

SOME ASPECTS OF SMALL-SCALE SOAP INDUSTRY IN POONA *

J. C. KALELE

I. History :

The Small-Scale Soap Industry may be said to have started in Poona as early as in 1920. The units did not have any sizeable business during the initial period because the use of soap was limited to the urban population mainly, the per capita consumption of soap was small, and there was the relative competition of larger units. The area of distribution of these units was also limited to one or two districts bordering on Poona District. Though exact figures as regards this industry during the initial period are not available, it appears that there were about two or three units manufacturing about 50 to 60 tons of washing soap per annum.

This study was undertaken in 1958. From the information gathered, the mortality rate in this industry appears to be high, and attempts to collect information about those units which went out of production were not very successful. The historical account given below, therefore, mainly relates to those units existing in 1958.

The following table gives a consolidated picture of the progress of the seven small-scale soap units operating in Poona City in 1958.

Table 1: PROGRESS OF SOAP INDUSTRY IN POONA

Year	No. of units working	Production (Tons)	Labour	Capital (in '000 Rs.)
1938	2	150	15	38,
1940	3	320	31	105,
1942	3	525	50	184,
1945	3	850	72	320,
1948	5	895	73	405,
1950	5	845	71	388,
1953	6	848	67	393,
1956	7	911	72	424,
Present	7	975	77	442,

* The present study was undertaken in 1958 immediately after the completion of the advanced Training Programme in Methods of Social Science Research at the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona 4.