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Study on Marketing Behaviour and Other Attributes of Vegetable Growers

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ABSTRACT

Marketing behavior of a farmer is influenced by several factors. The study was conducted purposively in Morar block of Gwalior district to assess the marketing behaviour of vegetable growers. The total of 120 vegetable growers formed the sample for the study. The primary data were collected through personal interview method with the help of pre-tested interview schedule which was prepared on the basis of objectives of investigation and variables. Statistical tools like- mean, S.D. and percentage were used for analysis of data. We found that majority(70.00%) of the respondents had medium to high level of marketing behavior. Most of the respondents belonged to middle age group, educated up to middle and primary school level, medium level of irrigation potentiality, medium level of farming experience, possessed up to 2.1 to 5 ha. of land, engaged only in farming as occupation, had medium level of annual income, medium level of mass media exposure, 63.33 percent of respondents were from medium category of extension contact, medium level of market orientation, medium category of innovativeness in vegetable production. And majority (60.00%) of the vegetable growers had medium knowledge level about vegetable production.

Keywords: *Marketing behavior, Vegetable growers*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of agriculture in the economy of India is profound. Despite the growth of industries and commerce it continues to be the principal economic activity of the people of India. Thus approx 70 percent of the people are engaged in agriculture but more than 70 percent of these farms at subsistence level. The Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO (1993) suggested that in order to enhance agricultural development, new commodities and new methods of production must be developed. For this reason, adequate production and even distribution of food has of late become a high priority global concern. Agricultural marketing is mainly the buying and selling of agricultural products. In earlier days when the village economy was more or less self-sufficient the marketing of agricultural products presented no difficulty as the farmer sold his produce to the consumer on a cash or barter basis. Marketing systems are dynamic; they are competitive and involve continuous change and improvement.

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Businesses that have lower costs, are more efficient, and can deliver quality products, are those that prosper. Those that have high costs, fail to adapt to changes in market demand and provide poorer quality, are often forced out of business. Marketing has to be customer-oriented and has to provide the farmer, transporter, trader, processor, etc. with a profit. This requires those involved in marketing chains to understand buyer requirements, both in terms of product and business conditions. Today's agricultural marketing has to undergo a series of exchanges or transfers from one person to another before it reaches the consumer. There are three marketing functions involved in this, i.e., assembling, preparation for consumption and distribution. Selling on any agricultural produce depends on some couple of factors like the demand of the product at that time, availability of storage etc. Sometime processing is done because consumers want it, or sometimes to conserve the quality of that product. The task of distribution system is to match the supply with the existing demand by whole selling and retailing in various points of different markets like primary, secondary or terminal markets. Products are sold in various ways. For example, it might be sold at a weekly village market in the farmer's village or in a neighboring village. If these outlets are not available, then produce might be sold at irregularly held markets in a nearby villageor town, or in the mandi.

In practice, the key players each see the agricultural/ food marketing system from a perspective of self-interest and these interests are sometimes in conflict. Illustrative examples of some of the conflicts which typically arise are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Conflict of interest in agricultural/food marketing systems

Key Players	Interests
Farmers	Maximum price, unlimited quantities
Manufacturers	Low purchase price, high quality
Traders and retailers	Low purchase price, high quality
Consumers	Low purchase price, high quality

Presently, development of marketing infrastructure to solve the problems of vegetable growers in rural areas is the primary concern of the government. Intensified efforts are needed to identify the specific problems related to vegetable marketing. Hence, the present investigation was undertaken with the following objectives.

1. To study the attributes of vegetable growers.
2. To determine the marketing behaviour of vegetablegrowers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted purposively in Morar block of Gwalior district due to highest vegetable productionamong the other blocks of the district. In Morar block, there are 169 villages. A list of villages where vegetable crops are grown was prepared with the help of RHEO/RAEO and local leaders and 10 villages were selected randomly. After that, a village wise list of vegetable growers was prepared and from each selected village, twelve farmers were selected by using simple random sampling method. Thus, a total of 120 farmers were formed the sample for the study. The primary data were collected through personal interview method with the help of pre-tested interview schedule, which was prepared on the basis of objectives of investigation and variables. The interview schedule was thoroughly discussed with the member of the advisory committee and their suggestions were incorporated. Statistical tools like- mean, S.D. and percentage were used for analysis of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile and marketing behaviour of vegetable growers:

The data in Table 2 shows that most of the respondents (63.33%) belonged to middle age group and higher percentage (30.00%) of vegetable growers educated up to middle and primary school level followed by 16.66 percent of the respondents were functionally literate. Majority of the beneficiary respondents (66.66%) belonged to level of medium irrigation potentiality, followed by both low and high level of irrigation potentiality (16.66%) and more than half of vegetable growers (65.00%) had a medium level of farming experience. The data in Table -2 indicates that maximum(38.33%) vegetable growers possessed up to 2.1 to 5 ha. of land. The data exhibits the distribution of vegetable growers according to their occupation. The data shows that most of the (70.00%) respondents engaged only in farming, followed by dairy farming + service. Majority (75.00%) of the vegetable growers had medium level of annual income. The perusal of data indicates that majority (73.33%) of the respondents had medium level of mass media exposure and the 63.33 percent of respondents were from medium category of extension contact. The perusal of data indicates that majority (66.66%) of the respondents had medium level of market orientation and 60.00 percent of respondents were from medium category of innovativeness in vegetable production. Majority 60.00 per cent of the vegetable growers had medium knowledge level about vegetable production while 23.33 per cent had low knowledge level. Almost similar findings were reported by Ragupathi (1999) Badodiya et al (2010), Hanchinal (1999) and Shashidhar (2003).

Table 2: Profile of the vegetable growers

S.No.	Traits	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
1	Age	Young (below 35 yrs)	24	20.00	44.50	9.88
		Middle (35-55 yrs)	76	63.33		
		Old (above 55 yrs)	20	16.66		
2	Education	Illiterate	16	13.33	2.06	1.18
		Functionally literate	20	16.66		
		Up to primary	36	30.00		
		Up to middle	36	30.00		
		Higher sec. &above	12	10.00		
3	Irrigation potentiality	Low (<29.38%)	20	16.66	42.83	13.45
		Medium (29.38%-56.28%)	80	66.66		
		High (>56.28%)	20	16.66		
4	Farming experience	Low (upto 5 yrs)	19	15.83	17.96	9.07
		Medium (6-10 yrs)	78	65.00		
		High (above 10 yrs)	23	19.16		
5	Annual income	Low (<1 lac.)	22	18.33	1.98	0.59
		Medium (1 lac.- 5 lac.)	78	75.00		
		High (>5 lac.)	20	16.66		
6	Land holding	Marginal (up to 1 ha.)	30	25.00	2.26	0.91
		Small (1.1 to 2 ha.)	36	30.00		
		Medium (2.1 to 5 ha.)	46	38.33		
		Large (above 5.1 ha.)	8	6.66		
7	Occupation	Farming	84	70.00	1.53	0.92
		Farming +Service	16	13.33		
		Farming +Service+ Business	12	10		
		Farming +Service+ Business+ other	8	6.66		
8	Extension participation	Low(<1.4)	24	20	3.43	2.03
		Medium (1.4-5.46)	76	63.33		
		High (>5.46)	20	16.66		
9	Mass media exposure	Low (<3.92)	20	16.66	6.16	2.24
		Medium (3.92-8.40)	88	73.33		
		High (>8.40)	12	10.00		
10	Market orientation	Low (<12)	24	20.00	16.06	4.06
		Medium (12-20.12)	80	66.66		
		High (>20.12)	16	13.33		
11	Innovativeness in vegetable production	Low (<9.39)	24	20.00	14.03	4.64
		Medium (9.39-18.67)	72	60.00		
		High (>18.67)	24	20.00		

12	Knowledge about vegetable production	Low (<9.51)	28	23.33	11.66	2.15
		Medium (9.51-13.81)	72	60.00		
		High (>13.81)	20	16.66		

Marketing Behaviour of Vegetable Growers:

It is considered as quality which can be acquired by an individual. It refers to the behaviour of the farmers with respect to marketing aspects of vegetables including time of sale, place of sale, marketing channels used and market prices. Marketing behaviour dimensions to be studied were inspired by Santosh Kumar (2008) and finalized in consultation with the marketing officials and social scientists. The statements used to analyze marketing behaviour of farmers are as follows. Reasons for selling at a particular period/time, whom, do you sell the produce, reasons to sell to a particular agency, where do you sell the produce, reasons for selling at a particular place. And on behalf of the above statements we recorded responses from the respondents.

The data presented in the Table 3 reveals that majority of the vegetable growers (85.00%) expressed that financial urgency was the major reason for selling vegetables at particular period followed by 80.83, 61.66, 54.16 and 32.00 per cent of them disposing their produce as it is highly perishable, non-availability of cold storage facilities, quality was not good and indebtedness of traders, respectively. Majority of them (85.00%) expressed that they sold their produce to wholesalers through commission agents followed by 42.50, 35.00 and 11.66 per cent sold their produce directly to the consumers to the traders through co-operative societies and to the government agencies such as hotels, respectively.

Table 3: Marketing behaviour of vegetable growers

S.No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	**Reasons for selling at a particular period/time**		
i.	Highly perishable	97	80.83
ii.	Quality was not good	65	54.16
iii.	No cold storage facilities available	74	61.66
iv.	Financial urgency	102	85.00
v.	Indebtedness to trader	32	26.66
2.	**Whom do you sell the produce**		
i.	Directly to the consumer	51	42.50
ii.	To the wholesaler through commission agents	102	85.00
iii.	To the traders through co-operative societies	42	35.00
iv.	To the Govt. agencies such as hostels	14	11.66
3.	**Reasons to sale a particular agency**		
i.	The agency is very nearer one	102	85.00
ii.	The agency is worthy credit	74	61.66
iii.	I have no time to engage myself in selling directly to consumers	106	88.33
iv.	Immediate cash payment	83	69.16
v.	Previous agreement	94	78.33
vi.	Better price	97	80.83
4.	**Where do you sell the produce**		
i.	In the village	55	45.83
ii.	In the nearby bazaar	97	80.83
iii.	In the *mandi*	74	61.66
iv.	In the distant market	32	26.66
5.	**Reasons for selling at a particular place**		
i.	Market is very near to place	97	80.83
ii.	The better transport facilities available in the market	83	69.16
iii.	Better price are available in the market	106	88.33
iv.	Better market facilities available in the market	55	45.83

*Multiple response

Most of the respondents (88.33%) expressed that their selling the produce to the particular agency is dueto the fact that they have no time to engage themselves in selling directly to the consumers, followed by 85.00, 80.83, 78.33, 69.16 and 61.66 of them sold to particular agency mainly because of nearness to agency, better price, previous agreement, immediate cash payment and worthiness of the agency for credit settlement, respectively. Around 80.83 per cent of them sold their produce to nearby bazaars, whereas 61.66, 45.83 and 26.66 per cent of them sold in *mandi*, in their own villages and distant markets, respectively. Majority of them (88.33%) expressed that they sold their produce at particular markets because of better price and 80.83 per cent expressed that the markets were very near to them, 69.16 per cent told that, it was because of better transportfacility, while 45.83 per cent opined that it was because of better market facility, respectively.

The overall marketing behaviour of vegetable growers:

The overall marketing behaviour of vegetable growers comprises a composite skill, the resultant of mix of many qualities and traits. The scores were assigned to the respondent on the basis of numbers of reasons for a particular statement i.e., score 1 for one or two reasons and score 2 for three or more than three reasons. On the basis of these responses, respondents were classified into low, medium and high categories on thebasis of mean ± SD.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to their overall marketing behaviour

Category	Frequency	Mean	S.D.
Low (<5.65)	16 (13.33)	7.06	1.41
Medium (5.65-8.47)	84 (70.00)		
High (>8.47)	20 (16.66)		
Total	**120 (100.00)**		

It is clear from Table 4 that the majority 70.00 percentof the respondents had medium level of marketing behaviour followed by 16.66 percent respondents hadhigh level of marketing behaviour and only 13.33 percent of respondent had low level of marketing behaviour. The table also presents the data regarding mean score of marketing behaviour. The mean score of marketingbehaviour was 7.06 and S.D. was 1.41.

Suggestions offered by vegetable growers for better marketing of their vegetables

The contents of Table 5 indicated majority of the respondents (81.66%) suggested for provide on-time and better loaning facility, 75 per cent suggested to displaythe prices of commodities at each market place, followed by access to market information (66.66%), providing market facility at nearby place (58.33%), followed by establishing separate markets for their major produce (40.00%) and providing lodging and boarding facilities at market places(39.16%) were the suggestions offered by vegetable growers for marketing their produce in a better way.

Table 5: Suggestions offered by vegetable growers for better marketing of their vegetables

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Provide on-time and better loaning facility.	98	81.66	1
Providing concession in transportation charges	47	39.16	7
Provide lodging and boarding facilities at market place	76	63.33	4
Establishing separate market for major produce	48	40.00	6
Display of prices at each market place	90	75.00	2
Providing access to market information	80	66.66	3
Provide market facility at nearby place.	70	58.33	5

SUGGESTIONS

Agricultural marketing needs to be conducted within a supportive policy, legal, institutional, macro-economic, infrastructural and bureaucratic environment. Traders and others cannot make investments in a climate of arbitrary government policy changes, such as those that restrict imports and exports or internal produce movement. Poor support institutions, such as agricultural extension services, municipalities that operate markets inefficiently and export promotion bodies, can be particularly damaging. Poor roads increase the cost of doing business, reduce payments to farmers and increase prices to consumers. Finally, the ever-present problem of corruption can seriously impact on agricultural marketing efficiency in many countries by increasing the transaction costs faced by those in the marketing chain. New marketing linkages between agribusiness, large retailers and farmers are gradually being developed, e.g. through contract farming, group marketing and other forms of collective action. Donors and NGOs are paying increasing attention to ways of promoting direct linkages between farmers and buyers within a value chain context. More attention is now being paid to the development of regional markets (e.g. East Africa) and to structured trading systems that should facilitate such developments. The growth of supermarkets could have a significant impact on marketing channels for horticultural, dairy and livestock products. Nevertheless, "spot" markets will continue to be important for many years, necessitating attention to infrastructure improvement such as for retail and wholesale markets.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that majority 70.00 percent respondents had medium level of marketing behavior about vegetables. Most of the respondents belonged to middle age group, educated up to middle and primary school level, medium level of irrigation potentiality, medium level of farming experience, possessed up to 2.1 to 5 ha. of land, engaged only in farming as occupation, had medium level of annual income, medium level of mass media exposure, 63.33 percent of respondents were from medium category of extension contact, medium level of market orientation, medium category of innovativeness in vegetable production. And majority (60.00%) of the vegetable growers had medium knowledge level about vegetable production. Majority of the respondents (81.66%) suggested for provide on-time and better loan facility, 75 per cent suggested to display the prices at each market place, followed by access to market information (66.66%). Agricultural marketing needs to be conducted within a supportive policy, legal, institutional, macro-economic, infrastructural and bureaucratic environment. The growth of supermarkets could have a significant impact on marketing channels for horticultural, dairy and livestock products. Nevertheless, "spot" markets will continue to be important for many years, necessitating attention to infrastructure improvement such as for retail and wholesale markets. These factors can be taken care of by the implementing agencies in the state while selecting the beneficiaries for agriculture marketing development programmes.

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