ABSTRACT

Tea is one of the most popular and widely consumed beverages of the world. At present more than thirty countries of the world is producing tea. Principal tea producing countries are China, India, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Indonesia. These five countries account for 76 percent and 79 percent of world production and export respectively. India is the second largest tea producing countries after China contribute a significant share to the world tea by producing 26 percent of total production of the world. Major tea producing states in India are Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. Commercial tea production in India was started by British in 1835 at the Lakhimpur district of Assam. Subsequently tea gardens were opened for cultivation of tea plants in the different districts of Assam as well as other states of the country. India was the largest tea producing country in the world till 2005 and slipped to the second position behind China in the year 2006 due to cumulative growth of the tea production in China.

Assam occupied unique place in India by producing more than 53 percent of the national production having plantation area of about 3.22 Lakh Hectares which is more than half of the country's total area under tea. There are 761 big tea estates registered with the Tea Board of India are engaged in the tea plantation and production in Assam. These estates are managed by different public, multinational and private companies. The tea industry plays a vital role in the state economy by earning foreign currency. Tea industry extended largest support by generating highest employment opportunities in Assam where average more than ten lakhs worker are directly or indirectly engaged. There are about 9,00,000 people of Assam are involve as small tea growers. 87,000 such small tea growers contribute more than 27 percent of the total tea production in Assam.

The major driving work force behind the country's tea sector is the of eastern India's tea industry, particularly of the state of Assam which not only produces around 53 per cent of the country's total production, but also employs more than 10 per cent of the state's work force. However, the share of Assam in the country's tea production has

remained confined to a narrow range of 48 per cent to 53 per cent in during the period 2004 to 2015 due to decline in per hectare productivity. Apart from this, the most serious ailment remains not only low productivity but also with quality of tea produce due to low investment on infrastructure and low managerial efficiency. The problems of high cost of production and stagnant productivity need to be addressed on an urgent basis. What is necessary at the moment is that the tea industry gets modernized with a change in technique of plantation, adoption of new technology for tea manufacturing, improvement of encouragement to the electronic tea auction and managerial excellence. The industry could be expected to get back its earlier pride of place in international competitiveness and drive to road of prosperity.

Tea is a 'location specific', 'labour intensive', remunerative and systematic form of cultivation. It is location specific in the sense that it is being cultivated in specific agro-ecological conditions. Therefore, the impact of agro-ecological conditions on the production and productivity of tea is very much significant. It is also labour intensive in the sense that each and every stage of tea cultivation and production requires human labour so that entire system runs smoothly without interruption. Intensity of labour input depends on the availability of labour. Moreover, tea is a systematic form of agriculture, because, there exists a sequence of its cultivation from the field to the processing in the factory and each stage is followed by other stages. Rising competition in domestic market, less productivity performance, very old gardens and factories, unskilled manpower, poor relationship between employees and management, improper implementation of Government schemes, poor infrastructure for tea marketing, improper pricing, lack of new technology for managing factories and gardens, less co-ordination between global and domestic agencies. Volatility in the market and uncertainty in prices is also a major concern in last two decades. In spite of various steps taken by the different authorities as well as tea board of India, Assam tea production not able to regain the status which was before 1990. Our research tried to find out why tea industry is not able to uplift as per the expectation level. The thesis analysed the trend of tea production of Assam with respect to the national scenario, implication of small tea growers in total tea production in Assam,

the implementation level of different policies of Tea Board of India extended for the tea estates of Assam to enhance tea production, factors that are affecting the tea production in Assam. The entire thesis has been divided in to six chapters.

The first chapter is an introductory which highlighted the background of tea industry of the world, evolution of tea production and tea cultivation, growth of tea production in India and Assam, marketing channels of tea, auction process etc. The introductory chapter also framed with statement of problem, objectives, hypotheses and research methodology. The second chapter tinted with review of related literature on tea industry and tea production. This chapter has been divided in to six sections viz. literature related general in nature of tea industry, socio economic studies related to tea industry, studies related to marketing and export of tea, studies related to human resource management on tea industry, studies related to factor affecting tea production, studies related to productivity of tea. Views of different authors in the respective field of study mentioned above have been highlighted.

A detail analysis of the global scenario of tea production, cumulative growth rate of major tea producing countries, global scenario of tea export, cumulative growth rate of major tea exporting countries, state wise Indian scenario of tea production and state wise growth rate of tea production accommodated in third chapter. Time series analysis done for Production of tea in India, Export of tea from India, world tea production and world tea export. The regression analysis carried out to find the relationship between different identified variables on production of tea. Fourth chapter discussed the implication of small tea growers on the total tea production in Assam. The chapter highlighted genesis of tea production in small scale basis in world and also the concept of "Small Tea Growers" in India. Correlation amongst production of small tea growers, production of big tea growers and average annual production of the state of Assam have been established. It is found that there is a significant contribution by the small tea growers on the total tea production in Assam.

Primary data collected from sample tea estates through field survey were analysed in the fifth chapter. This chapter divided in to three sections namely *Section-I,* detail

analysis of the policies of tea board of India implemented by the tea estates of Assam. Chi-square test revealed that most of the policies of Tea Board of India were implemented by the tea estates of Assam. *Section – II* highlighted the factors affecting tea production in Assam. Factor analysis was performed to reduce the number of variables to fewer factors. Twenty seven selected variables were reduced by factor analysis using SPSS software with principal component analysis method. Eleven factors were identified which affect tea production in Assam. Detail development of productivity model for tea production in Assam has been given in *Section –III*. The relationship between total productivity and partial productivity has been established by using the statistical software MINITAB -18. It was observed that the major partial productivities in tea production in Assam are worker productivity which has the highest influence in tea production in Assam followed by the energy productivity and material productivity. Chapter six comprises with summery of all chapters, major findings, hypothesis verification and recommendations.