A study on customer satisfaction of uzhavar sandhai with special reference to Coimbatore city

[1] N. Chandru, [2] P. Jayasubramanian

[1] Department of Commerce, (M.Phil Research Scholar), Dr.N.G.P ASC, Coimbatore.

[2] Professor/ Head, Department of Commerce (PA), Dr.N.G.P ASC, Coimbatore.

Abstract
Direct marketing by farmers is being encouraged as an innovative channel. Farmers' Markets are under the administrative control of the State's sixteen Agricultural Marketing Committees, which, in turn, are part of the Department of Agricultural Marketing. The present study is conducted to analyze the gap between the expected performance and actual performance of the Farmer's in uzhavar sandhai. The main objective of the study is to analyze the customer opinion on the working of the farmer market (uzhavar sandhai). The statistical tools like percentage, weighted average and ranking analysis. The result divulges majority of the respondents are satisfied with the farmers behaviour while buying at uzhavar sandi, first rank is given to factors required for the purchasing vegetables in uzhavar sandhai.

Keywords: Direct marketing, uzhavar sandi, customers and agriculture.

1. Introduction
Direct marketing by farmers is being encouraged as an innovative channel. Some examples of these channels are ApniMandi, Rythu Bazars, and Uzhavar Sandies. These channels are mostly adopted in sales transactions of agricultural commodities like fruits, vegetables and flowers, which are highly perishable. In this channel, the produce moves quickly from farmers to consumers due to lack of middlemen. If farmers directly sell their produce to the consumers, it not only saves losses but also increases farmers' share in the price paid by the consumer.
Farmers' Markets were introduced with a view to eliminate the middlemen and arrange facilities for the farmers to sell their produce directly to the consumers at reasonable rates fixed every day. On account of the scheme, both the farmers and the consumers are benefited.

2. Statement of the Problem
It is important to know how far the farmers make use of such sandhai and what extent they prevent the middlemen therefore the researcher this research considers this research topic is pertinent in view of the above context.
The following are the questions are that raise:
➢ What is the role of uzhavar sandhai in Coimbatore in marketing vegetables?
➢ To what extent the service of the uzhavar sandhai are utilized by the farmers?
➢ What are the factors influencing the customer's in utilizing the uzhavar sandhai?
This study is an attempt to find out the answers to the above questions this study a case study, tries to bring out various aspects of the functioning of the Coimbatore uzhavar sandhai.

3. Objectives of the Study
➢ To study the customer opinion on the working of the farmer market(uzhavar sandhai)
➢ To identify the factors influencing the customers in utilizing the farmer market(uzhavar sandhai)
➢ To analyze the benefits enjoyed by the customers of the study unit
➢ To find out the common problems faced by the customers
➢ To suggest the ways and means to improve the working of the farmer market(uzhavar sandhai)

4. Scope of the Study
➢ It indirectly helps the government to update uzhavar sandhai in various aspects and techniques to find the development in various areas.
➢ Study the price sensitivity and service aspects among various groups of people.
➢ Analyzed the gap between the expected performance and actual performance of the Farmer's in uzhavar sandhai.
➢ Assess the overall quality of service provided by uzhavar sandhai.

5. Research Methodology
5.1 **Research Design & Sources of Data:** This study is descriptive in nature. It is both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected by using well-structured questionnaire from 200 respondents in coimbatoreby using convenient random sampling method. For the theoretical aspects secondary data were collected from books, journals and websites. This study was conducted for a period from August to October 2015.

5.2 Tools used For the Study
The study is done using
1. Simple Percentage analysis,
2. Ranking analysis,
3. Weighted Average,

6. Limitations of the Study
➢ The market survey was conducted only in Coimbatore city uzhavar sandhai. Hence, the results arrived from the study may or not be applied to other areas.
➢ The sample size is only 200 respondents

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- ➢ The period of study is limited to 6 months.
- ➢ There is no comparative study made.
- ➢ The result of analysis made in the study depends fully on the accuracy, reliability of information given by respondents.

7. Review of Literature

Parmar (1994) conducted an attitude survey with reference to the marketing problems faced by vegetable growers of south Gujarat and revealed that spoilage and malpractices in weighing were the major problems. The study suggested the need for the improvement in the marketing system by regulating the marketing operations, establishment of efficient transportation system and co-operative marketing structure.

Sharan and Singh (2002) observed the pattern of sales, Marketing cost and margins for kinnow in rajasthan. They found that the producer's share in consumers rupee is more in direct sale as compared to contract sale, Due to elimination of pre-harvest contractor. They further suggested that marketing cost and margin indicate that producers share in consumers rupee may be increased by decreasing the number of intermediaries in the existing marketing system.

Mohan (2004) suggested that the changed scenario, strong and viable agriculture financial institutions are needed to cater to the requirements of finance for building the necessary institutional and marketing infrastructure.

Agwu (2008) Recommended that extension should be more inclusive in documentation and transfer of innovations, Expand technology transfer mandate, Facilitate farmer innovations and build capability to analyze the same for social and economic development. The administrator and planners should adapt flexible management style that could encourage private sector interaction with the public sector; Backed up with institutional guidelines for the linkage interactions. Several other factors such as micro economics, Social institutional mechanism for flow of information, Relevant actors and dynamics of knowledge economy must be consider as important in determining the better outcome of processes.

Yue (2009) stated that agro-businessmen corresponded with market economy. Modern agriculture is a revolutionary reformation on traditional agriculture and is a new type of diversified and comprehensive industry being developed. Farmers are principal part of modern agriculture construction and diversification.

Halder and pati (2011) suggested farmers that they should be their own setters rather than price followers. There is also an immediate need to integrate the production, Marketing and processing processes of the produce to get maximum benefits from fruits and vegetables cultivation.

8. Analysis and Results
8.1 Percentage Analysis

Table 1: Demographic variables of the respondents

Factors	Options	No .of respondents	Percentage (%)
Age	20-30 years	74	37
	31 - 40 yrs.	36	18
	41 - 50 yrs.	35	17.5
	Above 50 yrs.	55	27.5
Gender	Male	134	67
	Female	66	33
Marital status	Married	110	55
	Unmarried	90	45
Educational level	Illiterate	14	7
	Primary level	56	28
	Higher secondary school	36	18
	Degree /diploma	94	47
Family	Nuclear	179	89.5
	Joint	21	10.5
Occupation	Business	30	15
	Private employee	44	22
	Govt employee	42	21
	Others	84	42
Annual income	Below 20000	80	40
	Rs.20001-30000	56	28
	Rs.30001-40000	42	21
	Above 40000	22	11

Table 2: Respondents behaviour towards various features of the uzhavar sandhai

Factors	Options	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Source of information	Newspaper	40	20
	Radio & Tv	50	25
	Friends and relatives	72	36
	Through others	38	19
Visiting uzhavar sandhai	Never	17	8.5
	Often	30	15
	Rarely often	53	26.5
	Very often	10	5
	Sometimes	90	45
Go to market regularly	Yes	174	87
	No	26	13
Distance travelled	2 km	42	21
	2-4 km	52	26
	4-5 km	50	25
	Above 5 km	56	28
Mode of transportation	Mini bus	16	8
	Own vehicle	156	78
	Corporation bus	22	11
	By walk	6	3
Purchasing items	Country vegetables	118	59
	English vegetables	48	24
	Fruits	26	13
	Green leaves	8	4
Basis of purchase	Daily	68	34
	Alternative days	18	9
	Twice in a week	30	15
	Once in a week	84	42
Basis of price level	At fixed price	150	75
	Less than fixed price	34	17
	More than fixed price	16	8

Percentage analysis deals with the demographic factors, respondents satisfaction towards various feature of the uzhavar sandhai.it can be inferred from the above Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents- 37% of the respondents belong to the age group of 36-45 years, 67% of the respondents belong to the male category, 47% of the respondents qualification is degree/diploma, 89.5% of the respondents are comes under the category of nuclear family, 42% of the respondents occupational status is others (servant, maid, housewife), 40% of the respondents belonging to the income group below Rs.20000.

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents-36% of the respondents awareness level of availability through friends&

relatives, 45% of the respondents are sometimes visiting the uzhavar sandhai, 87% of the respondents are goes to the market regularly, 28% of the respondents are travelled above 5km for purchasing vegetables in uzhavar sandhai, 78% of the respondents are used own vehicle for purchase, 59% of the respondents are purchasing country vegetables in uzhavar sandhai, 42% of the respondents are made purchase once in a week, 75% of the respondents are purchasing vegetables price level at fixed price.

8.2 Ranking analysis

Table 3: Factors which are influencing while purchasing in uzhavar sandhai

S. No	Factors	Score	Mean score	Rank
1	Good quality	823	4.11	I
2	Affordable price	427	2.13	V
3	Timely availability	567	2.83	III
4	Easy applicability	741	3.70	II
5	Reliability	442	2.21	IV

Table 3 shows that factors which are influencing while purchasing in uzhavar sandhai, it is observed that Good quality ranked first is the factor which influence while purchasing in uzhavar sandhai with the score of (823), Affordable price ranked fifth with the score of (427), Timely availability ranked third with the score of (567), Easy applicability ranked second with the score of (741) and Reliability ranked fourth with the score of (442).

8.3 Weighted Average Analysis

Table 4: Factors which regard the level of satisfaction towards purchasing

S. No	Particulars	ΣWX	ΣW	Percentage (%)	Rank
1	Price	736	15	49.06	IV
2	Quality	873	15	58.2	I
3	Availability	863	15	57.53	II
4	Distance	750	15	50	III
5	Time of convenience	678	15	45.2	V

Table 4 shows that Time of convenience has been ranked fifth with 45.2%, price has been ranked fourth with 49.06%, Distance has been ranked third with 50%, Availability has been ranked second with 57.53%, and Quality has been ranked first with 58.2%.

Table 5: Customer satisfaction level of uzhavar sandhai based on features

S. No.	Factors	ΣWX	ΣW	Percentage (%)	Rank
1	Price	746	15	49.73	IV
2	High Quality	844	15	56.25	II
3	Availability	825	15	55	III
4	Freshness	866	15	57.73	I
5	Right measurement	538	15	35.46	V

Table 5 shows that Right measurement has been ranked fifth with 35.46%, price has been ranked fourth with 49.73%, Availability has been ranked third with 55%, High quality has

been ranked second with 56.25%, and Freshness has been ranked first with 57.2%.

9. Summary of findings

❖ **On the application of the percentage analysis the following results were obtained**

- Majority (37%) of the respondents belong up to 20-30 years.
- Majority (67%) of the respondents are Male.
- Majority (55%) of the respondents are married.
- Majority (47%) of the respondents are Degree/Diploma.
- Majority (89.5%) of the respondents are comes under Nuclear family.
- Majority (42%) of the respondents are others.
- Majority (40%) of the respondents belong to below 20000 income group.
- Majority (36%) of the respondents awareness level of availability through friends and relatives.
- Majority (41%) of the respondents are satisfied with the purchase in uzhavar sandhai compared with others substitutes available in the market.
- Majority 45% of the respondents are sometimes visiting the uzhavar sandhai.
- Majority (87%) of the respondents will goes to the market regularly.
- Majority (28%) of the respondents are travelled above 5 km to uzhavar sandhai.
- Majority (78%) of the respondents are using own vehicle.
- Majority (59%) of the respondents are purchasing country vegetables in uzhavar sandhai.
- Majority (42%) of the respondents are make the purchase once in a week.
- Majority (75%) of the respondents are buying their requirements at fixed price in uzhavar sandhai.
- Majority (48%) of the respondents are satisfied with the farmers behaviour while buying.

❖ **On the application of the ranking analysis the following result were obtained**

Ranking analysis shows that First rank is given to factors required for the purchasing vegetables in uzhavar sandhai, Good quality and absence of consumers in price the vegetables these two are the main factor and problems faced by the customers while purchasing the vegetables in uzhavar sandhai.

❖ **On the application of the weighted average analysis the following results were obtained**

- Quality is the factor with regard to level of satisfaction towards purchasing in uzhavar sandhai has been ranked first.
- Freshness is the factor with regard to level of satisfaction towards purchasing in uzhavar sandhai has been ranked first.

10. Suggestions

Based on the major findings of the study the following suggestions are offered:

1) The government should come forward to create more awareness among the marginal farmers to utilize the uzhavar sandhai properly and also highlights the various facilities offered at free of cost to the farmers utilizing uzhavar sandhai through the agriculture offers.

2) Among the infrastructure problems, only a limited number of shops are available in uzhavar sandhai and sale of vegetables is done in open space. There are the most important problems since it is difficult to sell during winter and rainy seasons. Hence, the vacant space available in the uzhavar sandhai may be used for construction of additional shops.

3) The government has proposed to provide gold storage facility for uzhavar sandhai, where the daily average arrival of vegetables commendable. This may be implemented.

4) The reminded vegetables which are remained after the sale in uzhavar sandhai have to be disposed. So government can take some measures to avoid this.

5) Transport facility may be improved by the government in Coimbatore area to help the farmers who come to uzhavar sandhai early in the morning.

6) Training must be provided to the farmers in the market oriented gardening.

7) Re scheduling the timing of regular city-bus service in the afternoon to the villages for the convenience of farmers returning home.

8) Construction of cold storage to store the unsold vegetables.

11. Conclusion

To conclude uzhavar sandhai as an innovative market system plays a strategic role in making the agricultural marketing system highly effective. The government machinery take all precautionary measures in ensuring efficient functioning of the uzhavar sandhai. The farmer market must always be kept for away from the private traders and other middlemen. Continuous vigilance and follow up actions need to be taken by the government officials.

The government action alone would not sufficient and the consumers and farmers must go hand in hand to get the complete elimination of middleman to preserve the existing mutual benefits.

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