



# REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.7631 (UIF)

UGC APPROVED JOURNAL NO. 48514

VOLUME - 8 | ISSUE - 9 | JUNE - 2019



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## A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS OF VEGETABLE FARMERS IN DINDIGUL DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT:

*Vegetables provide vital protective nutrients like vitamins and minerals in the balanced diet of human beings. It is not an exaggeration to say that there is no human being in the world who does not consume vegetables. Besides, vegetable cultivation is more labor intensive and remunerative for small and marginal farmers. Despite its utility, vegetable cultivation, consumption and marketing in India remain a relatively neglected aspect. Though India is the second largest country in terms of production of vegetables in the world, the average per capita intake of vegetables is much below the requirements of a balanced diet. This is mainly due to severe handicaps associated with production and marketing of vegetables. The production problems include low productivity, traditional cultivation practices etc.*



**KEYWORDS:** *vegetables, nutrients, remunerative, production, problems.*

### INTRODUCTION

Vegetables may be defined as those annual plants of which immature succulent

Parts are commonly used for culinary purposes and also those perennial non-woody plants of which the stem, root, leaves stock or leaves are eaten. According to Randhawa (1966), the term vegetables includes all foods of vegetable origin, but the definition now excludes cereals and dried seeds of pulses, however, it includes grain on the cob, potatoes and sweet potatoes and several

other tubers.

Vegetables form the most nutritive menu of man and tone up his energy and vigor. Regular use of vegetables, supply many of the most essential health building and protecting Substances, such as vitamins and minerals. The nutrients in the vegetables overcome the common disorders like anemia, deficiency disorders and other ailments in human beings. It form a vital part of human diet. Rich in protein, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins, vegetables are indispensable for

maintaining good health. For a balanced diet, an adult needs about 280 gms.of vegetables per day; of this about 85 gms should comprise root vegetables; 100 gms. Leafy vegetables and 85 gms. The actual production of vegetables in not even Half the required quantity. Vegetable production must be increased to meet the demand of the vegetables of our country.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Singh (1993)<sup>1</sup>** productivity of Potato crop under riverbed cultivation is about 330 quintal

per hectare which is about 50 per cent higher than under field situations. Cultivation of Potato both under riverbed and fields is a profitable proposition but it requires heavy investment too. Farmers face many constraints in the availability of inputs. Area has potential to produce even high yields of Potato which may be achieved by relaxing the constraints in farm supplies.

Singh et al. (1994) had studied the production and marketing of hill vegetables in Himachal Pradesh and found that the producers' share of tomato and pea was 43.15 and 49.96 per cent respectively in the consumers' rupee. Parmer et al. (1994) conducted an attitude survey concerning the marketing problems faced by vegetable growers of South Gujarat and revealed that spoilage and malpractices in weighing were the major problems. The study suggested the need for improvement in the marketing system by regulating the marketing operations, establishment of efficient transportation system and co-operative marketing structure.

**Verma et al. (2001)<sup>2</sup>** in their study "Consumption behavior of Potato products in rural and urban areas of Meerut district" conducted a benchmark survey in rural and urban areas of Meerut, during the years 1999 and 2000 to evaluate the consumption rate of different Potato products. The data revealed that Frito Lay were more popular, with a consumption rate of 10.7-27%, followed by PikNik Potato pops (9-11%). The people in rural areas and general markets preferred to eat chips and local 'namkeens' (9-33%). The Haldiram (9-30%), Crax (11-14%) and 'namkeens' (33-39%) were more popular in rural and urban areas.

**Sunil Kumar (2003)<sup>3</sup>** in his study made an attempt to find out the producers share of consumer rupee of chillies in Andhra Pradesh. He concluded that the net shares of producers in the consumer rupee were very low (41.48 per cent). It was due to the presence of large number of intermediaries in between producer and consumers. So, the farmers were not getting good remunerative for their produces.

**Singh et al. (2010)<sup>4</sup>**, in their study, have attempted to examine the growth in area under chillies and vegetables in Punjab. The authors observed that the area under chilly crop in Punjab had decreased from 8.13 thousand hectares in 1981-82 to 2 thousand hectares in 2004-05. On the other hand, the total area under vegetable cultivation had increased from 63.83 thousand hectares to 113.06 thousand hectares during the same period. The results further revealed that area under vegetables had increased at annual compound rate of 3.18 per cent, whereas area under chillies declined at annual compound rate of 5.05 per cent per annum. This happened due to the reason that the area has been shifted in favour of paddy crop due to assured market under minimum support programmed.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Agriculture, a major sector of the Indian economy has several problems. Of all the problems, marketing is the most critical one. Only in agricultural marketing the scope for exploitation and defrauding the (Farmers) producers are more. As the producer-farmers are scattered and unorganized the problem takes different dimensions. Grading, preserving, processing and pricing are facilitating activities for better marketing of agricultural produce. In India, in the agriculture markets such facilitates are either missing or inadequate. Marketing of agricultural products has been posing a big problem for the farmers.

The farmers, who produce crops, struggle a lot of bring them up. They plough and tilt the land, seed the plants, water resources, clean them and pack the products ready to be taken to the markets for sale.

Even at the time of producing the crops and at the time of selling them they face a lot of hurdles and obstacles such as the interference of brokers and middlemen, lack of insurance facility, lack of finance, high cost of inputs, storehouses and transporting problems. In the market the farmers are cheated by the brokers the purchases like charging the goods less, weighing the products in unbalanced machines and so on. Thus the farmers face a number of problem from the initial stage of production to till the sale of the products in the market. And all these are interwoven and ultimately make a deep impact on agricultural marketing. As a result agriculture as an occupation become unprofitable and therefore, unviable.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To identify the socio- economic conditions of selected vegetable growers.
2. To study about the production and marketing problems faced by the farmers in the study area.
3. To provide valuable suggestions to the farmers.

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. There is no significant association between the facilities available for the farmers and place of location of the market.
2. There is no significant difference between the income levels of the farmers in wholesale market.

### **SOURCES OF DATA**

This study has primary as well as secondary data. But the study relies more on primary data. However, to clarify certain points and to know the general details relating to wholesale vegetable marketing system and practices in Dindigul, the districts statistical officials, commissioner of statistics of Tamil Nadu, Director of Horticulture and plantation crops of Tamil Nadu and District Collect orates were consulted and some data of general nature were collected from them.

### **SAMPLING FRAMEWORK**

The researcher adopted random sampling method to select the sample observation for the producer. In Dindigul District, the majority of the producers were located in Dindigul and Ottanchatram Taluks. In this research study 100 farmers are selected from the Dindigul district.

### **ANALYSIS OF DATA**

After the final data collection was over, the researches organized the collected data from farmer and analyzed with the help of recommended statistical package namely SPSS version 15. The analyses were done in 3 different phases. In phase I, simply frequency table was prepared and it shows the position of the farmers. In phase II, the classification and regression tree was used to identify the functions of farmers. Finally, Multiple Regression analysis was used to scrutinize the impact of problems on their performance.

### **IMPORTANCE OF VEGETABLES IN FARMER'S ECONOMY**

Vegetables are sold at a higher rate than other crops. It provides regular as well as good Source of income in addition to the income from the agronomical crops. It provides regular work throughout the year to the farmers and his family labors. It supplies food stuff to his family and fooder in the form of refuse to his cattle. It provides better utilization of land, labor and capital.

Vegetables give very high quantity of food per acre and they grow quickly It is found that vegetables give higher yields in comparison to other crops. Most vegetables are short crop and it, as compared to other crops, can be raise throughout the year. Many of the vegetable crops posses high medical value for curing certain diseases.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The researcher recommends the farmers to contact the horticulture officers whenever they face ordinary and technical problems in their business.
2. In order to borrow money with major interest, the researcher advises the farmers to approach the commercial banks and financial institutions instead of local money lenders.
3. The researcher suggest that in order to reduce the cost of production of vegetables per acre, the farmers may option for bulk purchase of fertilizers, seeds, manure etc.along with their co-farmers.
4. In order to reduce the transport expenses for carrying the vegetables to the market, the researcher suggest cheap means of transport like bus and a combined transport along with co- farmers
5. It is advised to the farmers that they should carry clean and size- based vegetables to the market in order to increase the selling price.

## CONCLUSION

Maximum number of farmers in the study perceived the functional performance of pre-cultivating & financing function and found it to be moderate. Similarly the performance of their function was influenced by certain important factors such as sources of finance, cost of preparing the land, rate of interest on debt and mode of irrigation and these contributed to the performance of this function, moreover, the performance was also eroded by the problems that existed in the functional area such as rate of interest, return on investment, cost of the seeds, cost of the manure and cost of the fertilizers.

Most of the farmers agreed that the performance of the cultivating function was moderate. The researcher identified the factors such as cost of picking, information received from village extension officer, total cultivation cost and maintenance cost which were considered to be the best predictors of performance of cultivating function. On the order hand, the researcher also scrutinized the problems such as cost of picking, maintenance cost, cultivation cost and poor information provided by village extension officers reducing the performance of this functional area.

The farmers viewed that the performance of the selling function was moderate in their business. Moreover, the factors such as total sales per acre, transportation cost per acre, storage cost and sale of vegetables contributed to the performance of selling function. Some problems such as packing cost, transport cost, selling price, weighing system, maintenance of accounts and payment system reduced the performance of this function. Most of the farmers agreed that the overall performance was good. The researcher has also found that there are some personal and business factors influencing and affecting the overall performance of the farmers.

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LBP PUBLICATION