

Farmers Market: A Study On Social, Agro-Economic And Financial Benefits Experienced By Farmers

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How to cite this article: G.Pappa, Dr.M.Kalaiselvi (2024) Farmers Market: A Study On Social, Agro-Economic And Financial Benefits Experienced By Farmers. *Library Progress International*, 44(3), 25506-25513

Abstract

The study set out to examine the significance of Uzhavar Santhai in the lives of farmers. There are seven congregations of Uzhavar Santhai in the Pudukkottai District. Six of the seven were selected from blocks that comprised Gandarvakkottai, Aranthangi, Alangudi, Pudukkottai, Karambakudi, and Viralimalai. The inquiry was conducted and data were gathered. 108 replies in total were merged using the random sampling technique. According to the data gathered, the majority of farmers fell within the medium age range. More over half of the respondents have at least two acres of land, and many of them began farming in 2000. In this case, farming accounts for 80% of the farmer's employment, with the remaining 20% working as retailers.

Key words: Farmer's market, Subsistence, Middle man, Government

Introduction:

Direct marketing of agricultural products is a cost-effective method of satisfying both buyers and farmers. In India, the practice of selling agricultural products directly is growing. As everyone knows, agriculture is the foundation of the Indian economy, and according to the 2011 Census, 54.6% of the country's population currently depends either directly or indirectly on it for their daily subsistence. A farmer receives the largest possible portion of the money a customer spends on agricultural goods, and they also provide the goods to customers at a low cost. One example that has succeeded throughout most of India is Farmers Market, often known as the farmers market, which uses an effective marketing strategy to sell fresh fruits and vegetables directly to consumers. The growth of the farming class in the nation has been positively impacted by this social media platform. The study's methodology, a survey, aims to determine the connection between farmers' agricultural land and product sales. By eliminating middlemen, the Farmers Market aims to increase farmers' revenue. The Farmers Market elevates the status of farmers and centers on them. It is recommended that farmers bring their goods to the Farmers Market so they can sell them to customers directly.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the financial, agro-economic, and social benefits that farmers experience as a result of participating in farmers markets. The advantages of farmers markets to farmers and the agricultural loans they obtain from commercial banks are also examined in the study.

Review of Literature:

Dr. Ravindra B. Gawali (2020)¹ There are significant challenges in meeting the demands of the agriculture industry and producers in the quickly evolving marketing environment, while also acknowledging the vital and vital role that agriculture plays in meeting the food and health needs of consumers by guaranteeing food security. To control the production and distribution of food throughout the nation, the government implemented policies including public storage, minimum support prices, input subsidies, trade protection, market regulation, procurement, and distribution of food grains, etc. A deeper comprehension of the agricultural market and the most recent implementation of contemporary marketing tools and techniques have the potential to improve product-specific marketing strategies, decrease market inefficiencies, and increase farmers' incomes while ensuring the sustainability and economic viability of agriculture farming.

A. Narayanamoorthy*(2013)² Despite these successes, the farm industry has not had any exciting news since the early 1990s. The main characteristics of Indian agriculture today include farmer suicides, debt, crop failures, uncompetitive crop pricing, and low returns relative to cultivation costs. Farmers must also be protected from distressed sales by regularly monitoring the price behavior of key commodities, particularly during glut periods, so that the "Market Intervention Scheme" (MIS) can be quickly implemented. Farmers must also be protected from distressed sales by regularly monitoring the price behavior of sensitive commodities, particularly during glut periods, so that prompt "market intervention" can be made plan (MIS).

Amrutha S. (2024)³ Farmers Market helps farmers sell their own goods and profit directly from those sales. In addition to marketing their goods, farmers gain a lot of advantages by joining a particular farmers market. This study intends to investigate the benefits that farmers experience as a result of participating in farmers markets in order to investigate this idea and learn the ground-level realities of the Farmers Market model's effectiveness. Since agriculture accounts for a significant component of the Indian economy, the degree of agricultural productivity influences how rich the country is. Marketing determines the price of agricultural products in the agricultural industry before they are sold to consumers. Most farmers sell their produce at local fairs, markets, and cooperative groups. SHGs provide a great deal of assistance to female farmers so they can participate in farmers markets. According to farmers, their financial situation has improved, and they have simple access to the market and other infrastructure amenities built at Farmers Market to facilitate their seamless trading. Additionally, the farmers believe that it is now easier for them to obtain agricultural financing from commercial banks, which will ultimately enable them to enhance their agricultural operations and related activities. In order to promote healthy competition, which is comparable to ideal market conditions and higher price realization for farmers, the government can take steps to increase the number of buyers and sellers in wholesale markets. In addition to the aforementioned actions, the government can enhance market infrastructure by constructing storage (godown) facilities, cold storage facilities, improved loading and weighing facilities, suitable stalls, improved road connections, etc.

Statement of the Problem:

The challenges raised by the middlemen in the field of agricultural sector are huge. By incorporating farmers the Central and State Governments always try to find necessary solutions to solve this problem. Farmer market is such an attempt. It is important to know how far the farmers make use such markets and what extent they prevent the middlemen. Therefore this research topic is relevant in view of the below context. What is the role of farmer market in Pudukkottai District?

Objectives of the study:

- To study the socio-economic profile of the farmers in the farmers market in Pudukkottai District.
- To find out the factors influencing farmers and consumers to select farmer market.
- To evaluate the difficulties and the problem encountered by the sellers of farmer Market.

Salient features of Farmer's Market:

- Farmers growing vegetables, fruits and crops from villages and being identified and identity cards with photographs are issued to those farmers by the department of Horticulture.
- Farmer's marketing starts it's functioning from early morning.
- Special vehicles have been arranged for the farmers to bring their produce into farmer's markets at free of cost.
- Farmer's produces are weighed and recorded.
- Shops in farmer's markets are allotted to the farmers on first come first basis.
- Free electronic weighing balances have been provided to the farmers on priority basis.
- Daily price for each produce has been fixed by them team of officials including Agricultural officers and representatives from farmers group. The rate fixed will be 20 per cent more than the of prevailing wholesale market price.
- Consumers are benefited by getting 15 per cent less than that of prevailing retail price.
- Price list of the produce are provided in black boards in front of every shop.
- Drinking water, sanitary facilities, telephone connection and parking facilities are provided in all the farmer markets.
- Cold storages with 2 MT capacities have been constructed to prevent decaying of fruits and vegetables in top performing 27 farmer's market, where sale of fruits and vegetables exceed 15 MT per day.
- Supervision by the authorities for the prevention of malpractices.

Key stakeholders of Farmer's Market and their Duties:

- The Tamil Nadu government's Agricultural Marketing Department is in charge of putting the whole direct marketing idea into practice.
- Joint Collectors: These individuals are in charge of making sure the farmer's market in their districts runs smoothly. For the farmer's market to run well, they are in charge of all appointments of important officials and making sure that Agriculture Officers, Horticulture Consultants, Estate Officers, and pertinent local bodies are properly coordinated.
- Estate Officers: The farmers market's care and maintenance fall within the purview of the estate officers. They assign stores, set prices, and make sure everything runs smoothly on a daily basis.
- Horticulture Consultants: They are in charge of finding, encouraging, and guaranteeing farmers' presence so they may utilize the services offered by the farmer's market. They offer farmers pre- and post-harvest consulting.
- Agriculture Officers: These professionals support and coordinate with Horticulture Consultants and Estate Officers.
- Farmers: Self-help groups sell their produce at farmer's markets.

- The Rural Women and Children Department (DWCRA) SHGs: At the farmer's market, they sell goods together.

Theoretical frame work:

1. Farmers Marketing: Farmers gather at farmers markets to sell produce to customers directly, typically from the back of their trucks. Fresh fruits and vegetables are available at many markets, along with meat, fish, and dairy goods.

2. Social and Agro economic: Social support, money, employment, education, and neighborhood safety are a few instances of social and economic determinants. A society's options are influenced by social and economic factors. These choices affect our ability to afford housing, medical treatment, and stress reduction.

3. Financial Benefits: One of the various low-hedged entry options available to new farmers is growers' requests, which enables them to begin small, gauge consumer demand, and expand their enterprises. Encourage the practice of innovative husbandry. For every \$1 million in profit, original farmers create 13 full-time ranch driver employment.

Need of the Study:

Accessing traditional, intermediary-dominated marketplaces, where they frequently obtain lower rates for their produce, is difficult for small and marginal farmers. This study can assist in demonstrating how direct involvement in farmers markets enhances their ability to negotiate and obtain reasonable prices. By carrying out this research, we hope to contribute to a more sustainable and just agricultural system by offering a thorough grasp of the financial, agro-economic, and social benefits that farmers markets give.

Research Problem:

While prior research has examined customer behavior and market developments, there is a dearth of thorough studies that concentrate on the advantages that farmers enjoy. How the interaction of social, agro-economic, and financial aspects affects farmers' involvement and the long-term sustainability of farmers' markets is one of the main areas of unmet knowledge.

Research Methodology:

The study were blend of both analytical and descriptive in nature. The researcher has used both Primary and Secondary data. The Primary data were collected from the farmer's markets. The Secondary data were collected the magazines, newspapers, e-journals and so on. Hence the total population sizes are 108.

Socio- Economic Profile of the farmers:

Description of demographic variables of the respondents: this shows the distribution of the respondents observed over the variable such as Gender, Age, Education level, Category level, Monthly income, and No.of years in the market, Types of Agricultural products and Disposal of unsound products etc.

<i>Sl. No</i>	<i>Personal Background</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Gender	Male	45	40.63
		Female	63	59.37
		Total	108	100
2	Age	30-40	36	33.33
		41-50	47	43.75
		51-60	18	16.67
		61-70	7	6.25
		Total	108	100
3	Education level	Illiterate	0	0
		School level	80	77.08
		College level	28	22.91
		Total	108	100
4	Category of Seller	SHG	70	66.67
		Farmer	25	21.87
		Co- operative Societies	13	11.45
		Total	108	100
5	Monthly income	Upto Rs. 10,000	50	45.83
		10,000-15,000	36	33.33
		15,000-20,000	18	17.7
		Above 20,000	4	3.13
		Total	108	100
6.	No. of .Years in the Market	Less than 1 year	38	34.37
		1-3 years	30	27.08
		3-5 years	22	20.83
		More than 5 years	18	17.7
		Total	108	100
7.	Types of Agricultural Products	Vegetables	59	55
		Fruits	18	16.67
		Flowers	12	12.45
		Others	19	17.708
		Total	108	100
8.	Disposal of Unsold Products	Stored	75	69.79
		Sale in open market	33	30.21
		Total	108	100

Interpretation:

The above distribution shows that about 40.63 per cent among the total respondents were male and 59.37 per cent were female. Thus, it can be interpreted that women constitute most among the respondents.

From the above table it is clear that about 43.75 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group 41-50 years while 33 per cent of them belong to 30-40 years. Around 16.67 per cent of them belong to the age group of 51-60 years and only around 6.25 per cent comes under 61-70 years. So it is well clear that most of the farmers who comes and sells their products here are those who have their age in between 41-50 i.e., they are middle age group.

From the above data we can clearly understand that there were no illiterate people among the respondents who are engaged in market activities. Most of them, i.e., about 77.08 of them had received basic education. While 22.91 of the respondents had received college level education.

From this we can understand that almost 66.67 of the respondents belong to self-help groups. While people from Co-operative Societies constitute around 11.45. So it is clear that majority of the sellers are from self-help groups which is followed by farmer and sellers from Co-operative's societies respectively.

The tables below shows that about 45.83% of the respondents are receiving an income below Rs.10, 000. About 33.33% of the respondents fall between Rs. 10,000-15,000. Among the remaining 17.7% comes between Rs. 15,000 – 20,000 and 3.13% comes above Rs. 20,000. From this we can understand that those who receive remunerative prices above Rs.20, 000 are very low and those who receive remunerative prices below Rs.10, 000 very large.

Among the total about 34.37% of the respondents selling products in the market for less than one year. About 27.08% of the respondents carries out the market activities for a period of 1-3 years and 3-5 years respectively. Those who sell agricultural products in the farmer's market for a period of more than five years are very less, i.e., only around 17.7%. Most of the respondents who carries out operations in this market didn't stay there for a longer period.

Among the different type of agricultural products vegetables are the most sold one. Fruits and flowers together constitute around 27% of the total which is almost half of the total number of vegetables sold in the market. About 17.708% of the respondents are engaged in the selling of agricultural products other than vegetables, fruits and flowers.

From the above data we can clearly understand that around 69.79% of the total respondents stores the unsold products and the remaining 30.21% depends directly on open market for the disposal of unsold products. It is clear that, most of the farmers try to store it properly and sell it later when the conditions are favorable.

Analysis of various facilities available in the market Administrative facilities:

Efficient organization enables Farmers Market to operate as intended. Along with determining the market's location, special attention was paid to a number of additional services, including setting prices, monitoring for malpractices, determining working hours, allocating stalls, etc. Efficient organization enables Farmers Market to operate as intended. From determining the market's location, a number of Special attention was given to other services like setting prices, monitoring for malpractices, determining working hours, allocating stalls, etc. The involvement of middlemen in the marketing process is one of the biggest obstacles that farmers confront. When intermediaries have complete control over the market, they steal the benefits that farmers should receive. Eliminating middlemen from the current distribution network undoubtedly improves the farmers' prospects for the future. They will be able to purchase his produce at a fair price as a

result, raising his standard of life in the long run. Farmer Market which assists farmers in building direct connections with customers, is seen as a successful direct marketing approach since it lessens the need for middlemen. The table below shows the reaction of respondents towards different types of administrative facilities available for the functioning of the market.

S. No	Factors	Highly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Neutral	Moderately Dis Satisfied	Highly Dis satisfied
1	Location of market	38	13	24	18	3
2	Working hours	64	32	0	0	0
3	Cost of transport	24	47	17	0	8
4	Price Fixation	52	39	0	5	0
5	Current Earning	41	12	43	0	0
6	Remuneration	78	0	11	4	3
7	Immediate cash	82	14	0	0	0
8	Standard of living	7	79	10	0	0
9	Supervision service	77	6	13	0	0
10	Allotment of stalls	17	41	23	14	1
11	Stall space	36	55	2	3	0
12	Transaction Time	84	9	3	0	0
13	Supervision for Malpractices	89	7	0	0	0
14	Weighting Scale	75	12	9	0	0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above data clearly shows that among different types of administrative facilities, most of the respondents are highly satisfied with the supervision for malpractices. So we can say that to a certain extent this Farmer's marketing is helpful for preventing intermediaries between farmers and consumers. In addition to that, it is highly notable that majority of them are highly satisfied with the price that they are getting for their agricultural products. This shows that the actions such as price fixation, current earning, allotment of stalls, weighing scale etc. Were also carried out in a free and fair manner in this market.

Conclusion:

With the primary goal of assisting farmers in bringing and selling their goods without the assistance of any middlemen or marketing intermediaries, the state government of Tamil Nadu made the decision to work toward the establishment of a market known as the Farmer's Market. The Tamil Nadu state government made the decision to strive toward the establishment of a market known as the Farmer's Market with the principal goal of assisting farmers in bringing and selling their produce independently of any middlemen or marketing intermediaries. A lot of farmers have come to the farmer's market because of the many amenities it offers. The assistance provided by the government in the areas of infrastructure, marketing, administration, and transportation is quite impressive. From the perspective of farmers, the ID system, weighing facilities, oversight for malpractices, etc., have guaranteed the Farmer's Market's ongoing operation at the highest possible level of satisfaction. This also assisted in avoiding the middlemen's needless involvement. More targeted actions with stringent limitations and oversight are highly desirable for the market's smooth operation. Setting prices based on quality rather than quantity is preferable.

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