

MALPE FISHERWOMEN CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY: A BEACON LIGHT TO FISHERWOMEN

S.Gunakar

Pompei College,Aikala-574141

Mangalore- Karnataka

and

Ramachandra Bhatta

Formerly -ICAR Emeritus Scientist (Economics) and Professor of Fisheries
Economics, College of Fisheries,

Mangalore 575 002, rcbhat@gmail.com

Background

All coastal states have **promoted** fisheries co-operatives with a view to:

- ❑ Improve the socio-economic conditions of the members,
- ❑ Initiating them into modern methods of fishing, processing, storage and marketing of fish catches by providing the necessary inputs.

Background...

- ❑ There are **125** Primary fisheries co-operative societies functioning in three coastal districts with a total membership of **4,48,106** as on 31-3-2019 .
- ❑ Karnataka Co-operative Fisheries federation is functioning at state level along with the two federations each at Mangalore and Karwar respectively.
- ❑ In Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts there are 19 and 44 fisheries o-operative societies.
- ❑ out of it **4** and **19** women co-operative are organized in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts respectively.
- ❑ Malpe fisherwomen co-operative society is the **first** women society established in Karnataka.



○ Arabian Sea

Bay of Bengal

Laccadive Sea

Sri Lanka

Colombo

GUJARAT

Ahmedabad
અમદાવાદ

Indore
इन्दौर

India

Nagpur
नागपूर

WEST BENGAL

Kolkata
কলকাতা

Surat

MAHARASHTRA

Mumbai
मुंबई

TELANGANA

Hyderabad
హైదరాబాద్

GOA

KARNATAKA

ANDHRA
PRADESH

Chennai
சென்னை

TAMIL NADU

KERALA

Arabian Sea



Objectives

1. To study supply chain practice followed by the society in the distribution of salt.
2. To study the role in the collective management of property and resources.
3. Its struggle in access to space within the port area.

Methodology and Data collection

- ❑ The present study is based mainly on primary and secondary data.
- ❑ The primary data were collected with the help of interview schedule specially designed for this purpose.
- ❑ The direct interview with office bearers and members
- ❑ The financial and physical progress during 1997- 98 to 2021-22.

Brief Profile of the society

- Established in the year **1977** with an initial capital of Rs. 16000 (a share value of Rs. 10 each) contributed by the 297 members with a grant of 100000 from the state.
- Area of operation: five villages- **around Malpe fisheries harbour**
- The society operates its office located in the leased port land

Prime activities:

- ❖ Granting group loan and individual loan
- ❖ Implementation of State subsidy schemes (Savings-cum-Relief scheme)
- ❖ Input supplies such as salt
- ❖ Transport services

Membership and Share capital

- Society started in the year 1977 with 297 members now has **2,588** members with share capital of Rs. **21,96,370.**

No. of member and their share capital for the last 22 years

Year	No. of members	Share capital (in Rs.)
1997	297	16,000
1999-2000	934	1,92,010
2004-2005	1009	1,44,390
2009-2010	1168	1,53,610
2014-2015	1731	5,62,700
2019-2020	2465	13,83,550
2021-2022	2588	21,96,370

Organisation structure

BOD consists of 9 members-

- President
- Vice president
- Five directors
- Assistant director of fisheries
- Inspector of co-operative society (Fisheries)

President and vice president are elected by the 7 members of the Board. They hold the office for a period of two and half years.

Mobilisation of Savings:

1. Savings bank Account

at present 1,490 members With nearly Rs. 20,00,000 deposit
@7.5% interest

2. Fixed Deposit @ 9% interest

At present 20 members Rs. 20,00,000

3. **Pigmy** No minimum and maximum limit. Daily collection . Two women staff collect the amount daily.

Financial assistance to fisherwomen

- ❑ The maximum amount of loan given to the member is Rs. 5000 till 2003-2004.
- ❑ From 2003-2004 they started to lend maximum of Rs. 10,000 per member, usually for a period of one year at interest rate of 14%.
- ❑ Today the maximum amount of loan given to individual member is Rs. 50,000 @ 14% interest.(personal security of 2 members and LIC policy) No security.
- ❑ Group loan to a group of 4-5 member(Rs. 50,000 per member)

Direct loan given to members

Year	Loan amount (Rs.)	No. of beneficiaries	Loan per member (Rs.)
1999-2000	65000	13	5,000
2004-2005	1,50000	15	10000
2009-2010	237467	43	5,522
2014-2015	56,94,167	299	19044
2019-2020	10,74,140	306	3,510
2021-2022	63,06,537	267	23,619

Financial assistance to fisherwomen under

Matsya Mahaila Swavalambana Yojane- 20members – Rs.5,000 each.

Savings-Cum-Relief Scheme:

2021-22: 454 members benefited

Financial result

Year	Profit (in Rs.)
1999-2000	1,58,666.55
2004-2005	95,658.99
2009-2010	2,28,530.00
2014-2015	4,27,043.38
2020-2021	10,66,896.00
2021-2022	11,22,714.00

Vehicle facility to fisherwomen

- With the financial assistance of **National co-operative Development corporation** in 1980,(Loan cum subsidy Rs. 53,300(Rs.26600 loan+26700 subsidy) purchased Pick-up for 62,047.12. It helped the fisherwomen in carrying the fish to the different parts of the market. Due to heavy maintenance they incurred a loss on running the vehicle and finally disposed in the year **1993**.
- Another van was given by the **Central Social Welfare Board** through State Social Welfare advisory board in the year **1982**. This vehicle also disposed in the year 1999 due to heavy repair expenses.
- Under this scheme 3 societies got the benefit (Ullal, Bagvadi, and Malpe) The Ullal and Bagvadi society disposed the vehicle earlier to Malpe society.

Supply chain management of Salt

- ❖ Salt is the major input required for salt curing fish. Fisherwomen need huge quantity of salt to dry and preserve fish for longer duration.
- ❖ By considering the uninterrupted demand for salt few individuals started supplying salt near fish drying yard and used to earn huge amount of profit.
- ❖ By knowing the fact and also to fetch remunerative income to the members Malpe fisherwomen co-operative society started supplying salt required by the dry fish sellers who are the members of the society, in the year **1978**.
- In the first year they made a turnover of Rs. 30,000 by selling the salt at Rs. 18 per bag. each bag weighing 60 Kg.
- At present they sell on an average **319** tons of salt to around **51** members. The average turnover over a period of 10 year is **Rs.9,78,522.50**.



Table showing the turnover of salt

Year	Sales in bags	No. of beneficiaries	Selling price/Bag (Rs.)	Total turnover (Rs.)
1999-2000	9243	141	70	6,44,392
2004-2005	6166	76	70	431,620
2009-2010	3889	49	135	6,29,910
2014-2015	5519	57	135	8,04,195
2019-2020	6139	45	150,165,175	9,92,590
2021-2022	7014	46	185,195,210,220,250	14,44,080

Salt distribution channel

- Malpe fisherwomen co-operative society
- Distributor-cum-unloader
- Wholesale dry fish sellers



- Usually society starts supplying the salt in the month of August every year irrespective of the order as the demand is assured.
- In the fish drying yard there is a group of distributor cum unloaders who unload and carry the salt to the fish drying site of the fisherwomen.
- The fisher women who need salt, required to place an order either with the society or with distributor.
- Based on the order placed, society in turn places the order with the commission agent.
- The minimum number of days required by the commission agent to supply the salt is five days.
- When salt is ready for supply commission agent sends a message to the society and also to the distributor cum unloader.

- Commission agent arranges for the transportation of salt.
- As soon as truck reaches the Malpe port, it directly goes to the fish drying yard where the unloader and society staff get ready to distribute the salt.
- Based on the book entry the required number of bags of salt unloaded and supplied directly from the truck to the huts of the fisherwomen where they store their dry fish, belongings and salt.
- The remaining bags of salt are stored in the Godown of the society. Society owns **2000** sq feet of tiled building to store the salt.

- To meet their subsequent demand for salt they request the distributors to supply and keep required number of bags of salt in their place.
- The distributor as soon gets the demand for supplying minimum 75 bags of salt in each round of subsequent demand, hires a tempo and load the salt from the godown of the society and distribute same to the fisherwomen.
- The distributor informs the society about the number of bags of salt supplied in the second and subsequent rounds with the name of the fisherwomen to whom the salt is supplied.
- The secretary record the entry in her issue register.
- Similarly few fisherwomen directly request the society to supply the salt. In such cases the society inturn give the instructions to the distributor to supply the salt.

- The Secretary with her assistant weekly visits the fish drying yard with the list of borrower of salt.
- Once the delivery is confirmed they record the entry in the small book maintained by each fisherwomen.
- Once in a month society physically verify the stock.
- The distributor keeps the Godown Key with himself.
- This shows the amount of trust and confidence of society with the salt distributor.
- **Maximum and minimum level of stock of salt maintained by the society :**
- Society has the practice of placing re-order when stock level reaches the 300-400 bags and keeps maximum of 5000(300 tons) bags of salt.

Cash Collection practice :

- ❑ There is no stipulated time to pay the buying price.
- ❑ However fisher women pay the price as and when they get the money by selling their product.
- ❑ Finally they settle the account by the end of **April-July every year.**
- ❑ Usually secretary with her assistant visits the fish drying yard every week to cross check and confirm whether the required quantity of salt distributed to the fisher women as per the details given by the supplier.
- ❑ At this time fisherwomen whoever have the money make part payment of their purchase. Therefore, the weekly visits serve dual purposes one is confirming the delivery of salt and secondly collection of dues.
- ❑ The accounts of the society shows that 90% of the dues are collected from the fisherwomen.
- ❑ Only 10% women owe the amount of salt purchased. This is because of the supply of salt at reasonable price .
- ❑ No interest is charged on the outstanding amount.

Practice of making payment to the supplier

- ❑ There is no prefixed conditions for settlement of dues. The society makes the payment either in full or part of the bill depending upon the availability of cash.
- ❑ All the payments are made by cheque.
- ❑ No advance payment is made. This is a clear indication of amount of trust enjoyed by the society from the supplier of salt.
- ❑ The bills are sent along with the transport vehicle and cheque is collected from the society by the commission agent personally

Competition in salt distribution

- Society is facing a competition with two Independent men suppliers.
- Though the society is able to supply the salt to all its members, it has not succeeded in getting the demand from 4-5 group of women groups, because they depend on them for marketing their dry fish.
- Since these women groups need huge money for salt and knowing this fact commission agents who buy the fish started to supply the salt to their customers and these fisherwomen found it as the easiest way of meeting their working capital requirement.

Society's struggle with Port authority

- The cooperative as a social enterprise has helped their members in managing the port land allotted to their members for fish drying activities.
- It has leased five acres of land from the port authorities since 1992 @ Rs. 1.50/sq.m.
- Later port authority increased the lease rate to Rs. 4.50 per sq.metre.
- But in the year 2006 port authority once again increased the rate to Rs. 15 per sq.m (According to Karnataka Ports (Landing and Shipping Fees) (Amendment) Rules, 2006) per . But this proposal was not accepted by the society and society continued to collect the lease @ Rs. 4.50 per sq. m.



- ❑ In 2010 the society has received number of letters from the port authorities, instructing the society to pay the lease at revised rate and warned them to pay the dues from the year 2006 which comes around more than 3, 70,000. In addition to that port authority also levied service tax which was Rs. 32,000.
- ❑ Port Authority issued a notice to society pay a penalty for delay in payment of tax and of delayed tax.
- ❑ The office bearers of the society convinced the the authority - fish drying activity not commercial activity and it is livelihood activity.
- ❑ Society got success in upholding their view.
- ❑ Since 2020-21 port authority charge Rs. 6.10 as lease rent /sq meter per annum . Society inturn collect Rs. 7/sq.meter from the members and service tax at 18% .

- In order to provide basic facilities to the fisher women involved in dry fishing activities (clean water, drainage, clean platform for fish drying, storage, freezing facility, rest rooms, toilets) at the fish drying yard and to supply quality dry fish, society requested the port authority to extend the lease period from 1 year to 30 years.
- After repeated request port authority agreed to extend the lease period for 30 years with some conditions.
- Steps have been initiated to provide basic facilities with assistance of Karnataka Coastal development Authority.

Suggestions

- Shrinking coastal space for fishing related activities was one of the main concerns of the fisher groups. New claimers such as tourism, housing, infrastructure, industries etc have -alienated the land and resources transfer to available for fishing related activities. Therefore, by using the existing legislations, areas currently needed and required for future expansion by fisher groups should be completed protected.
- Land areas customarily used by the women for their livelihood activities should be permanently leased for specified purposes.
- Adequate facilities for drinking water, sanitation and other retail marketing facilities should be provided in the fish drying yards and fish markets, by the government and their maintenance should be entrusted to fisherwomen associations.
- There is a urgent need to formulate the policy to provide rights over coastal land, social security measures (Specific to fishermen and fisherwomen engaged in fishing and related activities)

Conclusion

- Malpe fisherwomen society is a unique society when we compare with other societies, functioning coastal Karnataka. The uniqueness of society lies in two aspects. First one is the involvement of the society in promotion of collective enterprise of fisherwomen i.e by supplying salt to the women involved in fish drying activity. Secondly, managing the port land given to fisherwomen for fish drying.