

Problem of Small-Scale Farmers in Agriculture Sector in Tirunelveli Taluk

¹ Dr. M. Nithya, ¹ Dr. S. Banupriya, ² Dr. K. Esakkimuthu

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Yadava College, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu.

² Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, K.R College of Arts & Science, Kovilpatti, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51583/IJLTEMAS.2025.1411000004>

Abstract: India is an agriculture-oriented country. The country of agriculture of India towards employment is often not right recognized and well appreciated, although it provides employment to a great majority of people, that is, about 60 per cent of the country's population. It is feeding its huge population with food grains and other food items. The food grain production is around 230 million tonnes. Agriculture is contributing to industrial development through supply of raw materials. Agriculture commodities constitute 25 per cent of India's exports, while its share in the national income works out to be 18 per cent. The agrarian economy is the base on which the entire distorted structure of the economy and the society is constructed. Nowadays, these farming techniques are necessary as day-to-day farming lands are becoming apartments and factories. Actually, everything is happening in a contrast as for the increasing population. There should be an increase in agriculture land, but instead it is in a decreasing stage. In such a case, the awareness among the farmers is lacking. The government has to take some initiatives about such issues and appoint some persons to spread awareness about the profitable techniques of farming to uneducated farmers. Some are non-eco-friendly but we still continue the same. We must have some awareness about those things which may give profit in instant, but not an everlasting one better future.

Key Words: Population, Economy, Agricultural commodities, farmers.

I. Introduction

Agricultural production in developing countries has largely been on subsistence basis. The farmers only produce for themselves and immediate families and the quantity of goods produced are grossly inadequate for the growing population. There is an increased wide-spread in the level of poverty amongst the people especially those living in the rural areas. An old growing situation of unemployment in recent years had led many the rural/urban dwellers into small scale farming and today, the small scale farmers are known for their important and huge contributions to the Gross National product, they are currently the producers of about 98 percent of the food consumed in Tirunelveli with the only exception of As agriculture land in developed countries shrinks arable land has not been exploited to produce crops and because of urban expansion, food production is gradually livestock to stem the threat of hunger and poverty being a critical resource which Africa can supply to the through efficient production system. It is obvious that world. The cost of producing food in first world countries from growth point of view, opportunities exist in Africa's extremely high and land is scarce; but on the other agriculture sector. In Tirunelveli Taluk with small-scale farmers no hand, sub-Saharan Africa has enormous natural, physical doubt, having a lot to benefit in a situation where there is and human potential. The focus of the revealing the problem faced by small scale farmers in Tirunelveli Taluk in order to showcase them for possible solutions by the various arms of government, nongovernmental organizations and interested individuals. Small scale farmers have always played dominant role in agricultural.

Statement of The Problem:

A redirection of attention to agriculture had long- time been strategized by government and non-governmental agencies as the right antidote to the crises of unemployment in yet majority of the rural dwellers seek migration opportunities hence, compounding the general unemployment situation and food shortages in the country. An investigation to know the problems that have made individual (small scale) unattractive becomes imperative. India is the world's largest producer of milk, Pulse and Juke, and rank as the second largest producer of rice, wheat, sugarcane, groundnut, vegetables and fruits. Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for about 58% of India's population. Recently in our country the farmers were protesting against the three new laws introduced by the central government that is loosened rules around sale, pricing and storage of farm products which have protected them from free market for years. Therefore, the present study is done on the problems faced by the farmers and the chances of being successful in future by using the schemes, subsidy and incentives provided by the government. Also, to know whether the farmers are aware of the government policies, provided to safeguard the farmers

Meaning:

"Small –Scale agriculture is a method of agriculture that was less machinery and more human labour." "Local Small-scale farming typically utilizes more sustainable method than conventional farming systems to maintain soil productivity."

Definition:

The term agriculture as defined as an art, science and business of producing crops and livestock for economic purposes.

Scope of The Study

Agriculture is the backbone of the economy. It has many opportunities, but utilization of those opportunities is not up to the level. This study was mainly focused on problems and prospects of small farming. The intention is to know the socio-economic factors affecting the farmers. Therefore, this study is to understand the problems and prospect faced by farmers. The investigation is limited to farmers that have farmed for at least three to four years within the study area in Arable Crop farming with cultivated fields of less than five-hectares, domestic animal readers with less than five thousand fishes in their ponds and also, home-garden vegetable farmers scattered around in the local government area.

Objective of The Study:

- ❖ To Identify the socio-economic condition of the farmer in Tirunelveli taluk.
- ❖ To know the problems faced by small scale farmer in Tirunelveli taluk.
- ❖ To analyse the problem faced by small scale farmer in Tirunelveli taluk.

Area of The Study

The study covers Small Scale agriculture in farmers in the area of Tirunelveli Taluk.

Period of The Study

This study for the problem and challenges of Indian agriculture in Tirunelveli Taluk require for the period of 2023-2024 for the complete research and analysis of the data.

II. Methodology

The present study is empirical research and it is based on the survey method. A Structured non-disguised questionnaire was used to collect information. This study is descriptive and analytical in nature based on primary and secondary data.

Research Design

The researcher has been selected on convenience sampling technique and the total number of samples was 150 out of which 100 were selected. The structural interview schedule was used to collect the relevant data.

Sampling Design

The present study is based on convenience sampling method has been adopted 110 sample respondents from Tirunelveli area has been selected on the basis of convenience and get the questionnaire filled in. Excellent opportunity for organized retailers in the area. This study has an academic significance, bearing in mind the new and promising trends in the feel of marketing, specially retailing.

Data Collection Method:

- Primary data
- Secondary data

Primary Data

The primary data were collected directly from the sample consumers through a well devised interview schedule method is used to collect data from the respondents. Sample size of 110 respondents has been appended in the report.

Secondary Data

The secondary data were collected directly from the sample consumers through a well devised interview schedule method is used to collect data from the respondents. Sample size of 110 respondent has been appended in the report.

Statistical Tools Used for Analysis

Apart from the necessary table chart and like suitable tools are applied for analysis and interpretation.

- Percentage analysis
- Chi square test analysis

Limitation of The Study:

The following are the limitations of the study:

It is restricted to 110 farmers as respondents in the Tirunelveli Taluk. Hence results obtained from the study cannot be generalized to the population as a whole. As the study was conducted for short duration of five months it was difficult to study in depth about the various aspects. This study only covers problem of the famers. Time Constraint.

III. Introduction of Review Literature:

A literature review is a type of academic writing that provides an overview of existing knowledge in a particular field of research. A good literature review summarizes analyses, evaluates and synthesizes the relevant literature within a particular field of research. It illuminates how knowledge has evolved within the field, highlighting what has already been done, what is generally accepted, what is emerging and what is the current state of thinking on the topic. Additionally, literature reviews identify the gaps in the current knowledge that is, un investigated or under-researched areas.

Review of Literature

1. Alexandra Effenberger 36 (2), 175-205, 2012 - After 20 years of neglect by international donors, agriculture is now again in the headlines because high food prices are increasing food insecurity and poverty. In the coming years, it will be essential to increase food productivity and production in developing countries, especially in Sub-saharan Africa and with smallholders. This however, requires finding viable solutions to a number of complex technical, institutional, and policy issues, including land markets, research on seeds and inputs, agricultural extension on seeds and inputs, agricultural extension, credit rural infrastructure, connection.

2. Mahesh Singh, Anaemia Pander(2021) - Small scale farming referred to the method of farming in which farming has been done on a small piece of land. Apart from various benefits of small scale farming such greater productivity, improved quality and provide more employment, it has some drawback such as financial uncertainty, less profit etc., Because of high quality of the food produced by small scale farming the demand of the respective food is also high that leads to the improved health. By considering the all aspects of the small farming, this review paper discussed about the problems and prospects of small-scale farming.

Data Analysis & Interpretation:

Age of the Respondents

AGE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Under 18	13	11.8
18-25	39	35.5
26-40	39	35.5
Above 40	19	17.3
Total	110	100.0

The age distribution of respondents is as follows: 11.8% are under 18, 35.5% are aged 18-25, 35.5% are aged 26-40, and 17.3% are above 40. A total of 110 respondents participated in the survey."

Gender of the Respondents

GENDER	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Male	42	38.2
Female	68	61.8
Total	110	100.0

The gender distribution among respondents indicates that 38.2% are male and 61.8% are female. Out of 110 respondents, 42 are male and 68 are female. The majority of respondents, accounting for 61.8%, identify as female, while 38.2% identify as male.

Biggest Challenges Small Scale Farmer

CHALLENGES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Access to Capital	14	12.7
Lack of Technical Knowledge	24	21.8
Market Access	31	28.2
Climate Change	28	25.5
Others	13	11.8
Total	110	100.0

Among the 110 respondents surveyed, various challenges were identified in their respective fields. Notably, 12.7% of respondents cited 'Access to Capital' as a primary obstacle, while 'Lack of Technical Knowledge' was highlighted by 21.8% of participants, indicating its significant impact. Moreover, 'Market Access' emerged as a major concern for 28.2% of respondents, underscoring the importance of market connectivity. Surprisingly, 'Climate Change' was identified as a substantial challenge by 25.5% of participants, reflecting growing environmental concerns within industries. Additionally, 11.8% of respondents mentioned 'Others' as challenges not categorized, demonstrating a variety of unique obstacles faced. This breakdown illustrates the diverse spectrum of challenges encountered across different sectors."

Major Accessing Markets on Produce

ACCESSING MARKETS ON PRODUCE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Lack of Market Information	15	13.6
Poor Transportation Infrastructure	19	17.3
Middlemen Exploiting Farmers	32	29.1
Price Fluctuations	25	22.7
Others	19	17.3

This table shows the accessing markets on produce distribution of 110 respondents. Among them 15 respondents (13.6%) are Lack of market information, while 19 respondents (17.3%) are poor transportation infrastructure, while 32 respondents (29.1%) are Middlemen exploiting farmers, while 25 respondents (22.7%) are price fluctuations, while 19 respondents (17.3%) are other. This information provides an understanding of the accessing markets on produce composition within the surveyed population.

Type of Farming Method in Future

TYPE OF FARMING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
Traditional Farming	21	19.1
Organic Farming	25	22.7
Hydroponic Farming	31	28.2
Aquaponic Farming	22	20.0
Perm culture	11	10.0
Total	110	100.0

In this dataset, hydroponic farming emerges as the most prevalent type among respondents, comprising 28.2% of the surveyed farmers, indicating a significant interest or adoption of soil-less cultivation methods. Organic farming closely follows, representing 22.7% of respondents, reflecting a substantial preference for natural and sustainable agricultural practices. Meanwhile, traditional farming and aquaponic farming show comparable frequencies, at 19.1% and 20.0% respectively, suggesting a balanced consideration between conventional and innovative cultivation techniques. Permaculture, with the lowest frequency at 10.0%, signifies a lesser prevalence or recognition among the surveyed population, potentially indicating a niche or specialized approach to farming.

IV. Findings of The Study:

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

- ✓ The table shows that, majority 17% of the respondents are 18-25 years age group.
- ✓ The table shows that, majority 68% of the respondents are Female.
- ✓ The table shows that, majority 44% respondents' income is up to are 20,000-30000
- ✓ The table shows that majority 28% respondents are climate change.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 42% respondents are others.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 37% respondents are NGO's co-operative.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 40% respondents are Quality.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 66% respondents are No.

- ✓ The table shows that majority 43% respondents are Direct to consumer.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 43% respondents are rarely.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 60% respondents are No.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 32% respondents are Middlemen exploiting farmer.
- ✓ The table show that majorities 35% respondents are Crop rotation and Intercropping.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 28% respondents are Infrastructure Development.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 31% respondents are Yield optimization resources efficiency.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 31% respondents are Hydroponic farming.
- ✓ The table shows that majority 46% respondents are Succession Planning

Finding related to chi-square analysis.

- ❖ The chi-square test yielded a statistic of 11.083 with a corresponding p-value of 0.086. Since the p-value exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, based on this data, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant association between age group and awareness levels.
- ❖ The chi-square test resulted in a statistic of 4.399 with a corresponding p-value of
- ❖ 0.111. Since the p-value exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, based on this data, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant association between gender and awareness level.
- ❖ The chi-square test resulted in a statistic of 7.897 with a corresponding p-value of
- ❖ 0.095. Since the p-value exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, based on this data, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant association between geographical location and awareness level.
- ❖ The chi-square test statistic is 7.897 with a corresponding p-value of 0.095. Given that the p-value exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, based on this analysis, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant association between geographical location and awareness level

Suggestions:

- ❖ Small-scale farmers often face a myriad of challenges that hinder their productivity and profitability.
- ❖ Access to resources like land, capital, and modern technology is often limited, making it difficult for them to compete with larger agricultural operations.
- ❖ Additionally, unpredictable weather patterns and climate change can significantly impact crop yields, leading to financial instability.
- ❖ To address these issues, holistic support mechanisms, including financial assistance, technology transfer, and market access initiatives, are crucial to empower small-scale farmers and ensure sustainable agricultural development
- ❖ Lack of infrastructure, such as roads and storage facilities, further exacerbates these challenges by hindering transportation and reducing the shelf life of perishable goods.

V. Conclusion:

This study is done on problems and prospects in small farming. It is evident from the study that most of the farmers prefer mixed cropping method of irrigation preferred is drip irrigation. It is inferred from the study that the most common problem faced here is lack of marketing knowledge. Also, they face difficulties in adapting modern farming as they feel it is costly in implementing. The conversation to organic farming is possible aware of the government schemes so it is suggested from the study that involvement of youngsters should be increased in farming and facilities should be improved to market their yield.

Reference

1. Alexandra Effenberger 36 (2), 175-205, 2012 "Income and consumption level s of small Farmers and Agricultural Labourers in Punjab", Indian Journal of Regional Science, Vol.37, No.2, P.P.78-82.
2. ANTWI, M., & SESHLODI, P. (2011). Marketing constraints facing emerging small-scale pig farmers in Gauteng province, South Africa, Journal of Human Ecology, 36(1), 37-42.

3. BOTHOKO, G.J.& OLADELE, O.L. (2013). Factors affecting farmers participation in agricultural projects in Ngaka Modiri Molema district farmers in south Africa: Factor analysis approach. *African Journal of agricultural research* 4(3), 208-214.
4. Food and Agricultural Organization of United Nations (FAO)(2017). The future of food and agriculture-trends and challenges. FAO, Rome. Retrieved January 5, 2021,
5. MATSANE, S.H.&OYEKALE, A.S. (2014). Factors Affecting Marketing of Vegetables among Small-Scale Farmers in Mahikeng Local Municipality, North West Province, South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science* 5(2), 390-397,.