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A Study on the Problems Faced by the Farmers in Cultivating and Marketing of Coconut with Special Reference to Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts District

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1.1.INTRODUCTION

Agriculture has been playing a predominant role in the economic development of all developed and developing countries. Ever since India's independence agriculture in India has taken strides owing to the varietal and agronomic interventions of agricultural research and the resourcefulness of the farming community. In recent years, agriculture has gone through a lot of changes viz., adoption of new scientific methods of production, new farming practices and new methods of marketing. Now, it is considered as an industry supplying food materials to the millions and basic raw materials such as Cashew nut, Coconut, Coconut and cotton, and the like for industrial development. Coconut is a horticultural commodity

The Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts district is one of the districts which cultivate amount of coconut in Tamilnadu. The farmers who cultivate the coconut in the district have to sell the produces either directly in the market or to the merchant in the locality. Some of the farmers have their own industry where the coconut dried in the field and after that it is sold for coconut oil manufacturers. Few of the farmers have their own industry for making coconut oil. But most of the farmers sell their coconut the merchant in the local area or sell directly in the neibouring market.

The coconut Development board helps to the farmers in cultivating and marketing of coconut. The employees and workers of Coconut Development Board visit the coconut farm and give guidance to control the diseases in the coconut. Further the farmers face number of problems in cultivating and marketing of coconut in the study area. It is reported that the farmers could not able to get adequate price for the coconut in many occasions. It makes the farmers economically weak which leads to increase in the borrowings of the farmers year by year. Many farmers of coconut in the study area face similar issues in marketing the coconut cultivated. Nobody takes care of the framers problem in marketing the coconut in the study area. Hence to know the problems faced by the farmers in the study area a thorough study is to undertaken. By the above views in mind the researcher selected the topic "A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE FARMERS IN CULTIVATING AND MARKETING OF COCUNUT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TIRUPUR AND COIMBATORE DISTRICTS" for her research work

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Coconut is one of the leading commodities in agricultural exports; the production programme of the crop is of critical importance in improving the efficient use of resources. The cost of production and net return obtained per unit, would determine the profitability of the crop. The constraints in enhancing productivity among the coconut cultivators are lack of awareness on recent development related to crop improvement, lack of quality planting materials to farmers, lack of proper management practices and pest problems are to be tackled consciously to make coconut farming attractive. Though production is the initiation of the developmental process, it could bring less gain to the producers unless there exists an efficient marketing system. The producers depend upon the market conditions to fulfill their hopes and expectations. But forced sales, multiplicity of market charges, malpractices in unregulated markets and superfluous middlemen are the problems faced by the cultivators Though coconut has a pride, not only for its diverse uses but also for its special preference to consumers, both rich and poor, it is subjected to the above stated production and marketing problems. The Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts District of Tamil Nadu is one of the leading coconut producing regions and hence the researcher thought that, it is worth to study and analyse the problems and prospects of coconut cultivation and marketing in the selected district.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

People are engaged in various activities to generate income to the family based on the efficiency, knowledge, family occupation or any other activities in which the individual has knowledge. Likewise, most of the rural people in our country are involved in agricultural activities for generating income to the family. Cultivation of coconut is one of the most important sources for generating income to the agricultural workers. In all activities, people get some short of income based on the work or effort taken by the individuals. Regarding the farmers' income there is no guarantee for getting the expected return from their crop. Various factors like natural calamities, price fluctuation, problems from insects and rainfall have considerable impact on the income of a farmer. They could not sometimes get the amount put in to grow or cultivate any types of crop. There is no chance for reimbursement of the amount lost by the farmers due to the crop failures or low yielding from the crops.

The harvesting period for the crops cultivated varies from crop to crop. Most of the crops are harvested within 4 months; few crops take 6 months for yielding. Banana, consume at least 1 year for yielding and harvesting. The farmers who involved in coconut cultivation have to wait more than 5 years to get income from the crops. Up to harvesting of coconut, the farmers are in a position to invest huge amount in the crops and to manage their family. Crop failure and fall in price render more trouble to the farmers. They face difficulties in arranging funds for cultivating inter crop and to meet the family expenses. When the coconuts are sold to the merchant, they make delay in making payment to the farmers. Unnecessary delay in getting amount from the merchant forces the farmers to borrow money from moneylenders or from other sources. This is the regular practice and problems faced by the farmers involved in marketing of coconut. The government does not fix the rate per tone for purchasing the coconut from the farmers. However, it is reported from farmer's side that the rate given to coconut while buying from the farmer is not adequate. Hence, the farmers could not get enough income from their crops. They always lead very normal life with low standard of living when compared with others. This pathetic situation of the farmers in the study area should be changed. The government and the authorities concerned should know the real causes for problems of the farmers in the study area. Hence, this

research study gets vital importance to know the practical difficulties of the farmers who cultivate coconut and find out the remedial measures to solve the problems of the farmers in marketing of coconut and bring their standard of living to a better position to lead a peaceful life like others.

1.4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study is planned with the following objectives

1 To verify the existing method and technology adopted for cultivation of production of coconut in the study area;
2 To evaluate the method adopted by the farmers to market the produces in the study area
3 To know the support provided by the Coconut Development Board to the farmers in the study area
4 To identify the satisfaction level of respondents regarding the support provided by the Coconut Development Board.
5 To analyze the problems faced by the respondents and causes the problems
6 To find out the remedial measures to solve the problems faced by the respondents and offer recommendations to the needy group.

1.5. DATA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study pertains to the Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts District of Tamilnadu state. The study is following suitable methodology and technique to collect the needful data for the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative information. The study also focused on the secondary data to provide background insights on the coconut cultivators in India. In general and particularly Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts District of Tamilnadu. There are total number of 3287 approximately in Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts (data collected from society) 15 % of the total population (484) were selected as sample respondents. For convenient the researcher and the supervisor decided to collect data from 480 respondents (Primary survey will be adopted. The sample respondents will be selected based on purposively sampling technique.

1.5.1RESEARCH DESIGN

Descriptive research will be conducted in this study to make the research effective and useful to the needy.

1.5.2 COLLECTION OF DATA

Both the primary and secondary data will be collected in this research work

1.5.3PRIMARY DATA

Primary data will be collected from the sample respondents from the population by way preparing a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be prepared with the guidance of the experts in the relevant field. Necessary corrections will be made in the questionnaire to make the research work effective and find out result fruitfully

1.5.4 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data will be collected from the journals and magazine published in the related topics.

1.5.5 SAMPLE SELECTION

The population for the study is framers cultivating coconut in the study area. As the population for the study is numerous in the study area, 467 the respondents were selected at random by using convenient sampling method from farmers involved in coconut cultivation.

1.5.6 STUDY AREA

Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts district is being one of the districts, which are having more acres of cultivable land especially for coconut cultivation. Further, the Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts district is very popular for different varieties of coconut cultivation where number farmers are involved in cultivation of coconut. Apart from this, the research being hailed from Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts district is to make the research work thoroughly by making the field work and for data collection.

1.5.7. STATISTICAL TOOLS

The collected data were analyzed and interpreted properly to find the result of the research work. Further to know the association between two variables in deciding the particular issues statistical tools like simple percentage, chi-square, rank correlation, were applied.

1.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

1. The data will be collected from respondents of Tirupur and Coimbatore Districts District. So the findings of the study may not be considered for other districts.
2. As the respondents will not co-operate well at the time of questionnaire or interview schedule, the findings were based on the information given by the respondents. There may be possibility for bias in the information provided by the respondents.
3. The researcher will be collected data only from the farmers who involved in cultivation of coconut. Hence, the findings of the research may not be considered for framing policy decisions for the farmers involved in cultivation of other crops.

1.7. HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no association between age of the respondents and their level of income
2. There is no association between the educational qualifications of the respondents and knowledge level regarding modern techniques used for cultivating the coconut
3. There is no association between area of the land used for cultivating the coconut and the income generated by the farmers.
4. There is no association between the experience of the farmers and opinion about the support by the CDB.

TABLE NO.4.1 SHOWING THE GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	399	82.4
2	Female	85	17.6
	Total	**484**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

The above table reveals that among the total respondents 82.4% of the respondents are male while the remaining 17.6% of the respondents are female members

TABLE NO.4.2 SHOWING THE AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	Below 25 years	31	6.4
2	26-35 years	122	25.2
3	36-45 years	145	30.0
4	Above 45 years	186	38.4
	Total	**484**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

The above table shows that among the total respondents 38.4% of the respondents belonged the age of above 45 years, 30% of the respondents are in the age group of 35 -45 years, 25.2% of the respondents belong to the age group of 26-35 years whereas the remaining 6.4% of the respondents are in age of below 25years.

TABLE NO.4.3 SHOWING THE MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	361	74.6
2	Unmarried	55	11.4
3	Widow	43	8.9
4	Divorce	25	5.2
	Total	**484**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

From the above table it is inferred that among the total respondents 74.6% of the respondents are married, 11.4% of the respondents are unmarried, 8.9% of the respondents are widow whereas the remaining 5.2% of the respondents are divorced from their spouse.

TABLE NO.4.4 SHOWING THE EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No	Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	85	17.6
2	Primary	157	32.4
3	High school	175	36.2
4	collegiate	49	10.1
5	Others (specify)	18	3.7
	Total	**484**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

From the above table it is understood that among the total respondents 36.2 % of the respondents have completed High School education, 32.4 % of the respondents have primary education, 17.6 % of the respondents are illiterate, 10.1 % of the respondents have completed collegiate education whereas the remaining 3.7% of the respondents have studied other courses of education.

TABLE NO.4.5 SHOWING THE DEPENDENTS IN THE FAMILY OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No	Dependents	Frequency	Percentage
1	1member	43	8.9
2	Two members	145	30.0
3	Three members	163	33.7
4	Four members	121	25.0
5	More than 4 members	12	2.5
	Total	**484**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

From the above table it is inferred that among the total respondents 33.7 % of the respondents have three dependent members in the family, 30 % of the respondents have two members in the family, 25 % of the respondents have four members in their family, and 8.9 % of the respondents have only one member in the family whereas the remaining 2.5% of the respondents have more than 4 members in the family..

TABLE NO.4.6 SHOWING THE ANNUAL INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No	Annual income	Frequency	Percentage
1	Below Rs50, 000	36	7.4
2	Rs.50,001-100000	127	26.2
3	Rs.100001-1, 50,000	199	41.1
4	Above Rs.150000	122	25.3
	Total	**484**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

From the above table it is known that among the total respondents 41.1 % of the respondents earn between Rs.100001-Rs.150000 as their annual income, 26.2 % of the respondents get an annual income between Rs.50001-100000, 25.3 % of the respondents are getting Rs. 150000 and above as their annual income while the remaining 7.4% of the respondents earn below Rs.50000 as their annual income.

TABLE NO.4.7 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THEIR SATISFACTION REGARDING THE PROFILTABILITY FROM COCONUT CULTIVATION

Gender	Count	Profitability					
		Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Total
Male	Count	76	164	73	57	29	399
	Expected Count	75.0	170.6	74.2	52.8	26.4	399.0
Female	Count	15	43	17	7	3	85
	Expected Count	16.0	36.4	15.8	11.2	5.6	85.0
Total	**Count**	**91**	**207**	**90**	**64**	**32**	**484**

Source: Primary data

Null Hypothesis

There is no association between the gender of the respondents and their satisfaction about the profitability from coconut cultivation.

Alternative Hypothesis

There is no association between the gender of the respondents and their satisfaction about the profitability from coconut cultivation.

Factor	Calculated Value of Chi-square	D.O.F	Table Value	Result
Gender	5.078	4	9.49	Not Significant

From the above table it is understood that as the calculated value of chi-square (5.078) is smaller than the table value (9.49) for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant relationship between the respondents based on gender and their opinion about the satisfaction regarding the profitability while cultivating the coconut.

TABLE NO.4.8 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THEIR SATISFACTION REGARDING THE LABOUT COST FOR COCONUT CULTIVATION

Gender	Count	Labour Cost					
		Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Total
Male	Count	69	173	81	52	24	399
	Expected Count	74.2	175.6	74.2	50.3	24.7	399.0
Female	Count	21	40	9	9	6	85
	Expected Count	15.8	37.4	15.8	10.7	5.3	85.0
Total	**Count**	90	213	90	61	30	484

Source: Primary data

Null Hypothesis

There is no association between the gender of the respondents and their satisfaction about the labour cost for coconut cultivation.

Alternative Hypothesis

There is no association between the gender of the respondents and their satisfaction about the labour cost for coconut cultivation.

Factor	Calculated Value of Chi-square	D.O.F	Table Value	Result
Gender	6.299	4	9.49	Not Significant

From the above table it is understood that as the calculated value of chi-square (6.299) is smaller than the table value (9.49) for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant relationship between the respondents based on gender and their opinion about the satisfaction regarding the labour cost while cultivating the coconut.

FINDINGS

- Major proportions of the respondents are male (82.4%)
- Majority of the respondents are in the age group of above 45 years (38.4%)
- Major portion of the respondents are married (74.6%)\
- Major portion of the respondents have completed High School education (36.2%)
- Considerable proportion of the respondents has three dependents in their family (33.7)
- Considerable portion of the respondents earn between Rs.100001-Rs.150000 as their annual income (41.1%)
- Considerable portion of the respondents have the experience of 11-20 years of experience in agriculture.
- Considerable portion of the respondents have the experience of 6-10 years of experience in cultivating the coconut (36.2).
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they have own land for agriculture (47.6%)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they have own land for agriculture (47.6%)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they allocate land in 2:1 ratio for coconut and other crops (31.4%)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they get information about the coconut from the fellow farmers (38.6)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they cultivate coconut as it is a traditional crop (33.9%)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that the cultivation of coconut has increased nowadays (51.2)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they prepare the land for cultivation by ploughing and ploughing with manure respectively (30%)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they use drip irrigation system for cultivation (43.8)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they adopt modern technology in farming (52.3%)
- Major portion of the respondents have informed that they inorganic fertilizer in farming (48.8%)

- Majority of the respondents have informed that they get more benefits while applying the modern cultivation system (80.6%)
- Among the 390 respondents who receive benefits by applying the modern cultivation majority of the respondents conveyed that modern cultivation reduced the labour problem (41%)
- Majority of the respondents conveyed that they get a yield of 80000 coconuts per acre (36.2%)
- Majority of the respondents conveyed that they get labour on the daily wages basis (46.3)

FINDING FROM CHI-SQUARE

From the above analysis it is understood that as the calculated value of chi-square (5.078) is smaller than the table value (9.49) for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant relationship between the respondents based on gender and their opinion about the satisfaction regarding the profitability while cultivating the coconut.

From the above analysis it is understood that as the calculated value of chi-square (6.299) is smaller than the table value (9.49) for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant relationship between the respondents based on gender and their opinion about the satisfaction regarding the labour while cultivating the coconut.

It is understood from the analysis that the calculated value of chi-square (36.244) is greater than the table value (9.49) for 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is a close relationship between the respondents based on gender and their satisfaction regarding the yield from the land.

CONCLUSION

Coconut sector is usually facing a whole lot of complications more recently. To begin with, agriculturists don't get the proper value for coconut. However, in most of the area the coconut really is sold for a price more than 3 times of the purchase price i.e., the price given to the growers. Therefore the intermediary people get more benefit. This could be solved to an excellent broaden by effectively using the Coconut producers Societies (CPS). Each CPS after collecting the coconuts from growers can sell them in the urban region directly using the transport. Hence, the customer's burden of paying out high cost to coconut could be lowered to a maximum level. In the same manner CPS are certain to get a lot of profit that will ultimately reach the farmers who are cultivating the coconut

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