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INFLUENCING FACTORS OF TEA PRODUCTION IN ASSAM: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Assam is the largest tea producing state in India, which occupied its unique position, by producing more than fifty percent of national tea production. In the year 2015-16, Assam produces 653 Million kg of tea, which is fifty-three percent of national production. Tea Plantation area of Assam is about 3.22 Lakh hectares which is also more than half of the country's total area under tea. Tea industry extended largest support by generating highest employment opportunities in Assam by providing average daily employment to more than six lakh persons in the State, which is around fifty percent of the total average daily waged employee in the country. Assam teas are popular in the foreign countries due to their strong, brisk and full bodied liquor. The industry plays a vital role in the state economy by earning foreign currency as well as through direct and indirect taxes. The growth rate of production of tea in India in general and Assam in particular is not satisfactory in compare to the other tea producing countries like China, Sri Lanka, Kenya etc. Attention to be given for substantial growth of tea production of Tea Industry of Assam, which is the one of the major backbone of economy of the state as well, the country. This paper aims to analyze the total productivity tea production in Tea Industry of Assam. The paper also highlights the partial productivity of tea production of tea Industry of Assam. Data collected through field survey were analyzed using different statistical tools to find the relationship amongst different variables.

KEYWORDS

tea production, productivity analysis, total productivity, partial productivity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tea industry of India is one of the oldest industries in India having more than 180 years old history. East India Company loses its legal monopoly of trade between China and British in the year 1832. As a result, the cultivation of tea was taken up to India in 1834. Presently, India produces 23 percent of world tea production and consumes around 21 percent of total world consumption which is around 80 percent of tea produced inside India. In the year 2015, India produced 1208 million kg of tea from total plantation area of 564 thousand hectare with an average yield of 2142 kg per hectare. India earned foreign exchange of Rs 4086 crores in the year 2015 by exporting 217.67 million kg of tea with an average price of Rs 187.7 per kg. In the same year, India imported 18.61 million kg of tea having cost of Rs 236 crores with an average import price of Rs 127 per kg. Tea industry provides direct employment of 1.27 million workers mainly drawn from the backward and socially weaker section of the society out of which around 50 percent are women worker (second largest employer in the organized sector after Indian Railway). Tea is commercially cultivated in 16 states in India viz, Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Odisha and Bihar. Out of which Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are accounted for more than 95% of the total tea production in India.

Assam occupied unique place in India by producing more than fifty percent of the national production having plantation area of about 3.22 Lakh Hectares which is more than half of the country's total area under tea. Assam teas are popular in the foreign countries which maintaining its international reputation and commands significant share in the World Tea Market due to their strong, brisk and full bodied liquor. Tea industry extended largest support by generating highest employment opportunities in Assam. It is the single largest industry in Assam that provides average daily employment to more than 6.86 lakhs persons in the State, which is around 50 percent of the total average daily waged employee in the country. This Industry also helps in providing indirect employment in different sectors like road construction, transportation, warehouses, manufacture of plywood, tea chest, paper, card board, aluminium foil, tinsplate, metal fittings, fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, iron, steel, coal, etc. The growth rate of production of tea in India in general and Assam in particular is not satisfactory in compare to the other tea producing countries like China, Sri Lanka, Kenya etc.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find the present scenario of tea production in Assam
2. To find the various factors influencing tea production in Assam
3. To find total productivity and partial productivity of Tea production in Assam

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Asopa V.N. (2007) pointed out that the extremist in Assam is one of the major concerns for the declination of the growth of the tea industry.

Saikia Biswajeet (2008) in his study regarding the problems facing by the tea garden worker for their identity and rights. He pointed that tea community in Assam has never received any attention for boosting their development. In this twenty first century these workers are still to get their identify in Assamese society. He found that a section of the youth among the tea garden population those who acquire higher education and leave behind the centuries-old practice of indentured labour, has, to some extent, managed to create an identity for the tea garden community.

Due to higher price, tea producers are facing huge competitions from Sri Lanka, Kenya, Vietnam, Cuba etc., and therefore exports order are gradually falling (**Das H N, 2008**). Non Scientific variation of prices causes reducing demand of Indian tea in general and Assam tea in particular.

Das Ashim Kr (2009) found in his study that tea industry is being effected due to absence of accurate estimates of the formulation of long term industry wise action plans.

Jain Shweta (2011) identified some major factors as being responsible for India's poor performance of tea industry are high input costs, the old age of the bushes, unskilled labor, and lack of infrastructure, poor price realization, legal problems, outdated machinery, high fixed and labor cost, inefficient Tea Board, inability to

compete with other tea producing nations in terms of price, quality, packaging, etc.; slow increase in world demand for tea as compared to the subsequent increase in its supply, losing traditional international buyers and more inclination towards domestic market in comparison to the international market.

Majumder Basu and others (2011) observed that strategies must be adopted to meet up the challenges in global demand for tea industry in India. They suggested promoting tea as health benefit beverage to the nonconventional areas of tea in the world for an expansion in the consumption. Different types of tea products need to be developed for balancing the supply demand chain for the end user.

Hazarika M and other (2011) found that Indian tea industry facing several challenges. Nearly 50 percent of tea bushes in the plantations are more than 50 years old. This factor leads to decline in productivity.

Roy S (2011) suggested to modernize of tea industry of Assam with a change in technique of plantation, improvement of encouragement to the electronic tea auction and managerial excellence.

Mahanta Devajit (2012) observed that tea growers in Assam did not give much attention on the marketing aspect as they always enjoy a readymade market for their product.

Tea sell by auction system where only registered seller, buyer, broker and warehouse can participate in a particular auction. In the auction system producers does not take part in the selling process. The auction system is one sided operation where price determination is mainly controlled by the broker (**Hazarika K, 2012**). The broker fixes price with buyer that inform to the seller accordingly. As a result, seller may not get the actual price that giving by buyer in auction system which effect in the profit margin in the tea industry.

Goowalla H (2012) studied on Labour Relations Practices in Tea Industry of Assam. He pointed that the tea industry in Assam have long been neglecting the human aspect of the organization. He emphasized deal on human aspect in order to produce extra ordinary result in the competitive scenario.

Anil P.V (2013) observed that India occupies the last position among the major tea producing countries regarding yield per hectare apart from exceptional geo-agro-climate situation has created unique conditions that are very suitable for growing a super fine quality of tea. The average tea yield among the major tea producing countries is 2235 Kg/ha, where as it is 1693 Kg/ha in India. Future prospects of the tea plantations may jeopardize due to various constrains and weakness if due attention and appropriate measures are not taken in time.

Arya Nizara (2013) found that the Assam Tea had lost its competitive edge in the market due to price rise. Over the last few years the tea industry is facing problems as the land for tea plantations has not grown much while the work force had multiplied enormously which indicates vast surplus of labour in tea gardens. The industry needs transformation through low prices, incorporation of small estates and cooperative management

4. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data collected through structured questionnaires, personal interviews, field visits. The secondary data gathered from related literature published in the journals, newspaper, books, statements, reports. The nature of study is primarily quantitative, descriptive and analytical.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

(i) **Questionnaire:** structured questionnaires of mix type with open ended, closed ended and multiple choice questions having of a 5-point Likert Scale was used to collect data.

(ii) **Sampling Procedure:**

a) **Type:** Descriptive

b) **Universe of the study:** Exhaustive list of Tea Estate of Assam registered with Tea Board of India having size more than 10.12 hectare is the universe for this study. The total number of large tea estates (having size more than 10.12 Hactare) in Assam registered with Tea Board of India as on 08-09-2010 is 643. Hence universe is 643.

c) **Sample Size:** out of the universe 25 tea estates were selected randomly from the universe for this study to meet objective (a). Two respondents have been taken from each sampled tea estate one as Manager and one Assistant Manager. Hence total respondents are 50. For objective (b) and (c), three tea estates were selected for collection of data.

PRODUCTIVITY

According to Chery (2013), productivity is known as the ratio between the output and input. Mathematical expression given by Chery is as follows:

Productivity = amount of output ÷ amount of input.

Multifactor productivity = Production at standard price ÷ (Labour + material + overhead + capital) price

Labour Productivity = Worker output expressed in rupees ÷ Worker salaries and wages in rupees.

Material Productivity = Production output in rupees ÷ (Raw material + packaging material + supplies) in rupees

Capital Productivity = Total sales in rupees ÷ depreciation in capital assets in rupees.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

A. FACTORS WHICH AFFECT PRODUCTION OF TEA

TABLE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Factors	Most Important Score=4	Very Important Score = 3	Important Score = 2	Less Important Score=1	Not important Score=0	Total Score	Rank
Rainfall	50	0	0	0	0	200	1
Temperature	5	24	20	1	0	133	2
Humidity	4	26	16	4	0	130	3
Windflow	2	6	10	25	7	71	5
Pressure	5	12	18	8	7	100	4

Inference

From the above analysis, it is found that respondents have considered rainfall and temperature is the most important factor followed by Humidity. All respondents pointed rainfall is most important factor amongst all physical parameters. Pressure and wind flow has less impact on production of Tea.

TABLE 2: INFRASTRUCTURE

Factors	Most Important (Score=4)	Very Important (Score = 3)	Important (Score = 2)	Less Important (Score=1)	Not important (Score=0)	Total Score	Rank
Transportation	5	39	5	1	0	148	3
Road Connectivity	45	5	0	0	0	195	1
Irrigation	36	10	4	0	0	182	2
Water Supply	2	26	18	4	0	126	5
Drainage	3	32	8	5	2	129	4

Inference

It is observed from the analysis that the road connectivity and irrigation is the most important factor then other infrastructure parameters. All respondents pointed the road connectivity is most important for production of tea followed by Irrigation. It is found that transportation, drainage and water supply is also important for increase in productivity of tea.

TABLE 3: WORKER

Factors	Most Important (Score=4)	Very Important (Score = 3)	Important (Score = 2)	Less Important (Score=1)	Not important (Score=0)	Total Score	Rank
Skilled worker	50	0	0	0	0	200	1
Male worker	0	0	0	16	34	16	4
Female Worker	0	0	0	8	42	8	5
Casual Worker	5	2	36	4	0	102	3
Permanent Worker	16	33	1	0	0	165	2

Inference

It is found from the observation that skilled workers are most important factor followed by permanent worker for increase in production of tea. Casual worker placed as 3rd rank by the respondents. However the gender of worker is less important for production of tea.

TABLE 4: ENERGY

Factors	Most Important (Score=4)	Very Important (Score = 3)	Important (Score = 2)	Less Important (Score=1)	Not important (Score=0)	Total Score	Rank
Electricity	50	0	0	0	0	200	1
Coal	5	24	20	1	0	170	2
Furnace oil	0	4	36	6	4	90	3
Crude oil	0	0	0	6	44	6	5
Natural Gas	2	2	8	34	4	64	4

Inference

It is observed from the analysis that the Electricity is the most important factor then other energy parameters. All respondents pointed the electricity is most important factor for production of tea followed by coal. It is found that Furnace oil, Crude oil and Natural Gas as less impact on production of tea.

TABLE 5: TECHNOLOGY

Factors	Most Important (Score=4)	Very Important (Score = 3)	Important (Score = 2)	Less Important (Score=1)	Not important (Score=0)	Total Score	Rank
Technology for plantation	6	26	12	4	2	130	2
Technology for Plucking Green Leaf	9	29	11	1	0	146	1
Technology for Processing Green Leaf	5	19	19	6	1	121	3
Technology for Packaging	0	7	33	6	4	93	4
Technology for Marketing	2	9	16	21	2	88	5

Inference

It is found that from the above analysis that "technology for plucking of green leaf" is most important factor for productivity of tea followed by "Technology for Plantation". As per respondents view, Technology for processing of green leaf is also important while technology for packaging and technology for marketing is less important.

TABLE 6: MATERIAL

Factors	Most Important (Score=4)	Very Important (Score = 3)	Important (Score = 2)	Less Important (Score=1)	Not important (Score=0)	Total Score	Rank
Pesticide	16	26	8	0	0	158	2
Fertilizer	39	9	2	0	0	187	1
Cultivating Materials	7	29	9	4	1	137	3
Irrigation Materials	0	23	23	4	0	119	4
Packaging Materials	2	9	33	6	0	107	5

Inference

Amongst the materials, it is found from the above analysis that fertilizer is most important factor followed by pesticides then followed by cultivating materials. Irrigation materials are also important while packaging materials are less important.

TABLE 7: INPUT COST

Factors	Most Important (Score=4)	Very Important (Score = 3)	Important (Score = 2)	Less Important (Score=1)	Not important (Score=0)	Total Score	Rank
Worker Cost	46	2	2	0	0	194	1
Material Cost	39	7	4	0	0	185	2
Capital cost	7	9	32	2	0	121	3
Welfare Cost	0	23	13	12	2	107	4
Misc	0	11	30	9	0	102	5

Inference

It is observed from the above analysis that worker cost is the most important factor followed by material cost. All respondents mentioned the worker cost is most important amongst all input cost. Capital Cost, Welfare Cost and Miscellaneous Cost are less important factor in the productivity of tea.

TABLE 8: INPUT AND OUTPUT 2010-2015 OF TEA ESTATE - 1

YEAR	Employee Wages (Lakh)	Energy (Lakh)	Material (Lakh)	Capital (Lakh)	Subsidized Ration (Lakh)	Misc (Lakh)	Total Input Cost (Lakh)	Total Monetary Output (Lakh)
2010	61.19	44.44	30.69	30.05	26.11	19.17	211.65	296.33
2011	70.23	47.38	36.89	31.87	28.56	15.67	230.6	283.65
2012	98.32	54.73	39.31	35.56	32.19	20.71	280.82	362.79
2013	102.06	64.2	48.89	39.07	35.65	15.88	305.75	383.01
2014	133.34	79.34	54.47	45.01	37.23	26.27	375.66	584.38
2015	145.82	80.45	67.36	46.36	39.56	16.7	396.25	578.36

TABLE 9: TOTAL PRODUCTIVITY AND PARTIAL PRODUCTIVITY OF TEA ESTATE - 1

YEAR	Total Productivity	Partial Productivity					
		Employee Wages	Energy	Material	Capital	Subsidized Ration	Misc
2010	1.4	4.84	6.67	9.66	9.86	11.35	15.46
2011	1.23	4.04	5.99	7.69	8.9	9.93	18.1
2012	1.29	3.69	6.63	9.22	10.2	11.27	17.51
2013	1.25	3.75	5.96	7.83	9.8	10.74	24.11
2014	1.56	4.38	7.36	10.72	12.98	15.69	22.24
2015	1.46	3.96	7.19	8.58	12.47	14.61	34.63

TABLE 10: INPUT AND OUTPUT 2010-2015 OF TEA ESTATE - 2

YEAR	Employee Wages (Lakh)	Energy (Lakh)	Material (Lakh)	Capital (Lakh)	Subsidized Ration (Lakh)	Misc (Lakh)	Total Input Cost (Lakh)	Total Monetary Output (Lakh)
2010	285.37	138.08	174.9	82.84	156.49	82.87	920.55	1178.32
2011	359.68	185.42	168.63	93.43	224.84	92.2	1124.2	1528.92
2012	407.12	205.32	176.49	82.36	230.45	74.89	1176.63	1906.16
2013	397.64	217.46	195.37	88.42	225.39	88.36	1212.64	1787.12
2014	395.32	239.56	201.34	90.25	205.23	93.86	1225.56	1770.95
2015	449.52	287.12	211.76	95.23	201.19	106.09	1350.91	2029.53

TABLE 11: TOTAL PRODUCTIVITY AND PARTIAL PRODUCTIVITY OF TEA ESTATE - 2

YEAR	Total Productivity	Partial Productivity					
		Employee Wages	Energy	Material	Capital	Subsidized Ration	Misc
2010	1.28	4.13	8.53	6.73	14.22	7.52	14.22
2011	1.36	4.25	8.24	9.06	16.36	6.8	16.58
2012	1.62	4.68	9.28	10.8	23.14	8.27	25.45
2013	1.47	4.49	8.21	9.14	20.21	7.92	20.22
2014	1.44	4.47	7.39	8.79	19.62	8.63	18.87
2015	1.50	4.51	7.06	9.58	21.31	10.08	19.13

TABLE 12: INPUT AND OUTPUT 2010-2015 OF TEA ESTATE - 3

YEAR	Employee Wages (Lakh)	Energy (Lakh)	Material (Lakh)	Capital (Lakh)	Subsidized Ration (Lakh)	Misc (Lakh)	Total Input Cost (Lakh)	Total Monetary Output (Lakh)
2010	71.55	56.74	27.14	36.45	29.6	25.25	246.73	335.56
2011	98.59	70.11	39.67	37.16	39.16	30.14	314.83	418.73
2012	100.26	73.65	41.56	37.77	40.17	26.81	320.22	387.46
2013	118.22	82.08	44.15	39.86	45.66	60.92	390.89	485.26
2014	121.15	85.34	46.98	38.19	47.19	56.72	395.57	470.95
2015	135.48	88.55	55.66	42.18	52.81	55.48	430.16	554.03

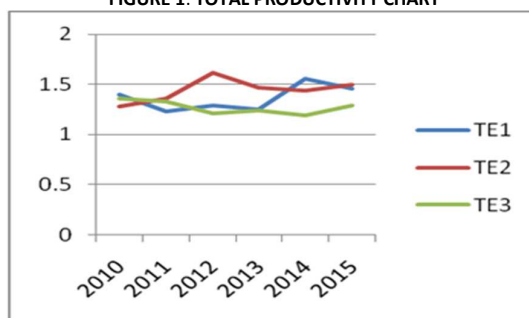
TABLE 13: TOTAL PRODUCTIVITY AND PARTIAL PRODUCTIVITY OF TEA ESTATE - 3

YEAR	Total Productivity	Partial Productivity					
		Employee Wages	Energy	Material	Capital	Subsidized Ration	Misc
2010	1.36	4.69	5.91	12.36	9.2	11.33	13.29
2011	1.33	4.24	5.97	10.55	11.26	10.69	13.89
2012	1.21	3.86	5.26	9.32	10.25	9.64	14.45
2013	1.24	4.1	5.91	11	12.17	10.62	7.96
2014	1.19	3.88	5.51	10.02	12.33	9.98	8.30
2015	1.29	4.09	6.25	13.13	10.49	10	9.98

TABLE 14: TOTAL PRODUCTIVITY FROM 2010-2015 OF TEA ESTATE -1, TEA ESTATE - 2 AND TEA ESTATE - 3

Year	TE1	TE2	TE3
2010	1.4	1.28	1.36
2011	1.23	1.36	1.33
2012	1.29	1.62	1.21
2013	1.25	1.47	1.24
2014	1.56	1.44	1.19
2015	1.46	1.5	1.29

FIGURE 1: TOTAL PRODUCTIVITY CHART



6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (TOTAL PRODUCTIVITY)

It is observed from the table 9 that the total productivity of Tea Estate – 1 was 1.4 in the year 2010, which is decreased to 1.23 in the year 2011 and again increased slightly in the year 2012 and become 1.29. The total productivity again decreases to 1.25 in the year 2013 and then increased in next year on 2014 to reaches 1.56, which is, further became 1.46 in the year 2015 showing a decreasing trend.

The total productivity of Tea Estate -2 has shown in the Table 11. The value shows an increasing trend in three consecutive years from 2010 to 2012. The total productivity was 1.28 in the year 2010, which increased to 1.36 in the year 2011 and reached 1.62 by the year 2012. The value decreased in the year 2013 to 1.47 and by the year 2015, it increases to reach 1.5.

Tea Estate -3 showing a mixed trend for total productivity from 2010-2015. The table 13 shows the decreasing trend from the year 2010 to 2012. The total productivity in the year 2010, 2011 and 2012 was 1.36, 1.33 and 1.21 respectively. The value has increased to 1.24 in the year 2013 and again decreases in the year 2014. The total productivity has increased again to 1.29 in the year 2015.

7. CONCLUSION

From last decade the production and growth of these tea industries of Assam, which are backbone of the economy of the state as well as largest employment generator, are not up to the mark. The growth of the industry is not satisfactory due to different reasons. Many factors have been cited as causing the crisis in the Indian tea sector—since the late 1990's.

Assam tea is known world over for its distinctive quality. Out of all tea producing states of the country, Assam is the largest tea producing states. The Tea industry occupies an important place in Assam and plays a very special role in the State economy in particular and in the national economy in general. Government earns good amount of revenue in the form of VAT, Sale Tax, and Income Tax etc. Most of these tea growers are come under direct slab of income tax as a result government receiving a good amount of revenue from these tax payers.

Tea Industry is a labour oriented industry where huge manpower required for running plantation and factories activity. The tea industry in Assam provides average daily employment to more than six lakh persons in the state, which is around 50 percent of the total average daily number of labour in India. At present more than 9,00,000 people are involved in the small tea growing business in Assam. Almost 250,000 hectares of land is covered for such plantations around 20 percent of the total population of Assam belong to the tea garden employee that is one of the biggest organized work force and is the biggest contributors to the economy of Assam. Most of these registered large size gardens are owned by national and multinational companies. But the small tea growers having cultivation land area is less than three acres accounted for 30 percent of the total tea produced in the State, which is 14 percent of the total tea production of India. Most of the unemployed youth of Assam are engaged in this business as small tea growers.

All the complied data is the cause of serious concern as it is reflecting the sick condition of the tea industry of Assam. It is important to revive this industry where about 25% of total population of Assam is directly and indirectly engaged. A strong initiative should be taken to revive this industry as it was before 2001 and to get back its pride in international market.

For optimum benefit of the industry may give emphasize to produce value-added products like medicinal tea, organic tea, genetically modified varieties of tea plants and flavored tea.

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