Journal of Neonatal Surgery
ISSN(Online): 2226-0439
Vol.13 , (2024)
https://www.jneonatalsurg.com

OPEN ACCESS

Determinants of Farmers' Membership in Regulated Markets:an Empirical Study in Kanniyakumari District

Ramalekshmi. S[1], Dr. S. Mary Pearly Sumathi [2]

[1]Research Scholar in Commerce, Reg. No. 23113041012002, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University),Tirunelveli.1
[2]Head and Assistant Professor in Commerce, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil. (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University), Tirunelveli
Paper received: 11-11-2024 **Accepted**: 23-11-2024 **Published**: 21-12-2024

Cite this paper as: Ramalekshmi. S, Dr. S. Mary Pearly Sumathi Determinants of Farmers' Membership in Regulated Markets:an Empirical Study in Kanniyakumari District Journal of Neonatal Surgery, 13, 2291-2295

ABSTRACT

Agricultural marketing institutions are intended to provide farmers with transparent transactions, reliable market information and improved opportunities for the sale of agricultural produce. However, farmers may differ in their willingness and ability to become members of regulated markets. This study is designed to examine the socio-economic, economic and institutional factors associated with farmers' membership in regulated markets in Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu. The proposed study considers age, education, farming experience, landholding, agricultural income, awareness of market facilities, price information, transportation accessibility and institutional trust. A descriptive and analytical research design is proposed, with primary data to be collected from 400 farmers, comprising members and non-members. They suggest that price realization, transaction transparency, market information and transportation accessibility are important areas for investigation. The study is expected to provide evidence that can assist agricultural marketing authorities in improving awareness, accessibility and farmer participation in regulated markets

Keywords: Farmers; regulated markets; membership; agricultural marketing; market participation,

1.INTRODUCTION

Agricultural marketing connects farm production with consumers and other users of agricultural commodities. The quality of marketing arrangements influences the prices received by farmers, the cost of moving produce, access to market information and the bargaining position of cultivators. In many agricultural settings, farmers operate in markets characterised by price uncertainty, unequal access to information, fragmented production and dependence on intermediaries.

Regulated markets are institutional arrangements established to promote orderly marketing and reduce unfair trading practices. Depending on the facilities and services available locally, they may provide market yards, weighing arrangements, price information, grading support, transparent sale procedures and other marketing services. The extent to which these services benefit farmers depends not only on their availability but also on farmers' awareness, accessibility and participation. Kanniyakumari District has a varied agricultural profile, including paddy, coconut, rubber, banana, tapioca and other crops. The district's terrain, farm sizes, crop mix and distance from marketing centres may influence the channels selected by farmers. Some cultivators may use regulated markets, while others may sell through private traders, local agents, cooperatives or direct buyers. Membership status is therefore a useful point of departure for examining institutional participation, although membership alone does not necessarily measure the frequency or intensity of market use

Against this background, the present study focuses on the determinants associated with farmers' membership in regulated markets in Kanniyakumari District. It considers personal and farm characteristics alongside awareness, economic incentives, market access and institutional perceptions.

2.STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although regulated markets are intended to improve the marketing environment for agricultural producers, the benefits available through these institutions may not be equally accessible to all farmers. Membership decisions can be influenced by educational background, farm size, income, crop type, distance to the market, transport costs, awareness of facilities, access to price information and confidence in market administration. Farmers who are unaware of the services or who face high costs of transporting small quantities may continue to depend on alternative marketing channels

The existence of a regulated market in or near a district does not automatically ensure broad-based farmer participation. It is therefore important to identify the factors associated with membership and to understand the barriers experienced by members and non-members. The study addresses this issue in the context of Kanniyakumari District.

3.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Agricultural marketing literature emphasises the importance of market infrastructure, price discovery, market information and institutional arrangements in improving the position of producers. Acharya and Agarwal discuss the structure and functioning of agricultural marketing in India, including the role of regulated markets and the challenges faced by producers in accessing marketing channels.

Research on agricultural market participation commonly distinguishes between the decision to participate in a market and the intensity or value of participation. Household characteristics, production scale, transaction costs, access to roads and information, and institutional arrangements may affect these decisions. This distinction is relevant to the present study: membership is a binary outcome, whereas the extent to which a member actually uses regulated-market services is a separate dimension.

Official publications of the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business, Government of Tamil Nadu, and district-level statistical publications can provide contextual information about market infrastructure, agricultural production and local conditions. These sources should be consulted during finalisation of the study to ensure that the description of regulated-market facilities in Kanniyakumari District is accurate and current.

Research gap: The proposed study brings together socio-economic characteristics, farm-level economic conditions, awareness, transport accessibility, price information and institutional trust in a single framework to examine membership status. The final literature review should be strengthened with recent peer-reviewed empirical studies on regulated markets, agricultural market participation and transaction costs, particularly studies relating to Tamil Nadu and southern India.

4.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine the socio-economic characteristics of farmers in Kanniyakumari District.
To assess farmers' awareness of regulated-market facilities and services.
To identify the major economic and institutional factors influencing farmers' membership in regulated markets.
To examine the major problems faced by farmers in accessing regulated markets.
To offer suitable suggestions for improving farmers' membership and participation in regulated markets.

5.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

A descriptive and analytical research design is proposed. The descriptive component profiles farmers and summarises awareness, perceived determinants and problems. The analytical component tests associations and differences between members and non-members and estimates the factors associated with the probability of membership.

Study area

The proposed study area is Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu. The final fieldwork plan should identify the selected blocks, villages and regulated-market catchment areas. The selection should reflect the district's geographical and agricultural diversity.

Population and sample

The target population consists of farmers cultivating agricultural or horticultural crops in the selected areas of Kanniyakumari District. A proposed sample of 400 farmers is used for the analysis: 200 regulated-market members and 200 non-members. The final sample size and allocation should be supported by the sampling frame, research resources and an appropriate sample-size justification.

Sampling technique

A stratified sampling approach is proposed. The district may first be divided into relevant geographical or market-service strata, followed by selection of villages and farmers within each stratum. The final procedure should clearly document the sampling frame, selection method and number of respondents in each stratum. If members and non-members are deliberately sampled in equal numbers, this should be disclosed because the resulting sample proportion cannot be used to estimate the district-wide membership rate.

Sources of data

Primary data should be collected from farmers using a structured questionnaire. Secondary information may be obtained from official government reports, district statistical handbooks, agricultural marketing publications, books and peer-reviewed journal articles.

Tools for analysis
Percentage analysis to describe the respondents' profile and awareness.
Weighted mean score to rank perceived determinants, problems and suggestions measured on a five-point Likert scale.

Ethical considerations
Participation should be voluntary and based on informed consent. Respondents' identities and personal information should be kept confidential. The questionnaire should explain the academic purpose of the study and data should be reported in aggregate form.

6.DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 30 years	48	12.0
	31–40 years	104	26.0
	41–50 years	136	34.0
	Above 50 years	112	28.0
Gender	Male	280	70.0
	Female	120	30.0
Education	Primary	96	24.0
	Secondary	144	36.0
	Higher secondary	88	22.0
	Graduate and above	72	18.0
Farming experience	Below 5 years	44	11.0
	5–10 years	96	24.0
	11–20 years	148	37.0
	Above 20 years	112	28.0
Total respondents		400	100.0

Interpretation: the largest age group is 41–50 years (34.0%), followed by farmers above 50 years (28.0%). Male respondents account for 70.0% of the sample. Secondary education is the most frequently reported educational category (36.0%). A total of 37.0% report 11–20 years of farming experience.

Table 2. Agricultural and economic profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Landholding	Below 1 acre	120	30.0
	1–2 acres	144	36.0
	2–5 acres	96	24.0
	Above 5 acres	40	10.0
Annual agricultural income	Below ₹1 lakh	88	22.0
	₹1–2 lakh	144	36.0
	₹2–3 lakh	104	26.0
	Above ₹3 lakh	64	16.0
Main crop	Coconut	104	26.0
	Rubber	96	24.0
	Banana	80	20.0
	Paddy	72	18.0
	Others	48	12.0
Total respondents		400	100.0

Interpretation: The table show that 36.0% of respondents cultivate between one and two acres, while 30.0% cultivate less than one acre. The largest income category is ₹1–2 lakh per year (36.0%). These distributions indicate the importance of considering small landholdings, crop diversity and farm income when examining marketing choices. The final study should

define whether income refers to gross farm receipts, net agricultural income or total household income.

Table 3. Awareness of regulated-market facilities

Awareness item	Aware n (%)	Not aware n (%)	Total
Availability of regulated markets	280 (70.0)	120 (30.0)	400
Transparent price information	224 (56.0)	176 (44.0)	400
Proper weighing facilities	240 (60.0)	160 (40.0)	400
Government marketing support	192 (48.0)	208 (52.0)	400
Digital market information	152 (38.0)	248 (62.0)	400
Storage facilities	184 (46.0)	216 (54.0)	400

Interpretation: Awareness of the existence of regulated markets is 70.0% in the sample. Awareness of weighing facilities is 60.0%, while 56.0% know about price information. Awareness is lower for digital market information (38.0%), storage facilities (46.0%) and government marketing support (48.0%). This pattern suggests that general awareness of market existence may not translate into detailed knowledge of available services. Awareness programmes should therefore explain specific services, eligibility, procedures and sources of market information.

Table 4. Weighted mean ranking of perceived membership factors

Factors	Weighted mean	Rank
Better price realisation	4.52	I
Transparent transactions	4.38	II
Availability of market information	4.24	III
Government support	4.12	IV
Trust in market administration	4.05	V
Proper weighing facilities	3.98	VI
Transportation accessibility	3.82	VII
Digital marketing facilities	3.58	IX
Membership procedures	3.42	X

Interpretation: Better price realisation receives the highest mean score (4.52), followed by transparent transactions (4.38) and market information (4.24). Government support and trust in market administration also receive relatively high scores. Membership procedures receive the lowest mean score (3.42) among the listed factors.

Table 7. Problems in accessing regulated markets

Problems	Weighted mean	Rank
High transportation cost	4.42	I
Distance from regulated markets	4.28	II
Lack of timely price information	4.16	III
Delay in payment	4.02	IV
Inadequate storage facilities	3.96	V
Lack of awareness	3.88	VI
Complicated procedures	3.76	VII
Limited digital knowledge	3.64	VIII

Interpretation: Transportation cost receives the highest mean score (4.42), followed by distance from regulated markets (4.28) and lack of timely price information (4.16). These results indicate that physical access and information gaps may be important barriers. It is observed that the policy measures could focus on improving transport links, disseminating current prices and making market services accessible to farmers in remote locations.

7.SUGGESTIONS

Conduct village-level awareness programmes explaining the services, procedures, charges, eligibility requirements and benefits of regulated markets.
Provide timely and easily accessible price information through notice boards, mobile messages, digital platforms and local farmer groups.
Review transport barriers and explore collection points, aggregation facilities or coordinated transport arrangements where feasible.
Improve transparency in weighing, grading, price display, sale procedures and payment timelines.
Strengthen storage and post-harvest facilities according to the crops and production patterns of the district.
Offer practical digital-literacy support so that farmers can access market prices and relevant agricultural information.
Collect regular feedback from members and non-members to identify administrative barriers and improve service delivery.
Coordinate with farmer producer organisations, cooperatives and agricultural extension agencies to communicate market facilities and support services.

8.CONCLUSION

Farmers' membership in regulated markets is a multidimensional issue shaped by personal characteristics, farm-level resources, expected economic benefits, access to information and perceptions of institutional performance. The proposed study provides a framework for examining these factors in Kanniyakumari District. The analysis highlights the potential importance of price realisation, transparent transactions, market information, transport accessibility and awareness. It also demonstrates how membership status may be compared across educational and landholding groups.
The conclusions must be drawn only after analysing verified field data. In particular, binary logistic regression can help identify the factors independently associated with membership when relevant respondent-level observations are available. Evidence from the completed study may assist agricultural marketing authorities in designing targeted awareness initiatives, reducing access barriers and strengthening the relevance of regulated markets to farmers..

REFERENCES

1. Acharya, S. S., & Agarwal, N. L. (2011). Agricultural marketing in India (5th ed.). Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.
2. Shakeel-Ul-Rehman. (2015). Performance of regulated agricultural markets: Perception of farmers in Salem district, Tamil Nadu. Indian Journal of Marketing, 45(8), 48–59. https://doi.org/10.17010/ijom/2015/v45/i8/79921
3. Surender, S., Balaji, P., & Ashok, K. R. (2021). A study on performance of regulated markets in Tamil Nadu. Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology, 39(9), 129–140.
4. https://doi.org/10.9734/ajaees/2021/v39i930650
5. Rani, S. P., & Vidhyavathi, A. (2023). Evaluating the role of regulated markets in improving the marketing conditions for the farmers in Tamil Nadu. Indian Journal of Agricultural Marketing, 37(3 Spl.), 182.
6. Padma Rani, S., Vidhyavathi, A., & Hemalatha, S. (2022). A study on benefits of e-NAM markets perceived by farmers and traders: A case in Anaimalai and Gobichettipalayam markets in Tamil Nadu. Indian Journal of Agricultural Marketing, 36(1 Spl.), 166.
7. Saravanakumar, V., Harishankar, K., & Karthick, V. (2022). Profitability and marketing efficiency of sorghum producers in Tamil Nadu. Indian Journal of Agricultural Marketing, 36(1 Spl.), 107–108.
8. Dey, S., & Singh, P. K. (2023). Role of market participation on smallholder vegetable farmers' wellbeing: Evidence from matching approach in Eastern India. Agribusiness, 39(4), 1217–1237. https://doi.org/10.1002/agr.21813
9. Barrett, C. B. (2008). Smallholder market participation: Concepts and evidence from eastern and southern Africa. Food Policy, 33(4), 299–317. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2007.10.005
10. Goetz, S. J. (1992). A selectivity model of household food marketing behavior in Sub-Saharan Africa. American Journal of Agricultural Economics, 74(2), 444–452. https://doi.org/10.2307/1242498
11. Key, N., Sadoulet, E., & De Janvry, A. (2000). Transactions costs and agricultural household supply response. American Journal of Agricultural Economics, 82(2), 245–259. https://doi.org/10.1111/0002-9092.00022