

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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A STUDY ON ICT INITIATIVES IN THE SALE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AT APMC'S IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is different from industry and plays a significant role in the economic development of a nation. India's prosperity depends upon the agricultural prosperity. There are many kinds of agricultural products produced in India and the marketing of all these farm products generally tends to be a complex process. Agricultural marketing involves many operations and processes through which the food and raw materials move from the cultivated farm to the final consumers. Agriculture provides goods for consumption and exports and manufacturing sectors. The suitable marketing system should be designed so as to give proper reward or return to the efforts of the tiller of the soil. Agricultural marketing plays an important role in Indian agriculture in general and farmer's economy in particular. The use of information technologies provides transparency in agri-business and making appropriate decisions in marketing of agricultural produce. The study was conducted in APMC Market Yards in Karnataka with an objective to identify and assess the extent of use of Information communication technologies (ICTs) in marketing of agricultural commodities and also to investigate the nature and extent of economic benefits by use of ICTs to farmers and other stakeholders in marketing of agricultural commodities.

KEYWORDS

information communication technology, agricultural marketing, produces, prices and decision making.

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural Marketing is an area for the "second generation" of green revolution problems. Indian Marketing is undergoing a significant metamorphosis because of economic liberalization and globalization. The successes of marketing strategies and macro-economic policies in developing countries are influenced by availability of Infrastructure development, which plays a significant factor in present era of marketing. Further, the market efficiency mainly depends on organization and structure of the market. The structural features of the market reflect the relative degree of concentration of market power in favour of buyers or sellers which influence the market conduct and performance.

In past, agriculture was driven by bid, at present it is driven by command using technological interventions in the marketing process. But, the monetary potential of technology use in agriculture is not yet recognized. Though Information Technology (IT) revolution, aided by the revolt in telecommunication has helped in not only market information system but also has changed the nature of market functioning altogether by making several intermediaries redundant, reducing the cost of information, lowering the transaction cost and increasing the competition.

Farmers have instigated to perceive marketing rather than production as the major constraint to enhancing farm incomes. Markets are the means of either prosperity or distress for the farmers. These are the places where the farmers' fate for the crops they have grown is decided. Hence, the government does everything possible to ensure that the farmers realize a better return for their produce. In addition, Enactment of Model APMC Act, linking of all APMCs with National Information Network (NIC-NET) to provide the speedy and timely dissemination of market information to the growers, separate web portals for dissemination of market information, etc., is some of the efforts of the govt. In order to render the marketing systems more efficient, government has introduced electronics devices into market mechanism in some markets for bringing more transparency in the markets. ITCs have been used for transmission of information in various industries. However, their uses in agricultural markets are relatively low. With this backdrop, the present study is an attempt to assess the use of electronic devices being introduced in the regulated market e-tendering mechanism Computerization of Activities. Implementation of Development works through e-tendering process, Market Information System-Trading through Spot Exchanges. Etc. and their utility to different stakeholders in APMC Market yards in Karnataka.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To provide competitive price for farmers produce, correct weighing and immediate payment
2. To provide basic infrastructure facilities for trade of notified agricultural commodities.
3. To implement welfare programmes for farmers and shramiks

METHODOLOGY

The research is based on purely secondary data; it's an exploratory and descriptive in nature. The secondary data is collected from review of researches, websites and other reports.

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRONIC TENDER SYSTEM IN KARNATAKA - APMC ROLE**HISTORY**

The Karnataka Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act 1966 has been enacted to provide a uniform law relating to the better regulation of buying and selling of Agricultural Produce and the establishment of Markets for Agricultural Produce throughout the State. The Act has been enacted & given effect to from 1-5-1968 by repealing and replacing the following Acts which were in force in the several areas:

1. The Bombay Agricultural Produce Markets Act, 1939 (Bombay Act, 22 of 1939 as in force in Bombay area.)
2. The Madras Commercial Crops Markets Act, 1933 (Madras Act, 20 of 1933) as in force in the Madras area and as in force in Bellary District.
3. The Coorg Agricultural Produce Markets Act, 1956 (Coorg Act, 7 of 1956) as in force in Coorg District.
4. The Hyderabad Agricultural Produce Markets Act, 1339 F (Hyderabad Act, 2 of 1339 F) as in force in Hyderabad area.
5. The Mysore Agricultural Produce Markets Act, 1939 (Mysore Act, 16 of 1939) as in force in Mysore area
6. A Market at Bailahongal was established under the Bombay Agricultural Produce Markets Act, during 1936 and at Tiptur under The Mysore Agricultural Produce Marketing Act, during 1948 in the State. Department of Agricultural Marketing which was earlier and unit of the Co-operation Department started functioning as an independent department during the year 1972.

OBJECTIVES

Through Agricultural Produce Market Committees, establishment of Market Yards, submarket yards and developing and maintaining the market yards and sub market yards. Enforcing the regulatory measures in respect of sale and purchase of Agricultural produce brought by the Agriculturist to the market yards, providing a platform to ensure competitive prices, correct weighment, payment and creating an exploitation free atmosphere by preventing illegal activities in the marketing of agricultural produce. Regulating the activities of warehouses by enforcing the licensing conditions, establishment and maintenance of laboratories for the purpose of grading of agricultural produce in the State.

FUNCTIONALITIES

The Director of Agricultural Marketing is an officer appointed by the State Government to exercise or perform such of the powers or functions of the Director of Agricultural Marketing under the provisions of the Act or Rules. Accordingly, declaration of market yards, market sub-yards, sub-market and sub-market yards, superintendents, direction and control of elections, disqualification of sitting member, motion of no confidence, vacancy in the office of chairman and vice chairman, Bye-laws, appointment of officers and staff to the market committees, grant / renewal of license of private market yard, farmer-consumer market, direct purchase, appellate authority, control over the market fund etc, are monitored and implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Act and Rules.

REGULATION

- Introduction of electronic weighing scales in all the markets for weighment of farmers' produce.
- Adoption of competitive system of sale like auction and tender systems in the markets to ensure competitive price for farmers' produce.
- Introduction of electronic tender system of sale in 45 APMCs.
- Issue of transport permits on line and given to commission agents.
- Account settlement slip to be prepared in triplicate by commission agents; one to be paid to farmer, one to APMC and the other for himself.
- Payment to be made to farmers by commission agents or traders after sale on the same day. In case of delay 1% per day to be paid as interest upto 5 days. After that licence will be cancelled and legal proceedings will be initiated.
- Commission to the agents to be paid by the trader and not the farmer. At present commission is 1.5 % of all commodities, 1% for vegetables and Rs. 5/- per head of cattle, Rs. 1/- per head of sheep and goat.

DEVELOPMENT

- Action plans are prepared every year and infrastructure facilities are provided in the market yards.
- Markets are developed from APMC funds, assistance under National Horticulture Mission Scheme, DMI Scheme for infrastructure development, grading and quality improvement, ASIDE scheme, RIDF scheme, RKVY Scheme, etc.

WELFARE ACTIVITIES

- Raith Sanjeevini Accident Insurance Scheme: Compensation of Rs. 50,000 is paid to farmer or his family member in case he/she meets with accidental death and a maximum of Rs. 15,000/- depending on the extent of disability, in case of permanent disability, while doing agricultural or marketing operations. So far Rs.25.81 crores is given to 8,304 beneficiaries.
- Janashre Bima Yojana: The hamals, weighmen, cartmen working in APMCs under the licence are insured for natural or accidental death or permanent disability. A compensation of Rs. 30,000 for natural death and Rs. 75,000/- for accidental death or disability is given through LIC. The premium of Rs.100/ per person is paid by the concerned APMC. So far Rs. 4.49 lakhs is given as compensation to 1,640 members.

ICT INITIATIVES

- Electronic Tender System of Sale.
- Computerization of Activities.
- Implementation of Development works through e-tendering process.
- Market Information System.
- E-Trading through Spot Exchanges.

MANUAL TENDER SYSTEM OF SALE AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE OF E-TENDER SYSTEM OF SALE

- The licensed trader who is interested to buy the commodity will be given a unique code number and a password.
- The trader who is interested to buy the commodity will inspect the commodities displayed in the yard and quotes his prices through the computer system he is having in his shop or through the kiosks where these computers are established in different places in the yard.
- In this way the rates quoted by different traders for different commodities will be collected at the central server located in the APMC office which is connected to the input systems located in different places in the market yard either through cable or satellite.
- The rates once quoted by a trader cannot be reduced. However, if he wants to increase the rates quoted, he can do so.

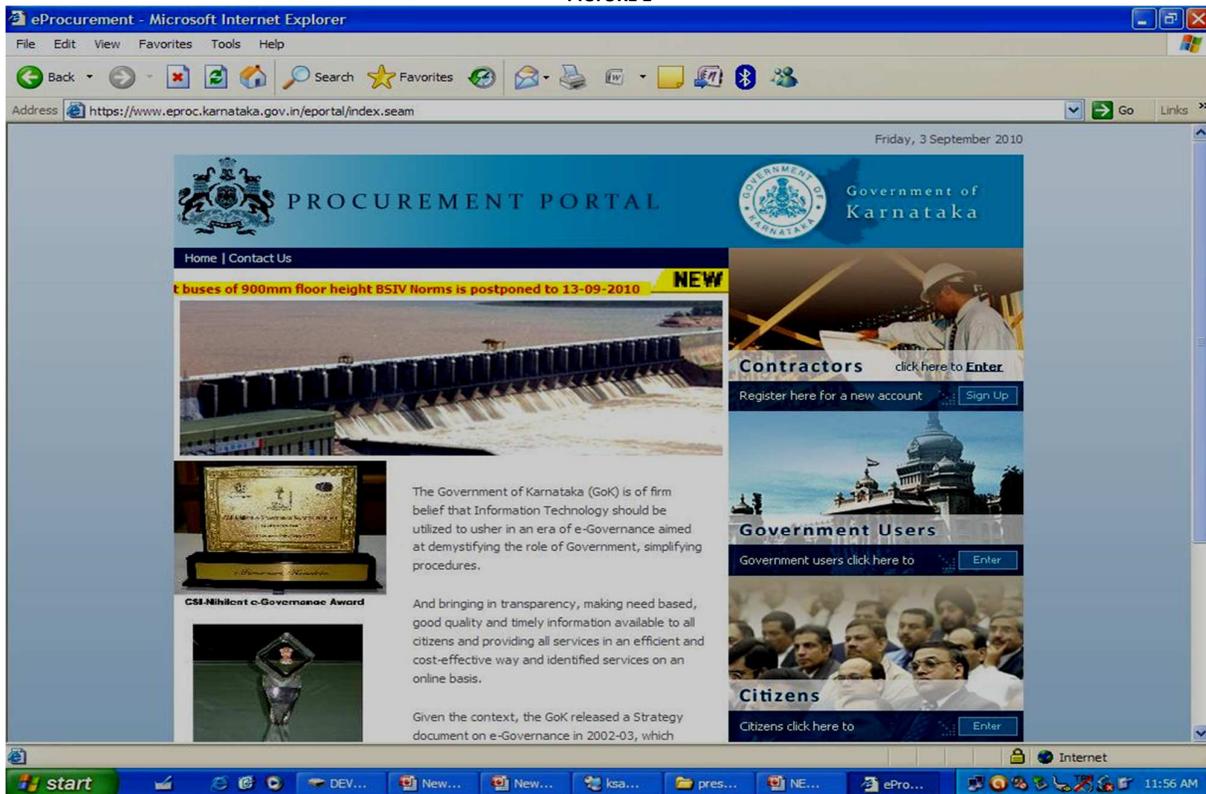
ELECTRONIC TENDER SYSTEM OF SALE AND COMPUTERATION OF TRANSPORT PERMITS

- Special initiative to issue permission for transportation of traded notified commodities.
- Earlier APMC staff used to issue the permit. Now traders themselves can generate trade permits.
- The system has brought in transparency and accuracy in stock and transport.
- Reduced the number of staff required for the job.
- Information is made available online.
- Helped avoid evasion from payment of market fee.
- Avoided mal practices by the traders and staff.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT WORKS THROUGH E-TENDERING PROCESS

- Developmental works are implemented through e-procurement, an initiative of e-Governance Department, GOK. Now there is more competition in tender and sometimes the rates quoted are below scheduled rates.

PICTURE 1



MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM IN KARNATAKA

- On line Market Information Service through <http://krishimaratahavahini.kar.nic.in> About 7 lakh hits are recorded
- Toll free telephone 1800-425-1552 to provide market information. About 60,000 farmers got the information during the last 2 years
- About 60,000 farmers have registered for Market SMS

MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM IN KARNATAKA

- ✓ Electronic Display Boards have been installed for dissemination of information on prices and arrivals of commodities in all the APMCs in the State for the benefit of farmers and users of the market.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Regular training and extension programmes are conducted to various market stakeholders including farmers, officials, elected representatives of the people, etc.
- Marketing extension through radio, television, press, monthly magazine, farmers contact programmes, exhibitions, publications, workshops, seminars, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISIONS OF MODEL ACT

- The major provisions of the Model Act of Govt of India are incorporated in KAPM (R&D) Act and Rules.
- Single licenses are issued to 292 persons.
- License is issued to 3 companies for establishment of private markets.
- For the establishment of direct purchase centers 9 licenses are issued.
- For establishment of Spot Exchanges 3 licenses are issued.
- Provisions are made for contract farming and farmer-consumer market.
- Grading and standardization of commodities like food grains; cotton, etc are done by establishing laboratories.

CONCLUSION

This Study centers on the use of electronic and communication technologies in marketing of agricultural commodities in APMC Market yards, Karnataka, India. The study clears out that, there was no direct benefit was observed by means of use of electronics and communication technologies in markets, either to the traders or other market functionaries in the study area. Additional, it also indicated that, the illiteracy of farmers and limited access or no access to electronic devices awareness makes the web portals redundant for them. Hence, the use of electronics devices in the markets can only reduce the marketing process. Nevertheless, the Electronic balance/scale, electronic display and use of computers for tendering were the only few electronics devices used in the regulated markets. Further, selling operation time had reduced considerably in these markets due to the use of e-balance and the e-tendering process. The study also points that, the payments to the farmers were made between one and 15 days in all the markets. Thus these electronic equipments had no direct impact on the price mechanism but alleviated the buying and selling processes. Hence, the study suggests that, there is an immediate need to introduce/put to use the electronic display boards, TV display in these markets for the benefit of farmers and suggest that, there is an immediate need to conduct some awareness programmes and also training programmes in rural areas for creating awareness about electronic-tendering to formers.

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