

A STUDY ON PROBLEMS FACED BY THE FARMERS OF COIMBATORE DISTRICT IN MARKETING THEIR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE THROUGH UZHAVAR SANDHAI

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Abstract

The “City-Centric Models” of farmers’ market with direct farmer-consumer sales can create more surpluses for small and poor farmers. Although not a popular idea in developing countries, in developed countries these markets have been very competitive because of their institutionalization. However, they stress more on “organic” vegetables and fruits, thus creating a “space” for small farmers among the large corporate industrial farming. Objectives of the study is to analyze the socio-economic condition of farmers of Coimbatore District who are Marketing their agricultural produce through Uzhavar Sandhai, and to study the problems faced by the farmers of Coimbatore District in marketing their Agricultural produce through Uzhavar Sandhai. The research design used in this study is Descriptive in nature. Primary as well as secondary data used in this study. The primary data is collected through questionnaire and the sample size is 140 and the data collected from 140 farmers who are selling their products in uzhavar sandhai. Convenience sampling method is used in this study. The findings of the study is the Delay in executing field work” was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1338 and mean score of 9.56. The study suggested that the Municipal corporation may create awareness about farmers market through local advertisement media and for effective communication purpose, the electronic price display board may be extended by the market committee in each Uzhavar Sandhai . Hence, the Uzhavar Sandhai brought a great relief to farmers by eliminating the role of middlemen. Overall, the work done by the researcher is a rewarding exercise and the researcher will be delighted if the suggestions are implemented by the policy makers in the Government.

Key Words: Agriculture, Communication, Development etc.,

I.1.Introduction

While India has been a predominantly agricultural economy, it now seems to be increasingly shedding this image and transforming itself in to a service sector-driven economy. As more and more policy decisions are being taken in favour of the manufacturing and service sectors, less is said about the agricultural sector. On the trade policy front, policies followed by various Central governments after 1991 have been taking India towards a “tariff-alone approach”, which opened the economy to large imports of much cheaper agricultural goods and has threatened the very livelihood of both agricultural labourers and small farmers. Without adequate backing, people who are depending upon agriculture have nothing to gain, but more to lose. If this trend continues, farmers and agricultural labour will suffer and their livelihood security will be damaged. When we take the case of small farmers, it is found that vegetables have been the prime crop that is being cultivated by them and thus also their prime source of livelihood. India being the largest producer of vegetables and fruits, it should be able to make trade policy decisions to protect this position. There are some very important lessons to be learned from the recent suspension of the WTO negotiations that seek to address the development concerns of developing countries (July 2006). It is absolutely essential therefore to create and maintain necessary safeguards at the domestic level in order to deal with the challenges thrown by a globalised agriculture sector.

In this context, an aspect that is of paramount importance in enabling the farmers to face up to these challenges would be to restructure the functioning of agricultural markets on the domestic front. This would first and foremost involve the elimination of traders and middlemen from exploiting the farmers. This could be done by starting a direct farmers’ market in places where there is significant population of small farmers and a corresponding demand for the produce yielding fair

prices for both the farmers and the consumers. An example can be cited in the 'Uzhavar Sandhai'(farmers' market) system followed in Tamil Nadu, where it has received tremendous support from farmers and consumers alike, both of whom benefit from such direct marketing.

The "City-Centric Models" of farmers' market with direct farmer-consumer sales can create more surpluses for small and poor farmers. Although not a popular idea in developing countries, in developed countries these markets have been very competitive because of their institutionalisation. However, they stress more on "organic" vegetables and fruits, thus creating a "space" for small farmers among the large corporate industrial farming. What Uzhavar Sandhai has done effectively in Tamil Nadu is to create a better market for the products of poor, small and marginal farmers with fixed prices and informed consumers. Two most important advantages, which the farmers have obtained through the Sandhai, are the following. First, they are able to get a "fair price" for their produce, which they obtain as ready cash-in-hand in contrast to the situation when they sell to wholesale agents who make delayed settlements. Second, they can bringing very small quantities into the market, which is not possible in the wholesale markets. Thus, this market is like the life blood for many farmers and agricultural labourers as it supports continual farming and induces the farmer to stay in farming. By providing opportunities for employment to lakhs of landless agricultural labourers in their own villages, this could also put a check on migrations to the cities. Uzhavar Sandhai thus could be playing a unique role in empowering the farmers in Tamil Nadu and avoiding the widespread farmers' suicide that have been reported in other states like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, etc. It is therefore a unique fair farmers' market model, which is capable of providing answers to several challenges put forth by the globalisation of agriculture. One of the other significant positive aspects of the Sandhai is that it does not require much training, because all that is required is the introduction of the concept of fair farmers' market. If they are given the required simple training in marketing techniques, then farmers can decide what to experience, we can extend farmers' markets to smaller towns and villages. Each region is cultivate, when to sell and at what price, and whom to sell. As we gain 'different' by way of its culture, habits and socio-economic fabric, so we have to redesign the concept to suite the conditions of each locality. If implemented on a wider scale, farmers' markets could improve the efficiency and power for decision-making by poor farmers in restructuring their living standards and could also strengthen the role played by developing countries in the WTO negotiations.

Agriculture, which is considered the backbone of the Indian economy, has taken a back seat due to the apathy of government policies in the last two decades. The percentage of cultivable land has come down. Meanwhile, nearly 70 percent of the population depending upon agriculture for their daily livelihood directly or indirectly is currently undergoing a transformation. With dwindling surpluses from agricultural activities, most of the labourers have now shifted to service sector activities like real estate, working as construction workers, and others (especially the second generation from farming families) who are semiskilled have found solace in the periphery, working for courier companies and the like. Thus, semi and unskilled workers are forced to take up work in manufacturing (mostly contractual in nature) and service sectors – where wages are minimal and hardly any social security is provided by the company. Yet approximately some 20 percent of the villagers now depend solely upon agricultural income for their livelihood directly. Farmers' welfare directly depends upon the income generated from agricultural produce. This income would be high or low depending upon the nature of the price discovered in the market for the produce. The farmers often do not participate in determining the price and instead the middlemen and agents. Globalisation is a process in which the entire nation is expected to benefit, including the small farmers as stakeholders. But in India, we see a different picture. Globalisation has left the small farming community (and in the case of certain crops, the government) do it. These third parties make profit out of the loss imposed upon poor farmers by manipulating the demand-supply conditions. When this threatens the daily livelihoods of the villagers, they search for better sources of income outside agriculture. This leads to sale of land, which ultimately drives the agricultural labour-force out of employment. The other side of the story is that due to the low prices received for their produce, farmers are sometimes compelled to give very low wages to the labourers, which is far less than what

they might receive in comparison to the manufacturing sector. This forces the labourers to migrate out of agriculture. This indeed is not bad for an economy, which is in the second stage of reforms and globalizations. Reforms would be meaningful in the macro context, only if they provide greater employment opportunities with better wages and working environment. It is an irony that it is not so in the agricultural sector in a nation, which calls “ Mathama Gandhi” the father of the nation, who always stressed upon “self sufficient villages” as the building blocks for making India a strong nation. Today we have a situation where large-scale migration of productive labour force (in the age group of 16 to 58) from villages to metros is creating unmanageable shanty townships. This has come about due to a combination of misplaced trade and other policies. Fruits and agricultural landless labourers behind to languish in penury. In the era of corporate farming many large farmers have joined hands with big companies to do their business.

1.2. The Dynamics of Farmers’ Market

A Case Analysis of “Uzhavar Sandhai” of Tamil Nadu political nexus. Small farmers cannot do this, as they lack the above-stated skills and are not united under one group. As this situation stands to be corrected, we explore an alternative to the existing nexus through this study. Another important issue, which has to be addressed surrounds the impact of globalisation in terms of falling commodity prices on small farmers. Despite being the largest producer of vegetables and fruits, India does badly on the export front because huge amounts of produced vegetables are not stored properly due to the lack of cold storage facilities. Even if some of the produce reaches the export gate, due to the heavy competition in the international market for vegetables and fruits created by developed nations by heavily subsidising their produce, the products from India with their higher prices lose in competitiveness. This is further aggravated by having a system filled with middlemen. Further, with the formation of the WTO, India has had to open its own economy gradually to the international flow of agricultural commodities.

Trade policies followed by various Central governments since the early 1990s have thus been taking India towards a “tariff-alone approach”, which has opened the economy to large imports of much cheaper agricultural goods and has threatened the very livelihood of both agricultural labour and small farmers. On many occasions, Indian imports of vegetables and fruits have displaced an equivalent demand for the same produced in India, which has had a direct impact on prices that farmers obtain. This can affect the local production and supply of agricultural commodities thereby adversely impacting our long-term national interest, namely self-sufficiency in food. As farmers face falling prices and greater Competition, steps are thus urgently needed within the domestic space to eliminate middlemen and give full value for the produce, so as to improve the standard of living of the farmers. However, since reforming the Indian marketing system would be a long and time-consuming process, it is in this context that a better marketing support for farmers enabling them to fetch higher prices than those in the existing system is being explored as a parallel marketing mechanism. This might prove helpful in creating a cooperative-like setup in agriculture. A rejuvenated farm sector would also be a better competitor in the world markets, in the event that developed countries agree to a meaningful cut in their domestic support (subsidies). Such changes in the agricultural marketing system can be brought in through fair trading practices among the small farming community. Fair price is a part of fair trading practices and has to be inculcated the agricultural society with great care. Problems like fair price, better market place, better quality, correct weighing of goods and facility to store and transport goods, etc. have to be addressed. If these problems are solved, then we can be assured that major hurdles in the way of a better fortune for the farmers will be removed. In particular, the price should be a profitable one for the farmers and should make some difference in their quality of life and give enough incentive to them and their next generation to take up and continue farming as their livelihood. This kind of supportive fair marketing system can be drawn from examples of weekly farmers Sandhais (markets) that are prevalent all around rural Tamil Nadu. The present study tries to focus on the daily dynamics of “Uzhavar Sandhais” to understand how they make a significant difference in farmers’ standard of living. The tariff-alone approach pursued so far under the WTO’s Agreement on Agriculture (AOA) has seen

Indian agricultural tariffs being reduced progressively and thus giving increased access to imports, whereas India's own agricultural exports have failed to gain any significant access in other countries (especially the developed countries) due to the presence of Non-Tariff Barriers or Measures (NTBs/NTMs). Taking a "balanced approach" in addressing the issues in the AOA would mean addressing both NTBs/NTMs (in particular SPS issues) as well as tariff issues, together with other more specific issues such as export subsidies and domestic support, and also the livelihood and developmental issues in this context. Again, on a specific issue like the Ad-Valorem Equivalent (AVE) tariffs, there is far from any kind of consensus.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Farmers in India face a number of problems during cultivation as well as marketing the produces, which need attention. One of the most important problem is how to get a fair price for their produce. Farmers happen to sell their produce less than the cost of cultivation. Therefore, farmers need assistance for securing a reasonable price for fruits and vegetables. The role of transport is very important for the development of any economy and agriculture is also no exception. Farmers face problems regarding adequate and quick means of transportation of produces at the village level. A large number of farmers do not have their own means of transport facility to market their produces. Farmers need transport facility in the very early morning i.e., around 4.00 am, in order to reach the Uzhavar Sandhai on time. Most of the villages are still not provided with sufficient transport facilities by the state that too in the early morning and farmers have to depend on private transport operators to carry vegetables to the market yard. Farmers spend more on transport, which increases the cost of produce. Hence, the farmers are necessitated to sell the produces at village at a comparatively lower price. Marketing of agricultural produces is different from other manufactured products because of their perishable nature, seasonality of production, bulk quantities and variation in quality which requires special care and attention in providing time, form and place utilities. The peculiar character of agricultural commodities, especially fruits and vegetables, are such that, they cannot be preserved for a long time. Storage facility is an important infrastructure for perishable agricultural produces viz., flowers, fruits and vegetables to keep afresh. Farmers utilising Uzhavar Sandhai need these storage facilities in order to preserve the unsold vegetables. There are surplus produce during harvest season that require cold storage facility to preserve the vegetables for a few days more. But this sort of facility is not available in most of the Uzhavar Sandhais.

Indian agricultural marketing involves a long chain of middlemen. Farmers have to depend on middlemen for selling their produces. The uneducated farmers are not capable of analysing the trend of vegetable market as they supply through middlemen and they sell their produce for the price offered by the middlemen. The middlemen earn a good amount of profit because of the innocence of farmers and hence the farmers cannot reap the benefits of their hard work. Therefore the promotion of an organised pattern of vegetable marketing is essential to protect the farmers from other functionaries. Farmers face many problems due to the discontinuation of customary benefits provided in the Uzhavar Sandhais, viz., free transport of luggage, withdrawal of agricultural officers in the department of Horticulture, and reduction in the number of Uzhavar Sandhais. Farmers continue to face all these marketing problems even after sixty six years of independence. Transport, Fair price, Marketing Infrastructure, and a long chain of middlemen are the major issues in agricultural marketing. The aim of "direct marketing" is mainly to eliminate the involvement of middlemen in agricultural marketing, assuring a fair price and to provide all sorts of marketing infrastructure facilities including market yard and weighing scale. Hence, the present study on problems faced by farmers with reference to Uzhavar Sandhai has been undertaken to analyse these issues in reality.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the socio-economic condition of farmers of Coimbatore District who are Marketing their agricultural produce through Uzhavar Sandhai.

2. To study the problems faced by the farmers of Coimbatore District in marketing their Agricultural produce through Uzhavar Sandhai.

1.5. Methodology

A good research work requires a clear scientific methodology because only through the application of correct methodology in selection of sampling techniques, appropriate tools of data collection etc., well founded conclusions can be drawn on the phenomenon under considerations. Research design constitutes the blue print of collection, measures and analysis of data. In specific terms, a research design is the arrangements of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research prose with economy in procedure. Here in this study the researcher used Descriptive research, which is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or of a group. This study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data is the data that is collected afresh for the first time and that is original in nature. The primary data is collected through questionnaire. Secondary data is the data that has been collected by some one else and which has already been passed through the statistical process. Secondary data has been collected from newspapers, magazines, web sites and general discussion with local municipal government officials. Samples were collected from farmers in which the total sample size of respondents are 140.

A sample design is a definite for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or the procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample i.e. the size of the sample. Sample design is determined before data is collected. There are many sample designs from which a researcher chooses convenience sample method. The sample units are selected according the convenience of the investigator or researcher. For the purpose of the survey, a structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed to farmers who are selling their products in uzhavar sandhai in Coimbatore District.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

Time and cost constraints. The study is confined to Coimbatore District only. The findings and suggestions of the study are not generalised to all. The data collected is based on the questionnaire so the results will be vary according to the opinions of individuals. Information collected from the farmers considered for analysis. As the farmers are based to their opinions, we cannot their expectations are fully reliable.

1.7. Analysis and Interpretation

Table - 1 Socio Economic Conditions of Farmers

AREA	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Coimbatore North	33	23.81
Mettupalayam	31	22.14
Pollachi	39	27.86
Coimbatore Sourth	37	26.19
Total	140	100
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION		
No formal education	42	29.76
Primary	45	31.90
High school	39	27.86
Collegiate	13	9.29
Total	140	100
AGE		
Upto 25 years	31.00	22.1
25 to 35 years	42.00	30.0
35 to 45 years	36.33	26.0
45 and above	30.67	21.9
Total	140.00	100.0

NO. OF FAMILY MEMBERS		
Upto 4 members	52.33	37.38
5-6 members	20.00	14.29
Above 6 members	67.67	48.33
Total	140.00	100.00
TYPE OF FAMILY		
Nuclear family	69.00	49.29
Joint family	71.00	50.71
OCCUPATION		
Agriculture	44.67	31.90
Agriculture with business activities	47.33	33.81
Agriculture with allied activities	48.00	34.29
Total	140.00	100.00
ANNUAL INCOME		
Below Rs.3 lakh	55.67	39.76
Rs. 3 to 4 lakh	69.00	49.29
Rs. 4 to 5 lakh	10.00	7.14
Above Rs.5 lakh	5.33	3.81
Total	140.00	100.00
CROP LOAN AVAILED		
Yes	32.67	23.33
No	107.33	76.67
Total	140.00	100.00
SOURCE OF FINANCE		
Own fund	76.00	54.29
Money lender	31.33	22.38
Borrowings from nationalized banks	1.33	0.95
Borrowings from traders	16.00	11.43
Others	15.33	10.95
LAND HOLDING	44.33	31.67
Own land	44.33	31.67
Leased land	73.00	52.14
Both	22.67	16.19
Total	140.00	100.00

Source: Primary Data

The above table represents the socio economic condition of the farmers. 23.81 per cent of the respondents are from Coimbatore North area, 22.14 per cent of the respondents are from Mettupalayam, 26.19 per cent of the respondents are from Pollachi and 26.19 per cent of the respondents from Coimbatore south. The majority of the respondents are from Pollachi (27.86 per cent).

Regarding the educational qualification of the respondents, 29.8 per cent of the respondents have no formal education, 31.9 per cent of the respondents have completed their primary education, 27.86 per cent of the respondents have completed high school education and only 9.29 per cent of the respondents are graduates and have completed collegiate education. The majority of the respondents have primary school education (31.90 per cent).

The details on age of the respondents was given in the above table. 22.1 per cent of the respondents belong to the age category of up to 25 years, 30.0 per cent of the respondents belong to the age category of 25 to 35 years, 26.0 per cent of the respondents belong to the age category of 35 to 45 years and 21.9 per cent of the respondents belong to the age category of 45 and above years. The majority of the respondents belong to the age category of 25 to 35 years (30.0 per cent).

From the above table, it is clear that the 49.3 per cent of the respondents belongs to nuclear type of family and 50.7 per cent of the respondents belongs to joint family. The majority of the respondents belong s to joint family (50.7 per cent).

Regarding the source of income of the respondents. 31.9 per cent of the respondents income source is only agriculture, 33.8per cent of the respondents income source is agriculture with business activities, 34.3per cent of the respondents income source is agriculture with allied activities. The majority of the respondents income source is agriculture with allied activities (34.3 per cent).

It is evident from the above table that the 39.8 per cent of the respondents earn below Rs. 1 lakh, 49.3 per cent of the respondents earn Rs. 1 to 3 lakh, 7.1 per cent of the respondents earn Rs. 3 to 5 lakh and 3.8per cent of the respondents earn above Rs. 5 lakh. The majority of respondents earn Rs. 1 to 3 lakh (49.3 per cent).

The details on the crop loan availed by respondents was given in the above table 23.3 per cent of the respondents availed crop loan and 76.7 per cent of the respondents didn't avail crop loan. The majority of the respondents availed crop loan (76.7 per cent).

Table - 2 Infrastructure Problems

S.NO.	Infrastructure problems	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	. Absence of canteen facility	1257	8.98	2
2	Poor lavatory provision and maintenance	1033	7.38	3
3	. Non-availability of drinking water	689	4.92	6
4	Limited number of shops	770	5.5	5
5	Sale of vegetables in open space	778	5.56	4
6	Poor storage facility	1352	9.66	1
7	Lack of telephone facility	678	4.84	7
8	Improper communication by office staff	672	4.8	8
9	Lack of clarity and visibility of prices displayed on the board	666	4.76	9

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the infrastructure problem faced by farmers in uzhar sandhai. "Poor storage facility" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1352 and mean score of 9.66. "Absence of canteen facility" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1257 and mean score of 8.98. "Poor lavatory provision and maintenance" was ranked second by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1033 and mean score of 7.38. "Sale of vegetables in open space" was ranked third by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 778 and mean score of 5.56. "Limited number of shops" was ranked fourth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 770 and mean score of 5.50. "Non-availability of drinking water" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 689 and mean score of 4.92. "Improper communication by office staff" was ranked seventh by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 678 and mean score of 4.84. "Improper communication by office staff" was ranked eighth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 672 and mean score of 4.80. "Lack of clarity and visibility of prices displayed on the board" was ranked ninth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 666 and mean score of 4.76. It is evident that most of the respondents gave top priority to "Poor storage facility" for withholding the workers.

Table -3 Problems with Officials

S.NO.	PROBLEMS WITH OFFICIALS	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	No consultation before price fixation	725	5.18	6
2	Close supervision	745	5.32	5
3	Demanding vegetables free of cost	781	5.58	4
4	Demanding vegetables for a very low price	988	7.06	3
5	Delay in issuing card	1257	8.98	2
6	Collection of funds for the conduct of function and certain events	1386	9.90	1

Source: Primary Data

The above table depicts the problem with officials faced by farmers in uzhar sandhai. "Collection of funds for the conduct of function and certain events" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1386 and mean score of 9.90. "Delay in issuing card" was ranked second by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1257 and mean score of 8.98. "Demanding vegetables for a very low price" was ranked third by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 988 and mean score of 7.06. "Demanding vegetables free of cost" was ranked fourth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 781 and mean score of 5.58. "Close supervision" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 745 and mean score of 5.32. "No consultation before price fixation" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 725 and mean score of 5.18. It is evident that most of the respondents gave top priority to "Collection of funds for the conduct of function and certain events" for withholding the workers.

Table - 4 Transport Problems

S.NO.	TRANSPORT PROBLEMS	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	Rare bus service	692	4.94	5
2	Refusal to stop in between the bus stops	731	5.22	4
3	No bus facility to the remote village	784	5.6	3
4	Exorbitant charges levied by private vehicle operators	1028	7.34	2
5	Irregular transport service	1268	9.06	1

Source: Primary Data.

The table shows transport problems faced by the farmers while carrying their agricultural products to uzhar santhai for sales. "Irregular transport service" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1268 and mean score of 9.06. "Exorbitant charges levied by private vehicle operators" was ranked second by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1028 and mean score of 7.34. "No bus facility to the remote village" was ranked third by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 784 and mean score of 5.06. "Refusal to stop in between the bus stops" was ranked fourth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 731 and mean score of 5.22. "Rare bus service" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 745 and mean score of 5.32. "No consultation before price fixation" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 725 and mean score of 5.18. It is evident that most of the respondents gave top priority to "Irregular transport service" for withholding the workers.

Table – 5 Problems from Itinerary Vendors

S.NO.	Problems from itinerary vendors	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	Sale of English vegetables	375	2.68	5
2	Supply of vegetables at the door step of the consumers	393	2.81	4
3	Providing credit facility	498	3.56	3
4	Maintaining social relationship with consumers	633	4.52	2
5	Sales of small quantities of vegetables	698	4.99	1

Source: Primary Data.

The above table shows the problem with itinerary vendors faced by farmers in uzhar santhi. "Sales of small quantities of vegetables" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 698 and mean score of 4.99. "Maintaining social relationship with consumers" was ranked second by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 633 and mean score of 4.52. "Providing credit facility" was ranked third by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 498 and mean score of 3.56. "Supply of vegetables at the door step of the consumers" was ranked fourth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 393 and mean score of 2.81. "Rare bus service" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with

the total score of 745 and mean score of 5.32. "No consultation before price fixation" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 375 and mean score of 2.68. It is evident that most of the respondents gave top priority to "Sales of small quantities of vegetables" for withholding the workers.

Table - 6 Labour Problems

S.NO.	Labour problems	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	Migration of labour to urban areas	767	5.48	5
2	Demanding more wages	795	5.68	4
3	Non-availability of labour on time	1005	7.18	3
4	Loss of advance made due to migration of labour	1260	9.00	2
5	Delay in executing field work	1338	9.56	1

Source: Primary Data.

The above table shows the labour problem faced by the farmers. "Delay in executing field work" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1338 and mean score of 9.56. "Loss of advance made due to migration of labour" was ranked second by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1260 and mean score of 9.00. "Non-availability of labour on time" was ranked third by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 1005 and mean score of 7.18. "Demanding more wages" was ranked fourth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 795 and mean score of 5.68. "Migration of labour to urban areas" was ranked fifth by the selected sample respondents with the total score of 767 and mean score of 5.48. It is evident that most of the respondents gave top priority to "Delay in executing field work" for withholding the workers.

I.8. Suggestions of the Study

Suggestions of the study are as follows,

- Based upon the survey, Direct Marketing, more varieties, fresh & green, leafy vegetables are the main factors to influence the customers.
- Most of the respondents are expecting separate place for parking and they expect to be provided with a security officer farmer's market.
- Respondents and farmers are expecting Tiffin centre and drinking water facilities. Among the infrastructure problems, only limited number of shops available in Uzhavar Sandhai and non availability of drinking water are the most important problems faced by the farmers. Hence, the vacant space available in the Uzhavar Sandhai may be used for construction of additional shops.
- Farmers are expecting small godown facilities to store their products like opinions, coconuts etc.,
- Concerned authority of the farmer's market at right place and necessary step to implement Avain milk stall in farmers market for milk, butter, ghee etc.,
- Suggestion box may be kept in farmers market at right place and necessary action should be initiated upon those suggestions.
- Municipal corporation may create awareness about farmers market through local advertisement media. For effective communication purpose, the electronic price display board may be extended by the market committee in each Uzhavar Sandha is
- Avoidance of middlemen domination in farmers market
- Concerned officers should make surprise visits at the farmers market to inspect and regulate the activities.
- Extending the working hours of market in the evening time. □ Officials should be instructed that they should consult the farmers before fixing price and announce properly in mike. Also officials should be instructed that they should issue cards without any delay.
- The Government should provide cold storage facility in all Uzhavar Sandhais.
- The Government should create more transport facilities from the remote villages.

1.9. Conclusion of the Study

Farmers Market is a bridge between farmers and consumers. Farmers are getting right price for their product without middlemen involvement. Farmers are motivated by the direct consumers at 100 per cent level as well as consumers are fully satisfied by the way of freshness, availability and quality. Hence, concerned authorities should take care for proper functioning and regularize the supply of vegetables in farmers market. It is essential that they manage their activities in a logical way in order to align with the customer needs. If the findings and suggestions from this study are concerned and put into practice, definitely there will be more chances for further development. The main contention for both the sides is the middlemen, who steal away a great chunk of money. The Uzhavar Sandhai brought a great relief to farmers by eliminating the role of middlemen. Overall, the work done by the researcher is a rewarding exercise and the researcher will be delighted if the suggestions are implemented by the policy makers in the Government.

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