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A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE FARMERS CULTIVATING SUGARCANE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ERODE AND TIRUPUR DISTRICTS

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ABSTRACT

The traditional occupation of most of the Indian citizens is farming. More than 65 percent of the population in India is residing in rural areas of the country. Out of them about 80 percent of the public depend on agriculture and allied industries of agriculture. In olden days particularly before independence the Indian agriculture was very backward when compared with the developed nations because of lack of advanced technology and also using of traditional pattern of farming. After independence much importance was given by the then governments to develop agriculture. In all budgets considerable amount is being allocated to agriculture sector. Due to the efforts made by the government we experienced considerable development in agriculture. Modern equipments and machineries are being used in all phases of agriculture starting from ploughing of land to harvesting of crop. Further in many ways the government announces subsidies to the farmers for few crops and for some of the agricultural works like trip irrigation, supply of fertilizers at a subsidized rate. Only limited farmers get huge income from agriculture. All other farmers could not earn income as like in the case other activities involved by the human being. The farmers are affected due to various factors like shortage of rainfall, problems of diseases in the crop, seed failure, and heavy rainfall at the time of harvesting, fluctuation in the price of the agricultural produces. The farmers are affected irrespective of the nature of the crops either cash crops or food grains due to low income from their crops. The period of the study for this research is taken from 2015 to 2016. The study is based on primary and secondary data. The data required for the study has been collected from Questionnaire, Journals, reports, etc.

KEYWORDS

Tirupur, Erode, farmers problems in cultivating sugarcane.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Sugarcane is well known to all of us. Sugarcane is the basic raw material for all forms of sugar. Hence sugarcane cultivation is fully encouraged by the government. More cottage industries and large scale industries were established for manufacturing sugar. Simultaneously the necessity for cultivation of sugarcane was increased. In all parts of the country where the water level is good and the irrigation from river and dam water is available, the farmers started to cultivate sugarcane. Being sugar is the basic necessary domestic commodity; the demand for the sugar is going on increasing year by year. Hence the necessity for cultivation of sugarcane is also simultaneously increased.

The prices of agricultural commodities are usually determined by market factor of demand and supply, if there are many farmers producing the same commodity then they will fetch lesser prices for their produce. When there is great demand from farmers for a certain commodity, then farmers can expect to get higher prices. These prices keep changing daily. Other factors that determine the prices of the product are its quality, yield and pest free status. Climatic conditions, international prices, cost of production and new laws may also affect the prices of agricultural commodities. The prices at different markets may be different.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India normally all farmers are struggling lot for survival irrespective of total area of the cultivation, type of crop cultivated, etc. All the farmers say their views and reasons for the difficulties. The farmers who are cultivating sugarcane are forced to borrow amount from outside, because of some administrative difficulties in the sugar mills, the dues from sugar mills to the farmers getting delay for settlement. For starting the cultivation of next crop they are in need of finance. Hence they approach the money lenders for financial support where they have to pay high rate of interest. The crops failure also makes them further weak in their financial position. In Tirupur and Erode district due to industrial development, there are huge amount of employment opportunities with reasonable wage or salary package. The entire farming labourers turn to industrial sectors due to working conditions. For agriculture work there is heavy demand for labourers but only few workers are available. This caused high rate of labour cost in agriculture. The fertilizers and pesticides' rate is also high. A farmer who has minimum acres of land for cultivating sugarcane cannot afford the input cost till the harvesting of sugarcane.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to portrait present condition and problems faced by the farmers cultivating sugarcane. The objectives are:

1. To analyze the various issues and problems faced by the farmers from cultivation to harvest of sugarcane.
2. To uncover out the causes and reasons for the problems.

1.4 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rao I.V.Y. Rama (2012) in his study entitled that Efficiency, yield gap and constraints analysis in irrigated vis-à-vis rain fed sugarcane in north coastal zone of Andhra Pradesh shows that the value of BCR is higher for plant crop in irrigated (1.49%) than in rain fed (1.43%) regions. The most important constraint in sugarcane cultivation is shortage of labour during crucial operations.

Jaswanth Singh, R.D.Singh, S.I.Anwar and S.Solomon (2011) in their paper entitled that 'Alternative Sweeteners Production from sugarcane in India: Lump Sugar (Jaggery)'. Importance of sweeteners has long been recognized in Indian diets. Sweetness and flavor are very important as regards consumers' acceptability. Industry has flourished in different states of the country viz., Uttar Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

Murali P., Balakrishnan R. (2011) In the recent past, labour scarcity coupled with high labour wage rate has greatly affected the irrigation and harvesting of sugarcane crop in time. It has reduced sugarcane area from 3.91 lakh ha in 2006-07 to 3.14 lakh ha in 2009-10 in Tamil Nadu. Modern sugarcane machinery and labour-saving devices were introduced on a large scale to reduce dependency on labour, and finish different farm operations in time and found the mechanical operations to be superior to manual operations in sugarcane cultivation.

I.V.Y Rama Rao., G Sunil Kumar Babu (2011): The present study was an attempt to work-out costs and returns in value added products of Sugarcane viz., sugar, jaggery and sugarcane juice, in order to suggest the sugarcane growers, the profitable and sustained way to deal with sugarcane. The results revealed that cost of cultivation of sugarcane is the prime factor in the various value added products. Among the value added products, sugarcane juice production was found more profitable, which needs further study of technical and financial feasibility of keeping quality in order to produce on large scale.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 SOURCES OF DATA

The data required for the study have been collected from both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the sample respondents with the help of a questionnaire / Interview schedule. Further, for the purpose of analysis, detailed information was collected from the secondary sources such as Books, Periodicals and Journals.

1.5.2 SAMPLE SELECTION

Due to the development in the economy, social status and the changing trends among the farmers led cultivation of cash crops than the food grains and the pulses. Erode and Tirupur districts are considered one of the districts where sugarcane is cultivated more. As the population for the study is numerous, 800 respondents were selected at random by using convenient sampling method. In Erode district among 7 revenue blocks 20 villages where sugarcane is cultivated are chosen for the selection of the respondents. In each village 20 farmers who cultivate sugarcane were identified and selected as sample respondents from the total population. Likewise, in Tirupur district there are seven revenue blocks where only in four blocks the sugarcane is being cultivated. Among four blocks 20 villages were chosen by using stratified random sampling. Then 20 farmers per village, who are involved cultivation of sugarcane, have been selected as sample respondents. The sample respondent consists of both the male and female from middle class and lower class people.

1.5.3 STUDY PERIOD

The data collected from the primary sources took 4 months. The secondary data collection 2 months, preparing the master table, data analysis and interpretation consumed 4 months. To present the data in the form of the report took another 2 months. The same was confined only to the study area and was related to 1-year period starting from November 2015 to October 2016.

1.5.4 FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The core of the study being 'A study on the problems and prospects of the farmers cultivating sugarcane with special reference to Erode and Tirupur districts, the study centered on two dependent variables viz., opinion about the initiatives taken by the government for the welfare of the farmers and the satisfaction level of the farmers regarding the social status and their wellbeing.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The data was collected from the farmers cultivating sugarcane in Erode and Tirupur districts only. So the findings of the study may not be considered for other districts where sugarcane is cultivated.
2. We cannot expect full co-operation from the respondents at the time of questionnaire or interview schedule. So the findings may be based on the information given by the respondents. There may be possibility for bias in the information provided by the respondents.
3. The survey was conducted only with the farmers who cultivate sugarcane. So it may not be considered for taking policy decisions for the farmers cultivating other crops in Erode and Tirupur districts.

1.7 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**HENDRY GARRET RANKING METHOD****TABLE 1: PROBLEMS FACED BY THE FARMERS WHILE CULTIVATING THE SUGARCANE**

Sl.No	Problems faced by the respondents	Rank							Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	shortage of labour	120	150	104	155	99	86	86	800
2	seed problem	121	140	104	156	105	78	96	800
3	water shortage	123	148	100	141	103	98	87	800
4	power problem	142	143	96	146	104	79	90	800
5	High cost of labour	121	152	103	152	104	84	84	800
6	shortage of fertilizers	134	152	93	143	101	85	92	800
7	lack of financial assistance	128	149	102	159	102	77	83	800
Total		889	1034	702	1052	718	587	618	5600

TABLE 2: GARRETT RANKING TABLE

Sl.No	Problems faced by the respondents	Rank							Total Score	Average	Rank
		S7	S6	S5	S4	S3	S2	S1			
1	Shortage of labour	7920	7050	6032	7750	4257	3010	1892	37911	47.388	IV
2	Seed problem	7986	6580	6032	7800	4515	2730	2112	37755	47.193	VI
3	Water shortage	8118	6956	5800	7050	4429	3430	1914	37697	47.121	VII
4	Power problem	9372	6721	5568	7300	4472	2765	1980	38178	47.722	II
5	High cost of labour	7986	7144	5974	7600	4472	2940	1848	37964	47.455	III
6	Shortage of fertilizers	8844	7144	5394	7150	4343	2975	2024	37874	47.342	V
7	Lack of financial assistance	8448	7003	5916	7950	4386	2695	1826	38224	47.780	I

From the above table it is under stood that among the problems based by the respondents power problem is given first rank with a Garrett score of 38178 and an average of 47.722 followed by the problem "high cost of labour gets second rank with a Garrett point 37964 and with an average of 47.455. The third rank given to the problem "shortage of labour" with a Garrett point 37911 and an average of 47.388. The fourth rank given to the problem "shortage of fertilizer" with a Garrett point 37874 with an average of 47.342 and the fifth rank goes to the "seed problem" with a Garrett point of 37755 and an average of 47.193 and finally the sixth rank is given to the problem "water shortage" with a Garrett score of 37697 and average of 47.121

The problems faced by the farmers while transporting the sugarcane was studied by collecting the responses from the respondents by choosing six major problems in cultivating the sugarcane. They are 'High freight charges, 'Damages of produce', 'Dry and weight loss due to heat, 'Poor service of the transporter, 'Delay in loading and unloading, and 'More cost' The respondents were asked to rank the problems according to their perception and the order of merit given by the respondents was converted into ranks using Garrett ranking method.

TABLE 3: THE OVERALL PROBLEMS FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS

SL no	Problems	Rank											Total
		S11	S10	S9	S8	S7	S6	S5	S4	S3	S2	S1	
1	Transport problems	47	115	108	90	68	108	48	47	74	61	34	800
2	More amount of commission	46	118	107	97	72	106	46	46	70	58	34	800
3	More transport cost	53	114	106	106	76	100	46	46	69	54	30	800
4	Delay in getting the amount	43	128	99	93	72	105	50	49	63	56	42	800
5	Insufficient rate per tonne	32	96	112	80	88	120	48	56	88	64	16	800
6	Inconvenient for loading and unloading	45	131	98	107	75	99	47	47	60	53	38	800
7	Loss of weight	32	88	128	64	88	120	40	64	96	64	16	800
8	Problem from intermediaries	43	127	120	94	68	93	51	51	69	60	42	800
9	Shortage of supporting manuals	37	97	104	88	83	119	51	51	88	67	15	800
10	Inadequate price	42	146	82	106	82	97	50	49	49	49	48	800
11	Non availability of finance	45	126	98	116	80	105	44	44	62	53	27	800
	Total	465	1286	1162	1041	852	1172	521	550	788	639	342	8800

TABLE 4: RELATIVE CONTRIBUTION OF DISCRIMINANT SATISFACTION LEVEL OF FARMERS IN TOTAL DISCRIMINANT SCORE

Sl. No.	Discriminant satisfaction level	Discriminant Coefficient	Mean Difference	Product	Relative Contribution in TDS
1.	Satisfaction about the yielding	0.0445	0.6650	0.0296	7.89
2.	Availability of labour	0.1246	0.5401	0.0673	17.93
3.	Satisfaction about the rainfall	0.0997	0.4727	0.0471	12.55
4.	Supply of power	0.0884	0.5293	0.0468*	12.47
5.	Labour cost	0.1899	0.5793	0.1100	29.31
6.	Profitability	0.1366	0.5451	0.0745	19.85
	Total	-	-	0.3753	100.00
Per cent of Cases Correctly Classified: 74.02					

Source: Calculated from Primary Data

* Significant at five per cent level

The higher discriminant coefficients are identified in the case of satisfaction level since their discriminant coefficients are 0.1366 and 0.1899 respectively. It shows the higher influence of above said satisfaction level of respondents in discriminant function. The higher relative contribution of discriminant two satisfaction level is identified in the case of labour cost and profitability since their relative contributions are 29.31 and 19.85 per cent respectively. The estimate two group discriminant function correctly classifies the cases to the extent of 74.02 per cent. The analysis reveals that the important discriminant satisfaction level which are highly perceived by the farmers having own land than the farmers having leased land.

CLUSTER ANALYSIS

TABLE 5

Serial No	Final Cluster Centers Variables	Cluster				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Satisfaction about the yielding	2.48	2.49	3.26	2.70	2.86
2	Availability of labour	2.61	2.42	2.51	3.42	3.10
3	Satisfaction about the rainfall	2.42	3.15	2.67	3.05	2.79
4	Supply of power	2.66	3.14	2.92	2.60	2.99
5	Labour cost	2.86	2.68	3.17	2.37	2.91
6	Profitability	2.52	2.61	2.61	2.68	3.53
7	Price for the sugarcane cultivated	2.64	3.11	3.37	2.61	2.71
8	Climate	2.81	2.20	2.62	2.81	3.16
9	Grading the produce	2.98	2.56	2.57	2.96	3.06
10	Regarding rate fixed	2.63	2.67	3.16	2.88	2.88
11	Services charges levied	2.72	2.60	2.78	3.02	3.06
12	Facilities provided	2.46	2.72	2.65	2.78	3.67
13	settlement of the amount	2.67	2.61	2.97	2.52	3.28
14	method adopted for selling the produce	1.55	1.69	2.36	2.28	2.04
15	Secret tender	2.52	3.03	2.72	3.48	2.56
16	Other materials used for manufacturing sugar	1.18	1.28	1.15	1.15	1.24
17	Opining about the charges for processing	2.08	3.23	3.48	2.92	2.32
18	Opinion about other ways of preparing sugar	1.15	1.21	1.29	1.25	1.12
19	Material used for manufacturing sugar	1.21	1.46	1.33	1.30	1.39
20	Satisfaction about the current status	2.38	3.15	3.03	2.62	2.24
21	Mode of payment	3.53	2.16	2.56	2.28	2.34
22	Loss of weight	2.52	2.45	3.00	2.34	2.75
23	Income from sugarcane cultivation	2.48	2.17	2.76	3.57	2.43
24	Development	2.73	3.17	2.59	1.95	2.77
25	Social status	2.23	2.46	2.99	2.35	3.34
26	Income from other crops along with sugarcane	2.36	2.35	2.69	2.58	3.13
27	Support from the intermediaries	2.77	1.95	3.65	2.42	2.44

To study the variables which are statistically significant across the five clusters, ANOVA tool was employed and the result obtained is given in the following table.

TABLE 6

ANOVA							
Sr. No	Statements	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
		Mean Square	D.o.f	Mean Square	df		
1	Satisfaction about the yielding	12.400	4	.894	637	13.873	.000
2	Availability of labour	22.193	4	.912	637	24.336	.000
3	Satisfaction about the rainfall	11.542	4	.937	637	12.320	.000
4	Supply of power	6.450	4	.999	637	6.453	.000
5	Labour cost	10.187	4	.972	637	10.485	.000
6	Profitability	23.887	4	.860	637	27.790	.000
7	Price for the sugarcane cultivated	13.166	4	.959	637	13.726	.000
8	Climate	14.661	4	.985	637	14.884	.000
9	Grading the produce	6.952	4	1.003	637	6.928	.000
10	Regarding rate fixed	5.391	4	.995	637	5.420	.000
11	Services charges levied	4.978	4	1.012	637	4.919	.001
12	Facilities provided	31.226	4	.840	637	37.165	.000
13	Settlement of the amount	12.870	4	.929	637	13.846	.000
14	Method adopted for selling the produce	16.516	4	.986	637	16.749	.000
15	Secret tender	20.810	4	.893	637	23.314	.000
16	Other materials used for manufacturing sugar	.391	4	.159	637	2.456	.045
17	Opining about the charges for processing	46.576	4	1.166	637	39.933	.000
18	Opinion about other ways of preparing sugar	.600	4	.156	637	3.841	.004
19	Material used for manufacturing sugar	1.218	4	.362	637	3.366	.010
20	Satisfaction about the current status	19.443	4	1.126	637	17.262	.000
21	Mode of payment	46.798	4	.979	637	47.786	.000
22	Loss of weight	7.904	4	1.174	637	6.730	.000
23	Income from sugarcane cultivation	34.755	4	1.032	637	33.664	.000
24	Development	23.011	4	1.148	637	20.053	.000
25	Social status	30.764	4	1.237	637	24.873	.000
26	Income from other crops along with sugarcane	13.985	4	1.117	637	12.524	.000
27	Support from the intermediaries	43.446	4	1.042	637	41.691	.000

The F tests should be used only for descriptive purposes because the clusters have been chosen to maximize the differences among cases in different clusters. The observed significance levels are not corrected for this and thus cannot be interpreted as tests of the hypothesis that the cluster means are equal.

TABLE 7

Number of Cases in each Cluster			%
Cluster			
	1	198.000	24.75
	2	147.000	18.37
	3	136.000	17.00
	4	150.000	18.75
	5	169.000	21.13
Valid		800.000	100.00

The ANOVA table identifies 27 statements which are significant across the five clusters. The last column in the table indicates that all the statements are significant at 0.05 levels as they have probability values less than 0.01.

The validity and stability of the clusters were checked by splitting the samples in to strata of 400 each and repeating the same procedures of cluster analysis in two. The results showed five cluster solutions on both the samples.

The table shows the number of respondents in each cluster segments. Out of the 800 first clusters were grouped by 198 (24.75%) respondents, second cluster was grouped by 147 (18.37%) respondents, and third cluster was grouped by 136 (17%) respondents, fourth cluster by 150 (18.75%) respondents and the fifth cluster were grouped by 169(21.13 %) respondents.

The ANOVA identifies 27 statements which are significant across the five clusters. The last column in the table indicates that all the statements are significant at 0.05 levels (equivalent to 95% confidence level) as they have probability values less than 0.01.

The validity and stability of the clusters were checked by splitting the samples in to strata of 400 each and repeating the same procedures of cluster analysis in two stages (Hierarchical and non-hierarchical). The results showed five cluster solutions on both the samples.

FINDINGS

From the analysis it is found that among the problems faced by the respondents while marketing and selling the sugarcane Problem from intermediaries 'is given first rank with a Garrett score of 43942 and an average of 54.92 followed by the problem "More transport charges' gets second rank with a Garrett point 43614 and with an average of 54.51 third rank given to the problem "Inconvenient for loading and unloading" with a Garrett point 43492 and an average of 54.36. The fourth rank given to the problem 'Inadequate price' with a Garrett point 43410 with an average of 54.26 and the fifth rank goes to the problem "More amount of commission' with a Garrett point of 43141 and an average of 53.92 and the sixth rank given to the problem "Delay in getting the amount" with a Garrett score of 42956 and average of 53.69, the seventh rank goes to 'Transport problems' with a Garrett score of 42896 with an average of 53.63, the problem 'Non availability of finance' gets eighth place with Garrett point 43860 with an average of 53.62 and the ninth rank goes to the problem 'Shortage of supporting manual' with a Garrett point of 42411 with an average of 53.01, the tenth rank goes to the problem 'Insufficient rate per tonne' with a Garrett point 42280 with an average of 52.85 and finally the problem 'loss of weight' gets eleventh place with a Garrett point 42000 with an average of 52.50.

CONCLUSION

Farmers are considered as the main heart of India because of the contribution by the farming sector in the economic development of the country. Whatever may be the crop or whoever may be the person and whichever may be the area, it is necessary to all the government officials and the authorities to see the welfare of the farmers in the particular area. In the study area the farmers cultivating sugarcane face various issues relating to cultivation and marketing of sugarcane. In this regard researcher identified the causes for the problems and the remedial measures to solve the plight of the farmers in the study area. Adequate rate for the produce, power supply without any power cut, supply of fertilizers with concessional rate and providing the financial assistance and inputs to the cultivation and concessional rate Further the shortage of labour in the farming sector especially can be solved by introducing the machineries in the cultivation and harvesting related works of sugarcane simultaneously it will reduce the cost of input to the farmers in the study area. Hence the government and the authorities concerned

in the department should see that the farmers are provided with the above stated facilities to bring betterment in the life of the farmers in Tirupur and Erode districts which will lead to the balanced development of the districts including the rural parts of the study area.

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