt is widely used now a day for making coir products during 2006 -2007.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

India is the major exporter of value added coir goods. Sri Lanka is the largest exporter of coir fiber followed by Thailand and India. Despite the spread of coir industry in some of the major coconut producing countries, not more than 10% of the global output of husk is utilized for coir fiber extraction. There has been only marginal improvement in the production and structural patterns of coir products with the result that the new consumers particularly of the younger generation are not attracted to the very familiar products. The future of coir industry depends on development of non-conventional products. The R and D efforts in India have been successful in developing many new products , which could be utilized for a variety of applications that are cost effective and environment friendly ,capacity building and quality up gradation o the widely scattered household production units are critical in improving the domestic coir industry. To avoid competition between producing countries and collapse of price the formation of an international forum by beginning together all the coir producing countries has been proposed in this paper. The survival of coir industry depends on its ability to adapt itself quickly to the fast changing consumer preferences and

widening choice. Whether for domestic or export purpose, the coir sector has to diversify, keep the quality of products and services high and ensure cost effectiveness.

HEALTH ISSUES OF COIR WORKERS

The coir board will engage an agency to study occupational health hazards in the sector, primarily in Alappuzha district. The exercise is intended to make an assessment of various diseases prevalent among coir workers to enable early detection and treatment. About 50,000 people are estimated to be working in the sector in over a thousand small scale coir units in the district. This is in addition to the major coir based industrial units. Many small scale units had poor infrastructure and lacked adequate ventilation or lighting. The unhealthy working environment contributes to several diseases, which most workers are unaware of it.

About one third of those who get medical attention get cured because of timely intervention while a majority encounters health problems. Early detection could be the ideal way to deal with the situation.

A clinical survey will be the major component of the study. It will try to find the real cause and specific cause of infection. It would also search for any increase in the incidence of lung cancer, official sources said. Studies conducted among coir workers in Sri Lanka some years ago pointed to prevalence of allergic conditions and pulmonary function abnormalities. A study in Alappuzha by a team of doctors had also found incidence of abnormalities in pulmonary function among the coir workers, source said.

Processing of coir, which is the fiber obtained from the husk of the coconut, is a dusty procedure. Workers in two coir processing factories in Sri Lanka were examined clinically and radiographically for evidence of respiratory disease such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, byssinosis, pulmonary tuberculosis which may occur from occupational exposures were considered by there was no evidence to suggest a definite association between these conditions and coir dust. Twenty two workers had abnormal chest radiographs but when compared with a control group of 591 workers from an engineering firm where lesions were found in 20 cases, there was no significant difference. In the opinion of the medical officer, management and workers of the large factory investigated, coir dust does not produce any respiratory disability.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter an attempt is made to analyse the available literature on different aspects of Coir Industry for the purpose of identifying major developments in the Industry. For analytical purposes the existing literature can be divided into studies on Coir Industry, studies on Coir Co-operatives and their problems and studies on the marketing of coir products.

Studies on Coir Industry

"Coir Industry in India with Special Reference to Marketing and Trade" by Bhaskaran Unnithan. K, was the first systematic research work in the field of Coir Industry. This study thoroughly analyses the industry from its origin to international marketing of coir products. The study has three parts. The first part gives a background of the industry. It deals with the locational factors and the various processes in the manufacture of coir and coir products and the structure and organization of the industry. The second part deals with internal marketing. There are two major approaches of marketing in the study. One is institutional approach and second is functional approach. Former deals with retailing and wholesaling and the network of middle men in between petty producers of coir yarn to and the merchant capitalist. The second approach deals with marketing from the stand point of activities or functions such as buying, selling, transportation, Unnithan Bhaskaran, K (1970) "Coir Industry in India with special reference to Marketing and Trade," Coir Board, Cochin.

Storage, standardization and grading, financing etc. The third part of the study deals with external marketing. It analyses the major markets, competition from other nations, problem of financing, export promotion measures, market surveys, studies on quality control and recommendations for the improvement of the industry.

M.V. Pyleez made an attempt to find out the problems faced by the Coir Industry during 1974. The year 1974 was a bad year for the Coir Industry. Due to acute shortage of fiber the industry reached to the lowest level. This situation had caused great anxiety to all concerned with the industry. The study involved the investigation and analysis of the delicate and somewhat controversial issues in the fibre extraction, spinning, manufacturing and export sectors of the industry. In the course of the study author had interviewed literally all categories of people connected with the industry and discussed with them different aspects of the problems faced by the industry. The husk dealers, the workers in

the various sectors, trade union leaders, manufacturers, exporters, professional experts employed in the industry, members of Coir Board and the concerned officials and experts representing the state and Central Government were interviewed.'

In the study Prof. Pylee found that shortage of coir fibre was the basic cause of the crisis of 1974. It affected the output of the spinning and manufacturing sectors. As a result there was a substantial decrease in the production of coir yam and coir products. This intern left a large number Pylee, M.V (1976) : "A Study of Coir Industry in India Problems and Prospects (1975):" Coir Board, Cochin.

The Kerala Government's ban on the use of husk-beating machines and the husk control orders 1973 had seriously affected the organization of collecting, retting and extraction of fibre from coconut husk. He also found that the development of synthetic hard fibers, non-synthetic substitutes, sophisticated coir products manufactured in Western- Europe and the inability of Coir Industry in India to adopt mass production techniques of higher productivity are chiefly responsible for the declining trend in exports. At the same time the cost of production has been progressively rising.

The author remarks that the declining trend in exports and the rising cost of production must be viewed with concern and urgent steps must be taken to mechanize and modernize the Coir Industry. This should be done in phased manner without displacing unduly large number of workers so as to improve productivity and to make the industry economically viable and competitive in the long run. He made a suggestion for detailed state wide survey of husk potential to identify centers where husk potential is maximum. The State Government may prepare a long term master plan for mechanization. Since the interest of workers is a major consideration for introducing mechanization in the fibre extracting sector, preference should be given to public sector and worker's co-operatives to install and operate the husk beating machines.

In the manufacturing sector there is urgent need to modernize production and manufacture of sophisticated coir products. Prof. Pylee remarks that there is need to review the impact of advertising and sales promotion in the past and then redefine the objectives in terms of products, markets and consumer motives. There is urgent need to set up and overseas market intelligence center. If the Coir Board has to function effectively as an instrument to serve the industry, there is urgent need to reorganize and strengthen the Coir Board in the light of functions envisaged by the Act. The proposed reorganization of the Coir

Board will involve the creation of eight separate divisions. These divisions are General Administration, Planning and Coir Production, Marketing, Export Control, Price Control, Research and Development, Economics and Statistics and Co-operative Organization.

Another study on coir industry was made by M.N.V. Nair⁴ In this study an attempt is made to reveal the structure of the industry with special reference to employment in Coir Industry. Coir yarn production, one of the processes in the coir industry was the subject of analysis by Tessa Kurian. She tries to study the salient features of the Coir Industry, the different types of coir yarn and its end uses, spinning of yarn and organization of production in the yarn spinning sector. In her study special emphasis was given to the working of co-operatives in the production as well as marketing of coir yarn and its problems.

Another major study was done by Thomas Isaac⁶ In his doctoral thesis he tries to analyze the evolution of Industrial organization and structure Nair, M.N.V (1977) : "Coir Industry a Study of its Structure and Organizations with Particular Reference to Employment in Kerala," Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

Kurian Tessa (1982), "Production and Marketing of Coir Yarn in Kerala," M.Phil. Thesis submitted to the CUSAT, Cochin (Unpublished). Isaac Thomas, T.M (1984) : "Class Struggle and Industrial Structure - A Study of Coir Weaving Industry in Kerala-1859-1980," PhD thesis submitted to J.N.U at C.D.S Trivandrum. (Unpublished). transformation of coir weaving industry in between 1859 and 1980. During this period the Coir Industry had to face some major changes. Manufacturers gradually withdraw from the direct management of production and increasingly confined themselves to the sphere of trade. They became merchant shippers rather than manufacture-shippers. He remarks that the emergence of radical working-class movements and development of labor militancy on the background of social, religious and political conditions of Kerala opened new pages in the labor management relations.

Another study was on Coir Mat Weaving Industry in Kerala by N. Madhava Menon. The study was focused mainly to examine the growth of the depot system, its child the new putting of system of production and the organizational changes in the domestic small scale coir matts weaving sector. The study attempted to analyze the rationale of such a system, the Menon Madhava, N (1994) "Changes in the Organization of Production in the Coir Mats Weaving Industry in Kerala," M.Phil. Thesis, submitted to Kerala University (Unpublished) factors encouraged it and its consequences. The study found that the

organization of production in the Coir Mats Weaving sector changed through the putting out system of production due to the emergence of depot owners, which was unfavorable to the workers and the small scale producers in that sector.

. A joint study was made by PyralalRaghavan and T.M. Thomas Issac on Revitalization of Coir Industry in Kerala. In this working paper attempt is made to evaluate policy frame work for revitalization of Coir Industry by analyzing the new trends in the industry viz. choice of technology, changes in the labor market the external threat in raw materials and product market, mechanization and rehabilitation of the displaced workers. They have made the following suggestions for the revitalization of the industry. Deregulation of the husk market in the husk surplus northern districts. Removal of restrictions on mechanicalfibrin in the northern districts and for a flexible policy in this regard in the southern districts.

PyralalRaghavan, Issac Thomas, T.M (1990) "A Policy Frame Work for Revitalization of Coir Industry in Kerala," Working Paper No. 240, C.D.S, Trivandrum, November. Planned rehabilitation programmer for the displaced workers into the expanding sectors of the industry and Technological up gradations sought to be implemented within the co- operative frame work which would facilitate a more equitable distribution of the work and the benefit; of the increased productivity to the work force. The other studies on Coir: industry is in the form of reports and surveys. Important they are the following. Report of the committee on Coir Mats & Mattings Manufacturing Industry" assessing the wage structure and conditions of employment in the industrial establishments of Mats and Mattings and to find out whether there is wide discrepancies in the wage level and other benefits to the employees working in different factories and in between different regions with in the state. The committee gives a brief description of organization of small scale mats production.

Due to the general dislocation and mounting figures of unemployment in the industry subsequent to the fixation of the Minimum Wages (Minimum Wages Act of 1948), Government appointed a committee to examine the position that has affected the laborers and also the regular working of the industry." The committee found that certain modifications in the minimum wages already notified are necessary for the smooth and regular working of the industry. Pillai Paramesewaran, G (1955): "report of the Committee on Coir Mats & Mattings Manufacturing Industry," Government of Travancore-Cochin, Trivandrum. "Government of Travancore, Cochin (1955) Report of the Coir Advisory Committee, Trivandrum.

"Report on the survey on Coir Industry in household sector 1975-76" focused on the socio-economic conditions of the coir workers in the household sector only." Report on coir workers census in Kerala 1988" -estimates the socio- economic aspects of coir workers. The objective of this census was to identify the actual coir workers and issue family benefit identity cards to

them incorporating all the relevant details of members thereof. The period of the survey was four months. The census covered 256 revenue villages spread over 29 Taluks in the State where coir workers are concentrated. The survey was primarily aimed at identifying the coir workers. Survey reveals the total number of coir workers household, district wise percentage distribution of coir workers, grouping of coir workers on the basis of sex, age, percentage distribution of coir workers according occupational status, percentage distribution of coir workers by educational status, percentage distribution of workers according to ownership of residential houses, percentage distribution according to monthly income, and the percentage distribution on the basis of literacy. This study gives an overall picture of coir workers in Kerala.

The Kerala Statistical Institute, Thiruvananthapuram carried out a Survey of Coir Industry in Kerala's during the period August 1995 to November ' Bureau of Economics and Statistics (1978) : Report on the Survey on Coir Industry in Household Sector, 1975-76, Thiruvananthapuram. "Department of Economics and Statistics (1990) Report on Coir Workers Census in Kerala 1988. 1996 at the instance of the Coir Board covered the following aspects of the Coir Industry. Quantity and value of coconut husk used in Coir Industry and of fibre, yam and coir products produce in Kerala. Number of workers engaged in Coir Industry. Extent of utilization of equipment in the industry. Pattern of disposal of fibre, yam and coir products. Demand for fiber, yam and coir products. Movement of fibre, yam and coir products from Kerala and to Kerala and Socio-economic aspects of Coir Industry in Kerala. The survey revealed that there are 1,9 1,656 coir households in the state. The survey grouped the workers as Primary, Secondary and Ancillary workers. A person whose main income for livelihood is from Coir Industry is treated as a primary worker. A person whose income from Coir Industry is only a secondary source of livelihood is treated as a secondary worker and a person who has more than one occupation but worked in Coir Industry at least for some time during the last one year and earned a part of income for his livelihood is treated as ancillary worker. The survey also revealed total production, internal assumption and external trade of coir products.

Kerala Statistical Institute (1997) Survey of Coir Industry in Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. "Coir Industry and Ninety Five year plan (1997-2002)"⁵ gives the programmers for the 9th five year plan envisaged by the Coir Board. The 9th plan proposals for Coir Industry aims at increased utilization of coconut husk for production of fibre and growth of value added products through modernization. The major efforts projected for accelerated growth of domestic market and promotion of export market are by implementing 'Market Development Assistance Schemes and Export Development Assistance Schemes'. The area of thrust in the 9th plan are for an expansion of domestic and export market, modernization of production infrastructure for attaining high productivity, quality up gradation and product diversification. In the science and technology sector, the emphasis is for modernization of production and new uses of coir and coir pith and product diversification. Training programs for workers for modernization and mechanization, implementation of welfare programmers are also proposed in the plan.

Special Task Force on Coir Industry was constituted by the State Planning Board, under the chairmanship of Dr. Thomas Issac, Associate Fellow C.D.S Thiruvananthapuram in 1990, to study in detail the present plight of the industry and suggest concrete measures for the uplift of the Industry. The terms of reference assigned to the Task Force were Coir Board (1998) "Coir Industry and Ninth Five year plan 1997-2002," Coir House, Cochin. Government of Kerala (1990) : Report of Special Task Force on Coir Industry, State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram, June. To examine measures for increasing the economic availability of husks at reasonable prices. To examine the conditions in fibre production with special reference to restrictions on mechanical fibre and the brown fibre industry. To revive the functioning of the coir co-operatives in Kerala and propose measures for increasing their efficiency and economic viability. To propose measures for improving the quality of yarn and productivity of labor in yarn spinning. To examine measures for improving the weaving process and the present restrictions on the mechanization of the weaving sector. To propose measures for export promotion and development of the internal market for coir and coir products and To review the research and development activities in Coir Industry and identify the priority areas for research and development that should be taken up on a war footing. Various interests in coir industry viz. exporters - cum - manufacturers, small scale manufacturer's representatives of coir co-operatives and major trade unions and institutions conformed with coir industry viz. Coir Board, Coir Development Directorate and Coir Fed

were represented in the Task Force. The recommendations of the Task Force are divided into the following sections.

- 1 Measures for increasing the economic availability of husk and fibre.
- 2 Measures for improving the quality and productivity of yam in the spinning sector.
- 3 Re-organization of the co-operative sector.
- 4 Measures for improving the manufacturing sector.
- 5 Measures for export promotion and development of internal market and
- 6 Research and development activities.

The recommendations of this Task Force are significant departures from the policy pursued in the past: particularly the nature of interventions in the husk market, policy towards non-retted husk fibre sector and the technological choice in the industry. Studies on coir co-operatives The State Co-operative Union, Kerala published a pamphlet entitled "Coir Co-operatives in India" by K.B. Unnithan in 1968." It was a land mark in the history of Coir Co-operatives in Kerala. It examines the problems of Coir Industry, particularly exploitations of poor workers by middlemen traders and petty producers and the need to re-organize the Industry on a co-operative basis.

O.V. Varkey's Doctoral thesis was a detailed study of the Coir Co-operatives with special reference to Primary Coir Vyavasaya Co-operatives." The " Unnithan, K.B (1968) : "Coir Co-operatives in India, State Co-operative Union," Kerala. Varkey, O.V (1981) : "Development and Working of Coir Co-operatives in Kerala," PhD thesis submitted to the University of Pune (Unpublished). Another study on coir co-operatives was made by Hemalatha. Her work deals with the study of Coir Fed, an apex co-operative body in the coir co-operatives. The author explains the origin and development of coir co-operatives in general and particularly analyses the working of Coir Fed and its problems and prospects. In this field another study was made by P. Rajendran Nair.*" He has made comprehensive analyses of co-operatives and private units in the coir processing industry. His study is confined to the coir processing units of Kayamkulam Project Area. The objectives of the study are to get a clear knowledge of the working of two sectors - Private and Co-operative - of the Coir Industry to compare the two sectors from different aspects namely employment, number of working days, efficiency, wages and other fringe benefits of the labor class.

Hemalatha (1992) : "Role of Coir Fed in the Co-operative Sector of Coir Industry in Kerala," M.Phil. thesis submitted to Kerala University (Unpublished). 'O Nair Rajendran, P (1 993) : "Coir Processing Industry - A Study of Co-operative and Private Units," M.Phil. Thesis submitted to Kerala University (Unpublished). 'Government of Kerala (1990) : Report of the Special Task Force on Coir Industry under the Chairmanship of Dr. Issac Thomas, Stale Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram. And madethe following suggestions for the re-organization and strengthening of co-operative sector and creation of infrastructure facilities. Appointment of a special officer and constitution of a committee for the re-organization of the co-operative sector. An outlay of Rs. 5 lakhs has been proposed to meet the salary and allowances and office expenses of the special officer. Grant to the re-organized coir co-operative societies to wipe off loss. An amount of Rs. 400 lakhs has been provided for the 8th plan under this head. Enhanced rate of manager] al assistance to re-organized coir co-operative societies. The re-organist societies will be given managerial assistance at a flat rate of Rs. 7200 per annum for five years, instead of the present tapering system of 100% d~ ring the first year, 80% during the second year, 60% during the third year, 110% during the fourth year and 20% during the fifth year. Enhanced rate of share capital to re-organized coir co-operative societies. Governmentcontribution~ members of re-organized societies would be enhanced from Rs. 360 to Rs.900 per member in the case of primary societies and from Rs.675 to Rs. 1800 per. member in the case of Mats and Mattings societies.

Report of the High Power Committee under the chairmanship of Thachadi PrabhakaranZ2 gives a detailed description of the evidence collected by them on matters related to availability of husk and working of societies. He also received complain.s and suggestions from the workers regarding overlapping on the area of activities of primary coir co-operatives, Coir Fed, competition among various trade unions, working of direct production and unit system, wages and service conditions of the coir workers, the welfare benefits of the workers in the societies etc. The report also dealt with the criteria adopted by the committee for the evaluation. In the light of the suggestions and coml~laints received from the workers, traders and representatives of coir co-'3perative societies, the committee made the following recommendations. Grouping of societies into A, B and C on the basis of performance. Group A consists of societies working satisfactorily and Group B involves the societies are not satisfactorily working but can revive with in a period of 3 years and Group C cosmists of those societies which are dead and beyond recovering.

Amalgamation of small and inefficient societies. Government of Kerala (1993) : Report of the High Power Committee under the Chairmanship of Thachadi Prahakaran M.L.A for the Revitalization and Evaluation of the Working of Coir Co-operatives in Kerala, Trivandrum, February (Malayalam). Protecting the laborers of societies which are going to liquidate by providing work at other societies which are working well. Reification of the area of operation of the societies. Abolishing dual and bogus memberships. Complete abolition of husk. Control and licensing system and Take measures to improve the working of Coir Fed. The problems of primary Coir Co-operatives of Kerala with a special emphasis on the Kayamkulam project area (specializes in the manufacturing of white fibre and yarn) was also studied by V. Rajan.²³ This study brings out the significance of primary coir co-operatives in the coir industry, identifies the reason for the: poor performance of coir co-operatives and analyses the prospects of their re-organization of the co-operatives. This study is based on secondary data collected from Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Coir Directorate and Coir Project Office and from Primary Coir Co-operative societies. Here analyses of societies based on the following aspects.

1. Organizational aspect.
2. Financial aspects.
- 3 Technology used and productivity.

'Rajan, V (1994) : "Socio-Economic Aspects of Coir Co-operatives in Kerala," M.Phil thesis submitted to Kerala University, Trivandrum. (Unpublished).

4. Marketing aspects.
5. Wage structures of workers and conditions of employees.

Report of the Committee for the Renovation of the Afflicted Coir Vyavasaya Co-operative Societies under the chairmanship of Anathalavattom Anandan gives a detailed report on the performance of coir co-operatives in Kerala.²⁴ The report consists of two parts. The first part deals with the evaluation of the working of societies. For evaluation the committee used some indices such as member's contribution to shares of co-operatives, Government's shares, total share capital, total assets, total liabilities and cumulative loss. The committee made a detailed study of the working of A, B and C grade societies. After the study they came to the conclusion that the present classification is unscientific and what is required is to classify

societies in to efficient and inefficiently working. The second part of the study consists of the recommendations of the committee. The major recommendations are:

1. In spinning sector societies having the ability to provide employment to minimum 150 laborers and the manufacturing societies having the ability to provide work to 50 workers are treated as efficient.
2. All loans and interest liability of efficiently working societies to Government may be changed to Government shares. Government of Kerala (1 997) : Report of the Committee for the Renovation of the Afflicted Coir Vyavasaya Co-operative Societies under the Chairmanship of Anathalavattam Anandan, Thiruvananthapuram (Malayalam).
3. For getting maximum aid from Government, measures are taken to raise the value of Government shares by keeping the present proportion of 1:9 (i.e. one laborshare : 9 Government share contribution).
4. The margin of cash credit (For working capital loan) must be lowered to 10% from the present 40%.
5. The interest rates for all loans given to coir co-operatives are to be reduced.
6. Existing scheme of husk subsidy, rebate etc. should only be given to Coir Fed.
7. Financial assistance should be given to all Integrated Coir Development Units to purchase generator's.
8. Introduction of group insurance scheme to the coir workers through Welfare Board.
9. Introduction of Housing finance scheme to coir workers.
10. Opening of showrooms for coir products in major cities and towns.
11. Providing training facilities to workers in modern techniques of production.
12. Measures should be taken to promote the use of Geo-Textiles in the construction of roads, railway lines, and conservation of coastal areas and to prevent sea erosion and soil erosion.
13. Manufacturing society's art: started in coir producing centers.

Studies on the marketing coir products

A major study on marketing of coir products is made by K.B. Unnithan. His study on coir industry in India with Special Reference to Marketing and Trade explains the strategy of marketing. The second part of his book explains marketing structure, internal marketing, cooperative marketing of coir and coir products, grading and standardization of coir products, trade and transport, price trends and patterns, methods of price fixation, artificial fluctuations, floor prices, competition from other countries, price trends of coir mats and Government assistance for stabilizing the price. The third part of Unnithan's book explains foreign trade of coir products. It analyses foreign trade in coir till 1951 and foreign trade after 1951. It also explains foreign markets, financing of foreign trade and export promotion measures of Government. Report of Special Task Force on Coir Industry, state planning board also made recommendations for the promotion of marketing. These recommendations are Consultancy charges. The proposal is to appoint a professional marketing consultancy agency for the preparation of a detailed action plan for expansion of internal markets. The consultancy services are proposed to be continued for the entire five year plan period for which an amount of Rs. 10 lakhs is proposed. Fifty percentage Central assistance is expected.

Sasi [1995] reveals that the number of coir workers in coir industry has been reduced to 50% with the passing of 50 years. According to him this is due to the increased exploitation of laborers and lack of proper attention by authorities in the coir sector. He adds that the majority of coir co-operatives are not functioning and the functioning ones are unable to pay Minimum Wages to the workers.

He stresses the need for ensuring co-operation between the private sector and the cooperative sector for the healthy growth of the coir sector. The article demands extension of Government assistance to private coir sector too.

Anathalavattom Anandan [1995], in an article relating to the renovation of coir yarn sector portrayed the pitiable condition prevailing in the area of wages, working conditions etc. of coir workers. He categorically states that the prevailing production system should be changed so as to suit the domestic and foreign market even though there is some displacement of laborers, and urged that some steps need to be taken to remove the doubts and anxiety existing in the minds of coir workers at the time of modernization.

Ajith Kurnar [2001], in their respective articles, explain the reasons for decreased demand of coir yarn in U.S.A, which was the major market for coir yarn in the globe. The reduction in the area under Hop cultivation, as a consequence of the use of

high yielding hybrid varieties is one of the reasons for the reduced of take of coir yarn. Another reason is lack of competition in Indian coir industry, and its continued use the traditional method of production which could not withstand the competition form Sri Lanka in the U.S.A. market and he broke the Indian monopoly in the matter of supply of coir yarn for Hop cultivation. The reasons for this situation are the emotional policies against modernization and mechanization of coir industry in India.

CHAPTER-3

METHODOLOGY

Title of the study

A study of problems of the coir workers in Cherthala with a special reference to Nedumbrakkadu.

Statement of problem

A study of the problems of coir workers in Cherthala with special reference to Nedumbrakkadu.

General objectives

A sociological study of problems of coir workers in Nedumbrakkadu, Cherthala

Specific objectives

- To study the socio-economic profile of coir workers.
- To study about the health problems of coir workers.
- To study about the job satisfaction of coir workers.
- To study whether they are aware about the welfare measures of government.
- To study about the exporting demand of the coir products.

Identification of variables

Age, sex, marital status, income, religion, education were identified as the independent variables of the study.

Classification of concept

Definition of coir

Theoretical definition:

Fiber from the outer husk of the coconut, used in potting compost and for making ropes and matting.

Operational definition:

Coir netting alone has proven is effective at holding back saturated materials in steep slope condition.

Definition of coir workers

Theoretical definition:

Coir worker means any person who is employed for wages to do any work in connection with the various processes.

Operational definition

In coir industry and who gets his wages directly or indirectly from the employer, dealer or producer of coir products and includes any person employed by through an agent and depends mainly on coir industry for his livelihood.

Research design

A descriptive mode of study is the research design was used in this study.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to assess the feasibility of the study. It was instrumental in designing the research in general, identifying the sample.

Pretest

A pretest was carried out to check the appropriateness of the questionnaire. It helped to discard irrelevant questions and reformulate the question in a comprehensive manner.

Universe

The universe of the study was all the coir workers of Nedumbrakkadu; it is situated in Cherthala.

Sampling Method

For the above study we used Simple Random Sampling

Out of 5 Number of Coir Industries in Nedumbrakkadu, We selected one industry by lottery method consisting of 150 number of workers; from that 50 workers were taken again through lottery method.

Tool of data collection

Questionnaire was used as the tool of the data collection. There were close ended questions.

Data collection

Data collection was done on day 26 December 2014. The respondents were contacted in their respective work sites in the industry.

Data analysis

The primary data collected by the questionnaire was duly edited, by using SPSS software and also prepared by using Microsoft word and Excel make it more attractive.

Limitation of study

As the study was concentrated on a particular region of Cherthala, the researcher was not able to fully find the problems of the coir workers,

Chapter-4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation of data is the core of any research report after the data has been collected. The researcher focuses on analysis and interpretation. Analysis of data involves a number of related operations which are performed with the purpose of summarizing the collected data and organizing these in such a manner that they answer the research questions. Analysis means a critical examination of the assembled data and the purpose of interpretation is to highlight the meaning of the research findings by linking them to other available knowledge.

1. To study general details of coir workers

Distribution of age

Table No – 4.1

AGE	FREQUENCY	Percentage
30-40	13	26 %
40-50	26	52 %
50-60	11	22 %

In this study out of 50 respondents 26% were belonging to 30-40 age group. 52% were belonging to 40-50 age groups. And rests of the workers are belonging to 50-60 age groups. The majority of the workers are in the middle age.

Distribution of sex

Table No –4.2

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	4	8 %
FEMALE	46	92 %

In this study 92 % were females and the rest of the 8% were males. While considering the workers there is an increase in the rate of females. Females are most found in this sector.

Marital status

Table No – 4.3

MARITAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MARRIED	43	86 %
UNMARRIED	4	8 %
DIVORCED	3	6 %

While considering the marital status we found that 86 % of the worker are married and settled in families .And 8% of them were unmarried. And the rest of 6% were divorced.

Nature of occupation

Table No – 4.4

OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
PERMANENT	36	72 %
TEMPORARY	14	28 %

While considering nature of occupation, were divided the service period in two. Permanent and temporary. 72% were responded as permanent and 28% were temporary workers.

Number of years' service

Table No – 4.5

YEARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
10-20	41	82 %
20-30	5	10 %
30-40	4	8 %

Considering number of years of service 82% have 10-20 year service period. 10% having 20-30 years of service. And 8% having 30-40 years of services. This table shows that all the workers are very skilled in their works. Because the workers are very experienced.

Educational qualification

Table No- 4.6

QUALIFICATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
UP TO SSLC	25	50 % ✓
SSLC	22	44 % ✓
DEGREE/PG	3	6 % ✓

As shown in the table, 50% of workers were not educated up to SSLC. 44% of the workers have completed their SSLC and 6% have higher education. Through this, we can analyze that educated people are also in these fields.

2. To study the socio economic profile of coir workers

Category

Table No-4.7

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
APL	7	14 %
BPL	43	86 %

According to this table, out of 50 respondents, 86% were below the poverty line and 14% were above the poverty line.

Number of workers

Table No-4.8

WORKERS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1-2	43	86 %
2-4	7	14 %

According to this table the 86% of families 1 or 2 are coir workers. 14% of families 2 or more persons working in this field. In their locality most of the people are depended on coir work.

Hereditary

Table No-4.9

HEREDITARY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	40	80 %
NO	10	20 %

This table shows that the respondents are of 80% are hereditary workers while 20% of are not hereditary workers.

Wages

Table No-4.10

WAGES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
DAILY	7	14 %
MONTHLY	43	86 %

This table infers that the respondents are of 14% are getting the wages daily while 86% of respondents are getting the wages monthly.

3. To study about the health problems of coir workers

Health problems

Table No-4.11

HEALTH PROBLEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	30	60 %
NO	20	40 %

60% of workers opines that they health problems with this job. The rest of workers are not suffering any health problems.

Reason of health problems

Table No-4.12

REASON	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
DUST	23	46 %
OTHERS	27	54 %

Regarding health problems 60% responded that they have health problems and out of which 46% is having problem with dust.

4. To study the job satisfaction of coir workers

Riskiness of field

Table No – 4.13

RISKINESS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	44	88 %
NO	6	12 %

For the question whether the field of work is risky 88% of them responded yes because the work is very hard due to they are facing health problem.

Job timing

Table No 4.14

JOB TIMING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
7AM-5PM	1	2 %
8AM-6PM	39	78 %
10AM-5PM	10	20 %

This table shows that the factory provides a different time schedule for workers. 78% were worked at the time 8am-6pm.20% were worked at the time 10am-5pm,and only 2% were working between 7am-5pm.

Satisfaction of salary

Table No -4.15

STISFCTION OF SLRY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	12	24 %
NO	38	76 %

This table shows weather the respondents are satisfied with their salary. 76% were not satisfied with their salary. And 24% of the respondent is satisfied.

Able to full fill daily needs

Table No – 4.16

FULL FIIL DAILY NEEDS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	11	22 %
NO	39	72 %

This table shows that weather the respondents are able to fulfill their daily needs.72% of respondent were not able to fulfill their daily needs.

Interested in other types of job

Table No – 4.17

INTRESTED IN OTHER JOBS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	30	60 %
NO	20	40 %

This table shows that the respondents are interested in any other types of jobs or not.60% of them responded that they were interested in other jobs.

5. Regarding aids from the government

Receive any aid from government

Table No – 4.18

RECEIVE ANY AID	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	8	16 %
NO	42	84 %

The above table shows that the respondents are getting any government aid or not. 16% of them received government aid. 84% were without aid.

Pension received

Table No – 4. 19

PENSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	7	14 %
NO	43	86 %

The above table shows weather the respondents are receiving pension or not. 14% of them received pension and 86% of them not received pension.

Educational aid

Table No - 4.20

EDUCATIONAL AID	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	23	46 %
NO	27	54 %

The above table shows weather the respondents have got any educational aid or not.46% of them received educational aid. so, most of them were not receiving any of the aids

6. The study about the exporting demands of the coir products

Manufactured products

Table No – 4.21

PRODUCTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
CARPETS	14	28 %
FLOWER POTS	7	14 %
MATS	17	34 %
COIR	12	24 %

According to this table,28% were engaged in manufacturing carpets. 14% products were flower ports. 34%of mats were produced because it have more demand and 24% of products were ordinary coir.

Demand for coir products

Table No – 4.22

DEMAND FOR COIR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	49	98 %
NO	1	2 %

According to this table, 98% were responded that there is demand for coir products. And other 2% were responded that there is no demand for coir products.

Demanding foreign countries

Table No -4.23

DEMAND	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	43	86 %
NO	7	14 %

This table shows the demand for foreign countries or not. 86% was responded that there is demand for coir products. The rest were opines that there is no demand for foreign countries.

Independent manufacturing

Table No - 4.24

INDEPENDENT Manuf..	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	43	86 %
NO	7	14 %

This table shows that a part from the factory job 86% was having their own independent units at home. 14% were only depended the factory job.

Job satisfaction

Table no - 4.25

JOB SATISFACTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	43	86 %
NO	7	14 %

This table shows that 86% were satisfied with their job. The most of the workers are poor in their educational background. Therefore they cannot engage other type of better job.

Though there was health problems and the salary were not satisfactory 86% out of 100% were satisfied with their job. The main reasons was that they were not qualified enough to get another job and some of them were following their hereditary work and also it was an occupation of their locality.

CHAPTER- 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study we conducted on the basis of five objectives, such as

1. The socio economic profile of coir workers.
2. To study about the health problems of coir workers.
3. To study about the job satisfaction of coir workers.
4. To study whether they are aware about the welfare measures of government.
5. To study about exporting demand of the coir products.

According to the general characteristics of the workers we find that, out of 50 respondent, the age of respondents were divided into such as 30-40, 40-50, 50-60. In that 26% belong to first category 52% to the second and rest were belonging to the last category. From this study it was clear that the 92% of the workers were females. We found that 86% workers were married and settled and the 8% of were un married and the rest were divorced. Considering the nature of occupation 72% of workers were service period of workers were divided into three 82% had very low service period had more than 3 decades of service. Most of the respondents were educated only up to SSLC considering the first objective, 86% were belonging the BPL category, the rest were in APL category. When analyzed it was found that 86% of workers 2 or more family members were engaged in the same vocation the reason was that 80% of the workers following their hereditary work. Rest of them started thus work for support their partner. The factory provide the wages for the workers as daily or monthly .the rest of the small portion paid in daily

While considering the second objective, we study the health problems of the coir workers. The 60% of the workers responded that they have health problems with regarding to the work. 30% and also they revealed that the health problems are coming mainly through the dust.

Whether the field of work was risky 88% responded that work was risky because the work was very hard due to which they are facing health problems. The factory providing a different time schedule for the workers .the workers has to choose their job timing. 76% of the workers not satisfied with their salary because the factory provide salary in a limited manner compared to other factory.24% were satisfied with their salary because of the limited salary.72% of the workers did not able to fulfill their family needs . The 60% of the workers are interested in other type of job because that provide more salary .The rest 20% were not interested in other jobs ,because their educational qualification is very low.

Fourth objective focused on the awareness of the welfare measures of government .84% of the workers responded that they did not get any aid from the government. The rest of the workers get different forms of governmental aids . Through this study we understood that very small rate of workers only get pension. The educational aids provided by the government is received by the workers ,children are getting different scholarships also ,but 54% of them did not have any idea about these aids.

In our study the last objective was the demand of coir products for exporting we analyzed that there are various products made in that factory .Which include carpets, flower pots , mats, coir, floor mats, door mats,brushes,mattresses etc. 98% of workers responded that there have, a demand for the coir products .86% of workers revealed that there is demand for the coir products in foreign countries .we analyzed that the 86% of the workers have independent manufacturing units. Above all it was found that 86% were satisfied with their job.

Our conclusions are,

- The socio- economic background of coir workers were in very poor condition.
- Majority of the workers are suffering with different health problems.
- The third factor is that workers are not satisfied with their salary.
- Majority of the worker are not aware about the governmental aids.
- Demand for coir products for exporting is found to be high

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APPENDIX

A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS OF COIR WORKERS IN ALAPPUZHA

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name :
 2. Age : Years
 3. Sex : Male Female
 4. Marital Status : Married Unmarried Divorced
 5. Nature of Occupation : Permanent Temporary
 6. No.of years of service : Years
 7. Educational Qualification : Up to SSLC SSLC Degree/PG
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1. Which category do you belong to? APL BPL
 2. How many workers are there in your family?
 3. Is this a hereditary line of work? Yes No
 4. Do you get daily wages or at monthly salary Daily Month ends
 5. Do you face any health related problems? Asthma Others
 6. What are the reasons?
.....
 7. Is this field of work risky? Yes No
 8. What are your job timing?
 7 am to 5 pm 8am to 6pm 10am to 5pm Other
 9. Are you satisfied with your salary? Yes No
 10. Are you able to full fill your daily need? Yes No
 11. Are you interested in any other type of job? Yes No
 12. Do you receive any benefits / Grants/ Sub sidies from the govt? Yes No
 13. Do you receive pension? Yes No

14. Do you receive any educational aid from the government?

Yes No Others

15. If yes please mention the benefits

16. What are the different types of products that can be manufactured from coir?

Carpets Flower Pot Mat Others

17. Is there very good sale for the coir products? Yes No

18. Do you export products made from coir to foreign countries? Yes No

19. Do you manufacture coir products independently? Yes No

20. Are you satisfied with this job? Yes No