

## Problems Encountered by the Turmeric Farmers and Suggestions to Overcome the Problems in Marketing the Produce in Kadapa District of Andhra Pradesh

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**ABSTRACT:** Turmeric is a primeval and holy spice of India and is popularly known as ‘Yellow gold’. Among various problems in turmeric farming, marketing is the major one and the turmeric farmers lose their bargaining power and get exploited as whole produce will emanate to market yard at a time. The present study was conducted during 2020-21 and carried out purposively in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh with the objective of studying the problems that are faced by the turmeric farmers and suggestions to overcome them in the marketing of the produce with a sample size of 90 respondents. The study followed *Ex post facto* research design. In this study, Garrett’s ranking technique was used to identify and rank the problems. Whereas, suggestions were measured using frequency and percentage. The results of the study revealed that the major problems faced by the turmeric farmers were; lack of remunerative price, delayed cash payment and fluctuation in market prices got first, second and third rank respectively. These problems directly hinder the marketing behavior of turmeric farmers. Whereas, major suggestions offered by the turmeric farmers were; provision of minimum support price for turmeric (94.44%), provision of information about current marketing situations (91.11%) and provision of sufficient storage facilities (88.89%) got first, second and third rank respectively.

**Keywords:** Marketing, Problems, Suggestions, Turmeric farmers.

### INTRODUCTION

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa* L.) is an imperative spice crop of our country and considered as ‘Golden Spice of life’. India is the leading producer, consumer, and exporter of turmeric in the world with a global share of 78 percent and 60 percent of production and export respectively. It occupies a distinct place in the national as well as international spice market. It has been estimated that in India, turmeric is cultivated nearly 2.57 lakh ha with a production of 9.46 lakh tonnes (shares 14 percent of total spice production) and average national productivity of 3.7 Mt ha<sup>-1</sup>. According to the Spice Board of India’s report 2019, nearly 1.39 lakh tonnes of turmeric with an economic worth of Rs. 1786.00 crores were exported during 2018-19. Andhra Pradesh is one of the leading producers of turmeric with an area of about 17,800 hectares and producing 80,100 metric tonnes with average productivity of 4.16 Mt ha<sup>-1</sup>. Kadapa district is well recognised for production and marketing of turmeric among other districts in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. In Kadapa, turmeric is cultivated in 4,315 hectares of area with a total annual production of 51,780 tonnes (Season and Crop Report, 2019). Among various problems in

turmeric farming, marketing is the major one and the turmeric farmers lose their bargaining power and get exploited as whole turmeric produce will emanate to market yard at a time. The minimum prices of turmeric in the Kadapa regulated market yard shows unpredictable behavior. In this backdrop, it has been increasingly felt that providing market extension services would be an opportunity to mitigate the aforesaid difficulties. In order to educate farmers about their enterprise and the varieties that are best for the region based on market demand, market extension services should be made available. Hence, the present investigation was undertaken with the following objective to study the problems encountered by the turmeric farmers and suggestions to overcome them which were actually investigated in the main research study.

Babu (2004) found that majority (92.22%) of vegetable growers suggested to provide subsidies on inputs followed by improving credit facilities (91.11%), providing cold storage facilities (88.88%), establishing vegetable processing units and value addition centers (74.44%), enhancement of infrastructural facilities (72.22%) were identified as ranks I, II, III, IV and V respectively. They also suggested to increase number of

rythu bazars (58.88%), supply of pure seed for better quality of produce (56.66%) and to provide latest market information (55.55%).

Kumar *et al.* (2008) reported that the major problems faced by the paddy growers were uncertain contact of extension personnel (82.85%) followed by high cost of chemical fertilizers (71.90%), lack of capital fund (66.67%), weak market infrastructure (46.67%), limited transport facilities (41.13%) and fluctuating market prices (20.95%) and the major suggestions given by the paddy growers were training to needy farmers (49.52%) followed by effective and efficient marketing system (43.34%) and establishment of co-operative marketing societies (29.05%).

Walke *et al.* (2009) indicated that the major suggestions given by the brinjal growers were stable market price for brinjal (78.33%) followed by effective and efficient marketing system (52.50%) and establishment of co-operative marketing societies (37.50%).

Srinivas *et al.* (2016) reported that the major problems faced by the vegetable growers in marketing were price fluctuation (97.50%) followed by high hamali charges (66.67%) and high transport charges (64.17%) and the major suggestions given by the vegetable growers were establishment of markets at village level, cold storage facilities in order to avoid price fluctuations.

Devde (2017) revealed that majority (91.66%) of vegetable growers identified the major problems were fluctuation in the market price followed by absence of storage facilities (90.00%), high commission charges (83.16%), lack of market information (60.00%), inadequate physical facilities in the markets (54.16%), prolonged transaction (50.00%), faulty system of weighment (45.83%), no grading facilities (34.16%), illegal deduction while selling (29.16%), lack of processing facilities (21.66%), and markets are far away (23.34%). He also revealed that majority (91.66%) of vegetable growers suggested for providing access to market information followed by fixing minimum price for the produce (87.50%), display the prices at each market place (84.17%), fixing minimum labour charges (79.17%), providing concession in transportation charges (72.50%) and procurement at nearby places (70.83%).

Maratha and Badodiya (2017) concluded that the major problems faced by the vegetable growers were fluctuation in market price (82.50%) followed by lack of market information (77.50%), high commission charges (74.16%), delayed cash payment (69.16%), lack of processing facilities (65.00%), faulty system of weighing (51.66%), high cost of transportation (50.83%), absence of storage facilities (50.00%), markets are far away (31.66%) and no grading facilities (20.83%).

Maruti (2017) revealed that majority (96.67%) of onion growers faced the problem of fluctuation in the prices of commodities followed by fluctuation in market price (95.33%), commission charges while marketing the onion produce (62.67%), poor transport facilities (29.33%), inadequate availability of market related information (21.33%), and inaccurate weighing instruments (10.67%). He also revealed that majority

(74.67%) of onion growers suggested for government should fix the minimum support price for onion followed by stable market price for onion (70.00%), need for regular supply of electricity (64.67%), establishment of co-operative marketing societies (54.67%), NAFED need to purchase onion at reasonable rate (52.67%), effective and efficient marketing system (51.33%), provision of quality seed and planting material with technical know-how (50.00%), and adequate availability of production inputs (43.33%).

Katole *et al.* (2018) reported that the major problems faced by the turmeric growers in marketing were markets are far away (83.33%) followed by high cost of transportation (79.16%), no grading machinery availability (75.00%), lack of market information (72.50%), fluctuation in market price (67.50%), inadequate of storage facilities (64.16%), lack of processing facilities (54.16%) and loading and unloading charges are more (50.00%).

Shrikant (2018) revealed that majority 81.66 per cent of tomato growers suggested to establish separate market for tomato followed by providing concession in transportation charges (75.00%), elimination of middlemen in the market (70.00%), support price for the produce during price fluctuations (66.66%) and timely availability of market information (58.33%).

Vineetha *et al.* (2018) indicated that the major problems faced by the groundnut farmers were lack of timely market information (95.83%) followed by lack of remunerative price (94.17%), improper weighment (91.67%), fluctuation in market prices (89.17%), involvement of middle men (82.50%), high cost of labour during harvesting (75.00%), lack of co-operative marketing system (71.67%), high commission charges (68.33%), long distances of the markets (62.50%), delayed cash payment (60.83%), scarcity of labour for transportation and marketing (57.50%), insufficient storage facilities (22.50%) and high cost of transportation (12.50%).

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present investigation was carried out in the Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh in the year 2020-21 and was purposively selected for the study as it had a maximum area under turmeric cultivation in the Rayalaseema region. *Ex post facto* research design was followed for the study. Out of 51 mandals of the Kadapa district, two mandals namely Mydukur and Duvvur were purposively selected on the basis of the highest area under turmeric cultivation. From each mandal, three villages, and from each village 15 respondents were selected by using a simple random sampling procedure which make a total of 6 villages and 90 respondents respectively. The data was collected by a structured questionnaire administered personally as per schedules. The data pertaining to problems has been collected through statements of the structured schedule and tabulated on the basis of Garrett's ranking technique. Respondents were free to express their suggestions in order to eliminate the problems that are faced by them in selling the produce. All the suggestions borne out through systematic

observation had been recorded by the researcher. 'Suggestion' was operationally defined as the requirements expressed by the turmeric farmers in order to improve the marketing in turmeric. An open-ended schedule was developed to measure the suggestions. The suggestions as expressed by the respondents were keenly observed and framed into eight major suggestions. They were measured using frequency and percentage. Finally, the suggestions were ranked from one to eight based on the descending order of frequencies obtained.

It is essential to comprehend the problems that are faced by the turmeric farmers in order to increase their marketing-related aspects in turmeric. 'Problem' was operationalized as something that limits or restricts the turmeric farmers in marketing of turmeric produce. Based on the review of literature and interaction with turmeric farmers during pretesting and by taking expert's opinion, a list of ten important problems were identified and the turmeric farmers were asked to rank the identified problems in the order of their preference. Garrett's ranking technique: To find out major problems faced by the sample turmeric farmers in marketing, Garrett Ranking technique was used (Garret and Woodworth 1969). As per the order of the merit given by the turmeric farmers was changed into ranks by using the below formula. The main advantage of this technique over basic frequency distribution is that the items are ranked according to the importance of turmeric farmers, and the results of this ranking have been translated into score values using the formula

below:

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

Where,  $R_{ij}$  = Rank given for  $i^{\text{th}}$  item by the  $j^{\text{th}}$  sample respondents

$N_j$  = Number of items ranked by  $j^{\text{th}}$  sample respondents

By using the tables provided by Garret and Wood worth (1969), Garrett's Table was used to convert each rank percent position to scores. The scores of each respondent were then added together for each problem and divided by the total number of respondents whose scores were collected. According to respondents, the problems with the highest mean values are considered to be the most important.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents were asked to express the problems that are faced by them in the marketing of their produce. The data presented in Table 1 revealed that among the different problems faced by the turmeric farmers, 'Lack of remunerative price' was the most severe problem and was given first rank by the respondents. Even though, the majority of turmeric farmers sold their produce in agricultural market yards, the agents banded together to lower the charges at the point of sale, so that they could later resell the produce to consumers at higher prices. In addition, farmers' profit margins were being reduced by the high cost of essential inputs. As a result, the farmers also believed that the prices were unfair or unprofitable.

**Table 1: Garrett's ranking for different problems faced by the turmeric farmers (N=90).**

Sr. No.	Problems	Garrett's score	Garrett's mean score	Rank
1.	Lack of remunerative price	7380	82.00	I
2.	Delayed cash payment	6300	70.00	II
3.	Fluctuation in market prices	5670	63.00	III
4.	Absence/insufficient storage facilities	5220	58.00	IV
5.	Involvement of middlemen in marketing	4680	52.00	V
6.	High commission charges	4230	47.00	VI
7.	Lack of timely market information	3780	42.00	VII
8.	Lack of co-operative marketing system	3330	37.00	VIII
9.	High cost of transportation	2700	30.00	IX
10.	Long distance of the markets	1620	18.00	X

'Delayed cash payment' was given second rank by most of the farmers because they sold their produce in the market yards where the payment was delayed and it would be credited to the farmers' bank accounts only after two months. So, they had no immediate payment arrangements to meet their day to day expenditure and also for repaying their debts.

'Fluctuation in market prices' was given third rank. When an excess quantity of produce entered into the market, a group of commission agents and certain traders in the agricultural market yards would lower their prices. So that, the commission agents can make more profit than the farmers.

The fourth rank was given to 'absence/insufficient storage facilities'. Due to the lack of storage units in the villages, most of the small and medium farmers were unable to store their produce. Whereas, large farmers stored their produce in storage units because they were

financially stable and can sell it at high market prices. So, the government should take the required steps to upgrade the storage units in the villages for small and medium farmers.

The following rank was given to 'Involvement of middle men in the marketing'. The turmeric farmers made it clear that, during harvest, they must rely on middlemen to sell their product at the local level in order to receive prompt payment to satisfy their urgent needs.

'High commission charges' was given next rank by the respondents. The commission agents formed a syndicate once the produce was brought to market, which allowed them to lower the prices while charging the retailers more for the same produce. This covert agreement between the agents caused the farmers to frequently sell their produce at throwaway prices, causing them to suffer significant losses.

'Lack of timely market information' was given next rank by the respondents. Since the farmers might not have timely market knowledge on current prices of turmeric, they expressed their dissatisfaction with the government departments and extension agents for their inadequate market information.

'Lack of co-operative marketing system' was given next rank by the farmers, as farmers may be mobilized to form co-operatives which helps to reduce the role of middlemen and commission agents while boosting their bargaining strength.

'High cost of transportation' was ranked next by the turmeric farmers. Farmers band together to hire a vehicle to deliver their produce to market yards due to the higher hiring costs of transportation. But due to

several hikes in the HSD oil prices recently the charges were increased by the transporters. Due to this, some of the farmers were compelled by this circumstance to retail their produce locally in order to save money on transportation.

'Long distance of the markets' was ranked last by the respondents. Farmers reported that due to long distance of market yards, they sell their produce to local markets in order to meet their day to day requirements. By establishing agriculture infrastructure facilities at the village premises, forced or distressed sales and transportation can be reduced among farmers. The findings were in accordance with the studies conducted by Katole *et al.* (2018); Nitin and Goyal (2022); Ravi *et al.* (2018); Vineetha *et al.* (2018).

**Table 2: Suggestions given by the turmeric farmers to overcome the problems (N=90).**

Sr. No.	Suggestions	f	%	Rank
1.	Provision of minimum support price for turmeric	85	94.44	I
2.	Provision of information about current marketing situations	82	91.11	II
3.	Provision of sufficient storage facilities	80	88.89	III
4.	Efforts to minimize the role of middlemen in the markets	72	80.00	IV
5.	Efforts to minimize/eliminate the commission charges by the concerned authorities	62	68.89	V
6.	Establishing cooperative marketing and FPOs and rapid expansion of regulated marketing systems	56	62.22	VI
7.	Initiatives to upgrade the infrastructure of the market	52	57.78	VII
8.	Farmers should have adequate and cheap transport facilities that could enable them to take their surplus produce to the market	42	46.67	VIII

It is evident from Table 2 that among different suggestions given by the turmeric farmers, 'provision of minimum support price for turmeric' was suggested by the majority of the turmeric farmers. If government provides MSP for turmeric that could eliminate most of the problems faced by the turmeric farmers. Since the majority of the respondents were medium-sized, they depend on a worthy market price for their produce in order to cover the initial cost of turmeric cultivation as well as other family expenses. As a result, the product's fair market value was the only basis of income. The majority of farmers also stated unequivocally that when they took their produce to market, commission agents, brokers, etc. artificially lowered market prices. The market yard workers also didn't help the farmers in these situations. Thus, the turmeric farmers stated that, the government should enforce strong penalties against any market yard defaulter and determine the right and better market price long in advance while keeping in mind the challenges facing the turmeric producers.

The second suggestion given by the farmers was 'provision of information about current marketing situations' which would enable them to learn more about current marketing situations. Farmers still do not have awareness of online marketing system to sell their product as these systems have not yet started at ground level. Farmers, therefore believed that village-level marketing through RBKs would be highly beneficial in giving them the most recent market information.

The third suggestion given by the farmers was 'provision of sufficient storage facilities', almost all the farmers do not have their own storing facility which requires costly infrastructure and maintenance. As there is no adequate storage facility the farmer has to trade the produce as soon as possible. Due to this reason, the

farmer sometimes are forced to retail the produce at lower price.

Farmers also opined that 'Efforts to minimize the role of middlemen in the markets', because the middlemen were hitting away the returns of the farmers as they purchase the produce from the farmers and transported it to APMC.

Farmers also expressed 'efforts to minimize/eliminate the commission charges by the concerned authorities' as a suggestion that enables them to negotiate a higher price for the produce. It is a known fact that the commission agents receive a larger portion of the farmers' profits. Therefore, farmers proposed that commission charges should be decreased by establishing farmer's associations and enlisting the aid of government organizations that assist them in marketing their produce directly to wholesalers or consumers in order to gain the maximum benefits.

The next suggestion given was 'establishing cooperative marketing, FPOs and rapid expansion of regulated marketing systems'. Farmers believed that only through regulated markets and cooperative marketing systems, it would be possible to eliminate the role of middlemen present in turmeric regulated market yards, standardized weights could be used for weighing, and put a stop to vague and undefined charges in unregulated market places, provide proper grading and standardization procedures in turmeric market yards and strengthen the bargaining power of the farmers, etc. Due to long chain of marketing channels for agricultural produce, the farmers are exploited by many intermediaries in this chain. So, FPO will ensure proper marketing facilities to the farmers and help them in value addition also. Further, the government must intervene to ensure that to provide sufficient market yards, enough credit facilities



for the turmeric farmers to prevent distressed sales and more training sessions should be conducted to update farmers' knowledge of marketing-related topics, an insurance scheme for farmers, regulation of non-functioning market committees, and to provide a fire fighting system at the market yards.

'Initiatives to upgrade the infrastructure of the market' was suggested next by the farmers. Establishment of infrastructure in the markets helps the farmers to trade their produce in particular markets and also to store their product when the price was not good and increase their profits by selling their produce at the highest price. The next suggestion given was 'Farmers should have adequate and cheap transport facilities that could enable them to take their surplus product to the market'. Farmers also requested assistance from the government in order to transport their produce to other states for obtaining maximum benefits. The findings were in accordance with the studies conducted by Kumar *et al.* (2008); Vineetha *et al.* (2018).

## CONCLUSIONS

Turmeric is one of the most indispensable spices and is used as an important ingredient in culinary all over the world, but its marketing involves a lot of problems. It was found that lack of remunerative price was the most common problem for the turmeric farmers followed by delayed cash payment and fluctuation in market prices etc. To overcome these problems, the major suggestions given by the respondents were; provision of minimum support price for turmeric followed by provision of information about current marketing situations, provision of sufficient storage facilities and by providing village-level marketing through Rythu Bharosa Kendra's (RBKs) would be highly beneficial in giving them the most recent market information which in turn increase their profits by selling their produce at highest prices.

## FUTURE SCOPE

An attempt has been made in this research to find out the problems faced by the turmeric farmers and their suggestions to overcome which would also helpful to planners, policy makers, scientists and administrators to overcome the constraints. The study also reveals the marketing behavior of turmeric farmers which will help the extension worker and other agencies to know the present level of marketing behavior of the farmers. The findings of the study will be useful to the planners for preparing the programs concerned with turmeric marketing; to the scientists in formulating location specific research programs; to the trainers for developing training programs in the area of market led

extension.

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