

Uzhavar Sandhais - A Boon or Bane for Rural Empowerment in Tamil Nadu

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Introduction

Marketing of fruits and vegetables is more complex in nature in comparison with the other field crops because of special traits like highly perishable nature, seasonality and bulkiness, which needs special care and immediate disposal. The Uzhavar Sandhai has assumed more relevance and significance especially in respect of marketing fruits and vegetables. The Uzhavar Sandhai is mainly organised to enhance the farmer's income by preventing intermediaries and distress selling. As the sale at the Uzhavar Sandhai is only for cash, the farmers are getting money immediately. This is absent when they sell their produce to the middlemen because most of the traders make delayed payment.

The Uzhavar Sandhai revolves around the farmer and raises the position of farmer-to-farmer seller. The farmer is motivated to bring his produce to the Uzhavar Sandhai as he can directly market it to the consumers. Day in and out, they come to the market and the market has become their life breath and in turn, the farmer sellers have become the life breath of the market. Hence an attempt has been made to analyse the farmer sellers in selected Uzhavar Sandhai in the sandhais at Nagercoil, Kanyakumari and Valliyur areas in Tamil Nadu.

Origin of Uzhavar Sandhai

Uzhavar Sandhai had its birth in the concept of Kal Ghaj in Russia. The former Union agriculture secretary, MS Gill on his visit to this country was impressed by this concept of farmers' market and he replicated this concept by initiating Apna Mandis in Punjab and Haryana in early 1987.

The ruling DMK Government in Tamilnadu subsequently replicated this concept in 1999 in the form of Uzhavar Sandhais. Andhra Pradesh followed suit and started the Rythu Bazar on similar lines. In order to eliminate the involvement of intermediaries the state government introduced Uzhavar Sandhai (Farmers' market) where the farmers and consumers can have direct dealings. The idea of setting the Uzhavar Sandhai exclusively for selling vegetables grown by the local growers was conceived in the early 1990s by former Union Agricultural Secretary, M.S. Gill. It is reported that 'Kal ghaj', a farmers market, was started way back in 1975 exclusively to sell vegetables and spinach in the former Soviet Union. During a visit to United Kingdom, Mr. M.S. Gill noticed that some of the farmers were selling vegetables and fruits at the roadside on a collective basis at a high profit. The market was very busy. After a detailed investigation, he found that the farmers directly sold their produce to the consumers without the help of intermediaries. Immediately on his return to India, he successfully set 'Apna Mandi' or 'Kisan Mandi' in Punjab. The first 'Apna Mandi' was started in Punjab at Chandigarh in 1987, in Haryana at Karnal in 1988. Noticing their success, the Union Ministry of agriculture suggested the idea for starting Uzhavar Sandhais in other states also. Andhra Pradesh took immediate steps to start 'Rythu Bazaar'.

Recently a high-powered European committee visited the largest vegetables market in Tamilnadu, Ottanchatiram for an on the spot assessment of vegetables marketing by the farmers. The committee found that farmers sold their vegetables not only at throwaway prices but also simply dumped unsold vegetables on the roadside for want of transportation. Some growers reported to

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the committee that vegetables like tomatoes were left in the field itself as even the labour cost for harvesting was not realized. This kind of situation had arisen even in adjoining states like Karnataka, where the growers registered their protest by dumping truckloads of tomato on the national highways due to a glut in the market. Market surplus, high input cost, lack of transportation and exploitation by the middlemen and wholesalers have made vegetable cultivation an unremunerative activity and made farmers' lives miserable. Realizing the distress sale of vegetables and fruits, and the middlemen and wholesale traders' role in cheating the farmers the committee suggested providing financial assistance of Rs. 300 crores to help the vegetable growing farmers. Even this was not given proper attention by the government at that time and the farmers continued to be exploited by vegetable traders and commission agents.

When the President of the Tamilnadu unit of the Traders Association visited the 'Rythu Bazaar' in Andhra Pradesh, he realized the importance of the concept of a farmers' market. On his return, he reported his conclusions to the Chief Minister, and he was convinced on the feasibility of a farmers' market. The government then identified the sites for Uzhavar Sandhais.



Review of literature

The Study Commissioned by the Oxfam GB in India

Uzhavar Sandhai is in operation in Tamilnadu since 1999 with first such farmers' market being set up in Madurai. As per 2002 data, there are about 102 Uzhavar Sandhais in various urban centres in Tamil Nadu. "It has survived despite inadequate support from the government, which has focused its energies behind promotion of Self Help Group (SHGs), providing them with infrastructure and soft bank loans. Therefore, the Uzhavar Sandhais have survived purely because of the merits in their unique system of marketing," the study said. Farmers are allotted a space where they can sell their produce. The government has set up marketing committees to identify farmers and give them a permit or identity cards. Farmers do not pay any rent or commission. The marketing committee fixes the prices of fruits and vegetables, which holds good for the whole day.

The Hindu, New Delhi May 20

"No Role for middlemen in product Selling" Farmers have benefited when the consumers directly purchase their produce from them. This eliminates the role of a chain of middlemen and consumers get the benefit of fresh produce at reasonable rates, said trade and management experts.

Study by IIFT , Delhi and KASC, Erode

The study entitled “ Meeting Local demands for vegetable & fruits – The dynamic of Framers’ Market conducted by Murali Kallummal of the centre for WTO studies in the Delhi based Indian Institute of foreign Trade (IIFT) and K. Sakthi Srinivasan of the Department of Management studies in Kongu Arts and Science College, Erode, TamilNadu urged policymakers to promote such farmers’ markets in the interests of livelihood and food security.

Biodiversity Unit, Department of Botany, The American College, Madurai, India

Monitoring biodiversity of a given geographical territory that supplies a local market is an age – old practice. Due to various reasons our markets have become complex, unorganized structures. Commodities pass a number of middlemen before they reach the customer. Therefore it is difficult to trace and identify the origin of a given commodity. In this context, the authors have identified “ Uzhavar Sandhais “ as an organization with a high who’s potential for participatory monitoring of agro – biodiversity (Vegetable crops). Uzhavar Sandhai is a Fair Trade Organisation (FTO) that is owned by the Tamilnadu Government. Uzhavar Sandhai aims at organizing local farmers and helps them to maximize their income. It does so by providing a bridge between urban customers and rural vegetable growers. In an novel design, tracing the origin of vegetables becomes easy. Within one and half year period since the programme started it has become widely accepted as a small – scale enterprise of traditional farmer communities.

Vijayaraghavan and Subramanyam (1980) also observed that discussion with family members was the useful method of taking decision.³ The second rank is given to consultation with village merchants. Outside their family circle, they find it easy to consult with merchants of their own village. Then they consult the marketing officials. The marketing officials are approached to get the particulars regarding the Uzhavar Sandhai.

Bhale Rao et. al (1981), Subramanyam (1981) and S. Chowdhury (2002). Paying rent and establishing a shop is generally out of reach of the small farmers. Getting a place with basic amenities to sell their products without rent is a boon for them. Provision of weighing scales by the marketing committee also relieve them from the botheration of bringing their own scales.

Need for the study

The government established hundred Uzhavar Sandhais in various parts of Tamilnadu. In Madurai and Virudhunagar districts eleven Uzhavar Sandhais were established. At present there are as many as five Uzhavar sandhais situated at Kanyakumari, Valliyur, Nagercoil, Tirunelveli and Thovalai which are the most sought after uzhavar sandhais adjacent to the God’s own country, Kerala. These are some of the markets from where a large number of traders purchase huge quantities of vegetables for sale in Kerala. The researcher attempts to find out whether Ulavar sandhai is a boon or bane in Tamilnadu . The study highlights the personal profile of farmers with respect to their age , income, type of produced, traded, income and source of information towards Ulavar Sandhai

Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are:

- 1) To study the personal profile of farmers.
- 2) To find out the awareness of Ulavar Sandhai among farmers of Tamilnadu.
- 3) Decision alternatives of the Farmer Sellers in Uzhavar Sandhais
- 4) To find out the impact of Ulavar Sandhai among farmers in Tamilnadu.
- 5) To Anlayse the strength and weakness associated with Ulavar Sandhai.
- 6) To offer valuable suggestions to the government and farmers while trading

Methodology

The study covers both the primary and secondary data. Descriptive research is most suitable. The data was collected by interview method by using structured questionnaire. For the purpose of study, the data has been collected at a uzhavar sandhai in the above mentioned sandhais at Nagercoil, Valliyur, Thovalai, Kanyakumari and Thirunelveli this year. Data have been collected from a cross section of farmers, consumers, assistant agriculture officers and horticulture officers.

Sources of data collection

The data was collected from the published records, journals, magazines, web portals, news paper and general discussions with local municipal governmental officials. Primary data was collected by administering questionnaire cum interview schedule to farmers.

Sampling Technique

Universe: Farmers of Tamilnadu trading in Uzhavar Sandhai

Sampling Unit: The sampling limit was limited to Uzhavar Sandhais in the places of Nagercoil, Valliyur, Thovalai, Kanyakumari and Thirunelveli.

Sample size: 120 farmers

Sampling design: Convenience sampling method adopted.

The collected data was analyzed by using the percentage analysis, central tendency, and Garrett's Ranking method.

Limitations of the study

Farmers do not follow what they have stated in their responses. Thus the degree of reliability cannot be taken to be always correct. There are certain constraints.

- 1) The study is limited to the Uzhavar Sandhais situated at Nagercoil, Valliyur, Thovalai, Kanyakumari and Thirunelveli this year.
- 2) The period of the study is limited.
- 3) One more limitation would be that the sample size is too small to come to any conclusion and there may be discrepancies in data due to this.

At this juncture, an objective study of the performance of the farmers' market becomes imperative for judicious policy making. For this purpose an empirical study has been conducted. Based on the field work a SWOT analysis has been made in the following section.

SWOT analysis consists of systematic evaluation of an organization's strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats which it faces, It provides a general framework for understanding and managing the environment under which an organization operates.

Strengths of Uzhavar Sandhai

Fair price is determined by the officers of the Agriculture Marketing Committee and representatives of farmers for the vegetables and fruits everyday. Generally the price fixed is 20% higher than the wholesale price and 15% less than the retail price. Fresh vegetables are weighed correctly and are available at lower price (15% less than retail shops) for the consumers. The price fixed is uniform in all farmers' markets in these markets. About 4000 to 5000 consumers visit the farmers' market everyday.

About 20 to 25 tons of vegetables of the value of about 1.5 lakhs to 2 lakhs are sold every day. About 125 farmers sell their produce in week days and 175 farmers sell their produce during the weekend in the farmers market. Administrative officers and three assistants under the authority of Commissioner of Agriculture Marketing regulate the functioning of the farmers' market. Facilities for disposal of garbage to the tune of five to six tons per day has been provided by Exonora, an environment conscious NGO.

Government support is extended in terms of construction of shops, free supply of weighing 3 machines and free transport of vegetables to the farmers' market in selected State run buses. The farmers' market functions from 5A.M. to 2P.M. everyday with longer working hours. Bulk purchases for marriage and other functions are allowed with prior intimation and production of proof as it enables higher turnover in the market. The sale is only for cash and so there is no problem of delayed payment or bad debts.

Weaknesses

Lack of cold storage facilities to preserve unsold vegetables of the previous day affects the quality of the vegetables. The normal functioning of the farmers' market has been much affected due to the termination of the services of welfare workers who used to issue tokens to the farmers at the time of arrival, issue weighing machines and enquire the price in the wholesale market. Approximately 750 workers were employed in the Uzhavar Sandhais and they are removed from services now. Shortage of manpower affects its operational efficiency.

Inadequate roofing facilities adversely affects trade during rainy season.

It is widely alleged that traders enter the farmers' market with fake identity cards.

The farmers' markets face stiff competition from wholesale market. The bulk buyers prefer to buy the from the wholesale market as the price fixed is 20% higher than that of the wholesale market.

Opportunities

The farmers are educated on modern methods of farming by the Agriculture and Horticulture departments in the farmers' market itself. High yielding seeds, bio-fertilizers and the like are sold for the benefit of farmers. Such supports are likely to bring more hectares of land under vegetable cultivation. At present nine percent of the total cultivated land is under vegetable cultivation. It is expected to grow with active government support.

The farmers have learnt the nuances of salesmanship such as courteous and polite manners and have succeeded in getting patronage of large number of consumers.

The spirit of co-operation and togetherness has emerged among the growers resulting in collective responsibility.

It is observed that the vegetable growers are willing to contribute in the form of entry fee to sustain and improve the present marketing system.

Threats

The powerful lobby of wholesalers and commission agents influence the political stand on uzhavar sandhai. The present government has proposed weekly market in lieu of farmers' market which may not benefit marginal and small farmers. The present government's attitude is not favourable towards uzhavar sandhais.

The above SWOT analysis shows that the strengths are highly significant and the opportunities offer tremendous scope for growth. Majority of the findings relating to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats can be generalized to all markets functioning in Tamilnadu. Hence it is suggested that the Government of Tamilnadu should take steps to strengthen the present system of uzhavar sandhais in the interest of consumers and the farmers at large.

Salient features

The government started uzhavar sandhais (farmers' market) in 103 places in the State. The Salient 16 features of the Uzhavar sandhais in Tamilnadu are as follows:

1. Approximately 200 shops are built in each market center.
2. The shops are rent free and weighing machines are provided to the farmers free of cost.
3. Prices are fixed by the officers based on wholesale and retail prices.

4. Branches of banks, cold storage facilities and provision for garbage disposal are provided in the farmers' market.
5. Free transportation of vegetables from nearby villages to the farmers' market through State run kale buses is extended.

Since its inception in October 1999 till May 2001, 103 uzhavar sandhais in Tamilnadu have done a total 25 business of Rs. 225.52 crores. About 3.5 lakh tons of vegetables, fruits and flowers have been sold benefiting about 28.13 lakh farmers and 9.2 crore consumers.

The farmers' market in Hosur near Bangalore has been identified as a model, market by the Agriculture Marketing Society. This market has an average arrival of 42,940 kg of vegetables per day and caters to the farmers of 208 villages nearby. Agriculture experts deputed by Kamataka State recently visited Hosur market ID Study the possibilities of introducing such a set up in Tamil Nadu.

The sales volume of vegetables in other farmers' markets is also quite significant. In eight uzhavarsandhais daily sale varies between 20 and 40 tons, in 33 farmers' markets daily sale varies between 10 and 20 tons, in 31 farmers markets it is between 5 and 10 tons and in 30 markets the sale ranges from one to four tons per day.

Garretts Ranking method

To find out the most significant factors which influence the respondents while arranging tour, Garrett's ranking technique was used. As per this method, respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all the factors and outcome of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of the following formula :

$$\text{Percent Position} = 100(R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for the i th factor by the j th respondents

N_j = Number of factors ranked by the j th respondents.

By referring the Garrett's Table, the percent position estimated is converted into scores. Then for each factor the scores of each individual are added and then mean values is considered to be the most important

Source of Information

Any new concept needs to be communicated to the group concerned. Successful results can be obtained through proper communication. The communication must reach the right persons, at right time, at the right place and through the right means. The establishment of Uzhavar Sandhai reached the farmers through various media such as All India Radio, newspapers, marketing officials, fellow farmers, pamphlets issued by Uzhavar Sandhais and Television. The sources of information were given to the farmers for ranking. The orders of merit assigned by the farmer sellers were converted into ranks by using the formula. The results of ranking are shown in Table 1.1.

The Table 1.2 exhibits Garrett's ranking and scores. The Table 1.2 highlights Garrett's scores which help to decide the most important factors adopted by the farmers for source of information is Uzhavar Sandhai. The highest score is 54.66, 1 rank for Uzhavar Sandhais, and the lowest rank is 30.85, the last rank selected by the respondent is through television. It is inferred from these table that an individual chooses the factor based on his own perceptions in order to satisfy their routine needs.

Decision Making

Decision-making is crucial in marketing. Decision regarding what to sell, when to sell, where to sell, whom to sell must be taken by the farmer sellers. Correct decision must be taken at correct time. Correct decision depends upon the marketing experience and knowledge possessed by the

farmer sellers. Some persons may take self-decision; some others may take decision after having consultation with others. In order to find out how they select Uzhavar Sandhai, various decision-making alternatives were given to the farmer sellers for ranking. The alternatives were ranked with the help of Garrete's ranking techniques and are given in Table 1.3.

The Table 1.4 exhibits Garrett's ranking and scores. The Table highlights Garrett's scores which help to decide the most important factors adopted by the farmers for trading in Uzhavar Sandhai. The highest score is 61.07, I rank for consulting family members, and the lowest rank is 44.98, the last rank selected by the respondent is consulting commission agents. It is inferred from these table that an individual chooses the factor based on his own perceptions in order to satisfy their routine needs.

Instead of taking self decision, the farmer sellers give due consideration to their family members. The results presented in Table 1.4 revealed that most of the farmer sellers are taking decision regarding marketing their produces in Uzhavar Sandhai, after having consultation with their family members accompany and assist the farmer sellers in marketing their produces in Uzhavar Sandhais and thus marketing the agricultural produce becomes a family venture in the study area. Hence, consultation with them counts.

Reason for Choosing Uzhavar Sandhais Uzhavar Sandhais provide a place for the marketers of vegetables and fruits to sell their produces directly to the people without recourses to the middlemen. These sandhais are started to establish a direct link between the farmer sellers and the consumers. By eliminating the middlemen, this scheme aims at benefiting both the farmers as well as the consumers. The farmer sellers need not pay rent of the shop allotted to them or commission for selling their goods at the market. The market committee appointed by the state government fixes the prices for the same. The prices are fixed for different commodities on the basis of previous day prices of that commodity in the wholesale market. Garrete's ranking technique is used to find out the primary reason for choosing the Uzhavar Sandhais by the sample farmer sellers. The various reasons are listed in Table 1.3 along with Garette Ranking.

The table 1.5 and 1.6 exhibits Garrett's ranking and scores. The table highlights Garrett's scores which help to decide the most important factors adopted by the farmers for trading in Ulavar Sandhai. The highest score is 62.2, I rank for avoidance of middle men, and the lowest rank is 41.47, the last rank selected by the respondent is reasonable rates. It is inferred from these table that an individual chooses the factor based on his own perceptions in order to satisfy their routine needs.

Sales per Day

The sales per day of the farmer sellers differ from each other. The sales value depends upon the nature of the vegetables sold by the farmer sellers. The details about the sales per day and the nature of vegetables are presented in table 1.4.

Table 1.7 clearly discloses that, 35 (74.5 percent) local vegetable sellers earn less than Rs. 100/- per day. There are 6 (15.8 percent) hill vegetable sellers whose earning ranges from Rs. 101-200/- per day. There are 16 (45.7 percent) fruit sellers who earn more than Rs. 200/- per day. It is evident from this table that the sales of the fruit sellers in Uzhavar Sandhais are higher compared to the sales of other farmer sellers.

Variety of Produce Sold in Uzhavar Sandhais

The varieties of produce sold in Uzhavar Sandhais are classified into three categories such as local vegetables, hill vegetables and fruits. Local vegetables category consists brinjal, tomato, lady's finger, small onion and greens which are grown locally. These vegetables are highly marketed by the farmer sellers in Uzhavar Sandhais. These vegetables are considered as short duration crops grown by the farmer sellers who depend on the sale of these vegetables for livelihood in this study area. During the hot humid rainy season, brinjal is one of the few

vegetables available to urban and rural poor at reasonable prices ranging from Rs. 4 to 8/- per kg. Vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, beans potato and carrot are considered as hill vegetables. The climatic condition needed for these vegetables is different from that of local vegetables. Farmer sellers of Kodaikanal market these vegetables. Fruits such as banana, guava, lime, mango and papaya are locally grown and marketed by local growers. The summary statistics regarding the sales per day of these categories of vegetables are given in Table 1.8. It is evident from Table 1.8 that, majority of the farmer sellers (58.3 percent) is selling only local vegetables. Hill vegetables are sold by only 16 (13.3 percent) farmer sellers. The average sale of fruits is the highest (193.7) compared to vegetables and hill vegetables. The coefficient of variation is more or less similar in the case of vegetables and hill vegetables.

Vegetable Cultivation

Vegetable cultivation is made on the basis of soil condition of the agricultural land. Seasonality is on the wane in vegetable cultivation. It has become a common phenomenon to see many vegetables like tomato, brinjal, lady's finger and cabbage being available throughout the year in vegetable markets. This has become possible because of the development of improved varieties/hybrids. In order to increase returns from per unit area of land, and to shorten the period of return to investment intercropping of vegetables is also followed by vegetable growers. Some varieties of greens are grown by the local vegetable growers by adopting intercropping. In fruit orchards especially vegetables are grown to utilize the space available in the initial stage. The important vegetables sold in Uzhavar Sandhais are selected and the details about the number of farmers growing those vegetables are given in table.

It may be seen from table 1.9 that out of the total sample farmer sellers, 77.5 percent reported the cultivation of tomato followed by 75 percent in case of brinjal, 51.7 percent in lady's finger and 37.5 percent in onion. Tomato is widely cultivated because of its demand, because it is profusely used in the Southern Indian cuisine. Among the sample respondents guava cultivators are lesser in number.

Profitability

Profit is the main motivating factor behind any business. Agriculture is not an exception to this. In Uzhavar Sandhais the prices are always higher than the wholesale rate and lesser than the retail rate which benefited the farmers and consumers because of direct selling, zero market margin and nil price spread. (Dharmarajan, 2000, Shanmugam and Kempuchetty, 2000). Rent free shops, free weighing scales and transportation facilities with the elimination of middlemen enables the farmer sellers to get more profit. Information is collected regarding the percentage of profit gained through selling products in Uzhavar Sandhais and presented in Table.

It is clear from Table 1.10 that 70 (58.3 percent) farmer sellers are getting more than 30 percent as profit in selling their produce in Uzhavar Sandhais. Out of 120 sample farmer sellers 10 (8.3 percent) farmer sellers started that their profit is less than 10 percent.

Results and Recommendations

1. Irrespective of the age, sex, educational qualifications, occupation, level of income and family size, there is no significant difference in the satisfaction level of consumers towards the price, variety of produces, quality, and relationship with traders etc which prevail in the uzhavar sandhais.
2. As many as 60% of the respondents were satisfied about the prices, quality and variety of the produces marketed in these sandhais.
3. The farmers here expect the Government to support them with additional facilities such as extension of working hours and providing special bus services at odd hours as well as to bring the produces to the sandhais

4. The farmers feel that there needs to be a need for an orientation programme on modern methods of farming and selling methods for them to keep themselves aware of the latest trends in the field rather than sticking on to the traditional methods.
5. The study also revealed that the setting up of the sandhais in various parts of the State had paved way for the eradication of poverty to a good extent as the farmers are able to sell off their produces at the earliest within a short span of time rather than keeping them as dead stock or selling it a low price when the vegetables and fruits start to decay.
6. Farmers are expecting Tiffin centre and drinking water facilities.
7. Farmers are expecting small godown facilities to store their products like onions, coconuts etc.
8. Concerned authority of the uzhar Sandhai should take necessary steps to implement Aavin milk stall in uzhar Sandhai for milk, butter, ghee etc.
9. Suggestion boxes may be kept in uzhar Sandhai at right place and necessary action should be initiated upon those suggestions.
10. Municipal Corporation Commissioner must create awareness about uzhar Sandhai through local advertisements media(like announcement, hoardings, scrolling).
11. Avoidance of middlemen domination in uzhar Sandhai.
12. Extending the working hours of sandhai in the evening time for office goers.
13. Regular maintenance should be carried out.
14. Concerned Officers should make surprise visits at the uzhar Sandhai to inspect and regulate the activities.

Several measures are recommended for improving the marketing of fruits and vegetables in the sandhais. The following major recommendations emerge from the study reported here on improving the marketing efficiency of fruits and vegetables. First, it is important to bring more markets under regulation and put them under the supervision of a well represented market committee.

Second it is important to promote, and perhaps even enforce through rules or laws, the practice of open auction in the markets. Third, it is important to bring more numbers of buyers and sellers to the wholesale markets so as to encourage healthy competition close to perfect market conditions and better price realisation to the producer farmers.

Besides above measures, improvements in market infrastructure such as storage (godown) facilities, cold storage, better loading and weighing facilities, proper stalls, better road links etc. would also be helpful in improving the marketing efficiency. Improvement in cold chain facilities, marketing of fruits and vegetables are obviously important and do not need any special mention. Efforts to improve the transparency in the market operations through better supervision by the market committee would be another important factor in improving the marketing efficiency. Finally there is substantial scope for improving the marketing efficiency by improving the market information system by making available latest and extensive market information to all market participants through the use of internet facilities and other means of communication.

Conclusion

The farmers who brave the vagaries of monsoon to produce vegetables and fruits, find it difficult to sell the produce at a profitable price. Establishment of U.S. has helped them to overcome the hardships posed by the middlemen. The direct contact with the consumers has enhanced their income. Like any other industry, diversification of products i.e. selling more than two products has resulted in high average sales per day. The Uzhar Sandhais in general, has done a laudable job in making the marketing easy for the farmers.

Table 1.1. Source of Information

Slno	Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
1	All India Radio	15	18	30	10	26	21	120
2	Local Newspapers	10	33	13	8	20	36	120
3	Fellow Farmers	18	25	11	10	30	26	120
4	UzhavarSandhais	33	34	10	9	10	24	120
5	Marketing Officials	20	27	14	12	14	33	120
6	Television	67	12	9	10	11	11	120
Garret Table value		77	63	54	46	37	23	

Source: Primary data

Table : 1.2 Garret ranking selection factor results

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Garret score	Average	Garret Rank
All India Radio	1155	1134	1620	460	962	483	5814	48.45	5
Local Newspapers	770	2079	702	368	740	828	5487	45.72	2
Fellow Farmers	1386	1575	594	460	1110	598	5723	47.69	3
UzhavarSandhais	2541	2142	540	414	370	552	6559	54.66	1
Marketing Officials	1540	1701	756	552	518	759	5826	48.55	4
Television	1340	756	486	460	407	253	3702	30.85	6

Table 1.3 : Decision alternatives of the Farmer Sellers in Uzhavar Sandhais

Slno	Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
1	Self decision	20	25	20	25	18	12	120
2	Consulting friends	10	20	16	17	38	19	120
3	Consulting family members	50	27	9	13	15	6	120
4	Consulting village merchants	25	34	25	13	13	10	120
5	Consulting the commission agents	8	15	23	23	26	25	120
6	Consulting marketing officials	10	40	26	24	13	7	120
Garret Table value		77	63	54	46	37	23	

Source : Primary data

Table: 1.4 Garret ranking selection factor results

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Garret Score	Average	Garret Rank
Self decision	1540	1575	1080	1150	666	276	6287	52.59	4
Consulting friends	770	1260	864	782	1406	437	5519	45.99	5
Consulting family members	3850	1701	486	598	555	138	7328	61.07	1
Consulting village merchants	1925	2142	1350	598	481	230	6726	56.05	2
Consulting the commission agents	616	945	1242	1058	962	575	5398	44.98	6
Consulting marketing officials	770	2520	1404	1104	481	161	6440	53.67	3

Table 1.5 : Reasons for Choosing Uzhavar Sandhais by Sample Farmer Sellers

Sno	Factors	1	2	3	4	Total
1	Direct contact with consumer	8	46	29	37	120
2	Avoidance of middlemen	78	16	14	12	120
3	Reasonable price	16	24	15	65	120
4	No rent for shop and no charge for weighing machine	21	35	56	8	120
	Garret Table value	72	56	44	28	

Source: Primary Data.

Table :1.6 Garret ranking selection factor results

Factors	1	2	3	4	Garret score	Average	Garret Rank
Direct contact with consumer	576	2576	1276	1036	5464	45.53	3
Avoidance of middlemen	5616	896	616	336	7464	62.2	1
Reasonable price	1152	1344	660	1820	4976	41.47	4
No rent for shop and no charge for weighing machine	1512	1960	2464	224	6160	51.33	2

Table 1.7 : Sales per day of the Farmer Sellers

Sales per day	Number of Farmers			Total
	Local vegetables	Hill vegetables	Fruits	
Less than Rs. 100/-	35 (74.5)	5 (10.6)	7 (14.9)	47 (100)
Rs. 101-200/-	21 (55.3)	6 (15.8)	11 (28.9)	38 (100)
Above s. 200/-	14 (4)	5 (14.3)	16 (45.7)	35 (100)

Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

Table 1.8 : Varieties of Produce sold in Uzhavar Sandhais

Varieties	Number of Farmers	Mean Sales	σ (S.D)	C.V
Small	47	83.46	12.67	15.18
Medium	38	163.70	22.12	13.51
Large	35	287.36	54.35	18.91

Table 1.9 : Number of Farmer Sellers Growing Selected Vegetables in Uzhavar Sandhais

Vegetables! Fruits	Number of small farmers	Number of medium farmers	Number of large farmers	Number	Total number of farmers Percentage
Tomato	42	26	25	93	77.5
Brinjal	39	28	23	90	75.0
Lady's finger	25	24	13	62	51.7
Onion	20	10	15	45	37.5
Potato	18	9	4	31	25.8
Carrot	16	7	6	29	24.2
Banana	6	5	4	15	12.5
Guava	4	6	3	13	10.8
Chillies/Greens	5	4	7	16	13.3

Percentage is calculated out of the total number of farmers.

Table 1.10: Percentage of Profit of Farmer Sellers

SI. No.	Percentage of Profit	Number of Farmers	Percentage
1.	Below 10	10	8.3
2.	11-20	14	11.7
3.	21-30	26	21.7
4.	Above 30	70	58.3
	Total	120	100.0

Source: Primary Data.

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