



A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FARMERS WHILE CULTIVATING AND MARKETING THE CASHEWNUTS

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INTRODUCTION

In olden days India was very backward in agriculture as the farmers followed the traditional methods of farming and lack of adequate knowledge among the farmers. Further at the time of independence we suffered lot even for food as there was no self-reliance in agriculture to our nation. Hence the government was in a position to find measures to overcome these problems. After that the then governments took initiative to find innovations and new technology in farming, which was resulted in continuous and steady growth in the agriculture income of the farmers and also the income of the country as a whole. At present we are exporting many commodities from agriculture like wheat, cotton, tea, rubber etc. cashew nut is one of the familiar crops which are cultivated in Tamilnadu. Though it is cultivated in the dry land where there are limited sources of water and poor rainfall, the farmers work hard to grow the cashew crop from ploughing of land, cultivating the cashew nut and marketing the same.

Normally in all area the farmers are suffering lot to bring out their produce in to market and to sell the same to the merchants. Irrespective of the nature of produce and the volume of the cultivated products, the farmers are frequently confused in marketing their produces due to various causes affecting the sales of the products. The increasing rate of transport charges and labour charges and the problems of the middle men are the main factors affecting the sales of the agricultural produces. The farmers dealing in cashew nuts are also facing similar problems in marketing the produces. Further there is no proper and stable price for the products. Though the government takes initiatives to safeguard the interest of the farmers in many ways, the problems of the farmers is going increasing every year, the economic condition of majority of the farmers is in a pathetic condition and questionable . How this problem can be solved? What are the real causes for the issues faced by the farmers in marketing? To know all these a thorough study is to be undertaken? By considering the above views in mind the researcher selected the topic “**A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF CULTIVATING AND MARKETING OF CASHEWNUTS BY THE FARMERS IN TAMILNADU**”

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The people are engaged in various activities with a view to earn money to meet their requirements and the requirements of their dependents. Farmers are also engaged in agriculture with the same attitude. All the people except the farmers lead a decent life and gradually increase the standard of living year by year. The business people and employees of the government and private sectors get regular and reasonable income to satisfy their needs. But the farmers who involved in cultivation of cashew nuts could get much income because various factors and could not lead a normal life like others. In many occasions they face serious in cultivating and marketing the produces since from cultivation to harvesting and marketing the cashew nuts to the wholesaler and merchants. Their necessities are going on increasing year by year. The input rate for farming also is going on increasing. They have to incur more amounts to carry the produces in to market and sell them to the merchants.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is the duty of the state to bring overall development in the domestic area of the country. Further the government should see that there must be balanced growth among the public and region irrespective of the community, caste, colour and the people involved in various activities for earning the income. Every year the government allocates reasonable funds to agricultural sector. Many schemes have been also introduced and implemented to bring growth and development of the farmers. The result is always negative. The government is always criticized by the experts for unfavouring the farmers in many aspects. Further the cultivation and marketing of cashew nuts is tedious work to all farmers because of various factors which further made the farmers weak and weaker. Role of middle man in the market creates problem to the farmers in marketing their products. There are many factors affecting the yielding of the cashew nuts. So a thorough study is to be undertaken to elevate the farmers dealing in cashew nuts. It is inevitable in modern scenario.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the main objectives, for which the research work is undertaken by the researcher.

1. To identify the existing method of cultivating the cashew nuts in the study area
2. To evaluate the system followed by the farmers for marketing the cashew nuts



3. To find out the areas in which the cashew nut is cultivated in Tamilnadu.
4. To examine the problems faced by the farmers in cultivating and marketing of cashew nuts.
5. To know the causes for the problems faced by the farmers.
6. To recommend remedial measures to solve the issues faced by the farmers in cashew nut cultivation and marketing.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research study covers only the problems faced by the farmers who cultivate the cashew nuts in Tamil Nadu State. The study deals with different dimensions of the issues in cashew nut cultivation and marketing such as transport problems, problems of getting fertilizers and labour problems and availability of inputs to the farming, issues related to the middlemen and brokers in cashew nuts.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses have been framed and tested.

1. The farmers' perception above the problems in cultivating the cashew nuts does not vary irrespective of different classifications of customers' age, gender, education, occupation, income level, and the acres of land used for cultivating the cashew nuts .
2. The farmers' perception in stating the reason for their problems does not vary irrespective of different classifications of farmers age, gender, education, occupation, income level, types of farming system followed by the farmers.
3. The farmers' opinion regarding the initiatives taken b the government to safeguard the interest of the farmers does not vary irrespective of different classifications of farmers' age, gender, education, occupation, and income level.
4. The farmers' opinion regarding the subsidy loan provided to the farmers by the government does not vary irrespective of different classifications of farmers age, gender, education, occupation, income level of the respondents
5. The farmers' attitude regarding the transport charges for carrying their produces into market does not vary irrespective of farmers' age, gender, education, occupation, income level.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher followed multi-stage sampling in the selection of samples. The farmers who cultivate the cashew nuts in Tamilnadu constitute the sample for the study. The sample for the study was selected through a three-stage sampling procedure. The first stage involved the choice of area in which the cashew nuts are cultivated. Then the sample respondents were selected from the total population for the research work.

Data Collection

Both the primary and secondary data were collected for the research work

Primary Data

Primary data was collected from the respondents by framing suitable questionnaire related to the study. The questionnaire was given to guide and experts for making necessary correction and deletion if necessary to make the questionnaire effective for the successful completion of the research work. Interview schedule will be arranged with the respondents for collecting the data.

Sample Selection

The respondents for the sample were selected at random from the total population by using convenient sampling. The selection of farmers formed the last stage of the sampling process. 300 respondents were selected from the population all over Tamilnadu. Representation of the respondents for the study was based on the area of acres of land utilized for cultivation of cashew nuts in all over Tamilnadu.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from the books, journals and magazines published in the study area for the research.

Study Period

The study period cover 6 months starting from September 2014-February 2015

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The perception of farmers towards the problems in cultivation and marketing of cashew nuts in Tamilnadu– based on their age, gender, education and other socio-economic status have been used as variables and ANOVA and 't' – tests were applied appropriately.



Dimension mean is the mean of individual rating of the items coming under respective dimensions, which is computed for each respondent. This average is used to represent the dimensions and also used along with the individual item wise ratings to compute mean and standard deviations.

Correlation analysis was used to find out the degree of relationship in the various dimensions of farmers in stating the problems faced by the farmers in cultivation and marketing of cashew nuts.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is subjected to the following limitations.

1. Due to cost and time constraints, the researcher selected the respondents from the districts in which the cashew nuts are cultivated considerably both in volume of farmers and in land area.
2. Since the study has considered only individual farmers of cashew nuts, the perception of farmers who cultivate other crops in the study area have not been taken in to account.
3. The study was based on the information provided by the respondents in the selected districts only as the cashew nuts are cultivated only in few districts of Tamilnadu.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table No.1, Showing the Age of the Respondents

Serial no	Age group	Frequency	Percent
1	Less than 25 years	47	15.67
2	26-30 years	171	57.00
3	31-40 years	56	16.66
4	Above 40 years	26	8.67
	Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation

The above table reveals that among 300 respondents 40.3 percent respondents belong to the age group less than 25 years, 29 percent of the respondents belong to the age group between 21-30 years, 17.7 percent of the respondents are in the age group between 31-40 years while 13 percent of the respondents are above 40 years.

Table No.2, showing the Monthly Income of the Respondents

Serial no	Monthly income of the respondents	Frequency	Percent
1	Below Rs.10000	59	19.7
2	Rs.10001-20000	74	24.7
3	Rs.20001-30000	91	30.3
4	Above Rs.30001	76	25.3
	Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

From the above table it is clearly understood that among 300 respondents 30.3 percent of the respondents get a monthly income between Rs.20001-30000, 25.3 percent of the respondents earn above Rs.30001 per month, 24.7 percent of the respondents informed that their monthly income is between Rs. 10001-20000 while the remaining 19.7 percent of the respondents conveyed that their monthly income is below Rs.10000

Table No.3, Showing the Education of the Respondents

Serial no	Education	Frequency	Percent
1	School	178	59.33
2	Undergraduate	56	18.67
3	Post graduate	28	9.33
4	Others	38	12.67



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4	Others	38	12.67
	Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

The above table limelight that among 300 respondents 59.33 percent of the respondents have studied up schooling, 18.67 percent of the respondents have studied UG degree, 9.33 percent of the respondents have completed schooling while the remaining 12.67 percent of the respondents have studied other courses like diploma

Table No.4, Showing the Dependents in the Family of the Respondents

Serial no	Dependents in the family	Frequency	Percent
1	2 Members	133	44.3
2	3 Members	121	40.3
3	More than 3 members	46	15.3
	Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

The above table reveals that among 300 respondents 44.3 percent of the respondents have two dependents in their family, 40.3 percent of the respondents have 3 dependent members in their family while 15.3 percent of the respondents have more than 3 dependents in their family.

Table No.5, Association between Age Group of the Respondents and Satisfaction about the Income

Serial no	Age group	Satisfaction level				Total	% of the respondents
		Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied		
1	Less than 25 years	22(25.4)	45(39.5)	32(31.1)	22(25)	121	40.33
2	26-30 years	16(18.3)	28(28.5)	21(22.3)	22(18)	87	29.00
3	31-40 years	15(11.1)	15(17.3)	15(13.6)	8(11)	53	17.67
4	Above 40 years	10(8.2)	10(12.7)	9(10)	10(8)	39	13.00
	Total	63	98	77	62	300	100

Null Hypothesis

There is no association between the age of the respondents and the satisfaction about the income from cashew nut cultivation.

Alternative Hypothesis

There is an association between the age of the respondents and the satisfaction about the income from cashew nut cultivation

Factor	Calculated value ²	Table value	DF	Remarks
Age	7.025	16.919	9	Insignificant

As the calculated value of chi-square ² (7.025) is less than table value (16.919) for 9 degree of freedom at 5% level of significance, there is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and There is no association between the age of the respondents and the satisfaction about the income from cashew nut cultivation Hence the null hypothesis is



accepted and concluded that there is no association between the age of the respondents and the satisfaction about the income from cashew nut cultivation

FINDINGS

- The following findings were made in this research.
- Majority (57 %) of the respondents are in the age group of 26-30 years.
- Majority of the respondents get a monthly income between Rs.20000-30000.
- Majority (59.33%) of the respondents have studied up to schooling
- Majority (44.3%) of the respondents have two dependents in their family.
- Majority (65%) of the respondents depending on rail fall only for cultivating the cashew nut.
- Most (73%) of the respondents are selling the cashew nut to the merchants in the study area.
- Most (47%) of the respondents are not satisfied with the income from the cashew nut cultivation.
- Majority(54%) of the respondents have borrowed loan from the co-operative banks their region.
- Major proportion of the respondents informed that there is minimum guaranteed price for the cashew nut in the market.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Some of the respondents felt that there is no proper irrigation to the cashew nut as there is rainfall failure. Hence the government may provide loan to digging the well and also to erection of bore well to get sufficient water to the irrigation. Few respondents opined that there is proper guidance from the agriculture department for controlling the diseases in the cashew crop. Hence the officials concerned in the department should make arrangement to create awareness among the farmers regarding the ways and means to control the diseases in the cashew crop.

Few respondents are not satisfied with the price given to their cashew nut as the input for the cashew cultivation is more. Hence the government should try to fix a guaranteed price for the cashew nut after considering expenses for cultivating the cashew nut.

Some of the respondents felt that the fertilizers for the crop are not available in the open market. Hence the government officials should see that the fertilizers are also available in the local market.

CONCLUSION

Since from the ancient period, the farmers are facing number of problems while cultivating the crops and also in marketing the crops. Likewise the then government took initiatives to develop the farmers. In every budget considerable amount has been allocated by the government for the farming sector. But still in all parts of the country the farmers are suffering lot in all occasions. There are number of factors affecting the yielding of capacity of the land. Further the climatic condition is also affecting the yielding capacity of the land. So that the farmers cultivating cashew nuts. In general the government has to allocate more amounts to uplift the income of the farmers and also increase the standard of living which will help the farmers to lead a normal life with peace as like others in the society.