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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	BANKING FOR THE POOR IN THE CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC FINANCE <i>DAVOOD MANZUR, HOSSEIN MEISAMI & MEHDI ROAYAE</i>	1
2.	THE RELATIONSHIP OF INSURANCE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ETHIOPIA: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE <i>ADERAW GASHAYIE</i>	5
3.	ETHNIC CONSIDERATION IN POLITICAL COVERAGE BY NIGERIAN MEDIA <i>DR. IFEDAYO DARAMOLA</i>	10
4.	ECONOMICS OF PROMOTING HIGHER EDUCATION: A CASE OF ROLE OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN <i>HASINUL HUSSAN SIDDIQUE</i>	14
5.	ANALYSIS OF CHRONIC AND TRANSIENT POVERTY IN RURAL OROMIYA - ETHIOPIA <i>DEREJE FEKADU DERESSA</i>	19
6.	TOWARDS A NEW MODEL FOR POVERTY REDUCTION IN NIGERIA <i>DR. AHMAD SANUSI, DR. AHMAD MARTADHA MOHAMED & ABUBAKAR SAMBO JUNAIDU</i>	25
7.	PERCEIVED EASE OF ACCESS/USE, PERCEIVED USEFULNESS, PERCEIVED RISK OF USAGE AND PERCEIVED COST OF USAGE OF MOBILE BANKING SERVICES AND THEIR EFFECT ON CUSTOMER COMMITMENT FROM SELECTED COMMERCIAL BANKS IN RWANDA <i>MACHOGU MORONGE ABIUD, LYNET OKIKO & VICTORIA KADONDI</i>	29
8.	LOST IN TRANSLATION: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SWEDISH ORGANIC CERTIFICATION AGENCY – KRAV <i>KHAN RIFAT SALAM & MAHZABIN CHOWDHURY</i>	35
9.	STOCK MARKET, INFLATION, AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA (1990-2010) <i>ADEGBITE, TAJUDEEN ADEJARE</i>	38
10.	DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN FORMATS IN FOOD AND GROCERY: THE CASE OF INDIAN RETAIL <i>DR. SNV SIVA KUMAR & DR. ANJALI CHOPRA</i>	44
11.	THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING TO FACILITATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GREEN MARKETING: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY <i>DR. D. S. CHAUBEY & K. R. SUBRAMANIAN</i>	52
12.	PROBLEMS FACED BY THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THENI DISTRICT-AN OVER VIEW <i>DR. A. SUJATHA</i>	61
13.	AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON PROFITABILITY AND CONSISTENCY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR IN INDIA <i>MOHAMMED NIZAMUDDIN & DR. PERWAYS ALAM</i>	64
14.	WHAT HAS BEEN SOWN HAS NOT BEEN HARVESTED: THE CURIOUS CASE OF FARM SUBSIDIES IN INDIA <i>B. SWAMINATHAN, M. CHINNADURAI & K. C. SHIVA BALAN</i>	69
15.	ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS POULTRY SOCIETIES IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS OF JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE <i>AASIM MIR & SHIV KUMAR GUPTA</i>	72
16.	SHG – BANK LINKAGE PROGRAMME IN ANDHRA PRADESH: A SWOT ANALYSIS <i>DR. M.SREE RAMA DEVI & DR. A. SUDHAKAR</i>	74
17.	A STUDY OF ISSUES AND CHALLENGES WITH REFERENCE TO THE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA <i>DR. MARUTHI RAM.R., MANJUNATHA.N., ASRA AHMED & PARVATHY.L</i>	78
18.	INFLUENTIAL FACTORS OF CEMENT CONSUMPTION IN INDIA FOR 2011-12 <i>ANJAN REDDY VISHWAMPATLA & DR. P. SRINIVAS REDDY</i>	82
19.	WOMEN IN HANDLOOM INDUSTRY: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS <i>S.VIDHYANATHAN & DR. K. DEVAN</i>	87
20.	NON-FARM SECTOR LOANS BY DINDIGUL CENTRAL COOPERATIVE BANK IN TAMIL NADU <i>DR. T. SRINIVASAN</i>	91
21.	DEVELOPMENT OF WEAKER SECTION OF SOCIETY: A ROLE OF STATE FINANCIAL CORPORATIONS <i>DR. SUSHIL KUMAR & MAHAVIR SINGH</i>	94
22.	AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR WITH RESPECT TO CONSUMER DURABLES <i>ANU GUPTA & PRIYANKA SHAH</i>	97
23.	A STUDY ON THE GROWTH OF SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANKS IN INDIA <i>C.A VISALAKSHI & K. BABY</i>	100
24.	ROLE OF GRAM SACHIV IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT - A CASE STUDY OF KURUKSHETRA DISTRICT <i>PARDEEP CHAUHAN</i>	105
25.	AGMARK CERTIFICATION AND CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION- A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO MADURAI DISTRICT OF TAMILNADU <i>DR. M. SANTHI</i>	108
26.	PERFORMANCE AND PROSPECTS OF HOPCOMS IN KARNATAKA – A DIRECT LINK BETWEEN FARMERS AND CONSUMERS <i>KRISHNA.K M. & DR. S. MOKSHAPATHY</i>	114
27.	HEALTH IMPACT OF IRON ORE MINES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON MINING AND NON-MINING INHABITANTS OF KEONJHAR DISTRICT OF ODISHA <i>MINATI SAHOO</i>	118
28.	IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION AND LIBERALIZATION ON SCs AND STs IN INDIA- A BIRD VIEW <i>DEEPA HANMANTHRAO & PADMAVATI R. SOMANI</i>	122
29.	TO STUDY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRESS-WORK LIFE BALANCE AND WORK ALIENATION AMONG WOMEN EMPLOYEES OF KERALA STATE GOVERNMENT IN TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT <i>CHITHRA MOHAN.K</i>	126
30.	DALITS AND DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN ANDHRA PRADESH <i>SATRI VEERA KESALU</i>	130
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	137

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AGMARK CERTIFICATION AND CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION- A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO MADURAI DISTRICT OF TAMILNADU

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ABSTRACT

In today's commercial sprawling market in India for consumer products it has become a difficult task for the consumer to choose a quality product. In view of the vastness and complications involved in the selling and buying of packed items, the need necessarily arose for a controlling agency to guarantee the quality for the consumer. Such specification has been laid out with regard to industrial products under Indian Standard institution, popularly known as I.S.I. Mark. This paper identify and analyse the level of awareness of consumer about the Quality, adulteration and Agmark in study area.

KEYWORDS

AGMARK certification, Madurai district.

INTRODUCTION

The economic development of any nation is basically dependent upon sufficient agricultural production and its proper distribution. For, agriculture satisfies the demand for foodstuffs on the one side and the necessary raw material for industrial production on the other. On account of the peculiar features of agricultural production, however, there arise a few problems such as insufficiency of production compared to demand, seasonal production, and reduction in quantity and quality, and the like of produce due to natural causes, which render the agricultural operations speculative in character.

In the context of present day modern living, public health has assumed greater importance than any other subject. With the migration of rural population to urban areas in search of employment, academic and health facilities the cities have become more congested and consequently the demand for food items has increased alarmingly. In order to save their precious time in the mornings, people prepare to buy 'ready to serve' food items.

With the development in food processing and packaging practices, the responsibilities of quality testing and certifying mechanism have become onerous. In an environment where the goods are of a perishable nature and purchasing power is strictly limited, quality assurance becomes critical.

In today's commercial sprawling market in India for consumer products it has become a difficult task for the consumer to choose a quality product. In view of the vastness and complications involved in the selling and buying of packed items, the need necessarily arose for a controlling agency to guarantee the quality for the consumer. Such specification has been laid out with regard to industrial products under Indian Standard institution, popularly known as I.S.I. Mark.

With regard to consumables grown by way of cultivation like Rice, pulses, Oilseeds, Oils and products like Honey, Ghee, Butter etc., and Government has thought it fit to give certain specifications which are standardized for different products under the style of Agricultural Grading and Marking Act as Agmark. It is significant to note that manufacturers and traders only voluntarily adopt Agmark and the Government enforces no compulsion. It may be due to paucity of laboratory facilities, stringent financial conditions that has not made the Government to make the introduction of "Agmark" compulsory.

When most of the products are adulterated and mixed with spurious ingredients it is very much important that the Government should encourage and bring in more manufacturers, traders into the fold of "Agmark" grading. It is only in the interests of consumers that they should seek and go in for "Agmark" products by which they are guaranteed of the quality not by the person who produces it, but by the Government who tested the product and affixes its seal of quality, Purity and Standard.

Agmark laboratories have been opened in important cities of Tamilnadu for the above Purpose from the year 1954. The numbers of Agmark Laboratories have steadily increased to 44 in the year March 2005 and Tamil Nadu leads all other States in the country in having such a large number of states owned Agmark Laboratories.

RAMPANT ADULTERATION

Another ground on which the business community is criticized is adulteration of goods. The trader resorts to many methods for this purpose. He adds some other cheap material to the goods merely to increase the bulk of the latter. The clay pellets are added to black-gram and small pieces are added to rice. Indian trade has achieved an unenviable reputation in adulteration of goods. The ingenuity in this field has reached high levels of sophistication and the search for additives that look like the original material has become a special art.

ILL- EFFECTS OF ADULTERATION

Adulteration of food items caused health problems. Some chemicals even caused abortion and cancer.

The Cause of cancer is always multifactorial. While it is not possible to identify the exact infectious diseases, on analysis and study of patients with cancer retrospectively or prospectively leads to some information why some persons get cancer while others escape from this dreadful diseases, which has tendency to kill the patient. This is not the situation in the case of infectious diseases like Malaria, Typhoid, Tuberculosis and the like. If the Mosquito bites a normal person the mosquito transmits the Malarial Parasite to the human body and person gets Malaria. Similarly other diseases have a definite cause and effect relationship that can be explained fully, but in cancer this cannot be explained fully but at the same time when groups of patients suffering from particular cancer are analyzed. Scientists have injected these substances into animals under conditions similar to human life and produced cancer in the animals. And therefore not only casual relationship but also experimental evidence has been established to prove that certain substances and chemicals can be called "Carcinogens" (substances producing cancer). If these substances are adulterated in food then one can imagine the fate of innocent victims of cancer.

The layman can never imagine that he is purchasing for himself with a substance, which will produce cancer with him when he is going to the market to purchase his regular food articles. The aim is to introduce to the public what are these substances and how they are adulterated to cheat the public and gain profit knowingly or unknowingly that they are also stimulating factors which might produce cancer.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is a matter of concern to note that so far no research study has been carried out on this topic. In that sense this is the pioneer attempt made by the researcher. In this context, it is relevant to recall the different notions held by various authors in their respective papers and theses.

The general problems of the Indian consumers are adulteration, artificial scarcity, malpractices in distribution, sudden scarcity for commodities etc. It is the right of the consumer to have the details of the content of the product, quantity, quality, date of manufacturing, expiry date, maximum retail price, direction for use, complete address of the manufacturer etc. "getting standards and unadulterated products at the right time for reasonable price is the right for the public"²³

The Honorable Justice Mr. P.B. Mukharji Chairman, Study Group prepared a report for the study group of the Calcutta seminar about the Social Responsibilities of Business.

He insisted that compulsory quality control is a necessity. But more essential are the methods of enforcing such quality control. There is hardly any legal method in India for enforcing quality control or punishing breaches in this respect, except in obvious cases of adulteration and spurious product. The I.S.I. standards or quality certificate by Government agencies like Agmark have their value, but they have not yet made any decisive impression on the improvement of quality or standards; first because they do not apply to many essential goods and articles of necessity and secondly because they have not had the backing of the public, of products and of consumers in general.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Agmark grading is voluntary in nature. Hence the benefits of the scheme will reach the end consumers of the scheme will reach the end consumers only, when there is effective convergence of Agmark packers (Traders who are in Agmark grading) and the common consumers. Active participation of both the packers and consumers only paves the way for successful implementation of Agmark grading scheme. In this paper tries to examine the problems in enforcing grading scheme and to know to what extent the consumers and traders are benefited.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the specific objectives of the present study: -

1. To identify and analyse the level of awareness of consumer about the Quality, adulteration and Agmark
2. To offer suitable suggestions on the basis of the study.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in perception scores among different groups of members based on the age.
2. There is no significant difference in perception scores among different groups of members based on the Gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the perception scores among different groups of consumers based on the marital status".
4. There is no significant difference in perception scores among different group of members based on the education.
5. There is no significant difference in perception scores among different groups of consumers based on the occupational pattern.
6. There is no significant difference in perception scores among different groups of consumers based on the income level.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary. The main source of primary data was the consumers and a schedule was designed and administered. The schedule has been used for collecting information relating to awareness of Agmark, quality of products, good packaging, ill effects of adulterations, and degree of preference in buying Agmark products.

SAMPLING DESIGN

Those who are regular customers of self-service provisional stores, departmental and retail grocery stores particularly in East Masi Street (near yanaikal), which forms the main backbone of Madurai city for retail business, have been chosen. It is a place full of burble and activity and swarms with a multitude of eager consumers who come to buy vegetable oil, ghee and all flour identify. The research scholar took pains to randomly select 300 respondents from these groups of consumers representing a cross section of the literate people of the temple city.

TOOLS OF ANALYSIS

In order to analyse the perception of respondents towards Agmark they were asked to respond 15 statements in using Likert’s five point-scale starting from “Strongly Agree” (5) to “Strongly Disagree”(1). Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation and Coefficient of Variation have been calculated to find which category has high perception.

The perception scores were classified into three groups:

- (i) High perception: Scores above (Arithmetic Mean + Standard Deviation).
- (ii) Moderate perception: Scores ranging from (Arithmetic Mean – Standard Deviation) to (Arithmetic Mean + Standard Deviation); and
- (iii) Low perception: Scores less than (Arithmetic Mean – Standard Deviation).

In order to test the significant difference in the performance scores of different groups, based on age ,gender, marital status, literacy level , occupation pattern and level of income, the Kruskal-Wallis Test has been used.

$$H = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \left(\frac{R_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{R_2^2}{n_2} + \dots + \frac{R_k^2}{n_k} \right) - 3(N+1)$$

Where

$n_1, n_2, \dots n_k$ are the number in each of k samples

$N = n_1+n_2+ \dots + n_k$ and $R_1, R_2, \dots R_k$ are rank sums of each sample.

In the present study, six personal factors are the basis for assessing the relationship with the consumer’s attitude regarding the consumption of quality goods, knowledge in ill-effects of adulterated goods, understanding the various provisions in the Agmark produce grading and marking scheme.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The perception of the sample consumers about the quality and Agmark is ascertained through their income, education, degree of importance given to quality, knowing of Agmark as a synonym for quality and purity, the price of the Agmark product, the level of importance given to Agmark rather than Brand image. The availability of Agmark even in rural areas is studied.

PERCEPTION ON AGMARK WITH QUALITY

Table 1 highlights five statements for studying the relationship of quality with Agmark. For this an interview schedule was prepared and opinion gathered from 300consumers. The scores of the consumer on the statements are depicted in the Table1

TABLE 1: PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS ON QUALITY OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT

Sl. No.	Statements	S.A.	A	N O	D.A.	S.D.A	Total Scores
1.	Buy only quality product	580	376	30	144	8	1138
2.	Agmark is synonym for purity and quality	325	632	174	38	0	1169
3.	Price for a Agmark product is reasonable	215	472	309	72	0	1068
4.	Preference is given to Agmark than Brand	415	544	39	136	0	1134
5.	Agmark products are available in all areas	300	400	222	132	0	1054

Note: S.A- Strongly Agree, A – Agree, N.O. No Opinion, D.A. – Disagree, S.D.A. Strongly Disagree.

Source: Primary data.

Table 1 Shows that Agmark is synonym for purity and quality, is the most important factor that helps to determine the quality of Agricultural product. The least one is the Agmark product is available in extension areas.

PERCEPTION ON ADULTERATION

Table 2 shows the perception of consumers on Agmark and Adulteration. In this chapter the perception of the sample consumers regarding the uses of Agmark and the ill effects of Adulteration is measured with the help of five statements, which are depicted in the following table.

TABLE 2: PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS ON ADULTERATION

Sl. No.	Statements	S.A.	A	N O	D.A.	S.D.A.	Total Scores
1.	Consumption of Adulterated foods leads to health disorders	450	664	105	12	3	1234
2.	Adulteration cannot be found manually	260	552	261	46	0	1119
3.	Adulteration is more in Non-Packed products	395	632	81	56	8	1172
4.	All Agricultural Products should be compulsorily graded to prevent adulteration	310	456	168	136	0	1070
5.	Inspection done by officials to check adulteration is satisfactory.	155	460	360	68	0	1043

Source: Primary data.

It is clear from the table 2 that "A consumption of adulterated foods leads to health disorders" occupies the first place scoring the intensity value of 1234 followed by 'Adulteration is more in Non-Agmark products'. Adulteration cannot be found manually is placed in third position. "All Agricultural Products should be compulsorily graded to prevent adulteration", "Inspection done by officials is satisfied" are placed fourth and fifth respectively.

PERCEPTION ON AWARENESS

There are a number of provisions incorporated in the Agricultural produce grading and Marking Act to help the consumers to get a quality and unadulterated food product. If the consumer buys any substandard food products under Agmark seal some remedies are also provided in this act. The survey was conducted from the 300 sample consumers about the awareness of the scheme and its various provisions. For this purpose five statements have been presented in an interview schedule and their opinions have been elicited

TABLE 3: PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS ABOUT THE AWARENESS OF THE SCHEME

Sl. No.	Statements	S.A.	A	N O	D.A.	S.D.A.	Total Scores
1.	Agmark is a third party guarantee given by Government of India	530	436	138	66	6	1176
2.	Agmark is as popular as ISI & ISO	560	468	102	68	3	1201
3.	Agmark products is self-explanatory	5	124	120	350	53	652
4.	Awareness about different grade specifications	45	252	207	278	20	802
5.	When I buy Agmark I Come to the consumer protection act	375	480	129	98	13	1095

Source: Primary data.

It is clear from the above Table that Agmark is as popular as ISI & ISO occupies the first place scoring the intensity value of 1201 followed by Agmark is a third party guarantee given by government of India. The least intensity score is given to Agmark is self-explanatory.

TABLE 4: DETAILS OF PERCEPTION SCORES OF RESPONDENTS FOR VARIOUS CATEGORIES

Sl.No.	Various Categories	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	C.V.
1.	Quality	11.00	24.00	18.5433	3.03074	16.34
2.	Adulteration	13.00	24.00	18.7933	2.50564	13.33
3.	Awareness	5.00	22.00	16.4200	2.62805	16.01
4	Overall	35.00	67.00	53.7567	6.82099	12.69

Source: Primary data.

It is evident from Table 4 that the perception of the sample consumers about Adulteration and its ill effects occupied the first place (mean 18.79 and standard deviation 250) followed by quality. The perception of consumers about the awareness of the scheme occupies the third place. This clearly shows that the consumers are fully conscious of the good and the bad things about the products that they purchase. It will be in the interests of society if the government takes concrete efforts to popularize the Agmark approved goods.

EXTENT OF PERCEPTION OF VARIOUS CATEGORIES TOWARDS AGMARK

The overview of the respondents' perception scores of impact is depicted in Table

TABLE 5: OVERVIEW OF RESPONDENT'S PERCEPTION SCORES FOR DIFFERENT CATEGORIES

Sl.No.	Various Category	Low	Medium	High
1.	Quality	44	214	42
2.	Adulteration	56	154	90
3.	Awareness	38	214	48
4.	Overall	58	215	27

Source: Primary data.

It is clear from the above Table that the perception of a majority of sample consumers regarding quality, Adulteration, and the scheme falls under the medium category. With regard to overall impact 215 consumers fall in the medium perception category 27 consumers fall in the high perception category and 58 fall in the low perception category.

RANKING OF VARIOUS KINDS OF IMPACT

The sample consumers were categorized into three ranks that is to say 1, 2 and 3. The ranking was done on the basis of scores of end respondent for each impact. Altogether there are three categories of impact and hence there are three ranks. The number of respondents for each impact with ranks 1, 2 and 3 are arranged in rows and the D value is applied by using the Kalmogorov – Smirnov one sample Test. The Distribution of sample consumers based on the ranks of each category of impact is shown in Table 6

TABLE 6: DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS BASED ON RANKS OF VARIOUS CATEGORIES

Sl.No.	Category of Impact	Ranks			D Value	Result
		1	2	3		
1.	Quality	159	100	41	3.116	***
2.	Percentage	53.0%	33.3%	13.7%		
3.	Adulteration	160	114	26	4.154	***
4.	Percentage	53.3%	38.0%	8.7%		
5.	Awareness	44	65	191	2.532	***
6.	Percentage	14.7%	21.7%	63.7%		

*** Significance at 1 per cent level.

Source: Primary data.

From Table 6 it may be observed that most of the consumers gave the first rank for the adulteration and second rank for quality and the third rank for Awareness of the scheme. The result of the kolmogorov – Smirnov test also shows that there is a significant difference in ranking of all categories of impact among the members. Hence it is concluded that the three categories of impact are equally important

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL FACTORS AND AGMARK

In order to explore the relationship between personal variables and the perception of Agmark the Kruskal Wallis one-way ANOVA was used.

GENDER AND IMPACT PERCEPTION SCORE

To test the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the perception scores of impact among different groups of members classified according to sex, the Kruskal Wallis Test has been applied. The result of the test is depicted in Table 7

TABLE 7: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND PERCEPTION SCORE – KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

Sl.No.	Category of Agmark	H value	Result
1.	Quality	6.959	***
2.	Adulteration	1.494	NS
3.	Awareness	.144	NS
4.	Overall	7.003	**

Degrees of freedom: 1 ** Significant at 5 per cent level. NS – Not significant. *** Significant at 1 per cent level.

Source: Primary data.

It could be observed from the above Table that there is significant difference in the perception scores of the sample members in respect of quality category of Agmark. It indicates that gender influences the quality category of Agmark. In respect of adulteration category and awareness category there is no significant relationship between the perception scores of impact. It is also observed that as the calculated value of the chi-square for overall scores is more than the table value of 3.84 at the 5per cent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that significant difference exists in the perception scores among the groups according to gender. It means that gender influences the overall perception scores of members.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND PERCEPTION SCORES OF AGMARK

In order to test whether there is any relationship between age and the perception scores of Agmark the following null hypothesis has been framed.

“There is no significant difference in perception scores among different groups of members based on the age”. The results of the Kruskal - Wallis test are depicted in Table 8

TABLE 8: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND PERCEPTION SCORES - KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

Sl.No.	Category of Agmark	H Value	Result
1.	Quality	16.162	NS
2.	Adulteration	16.005	NS
3.	Awareness	28.884	***
4.	Overall	18.972	**

Degrees of freedom 4. ** Significant at 5 per cent level *** Significant at 1 per cent level. NS – Not Significant.

Source: Primary data.

It could be inferred from Table 4.16 that there is no significant difference in the perception scores of all categories of Agmark except the awareness of the scheme. It also shows that there is a significant difference in the perception scores of the overall impact among the groups of members according to their age. It indicates that the age is related with the overall scores due to the influence on the perception on awareness of the scheme.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND PERCEPTION OF AGMARK

In order to test whether there is any relationship between marital status and perception scores of Agmark the following null hypothesis has been framed

“There is no significant difference in the perception scores among different groups of consumers based on the marital status”

To test the null hypothesis the Kruskal Wallis Test has been applied. The result of the Test is depicted is Table 9.

TABLE 9: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND PERCEPTION SCORE –KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

Sl.No.	Category of Agmark	“H” Value	Result
1.	Quality	0.873	NS
2.	Adulteration	2.076	NS
3.	Awareness	.000	NS
4.	Overall	0.001	NS

Degrees of Freedom: NS – Not significant.

Source: Primary data.

It could be inferred from Table 9 that there is no significant difference in the perception scores of all categories with marital status. So marriage has no effect on their buying attitude.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND PERCEPTION SCORE

In order to test whether there is any relationship between education and perception scores of Agmark the following null hypothesis has been framed

“There is no significant difference in perception scores among different group of members based on the education”

The results of the Kruskal Wallis Test are depicted in the following table.

TABLE 10: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND PERCEPTION SCORE - KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

Sl.No.	Category of Agmark	“H” Value	Result
1.	Quality	34.014	***
2.	Adulteration	29.238	**
3.	Awareness	13.667	***
4.	Overall	34.334	***

Degrees of Freedom: 4 *** Significant at 1 per cent level. NS – Not Significant

Source: Primary data.

It could be observed from Table 10 that there is a significant difference in the perception scores of the sample consumers in respect of quality, adulteration and the awareness of the scheme. It is also observed that as the calculated value of the chi-square for overall scores is more than the Table value of 13.3 at the 1 percent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that significant difference exists in the perception scores among the groups according to the education. It means that education influences the overall perception scores of consumers.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN AND PERCEPTION SCORES OF IMPACT

In order to test whether there is any relationship between the occupational pattern and the perception scores of impact the following null hypothesis has been framed.

“There is no significant difference in perception scores among different groups of consumers based on the occupational pattern.”

The result of the Kruskal-wallis Test is recorded in Table 11.

TABLE 11: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL STATUS AND PERCEPTION SCORE - KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

Sl.No.	Category of Agmark	"H" Value	Result
1.	Quality	18.287	NS
2.	Adulteration	1.005	NS
3.	Awareness	.028	NS
4.	Overall	5.834	NS

Degrees of Freedom: 2 NS – Not significant.

Source: Primary data.

It could be inferred from Table 11 that there is a significant difference in the perception scores of all categories of impact. It also shows that there is significant difference in the perception scores of the overall impact among the groups of consumers according to their occupational pattern. It indicates that the working people are buying Agmark product and fully aware of the ill effects of Adulteration.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEVEL OF INCOME AND PERCEPTION SCORE

In order to test whether there is any relationship between the level of income and the perception scores of impact, the following null hypothesis has been framed.

To test the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the perception scores of impact among different groups of sample consumers classified according to their level of Income, the Kruskal-wallis Test has been applied. The result of the Test is depicted in Table 12

TABLE 12: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL OF INCOME AND PERCEPTION SCORE – KRUSKAL WALLIS TEST

Sl.No.	Category of Agmark	"H" Value	Result
1.	Quality	27.219	***
2.	Adulteration	21.798	**
3.	Awareness	14.525	***
4.	Overall	21.399	***

Degrees of Freedom: 3 ***Significant at 1 per cent level**Significant at 5 per cent level.

Source: Primary data.

It could be observed from Table 12 that there is a significant difference in the perception scores of the sample consumers in respect of all categories. It indicates that income influences the purchasing of quality and standard products. It is also observed that as the calculated value of the chi-square for overall scores is more than the table value of 11.3 at the 1 per cent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference exist in the perception score among the consumers according to their income. It means that income influences the overall perception scores of consumers.

FINDINGS

1. The study has Shows that Agmark is synonym for purity and quality, is the most important factor that helps to determine the quality of Agricultural product.
2. It is clear from the study "A consumption of adulterated foods leads to health disorders" occupies the first place scoring the intensity value of 1234 followed by "Adulteration is more in Non-Agmark products".
3. Study exhibits that the "Agmark is as popular as ISI and ISO" occupies the first place scoring the intensity value of 1201 followed by "Agmark is a third party guarantee given by government of India". The least intensity score is given to "Agmark is self-explanatory".
4. The perception of the sample consumers about Adulteration and its ill effects occupied the first place followed by quality.
5. The perception of a majority of sample consumers regarding quality, Adulteration, and the scheme falls under the medium category. With regard to overall impact 215 consumers fall in the medium perception category 27 consumers fall in the high perception category and 58 fall in the low perception category.
6. The result of the kolmogorov – Smirnov test shows that there is a significant difference in ranking of all categories of impact among the members.
7. It is concluded from the study that significant difference exists in the perception scores among the groups according to gender.
8. Age is related with the overall scores due to the influence on the perception on awareness of the scheme.
9. There is no significant difference in the perception scores of all categories with marital status.
10. It is concluded that significant difference exists in the perception scores among the groups according to the education.
11. The study indicates that the working people are buying Agmark product and fully aware of the ill effects of Adulteration.
12. It means that income influences the overall perception scores of consumers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For developing health consciousness and awareness about grading agricultural based food products, a study should be included as a curriculum from the school level onwards. It would pave the way for a healthy and strong future generation.
2. Publicity and propaganda work should be geared up through the various multimedia like newspaper, magazines and television about the benefits of Agmark grading and the availability of Agmark certified food products. Both central and state governments should promote this awareness campaign effectively and jointly.
3. Both the central and state governments should announce tax concession either partly or fully for the traders who are actively participating in Agmark grading and quality control.

CONCLUSION

In the changing scenario of world food economy, value addition to food as well as agricultural commodities, the significance of grading gains importance among the consumers, worldwide. This environment envisages a study of the efficacy of the Agricultural produce grading as well as marking with Agmark certification. As grading aims at uplifting the economic condition of the farmer or producer as well as the consumer welfare, the present study has been undertaken. The study starts with highlighting the act namely Agricultural Produce Grading and Marking act, 1937, due to its uniqueness in maintaining quality conscious both for producer as well as consumer and ends with pros and cons of the schemes .

The findings of the study provide scintillating effects to the minds of the consumers who are quality conscious and contribute remarkably to the existing body of knowledge in the area of grading aspects of the agricultural produce, which are mainly used in day-to-day life activity like cooking.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. A study of impact of agricultural produce grading in the manufacture of value based or value added agricultural products.
2. A problem in grading and marking of commercial grading in regulated market.

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