
MARKETING OF SUBSIDIARY FOOD ITEMS PRODUCED IN BATTICALOA DISTRICT.

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Abstract

Batticaloa District includes 14 Divisional secretariat Divisions. Out of these Divisions, Manmunai South Eruvil pattu division consists of 80% of the producers of subsidiary food items. They are engaged in producing various vegetables such as brinjals, long beans, ladies' finger, and bitter gourd, for their livelihood. The production of these subsidiary food items play an important role in the economy of the people in this division. But, most of the producers of subsidiary food items experience heavy losses due to the problems occurring in marketing. The main aim of this research is to find out the problems faced by the producers of subsidiary food items in marketing in Batticaloa district. This research is carried out using product's price fluctuation, intermediaries' influence, varied nature of products, availability of marketing instructions and transport facilities as main variables. The hypothesis of this research is that "there is no major change in the demand and supply of subsidiary food items produced in the above district" In this research ,primary data and secondary data have been used. 150 famers were selected as samples at random and Questionnaires were issued to them Villages such as Cheddipalayam, Mangkadu, Thettathivu, Kaluthavalai, and Kaluvanchikudi, which engage in the production of subsidiary food items in Batticaloa district were selected and the samples taken at random. The data gathered were subjected to analysis through SPSS and Ms Excel-2007 and the inter standard deviation are expressed through charts and figures.

On the basis of this research, considerable number of producers of subsidiary food items said that they face Marketing problems and due to this their income has been decreasing .It has been found that famers in Batticaloa has been facing marketing problems because of price fluctuations that occur often ,lack of storage facilities, Varied nature of changing products, increased presence of intermediaries, and the local competition that results, non availability of business suggestions at the needed time.

Keywords: *production of subsidiary food items , intermediaries, Marketing*

Introduction

Fourteen Divisional Secretariats’ divisions are in Batticaloa district. Further, this district includes 346 Grama sevaka Divisions and 876 villages. 80% of the people are engaged in agriculture in this area. Next to the main crop paddy cultivation, in the rural agriculture subsidiary food crops get their place, here. In the subsidiary food cultivation, chillies, brinjal, longbeans, ladies’ finger, red onion, tomatoes, murunga, and snake gourd are approved by the Department of Agriculture as the most suitable crops for this area and are being cultivated here. In this area , the soil is most suitable for vegetable cultivation and the Department of Agriculture introduces vegetable seeds, which have high yields. As such , the Farmers in this area are engaged in the cultivation of subsidiary crops with enthusiasim.

Several problems are encountered in producing and marketing these crops ,properly. Hence, the farmers get only a low income. Therefore, in order to find out the reason for this ,the research is carried out. The information obtained through this research will help to take up the problems regarding the agricultural produces of the farmers of this area to higher authorities. This

would create a change to solve the marketing problems of the farmers of this area.

Research Problem

The farmers in this district engage in cultivation of crops investing lot of money. But they do not get income according to their investment. In this region, there are major problems in marketing of subsidiary food items. Because of this, a situation in which farmers have to continue get a low income still exists. The aim of the research is to analysis the problems regarding marketing which causes a low income to farmers . Thus, this research examines the problems encountered in marketing of subsidiary food production by the producers of subsidiary food items in Batticaloa District.

The aim of the research

This research seems to fulfil the following aims:-

- 1 To find out the present marketing situation of subsidiary food crops.
- 2 To find out how these problems encountered in marketing lead to low income among farmers engaged in the cultivation of subsidiary food crops.
- 3 To put forward the solutions to the problems in the marketing of subsidiary food items.

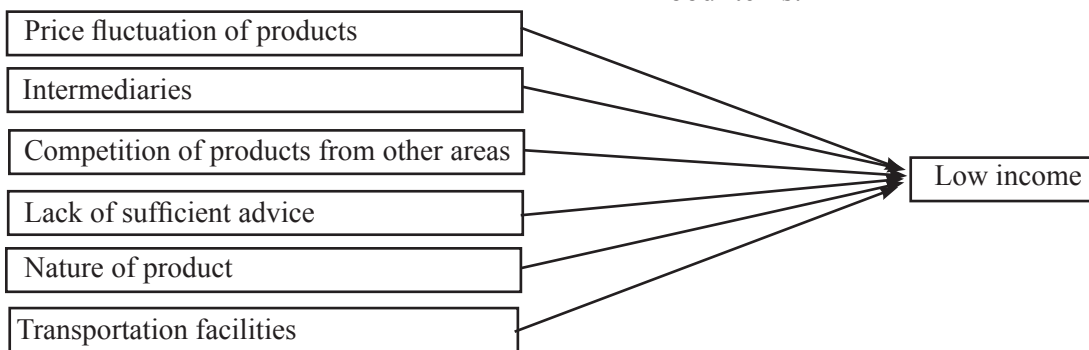


Figure 1 Conceptualization of the research

(Source : Exclusively prepared for the research)

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Conceptualization of the research

Method of research.

The reliability of a research depends on the information gathered for the research. Primary and Secondary data sources are used in this research.

During data collection primary research questionnaires are used the data for this research are collected from the agricultural producers through questionnaires and by interviews.

During the Secondary data collection, report of Agricultural Department, Central bank Annual reports, and internets are used.

Sample selection and sample size.

The selection of samples is a representation of the research population. In order to find out the problems regarding marketing of subsidiary

food produces in the Divisional Secretariats' Division of Manmunai south, Eruvil pattu, 150 subsidiary food producers were taken as samples.

In the area under research ,about 3000 people living in 346 Grama sevaka divisions are engaged in agricultural production. Out of them in proportionate basis ,that is, on the basis of the total number of the producers of subsidiary food products in the selected Grama sevaka Divisions, 150 farmers were randomly selected on proportionate basis and questionnaires issued.

Distribution of sample.

The selected sample includes the 150 farmers who were randomly selected and for whom questionnaires were issued.

The sample distribution is as follows:-

Table 1

No	Gramasevaka Division	The number of subsidiary food items producers.	Sample taken	Percentage%
1	Kaluwanchikudi	146	09	06
2	Kaluthavalai	1142	72	48
3				23
4	Thethaththivu	629	34	06
5	Mangkadu	146	09	17
	Cheddipalayam	402	25	
	Total	2365	150	100

(Source; Statistical report(2012)

Department of Agriculture, Kaluwanchikudi)

Submission of data and Analysis.

The necessary information for the research problem were obtained from the data collected. That is ,to obtain the values such as median, mean, and deviation ,modern Microsoft Excel and statistical package for social science(spss) were also used. The results obtained from analysis through the above methods will be submitted in various ways such as tables, charts, and statistics.

Evaluation of data

The questions put forward in the questionnaires consist of the following five scales.

Scale

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|---|
| 1. | Not agreed frmly | 1 |
| 2 | Not agreed | 2 |
| 3 | Not agreed or rejected | 3 |
| 4 | agree | 4 |
| 5. | agree firmly | 5 |

Measurement

The data will be subjected to analysis ,and the results obtained on that basis will be evaluated in the following basis :-

Range	Decision
$1 \leq D_1 \leq 2.5$	Not accepted
$2.5 < D_1 \leq 3.5$	Accepted
$3.5 < D_1 \leq 5$	Accepted firmly

Source : Research information)

Table 2 Submission of information

	Mean	Options(in measurements)%				
		1	2	3	4	5
		%	%	%	%	%
Price Fluctuation on the Product						
1. Increase in price fluctuation	3.98	-	-	32	33	29
2. Companies' poorcontribution in price fluctuation	3.96	-	08	33	15	45
3. Less information about price fluctuation	3.35	-	18	24	23	35
4. Intermediaries' contribution on price fluctuation	3.53	-	20	27	13	40
INTERMEDIARES						
1. Influence of Intermediaries	3.61	-	20	25	09	46
2. Influence of Price	3.51	-	21	25	17	37
3. Less sales Facilities	3.68	-	06	20	34	40
Competition of Products from Other areas						
1. Availability of outside subsidiary food items	3.54	-	20	15	35	30
2. Decrease in Price level	3.51	-	20	14	37	29
3. Local Competition impact	3.49	-	20	29	14	37
4. Local competition and drop in sales	3.41	-	20	20	13	44

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AVAILABILITY OF MARKET INFORMATION						
1. Availability of market information	3.46	-	20	13	41	26
2. Information contribution of government and nongovernmental organizations	3.54	-	20	11	37	32
3. Market information and drop in sales	3.57	-	20	10	37	33
4. Complexity in Information approaches	3.59	-	11	12	47	29
NATURE OF PRODUCT						
1 Standard quality and standard measurement	3.76	-	11	35	21	33
2 Difference in standard and drop in sales	3.84	-	11	33	17	39
3 Fulfilling customer's expectation	3.83	-	11	31	21	37
4 Standard quality and standard measurement	3.76	-	11	35	21	33
TRANSPORT FACILITIES						
1 Transport expenses and drop in profit	3.83	-	11	35	19	35
2 Safty and easier low level transport	3.87	-	7	24	31	38
3 Availability of transport	3.43	-	11	17	37	35

uation on Products:- W

Price fluctuations on products:

when asked whether Price fluctuations Cause impact in the marketing of subsidiary food products, 62% of thethat they agree with the above statement. And 32% said that they do not agree .The mean of this found to be 3.78 .According to the opinion of many the Price fluctuations that occur frequently is a major problem in marketing.

According to the opinion of many the poor contribution of the Government in controlling the Price fluctuations that occur often, causes problem in marketing. The mean for this poor level of contribution is found to be 3.96.

When questioned whether they consider less availability of information causes considerable impact on price fluctuations ,18% of them didn't agree. 58% of them agreed. Meanwhile ,the mean of this is found to be 3.35.

Intermediary.

When questioned whether they agree that the influence of intermediary was found considerably in their area 20% didn't agree and 55% of them said that they agree. The mean regarding the influence of intermediary was found to be 3.61 . As the influence of intermediaries in this area is found to be high, it is said that the producers of subsidiary food face problems regarding marketing.

When asked whether they agree that intermediaries have considerable impact on the prices of subsidiary food items, in the specified research area 21% didn't agree. 54% agreed. The mean regarding the impact of intermediary, on prices, was found to be 3.51.

The competition of products from outside.

When asked whether they consider that same type of products which are produced in the research area are brought to their area, 20% didn't agree with this statement. 65% said that they agreed with this statement. The mean for the availability of Subsidiary food items from outside, was found to be 3.54.

20% of the farmers do not agree with the statement that the subsidiary food products brought to Manmunai Eruvil pattu south division from outside areas cause drop price level. But 66% of the farmers agreed with the above statement. The mean for drop in price level was found to be 3.51.

20% of the farmers do not agree with the statement that the subsidiary food products brought to Manmunai Eruvil pattu south division from outside areas competition has increased. But 51% of the farmers agreed with the statement. The mean for the impact to the local competition was found to be 3.49.

Availability of market information.

When questioned whether they accept the statement that sufficient market information is not available 20% of the farmers said that they didn't accept it. But 69% of them accepted the statement. The mean was found to be 3.46. To the statement that the Contribution of government and non governmental organizations is in

low level. 69% of them said that they firmly accepted the statement.

When asked whether they consider that due to low level availability of market information, marketing of their subsidiary food products was affected and decreased the sales, 70% of the farmers said that they firmly accepted it. The mean of this was found to be 3.57.

When questioned whether the complexity in approaching the informants was felt in the marketing of their subsidiary food items, 11% of them negatively. About 66% of them answered affirmatively. The mean of this was found to be 3.59.

Nature of the product.

54% of the producers said that they accepted that their products didn't have the standard quality and standard measurements. The mean of this is found to be 3.76.

56% of the producers said that they accepted due to the quality differences found their products sales had dropped. The mean of this is found to be 3.84. 58% of the producers said that they accepted that their subsidiary food products had not fulfilled the needs and expectations of the customers. The mean of this is found to be 3.83.

Transport Facilities

54% of the producers said that they accepted that transport expenses had decreased the sales income of their products. 69% of the producers said that safely of their products in transport was poor and seemed suitable to carry their subsidiary food products. 72% of the producers said that they acceptable fact that there were

Table 3 The total result of research data .

Range	Decision	Frequently	Percentage(%)
$1 \leq D_1 \leq 2.5$	Not accepted	43	29
$2.5 \leq D_1 < 3.5$	accepted	31	21
$3.5 \leq D_1 \leq 5$	Firmly accepted	76	51
Total		150	100

(source :Research data)

no transport facilities needed to market their subsidiary food products. The mean of this was found to be 3.83.

Conclusion

Fluctuation of products price.: Various factors cause impact on the Fluctuation of subsidiary food products, That is, if we take Kaluthavalai village which is in the Manmunai Eruvil Pattu south Divisional secretariats’ division the reason for the Fluctuation of the products is the prices fixed by the intermediaries. Because of price Fluctuation due to lack of guaranteed price, the need to market at a low price, cause loss to the producers. As the producers are unable get reasonable price for their products , they are disheartened and unable to capture the market.

Intermediaries

In marketing ,the influence of intermediaries is inevitable. Due in capability to bargain, the producers have to come down close to the price asked by intermediaries and sell their products. The producers do not think to find the price range of their products in the market and supply the products accordingly. There fore, their cost

of production can be seen more than the profit they get. The cause for these problems is their lack of knowledge about marketing.

Competition of Products from other Areas

The main reason for price fluctuations is the arrival of products from other areas. By bringing subsidiary food products produced in other areas to the area under research, the demand for local subsidiary food products drops suddenly. Particularly ,as subsidiary food products from areas such as Dambulla, Numaraeliya,penetrate in to the market of the research area ,price fluctuation in the local products could be felt.

Lack of sufficient advice

Here, the subsidiary food producers do not get any information regarding market situation, market price, intermediaries, or customers. It is clear from the results that even though there are Agrarian Services Canters their advice service is found to be limited.

The nature of product

The subsidiary food products of the farmers of this area have the standard quality and

measurements. in the market for there products ,the products brought from various places are different to the standard of the products of this area. There fore, when compared with the competitive products, as the standard of the products of this area is different, drop in sales occur.

Transport facilities.

Transport services which greatly help in the daily transport of people are the regional bus transport service and the private bus service. As the transport services are not regular ,it is odserved that the producers are unable to take their producers to the market ,as such ,vegetable producers incur losses. As the people have to take their products in buses along with them products get crushed and damaged. Vegetable items which get crushed in this manner have to sold at a less price

Recommendations.

Fluctuation of prices on the products.

The government fixes a guaranteed price for paddy. In the similar way if a reasonable price is fixed to the subsidiary products of there farmers with out affecting the producers and consumers, producers can get relief from the impact of price fluctuations, The contribution of the government organizations should be increased in order to control price fluctuations.

Intermediaries

The influence of the intermediaries should be reduced and the producers allowed to sell their products themselves at the market.

Competition of products from other areas

Subsidiary food items produced in out side areas and brought to the market to be sold should be prohibited, because price fluctuations also happen due to the competition of products brought from outside value added system should be introduced

Lack of sufficient advice

Seminars regarding marketing. should be held for these subsidiary food producers in order to give necessary advice to them. further, the services of the Agrarian service centres should be extended in order to provide them sufficient advice.

The nature of products

The nature of subsidiary food items should be raised in order to full fill the expectations of the customers. For this purpose ,the contribution of both District and divisional agriculture departments should be enhanced.

Transport facilities.

The transport facilities of this area to be improved. Storage facilities should be provided. So that vegetables do not get damaged while transported. Further, the charges for the vegetable bag gages should be reduced. Incentives should be provided by the government and non –government organizations to the state bus services so that vegetable traders could be carried along with their baggage in the state buses.

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