

The Organisation of Production among the Ice-cream factory workers of Bira Bandhabpally, North 24 PGS, W.B., India: An Anthropological Perspective

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Abstract: The study outlines an in-depth analysis of a small-scale local ice cream factory situated in Bira, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. The factory, which has been operational since 2002, is run by a close-knit group of relatives. There are eight workers including five van pullers, who basically sell ice cream in local market. The study aims to analyze daily operational management including Time management, workload distribution, coping strategies, and any tools or systems used to manage work. Furthermore, the study evaluates the economic impact on the workers and owners and compares business profit margins with personal income and lifestyle choices in an anthropological lens. Through anthropological approach it explores cultural and social factors that influence economic conditions, such as community expectations, social status, and personal values.

Keywords: Production, Social Organization, Ice-Cream, Cottage small factory, financial opportunities

Introduction

The description and analysis of economic life using anthropological perspectives is the basic area of economic anthropology study. Economic anthropologists are engaged to pay attention to the relationship between economic life and the rest of social life in different ways, but these can, without too much distortion, be reduced to two broad types: the individual and systematic. The individualist methodology, as the label indicates, approaches the relationship between economic and social life through the study of the beliefs and practices of individual members of the group being investigated (Carrier, J. G, 2012)¹.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Cold War was at its height the cold war was at its height, the world economy was booming, and governments everywhere committed

themselves to spreading public services while upholding tight controls over financial markets. Economic anthropologists argued among themselves about the theories and methods needed to study their special preserve, which was now extended to include the world's peasants alongside its dwindling number of tribesman. (Hart & Hann, 2018)².

Mahieu (2023)³ said that 'like other perspectives, economic anthropology is not a discipline; it represents a human issue from economic perspectives. Anthropology is a part of economic analysis-an unrecognized part because the needs of economic policy require macroeconomics. He also said that the positive in nature is economic anthropology, which is based on the fieldwork data, but by establishing the person, it takes on a normative value.

Ensminger, J. (2001)⁴ stated that the last decades of the twentieth century were not kind to economic anthropology. In the bloom of postmodern sentiments, the type of research that has consistently been the forte of economic anthropology was at best underappreciated, at worst scorned, slandered, and ignored. As the social sciences move away from the excesses of those times, it is likely that many of the solid ethnographies and empirical studies that have been the foundation of economic anthropology will once again come into popular style.

Firth (1967)⁵ wrote as that Eggan and Gluckman pointed out in the Anglo-American Conference of 1963 that technical economics has had less influence on social anthropological research than other social sciences have had. Considering that theme, Firth pointed out that it has been granted and thinks that other factors have also been involved in the relative lack of development of economic anthropology.

According to Pandey (2017)⁶, economic anthropology is a sub-branch of social cultural anthropology that deals with the study of economic institutions like production, consumption, redistribution, exchange, trade, market, reciprocity, and hospitality in tribal societies or simple societies (p.176).

Review of Literature

The origins of ice cream can be traced back to the 4th century B.C., when Alexander the Great is said to have been fond of iced beverages. In 1962 A.D., Roman Emperor Nero is said to have ordered ice to be brought from the mountains and combined with fruit toppings. The earliest evidence of anything approaching ice cream being made was in China during the reign of King Tang of Shang, who had a staff of 2,2271, including 94 ice men.(Gugenheimer P,2006)⁷

Asia Pacific Business Press had published a book titled "The *Complete Technology book on Flavored Ice Cream*. In this book, the Ice cream is likely defined as 'a frozen dairy product made by freezing a mix with agitation to incorporate air and ensure uniformity

of a consistency. Ice cream is a frozen mixture of combination of components: milk, sweeteners, stabilizers, emulsifiers, and flavoring.(NIIR,2006) ⁸

Mukherjee A.N⁹ told that Sinha (2000), this continues exploration of an area of research that has come to be closely associated with his work culture in formal organizations. His study stands apart from his earlier work because it focuses on medium-sized enterprises, on which there is scant literature. Also, he mentioned that twenty-eight enterprises drawn from both the public and private sectors were chosen for the study. They encompass a wide variety of Industries ranging from light engineering and chemicals to ice-cream makers and distilleries (p.19).

Tylor J.C (2008)¹⁰ has explained various work methods to (1) determine the time required for performing each operation; (2) determine the total man-hours of labor and machine-hours of equipment required; and (3) provide a basic stage for developing improved work methods and plant designs. From this data , labour and equipment cost for performing all operations by the use of specified methods and equipment were computed. A comparison of these costs shows the relative efficiencies obtained with various methods and types of equipment in ice cream manufacturing plants. Freezing is the process which converts liquid ice cream mix to semi frozen ice cream.

Snikersproge Ieva (2020)¹¹ mentioned that the day to day ‘ technical decisions were made by the structure that Milkeries’ workers had setup to run the enterprise , it was organized in four sections-production, commerce, research and development, and the administration (p-136).

Deborah & Solway (2017)¹² explained that “one single women interviewed in 2010 was twenty and worked serving soft service in her aunt’s shop, making 900 Yuan a month. she was born and raised in Zouping, attended an academic high school there, and then left town for two years to obtain a relatively unprestigious short -course university degree in machine electronics”

A weekly journal of philanthropy reports that, in relation to the present investigation, “the ice cream, which is sold on the push-carts and in small neighborhood shops and is made without exception in the tenement houses, is usually sold in the front store and made in the back room or inside room, where the family sleeps, eats, and lives. During an investigation made last summer by the Mayor’s Push-Cart Commission, the policemen were asked to report any food sold in push-carts that, in their opinion, was unit for sale, which they would not do themselves. One man has reported a small factory where ice cream was made in a room in which three men slept.””(Sherman Mary, 1906)¹³

Maruca (2007)¹³ said, “While we had the ice-cream store, we constantly tinkered with the menus and raw management styles and explored a variety of aspects of the food service industry. Eventually, we felt that we had brought the business along as far

as we were interested, so we began searching for a new opportunity and settled on real estate sales.”

Objectives

1. To collect an ethnographic account of the Ice Cream Factory as a small cottage industry.
2. To examine financial opportunities.
3. To observe how many products are being taken by the workers from the factory. How many products are being sold, and how much is being brought back and deposited?
4. To observe whether both the owner and the worker benefit or not.

Methodology

According to Peto and Peto (1999)¹⁴, methodology’ refers to the structure of procedures and transformational rules whereby scientists shift information up and down this ladder of abstraction in order to produce and increase organized knowledge. He also mentioned that ‘methodology’ ‘is’ “logic-in-use” involved in selecting particular observational techniques, assessing their yield of data, and relating this data to theoretical propositions. In practice, the practical problems of using particular techniques for data collection cannot be entirely separated from the examination of their logic in use. Any methodological discussions, then, must include some reference to techniques (p. 2, 3). Research methodology may be expressed as the science of practicing how research is done scientifically, and it is also a way to systematically solve research problems (Kothari, 1990, p. 8)¹⁵. Jha (1999)¹⁶ wrote ‘that’ ‘methodology’ may be used to explicit theoretical discussion concerning the entire research proposal, including the forms of thought of the research, aims and objectives, application of the research methods, etc. (p. 197). The present study has been carried out in a small-scale ice-cream factory that is situated in Bira, North 24 Parganas, and W.B., India. A very simple knowledge of anthropological inquiries has been explained through this study. Concerning the objectives and motto of the research, selective methods and techniques have been applied for the data collection. Basically, **Case study**, **Observation**, **Interview**, and **Questionnaire** methods are used in this study. Some photographs have also been taken using photography techniques.

Discussion and Result

The name of the person from whom the data has been collected is Nityananda Ballav. It his owns an ice cream factory. It is a small-scale industry. He has no other shareholders. He started the factory after his mother died. He started the factory in 2002.

Type of production: He said that his ice cream factory produces 10 types of ice cream.

1. Small bowl of ice cream 2. Flat bowl ice cream 3. Cup bowl ice cream 4. Orange-flavored ice cream 5. Mango sticks ice cream 6. Strawberry-flavored ice cream 7. Chocobar ice cream 8. Pepsi 9. Mawakulfi 10. Cornetto

Taste- When I asked what kind of ice cream to taste, he said that the small bowl and flat bowl were of vanilla flavor. Orange ice cream should be eaten sweet and sour. Chocobar was yummy to taste. Mango sticks are mango-flavored. Strawberry ice cream is sweet and creamy. Chocobar is sweet and chocolaty.

Time period: it is known that the owner runs the factory for about 10 hours. However, depending on the product, the time period can be shorter or longer. The name of the person from whom the data has been collected is Nityananda Ballav. He owns an ice cream factory. It is a small-scale industry. He himself owns the ice cream factory. He has no other shareholders. He also said that the ice cream factory was named after his mother. He started the factory after his mother died. He started the factory in 2002.

Type of production: He said that his ice cream factory produces 10 types of ice cream. Small bowl of ice cream 2. Flat bowl ice cream 3. Cup bowl ice cream 4. Orange-flavored ice cream 5. Mango stick ice cream 6. Strawberry-flavored ice cream 7. Chocobar ice cream 8. Pepsi 9. Mawakulfi 10. Cornetto

Taste

When I asked what kind of ice cream to taste, he said that the small bowl and flat bowl were of vanilla flavor. Orange ice cream should be eaten sweet and sour. Chocobar was yummy to taste. Mango sticks are mango-flavored. Strawberry ice cream is sweet and creamy. Chocobar is sweet and chocolaty.

Time period- He runs the factory for about 10 hours. However, depending on the product, the time period can be shorter or longer.

<i>Machine</i>	<i>Price</i>
Amokein compressor: 5 tonnes	70,000
Motors 10 horse power	30,000
Charner Machine	1,00000
Hardner Machine	80,000
3 fan motors	
2 horse power	5,000
3 horse power	5,000
4 horse power	5,0000

3 Freezes Tata voltaz	$32,0000 \times 3 = 96,000$
7 van cars	$20,000 \times 7 = 1,40000$

Process of small Bowls, flat bowls, and cup bowls

Asking the owner of the ice cream factory about the process of making small bowl ice cream, he said that he makes small bowl, flat bowl, and cup bowl in the same process.

Materials

Cream powder 2.G.M.S.(Glycerol Monostearate) 3. C.M.C. (carboxymethyl cellulose) 4. Milk 5.Vanilla and 6. Sugar

Process

At first, mix cream powder, G.M.S. (glycerol monostearate), and C.M.C. (carboxymethyl cellulose) well and boil them with milk. Then add enough sugar and saccharin to the milk. Then the mixture should be left to freeze. After freezing, the frozen part should be broken up in the blender and added to the vanilla. Then put it in a bowl and cover it with paper. The bowls should be left in the fridge to freeze.

The Process of Making Orange Flavoured Ice Cream

Material: 1. Water, 20 liters 2. Maltodextrin, 1 kg 3. Sugar: 4 kg 4. An orange colored half- table spoon 5. Citric acid, 3 table spoons. 6. Orange essence, 20 ml

Process- At first, he pours two liters of water into a big pot. Then maltodextrin was mixed with 1 kg of water. After mixing water and maltodextrin, heat it. Then mix sugar with it—4 kg and half a table spoon of orange color. White turns orange when mixed with orange. After mixing well, add 3 table spoons of citric acid. Orange essence gives 20 ml. After mixing it all, he pours it into the pharmacy and sticks it on top. Then keep it at -25°C for freezing. When the ice cream is ready, remove it well and put it in a container. Then package well and keep in the freezer.

Mango Stick Ice cream

Material: 1 liter of water 2. sugar: 1 kg, 300 g 3. mango pulp, 1 kg 4. Mango essence, 10 ml 5. Mango flavor, 20 ml

First, pour water into a large container. Heat the water on the stove, and add sugar to it. After the sugar melts, the stove should be turned off. Then the mixture should be allowed to cool. Add 1 liter of mango pulp to 5 liters of water. Then mix the mango pulp with the sugar water well. Blend the mixture well in a blender. Then add 20 ml of mango

essence and 20 ml of mango flavor. Mix well, pour the mixture into the pharma, and stick it on top. Then keep it at -25°C for freezing. When it freezes, the ice cream should be removed and kept in a container. Then it should be packaged and kept in the fridge for sale.

Strawberry-flavored ice cream

Material: 1.Milk 2.Maltodextrin 3. G.M.S. (Glycerol Monostearate) 4. Guar gum 5.Sugar 6. Vanilla flavor essence

First, pour the milk into a bowl. Then add maltodextrin powder to it. Maltodextrin powder can be mixed with milk, either cold or hot. Maltodextrin powder and milk should be mixed well and placed on the stove for heating. G.M.S. should be added to it. G.M.S. and maltodextrin should be added at room temperature. Then the temperature should be increased. Additional heating should be done so that the maltodextrin and GMS mix. Then mix guar gum and sugar well in another container and pour it into the mix. After heating for some time, turn off the stove. Then leave the mixture for some time to cool. Then the mixture should be kept in the deep freezer. Remove from the fridge, blend the mixture well, and keep the batch in the fridge for 5–10 minutes. Add vanilla flavor essence to the batch-frozen mixture and blend well for 5–10 minutes. Then the mixture should be poured into the pharmacy for freezing and stuck on top. Then keep it at -25°C for freezing. When the mixture is frozen and the ice cream is made, take it out well, put it in a package, and keep it in the fridge. Now strawberry-flavored ice cream is ready.

Process of Chocobar Ice Cream

Material: 1. milk, 12 liters 2. G.M.S.(Glycerol Monostearate) 150 g 3. Sugar: 2 kg, 500 g 4. Alginate S4 (40 g) 5.Caramel (approximately) 6. chocolate slab, 500 g 7. Cocoa powder, 150 g 8. Nuts, approximately

First, pour 12 liters of milk into a big pot. Then pour 150 g of G.M.S. with milk. Now put the milk on the stove. Maltodextrin powder can be mixed with milk, either cold or hot. If G.M.S. is mixed with cold water and heated, it mixes well; no problem. If heated g.m.s. are mixed with milk, it will be seen that the oil has come on top of the milk. Then pour sugar (2.5 kg) into another container and mix well with alginate (40 g). After mixing in the sugar and alginate, pour in the milk. After mixing in the hot milk, turn off the stove. Then the milk should be kept cool. Once the milk has cooled down, pour 2 liters of milk into a batch in the fridge. Add enough chocolate essence and caramel to the mixture. It can be seen that the color of the mixture has become chocolate. Then the mixture should be poured evenly into the pharmacy well. Then put the stick on top. Then freeze it at a temperature of -25°C . When the ice cream freezes, it should be

removed. Then it is usually kept in the fridge for 6-7 hours. To make the top layer, first pour 500 grams of chocolate slab into a container, then take 150 grams of cocoa powder and mix 2 liters of palm oil. Mix everything and heat until well mixed. Then the mixture should be cooled. When the mixture cools down, add crushed almonds. For the top layer, the ice cream should be dipped in the mixture and removed, and again, it should be back in the fridge to freeze generally. Take out the ice cream from the fridge, package it, and keep it in the fridge for sale. Now Chocobar ice cream is ready.

Material- 1. sugar, 2. BT thickener (Bacillus Thuringiensis), 3. BS powder, 4. BP 5. BT sweetener (a plant-based, one-to-one drop in sugar replacer), 6. citric acid, 7. cloudy mist; 8. different color; 9. Mango flavor, pineapple, strawberry, etc.

First, pour water into a container. After heating the water in another container, mix the sugar, thickener, and BS powder well and add them to the hot water. Then, in another container, mix the BP and BT sweeteners and pour them into another pot of hot water. Then mix the two hot water bottles together. After mixing the two mixtures together, the mixture will become thick. Mix citric acid and normal hot water well in another container. Add about 4 liters of water to it. Pepsi has different flavors and colors. That's why we will add only the color and flavor of the color and flavor that we make Pepsi. And add a cloudy mist to it. When the whole process is done, we will cut the Pepsi liquid to the same size as the Pepsi chain and keep it in the fridge. Now Pepsi is ready.

Processing of Pepsi

Mawakulfi

Material: 1. Milk-12 litre 2. Mawa powder, 300 g; 3. sugar, 2 kg, 300 g 4. kulfi, 70 ml

First, pour 12 liters of milk into a big container. Add 300 grams of Mawa powder to the milk. Mawa powder should be mixed with milk slowly so that it does not curdle. After mixing well, the stove should be turned on because the Mawa powder does not mix well with hot milk. Then add 2 kg (300 g) of sugar mixed with milk. The mawa mixture will be ready in 30 minutes. Then turn off the stove. Stir until the mixture cools so that it does not stick to the bottom. Then you must take kulfi essence in cold milk, about 70 ml. Mix well, pour the mixture into the pharma, and place the stick on top. Then keep it at -25°C for freezing. When the mixture is frozen and the ice cream is made, take it out slowly and keep it in the refrigerator for later. Now, MawaKulfi is ready.

Case Study-O1

Name of the Informant: Chatur Baral

Age: 52

Sex: Male

Type of Work: Ice Cream seller

The name of the person from whom we took the data is Chatur Baral. He is 52 years old. He is Hindu. He belongs to the higher caste. Currently, he is an ice cream seller. To ask how many years he has been coming to the factory, he said that he has been coming to the factory for 2 years. He is a resident of Gobardanga. He has lived in Gobardanga for a long time. When asked when he came to the factory, he said that sometimes he came at 10:00 and sometimes at 11:30. He came late because his wife was sick. He cooked in the morning, bathed and fed his wife, then came to the factory. When asked if anyone else earns in his house apart from him, he said that he earns alone. His two daughters The elder daughter is married, and his younger daughter and wife live at home. When asked if the family is doing well by selling ice cream, he said that the money he earns by selling ice cream does not support his family. It is very difficult to run his family. When asked the reason, he said that it takes about 2000 taka per month to buy his wife's medicine. Moreover, his wife is almost sick. He is a patient with paralysis and heart disease. Sometimes he has to be taken to the doctor. It costs a lot of money to rent his car to take him to the doctor. He took his wife from Gobardanga to Barasat to see a doctor. When I asked him why he did not come to the factory and what he did, he said that he used to work as a laborer. He also said that his elder daughter helps, and the family runs on the rice and flour she gets from the ration. Now he comes to the ice cream factory every day to sell ice cream. When asked which products he takes for sale, he said that he takes Chocobar, Kulfi, mangostick, strawberry, orange, milk butter, and a nutty roll for sale. When asked what he does with the products he takes from the factory if they are not sold, he says that he brings them back to the factory and puts them in the owner's fridge. When he keeps the products in the fridge, does he count himself or does the owner count? He says that the owner's wife does the counting. He also counted the time to go to the store in the morning. As for the quality of the ice cream, he said that the quality of the ice cream is good. When asked about his relationship with the workers, he said that his relationship with them is very good. Even so, he has a good relationship with the owner.

Case study-02

Name of the Informant : Kamirul Islam

Age : 32

Sex: Male

Caste

Religion: Islam

Types of Work: Ice Cream seller

The person from whom we have collected data is Kamirul Islam. He is 32 years old. He is Muslim. He is an ice cream seller. When asked where his house is, he says that he lives in Shettpukur. He has lived in Shettpukur for a long time. He comes to

Bira from Shettpukur to the ice cream factory by bicycle every morning at 9 and takes the ice cream for sale. He earns about 12,000 rupees per month by selling ice cream. When asked how many years he has been coming to the factory, he said that he has been coming to the factory for 2 years. When I asked if any other member earns at his house, he said that he earns alone. He has a wife and a small daughter at home. He also said that his mother is alive. She is sick. She does not live near him. His elder brother lives near him in Bamungachi. But every month, he has to pay money to buy medicine. When asked what he does when the factory is closed, he said that he works as a laborer and sometimes goes to paint work. Now he comes to the ice cream factory every day to sell ice cream. He took ice cream from the factory to ask for sales. When I asked him what products he carries for sale, he said that he carries Chocobar, orange, mango, Pepsi, flat bowl, strawberry, and kulfi products for sale. When asked whether all the products are sold, he said that sometimes all the products are sold and sometimes not all the products are sold. On the day when all the products are not sold, he comes to the factory and keeps the rest of the products in the owner's fridge. And the products are counted by the owner's wife. Even when leaving in the morning, the owner's wife also gives them to the count. When asked about the quality of the ice cream, he said that the quality was good, but he also told the owner to improve it. He also says that his relationship with another worker is very good.

Case study-03

Name of the Informant : Nazrul Haque Sarkar

Age :43 years

Sex : Male

Caste : Islam

Types of Worker : Ice cream seller

The person from whom I have collected data is Nazrul Haque Sarkar. He is 43 years old. He is Muslim. He belongs to the general caste. He is an ice cream seller. On asking him, he said that he has been working in an ice-cream factory since 2009. He lives in Narayanpur. He has been living in Narayanpur for a long time. He regularly came from Narayanpur to the Bira Bandhabpally ice cream factory and took the products from the factory for sale. He earns Rs 9,000–10,000 per month by selling ice cream. Asking if there are any other earning members in his house, he said that his son earns besides him. His son's age is 22. When asked where his son works, he said that he works as a cutter in the cantonment. Moreover, sometimes, after returning home from work, he also works in a shoe store. Asked if there is any problem running his family, he said that with the money he and his son earn, their family runs well. Besides, when the factory is closed, he does other work. For example, embroidery on sarees, selling murimakha, and farming in the field But now his current occupation is selling ice cream. He regularly

brings out the ice cream from the factory for sale; sometimes all are sold, and sometimes not all are sold.

When asked where to keep the ice creams that are not sold, he said that he came to the factory and kept them in the factory's fridge. He took Chocobar, Small Bowl, Flat Bowl, Orange, Milk Butter, Mango Stick, Pepsi, and Kulfi from the factory for sale. On asking him, he said that the owner's wife keeps an account of the quantity of products he takes from the factory. When asked about the quality of ice cream, he said that the quality of ice cream is good. He also told the owner that the quality of the ice cream should be better. When asked about his relationship with the rest of the workers, he said that his relationship with them is very good.

Photographs



Fig. 1: Small Bowl Ice Cream



Fig. 2: Chocobar Ice Cream



Fig. 3: Orange Flavour Ice Cream



Fig. 4: Compressor Machine

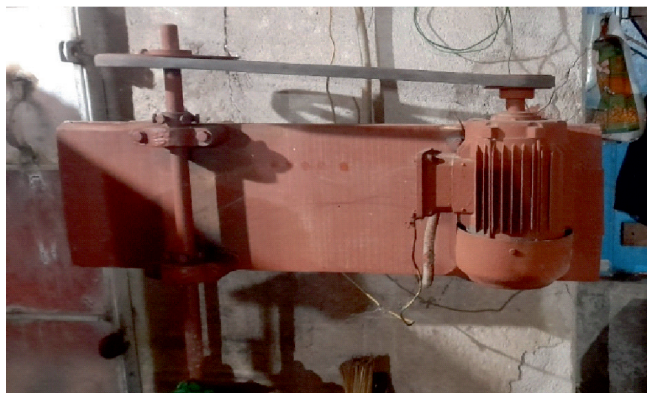


Fig. 5: Grinder



Fig. 6: Ice Pad



Fig. 7: Water tank of the salt



Fig. 8 : Tata Voltas Fridge



Fig. 9: Ice Can



Fig. 10: Van car for selling

Conclusion

From the previous discussion about ice-cream factory workers, it has been observed that they are becoming economically self-sufficient. They are getting a lot of help in their daily lives. Since the relationship between both the owner and the workers is good, if they face any difficulties, the owner helps them by giving them advance money. An ice cream factory is a place of employment where many people can earn their living by working. Apart from the permanent workers, there are many who buy ice cream from the factory and sell ice cream in boxes made by themselves from village to village. As a result, they benefited a lot economically, and the owner also sells many products. As a result, both owner and worker benefit economically. Every day, this small cottage ice cream factory produces about 2000 pieces of different types of ice cream, and around

1500 pieces are sold. The study shows that the relationship between owners and workers is good in this situation. The income per month satisfies both the 'owner and workers' basic needs for better living too.

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