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## HISTORICAL SURVEY OF MARTHANDANTHURAI

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### ABSTRACT

*In India 15% of the total population are involving in fishing and the sea fare activities. In Tamil Nadu Kanyakumari district comes under the first place for fishing and fishmarkets. 68 km of the boarder of Kanyakumari District is a covered by the sea. On eastern side the sea covered from Vattakottai to Kanyakumari, and on Western side the sea covered from Kanyakumari to Neerodi. Generally MartandaMthuari is considered to be a most populated area. It is coming under the Kollemcode town panchayat. According to 2001 census the total population of the Kollemcode town panchayat was 34,322. Of the Kollemcode town panchayat there are 4 slums namely Manchathopu, Vallavilai, Neerodithurai and Marthandanthurai. Marthandanthurai slum consist of 369 families and 2467 people approximately. Almost all the people of Marthandanthurai are doing fishing. The project group selected the life situation of the fisher folk of Marthandamthurai for their field study.*



**KEY WORDS:** *fishing, fisher folk, Social condition ,Economic condition, Religious condition, Political condition, Position of Women.*

### INTRODUCTION

Marthandanthurai Village is a place belongs to Kollemcode Panchayat of Vilavancode Taluk. Almost all the people of Marthandanthurai are having a close touch with the sea, because this place is situated near the seashore. Among the people of this are most of them are Christians. In their day to day life they are meeting with various problems and challenges. In this work we have analysed the social problems, Economic conditions, the position of women fisher folk and the condition of the A. V. M. canal at Marthandanthurai.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the social problems of the fisher folk at Marthandanthurai.
2. Economic condition of the people
3. To analyze the educational status of the fisher folk
4. To study the political and religious awareness of the people.
5. To study various helps from the government and other sources.
6. To assess the position of women at Marthanthurai

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**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

For writing this study, I have scientifically adopted descriptive method and investigative method. Through the Descriptive Method we can understand the real situations and the problems of the people. The investigative method helps to see the real life style of the people and their economic, positional, religious, and social improvement.

**TOOLS OR MATERIAL OF THE STUDY:****Primary data:**

For collecting the primary data, we have prepared the questionnaire and collected information. They collected various information, by asking questions to the people. This is the primary source of the study.

**Secondary data:**

The secondary sources also played a vital role for this project work. We have got information from books and newspapers. The Tamil newspaper "Thina Thanthi" dated 23-02-2002, the book "Folklore of fishermen in Kanyakumari District – Astuday" by Dr.N. Stephenson, and the article, "The A. V. M. Canal –Present and future" by Dr. Issac Jayadas, published in the Book "Water sources of the South West Coast" are the main secondary sources to study the various problems of fisher folk at Marthandanthurai.

**Questionnaire:**

The questionnaire is the important aspect of the study with various aspects of the questions. Based on the topic of the study the questions are compiled. The questionnaire contains the name, address, and family background, political, social, economic and religious condition of the people. The answers of the questions bring the required information regarding the theme.

**Social condition :**

During the time of fishing the fishermen of this area met with so many problems. The small hurts of fisherfolk were often affected because of the sudden storm prevailing near the seashore. At such times so many people lose their hurts and their goods. The government is not in a position to help this affected people in time.

**Economic condition:**

Fishermen of Marthandanthurai often meet with economic distress. At that time, the local parish church of the area comes forward to help the people by giving loans. Another practice in this area is, some of the rich in this place helped the poor fisherfolk by giving their machine boats for rent. The fisherfolk used that boat for fishing. Generally, they have to pay-half of the income to the boat owners. The rest of the amount may be used for the maintenance of machine boat, fuel and to meet the expense of their families.

Generally, the fisherfolk doesn't have any intension of saving the money. During the period of good catch, they get a considerable amount of money. But they spend the money within a few days. They have no eagerness to store the money for the future generation and so they often have to meet with starvation- Because of the lack of education, their economic condition is declining day by day.

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### 3. EDUCATIONAL CONDITION:

In Marthandanthurai almost 60%, of the people receives primary education. .But a very few of them have higher education like Degree and professional courses. Because of the effort taken by the church, a school called "St. Alosious Higher Secondary School" was started in this place in 25<sup>th</sup> October 1985. In the High school and Higher Secondary level 7500 of the students studying in that school are coming from outside of Marthandanthurai. In Marthandanthurai most of the parents are not able to send their children to school because of their economic poverty. In some rich families also the parents have no interest to send their children for higher education. In Marthandanthurai a person named Isaac got his B.Sc degree thirty years ago. At present more than 20% of the people of that area are B.A, B.sc., and B.com degrees holders. One of the unfortunate things is the increase in the number of educated people day by day. But a handful of people got employment opportunities.

### 4. RELIGIOUS CONDITION :

The church played a vital role in the development of the people of Marthandanthurai. The church in this place is under the administration of Thiruvananthapuram catholic Diocese. Rt. Rev. Dr. M. Soosai Pakiam is the present Bishop of the Trivandrum Diocese. The church of this area was founded in the year 1960 and the foundation stone was laid by the Bishop of the Diocese. Father Jerom D. Fernandes is the presence Parish priest of the Marthandanthurai Catholic Church. 790 families in this area are under the direct control of parish priest. A Parish Council as constituted to help the parish priest in administration. There are 12 members elected in the council. Among them a secretary and a treasurer are selected. Under the guidance of the Parish Priest the Parish Council solved so many political, social and religious problems.

For the administrative convenience the church area was divided into 34 units. Out of the 34 units, the concerned people of each unit elected their own president and secretary. The President and the secretary of the units discussed with the parish priest about the problems of the units, and solved it smoothly. The income of the church is coming from the subscriptions and contributions given by the fisherfolk and the coconut estate owned by the church. The fishermen of Marthandanthurai keep close attachment with the church. Usually, they honoured the word of the parish priest very much.

### 5. POLITICAL CONDITION :

Marthandanthurai people have a light touch with the politics of the country. Almost 60% of the people got voting right. At the time of election generally they jointly take a decision for choosing a suitable candidate for their betterment. Ten years back congress party got the majority in this place. But now the majority is in the hands of the Communist Marxist Party.

### 6. POSITION OF WOMEN:

40% of the total population of Marthandanthurai is womenfolk- Among them 15% females are literates. In general the women fork of Marthandanthurai is living with equalstatus. They are helping their husbands is by selling fishes in the market. One of the important feature of the women in that area is to do hard work without wasting their time for their upliftment in the society. They worked hard with their husband for their livelihood. Marthandanthurai is an example for the unity of womenfolk. Sometimes they may have quarrel among themselves in the market, when they are selling fishes. But very soon their problem may be settled.

Another feature of the women at Marthandanthurai is to form a women's association for their betterment particularly at the time of their marriages. They spend the reasonable amount for the marriage expenditure. The women’s association used to help the poor children by starting nursery and primary schools.

The investigator visited Marthandantliurar and the nearby places of changuviragam, Kandaviragam, Medavilagam, Irrayumanthope and interviewed 60 persons. The group asked the above said questions with the people. Through those questions the project group received the answers to form a clear cut picture about the social life of fishing community.

**TABLE – 1**

Status of the people	Number	Percentage
Low class people	32	<b>53.33</b>
Middle Class people	23	<b>38.33</b>
Upper class people	2	<b>834</b>

The table 1 contains the data Analysis of social status of the people of Marthandanthurai. Through the questionnaire method the project group found out, out of 60 people 53.33% get the status of low class 38.33% come to the status of middle class and the rest of the g.34"h are hailing to the status of upper class- The above said matter is clearly projecting through the following graph No.1

**Table 2**

Educational Status	Number	Percentage
Able to send the higher education	26	43.33
Not able to send higher education	34	56.67

Educational status of the people of the project area is very low, when we compare with other areas of the district. In the midst of their poverty and social distress 43 .33o/o of the people are able to send their children for higher studies

(\*z level). The majority of the people (56.67%) are not able to send their children for higher education. The majority people in that area are living under poverty. So that they could not provide proper education to their children.

**FINDINGS:**

1. In total the condition of Marthandanthurai area is insanitary and unhealthy for human habitation. There is no proper toilet facilities and rainage system are available in that area.
2. Systematic basic education has not yet reached the fisherfolk. Hence the children of fishersfolk also involve in the fishing work – without attending school.
3. The fisherfolk at Marthandanthurai used to throw, the rubbish, wastages, human excreata into the sea and allow the drainages to be mixed with the sea water. By that way the seashore and the nearby areas are polluted.
4. Generally, the above said area is under condition. The village has no proper drainage that the place is creating a bad smell.
5. The people in that area led an open door life. The fishermen had strong bodies because of their nature of work in the sea. Through fishing they get a very good exercise to their bodies. So in general more than 90% of the people have strong body with strong mind.

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6. The fisherfolk are generally having much faith in their religion. Almost all of them are catholic Christians. They are respecting the word of parish priest. The religion of that are is a source of inspiration to make unity among themselves.

#### RECOMMENDATION :

1. Most of the area of Marthandanthurai are not protected from the sea. The Tamil Nadu government is taking some steps for constructing sea walls here and there. If the government comes forward to sanction more amount for the construction of sea walls their it will a ray of hope in the life of the future fishermen.
2. Five years back the government of Tamilnadu has given out boat engine to the fisherfolk on the basis of loan. But later on this system was abolished because of the problem of repayment. If the government is ready to receive this plan it will be very much useful to the community.
3. Another important recommendation of the study group is to create awareness among the fishing community at Marthandanthurai about sanitation, cleanness of the environment, keeping the rubbish and wastages in the proper place, systematic drainage etc. this may be done with the help of parish church and its organizations, voluntary organizations, non-government organizations etc.

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