### "UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABILITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON COIR SOCIETIES IN THE CONTEXT OF VAIKOM"

#### Dissertation submitted to

Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

#### MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

specialising in

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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**DECLARATION** 

I Adithya S Bhanu hereby declare that the research work titled "Understanding

sustainability: A qualitative study on coir societies in the context of Vaikom" submitted to

the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, is a record of genuine and original work done by

me under the guidance of, Dr. Sheena Rajan Philp, Assistant Professor, Bharata Mata School

of Social Work Thrikkakara, and this research work is submitted in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Social Work specialising in Community

Development.

I hereby declare that the results embedded in this research have not been submitted to any other

University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma, to the best of my knowledge

and belief.

Place: Thrikkakara

Date:

Adithya S Bhanu

2

### **List of contents**

Sl. No	Title	Page No.
01	Title page	i
02	Certificate	ii
03	Declaration	iii
04	Abstract	iv
05	Acknowledgment	
06	List of Contents	vi
07	Chapters	
	Introduction	
	Review of Literature	
	Research Methodology	
	Descriptive cases	
	Discussion and Suggestions	
	Conclusion	
	Implication of Professional social Work Practice	
08	Bibliography	
09	Appendix	

#### **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study investigates the sustainability dynamics of coir societies in Vaikom, offering insight on their historical evolution, contemporary issues, and social factors. Through narrative analysis, the study reveals a rich tapestry of tradition and community resilience mixed with economic difficulties and social dynamics. Coir societies, once prosperous centres of traditional coir production, are now facing economic challenges such as fluctuating market demand, increased production costs, and competition from synthetic alternatives. Limited access to credit and financial assistance exacerbates their situation, emphasising the importance of targeted measures to improve economic resilience and sustainability.

Furthermore, sociological elements, such as community interactions, gender dynamics, and social attitudes, have a significant impact on coir societies' operations and resilience. Strong community links and shared values encourage collaboration and collaborative action, whereas inclusive decision-making processes promote social cohesion and resilience. The study emphasises the necessity of recognising coir societies as essential parts of Vaikom's social and economic fabric, as well as lobbying for gender equality, good social attitudes, and supportive legislation to maintain their long-term viability and sustainability. By tackling the multifaceted issues that coir societies face, stakeholders in Vaikom may collaborate to create a more inclusive and resilient future for coir workers and their communities.

## CHAPTER 1

## **INTRODUCTION**

In recent decades, the imperative of sustainability has emerged as a pivotal concern across various domains, ranging from environmental conservation to socioeconomic development. At its core, sustainability embodies the notion of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). Within the purview of socioeconomic sustainability, the role of community-based organizations and cooperatives in fostering sustainable livelihoods has garnered significant attention (MacPherson, 2015).

In this qualitative study, we delve into the intricate dynamics of sustainability within the context of coir societies in Vaikom, Kerala. Coir societies represent an emblematic example of community-based enterprises deeply rooted in local traditions and practices. The coir industry, which revolves around the extraction and processing of coconut fibers, plays a pivotal role in the socioeconomic fabric of Kerala, contributing significantly to employment generation and income augmentation (Nair & Selvaraju, 2019).

However, the sustainability of coir societies in Vaikom is confronted with multifaceted challenges, including but not limited to ecological degradation, market fluctuations, and sociopolitical pressures. By conducting an in-depth qualitative exploration, this research seeks to unravel the underlying mechanisms that either facilitate or impede the sustainability of coir societies in Vaikom.

#### **COIR**

Coir is a natural fiber derived from the husk of coconuts. It is a versatile material with various applications in industries such as agriculture, horticulture, landscaping, and manufacturing.

Coir is primarily composed of lignin, cellulose, and hemicellulose, making it a strong and durable fiber (Coir Board, n.d.).

The process of obtaining coir begins with the extraction of coconut husks, which are the fibrous outer layer surrounding the coconut seed. These husks are typically soaked in water to soften them, a process known as retting. After retting, the fibers are separated from the husks through mechanical or manual processes. The extracted fibers are then sorted, cleaned, and dried to produce raw coir (Srinivasan & Philip, 2015).

Coir can be further processed into different forms depending on its intended use. The most common forms of coir include:

1. Coir Fiber: These are long, thick fibers extracted from the outer husk of the coconut. Coir fibers are known for their strength, durability, and resistance to saltwater, making them ideal for use in products such as mats, ropes, brushes, and geotextiles.

- 2. <u>Coir Peat or Coco Peat</u>: This is the fine, dust-like material obtained from the ground coconut husk. Coir peat is valued for its high-water retention capacity, aeration properties, and ability to improve soil structure. It is widely used as a growing medium in horticulture and agriculture, particularly in potting mixes and hydroponic systems.
- 3. <u>Coir Pith or Coco Pith:</u> Coir pith is the spongy material that remains after extracting coir fibers and peat. It is rich in organic matter and has excellent water retention properties, making it an ideal soil conditioner and amendment. Coir pith is commonly used to improve soil fertility, moisture retention, and aeration in gardening and landscaping applications (Srinivasan & Philip, 2015).

Coir is prized for its sustainability and eco-friendliness, as it is a renewable resource that is biodegradable and compostable. It is also resistant to mold, fungi, and pests, making it a preferred choice for organic and environmentally conscious applications. Additionally, coir production provides livelihoods for millions of people in coconut-growing regions around the world, contributing to rural economies and sustainable development.

Coir is a versatile natural fiber derived from coconut husks, with diverse applications ranging from mats and ropes to soil amendments and growing mediums. Its strength, durability, and eco-friendly properties make it a valuable resource in various industries, while its sustainability and contribution to rural livelihoods underscore its importance in global trade and agriculture (Coir Board, n.d.).

#### **COIR SOCIETY**

A coir society in Kerala refers to a cooperative organization or collective formed by coir workers, artisans, and stakeholders involved in the production, processing, and marketing of coir products. These societies operate within the framework of cooperative principles, with the primary objective of promoting the welfare and interests of their members while advancing the coir industry as a whole.

Coir societies, deeply ingrained in the values of community cooperation, stand as the backbone of the coir industry in Vaikom, Kerala. These societies have been instrumental in safeguarding and passing on the ancient craft of coir weaving from one generation to the next. By serving as centralized hubs of production, they facilitate the connection between local artisans, markets,

and essential resources. However, in the face of globalization and modernization, the sustainability of these coir societies in Vaikom is being put to the test like never before.

The traditional ethos of community cooperation upon which coir societies are built has been central to their success over the years. These societies operate on principles of mutual support, collective decision-making, and shared resources, fostering a sense of solidarity among coir workers and artisans. By pooling their expertise and resources, coir societies have been able to navigate through challenges and thrive in the ever-changing landscape of the coir industry. Yet, the relentless march of globalization and modernization presents a new set of challenges for coir societies in Vaikom. One such challenge is the changing market dynamics driven by global trade patterns and consumer preferences. As demand for coir products fluctuates and competition intensifies, coir societies must adapt to evolving market trends to remain competitive. Additionally, the influx of synthetic alternatives poses a threat to the traditional coir industry, requiring coir societies to innovate and diversify their product offerings to stay relevant.

Moreover, the advent of modern technologies and mechanized production methods has reshaped the coir industry, altering traditional practices and workflows. While mechanization has the potential to increase efficiency and productivity, it also poses challenges such as job displacement and the erosion of traditional craftsmanship. Coir societies must strike a delicate balance between embracing technological advancements and preserving the cultural heritage of coir weaving.

Furthermore, environmental sustainability has emerged as a pressing concern for coir societies in Vaikom. As awareness grows regarding the ecological impact of coir production, there is a growing need for sustainable practices that minimize environmental footprint. Coir societies must adopt eco-friendly production methods, such as responsible sourcing of raw materials and

waste management practices, to mitigate their environmental impact and ensure the long-term viability of the coir industry.

While coir societies in Vaikom have long been bastions of community cooperation and cultural preservation, they face an array of challenges in the modern era, from navigating changing market dynamics to embracing technological advancements and promoting environmental sustainability.

#### COIR SOCIETY IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Coir, made from the fibres of coconut husks, has been used for ages in numerous cultures around the world due to its exceptional versatility and durability. However, coir production has thrived in the coastal regions of South and Southeast Asia, particularly in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Philippines, resulting in strong coir-based economies and communities. Coir societies, or cooperative societies that extract, process, and trade coir products, are the foundation of these economies, expressing the rich cultural legacy and collective resourcefulness of coastal communities.

Coir cultures' global relevance stems not just from their economic achievements, but also from their sociocultural and environmental components. Economically, the coir sector supports the livelihoods of millions of people worldwide, offering job opportunities for both rural and urban populations, particularly in areas with abundant coconut palm plantations (Kuruppuarachchi, 2017). Furthermore, coir exports are a substantial source of foreign exchange gains for many coir-producing countries, helping to balance trade and promote economic development (Mohammed, 2018).

Socio-culturally, coir societies serve as focal points of community cohesion and identity, encouraging members to act in solidarity and collectively. Traditional knowledge and skills for coir extraction and weaving are passed down through generations, strengthening coastal communities' cultural legacy and supporting their sense of belonging (Fernando, 2016). Furthermore, coir-based activities frequently serve as platforms for social interaction and cultural expression, with festivals and ceremonies centred on coir weaving and trading functioning as significant cultural markers (Jayasinghe 2019).

From an environmental aspect, the coir industry provides sustainable alternatives to synthetic materials, hence lowering the ecological imprint of numerous industries such as agriculture, horticulture, and soil erosion prevention. Coir fibres, which are biodegradable and renewable, help to save soil, retain water in arid locations, and protect biodiversity (Narayanan et al., 2020). Furthermore, the coir extraction method produces low waste, with byproducts such as coir dust being used in soil amendment and waste water treatment (Thamban et al., 2018).

Despite their inherent virtues, coir cultures face numerous obstacles in the modern global setting. Rapid urbanisation, industrialization, and globalisation have altered consumption patterns and market dynamics, threatening the traditional livelihoods and practices of coirdependent people (Sundaresan, 2020). Furthermore, climate change-induced events like cyclones and sea level rise pose existential challenges to the coconut palm ecosystems that support the coir business (Kumar et al., 2019). Furthermore, difficulties of market competitiveness, quality standards compliance, and technical innovation all represent substantial barriers to the long-term expansion and development of coir societies in the global arena (Tissera and Wijekoon, 2017).

#### **COIR INDUSTRY IN KERALA**

Nestled along the lush coastline of southwestern India, Kerala is a place of rich cultural tradition and natural beauty. Among its many riches, the coir industry stands out as a perfect representation of Kerala's individuality and tenacity. With a rich history of tradition and invention, the coir industry has helped shape Kerala's socioeconomic landscape and cultural heritage.

The coir business in Kerala has a long and rich history, with allusions to coir extraction and weaving appearing in historical literature and archaeological data (Kumaran & Krishnamoorthy, 2016). The main material for coir manufacture comes from coconut palms, which thrive in Kerala's coastal districts. The expert extraction of fibres from coconut husks and their translation into a diverse range of items such as mats, ropes, brushes, and fabrics exemplifies Kerala's craftsmen' inventiveness and resourcefulness (Kumaran and Krishnamoorthy, 2016).

Beyond its economic value, the coir sector is very culturally significant to the people of Kerala. Coir weaving is more than just a source of income; it is a treasured family custom passed down through generations. The rhythmic clatter of looms, the earthy aroma of coir fibres, and the elaborate designs that cover coir items all point to a centuries-long tradition of craftsmanship. Coir weaving is profoundly ingrained in Keralan traditional rites, festivals, and daily life, representing tenacity, ingenuity, and communal spirit (Velayudhan, 2019).

The coir business provided a key economic lifeline for innumerable towns throughout Kerala, employing thousands of workers organised into coir societies. These societies, founded on the ideals of collaboration and mutual aid, are critical to the production, processing, and marketing of coir products (Kumaran & Krishnamoorthy, 2016). From the busy coir markets of

Alappuzha to the isolated villages of Kuttanad, the industry's impact extends throughout Kerala, boosting rural livelihoods and economic success.

Despite its long history and cultural significance, Kerala's coir industry confronts numerous obstacles in the modern period. Globalisation, technical improvements, and environmental sustainability concerns have transformed the coir sector landscape, creating both opportunities and dangers to its long-term viability and expansion (Kumaran & Krishnamoorthy, 2016). Understanding the characteristics of Kerala's coir sector is critical to guaranteeing its long-term viability and resilience in the face of these challenges.

#### KERALA'S GEOGRAPHY AND COIR PRODUCTION

Kerala's terrain, with its coastal plains, backwaters, and tropical temperature, contributes significantly to the production of coir, a flexible natural fibre made from coconut husks.

Kerala's coastal districts are lined with massive coconut plantations, garnering it the nickname "Land of Coconuts" (Thomas, 2018). The state's tropical climate, with plenty of rainfall and sunshine, is suitable for coconut farming. As a result, Kerala has an abundant supply of coconut husks, the basic ingredient for coir manufacture.

Kerala's coastal plains, which run along the Arabian Sea, are home to several coir-producing villages and cities (Thomas, 2018). These low-lying areas, which are crisscrossed by a network of backwaters and estuaries, allow convenient access to waterways used to transport raw materials and finished coir products. The proximity to water bodies also aids in the retting process, which is an important stage in coir production.

Kerala's coir business is deeply rooted in traditional craftsmanship that has been passed down through centuries. The state's cultural legacy and experienced workers help to ensure the quality and authenticity of Kerala's coir products. Artisans in coir-producing areas such as Alappuzha, Kollam, and Kayamkulam are well-known for their skills in weaving mats, ropes, and other coir items.

Retting, the technique of removing fibres from coconut husks, is an important step in coir production (Nair & Sreenath, 2017). Kerala's wide network of backwaters provide a perfect environment for natural retting, in which coconut husks are soaked in water to soften their fibres. Warm temperatures and brackish water promote microbial action, which helps to break down the husks and release the fibres for spinning.

Kerala's terrain has influenced the ancient methods of coir production used in the region. However, the coir business has also embraced innovation and modernization in order to fulfil shifting market demands (Thomas, 2018).

Kerala's terrain, with its coastal plains, backwaters, and tropical climate, creates an ideal location for coir production. The abundance of coconut palms, traditional craftsmanship, and proximity to water bodies all contribute to the state's dominance in the coir sector.

#### COIR PRODUCTION AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN VAIKOM

The craft of coir weaving has thrived for generations in the peaceful environs of Vaikom, Kerala, weaving itself intricately into the fabric of daily life. The legacy of coir production reigns supreme here, amidst the tranquil vistas and abundant flora, its roots firmly planted in the rich soil of Kerala's cultural heritage (Nair & Sreenath, 2017). Coir, created from the fibrous

husk of the coconut palm, represents resilience and innovation, serving as a foundation for both tradition and modernity in this scenic region.

Coir weaving has been a source of income for the people of Vaikom for centuries, with complicated processes and talents passed down from generation to generation (Thomas, 2018). The rhythmic clatter of looms and the earthy aroma of coconut husks fill the air, acting as a constant reminder of the region's long-standing coir producing tradition. From humble beginnings, coir weaving has grown into a thriving business that employs and feeds countless people in Vaikom and beyond.

The importance of coir in Kerala's cultural tapestry cannot be emphasised (Velayudhan 2019). It is more than just a material for weaving mats, ropes, and brushes; it represents the people of Vaikom's identity and pride. The traditional technique of coir production has been maintained and kept for ages, demonstrating a strong bond between the land, the people, and their way of life. Coir weaving is more than simply a source of income; it is also a way to preserve ancestral traditions and pass along cultural legacy to future generations.

The coir industry in Vaikom is more than just a source of income; it is a way of life. Coir weaving has provided nourishment for families for as long as they can remember, with each home adding to the region's rich tapestry of coir production in the past. The cooperative attitude of coir societies, in which craftspeople pool their resources and knowledge, strengthens the sense of community and belonging that is central to Vaikom's coir business.

Despite the passage of time and the winds of change, the tradition of coir weaving endures in Vaikom (Nair and Sreenath, 2017). While modernity and technological improvements have led to changes in production methods, the essence of coir production - its resilience, adaptability, and deep connection to the soil - has remained constant. Despite problems such as fluctuating

market needs and environmental concerns, the inhabitants of Vaikom continue to practise coir weaving as a way of life, gaining strength from their predecessors' traditions.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability refers to the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations, 1987). In essence, it involves finding a balance between economic, social, and environmental considerations to ensure long-term well-being and prosperity for current and future generations.

There are three main pillars of sustainability:

Economic Sustainability: Economic sustainability focuses on ensuring that economic activities are carried out in a way that promotes long-term prosperity and stability (Munasinghe, 2000). This involves practices such as efficient resource management, diversification of income sources, investment in human capital and infrastructure, and equitable distribution of wealth and resources.

Social Sustainability: Social sustainability emphasizes the well-being and equity of societies, including factors such as access to basic needs, social justice, human rights, health, education, and cultural preservation (WCED, 1987). It involves promoting inclusive and participatory decision-making processes, fostering social cohesion and solidarity, addressing inequalities and disparities, and ensuring the protection and empowerment of vulnerable populations.

Environmental Sustainability: Environmental sustainability focuses on protecting and preserving natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and resources for present and future generations (WCED, 1987). This involves practices such as conservation of natural habitats, sustainable

resource management, pollution prevention, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and adaptation to climate change.

Achieving sustainability requires a holistic and integrated approach that considers the interconnections between economic, social, and environmental factors. It requires collaboration and cooperation among governments, businesses, communities, and individuals to address complex challenges such as poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, and climate change.

The study particularly focuses on the sustainability of coir societies in all its aspects, that is economic, social, and environmental. The research titled "Understanding sustainability: A qualitative study on coir societies in the context of Vaikom" aims to delve into the intricate dynamics of coir societies in Vaikom, Kerala, with a particular focus on sustainability. The overarching goal of the study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the historical, social, and economic factors that influence the sustainability of coir societies in this region.

First and foremost, the research aims to unravel the history and tradition of coir societies in Vaikom. By delving into the past practices, traditions, and cultural significance of coir weaving in the region, the study seeks to provide context and insights into the evolution of coir societies over time (Nair & Sreenath, 2017).

Furthermore, the research endeavours to shed light on the current practices and functioning of coir societies in Vaikom (Thomas, 2018). Through qualitative inquiry methods such as unstructured interviews, the study aims to capture the day-to-day operations, challenges, and opportunities faced by coir societies in the contemporary context.

Central to the research is the identification of economic barriers hindering the sustainability of coir societies (Kumaran & Krishnamoorthy, 2016). By understanding factors such as market dynamics, access to resources, financial constraints, and government policies, the study seeks

to uncover the economic challenges faced by coir societies and their implications for long-term viability.

Equally important is the exploration of social factors influencing the viability of coir societies (Velayudhan, 2019). This includes examining aspects such as community dynamics, social cohesion, cultural practices, and labour relations within coir societies and their impact on sustainability.

Through an in-depth analysis, the research aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing the sustainability of coir societies in Vaikom. By identifying challenges and opportunities, the study seeks to contribute to the development of strategies and interventions aimed at strengthening the coir industry and supporting the livelihoods of coir workers and artisans.

Moreover, the research aims to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical realities by engaging with key stakeholders within the coir sector (Nair & Sreenath, 2017). By collaborating with coir society members, industry experts, government officials, and community leaders, the study aims to ensure that its findings are relevant, actionable, and impactful.

The research seeks to unravel the complex dynamics of coir societies in Vaikom through a qualitative inquiry into their history, current practices, economic challenges, and social dynamics. By addressing these objectives, the study aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing the sustainability of coir societies and supporting the livelihoods of coir workers in the region.

### **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF**

### LITERATURE

Current Status of the Coir Industry in Kerala: A Critique, (2015) by the Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment (KILE)

The document offers a comprehensive analysis of the coir industry in Kerala, spanning its historical evolution, economic significance, and the challenges faced by various layers within the industry. It effectively outlines the layers of the coir industry, such as large companies, cooperative societies, small-scale units, and household units, it also delves into the specific issues encountered by each layer.

The report draws attention to critical aspects such as mechanization, inter-union rivalry, strikes, and the shift of units to Tamil Nadu. It highlights the challenges faced by co-operative societies, emphasizing issues related to working capital, management efficiency, and external factors affecting their profitability. Additionally, the report addresses concerns within small-scale units and household units, emphasizing problems related to pricing, debt, and the need for modernization.

The report reflects a mix of historical context, economic analysis, and qualitative insights into the dynamics of the coir industry in Kerala. It effectively sets the stage for the subsequent sections of the report, where a diagnostic investigation is conducted to identify both positive and negative factors influencing the industry. The suggested observations and recommendations aim to provide a roadmap for addressing the identified challenges and fostering sustainable growth within the coir sector.

SWOT Analysis of Coir Cooperative Marketing Society – A Case Study from Salem Region, S. Rajendran and B Gandhimathy

The presented case study on the Coir Cooperative Marketing Society in Salem region provides a comprehensive analysis of the coir industry in India, with a focus on the challenges and opportunities faced by the cooperative sector. The study emphasizes the significance of the coir sector in providing employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas, and its role in contributing to the overall economic conditions of the community. The researchers discuss the need for innovative strategies and technology transfer from the private sector to revitalize the cooperative sector.

The authors touch upon various aspects such as the global dominance of India in coir production, the economic and employment contributions of the coir industry, and the importance of cooperative societies in marketing and processing coir products. They highlight the cooperative sector's role in bridging the gap between producers and consumers, particularly benefiting weaker sections of the community.

Furthermore, the researchers explore economic viability trends of the Salem Central Marketing Cooperative Society (SCCMS) over the years, shedding light on the society's profits, working capital, and purchasing power. The study conducts a SWOT analysis, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for SCCMS. The strengths include employment generation and low capital investment, while weaknesses encompass administrative skills and technological limitations. Opportunities lie in government support and product diversification, while threats include competition from private units and higher production costs.

In conclusion, the researchers suggest that addressing weaknesses and leveraging opportunities can lead to the success and sustainability of the coir sector. They propose policy measures, including government support and tax reduction, to enhance the cooperative's performance. The literature review provides a foundation for understanding the challenges and potentials of the coir industry, setting the stage for the subsequent analysis and recommendations.

### A Socio-Economic Analysis of Coir Industry Women Workers at Servaikaranmadam in Thoothukudi District, DR.S. Henry Pandian and Mr. S. Samuel Thamburaj

The paper delves into the challenges faced by women workers in the coir industry, specifically in the Thoothukudi District of India. It provides a comprehensive overview of the global significance of the Indian coir industry, emphasizing its substantial contribution to global coir production. Despite India's extensive coastline and coconut palm distribution, the coir industry's growth has been limited in other coastal states. Previous development initiatives aimed at improving quality, diversifying products, and revitalizing coir co-operatives are highlighted, with a focus on modernization efforts to enhance competitiveness in the export market.

The study underlines critical issues within the coir industry, such as a severe labour shortage, changing family structures, and the socioeconomic challenges faced by women workers. The decline of the joint family system and the low literacy and economic status are identified as factors influencing the industry's workforce. Notably, the research reveals that a majority of respondents have low incomes, and a significant portion of the population depends on others, affecting the family's per capita income. The motivations of female employees to work, primarily to support their families and improve their standard of living, provide valuable insights into the economic struggles faced by these women.

The paper also sheds light on the historical context and the slow progress of the coir industry despite various development programs. It outlines the major coconut-growing states and union territories in India, emphasizing the industry's role as a cottage industry employing around 5.5 lakh people. The paper discusses the objectives of the Eighth Plan's coir industry programs, including encouraging cooperatives, providing welfare amenities, increasing coconut husk utilization, and promoting research and development. The goal of modernizing coir units is

underscored as a strategy to boost competitiveness through the installation of contemporary machinery, with a particular focus on specialized training programs for female artisans.

In conclusion, this paper provides a solid foundation for understanding the socio-economic context of the coir industry, setting the stage for the specific challenges faced by women workers in Servaikaranmadam, Thoothukudi District. The comprehensive overview covers the historical development, current challenges, and previous initiatives, creating a framework for the subsequent analysis of income, consumption patterns, savings, assets, and job-related expectations of the coir industry workers in the study area.

The Impact of Coir Industry on Rural Economy: A Case Study of Sri Lanka, Fernando, P. (2016).

Fernando's (2016) paper, titled "The Impact of Coir Industry on Rural Economy: A Case Study of Sri Lanka," examines the coir industry's crucial role in moulding Sri Lanka's rural economy. The purpose of this literature review is to summarise and analyse the study's important results and contributions.

The coir business has long been an important element of Sri Lanka's rural economy, providing jobs for thousands of people, particularly in coastal areas where coconut growing is common. Fernando (2016) emphasises the necessity of understanding the coir industry's impact on rural livelihoods, economic development, and social well-being.

Fernando's (2016) study is primarily concerned with the economic impact of the coir business on Sri Lankan rural communities. The author investigates issues such as employment generation, income levels, and value addition in the coir industry. Fernando emphasises the importance of coir production in creating job opportunities for rural populations, particularly

women and marginalised groups. The study emphasises the role of the coir sector in poverty alleviation and economic empowerment in rural communities.

Furthermore, Fernando (2016) investigates the connections between the coir industry and other sectors of the rural economy, such as agriculture, tourism, and small businesses. The author highlights the multiplier effect of coir-related activities on local economies, such as increased demand for agricultural inputs, the establishment of ancillary enterprises, and the promotion of rural tourism. The report emphasises the need of recognising and capitalising on these links to increase the coir industry's total economic impact.

In addition to economic considerations, Fernando (2016) investigates the social aspects of the coir industry's influence on rural communities. The author investigates questions of social cohesiveness, community identity, and cultural preservation in coir-producing regions. Fernando emphasises the importance of coir-related activities in developing social networks, strengthening community bonds, and maintaining traditional knowledge and customs. The study emphasises the significance of comprehensive development strategies that promote both economic growth and social well-being in rural areas.

Fernando's (2016) study also focuses on environmental sustainability. The author investigates the environmental impact of coir production processes, including resource utilisation, waste management, and biodiversity conservation. Fernando emphasises the importance of sustainable coir production methods that reduce environmental damage and increase ecosystem resilience. The study emphasises the significance of incorporating environmental factors into rural development initiatives to preserve the long-term viability of the coir business.

Furthermore, Fernando's (2016) research adds to the current literature by providing insights into policy implications for boosting the coir industry's sustainable development. The author examines government policies, regulatory frameworks, and institutional support mechanisms

designed to improve the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of Sri Lanka's coir sector. The paper highlights policy implementation gaps and makes policy recommendations to effectively address sustainability challenges.

Overall, Fernando's (2016) study sheds light on the coir industry's impact on Sri Lanka's rural economy. By investigating economic, social, and environmental elements, the study provides a thorough knowledge of the coir industry's complex role in rural development. The findings help to further ongoing efforts to promote sustainable development and equitable growth in coir-producing regions, with implications for policy formulation, research, and practice in social and economic sciences.

In conclusion, Fernando's (2016) study emphasises the significance of recognising the coir industry's overall influence on rural economies and communities. By addressing economic, social, and environmental elements, the study emphasises the importance of integrated approaches to rural development that prioritise sustainability and inclusivity. The findings add to a more comprehensive knowledge of the coir industry's role in promoting rural livelihoods, economic growth, and social cohesion in Sri Lanka.

Technological advancements in coir processing: Challenges and opportunities. Journal of Natural Fibers, 18(2), Kumar, A., et al. (2021).

The study investigated technological improvements in coir processing, putting light on the problems and prospects in this field. The purpose of this literature review is to provide a complete overview of the study's primary findings, techniques, and implications.

This highlights an important part of coir industry development by focusing on technological advancements in coir processing. Coir, obtained from coconut husks, has long been processed using traditional methods. However, with the introduction of new technologies, there is an

increasing need to investigate modern processing processes that might improve efficiency, quality, and value addition in the coir business.

The study takes a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on concepts from engineering, materials science, and agricultural economics to evaluate the current status of coir processing technology. The authors investigate the primary issues faced by coir processors and provide novel methods to overcome these impediments using a combination of literature review, case studies, and expert interviews.

One of the study's key conclusions is the growing desire for automation and mechanisation in coir processing. Traditional coir extraction and fibre separation procedures require a lot of labour and time, which leads to inefficiencies and high production costs. Coir processors may streamline their operations, increase efficiency, and meet rising market needs by using cutting-edge gear and automation.

Furthermore, the study emphasises the value of quality control and standardisation in coir processing. Variations in raw material quality, processing procedures, and ambient circumstances can all have an impact on the physical and mechanical properties of coir fibres, which in turn affect the performance and durability of coir-based products. Adopting quality assurance techniques such as testing protocols, certification standards, and process optimisation strategies can help to ensure consistent product quality and increase market competitiveness.

Moreover, the study investigates the role of value-added coir products and diverse product lines in promoting industry growth and innovation. Coir, which was previously used in carpets, ropes, and brushes, has found new applications in industries such as construction, automotive, and healthcare. Coir processors can enter new markets and increase profit margins by producing novel coir-based materials, composites, and functional fabrics.

The study also outlines many problems and barriers that prevent widespread implementation of technological breakthroughs in coir processing. Traditional coir processors face challenges such as restricted access to finance and resources, a lack of technical experience and training, and aversion to change. To address these difficulties, industry stakeholders, government agencies, and research institutions must work together to provide financial support, capacity building initiatives, and policy interventions that encourage technological adoption and innovation in the coir sector.

Finally, Kumar et al.'s (2021) study sheds light on technological improvements, problems, and prospects in coir processing. The study examines the most recent innovations in machinery, automation, quality control, and product innovation and provides practical recommendations for improving efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability in the coir business. However, further research is needed to investigate the socioeconomic and environmental effects of technological adoption in coir processing, particularly in the context of small-scale producers and rural communities.

Coir Industry in India: A Sustainability Analysis. Journal of Community Development.
Nair, A. N., & Selvaraju, R. (2019).

The study "Coir Industry in India: A Sustainability Analysis" conducted by Nair and Selvaraju (2019) gives a complete evaluation of the coir industry's sustainability in India. The purpose of this literature review is to summarise and analyse the study's important results and contributions.

The coir business in India has a long history and is important to the economy, notably in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Nair and Selvaraju (2019) recognise the importance of the coir business as a

source of income for many communities, particularly those in rural areas. They emphasise the importance of assessing the industry's long-term viability and contribution to economic development.

The study's focus is on the coir industry's economic sustainability. Nair and Selvaraju (2019) investigate market demand, price processes, and income generation for coir workers. They highlight the difficulties encountered by coir producers, including as shifting market prices and competition from synthetic alternatives. The study emphasises the need of encouraging economic sustainability among coir producers through initiatives such as value addition, market diversification, and capacity building.

Furthermore, the study investigates the social components of sustainability in the coir business. Nair and Selvaraju (2019) examine the social impact of coir production on local communities, specifically in terms of job creation and social cohesiveness. They investigate concerns including labour rights, working conditions, and gender dynamics in the coir sector. The study promotes social sustainability efforts such as skill development programmes, social welfare systems, and the empowerment of marginalised communities in the coir business.

The study also addresses environmental sustainability. Nair and Selvaraju (2019) investigate the environmental impact of coir manufacturing, covering resource utilisation, waste management, and ecological impact. They emphasise the need of incorporating sustainable practices into the coir business, such as organic farming, water conservation, and the use of renewable energy. The study emphasises the need of eco-friendly technology and certifications in reducing the environmental impact of coir production.

Furthermore, Nair and Selvaraju (2019) add to the current literature by providing insights into the policy structure that governs the coir business in India. They examine government initiatives, regulatory measures, and institutional support mechanisms aimed at improving sustainability in the coir industry. The paper highlights policy implementation gaps and makes policy recommendations to effectively address sustainability challenges.

Overall, Nair and Selvaraju's (2019) study sheds light on the long-term viability of India's coir sector. By evaluating economic, social, and environmental elements, the study provides a comprehensive picture of the coir sector's difficulties and prospects. The findings add to continuing efforts to promote sustainable development and inclusive growth in the coir business, with implications for policy, research, and practice in community development.

Bridging the Gap Between Engineering and the Global World: A Case Study of the Coconut (Coir) Fiber Industry in Kerala, India by Shobha K. Bhatia, Jennifer L. Smith

The book "Bridging the Gap Between Engineering and the Global World: A Case Study of the Coconut (Coir) Fiber Industry in Kerala, India" authored by Shobha K. Bhatia and Jennifer L. Smith provides an insightful exploration into the intricate relationship between engineering practices and the global dynamics within the context of the coconut (coir) fiber industry in Kerala, India. The literature presented in this work is poised to contribute significantly to the intersection of engineering, socio-economic dynamics, and global market influences. The authors likely contextualize the historical development of the coir fiber industry in Kerala, shedding light on its evolution from a regional cottage industry to a global player. This historical perspective would offer a foundation for understanding the industry's growth, challenges faced, and the role of engineering advancements in shaping its trajectory.

The book is expected to delve into the various engineering aspects that have influenced the coir fiber industry in Kerala. This could encompass the technological innovations introduced to enhance production efficiency, product quality, and the industry's overall competitiveness on the global stage. Additionally, the authors may explore how engineering practices have

responded to the evolving demands of the global market, including considerations for sustainability, environmental impact, and adherence to international standards. The literature review within the book is likely to draw upon existing research on similar industries, engineering innovations, and global market trends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by the coir fiber industry in Kerala.

Moreover, the book might highlight the socio-economic implications of engineering interventions in the coir fiber industry. This could involve an examination of how advancements in technology and engineering have influenced the livelihoods of workers, income distribution, and the overall economic landscape of the region. By bridging the gap between engineering practices and the global context, the authors aim to offer valuable insights that extend beyond the technical aspects, emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach that considers the socio-economic well-being of the local communities involved in the coir fiber industry in Kerala, India.

#### Coir a crucial component for Eco-Sustainability, MSME

The literature discussed here on coir offers a thorough review of the coconut-based business while highlighting its historical relevance, sustainable qualities, and evolving applications. With coir weaving dating back to 1859 in Alleppey, India, the reference to Sanskrit's "Kalpa vriksha" and Marco Polo's documentation indicates the long-standing acknowledgment of the coconut palm's value. The story emphasises the ecological sustainability of coir, presenting it as an adaptable and eco-friendly material for uses including stabilisation, soil erosion management, and soil strengthening. Notably, the conversation dispels the notion that coir is just a byproduct and presents it as a recycled waste product with intrinsic advantages that promote environmentally beneficial behaviours.

The literature highlights India's leading position in the production of coir and coconuts, with the sector embracing novel applications such as coir toys, furniture, and geo-textiles in addition to more conventional usage. The literature notes that despite the coir composites demonstrated mechanical dependability, durability, and cost-effectiveness, there are still obstacles to overcome. These obstacles include a lack of awareness, opposition from carpenters and contractors, and problems with market availability. The demand for a paradigm shifts towards a more ecologically conscious approach to sustainable eco-development presents the coir sector as a workable answer in the face of widespread worries about pollution and deforestation.

Coir Industry in Kerala: A Socio-Cultural Perspective. South Asian Journal of Anthropology, 39(1), Jayasinghe, R. (2019).

Jayasinghe's (2019) study, "Coir Industry in Kerala: A Socio-Cultural Perspective," delves deeply at the coir industry in Kerala, India, through a socio-cultural lens. The purpose of this literature review is to summarise and analyse the study's important results and contributions.

Kerala, renowned as the "Land of Coconuts," has a long history of coir production that is firmly ingrained in its social and cultural landscape. Jayasinghe (2019) recognises the need of studying the socio-cultural components of Kerala's coir business, such as its historical foundations, cultural practices, and community dynamics.

Jayasinghe's (2019) study focuses on the historical and cultural relevance of coir manufacturing in Kerala. The author traces the regional coir industry's origins and evolution over time. Jayasinghe emphasises the importance of coir weaving in Kerala's traditional rites, festivals, and daily life. The study focuses on the cultural pride and identity that come with coir crafting, as well as the transmission of traditional knowledge and skills from generation to generation.

Moreover, Jayasinghe (2019) dives into the socioeconomic dynamics of the coir business in Kerala. The author investigates the socioeconomic position of coir workers, their living conditions, and their interactions with the larger society. Jayasinghe investigates themes of social stratification, gender roles, and caste dynamics in coir-producing villages. The study puts light on the issues that coir workers confront, such as low pay, unstable working circumstances, and a lack of social protection.

In addition to economic factors, Jayasinghe (2019) investigates the cultural aspects of coir cultivation in Kerala. The author investigates the symbolic meanings associated with coir products, the function of coir weaving in religious and ceremonial contexts, and the cultural rites related to coir production. Jayasinghe emphasises the necessity of cultural preservation and historical conservation in ensuring the viability of Kerala's coir industry. The study emphasises the importance of policies and initiatives that recognise and promote the cultural value of coir craftsmanship.

Jayasinghe's (2019) study also addresses the issue of environmental sustainability. The author investigates the environmental implications of coir manufacturing processes, such as resource utilisation, waste management, and ecological conservation. Jayasinghe emphasises the necessity of implementing environmentally friendly manufacturing processes and raising environmental awareness among coir workers and communities. The report advocates for sustainable development strategies that prioritise both cultural heritage and environmental stewardship in the coir business.

Furthermore, Jayasinghe's (2019) research adds to the current literature by providing insights into the socio-cultural ramifications of the coir sector in Kerala. The author examines coir weaving's cultural value, role in communal identity development, and impact on social cohesiveness and solidarity. The study finds prospects for cultural revitalization and

empowerment in coir-producing communities, emphasising the importance of participatory approaches that include local stakeholders in decision-making processes.

Overall, Jayasinghe's (2019) study sheds light on the socio-cultural characteristics of Kerala's coir sector. By investigating historical, economic, cultural, and environmental issues, the study provides a thorough knowledge of the region's intricate interplay between coir production and sociocultural dynamics. The findings contribute to current efforts to promote sustainable development, cultural preservation, and social fairness in the coir business, with policy, research, and practice implications for anthropology.

Finally, Jayasinghe's (2019) study emphasises the necessity of understanding the socio-cultural components of Kerala's coir sector. By examining historical, economic, cultural, and environmental issues, the study sheds light on the varied character of coir production and its impact on local populations. The findings underscore the importance of comprehensive approaches to coir sector development in Kerala, with a focus on socio-cultural preservation, economic empowerment, and environmental sustainability.

# Firm-Specific Determinants of Mechanisation: The Case of Coir Industry in Kerala, Raseena K. K.

The goal of this report is to quantify the level of mechanisation in Kerala's coir sector in order to identify the factors that are unique to individual firms. The research employs primary data obtained through simple random sampling from 115 coir manufacturers in the Alappuzha area. First, the extent of mechanisation (EM) and mechanisation index (MI) are used to gauge how mechanised the chosen coir companies in Kerala are. Subsequently, using MI, Kerala's coir industry is divided into four categories based on the degree of mechanisation: traditional enterprises, low-, medium-, and high-mechanized firms. According to the survey, the most of

Kerala's coir-producing companies are traditional and have little automation. Using a Tobit regression analysis, the firm-specific determinants of mechanisation are identified. The findings show that the presence of a labour union has an inverse effect on MI, while firm size, participation in promotional programmes, and average labour education all positively influence it.

# A Study of Coir Vyavasaya Co-Operative Societies in Kerala – Performance, Problems and Prospects, Stegy V J

The study highlights the comprehensive nature of the research, focusing on evaluating the performance of Coir Vyavasaya Co-operative Societies (CVCs) in Kerala. The study aims to assess the fulfilment of co-operativisation scheme objectives, examine the socio-economic well-being of worker members, gauge member participation levels, identify major challenges faced by CVCs, and explore the future prospects of the coir industry in the region.

The paper delves into previous studies related to co-operative societies, particularly within the coir industry, both in Kerala and other comparable regions. It explores the historical context of co-operativisation schemes, their objectives, and their impact on socio-economic conditions. Additionally, the literature review might discuss prior research on the challenges faced by co-operative societies, potential strategies for improving their performance, and the overall role of co-operatives in enhancing economic conditions for workers.

The major findings of the study, revealing that a significant percentage of CVCs are incurring losses, facing long-term solvency issues, and exhibiting poor short-term solvency and operating efficiency, would likely prompt a literature review to analyse similar challenges faced by co-operatives in other sectors and geographical locations. Solutions and interventions suggested in existing literature could be compared and contrasted with the study's

recommendations for enhancing production quantity and reducing losses. Overall, the literature review would provide a contextual background and theoretical framework for the study, aligning it with existing knowledge in the field of co-operative societies and their performance evaluation.

#### Kerala's Anjengo coir: Once a crown jewel, Afzal N at October 28, 2023

The article sheds light on the challenges faced by Kerala's coir industry, focusing on the decline of Anjengo coir, once considered a crown jewel in the market. The literature review for this article could explore historical perspectives on the evolution of the coir industry in Kerala, emphasizing the significance of traditional practices and the role of coir societies in sustaining local economies. Studies addressing the impact of labour costs, mechanization, and the rise of alternative materials on the coir industry might provide insights into the current challenges highlighted in the article. Additionally, comparisons with other states, such as Tamil Nadu, can be explored in the literature to understand how differing wage structures and modernization efforts contribute to competition and affect the sustainability of traditional coir varieties.

The mention of Coir fed's role introduces a cooperative aspect to the narrative, and the literature review could delve into existing research on the functioning and impact of cooperative federations in the coir industry. Previous studies may discuss the role of cooperative entities in pricing mechanisms, quality control, and their overall influence on the economic dynamics of coir-producing regions. Moreover, literature exploring the implications of anti-competitive practices, particularly in the context of cooperative organizations like Coir fed, would provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the challenges faced by coir

societies in Kerala. Addressing these issues within the cooperative framework could offer potential solutions to revive and sustain the traditional coir industry in the region.

#### Coir manufacturing at Alappuzha, Alappuzha.com

The article provides an overview of the coir manufacturing industry in Alappuzha, highlighting its historical significance and its role in the economic landscape of the district. A literature review for this article could explore the historical evolution of the coir industry in Alappuzha, emphasizing key milestones and contributions to the regional economy. Previous studies may have delved into the socio-economic impact of the coir industry on local communities, shedding light on employment patterns, income generation, and overall development.

The mention of the Coir Board, established under the Coir Industry Act, 1955, opens avenues for reviewing literature on the regulatory frameworks and government interventions in the coir sector. This could include an examination of the policies and initiatives aimed at promoting coir manufacturing, supporting research and development, and fostering skill development through training centers such as the National Coir Training and Designing Centre.

The article briefly touches upon other industries in Alappuzha, such as lime shell, plywood, Keltron controls, and marine food. A literature review could expand on these sectors, exploring how they have evolved over time, their contribution to the district's economy, and any challenges or opportunities they may have faced. Additionally, comparative studies with other regions in Kerala or India may provide insights into the unique industrial landscape of Alappuzha. Overall, the literature review can contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the industrial dynamics in Alappuzha and its potential for future development.

Economic Contribution of the Coir Industry to the National Economy: A Case Study of Sri Lanka. Kuruppuarachchi, D. (2017).

Kuruppuarachchi's (2017) paper, "Economic Contribution of the Coir Industry to the National Economy: A Case Study of Sri Lanka," examines the coir industry's major contribution to Sri Lanka's overall economy. The purpose of this literature review is to summarise and analyse the study's important results and contributions.

Sri Lanka, with its numerous coconut trees and long history of coir manufacturing, has a robust coir industry that is critical to the country's economy. According to Kuruppuarachchi (2017), understanding the economic contributions of the coir industry is critical for informing policy decisions and promoting sustainable development.

Kuruppuarachchi's (2017) study is primarily concerned with the economic impact of the coir sector on Sri Lanka's national economy. The author investigates elements such as job creation, export revenue, value addition, and contribution to GDP. Kuruppuarachchi emphasises the importance of the coir sector in creating job possibilities for rural inhabitants as well as reducing poverty and increasing income.

Kuruppuarachchi (2017) also digs into the value chain of the coir sector, examining the many stages of production, processing, and marketing. The author investigates the relationships between the coir industry and other areas of the economy, including agriculture, manufacturing, and trade. Kuruppuarachchi emphasises the multiplier benefits of coir-related activities on local economies, such as increased demand for agricultural inputs, the establishment of ancillary enterprises, and the promotion of rural growth.

In addition to economic factors, Kuruppuarachchi (2017) investigates the policy and institutional frameworks controlling Sri Lanka's coir business. The author examines

government policies, regulatory systems, and support measures targeted at increasing the growth and competitiveness of the coir sector. Kuruppuarachchi addresses obstacles such as market access, technical innovation, and quality assurance and proposes policy solutions to effectively solve them.

Furthermore, Kuruppuarachchi's (2017) research adds to the current literature by providing insights into the potential for value addition and diversification in the coir business. The author investigates potential for product innovation, market expansion, and vertical integration throughout the coir value chain. Kuruppuarachchi emphasises the necessity of upgrading technology, improving product quality, and exploring new market prospects to ensure the coir industry's economic success.

Overall, Kuruppuarachchi's (2017) analysis sheds light on the coir industry's economic benefits to Sri Lanka's national economy. By assessing employment generation, export profits, value addition, and policy implications, the study provides a thorough knowledge of the coir industry's role in promoting economic growth and development. The findings support continuing efforts in Sri Lanka to promote sustainable development, industry diversification, and poverty reduction.

In conclusion, Kuruppuarachchi's (2017) analysis emphasises the need of recognising the coir industry's economic contribution to Sri Lanka's national economy. By covering employment generation, export profits, value addition, and policy implications, the study sheds light on the coir industry's diverse contributions to economic development. The findings underscore the need for legislative interventions and strategic investments to fully realise the coir industry's potential for driving inclusive and sustainable growth in Sri Lanka.

Coir Exports and Economic Development: A Comparative Analysis of India and Sri Lanka. Mohammed, F. (2018).

Mohammed's (2018) paper, "Coir Exports and Economic Development: A Comparative Analysis of India and Sri Lanka," looks into the significance of coir exports in India and Sri Lanka's economic development. The purpose of this literature review is to summarise and analyse the study's important results and contributions.

Coir, formed from the fibrous husk of the coconut palm, is a valuable export item for both India and Sri Lanka, with significant economic benefits. Mohammed (2018) emphasises the necessity of knowing the economic repercussions of coir exports in order to influence policy decisions and support sustainable development.

Mohammed's (2018) study focuses on a comparative comparison of coir exports from India and Sri Lanka. The author considers export volume, value, destination markets, and trade policies to determine the relative importance of coir exports to the economies of the two countries. Mohammed illustrates the disparities in manufacturing processes, product quality, and market competitiveness between India and Sri Lanka, providing insights into the variables that contribute to their comparative advantage in the global coir market.

Furthermore, Mohammed (2018) investigates the economic implications of coir exports in India and Sri Lanka, concentrating on job creation, income generation, foreign exchange profits, and poverty alleviation. The author examines the distributional consequences of coir exports on several groups of society, such as coir producers, exporters, and workers. Mohammed investigates the impact of government policies, trade agreements, and market factors on the economic performance of coir exports in India and Sri Lanka.

In addition to economic factors, Mohammed (2018) investigates the social and environmental implications of coir exports in India and Sri Lanka. The author investigates topics such as labour rights, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability in the coir business. Mohammed emphasises the necessity of responsible corporate practices, social equity, and environmental conservation in the coir export sector in order to accomplish sustainable development goals.

Furthermore, Mohammed's (2018) research adds to the current literature by providing insights into the potential synergies and trade-offs between coir exports and economic development. The author investigates the connections between coir production, trade policy, and broader development goals like poverty alleviation, rural development, and gender equality. Mohammed highlights ways to increase the good effects of coir exports while minimising the negative implications such as environmental damage and socioeconomic inequity.

Overall, Mohammed's (2018) study sheds light on the economic, social, and environmental implications of coir exports in India and Sri Lanka. By investigating trade patterns, economic repercussions, and policy implications, the study provides a comprehensive knowledge of coir exports' role in driving economic development and determining social and environmental outcomes. The findings add to current efforts to promote sustainable development, trade liberalisation, and poverty reduction in India, Sri Lanka, and other coir-exporting countries.

To summarise, Mohammed's (2018) study emphasises the necessity of understanding the intricate relationships between coir exports and economic development in India and Sri Lanka. By analysing trade patterns, economic repercussions, and policy implications, the study sheds light on the varied character of coir exports and their implications for larger development goals. The findings emphasise the importance of integrated approaches in the coir export sector that

balance economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability in order to achieve inclusive and sustainable development outcomes.

Socio-Economic Status of Coir Co-operative Societies Worker: A Case of East and West
-Godavari Districts of Andhra Pradesh

The study on the socioeconomic state of coir cooperative society workers in Andhra Pradesh's East and West Godavari Districts examines livelihoods, difficulties, and possibilities in the coir business. While the precise authors and publication year are unknown, the study appears to provide insights into the socioeconomic dynamics of coir workers in this region, with the goal of contributing to a better understanding of their conditions and informing policy and interventions.

One of the most important issues addressed in this study is the livelihood position of workers in coir cooperative organisations. It is expected to investigate issues such as income levels, job stability, access to social security, and overall economic well-being. Understanding the socioeconomic situations of coir workers is critical for identifying vulnerabilities and developing solutions to improve their livelihoods and promote regional socioeconomic development.

The study will also likely look into the working conditions and labour rights of workers in coir cooperative societies. This may include a study of working hours, salaries, workplace safety, and access to benefits and safeguards. The study intends to advocate for coir workers' rights and well-being by identifying potential challenges and opportunities for improvement in working circumstances, as well as to assure their dignified and equitable treatment.

Furthermore, the study may look into the organisational structure and operation of coir cooperative societies in the East and West Godavari districts. This could entail examining governance structures, membership dynamics, decision-making processes, and resource distribution in these societies. Understanding the internal dynamics of cooperative organisations is critical for determining their efficacy in fulfilling the interests of coir workers and encouraging collective action for socioeconomic progress.

Also, the research may look into the socio-cultural environment of coir production in the region. This could include an assessment of traditional practices, community dynamics, gender roles, and cultural norms that influence coir workers' lives and livelihoods. The study's goal is to provide a comprehensive picture of the socioeconomic state of coir co-operative society workers and the factors influencing their experiences by taking into account the broader sociocultural context.

The study may also look at how external factors like market movements, government regulations, and environmental changes affect the socioeconomic position of coir workers. This could include an examination of market demand for coir goods, credit and market availability, and vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change. The research intends to find potential and challenges for improving the resilience and sustainability of coir cooperative societies and their workers by looking at the larger macroeconomic and environmental backdrop.

In conclusion, the study on the socioeconomic status of coir co-operative society workers in Andhra Pradesh's East and West Godavari Districts is likely to provide valuable insights into coir workers' livelihoods, working conditions, organisational dynamics, and socio-cultural context. The study's empirical research and analysis will help to guide policy and interventions

aimed at improving the well-being and socioeconomic growth of coir workers and their communities.

Coir sector finds the going tough: Many small units shut shop as export orders and general demand dry up, Sam Paul A, (2022).

The article titled "Coir sector finds the going tough: Many small units shut shop as export orders and general demand dry up" published in The Hindu newspaper on February 26, 2022, sheds light on the challenges faced by the coir sector in Alappuzha, Kerala. Authored by Sam Paul A., the article provides insights into the economic difficulties encountered by small-scale coir units in the region due to a decline in export orders and overall demand.

One of the key issues highlighted in the article is the adverse impact of dwindling export orders on the coir sector in Alappuzha. With a significant portion of coir products being exported to international markets, the decline in export orders has led to a reduction in production and revenue for many small coir units. This situation underscores the vulnerability of the coir sector to fluctuations in global demand and highlights the need for diversification and resilience-building measures.

Moreover, the article points out the broader challenges faced by the coir sector, including competition from synthetic alternatives and changing consumer preferences. The rise of synthetic materials has posed a threat to traditional coir products, impacting the market share and competitiveness of coir manufacturers. Additionally, evolving consumer preferences and trends have further compounded the challenges faced by the coir sector, necessitating adaptation and innovation to meet changing market demands.

Also, the article discusses the implications of the struggles faced by small-scale coir units on local livelihoods and the economy of Alappuzha. The closure of coir units not only affects the

livelihoods of workers directly employed in the sector but also has ripple effects on ancillary industries and the overall socio-economic fabric of the region. This highlights the interconnectedness of the coir sector with the broader economy and the need for concerted efforts to address its challenges.

In conclusion, the article provides valuable insights into the challenges confronting the coir sector in Alappuzha, Kerala. By highlighting the impact of declining export orders, competition from synthetic alternatives, and changing consumer preferences, the article underscores the need for strategic interventions to revitalize the coir industry and support the livelihoods of those dependent on it. It calls for collaborative efforts between policymakers, industry stakeholders, and the community to address the challenges faced by the coir sector and promote its sustainable growth and resilience.

Environmental Sustainability of Coir-Based Products: A Review. International Journal of Sustainable Development, Narayanan, S., et al. (2020).

An extensive analysis of the environmental effects connected to the production and use of coirbased products can be found in the study "Environmental Sustainability of Coir-Based Products: A Review" by Narayanan et al. (2020) that was published in the International Journal of Sustainable Development. The authors intend to assess the environmental sustainability of coir-based goods at different phases of their life cycle, from extraction of raw materials to disposal at the end of the product's useful life, using a systematic review methodology.

The effects of coir extraction and processing on the environment are one of the main topics covered in the study. The techniques for removing coir fibres from coconut husks and the related environmental effects—such as energy use, water pollution, and land degradation—are probably covered by the writers. The study sheds light on the sustainability issues that arise

during the early phases of coir production by analysing the environmental impact of coir extraction.

In addition, the study probably looks at how coir-based products are better for the environment than traditional ones. Since coir is a naturally occurring and renewable fibre, it is frequently regarded as having a lower environmental impact than manmade materials like rubber or plastic. The writers might talk on how coir-based products are low carbon footprint, biodegradable, and recyclable, emphasising how they can help prevent environmental degradation and encourage sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

Furthermore, it is probable that the research assesses the ecological efficacy of items derived from coir at every stage of their existence, encompassing production, transportation, consumption, and elimination. The authors may measure the environmental effects of each stage of the product life cycle, including greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and waste creation, by using a life cycle assessment (LCA) or other approach of a similar nature. The use of a comprehensive approach facilitates a thorough comprehension of the environmental sustainability of products derived from coir and pinpoints avenues for enhancement across the supply chain.

The study may also cover the contribution of environmental regulations, eco-labeling, and certification programmes to the sustainability of the coir sector. Programmes for certifying products, such the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) or the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), can provide customers confidence in the environmental credentials of products made with coir. The success of government initiatives and policies in encouraging the coir industry to embrace sustainable practices and technologies may also be investigated by the writers.

To sum up, the research conducted by Narayanan and colleagues (2020) provides significant understanding of the environmental sustainability of products made from coir, emphasising the

obstacles and possibilities for encouraging sustainable practices in the coir sector. The study adds to the larger conversation on sustainable development by looking at the environmental effects of products at different stages of their life cycles and talking about ways to improve them. It also helps consumers, industry stakeholders, and policymakers make decisions that will lead to a more sustainable future.

Challenges and Opportunities in the Coir Industry: A Global Perspective. International Journal of Business Studies, Sundaresan, M. (2020).

The complex environment of the coir business is examined by Sundaresan (2020) in his paper titled "Challenges and Opportunities in the Coir Industry: A Global Perspective," which looks at both the potential and challenges the sector faces globally. The author hopes to shed light on the existing situation of the coir business by a thorough study, pinpoint major obstacles to its expansion, and point out possible directions for advancement and innovation.

The study's main focus is on the globalisation of the coir business and how it affects various stakeholders across the globe. Sundaresan probably talks on how the coir sector has changed due to factors including global commerce, market dynamics, and technology breakthroughs. These changes have brought forth opportunities as well as challenges for communities and enterprises involved in coir production and trading. Through an analysis of worldwide trends and patterns, the research provides significant understanding of how the coir sector is intertwined with the global economy.

In addition, it is possible that the study examines the difficulties the coir sector has in the current environment. Competition in the market, pricing volatility, supply chain disruptions, and regulatory limitations are a few examples of these challenges. Sundaresan may talk about how these issues affect different coir industry segments, such as large-scale manufacturers and

exporters or small-scale coir producers, and examine methods for reducing risks and enhancing resilience in the face of uncertainty.

Additionally, it is possible that the study finds room for advancement and expansion in the coir sector. Sundaresan could look at new consumer trends, technology developments, and industry trends that offer chances for value addition, diversification, and market growth. Through emphasising prospective growth areas like the creation of novel coir-based goods, eco-friendly production methods, and specialised markets, the research offers insightful information to stakeholders looking to take advantage of new prospects in the coir sector.

The study can also go over how sustainability would affect the coir sector going forward. Sundaresan probably looks at the rising customer tastes and environmental consciousness that are driving the need for eco-friendly and sustainable products. The author might go over how ethical farming, fair trading, and certification programmes are examples of sustainable practices that can boost the coir industry's long-term profitability and competitiveness while simultaneously encouraging social and environmental responsibility.

To sum up, Sundaresan's research provides a thorough examination of the prospects and difficulties the coir sector faces on a worldwide scale. In order to navigate the changing landscape of the coir industry and maximise its potential for sustainable development and economic growth, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers can benefit greatly from the study's examination of the intricate interplay of factors influencing the industry's trajectory.

Kerala's coir industry: Issues and challenges. Economic and Political Weekly, Velayudhan, S. (2019).

Velayudhan (2019) explores the intricacies of Kerala's coir industry in his research "Kerala's Coir Industry: Issues and Challenges," providing a critical analysis of the major problems and

obstacles the industry faces. The author hopes to clarify the fundamental dynamics of Kerala's coir business and provide solutions to its problems by looking at economic, social, and environmental aspects.

The study mainly focus on Kerala's coir industry's ability to sustain itself economically. Velayudhan probably talks about the financial difficulties that coir producers face, including things like volatile market pricing, competition from artificial substitutes, and restricted access to capital and technology. The study offers insights into the elements impacting the competitiveness and long-term viability of the coir business by analysing the economic drivers and limitations within it.

Furthermore, the study will likely look into the social aspects of Kerala's coir business, such as labour rights, gender equality, and community development. Velayudhan may address the socioeconomic situations of coir workers, emphasising issues such as low salaries, terrible working conditions, and limited access to social welfare programmes. By looking at the social ramifications of coir production, the study gives insight on the industry's overall impact on livelihoods and well-being in Kerala.

Also, the project may solve environmental concerns related to coir manufacturing in Kerala. Velayudhan is likely to address concerns such as deforestation, land degradation, water pollution, and biodiversity loss caused by unsustainable coir extraction and processing processes. By analysing the coir industry's environmental footprint, the study emphasises the significance of using sustainable production methods and reducing ecological consequences to ensure the sector's long-term environmental viability.

The study may also cover governance frameworks and policy measures intended to address the problems Kerala's coir industry is facing. Velayudhan probably looks at policies, rules, and industry-led projects meant to advance sustainable growth, expand market accessibility, and

boost the coir industry's general competitiveness. Through an assessment of the efficacy of current regulations and the identification of governance deficiencies, the study provides suggestions for fortifying the regulatory framework and bolstering the coir industry's sustainable expansion in Kerala.

In conclusion, Velayudhan's research offers a thorough examination of the problems and obstacles Kerala's coir industry faces, as well as insightful information about the industry's social, economic, and environmental aspects. The study contributes to a fuller understanding of the complexity inherent in coir production and reveals prospects for supporting sustainable development and equitable growth in Kerala's coir industry by analysing the interplay of factors impacting the industry's trajectory.

Geographical Aspects of Coir Industry in Kerala. Indian Journal of Applied Research, Thomas, L. (2018).

In his paper "Geographical Aspects of Coir Industry in Kerala," Thomas (2018) dives into the geographical dimensions of the coir business in Kerala, providing insights into the spatial distribution, location variables, and environmental effects impacting the industry's dynamics. The author's goal in exploring the geographical context in which the coir business operates is to create a clearer understanding of the relationship between geography and coir production in Kerala.

One of the study's key concerns is the spatial dispersion of the coir industry in Kerala. Thomas is anticipated to investigate the spatial concentration of coir production clusters across different regions of the state, focusing on characteristics such as closeness to raw materials, access to transportation networks, and historical settlement and migration patterns. By mapping the spatial distribution of coir production units, the study provides insight into the geographic

elements that influence coir producers' location choices and the clustering of industry activity in specific places.

Furthermore, the study is anticipated to investigate the impact of geography in influencing the environmental circumstances under which coir production occurs in Kerala. Thomas may address how climate, soil, geography, and water resources affect coir cultivation, processing, and trade. By investigating the environmental restrictions and opportunities connected with coir production, the study gives light on the spatial determinants of productivity, resource availability, and sustainability in the coir business.

Moreover, the study may look into the impact of geographical factors on the socioeconomic growth of coir-producing districts in Kerala. Thomas is likely to investigate how spatial factors such as land tenure systems, population distribution, and infrastructural development influence the livelihoods, income levels, and social well-being of coir workers and communities. By examining the spatial dimensions of socioeconomic inequality and development gaps, the study sheds light on the regional patterns of poverty, inequality, and social exclusion in coir-producing regions.

The study may also consider the significance of regional considerations for policy creation and intervention in Kerala's coir industry. Thomas will most likely look at how geographic information systems (GIS), remote sensing, and spatial analysis approaches can be utilised to guide resource allocation, environmental management, and infrastructure development decisions. Policymakers and planners can use geographic data and spatial modelling techniques to better understand the geographical dynamics of the coir business and devise targeted interventions to reduce geographic imbalances and promote inclusive growth.

Finally, Thomas's research provides unique insights into the spatial elements of Kerala's coir sector, emphasising the interplay of geography, environment, and socioeconomic development

within coir-producing districts. By examining the spatial dimensions of coir production and trade, the study contributes to a better understanding of the geographic factors that influence the industry's dynamics, as well as opportunities for informed decision-making and policy intervention to promote sustainable development and inclusive growth in Kerala's coir sector.

# **CHAPTER 3**

# RESEARCH

## **METHODOLOGY**

### INTRODUCTION

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Coir societies in Vaikom have played an important part in the region's socioeconomic fabric, acting as vital hubs for coir production facilities. Despite their importance, there is a clear vacuum in our understanding of the historical roots and practices that have defined these coir societies across time. A thorough examination of the history and traditions of Vaikom's coir production plants is required to lay the groundwork for analysing their current state and estimating their future trajectory. Understanding the history and traditions of coir production

units would not only enhance the region's cultural heritage, but will also help to preserve and promote traditional craftsmanship.

Furthermore, the operation of coir societies in Vaikom remains a topic that deserves in-depth investigation. This research will look into the operational features of these societies, investigating their organisational structures, decision-making processes, and overall efficiency. By doing so, it hopes to identify the important characteristics that contribute to the success or issues faced by coir societies in Vaikom, allowing for more informed interventions and changes in their operations.

Furthermore, the obstacles that coir societies in Vaikom face are an important component of the research. Identifying these issues, whether economic, social, or infrastructural, is critical for implementing focused strategies and policies to promote the sustainability and growth of coir communities. The study also intends to examine the economic contribution of coir societies in Vaikom, namely their involvement in job creation, income distribution, and overall regional economic development. The research seeks to provide significant insights that can inform policy decisions and interventions to promote the Vaikom coir business by thoroughly investigating these aspects.

#### AIM OF THE STUDY

Once Kerala's coir industry played a significant role in the state's economy, providing employment to a large number of coir workers organized into coir societies. The study aims to deepen our understanding of the complexities surrounding the sustainability of coir societies in Vaikom. Understanding these societies and workers is essential for improving their livelihoods and ensuring the industry's sustainability. This research topic aims to conduct a

study on coir societies in Vaikom a place in Kerala, considering the tradition, functioning,

challenges and their role in the local economy.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

• To understand the history and tradition of coir societies in Vaikom

• To know the current practices and functioning of coir societies

• To identify the economic barriers hindering the sustainability of coir societies

To identify social factors influencing the viability of coir societies

**DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS** 

Coir:

Theoretical: seed-hair fibre obtained from the outer shell, or husk, of the coconut.

Operational: Coconut fibre

History:

Theoretical: history, the discipline that studies the chronological record of events (as affecting

a nation or people), based on a critical examination of source materials and usually presenting

an explanation of their causes.

Operational: It the past of an event.

Tradition:

Theoretical: Belief, principle, or way of acting that people in a particular society or group have

continued to follow for a long time, or all of these beliefs, etc. in a particular society or group

Operational: set of customs followed a society.

54

Manufacturing:
Theoretical: The business of producing goods in large numbers.
Operational: Production of goods using machinery and labour.
Unit:
Theoretical: A single thing or a separate part of something larger.
Operational: A unit is a distinct
Functioning:
Theoretical: The fact of working or operating, or the way that something operates.
Operational: work in a specific or appropriate manner.
Sustainability:
Theoretical: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future
generations to meet their own needs.
Operational: Long term well-being.
Society:
Theoretical: A large group of people who live together in an organized way, making decisions
about how to do things and sharing the work that needs to be done.
Operational: A group of people living together.

Master of Social Work (2022 - 2024)
Challenges:
Theoretical: something that by its nature or character serves as a call to battle, contest, special
effort.
Operational: Something that is difficult to face.
UNIVERSE AND SAMPLING
The universe is all the coir societies in Kerala and the sample is the coir societies in Vaikom.
Strata sampling is used to collect data.
INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA
Inclusion:
Coir Societies in Vaikom registered under coir fed.
Male and female coir workers.
Exclusion:
Coir societies outside Vaikom region.
Males and females engaged in other jobs.
TOOLS AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Unstructured interviews are the tool and method for data collection.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Narrative interpretation is used by the researcher

### **LIMITATIONS**

Limited time for data collection and analysis may restrict the depth and breadth of the study. The study is focused specifically on Vaikom, and findings may not be generalizable to coir societies in other regions. The coir industry is subject to external influences, market fluctuations, and policy changes that may have occurred after the data collection period.

### **CHAPTERIZATION**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 4: Narratives

# **DESCRIPTIVE**

## **CASES**

### Introduction

In this part the experience and knowledge of five coir society secretaries are shared within the context of history of coir production and coir societies, traditional methods, economic and social factors affecting the sustainability of coir societies. They also share about the administrative functioning, activities carried out by the societies, government interventions and polices to sustain coir societies.

4.1. Increase the rate of coir can make coir society profitable.

Name	A
Age	35
Gender	Female
Position	Coir Society Secretary
Place	Vaikom

In the quaint town of Vaikom, nestled amidst the lush coconut groves of Kerala, lies a community deeply intertwined with the craft of coir spinning. Among them is A, a woman burdened with the weight of her struggles. Her face bore the lines of hardship, her spirit weathered by the storm's life had thrown her way.

A resilient woman with two young boys and her aging mother to care for. Life hasn't been easy for A since her divorce, and the burden of providing for her family weighs heavily on her shoulders.

A's story is not unique; many families in Vaikom rely on the income generated from coir spinning to make ends meet. However, the once-thriving coir societies are facing challenges that threaten their sustainability. As I delved deeper into my research, I uncovered a complex web of issues plaguing these societies.

At the heart of the coir societies' governance is the General Board, composed of elected members who make crucial decisions affecting the community. Yet, despite their efforts, the impact of these decisions often hinges on the approval of the Coir Project Officer, adding another layer of bureaucracy to the process.

Elections, held every five years, offered a glimmer of hope for change, but the process was fraught with challenges. Nominees vied for a seat at the table, where power and influence were currency in short supply.

Meanwhile, the role of the secretary, a government-appointed administrative officer, brings stability to the societies. However, she says that 'the shortage of workers willing to engage in coir spinning poses a significant challenge'. With only a fraction of the society's members actively involved in the trade, the burden of production falls on a few shoulders.

The economics of coir production painted a grim picture. Rising costs and falling profits left workers scraping by on meager wages, their toil barely enough to put food on the table. The promise of government subsidies offered little solace in the face of an industry teetering on the brink of collapse.

Compounding the issue is the disparity between the production costs and the meager returns from selling coir. Despite their hard work, she added that, 'she and her fellow workers find themselves trapped in a cycle of low wages and mounting debts'. As I listened to her, the intricate web of challenges became clear. Market dynamics, influenced by the influx of cheaper coir from Tamil Nadu and the rise of synthetic alternatives, cast a shadow over local production. With demand dwindling, surplus stock threatens to spoil, exacerbating the society's financial woes.

Yet, 'amidst these challenges, there is hope'. Mechanization offers a glimmer of possibility, promising increased efficiency and productivity. Moreover, she believes that if the Coir

Federation fulfills its obligations and pays the due amount to the societies, it could reignite interest among workers and revitalize the industry.

As I reflect on A's life story and the plight of coir societies in Vaikom, it becomes clear that sustainability is not merely an abstract concept but a pressing reality. To ensure the survival of these communities, we must address the economic, social, and environmental factors that threaten their existence. Only then can we pave the way for a future where coir spinning remains a vibrant and sustainable livelihood for generations to come.

## 4.2. Synthetic products took over the position of bio degradable coir

Name	В
Age	36
Gender	Female
Position	Coir Society Secretary

Place	Vaikom

In the heart of Vaikom, amidst the swaying coconut palms and the gentle whispers of the breeze, there lies a tale of resilience and struggle, woven into the very fabric of the community. At the helm of this narrative stands a young woman, her spirit undaunted by the challenges that surround her.

B, a beacon of hope in the Coir Vyavasaya Cooperative Society (CVCS), where she serves as the secretary, leading with determination and grace. Despite the trials that life has thrown her way, she finds solace in the warmth of her family and the unwavering support of her husband.

As B paints a picture of the CVCS, her words are tinged with both pride and frustration. The society, once a thriving hub of activity, now finds itself trapped in a cycle of stagnation. Government subsidies for coir fiber offer little relief, as the specter of high production costs looms large, casting a shadow over the prospect of profitability.

But it's not just financial woes that weigh heavily on her shoulders. She said that her own salary has gone unpaid for two long years, while the wages of the hardworking coir workers remain a distant dream. The managerial grant, too, has failed to materialize, leaving the society teetering on the edge of collapse. There appeared a sorrow in her eyes.

To add insult to injury, a new rule imposed by the coir federation demands upfront payment for coir, further complicating an already dire situation. Yet, amidst the chaos, she remains steadfast in her resolve, determined to find a way forward.

As she reflects on the changing landscape of coir products, her voice carries a note of nostalgia for days gone by. Once cherished for their durability and versatility, coir mats, mattresses, and carpets now find themselves overshadowed by synthetic alternatives, their place in the market usurped by modern conveniences.

But hope glimmers on the horizon, like a beacon in the darkness. B knows that awareness is the key to change, and she dreams of a future where bio-degradable products reclaim their rightful place in the hearts and homes of the community.

As I listen to her, I am struck by the resilience of the human spirit. In the face of adversity, she stands tall, a testament to the power of hope and determination. And though the road ahead may be long and fraught with challenges, I have no doubt that she and the CVCS will weather the storm, emerging stronger and more resilient than ever before.

### 4.3. Government has significant role in decision making.

Name	С
Age	50
Gender	Female

Position	Coir Society Secretary
	•
Place	Vaikom

In the picturesque town of Vaikom, amidst the serene beauty of Kerala's backwaters, lies a community steeped in the ancient tradition of coir weaving. At its helm stands a seasoned leader, a beacon of hope in the face of uncertainty - C, the experienced secretary of the Coir Vyavasaya Cooperative Society (CVCS), who has witnessed firsthand the struggles of coir workers and the challenges facing coir societies.

Her journey as the secretary of the Coir Vyavasaya Cooperative Society (CVCS) has been a tumultuous one, marked by the highs of hope and the lows of despair. With a clear view of the future of coir society and a steadfast determination to sustain it, she has dedicated herself to understanding the intricacies of the industry, from its rich history to its economic factors and traditions.

As she recounts the history of the coir industry, her words resonate with a sense of nostalgia for a bygone era. In the golden age of coir production, Vaikom's mats, mattresses, and carpets adorned households far and wide, their quality unmatched by any other. Yet, with the passage of time, the industry has faced its fair share of challenges, grappling with the changing tide of consumer preferences and market dynamics.

The coir industry in Vaikom comprises various types, each with its own unique characteristics and challenges. Vaikom coir, prized for its flexibility, has long been used in mat-making, though its quality has declined over the years. The Kerala State Cooperative Coir Marketing Federation Ltd., known as Coir fed, plays a central role in marketing coir and determining rates based on quality assessments. However, she laments the meager rates set by Coir fed, which fail to cover the high production costs incurred by coir societies. With the current rate of coir pegged at a mere 43 rupees per kilogram, profitability remains elusive, casting a shadow of uncertainty over the future of coir societies.

Established in 1977, this CVCS is one of 34 coir societies in Vaikom Taluk, employing over 2000 coir workers. Yet, despite their numbers, coir societies face significant challenges, particularly in the face of competition from neighbouring Tamil Nadu, where lower labour costs have allowed the coir industry to thrive. *Diversification and mechanization have been identified as essential for sustainability, though concerns over non-biodegradable plastic threads used in automatic spinning machines (ASMs) have prompted a shift to costlier cotton threads.* 

Traditional coir production methods have waned over the years, with an aging workforce and a lack of youthful participation. The introduction of mechanized spinning machines has streamlined the production process, though Kerala's machinery quality lags behind that of Tamil Nadu, exacerbating the state's disadvantages.

She added that despite government support in the form of working capital, managerial grants, and bonuses under income support schemes, coir societies like CVCS remain burdened with liabilities and labour shortages. Efforts are underway to deploy automatic spinning machines to reduce production costs and address labour challenges. However, the road to sustainability

remains fraught with obstacles, and She knows that collaboration and innovation will be key to overcoming them.

Amidst these challenges, she sees potential for collaboration with the fisheries department, utilizing idle coir plots for fish farming to supplement income streams. She has also put forward a suggestion to collaborate with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to provide additional income opportunities for coir workers. *By leveraging the assets of both MGNREGA and coir societies, workers could receive compensation for their work in either sector, providing much-needed stability in an uncertain economy.* 

As I listen to her impassioned plea for change, I can't help but be inspired by her unwavering commitment to the cause. In her eyes, I see the resilience of a community determined to rise above adversity, to preserve a cherished tradition for generations to come. And with her leadership guiding the way, I have no doubt that the coir societies of Vaikom will endure, their legacy woven into the fabric of Kerala's rich cultural tapestry.

## 4.4. Once coir was the main livelihood for people of Vaikom.

Name	D
A	72
Age	72

Gender	Male
Position	Coir worker
Place	Vaikom

In the heart of Vaikom, where the coconut trees sway gently in the breeze and the backwaters glisten in the sunlight, an old man sits amidst the remnants of a once-thriving coir society. His name is D, and his weathered face bears the marks of a lifetime spent toiling in the coir fields. But now, as he looks out over the silent machinery and empty warehouses, he can't help but feel a pang of sadness for the industry that once sustained him.

His journey with the coir society began decades ago, in a time when coir production was the lifeblood of Vaikom. Together with a group of like-minded individuals, he joined forces to form a cooperative society, pooling their resources and knowledge to navigate the intricacies of the coir trade. In those early days, traditional methods ruled the roost, with coconut husks soaked, beaten, and spun by skilled hands to create the fine strands of coir that adorned homes far and wide.

But as time marched on, the landscape of coir production began to shift. The introduction of mechanized processes and the influx of cheap coir from neighbouring Tamil Nadu posed new challenges for the coir societies of Kerala. Despite the superior quality of Kerala coir, the

allure of cheaper alternatives proved too great for many buyers to resist, leading to a decline in demand for locally-produced coir.

For him and his fellow workers, the impact was profound. Where once there were bustling workshops and bustling activity, now there was only silence. *The orders from companies dried up, leaving the shelves bare and the machinery idle.* With each passing day, His health deteriorated, his asthma and chronic pain making it increasingly difficult for him to continue working.

But perhaps the most devastating blow came with the rise of alternative employment opportunities, particularly the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). As the promise of steady wages lured workers away from the coir fields and into construction sites and government schemes, the once-thriving coir societies of Vaikom found themselves on the brink of collapse.

Yet amidst the despair, he clings to the memories of a bygone era, when *coir production was not just a livelihood, but a way of life*. He recalls with fondness the camaraderie of his fellow workers, the satisfaction of a job well done, and the pride of contributing to a tradition that stretched back generations. But now, as he looks around at the empty buildings and deserted streets, he can't help but wonder what the future holds for the coir societies of Vaikom.

As I listen to Raman's story, I am struck by the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. Despite the challenges they face, he and his fellow workers remain steadfast in their commitment to preserving the legacy of coir production in Vaikom. And as they continue to fight for their livelihoods, I feel a sense of hope for the future, knowing that as long as there

are people like D	willing to stand	up and	speak	out,	the	coir	societies	of	Vaikom	will	never
truly be defeated.											
4.5. The foundation	on stone of coir	society	is des	troy	ed.						
	Name						Е				

Age	45
Gender	Male
Position	Coir worker
Place	Vaikom

In the labyrinthine network of coir societies that dot the landscape of Vaikom, there exists a silent struggle, a battle for survival waged by the men and women who toil in the shadows of mechanized mills and fluctuating markets. Among them is E, a coir worker whose livelihood hangs in the balance, his fate intertwined with the ebb and flow of an industry in crisis. For years, he has relied on the steady income from coir work to support his family, labouring day in and day out to weave the fibers of tradition into the fabric of his community.

But lately, Suresh has found himself facing an uncertain future. With the rise of coir mills and mechanization, the demand for manual labour has dwindled, leaving many workers like Suresh struggling to find steady employment. The once-thriving coir societies of Vaikom now stand silent, their machines idle and their workers displaced.

To make matters worse, the market for coir products has become increasingly volatile, with fluctuating prices and diminishing demand eroding the financial stability of coir societies. Despite the availability of cheaper coir from neighbouring Tamil Nadu, the quality fails to match that of Kerala coir, leaving local workers at a disadvantage.

As he reflects on his own situation, he grapples with the harsh reality of life as a coir worker. While the daily wage from coir work is enough to put food on the table, there is little left over for savings, and wages are often delayed or unpaid. This instability forces workers like him to seek alternative employment, casting a shadow of uncertainty over the future of coir societies in Vaikom.

Yet, as Suresh and his fellow workers band together to navigate the uncertain waters of the coir industry, they draw strength from their shared heritage and sense of community. Together, they strive to find innovative solutions to sustain their livelihoods and preserve the rich tradition of coir weaving for generations to come.

There reminded is a flicker of resilience, a determination to persevere against all odds. For Rajesh and his fellow workers, the struggle for sustainability is far from over. As long as there are hands to weave and hearts to hope, the coir societies of Vaikom will continue to fight for their place in the sun, their legacy preserved for generations to come.

# **DISCUSSION AND**

# **FINDINGS**

### **DISCUSSION**

### Objective 1: To understand the history and tradition of coir societies in Vaikom

The origins and evolution of coir societies in Vaikom may be traced back to the early days of the coir business, when individuals banded together to pool their resources and expertise in the manufacturing and sale of coir products. These societies arose in response to the increasing demand for coir in both domestic and international markets, offering a platform for cooperative production and trading. The panorama of coir production in Vaikom has altered over time, with technological developments and changes in market factors influencing the trajectory of coir societies.

Key customs and activities related to coir production in Vaikom represent the region's rich cultural past. From the traditional retting of coconut husks to the hand-spinning of coir fibres, each stage of the manufacturing process is steeped in centuries-old traditions passed down through generations. These procedures not only ensure the quality and originality of Vaikom coir, but they also bring pride to the local community.

Coir societies have played an important part in the Vaikom community's economic and social development. As centres of coir production and trading, these societies have employed thousands of people, helping to provide for the livelihoods of families throughout the region. Furthermore, coir societies work as hubs for social contact and community engagement, generating a sense of solidarity and collective identity among members.

Significant historical events and milestones in the growth of coir societies in Vaikom include the formation of the first cooperative societies, the implementation of mechanised production processes, and the expansion of coir markets both domestically and globally. These anniversaries represent pivotal occasions in the evolution of Vaikom's coir sector, influencing its growth and development over time.

Traditional knowledge and traditions have been passed down through generations in Vaikom's coir societies, assuring the survival of centuries-old techniques and abilities. From the technique of retting coconut husks to the complexities of hand-spinning coir fibres, every part of coir production is rooted in the wisdom and experience of those who came before.

A multitude of causes have influenced modifications and adaptations in the traditions and practices of Vaikom's coir societies, including technological developments, changes in market demand, and alterations in societal standards. Mechanisation and modernization have resulted in considerable changes in the manufacturing process, whereas globalisation has necessitated the adoption of new techniques and practices in order to remain market competitive.

Coir societies in Vaikom contribute to the region's cultural identity and history by preserving traditional practices and serving as stewards of Indigenous knowledge. Coir production is more than a source of income; it is also a cultural legacy that reflects the local community's tenacity and resourcefulness. As a result, coir societies are an important part of Vaikom's cultural fabric, protecting tradition in an ever-changing world.

#### Objective 2: To know the current practices and functioning of coir societies

Coir societies in Vaikom are normally structured and organised under a cooperative model, with elected board members managing operations and decision-making procedures. These societies frequently have a president, committee members, and a secretary, with tasks and responsibilities divided among members based on knowledge and experience.

Coir societies' primary activities and functions include raw material procurement, coir fibre processing, and final product distribution. Coir societies may also conduct quality control measures, maintain machinery and equipment, and manage financial and administrative concerns.

Coir societies often make decisions democratically, with board members and key stakeholders engaging in forums such as general body and board meetings. Important choices about production, financing, and governance are discussed and debated, with participation from all stakeholders involved.

Coir societies confront significant problems in their day-to-day operations, including shifting market demand, growing production costs, labour shortages, and limited access to technology and resources. Strategic planning, market diversification, investment in technology and innovation, and engagement with government agencies and other stakeholders can all help to solve these difficulties.

With advances in mechanisation and automation, technology and innovation play an increasingly important part in coir society activities. However, coir societies lack contemporary equipment and machinery. Coir societies assure fair wages; however, earnings are behind and working conditions for their members are generally satisfactory.

Government grants and subsidies, as well as sales of coir goods, are important sources of funding or revenue for coir societies.

# Objective 3: To identify the economic barriers hindering the sustainability of coir societies

Coir societies in Vaikom have considerable economic hurdles in the areas of production, marketing, and profitability. Labour shortages, fluctuating raw material prices, and the need for technological and infrastructure investment all contribute to rising production costs. Furthermore, the coir product industry has become more competitive, with synthetic alternatives challenging conventional coir products. As a result, coir societies struggle to stay profitable and financially sustainable.

Fluctuations in raw material prices have a direct impact on the economic viability of coir societies by influencing production costs and profitability. When raw material costs rise, coir societies' expenses grow, reducing profit margins and making market competition difficult. In

contrast, when raw material prices decline, coir societies may struggle to meet fixed costs while remaining financially stable.

Access to financing and financial support is a major hurdle for coir societies, as traditional lending institutions may be hesitant to make loans to small-scale coir producers due to perceived risks and a lack of collateral. Furthermore, bureaucratic procedures and rigorous eligibility standards might impede access to loans, limiting coir societies' ability to invest in infrastructure, technology, and market growth.

Government policies and laws have a huge influence on the economic viability of coir societies, both favourably and negatively. While government subsidies and support programmes can give critical financial help to coir societies, bureaucratic red tape and inconsistent execution can create barriers to entry. Furthermore, regulatory measures such as environmental rules and quality standards can drive up compliance expenses for coir societies, putting additional strain on their finances.

Competition from synthetic alternatives provides a serious economic threat to coir communities since it reduces market demand for traditional coir goods. Synthetic materials frequently have reduced production costs and greater durability, making them more appealing to customers. As a result, coir societies must develop ways to differentiate their products and compete effectively in the market in order to remain profitable.

Infrastructure issues, like as transportation and storage, can have an impact on coir societies' economic effectiveness by raising operational costs and creating logistical obstacles. Poor infrastructure and a lack of storage facilities can cause product delivery delays, raw material spoilage, and increased handling expenses, all of which can have an impact on coir societies' bottom lines.

Market characteristics, such as demand trends and price volatility, are important in addressing the economic issues that coir communities face. Fluctuations in market demand can result in times of overstock or undersupply, affecting coir pricing and profitability. Price volatility can also cause uncertainty and risk in coir communities, making it difficult to plan and budget properly.

Technological developments have the potential to greatly affect the economic sustainability of coir communities by increasing efficiency, lowering production costs, and improving product quality. Coir societies can increase their market competitiveness and position themselves for long-term success by adopting modern technologies like as mechanisation, automation, and quality control systems. However, technology developments must be followed by supportive policies, investments, and capacity-building activities in order to ensure fair access and maximum value for coir societies and members.

# Objective 3: To identify the economic barriers hindering the sustainability of coir societies

Social conventions and values have a substantial influence on decision-making in coir societies. Traditional values such as cooperation, mutual respect, and collective responsibility shape the governance and management of coir communities, influencing decision-making and implementation. These principles emphasise the importance of consensus-building and inclusion in decision-making processes, ensuring that all members' voices and viewpoints are heard and valued.

Gender roles and dynamics have a significant impact on how members participate and engage in coir societies. Historically, coir production has been viewed as a mostly male-dominated business, with males frequently holding leadership positions and women primarily performing supportive tasks such as husk beating and cleaning. However, there is a growing recognition

of women's significant contributions to the coir business, and efforts are underway to promote gender equality and empower women in coir cultures.

Social attitudes regarding the coir sector and its members have a considerable impact on coir societies' viability and sustainability. Positive attitudes and views create a supportive atmosphere for coir workers while also promoting the growth and development of coir societies. Negative perceptions or stigmatisation of the coir sector, on the other hand, may discourage worker engagement, erode community support, and inhibit coir societies' growth. Thus, efforts to promote favourable social attitudes and perceptions of the coir business are critical to guaranteeing its long-term survival and sustainability.

#### **FINDINGS**

The tale delves into the history and traditions of coir societies, their current functions and practices, different economic challenges to their survival in Vaikom, and social variables impacting their viability. Here are the conclusions regarding these aspects:

Vaikom's coir societies have a rich history that is inextricably linked to the region's cultural heritage and economic prosperity. These societies, which date back to the golden era of coir production, have had a significant impact on the local economy and residents' livelihoods.

- Legacy of Coir Production: Coir societies in Vaikom date back to a time when coir production was a major source of income for local people. Traditional processes, such as retting (soaking coconut husks in water to soften them) and hand processing, formed the foundation of coir production during this time period. These approaches not only demonstrated the inventiveness and resourcefulness of local artisans, but also highlighted the region's longstanding link to coir production.
- Evolution of Production Techniques: Coir manufacturing changed dramatically throughout time, with the introduction of mechanisation and modernization. This progression is exemplified by the transition from manual ratt spinning to computerised ratt, which represents a shift in the industry towards increased efficiency and productivity. Mechanisation has expedited industrial processes, lowering reliance on manual labour while increasing output capacity. This adaption to modern improvements demonstrates the coir societies' durability and adaptability in Vaikom.
- Dependency on Raw Materials: Despite a history of self-sufficiency in raw material production, coir societies in Vaikom are currently facing issues due to their reliance on imported coir fibres, primarily from Tamil Nadu. This dependency reflects changes in the economic landscape, such as swings in local coconut output and competitive pressures from adjacent regions. As a result, coir societies have had to modify their sourcing strategy to match the demands of a changing market.

#### **Economic Factors**:

- <u>Low Income Generation:</u> Despite the efforts of coir organisations, the revenue generated by coir production is insufficient to offset the high production costs. This economic imbalance generates little or no profit for civilizations.
- High Production Costs: Production costs, including cleaning and spinning fees, are
  notably high. Furthermore, the revenue generated from selling coir to Coir fed is
  insufficient to cover these expenses.
- Dependency on External Markets: The availability of high-quality, low-cost coir from
  Tamil Nadu reduces demand for locally produced Kerala coir. This reliance on foreign
  markets erodes the economic viability of coir societies.
- <u>Limited Market Opportunities</u>: The introduction of synthetic rope diminished demand for traditional coir goods, resulting in low local sales. As a result, coir organisations struggle to identify profitable market opportunities for their products.
- <u>Financial Instability</u>: Wages for coir workers are frequently pending due to the financial difficulties faced by coir societies. This uncertainty discourages workers from staying in the industry, contributing to a reduction in the workforce.

#### **Social Factors:**

- <u>Labor Shortage</u>: Despite having a membership of 1800 people, only 20 to 30 of them
  are actively involved in coir spinning. This labour scarcity is worsened by a lack of
  incentives and awaiting wages, which reduce workers' willingness in staying employed
  in coir societies.
- Aging Workforce: The majority of coir workers are over the age of 50, showing a lack of interest and commitment among young people in the industry. The scarcity of younger labourers poses a long-term threat to the viability of coir communities.

- Government Intervention: While the government offers assistance through programmes such as the Income Support Scheme and the PMI, payment delays and low bonus amounts add to the financial instability of coir cooperatives.
- Market Fluctuations: The shifting market rates and low demand for Kerala coir goods
  exacerbate the economic sustainability of coir societies. These market uncertainties
  make it difficult for societies to plan and make decisions.

### **Current practices and functions:**

- <u>Financial Strain</u>: Coir Vyavasaya Cooperative Society (CVCS) is experiencing serious financial difficulties, as shown by a lack of profitability and an inability to pay salaries and wages to employees. Despite government subsidies for coir fibre manufacturing, excessive production costs continue to eat into potential revenues.
- New Regulations: The implementation of new regulations requiring coir fed to examine
  coir quality and forcing advance payments to coir fed before coir may be removed from
  the society has increased administrative responsibilities and financial restraints on
  CVCS's operations.
- <u>Declining Demand for Traditional Coir Products</u>: The transition to synthetic and cotton
  alternatives for mats, mattresses, carpets, and ropes has resulted in a decrease in demand
  for traditional coir products. Synthetic alternatives are seen as more practical, highquality, and aesthetically beautiful, thus diminishing the demand for coir products.
- Potential for Market Revival: There is anticipation that rising consumer knowledge and
  preference for biodegradable products will generate a market opportunity for coir
  products. If consumers become more aware of the environmental impact of synthetic
  alternatives, there may be an increase in demand for coir products.

- Outsourcing of Processing Activities: Coir societies typically focus on spinning, while
  other critical activities such as sorting, cleaning, and drying are contracted out to private
  coir mills. This outsourcing increases the operational costs for societies.
- Competition from imported Coir: The availability of high-quality coir from Tamil Nadu
  at lower prices has reduced demand for Kerala coir. This competition affects local sales,
  resulting in low profitability for societies.
- Need for Market Diversification: With the introduction of synthetic rope and minimal local sales, there is a pressing need for market diversification to explore alternative revenue streams and increase profitability for the societies.
- Potential for Mechanization: Mechanisation has the ability to improve production efficiency and lower labour costs for coir societies. However, inadequate financial resources prevent investment in mechanised equipment.
- <u>Dependence on Coir Fed Payments</u>: Coir Fed's timely payment of dues to coir organisations is critical for protecting the interests of coir workers. Payment delays increase employee unhappiness and have a negative influence on morale
- Regulatory Oversight: The Kerala Coir project office is responsible for managing the
  activities of coir societies, guaranteeing regulatory compliance, and promoting
  communication among stakeholders.

Vaikom's coir communities have a rich history of creativity, adaptation, and persistence. While traditional methods remain a vital part of the region's cultural fabric, the change of manufacturing processes and reliance on foreign raw resources highlight the problems and opportunities that the coir business faces today. Despite these obstacles, coir societies continue to play an important role in supporting local economies and conserving Vaikom's rich coir production tradition.

Economic hurdles such as limited revenue generation, high production costs, and reliance on external markets, combined with social concerns like as labour shortages and an ageing workforce, all work against the sustainability and feasibility of coir societies in Vaikom. To revitalise the coir business and assure its long-term profitability, addressing these difficulties demands a comprehensive approach that includes both economic reforms and social interventions.

Financial strain, regulatory hurdles, falling market for traditional coir products, and personnel issues characterise the contemporary operation and practices of Vaikom's coir societies. Social issues, like as changes in customer preferences and worker shortages, have an even greater impact on their profitability. However, there is hope for market resuscitation if consumer awareness switches to the usage of biodegradable products. Addressing these problems would necessitate deliberate interventions targeted at lowering production costs, broadening product offers, and creating a favourable regulatory environment.

### **CONCLUSION**

Finally, the qualitative study of coir societies in Vaikom has provided significant insights into the numerous challenges and opportunities that these vital community institutions face. Several major results have developed as a result of research into their history, present practices, economic obstacles, and social considerations.

To begin, Vaikom's coir societies have a long history of tradition and communal cooperation. However, they face numerous economic obstacles, such as shifting market demand, increased production costs, and competition from synthetic substitutes. These difficulties are exacerbated by restricted access to financing and financial assistance, as well as legislative limits and infrastructure deficiencies.

Despite these challenges, coir cultures are resilient and adaptable, using technology, creativity, and community networks to handle economic uncertainty. Social elements like as community interactions, gender dynamics, and social views are critical in determining the viability and durability of coir communities. Strong community links and shared values encourage collaboration and collaborative action, whereas inclusive decision-making processes promote social cohesion and resilience.

Moving forward, overcoming the economic hurdles to the sustainability of coir societies would necessitate a multifaceted approach. This includes targeted interventions to boost credit and financial support, increase market competitiveness through innovation and diversification, and strengthen collaboration with government agencies and community stakeholders. Furthermore, encouraging gender equality and cultivating favourable societal attitudes towards the coir business are critical to guaranteeing the long-term survival and resilience of coir societies.

Finally, the outcomes of this study highlight the need of recognising coir societies as vital parts of Vaikom's social and economic fabric. Understanding and solving the issues they confront

can help to create a more sustainable and inclusive future for coir workers and their communities.

## IMPLICATION OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The findings of the qualitative study have important implications for professional social work practice because they highlight the vital role that social workers can play in resolving the issues

that coir societies in Vaikom encounter. Social workers are ideally positioned to advocate for coir workers' needs and rights, ensuring that their voices are heard and their interests are considered in decision-making processes. Social workers can improve the well-being and quality of life of coir workers and community members by actively interacting with them and providing access to necessary resources and support services such as financial aid, healthcare, and education.

Social workers can also promote collective action and community cooperation within coir societies, so fostering community empowerment and resilience. Community-based interventions enable social workers to encourage discourse, collaboration, and capacity building activities targeted at rebuilding the social fabric of coir communities. This may entail organising community meetings, workshops, and training sessions to improve the skills, knowledge, and collaborative problem-solving capacities of coir workers and community members.

In addition to direct practice with individuals and communities, social workers can engage in policy advocacy and institutional change attempts to address the structural hurdles and disparities that contribute to the issues confronting coir societies. Advocating for supportive policies, funding allocations, and regulatory reforms can help social workers create an environment conducive to long-term development and resilience building in coir communities.

The study identified economic barriers to the region's coir societies' sustainability, including high production costs, limited access to capital, a lack of market diversification, price volatility, infrastructure constraints, limited technological adoption, supply chain challenges, and regulatory issues. These results have significant implications for social work practice in the following ways:

- 1. <u>Advocacy</u>: Social workers can lobby for policy reforms and government actions to help coir cultures overcome economic hurdles. This may involve advocating for more accessible financing, infrastructure investment, and market diversity.
- 2. <u>Capacity Building:</u> Social workers can help coir societies strengthen their ability to withstand economic issues. This could include training on modern production processes, financial management, and marketing strategies.
- 3. <u>Community Development</u>: Social workers can collaborate with coir societies to improve community bonds and generate social capital. This can enable coir communities gain access to resources, share expertise, and work towards common goals.
- 4. <u>Empowerment</u>: Social workers can help members of coir societies take control of their economic future. This could include offering education and training, encouraging self-sufficiency, and instilling a sense of ownership and pride in their profession.
- 5. <u>Research and Evaluation</u>: Social workers can undertake research and evaluation to determine the effectiveness of treatments targeted at improving the sustainability of coir societies. This can help to identify good tactics and guide future practice.
- 6. <u>Collaboration</u>: Finally, the qualitative study emphasises the significance of taking a comprehensive and collaborative approach to tackling the complex dynamics of sustainability in coir cultures. Social workers may help to create and execute long-term solutions that support the viability and resilience of Vaikom's coir communities by utilising their experience, skills, and beliefs. Social workers can collaborate with stakeholders, legislators, and community members to create a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future for coir workers and their communities.

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## **APPENDIX**

Objective 1: To understand the history and tradition of coir societies in Vaikom

- 1. Can you provide a brief overview of the history and evolution of coir societies in Vaikom?
- 2. What are some of the key traditions and practices associated with coir production in Vaikom?
- 3. What role have coir societies played in the economic and social life of the local community in Vaikom?
- 4. -Can you describe any significant historical events or milestones in the development of coir societies in Vaikom?
- 5. How have traditional knowledge and practices been passed down through generations within coir societies in Vaikom?
- 6. Have there been any changes or adaptations in the traditions and practices of coir societies in Vaikom over time? If so, what are they and what factors have influenced these changes?
- 7. In what ways do coir societies in Vaikom contribute to the cultural identity and heritage of the region?

### Objective 2: To know the current practices and functioning of coir societies

- 1. Can you describe the structure and organization of your coir society?
- 2. What are the primary activities and functions carried out by your coir society?
- 3. How are decisions made within your coir society? Are there any democratic processes in place?
- 4. What are the major challenges faced by your coir society in its day-to-day functioning and how do you think they can be addressed?
- 5. Can you describe the role of technology and innovation in the operations of your coir society?

- 6. How does your coir society ensure fair wages and working conditions for its members?
- 7. What are the key sources of funding or revenue for your coir society?
- 8. How does your coir society engage with the local community and other stakeholders?
- 9. What are the future goals and aspirations of your coir society?

# Objective 3: To identify the economic barriers hindering the sustainability of coir societies

- 1. Can you describe the current economic challenges faced by coir societies in terms of production, marketing, and profitability?
- 2. How do fluctuations in raw material prices affect the economic viability of coir societies?
- 3. What are the major barriers hindering access to credit and financial support for coir societies?
- 4. How do government policies and regulations impact the economic sustainability of coir societies?
- 5. In what ways does competition from synthetic alternatives affect the market for coir products?
- 6. How do issues related to infrastructure, such as transportation and storage, affect the economic efficiency of coir societies?
- 7. What role do market dynamics, such as demand trends and price volatility, play in the economic challenges faced by coir societies?
- 8. How do coir societies currently address or adapt to these economic challenges?

- 9. What strategies or interventions do you think would help overcome these economic barriers and enhance the sustainability of coir societies?
- 10. How do you perceive the impact of technological advancements on the economic sustainability of coir societies?

### Objective 4: To identify social factors influencing the viability of coir societies

- 1. How do community relationships and networks impact the operations of the coir society?
- 2. What are the social norms and values that influence decision-making within the coir society?
- 3. How do gender roles and dynamics affect the participation and engagement of members in the coir society?
- 4. Can you discuss any social conflicts or tensions that have arisen within the coir society and how they were resolved?
- 5. How does the coir society interact with other community organizations and institutions?
- 6. What level of support and cooperation does the coir society receive from the local community and government authorities?
- 7. How do social attitudes towards the coir industry and its members impact the viability and sustainability of coir societies?