

Perception Of Sugarcane Cultivators About Service Effectiveness Of Cooperative Sugar Mills In Dharmapuri District – An Empirical Study

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Abstract: *The study has been conducted about the services provided by cooperative sugar mills to sugar cane cultivators and perception of sugarcane cultivators about service effectiveness of cooperative sugar mills in Dharmapuri district. The primary objective of the study was to know the perception of sugarcane cultivators about the services provided by cooperative sugar mills in Dharmapuri District. Descriptive research method was followed and multi-stage random sampling was used to determine and select the sample. The study found that the higher age group sugarcane cultivators and more number of years experienced cultivators are not happy about services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. However, majority of the medium and large farmers, higher educated and higher income farmers were opined that the sample cooperative sugar mills are providing effective services to its member sugarcane cultivators.*

Keywords: Sugarcane Cultivators, Perception of farmers, Cooperative Sugar Mills, Service Effectiveness.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sugarcane is an important commercial crop worldwide and it is one of the main cash crops in India. Sugarcane is the main source of sugar in India and holds a prominent position as a cash crop and also it provides higher income to farmers compare with other agricultural products. Thus India is the second largest sugar producer in the world. Sugar can be produced from sugarcane, sugar-beet or any other crop having sugar content. But in India, sugarcane is the main source of sugar. At present, this is the second largest agro-based industry of India after cotton textile industry. This industry involves a total capital investment of Rs. 1,250 crore and provides employment to 2.86 lakh workers. In addition, 2.50 crore sugarcane cultivators also get benefit from this industry. Tamil Nadu has shown phenomenal progress with regard to sugar production during the last few years. High yield per hectare of sugarcane, higher sucrose content, high recovery rate and long crushing season have enabled Tamil Nadu to obtain highest yield of 9.53 tonnes of sugar per hectare in the

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whole of India. As a result of these advantages, the state has emerged as the third largest producer of sugar, contributing over nine per cent of the total sugar production of India. In India the rural economy and livelihood is mainly based on sugarcane and sugar industry due to the sugarcane as a cash crop. Therefore it is an important source of income for the farmers. There are 38 Sugar Mills are functioning in Tamil Nadu, out of this 15 sugar mills are owned and operated by co-operatives. Therefore around 40 percent of sugar mills in Dharmapuri district are operated by cooperatives. Thus, this study has conducted about the services provided by cooperative sugar mills to sugar cane cultivators and perception of sugarcane cultivators about service effectiveness of cooperative sugar mills in Dharmapuri district.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

The ultimate aim of cooperatives is to improve the socio-economic status of the members. Therefore, the co-operative sugar mills are expected to be the instruments of socio-economic transformation and bring about an economic revolution of sugarcane cultivators. But, now days the cooperative sugar mills are facing a lot of problems such as operational, marketing, financial and other problems to function effectively and efficiently. Co-operative sector in sugar industry is now facing much instability in its working due to uncertain policy of control, decontrol and re-control followed by the government. Even though the cooperative sugar mills are tried to provide effective services to its member sugar cultivators. On the other side the sugarcane cultivators are facing several problems while production, harvesting and marketing. Insufficient water, climate change, insufficient rainfall, high cost of manure, labour problems and etc are the major production problems faced by sugarcane cultivators. Labour shortage, delayed harvest, high transport cost, less market price, credit sales are the major problems faced by sugarcane cultivators while harvesting and marketing. Therefore, these problems are the burning issues to analyse in present conditions. Hence, this study has been undertaken entitled “Perception of Sugarcane Cultivators about Service Effectiveness of Cooperative Sugar Mills in Dharmapuri District – An Empirical Study”.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To present the various services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills to sugarcane cultivators.
2. To assess the sugarcane cultivators opinion about service effectiveness of sample cooperative sugar mills.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have been conducted about the functions and performance of sugar industry in India. Many of the studies points out the various services provided by sugar industry in general and co-operative sugar mills in particular. Hence, selected literatures have only given to picture the various aspects of service effectiveness of cooperative sugar mills.

Rout and et al (2013), has conducted a study entitled “Farmers Perception on Contract Farming of Sugarcane in Orissa: A Village Level Study”. The primary of the study was to examine the nature of contracts in sugar cane cultivation, type of inputs and services provided by the sugar factories to the farmers and benefits and constraints experienced by the farmers in sugar cane farming. The multi-stage stratified random sampling technique was adopted in the study. The study found the sample sugarcane cultivators were faced following constraints i.e., violation of terms and conditions by farms, lack of proper management by company, frequent price fluctuations in international market, scarcity of transport vehicle during peak periods, inability to provide proper transport facilities to farms and families negligence in maintaining quality.

Ganesh Patil., (2006) has published research article entitle “Half a century Track of Co-operative sugar Industry”. The study discussed about the success of cooperative sugar mills in India. The study found that that cooperative sugar mills acted as instrument for improvement of economic status of rural India. Also the study found that the cooperative sugar mills were positively changed the socio economic status i.e., education, occupation, number of days employment, income and etc of rural people in India. The researcher suggested that the government and co-operatives should prepare proper agenda to work and achieve the objectives of sugar cooperatives.

Biradar Patil A.P (1990) has conducted a study entitled “the co-operative sugar factories in Belgaum District”. The main objective of the study was to analyse the functioning of co-operative sugar mills and contribution of cooperatives on socio economic impact on rural areas. The study found that co-operative sugar mills have played a significant role in changing the socio-economic change in the rural areas. On the other hand, the study also found that there was a improper internal management in cooperative sugar mills such as lack of co-ordination between engineering and manufacturing staff and technical inefficiency due to that the cooperative working condition was very poor.

Mane P.M (1975) conducted an entitled “An analysis of the impact of Sugar Co-operative on the member farmers in the selected Sugar Co-operatives in Maharashtra”. The

study found that the co-operative sugar factory has increased the levels of income, savings, and investments with the help of improving the number of days employment and increased self-employment opportunities for sugarcane cultivators and their family members. The study finally concludes that the cooperative sugar mills increased the standard of living of the sugarcane cultivators.

`V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research method was adopted. Multi-stage random sampling technique was used. In the first stage Dharmapuri district was selected purposively. In the second stage, two cooperative sugar mills i.e., Dharmapuri District Cooperative Sugar Mills Ltd., and Subramaniya Siva Cooperative Sugar Mills Ltd., were selected purposively. In the third stage, as per the information received from officials of sample cooperative sugar mills the total of 1847 sugarcane cultivators were actively supply sugarcane to sample cooperatives, out of this 329 sugarcane cultivators were determined as sample size of the study by using sample size determination techniques. In the fourth stage, out of 1028 sugarcane cultivators from Dharmapuri District Cooperative Sugar Mills Ltd., and 819 sugarcane cultivators from Subramaniya Siva Cooperative Sugar Mills Ltd., 183 and 146 farmers were determined as sample size by using proportionate random sampling techniques. In the last stage, the samples of 329 sugarcane cultivators were selected by using simple random sampling.

VI. DATA USED AND METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Both primary and secondary data were collected and used. The data collected from sample sugarcane cultivators through direct interviewing method using a pre-tested structured interview schedule during the month of June to August 2019. The interview schedule consisted of two parts viz., demographic profile and the perception statements towards service effectiveness of sample cooperative sugar mills.

VII. TOOLS USED

To assess the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators towards service effectiveness of sample cooperative sugar mills Likerts five point scaling techniques was used and to present the data neatly and clearly understanding the reader the simple percentage analysis was used.

VIII. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The demographic variables such as age, gender, education, occupation and income and the cultivation variables number of acre sugarcane growing and experience in sugarcane growing were analysed in this part of the study.

**Table 1: Demographic and Cultivation particulars
of sample Sugarcane Cultivators (n = 329)**

S.N	Variables	Count	%
1	Demographic variables:		
	Age:		
	Upto 30	18	5.47
	31-40	112	34.04
	41-50	178	54.10
	Above 50	21	6.38
2	Gender		
	Male	242	73.56
	Female	87	26.44
3	Education:		
	No Formal Education	8	2.43
	Primary	25	7.60
	Secondary	54	16.41
	Higher Secondary	135	41.03
	Degree / others	107	32.52
4	Occupation		
	Primary Occupation	124	37.69
	Secondary Occupation	205	62.31
5	Annual Income		
	Less than Rs.25000	51	15.50
	Rs.25001-50000	186	56.53
	More than Rs.50000	92	27.96
	<u>Cultivation variables</u>		
6	No. of acres cultivation		
	Below 1 acre	35	10.64
	1 -5 acres	202	61.40
	Above 5 acres	92	27.96
7	Experience in Sugarcane Growing		
	0-5 years	68	20.67
	6-10 years	184	55.93
	Above 10 years	77	23.40

Source: Primary data

The analysis of demographic profile of sample sugarcane cultivators shows that most of the sample farmers were comes under the age group of 41-50 and 31-40 which constitutes 54.10 percent and 34.04 percent respectively. The majority of male farmers were involved in sugarcane cultivators which constitutes 73.56 percent. Out of 329 sample farmers 41.03 percent of sample sugarcane cultivators were completed higher secondary level education. Majority of the sample sugarcane cultivators were completed a higher secondary and degree level which constitutes 40.67 percent and 32.00 percent respectively. Majority i.e., 62.31 percent of the sample sugarcane cultivators are doing sugarcane cultivation is the primary occupation. Majority i.e., 56.53 percent of the sample sugarcane cultivators have earned Rs.25001-50000 per annum from sugarcane production and 27.96 percent were earned more than Rs.50000 per annum. The analysis of cultivation variables of sample sugarcane cultivators reveals that majority i.e., 61.40 percent of sample farmers were used 1-5 acres of land for sugarcane cultivation and 55.93 percent of the sample respondents have 6-10 years experience in sugarcane production. Hence, the result clearly indicates that the majority of the sample sugarcane cultivators were under the age group of 41-50, male, completed higher secondary level education, doing sugarcane cultivation as secondary occupation, earned Rs.25001-50000, used 1-5 acres of land and 6-10 years experience in sugarcane cultivation.

IX. PERCEPTION OF SUGARCANE CULTIVATORS ABOUT SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS OF SAMPLE COOPERATIVE SUGAR MILLS

The perception of sample sugarcane cultivators' was measured by using five points Likert's scaling statements i.e., highly satisfied, satisfied, neither nor, dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied. The service effectiveness of cooperative sugar mills were grouped into four aspects such as production/operational aspects, harvesting aspects, marketing aspects and finance aspects. To analyse the perception of sample respondents Multiple Linear Regression techniques was used. For the purpose of analysis, demographic variables such as age, gender, education, occupation and income and the cultivation variables number of acre sugarcane growing and experience in sugarcane growing were used as independent variables and total score of opinion statement of each aspects were used as deponent variables. A conceptual model for the analysis has been presented as follows.

Figure 1: Perception of Sugarcane Cultivators about Service Effectiveness of Cooperative Sugar Mills

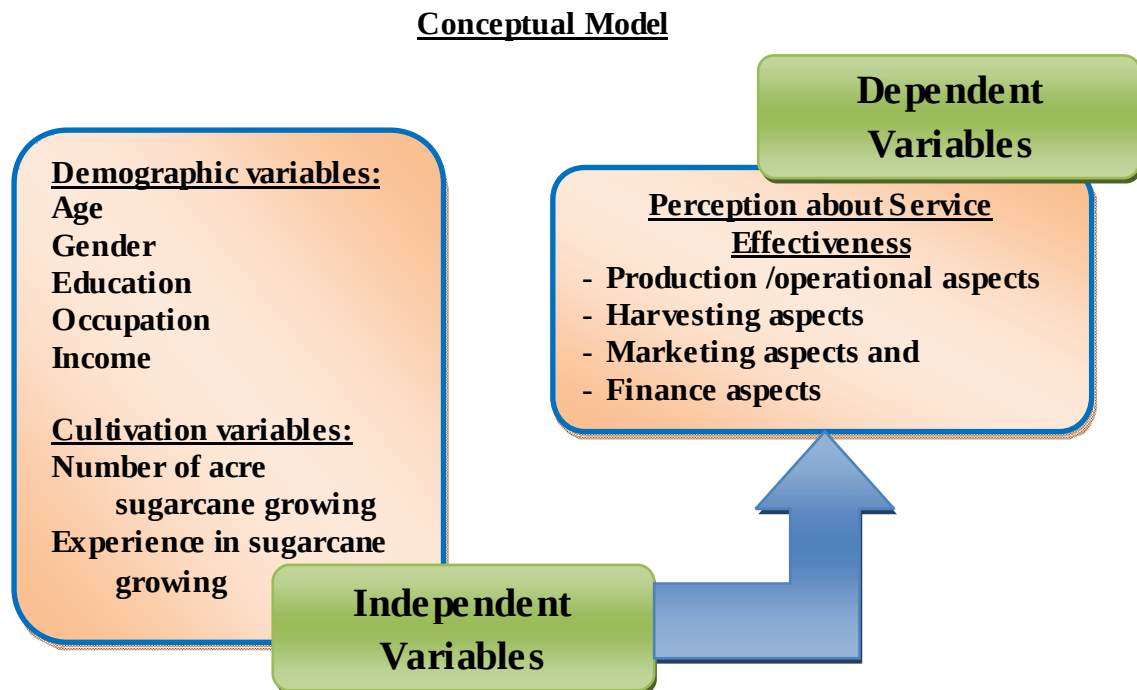


Table 2: Relationship between Sugarcane Cultivators opinion about Service Effectiveness of Sample Cooperative Sugar Mills - Multiple Linear Regressions

Independent Variables	Production Aspects	Harvesting Aspects	Marketing Aspects	Financial Aspects
Demographic Variables				
Age	-2.586**	1.247	-3.367*	1.099
Gender	-1.986	1.870	-1.980	1.544
Education	3.130*	2.970**	-2.811**	0.547
Occupation	-2.512**	2.004	2.699**	2.877**
Income	0.176	.0251	0.214	2.519**
Cultivation Variables				
Number of acre sugarcane growing	2.513**	2.736**	2.880**	3.105*
Experience in sugarcane growing	2.601**	-2.809**	-2.577**	2.001
Constant	29.047	27.988	30.124	27.975
R²	0.682	0.617	0.648	0.551
N	329	329	329	329

Source: Compiled from primary data

* Significant at 1 percent level ** Significant at 5 percent level.

Production Aspects: The result of multiple linear regression analysis reveals that the demographic variables such as gender and income do not influence on the perception of

sample sugarcane cultivators about the production services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. However, demographic variables of age, education and occupation and cultivation variables number of acre sugarcane growing and experience in sugarcane growing exerts influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the production services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. It implies that higher educated, more number of acre sugarcane cultivators and more number of years experienced sugarcane cultivators were have positive opinion about the production services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. On the other side higher age group and doing sugarcane cultivation as secondary occupation farmers were not happy about production services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills.

Harvesting Aspects: It is evident from multiple linear regression analysis that the demographic variables age, gender, occupation and income do not influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the harvesting services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. However, demographic variable education and cultivation variables number of acre sugarcane growing and experience in sugarcane growing exerts influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the harvesting services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. It implies that higher educated and more number of acres using for sugarcane cultivation farmers were have positive opinion about the harvesting services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. On the other side more number of years experienced sugarcane cultivators were not happy about harvesting services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills.

Marketing Aspects: The result of multiple linear regression analysis reveals that the demographic variables of gender and income do not influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the marketing services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. However, demographic variables of age, education and occupation and cultivation variables number of acre sugarcane growing and experience in sugarcane growing exerts influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the marketing services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. It implies that medium and large farmers were happy effect marketing services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. On the other side higher age group, higher educated, sugarcane growing as primary occupation farmers and less number of years experienced sugarcane cultivators were not happy about marketing services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills.

Financial Aspects: The result of multiple linear regression analysis reveals that the demographic variables such as age, gender and education and cultivation variable experience in sugarcane growing do not influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the financial services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. However, demographic variables of occupation and income and cultivation variable number of acre sugarcane growing exerts influence on the perception of sample sugarcane cultivators about the financial services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. It implies that doing sugarcane cultivation as primary occupation cultivators, higher income earning cultivators and more number of acres sugarcane cultivating farmers were have positive opinion about the financial services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills.

X. CONCLUSION

From the analysis result it may be concluded that the higher age group sugarcane cultivators and more number of years experienced cultivators are not happy about services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. However, majority of the higher educated and higher income farmers and more number of acres sugarcane cultivating farmers are happy about services provided by sample cooperative sugar mills. Hence, the analysis result clearly revealed that majority of the medium and large farmers, higher educated and higher income farmers were opined that the sample cooperative sugar mills are providing effective services to its member sugarcane cultivators.

XI. REFERENCE

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