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A STUDY ON FLOWER MARKETING IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT

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Abstract
Flower cultivation and marketing play an important role in the rural economy of Tamil Nadu by providing employment and income opportunities to farmers, traders, wholesalers, retailers, and other participants in the supply chain. Thanjavur district, traditionally known for its agricultural activities, has favourable conditions for the cultivation and marketing of several varieties of flowers. Flowers are used extensively for religious functions, weddings, festivals, social ceremonies, decoration, and personal purposes. However, flower marketing is characterized by perishability, seasonal price fluctuations, inadequate storage facilities, transportation difficulties, and dependence on intermediaries. This study examines the nature of flower marketing in Thanjavur district, identifies the major marketing channels, studies the problems faced by flower growers and traders, and suggests measures for improving marketing efficiency.
Keywords: Flower Marketing, Flower Cultivation, Farmers, Marketing Channels, Price Fluctuation, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu.

Introduction

Agriculture is one of the major sources of livelihood in rural India. Along with food and commercial crops, floriculture has emerged as an important agricultural activity. Flowers have considerable economic and cultural significance in India. They are used in temples, religious ceremonies, marriages, festivals, household functions, decoration, and the production of garlands and other floral products.

Thanjavur district has a strong agricultural base and a network of local markets and trading centres. Flower growers market their produce through different channels involving farmers, commission agents, wholesalers, retailers, flower vendors, and consumers. Understanding this marketing structure is essential for improving the income of flower growers and ensuring an efficient supply of flowers to consumers.

Profile of Flower Marketing in Thanjavur District

Flower marketing in Thanjavur district consists of several activities, beginning with harvesting and collection and continuing through transportation, wholesale trading, retailing, and final consumption.

Flowers cultivated and marketed in the region may include varieties such as:

- Jasmine
- Marigold
- Rose
- Chrysanthemum
- Crossandra
- Tuberose
- Other locally cultivated seasonal flowers

Statement of the Problem

Flower cultivation can provide attractive returns to farmers, but the marketing process presents several challenges. Since flowers are perishable, growers have limited time to sell their produce. In many cases, farmers depend on intermediaries for transportation, price information, and access to markets.

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To study the nature and structure of flower marketing in Thanjavur district.
2. To identify the major varieties of flowers marketed in the district.
3. To examine the different marketing channels used by flower growers.

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4. To study the factors influencing flower prices.
5. To identify the problems faced by flower growers in marketing their produce.

Research Methodology

The study can be undertaken using both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

Primary data may be collected directly from:

- Flower growers
- Wholesalers
- Retail flower sellers
- Commission agents
- Consumers

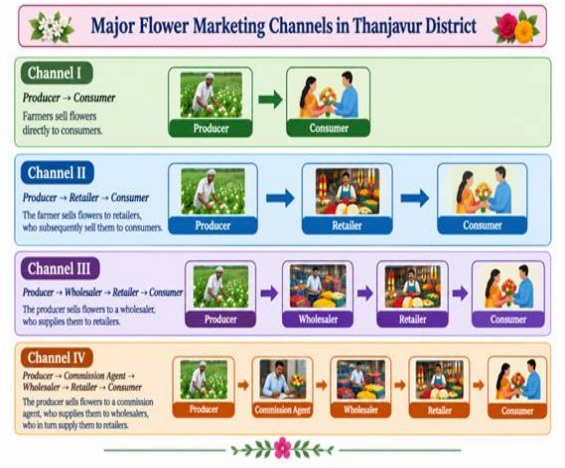
A structured questionnaire or interview schedule can be used to collect information regarding cultivation, production costs, selling prices, marketing channels, transportation, market information, and marketing problems.

Secondary Data

Secondary information may be collected from:

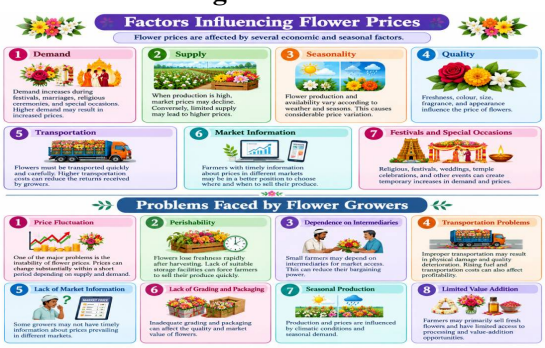
- Government publications
- Department of Horticulture
- Agricultural marketing reports
- District statistical publications
- Agricultural research institutions
- Journals and research articles
- Books and websites relating to floriculture and agricultural marketing

Major Flower Marketing Channels



Commission agents facilitate transactions between producers and traders and may play an important role in organized flower markets.The number of intermediaries can influence the final consumer price and the share of the consumer's expenditure received by the farmer.

Factors Influencing Flower Prices



Role of Intermediaries in Flower Marketing

Intermediaries perform several useful functions in the flower marketing system. They may provide:

- Collection of flowers from farmers
- Transportation
- Market linkage
- Sorting and grading
- Bulk aggregation
- Credit or advance payments in some arrangements
- Distribution to retailers
- Information about market demand

However, excessive dependence on intermediaries may reduce the producer's share of the final consumer price. Strengthening farmer organizations and direct marketing mechanisms can provide growers with additional marketing alternatives.

Measures for Improving Flower Marketing

The following measures can help improve flower marketing in Thanjavur district:

- **Strengthening Farmer Groups**
- Better Market Information
- Improved Transportation
- Storage and Post-Harvest Facilities
- Grading and Standardization
- Direct Marketing
- Value Addition

Flowers can be converted into:

- Garlands
- Bouquets
- Decorative products
- Floral arrangements
- Dried flowers
- Floral extracts and related products

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The following analysis is based on 100 respondents.

Experience in Flower Cultivation

Experience	Number	Percentage
Below 5 years	16	16%
5–10 years	28	28%
11–15 years	30	30%
16–20 years	18	18%
Above 20 years	8	8%
Total	100	100%

Interpretation

The table reveals that 30% of respondents have 11–15 years of experience in flower cultivation, followed by 28% with 5–10 years of experience. This indicates that a substantial proportion of respondents have considerable experience in flower cultivation.

Major Flower Cultivated

Type of Flower	Number	Percentage
Jasmine	32	32%
Marigold	24	24%
Rose	18	18%
Chrysanthemum	14	14%
Tuberose	7	7%
Other flowers	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Interpretation

The table indicates that jasmine is the major flower cultivated by 32% of respondents, followed by marigold at 24%. Rose accounts for 18%. The results indicate that different varieties of flowers are cultivated according to market demand and local growing conditions.

4.6 Primary Marketing Channel

Marketing Channel	Number	Percentage
Directly to consumers	14	14%
Retailers	26	26%
Wholesalers	38	38%
Commission agents	17	17%
Others	5	5%
Total	**100**	**100%**

Interpretation

The table shows that 38% of respondents sell their flowers through wholesalers, while 26% sell through retailers. Only 14% sell directly to consumers. This suggests that intermediaries play an important role in flower marketing.

Findings

Based on the above analysis, the major findings are:

1. A majority of the sample respondents are male.
2. The largest age group is 41–50 years.
3. A considerable proportion of respondents have substantial experience in flower cultivation.
4. Jasmine is the major flower cultivated among the sample respondents.
5. Wholesalers constitute an important marketing channel.
6. Price fluctuation is one of the major problems faced by flower growers.
7. Perishability creates difficulties in storing and transporting flowers.
8. Many respondents depend on traders and middlemen for market information.

Suggestions

The following suggestions may be considered for strengthening flower marketing in Thanjavur district:

1. Establish better local marketing infrastructure for flowers.
2. Improve access to market-price information.
3. Encourage collective marketing through farmer organizations.
4. Provide training in scientific harvesting and post-harvest handling.
5. Promote suitable packaging and grading practices.
6. Improve transportation facilities from producing areas to markets.
7. Encourage direct marketing wherever economically feasible.
8. Promote small-scale flower-processing and value-addition activities.

Conclusion

Flower marketing is an important component of the rural agricultural economy in Thanjavur district. The sector provides livelihood opportunities not only to growers but also to traders, wholesalers, retailers, transporters, and flower vendors. At the same time, the highly perishable nature of flowers, price fluctuations, transportation constraints, inadequate post-harvest facilities, and dependence on intermediaries create significant challenges. An efficient flower marketing system requires coordination among farmers, markets, traders, government agencies, financial institutions, and other stakeholders. Improved market information, collective marketing, better transportation and storage facilities, scientific post-harvest handling, and value addition can strengthen the marketing system. Such measures can contribute to reducing post-harvest losses and improving the economic opportunities available to flower growers in Thanjavur district.

Suggested References

1. Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops, Government of Tamil Nadu – publications and horticultural statistics.
2. Department of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business, Government of Tamil Nadu.
3. Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Tamil Nadu.
4. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) – floriculture-related information.
5. National Horticulture Board – horticulture and floriculture statistics.
6. Relevant books and research journals on Agricultural Marketing, Floriculture and Horticultural Marketing.
7. District-level statistical publications relating to Thanjavur district.