



A STUDY ON PROBLEM FACED BY COCONUT GROWERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Coconut plays an important role in contributing to India's GDP of about 15,000 crore rupees and 72% of world's total production is from India and productivity is also high in India. In India, Tamil Nadu tops the list in the productivity of coconut, but production is high in Karnataka and Kerala tops in the area. In Tamil Nadu, Cuddalore district ranks first in productivity of coconut followed by Krishnagiri and Theni. Production wise, Tiruppur and Thanjavur rank first. Coconut, a versatile crop being used for various uses, but in India, almost 70 % of the coconut is used for the edible purpose. Objectives of the study, To analyse the problems faced by coconut growers in Coimbatore District. Descriptive research design has been adopted in this study. Primary as well as secondary data have been adopted in this study. Primary data collected through interview schedule. Secondary collected through journal, websites, magazines, internet etc., Convenience sampling technique adopted in this study. Coimbatore district has selected in this study. 120 respondents are selected study. All respondents are engaged cultivation and marketing of coconut, they are having minimum 5 years experience. Weighted average method has adopted in this study. Data collection period from July 2021 to August 2021. Suggested in this study, 26.8 percent of the respondents felt that there is a heavy increase in the cost of marketing. 22.3 (7.1 mean score) percent of the respondents faced a problem of absence of stabilized price for the produces. Due to lack of poor coconut processing facilities in the study area the farmers may not be in a position to fetch good price for their products (25.5 percent.)

KEYWORDS: Price fluctuations, marketing commission, middle men etc.,

INTRODUCTION

Coconut, the versatile palm popularly known as the 'Tree of Life', 'Tree of Heaven', 'Tree of Abundance', 'Nature's Super Market', 'King of Palms', 'Kalpavriksha' as well as 'God's Gift to Mankind' and its fruit as 'LakshmiPhal', the 'Fruit of Wealth'. It is grown in more than 93 countries (P.Rethinam, 2002). Its kernel, water, shell, husk, leaf, trunk, oil, flowers etc., have a wide variety of use. It provides food, drink, health, medicine, shelter, aesthetic materials and wealth for millions of people in the Asian and Pacific region by making use of its products and byproducts. Coconut is a crop of great antiquity in India. It is a > traditional plantation crop grown in India for the last 3000 years and thus possesses the longest recorded history in the country. The crop has

significant role on the national economy besides its influence on the economic, social and cultural lives of millions of small and marginal farmers who form the backbone of the coconut culture and industry of the country. It acts as an enormous source of raw material for various small, medium and large-scale industries, particularly in those states where this crop is largely grown.

In India, coconut farming is inseparably embedded in the socio-historical culture as well as the ethnic identity. Coconut tree (*Cocos nucifera*) is a member of the palm tree family (Arecaceae). The term "coconut" (or the archaic "coconut") can refer to the whole coconut palm, the seed, or the fruit, which botanically is a drupe, not a nut. Coconut palm provides food security and livelihood to the large size of the population in the world particularly, in Asia Pacific Countries. Considering the versatile nature of the crop and the multi-uses of its products, the coconut palm is eulogized as KALPAVRIKSHA (Tree of Heaven). Coconut is a source of food, beverage, medicine, natural fiber, fuel, wood and raw materials for units producing a variety of goods. Coconut is also interlinked with socio-economic life of a large number of small and marginal farmers in peninsular India. It is estimated that about 12 million people in India are dependent on the coconut sector in areas of cultivation, processing and trading activities. With an annual production of around 17,000 million nuts, coconut contribution to nation's GDP is about 15,000 crores rupees.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ever since India's independence, agriculture in India has taken major strides owing to the varieties and agronomic interventions of agricultural research and the resourcefulness of the farming community. Marketing determines the productivity and profitability. Creating a sound marketing system is essential, as the problems of coconut growers mostly emerge due to the imperfections in the marketing system. Sincere attempts have been made to clear-off the marketing imperfections especially after independence during plan periods. Passing of Agricultural Produce Marketing Act, organization of Regulated Markets, and Cooperative Marketing Societies and establishment of Ware Housing Corporations are important landmarks in this regard. Nevertheless there are group projects of coconut farmers as effective institutions have been found in some of the regions of Tamil Nadu. Such group projects are also observed in some developing countries like Taiwan, Thailand and Philippines (Aurora Regaldo, 1994). These group projects enhance collective bargaining among coconut growers and enable for providing competitive price to coconut farmers. They seem to function as bargaining cooperatives of Canada. Thus, development of different forms of marketing institutions questions the relevance of the conventional formal marketing structures. Non-Institutional Agencies still dominate in coconut. Problems faced by the Farmers in Coconut Cultivation. They include Incidence of pests and diseases, High cost of input, Lack of irrigation, Shortage of tree climbers and Lack of scientific knowledge. Marketing of coconut like that of any other horticultural commodities, notionally has two aspects i.e. the marketing activity', in which sellers and buyers have mutual coordination in each other's activities, where goods and services from producers move through certain channels by conscious application of marketing tools. The other aspect is the marketing promotional activity, which comprises of gathering information, data, Compilation, analysis, interpretation of the data and passing the resulted valid Information to farmers, trade business organizations and other concerned agencies to facilitate marketing functions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Subburaj.B (2000) conducted a Research study on marketing of coconuts with a view to know the strategies employed for disposal of coconuts by farmers and the channel functionaries, seasonal variations in sale practices, mode of disposal of coconuts, indirect channel functionaries and their procurement and sale practices. This study is empirical analysis. It employed participatory appraisal technique. The study concludes that non-availability of organized credit for production, marketing and consumption purposes, absence of organized marketing institutions and difficulties in the adoption of off-farm value addition, processing and marketing technologies on coconuts are the major reasons for the 'forced sale' either through lease practices or on-farm sale of coconuts to marketing intermediaries.

Rethinam. P. (2001) conducted a study on problems and prospects of coconut industry in Andaman Nicobar Islands with a aim of studying coconut situation in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, trend in area, production and productivity of coconut, processing industry, prevailing marketing system and consumption pattern of coconut. The study reveals that Andaman & Nicobar Islands contribute an area of 24796 ha under coconut cultivation. The total palm population is 44.584 lakh and the annual production is 87.5 million nuts. Per ha productivity is as low as 3536 nuts per ha against the national average productivity of 7821 nuts per ha. This island recorded the lowest productivity rate in the country. Of the total production of coconut 40 percent is processed and the rest is consumed for house hold edible uses and tender nut purpose. The marketing system in this island was in vogue till recently wherein the tribes exchanged coconut for their daily requirements. The prevailing market price of copra in this island is only around Rs. 12-15 per kg. The Central Tribal Cooperative Society Ltd does the procurement under the price support scheme. The marketing structure of coconut in this island is a two tier system i.e., primary society and central society under cooperatives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To analyse the problems faced by coconut growers in Coimbatore District.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Descriptive research design has been adopted in this study. Primary as well as secondary data have been adopted in this study. Primary data collected through interview schedule. Secondary collected through journal, websites, magazines, internet etc., Convenience sampling technique adopted in this study. Coimbatore district has selected in this study. 120 respondents are selected study. All respondents are engaged cultivation and marketing of coconut, they are having minimum 5 years experience. Weighted average method has adopted in this study. Data collection period from July 2021 to August 2021.

TABLE NO.1 :REASONS FOR CULTIVATING LONG PERIOD –COIMBATORE

S.NO	REASONS FOR CULTIVATING LONG PERIOD	MEAN	RANK
1	Do not know other business	4.4917	2
2	Traditional crop	3.6917	3
3	Easy marketing	2.4583	6
4	Enough small size of land	2.7500	5
5	Family members support	2.7750	4
6	Regular income source	4.8333	1

Source: Primary Data.

The above table states the reasons for cultivating long period in madathukulam area. Regular income source has scored first rank with mean score of 4.833, Do not know other business has scored second rank with mean score of 4.4917, Traditional crop has scored third rank with mean score of 3.6917, Family

members support has scored fourth rank with mean score of 2.7750, Enough small size of land has scored fifth rank with mean score of 2.7500 and Easy marketing has scored last rank with mean score of 2.4583.

TABLE NO.2 :MARKETING PROBLEM FACED BY RESPONDENTS-

S.no	Marketing problem	Mean	Rank
1	Price fluctuation	7.15	1
2	Non non-institutional agencies	6.85	2
3	Lack of market information	6.775	3
4	High transport cost	6.6583	4
5	High commission charges	6.1083	5
6	Improper method of sale	6.025	6
7	Poor customer relationship	5.9917	7
8	Lack of export promotional activity	5.975	8
9	High dominance of market intermediaries	5.3917	9
10	Unauthorized deductions	5.2083	10
11	Non availability of marketing intelligence	3.8667	11

Source: Primary Data.

The above table states the Marketing problem in Coimbatore District. Price fluctuation has scored first rank with mean score of 7.15, Non availability of storage facilities has scored second rank with mean score of 6.85, Lack of market information has scored third rank with mean score of 6.775, High transport cost has scored fourth rank with mean score of 6.6583, High commission charges has scored fifth rank with mean score of 6.1083, Improper method of sale has scored sixth rank with mean score of 6.025, Poor customer relationship has scored seventh rank with mean score of 5.9917, Lack of export promotional activity has scored eighth rank with mean score of 5.975, High dominance of market intermediaries has scored ninth rank with mean score of 5.3917, Unauthorized deductions has scored tenth rank with mean score of 5.2083 and Non availability of marketing intelligence has scored last rank with mean score of 3.8667.

TABLE NO.3 : GENERAL PROBLEM FACED BY RESPONDENTS – COIMBATORE DISTRICT

S.no	General Problem	Mean	Rank
1	No research center nearby	5.8	1
2	No subsidy loss of natural calamities	5.55	2
3	Heavy investment	5.4	3
4	High cost of fertilizer and pesticides	5.2375	4
5	Non availability experienced labours	4.825	5
6	Non availability of loan facility	4.0625	6
7	Lack of availability of own (or) leased land	3.9375	7
8	High labour cost	3.3375	8

The above table states the General problem in Coimbatore district. No research center nearby has scored first rank with mean score of 5.8, No subsidy loss of natural calamities has scored second rank with mean score of 5.55, Heavy investment has scored third rank with mean score of 5.4, High cost of fertilizer and pesticides has scored fourth rank with mean score of 5.2375, Non availability experienced labour has scored fifth rank with mean score of 4.825, Non availability of loan facility has scored sixth rank with mean score of 4.0625, Lack of availability of own (or) leased land has scored seventh rank with mean score of 3.9375 and High labour cost has scored last rank with mean score of 3.3375.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

A good majority of the 68 respondents (64.1 percent) responded that the price offered by the institutional agency is better than the non-institutional agencies. Rest of the 52 respondents (35.9 percent) has favoured their opinion towards non-institutional agencies.

35.9 percent of the respondents preferred non-institutional agencies for their marketing operations. Among the 52 respondents 36.4 percent of the respondents opined that advance money given by the non-institutional agencies is the primary reason for preferring them. Farm gate sales and no cumbersome process are the reasons felt equally by the 20.9 percent of the respondents. 16.4 and 5.5 percent of the respondents responded that pre and post market services and good price are the criteria for preferring non-institutional agencies .

26.8 percent of the respondents felt that there is a heavy increase in the cost of marketing. 22.3 (7.1 mean score) percent of the respondents faced a problem of absence of stabilized price for the produces. Due to lack of poor coconut processing facilities in the study area the farmers may not be in a position to fetch good price for their products (25.5 percent). Though there are two institutional agencies functioning in the sample area. They are not in a position to satisfy the needs of the member respondents (4.6 percent). 3.3 percent of the respondents reported that unethical practices are followed by the intermediaries in the coconut marketing.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

Concerning coconut spot installment and the sensible cost was the central point which has a major impact on coconut marketing by direct selling method. It is discovered that lack of quality saplings was the serious issue looked at by the coconut producers in the study. The other factors were finance, high cost, and labor problem was faced by the coconut growers during the pandemic period. Hence the problems can be solved by introducing various features like online marketing, packaging, discounts, and touchless technology. These features help to improvise coconut marketing during this period. The department of agriculture must conduct various campaigns to teach the coconut growers regarding coconut farming and cultivation for standardizing the coconut price.

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