

A Survey of Marketing Challenges Faced by Cashew Nut Farmers in Konkan Region of Maharashtra, India

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Abstract

The Botanical name for Cashew is “Anacardium Occidentale”. It’s a “Cash Crop” for most of the farmers around the world. Cash crop is an Agricultural produce which makes the profit in return of selling by grown of crops. However, there is a need of information related to cashew nut marketing by cashew nut farmers. Hence, the present investigation is the survey research on marketing challenges faced by cashew nut farmers in Konkan region of Maharashtra, India. Multi Stage random sampling procedure is adopted in this study to select 320 respondents from 32 villages. In this study, the data were obtained from a field survey through the use of questionnaires, administered through personal interview to highlight cashew farmers’ challenges to market cashew nut in Konkan region. Both Male and Female respondents were from the age group of 30-59 years. Most of the Farmers fall in to educated group of Undergraduate, Graduate and Post Graduate. Transport facilities and distribution channels are available. The major problems are Spoilage of cashew nuts, Lack of Price information and lack of Marketing Information. More Marketing policies and strategies needed for cashew Industry.

KEYWORDS: Cashew, Farmers, Konkan, Maharashtra, Marketing

I) Introduction

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood of the majority of India’s Population. It is an important source of employment, local raw materials and government revenues. The main categories of Indian crops are Food crops, Cash Crops, Plantation Crops and Horticulture Crops. Cashew (*Anacardium Occidentale* L.) belongs to the family Anacardiaceae is an economically important tropical cash crop. The Cashew tree is a fast grower and tropical evergreen tree that produces the Cashew Nut (seed) and Cashew Apple. A large number of small and marginal farmers, especially living on the coastal belts of India, depend on cashew for their livelihood. Nearly 2.00 Lakh workers, more than 90% of whom are women, are directly employed in cashew processing factories which are concentrated mostly in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. In Maharashtra Cashew Nut is grown mainly in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurga of Konkan Region. Apart from economic significance, cashew industry has the potential leading role in the social and financial upliftment of the rural poor. So, cashew is generally described as poor man’s crop and rich man’s food.

II) Materials & Methods

1. Area of study

The study was carried out in villages of konkan region in Maharashtra state, India. Maharashtra state is one of the leading producers of Cashew in India is the reason behind the choice of Maharashtra state for this study. The state located in the western part of India and covers an area of 1,18,809 square miles. Konkan is the coastal division of Maharashtra state in India. It stretches North-South from the city of Mumbai in the North,

to Goa which borders the southern tip of Konkan. Konkan is also known as the Konkan Coast or Kokan, is a rugged section of the Western coastline of India. The land of Konkan is bounded by the Sahyadri Mountain range (“Western Ghats”) on the East and the Arabian Sea on the West. The region consists of costal districts such as Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurga and Thane. Generally the climate of Konkan region is hot and humid. The region witness all climatic seasonal changes i.e. Monsoon, winter and summer. The warm and humid climatic conditions are quite favorable for Horticulture, e.g. Mangoes, Kokam, Cashew Nuts, Coconuts and Strawberry. Marketing of Cashew nuts is normally done over four months annually between February and May.

2. Data collection & Sampling Methods

Primary data were used in this study. The data were obtained from a field survey through the use of questionnaires, administered through personal interview. Local Languages like Marathi and Malvani used to communicate with farmers. The questionnaire was designed to elicit information on marketing challenges faced by Cashew nut Farmers. The cashew nut farmers in Konkan region of Maharashtra state constitute the target population for this study. Multi Stage random sampling procedure is adopted in this study. A Three stage simple random sampling method has been used for selecting the units and respondents. Stage 1: Taluka Level: The Talukas in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurga District. Ratnagiri (8): Chiplun, Sangameshwar, Khed, Dapoli, Rajapur, Guhagar, Lanja, Mandangad, Sindhudurga (8) : Kudal, Sawantwadi, Kankavli, Devgad, Malvan, Vengurla, Dodamarg, Vaibhavwadi Stage 2: Two Villages from Each Taluka were selected for study. 16 Villages from each District were selected. Total 32 villages selected for the study Stage 3: 10 Farmers randomly selected from each village. Total 320 farmers selected for the study

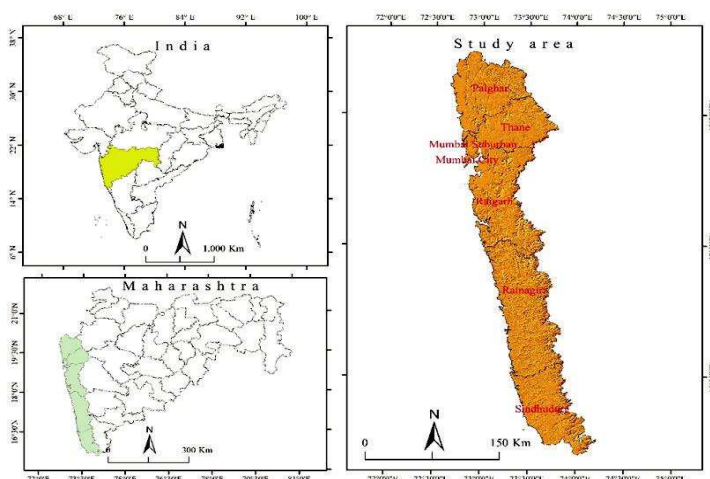


Figure 1: Location Map of study Area

Source : Arjun B. Doke (2017) “Land Use/Cover Mapping of Konkan Region, Maharashtra”

3. Analytical Framework

Simple frequency tables and percentages were used to profile the socio-economic characteristics and Marketing challenges faced by cashew nut farmers.

III) Results & Discussion

1. Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

This study found that a sizeable proportion of female were also involved in Cashew nut farming and Marketing. Table 1 revealed that 53% Male and 47% Female Respondents. Most of the cashew nut farmer (41%) fell into the age bracket of 45-59 and (31%) fell into the age bracket of 30-44 years. It shows that majority of the cashew farmers fell into the age of 30-59 years. Majority of Respondents were married (69%). This indicates that farmers with family are more intended in cashew nut farming. Undergraduates (63%) are more involved in Cashew nut farming compare to Graduates (21%). Farmers above poverty line (87%) were more involved than farmer below poverty line (13%). It shows that majority of cashew nut farmers are not poor farmers.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	170	53%
Female	150	47%
Age (Years)		
15-29	51	16%
30-44	100	31%
45-59	130	41%
60-74	30	9%
75-89	9	3%
Marital Status		
Single	62	19%
Married	220	69%
Divorced	9	3%
Widowed	29	9%
Education		
Illiterate	41	13%
Undergraduates	203	63%
Graduate	66	21%
Post Graduate	10	3%
Income		
Below Poverty Line	41	13%
Above Poverty Line	279	87%
Source: Field Survey 2018		

Table 2 shows the Marketing challenges faced by cashew farmers in Konkan Region. All farmers (100%) store cashews at home as they cannot afford rental shops. Also rental shops are available in city which is far away from the villages. Most of the farmers (66%) hire vehicle and few farmers (34%) carry head load due to high transportation cost. Retailer is the most favorable distribution channel of farmers (66%). Only 22% farmers process cashew nuts and market it. Most of the Farmers (81%) use their personal savings. Farmers are not intended to borrow money from Banks due to high rate of Interest. (79%) families are in cashew nut farming hence only (21%) farmers' hire labors. Only (22%) farmers' process cashew nut and they use plastic pouch for packing. Most of the farmers (78%) face spoilage problem when cashews are not dried properly. Majority of farmers (89%) agree that they lack cashew nut price information and (93%) farmers agreed that they lack Marketing Information.

Table 2: Marketing Challenges faced by cashew nut farmers in Konkan Region of Maharashtra, India		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Storage Facilities		
House	320	100%
Rented Shop	0	0%
Transportation		
Head Load (Due to High Transportation cost)	109	34%
Vehicle	211	66%
Distribution Channel		
Retailer	210	66%
Wholesaler	30	9%
Processor	70	22%
Exporter	10	3%
Finance		
Personal Saving	261	81%
Family	50	16%
Money Lenders	9	3%
Bank	0	0%
Labor		
Family Members	253	79%
Labor on Hire	67	21%
Packing		
Plastic Pouch (Processed Cashew)	70	22%

Spoilage (When not dried properly)	250	78%
Lack of Price Information	286	89%
Lack of Marketing information	299	93%
Source: Field Survey 2018		

IV) Conclusion

This study examined the Marketing challenges faced by Cashew nut farmers in Konkan region of Maharashtra state, India. The survey shows that Male and female contribution is almost equal in Cashew Farming as Male contributes 53% and 47% are females. Education and income level of cashew nut farmers are pretty high as compare to other farmers of Maharashtra. The farmers in Konkan region face many problems while marketing cashew nuts in the market. But major problems are Spoilage of cashew nuts, Lack of Price information and lack of Marketing Information. The study of above survey highlight that cashew nut farmers need training in the process of drying of cashew nuts to avoid spoilage. Price and Marketing information can be broadcast through Television and Local Newspapers to avoid major losses from cashew nut farmers. As most of the cashew nut farmers are educated enough to read and understand the information broadcasted on Cashew Market. More research recommended in Marketing policies and strategies for Cashew Industry.

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