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Farmer's Perception On Marketing Strategies For Coconut And Coconut Based Products, A Study In Pollachi

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Abstract: This study examines the perceptions of coconut farmers in Pollachi regarding various marketing strategies for coconut and coconut-based products. It explores their awareness, preferences, and the challenges they face in adopting both traditional and modern marketing methods. Using data collected from 129 respondents through structured questionnaires, the research employs statistical tools like percentage analysis, rank analysis, Likert scale, chi-square, and t-test. The findings reveal major issues such as lack of awareness, dependency on middlemen, and limited infrastructure. The study suggests enhanced digital marketing, cooperative linkages, and government support to improve farmers' income and market access.

Keywords: Coconut marketing, Farmer perception, Marketing strategies, Agricultural economics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Agricultural marketing plays a critical role in ensuring that farmers receive fair value for their produce and can sustainably participate in the market economy. In India, coconut cultivation is a vital livelihood activity for millions of small and marginal farmers, particularly in southern states like Tamil Nadu. Pollachi, a region renowned for its extensive coconut farming, significantly contributes to the state's agricultural output. Despite this, farmers often struggle with marketing their produce efficiently due to a variety of challenges such as fluctuating market prices, lack of direct access to buyers, limited awareness of marketing channels, and inadequate infrastructure.

In today's competitive agricultural landscape, traditional methods of selling through intermediaries or local markets no longer guarantee stable incomes. With evolving consumer preferences, globalization, and the rise of digital platforms, there is a pressing need for farmers to adopt modern marketing techniques that ensure better visibility, customer reach, and profitability. These methods include direct selling to consumers, online and digital marketing, participation in cooperative societies, and leveraging government schemes designed to enhance agricultural marketing.

However, the effectiveness of these strategies largely depends on the farmers' awareness, access to resources, technological literacy, and willingness to adopt change. Many farmers continue to rely on middlemen due to familiarity and ease of transaction, often at the cost of reduced profit margins. A thorough understanding of farmers' perceptions, their existing practices, and the obstacles they face is essential for developing sustainable

marketing models tailored to their needs.

Objective:

- To assess farmers awareness and perception of different marketing strategies for coconut and coconut-based products in Pollachi.
- To examine the current marketing channels used by coconut farmers and their satisfaction levels.
- To evaluate the role of government and institutional support in enhancing marketing opportunities for coconut farmers.
- To identify the key challenges faced by farmers in marketing their coconut products, including pricing, transportation, and market competition.

Statement of Problem

Coconut farming in Pollachi is vital but faces marketing challenges like inefficiencies, price fluctuations, and intermediary dominance, leading to low profits. Farmers rely on traditional, often exploitative methods due to a lack of structured marketing systems. Limited market information and inadequate infrastructure worsen these issues. This study aims to explore farmers' views, identify gaps, and suggest solutions to streamline marketing, reduce intermediary dependency, and improve incomes, focusing on both traditional and modern channels.

Research Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive research design is used in this study.

Source of Data

Primary Data: In this study primary data are collected by conducting a survey through a well-structured questionnaire.

Secondary Data: The secondary data was collected from various possible records like journals and articles, etc.

Sample Size

A Sample size of 120 respondents has been selected for the study.

Tools Used

- Percentage analysis
- Ranking analysis
- Likert scale analysis
- Chi-Square analysis
- T- test analysis.

Hypothesis

Chi- Square

H₁: There is significant relationship between farming experience and the average annual coconut production.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between farming experience and the average annual coconut production.

T- Test

H₁: There is significant relationship between the area of residence and type of coconut farming practiced

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the area of residence and type of coconut farming practiced

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study might have a limited sample size, which may not be representative of all coconut farmers in the region.
- The findings may not be applicable to other regions with different climatic and soil conditions.
- Farmers might provide socially desirable answers rather than their true opinions.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mrs. N. Nalini and Dr. D. Saravanan (2024) this study examined the challenges faced by coconut farmers in Tirupur and Coimbatore districts, Tamil Nadu. It highlighted that coconut cultivation is a major income source for farmers but is plagued by issues such as low market prices, delayed payments from buyers, and pest problems. Data were collected from 480 respondents using questionnaires, and statistical analysis was employed. The findings revealed that these challenges increased the financial burden on farmers. The study concluded with suggestions for better price regulation, financial support, and pest management strategies to improve the livelihoods of coconut farmers.

Dr. B. Rohini, (2022) the report highlighted India's global leadership in coconut production and its potential in the export sector. It analyzed the awareness of coconut exporters regarding government export promotion schemes and production trends. The study used purposive sampling to collect data from 133 respondents, which was then analyzed with statistical tools, including trend projections. Findings indicated that farmers lacked sufficient awareness of government schemes and needed better marketing strategies to enhance export performance. The report suggested increasing awareness of these initiatives and adopting diversified marketing strategies to strengthen the coconut export sector.

K. Muthumani and Dr. V. Sathuragiri (2022) Coconut farming serves as a livelihood for many in Theni district, contributing significantly to household income. The study aimed to analyze cultivation methods and the satisfaction levels of farmers regarding institutional support for production and marketing. Data were gathered from farmers across five taluks and analyzed statistically. The findings highlighted issues like inadequate financial assistance and insufficient market information. It recommended improving access to resources and enhancing marketing infrastructure to boost farmer satisfaction.

A. Joseph Raj Kumar (2021) this report detailed the efforts of the Coconut Development Board to enhance coconut farming and the associated industry in India. The main focus was on increasing farmer income, boosting productivity, and promoting value addition. Various initiatives, such as integrated farming systems, adoption of modern technologies, and market promotion programs, were implemented to address sectoral challenges. The findings highlighted significant progress in coconut production, processing, and exports, benefiting small and marginal farmers. The report recommended further support for research, farmer cooperatives, and technology adoption to ensure sustainable growth in the sector.

S. Rani, H.P. Maheswarappa (2021) this study evaluated the influence of rainfall and temperature on the productivity of coconut-based cropping systems in Tamil Nadu. The objective was to assess climate variability's role in yield fluctuations and identify effective nutrient management strategies. A five-year field experiment (2013–2018) examined different nutrient management approaches in a 26-year-old coconut plantation. Results showed that rainfall significantly impacted yield variation, while integrated nutrient management practices improved productivity and economic returns. The study recommended adopting rainwater management techniques and promoting organic recycling to enhance sustainability in coconut farming.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 3.1 Showing the Relationship Between Farming Experience and The Average Annual Coconut Production

Farming Experience	Average Annual Coconut Production				Total
	Less than 5 tons	5-10 tons	11-20 tons	More than 20 tons	
Less than 5 years	27	9	3	3	42
5-10 years	12	20	6	1	39
11-20 years	5	11	11	3	30
Above 20 years	5	3	7	3	18
Total	49	43	27	10	129

Table 3.2 Chi Square Test

Chi Square Test	
Degree Of Freedom	9
Level Of Significance	5%
Calculated Value	35.70
Table Value	2.262

In the above table, the hypothesis is accepted as the calculated value is more than the table value and there is significant relationship between farming experience and the average annual coconut production.

Table 3.3 Showing the Relationship Between Area of Residence and Type of Coconut Farming Practiced

	AREA OF RESIDENCE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TYPE OF COCONUT FARMING PRACTICED	RURAL	80	2.24	.720	.081
	URBAN	49	2.14	.784	.110

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the average maximum type of farming based on their area of residence (rural vs. urban). The results show that rural residents (N = 80) had a mean score of 2.24 (SD = 0.720), while urban residents (N = 49) had a slightly higher mean score of 2.14 (SD = 0.784). The difference in mean values is minimal, and the standard error of the mean is also small for both groups (0.081 for rural and 0.110 for urban). Based on this data, there is no substantial difference in the type of farming practiced by rural and urban residents.

Table 3.4 T- Test

F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	RESULT
.386	.535	.697	129	.487	Significant
		.684	99.965	.496	

A t-test was done to see if there is a difference between rural and urban people and type of coconut farming practiced. The results showed no significant difference between the two groups, as the p-value was 0.487, which is much higher than 0.05. Their area of residence does not have a meaningful effect on type of coconut farming practiced. The table concludes that there is no significant difference between area of residence and type of coconut farming practiced as the significance value is more than 0.05.

IV. FINDINGS

The study conducted among coconut farmers in Pollachi highlights several important findings regarding their demographic profile, farming practices, and marketing perceptions. A majority of respondents were male, below 30 years of age, married, and residing in rural areas. Most had less than five years of farming experience and cultivated between 1–5 acres of land. Traditional and organic farming methods were equally common, and the average coconut production was less than five tons per year. The predominant income range was between ₹2,00,000 and ₹3,00,000 annually.

In terms of marketing awareness, farmers were largely informed about selling techniques, cooperative societies, online platforms, and export opportunities. However, lack of awareness emerged as the top-ranked problem, followed by limited access to markets and complicated government procedures. While most farmers recognized the profitability of direct selling over middlemen, many still relied on intermediaries due to limited infrastructure and support.

Statistical analyses revealed that there was no significant relationship between farming experience and production levels. However, a significant relationship was found between area of residence and the type of farming practiced. The overall findings suggest that while farmers show awareness of modern marketing strategies, systemic barriers hinder their full participation and profitability in the market.

V. SUGGESTIONS

The study recommends several strategic interventions to improve marketing efficiency and farmer profitability. Farmers should be encouraged to adopt digital marketing tools such as social media, e-commerce platforms, and mobile applications to connect directly with buyers and reduce reliance on intermediaries. Establishing direct linkages with supermarkets, cooperatives, and institutional buyers can further improve transparency and profit margins. Infrastructure development is also essential, with a need for better storage facilities, transportation systems, and cold chains to preserve coconut quality and reduce post-harvest losses. Introducing a minimum support price (MSP) can provide a safety net against price fluctuations. Additionally, simplifying subsidy application processes and enhancing access to financial aid will support small-scale farmers in expanding their operations. Government initiatives should focus on strengthening market linkages, including export opportunities, to ensure broader market access and improved income prospects for farmers.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study highlights that coconut farmers in Pollachi face challenges like limited market access, financial delays, and transportation issues, reducing profitability. Dependence on middlemen lowers earnings, while difficulties in obtaining loans and subsidies hinder investment in better marketing. Poor infrastructure and high logistics costs restrict access to profitable markets, affecting product quality and sales. Government intervention is crucial—expanding financial aid, improving storage and transport facilities, and creating direct selling

opportunities will help. Simplifying subsidy applications, supporting cooperative markets, and facilitating exports will enable farmers to secure better prices, increase income, and achieve long-term sustainability. Addressing these issues can strengthen their market presence and build a more profitable future in coconut marketing

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