

FISH PRODUCTION, MARKETING AND CONSUMPTION IN THE
TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT



CHANDRASEKERAN RAMESHAN



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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Fish is a main component of food in Sri Lanka and fish production contributes about 2% to the total food production in Sri Lanka. Trincomalee district is one of the most important fishing area in the island. The fisheries sector is equally important and considered next to the agricultural sector in the Trincomalee district. The study was conducted to identify the fish market structures, fish market facilities and fish prices of different fish varieties. A random sample of fish wholesalers, fish retailers and fish consumers were studied. The data was collected from the sample respondents through personal interviews by the pre tested questionnaires. Also eight fish markets were selected for the study.

About 7 varieties of fish being caught by fishermen and it sold to wholesalers and it varied according to the fish markets. Only 13% of the fishermen sell their fish to the village consumers. Most of the fishermen (80%) sell their fish to wholesalers and others (7%) sell to retailers. The wholesaler marketing margin and retailer marketing margin showed variations among fish varieties. Most of the wholesalers carried out marketing functions, in which fish separating and transporting were the main marketing functions of the wholesalers (80%). The fish variety Mora showed high wholesaler marketing margin (Rs 50/ Kg) and Kumbala showed high retailer marketing margin (Rs90 /Kg). The total marketing margin varied according to the type of fish.

Inadequate capital was a main problem for fish retailers. Majority of the retailers (54.6%) were doing their fishing activities without obtaining credit. But all the wholesalers (100%) obtained credit for their fishing activities. The average purchasing quantity of fish for retailers per month was 20Kg and average selling quantity was 18Kg.

Most of the consumers were consuming Soodai, Soorai, Arakula and Kumbala. In which majority of the consumers (60.2%) consume kumbala variety for its taste and its nutritional content. About 60% of the consumers consume fish daily, and majority of the consumers (90%) stated they bought fish at village markets. About 90% of the consumers looked for quality before they purchased fish. The percapita fish consumption of fish per head is 31grams (0.031Kg) and average expenditure for fish per month of a consumer is Rs 6,000. The consumer's average purchased quantity of fish per month is 15Kg.

In this study water, electricity, storage and drainage facilities were considered as main facilities. Water facilities were identified all of the (100%) fish markets studied, but storage facilities identified only Trincomalee Town and Gravets fish market. 37.5% of the fish markets had buildings with itself, in which 37.5% of the buildings were permanent and others were semipermanent. In this study Trincomalee Town and gravets fish market only identified with market office and good parking space availability. Other fish markets did not have any parking spaces and market office. Most of the fish markets (90%) identified with bad condition.

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