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Coconut farming and marketing with special reference Totumkur District-Karnataka State

Vijayalakshmi N

Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract
Agriculture continues to be the core sector in the rural economy of Karnataka, providing livelihood security for vast majority of the population. In the crop production sub sector. It is principal crops namely coconut that too on account of the large scale area expansion through the shift in cropping pattern. The manufacturing units procure raw materials from coconut farmers. Some local traders supplies raw materials to these manufacturing units and in returns they procure the finish products. Considering the huge production of coconut husk in the region, individual artisans and ITI graduates can be encouraged to set up their one de-timbering and yarn making units with advanced machineries. The Copra obtained by drying the kernel of coconut is the richest source of vegetable oil containing 65 to 70 per cent oil. Cocos- nucifera is a large palm, growing up to 30 m (98 ft) tall, with pinnate leaves 4 6 m (13 20 ft) long, and pinnae 60-90 cm long old leaves break away cleanly, leaving the trunk smooth. Coconuts are generally classified into two general types: tall and dwarf. On very fertile land, a tall coconut palm tree can yield up to 75 fruits per year, but more often yields less than 30, mainly due to poor cultural practices. In recent years, improvements in cultivation practices and breeding have produced coconut trees that can yield more. An attempt is made in this paper to analyse the production and marketing of coconut in Tumkur area.

Keywords: Agriculture, rural economy, Coconut palm, Cultivation, Marketing, Production, Coconut husk

1. Introduction
There is no palm in this world, more beautiful than the coconut. The dense shade of nature's green umbrellas, the coconut palms are also providing relief to the people of tropics from the scorching sun. The coconut has an intimate relation with humankind through the variety of products and services it provides including environmental benefits, which is very much significant during this global warming era.

Marketing of coconut like that of any other horticultural commodities, notionally has two aspects i.e. the 'marketing activity', in which sellers and buyers have mutual coordination in each other's activities, where goods and services from producers move through certain channels by conscious application of marketing tools. The other aspect is the 'marketing promotional activity', which comprises of gathering information, data, compilation, analysis, interpretation of the data and passing the resulted valid information to farmers, traders, business organizations and other concerned agencies to facilitate marketing functions.

Karnataka is another state where about 20 per cent of the total production of coconut is harvested in the form of tender coconuts. It has been reported that nearly 50% of the coconut production in Mandya, Bangalore, Mysore and Hassan districts is harvested as tender nuts. In Karnataka state, tender coconut is a notified commodity in 14 regulated markets but actual trading is carried out in 6 markets only. Farmers in these districts lease out their gardens mostly to middlemen or sometimes traders and venders. Tender coconuts are traded in regulated markets of Maddur, Mandya, Channarayapatna, Holenarshimapur, Hosdurga and Kadur, but Maddur market is famous for daily trading of tender coconuts. Maddur market is an important regulated market exclusively for marketing of tender coconut.

2. Objectives of the study
a) To analyse the trend, growth and Marketing skills of coconut production
b) To know the extent of technological awareness of coconut farmers

3. Methodology
This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The Secondary data has been collected from Newspapers, Journals, National Horticulture Board (NHB), Coconut Board, Department of Agriculture and Horticulture, Concerned Organizations /Departments/ Institutions of government and Nongovernment organizations of various aspects including production, processing and marketing. The primary data has been collected by personal observation to contract the marketing channels or marketing system of coconut in Tumkur district.

4. Review of literature
A review of studies is essential to look into the relevant studies conducted on the problems so far. In addition, the review of studies provides the conceptual and methodological approaches and interpreting the empirical results of the present study.

Mani and Jose (1997) [1] analysed shift in the cropping pattern in Kerala based on the inter district, intra district and inter temporal shifts in area, production and yield of coconut. Secondary data was used for the study within the time span from 1975-76 to1995-96. The study argued that due to free trade strategy in India cropping pattern shift occurred in favour of superior horticultural crops. Another notable feature was the increased area for coconut cultivation.

R. K. Sivanappan points out the wastage of scarce water in surface irrigation of coconut fields. In surface irrigation the

entire field is flooded to a depth of 5 to 7 cm once in 5 to 10 days depending upon the type of soil. The quantity of water applied works out to more than 200 litres/day or about 1000-1400 litres in 5-7 days. The conveyance loss is about 20-25%. In contrast to this method is the Drip/Micro Sprinkler Method which has increased water use efficiency and water saving is up to 40 to 60% and labour saving up to 90%. Further Drip Method increases the yield by 30%. This method successfully meets the problem of irrigating sandy tracts. Many progressive farmers of Tamilnadu and Karnataka have adopted this advanced method of irrigation. Sivanappan feels that the time is not far away when the entire coconut farm in the country will be irrigated by Drip System for its sustainability and to increase yield.

E. A. Parameswar Gupta holds the view that coconut occupies a unique place in the socio-economic life of the people of the Indian sub-continent. According to him India would emerge as the second largest producer of coconut in the world before the close of the twentieth century.

5. Coconut production in Karnataka

Karnataka state for 15 per cent of area under coconut cultivation and 10 per cent of total production of coconut in the country. Occupying 31 per cent of the total area under horticultural crop. Coconut is the second largest and important horticultural crop of the Karnataka state, The crop is grown in all the districts of the state. The total area under coconut in the state is around 3.33 lakh hectares and the annual production of coconut is 1754 million nuts. Nearly 60 per cent of the coconut produced in the state is utilized as raw nuts for domestic culinary purposes, social cultural and religious purposes. About 25 per cent of the nuts are converted into edible ball copra, desiccated coconut powder and the remaining 15 per cent is utilized as tender coconut for drinking purpose. Prominently, 55 -65 per cent of the arrival of coconut is exported to other states i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, etc., about 60 per cent of coconut production in Karnataka is used in domestic items and remaining is dried as copra, most of the copra arriving to the markets is dispatched to other state, where the Karnataka copra is in great demand. The coconut utilized for commercial product preparation is only to the extent of 35 40 per cent, while 55 60 per cent is consumed for food and beverage purposes. The main coconut growing districts in karanataka are Tumkur, Hassan, Dakshina Kannada, Chikkmagalur, Chitradurga Karnataka, etc.

i) Chikkamagaluru

Area under coconut cultivation in Chikkamagaluru constitutes to 9% of total area under coconut cultivation in the state. Out of the 7 taluks in Chikmagalur, two Talukas viz. Kadur and Tarikere were selected for the study. Kadur has the maximum area under coconut cultivation in the district and constitutes to about 76% of the total coconut cultivated area.

ii) Dakshina Kannada

Dakshina Kannada contributes to 4% of total area under coconut cultivation in the state. This is the eighth district in Karnataka as far as cropped area under coconut is concerned. The district comprises of 7 taluks, of which Belthangadi has the maximum area under coconut cultivation in the district and constitutes to about 32% of the total coconut cultivated area.

iii) Hassan

Hassan has the second largest coconut area in the State. Nearly 14% of area under coconut cultivation in Karnataka is from this district. The district comprises of 8 taluks, of which Arisekere and Channarayapatna were selected under the study. Of the 8 Taluks in Hassan, Arisekere and Channarayapatna contributes maximum towards the coconut production in the district (almost 81%).

iv) Mandya

Mandya is the fifth largest district in Karnataka as far as area under coconut cultivation is concerned. Nearly 6% of area under coconut cultivation and more than 8% of coconut production in Karnataka is from this district. Coconut palm density for the district is found to be 119 per Ha, whereas the bearing palm density is 107 per Ha. Estimated coconut production for Mandya in 2012-13 is estimated to be 2459 lakhs nuts.

v) Mysore

Mysore is the sixth largest district in Karnataka as far as area under coconut cultivation is concerned. More than 6% of area under coconut cultivation and 5% of coconut production in Karnataka is contributed by this district.

vi) Tumkur

Tumkur is the largest coconut producing district in Karnataka. Nearly one third of area under coconut cultivation and production in Karnataka is contributed by this district alone. Estimated per palm yield for the district is the second lowest in the state, which is just above Chikmagalur.. Production of coconuts in Tumkur in 2012-13 is estimated to be 6608 lakh nuts, the highest in all districts due to large coconut area.

vii) Udupi

Udupi is enjoying seventh place in area under coconut cultivation in Karnataka. Nearly 4% of area under coconut and production in Karnataka is contributed by this district. Of the three Talukas three viz. Udupi, Karka and Kundapura, Udupi is the largest coconut growing Taluk contributing 42% of coconut area in the district.

Table 1: Area, Production and Productivity of Coconut in Tumkur District - 2000 to 2014

Years	Area(Ha)	Production (Lakh Nuts)	Productivity (Nuts/Ha)
2000 – 2001	100810.00	6632.83	6580
2001 – 2002	110993.00	5477.67	4936
2002 – 2003	111248.00	5490.26	4936
2003 – 2004	109443.00	5401.18	4936
2004 – 2005	110937.00	5474.91	4936
2005 – 2006	122690.00	6054.94	4936

2006 – 2007	125511.00	6194.16	4936
2007 – 2008	124110.00	6837.65	5510
2008 – 2009	132587.00	9945.66	7502
2009 – 2010	138660.00	9858.98	7111
2010 – 2011	142248.00	13477.00	9475
2011 – 2012	142880.00	13495.86	9446
2012 – 2013	147032.00	13888.04	9446
2013 – 2014	145910.00	11397.18	7812
Average Production in the Year group(2000-14)	126075.64	8544.74	6777

Source: Horticulture Division, Dept. of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of Karnataka & India

The table-1 indicates the area, production and productivity of coconut in Tumkur district during 2000-01 to 2013-14. The table-1 clearly indicates that there has been increasing trend in area, production as well productivity with 100810 to 145910 of area, 6632.83 to 11397.18 production and in terms of productivity 6580 to 7812 nuts /ha, respectively. The overall results show the increasing trend in the above aspect and also total average of production of 2000-2014, area 126075.64, production 8544.74 and productivity 6777 nuts of tumkur district.

Table 2: Taluks wise area under coconut production in Tumkur district -2013-14

S. No	Taluks	Area in (hectares)	Percentage
1	Tumkur	13,458	15
2	Tiptur	31,111	28
3	Gubbi	30,680	27
4	Kunigal	6,588	8
5	Chikknayakanahaalli	27,700	24
6	Turuvekere	28,153	25
7	Sira	7,047	9
8	Madhugiri	1,642	2
9	Koratagere	1,710	2
10	Pavagada	450	1

Source: Department of Horticulture, Tumkur

Table – 2 show that area under coconut production in Tumkur district during 2013-14. The Tiptur taluk has been registred 28 percent of area under coconut production with first position, followed by 27 percent gubbi stood second place. The Turuvekere registred with 25 percent stood third place and Chikknayakanahaalli registred 24 percent and Tumkur with 15 percent and the remaining 5 taluks such as Sira (9 percent), Kunigal (8 percent) Madhugiri and Kortagere (02 percent) and Pavagada (01 percent) accounts terms of area under coconut production in Tumkur district.

6. Coconut marketing channels in Tumkur district

Marketing of coconuts differs from that of other fresh fruits due to natural durability of coconuts, which are sold as fresh tender nuts as well as matured water nuts and dry nuts. It has been observed that they do not differ much except where the post-harvest practices change on account of the form of the coconut and coconut products consumed in that area. Indirect mode of disposal of coconuts as a strategy is more popular and widely adopted by coconut farmers. This indicates that channels, intermediaries play a major role in both assembling and equalization functions in marketing of coconuts.

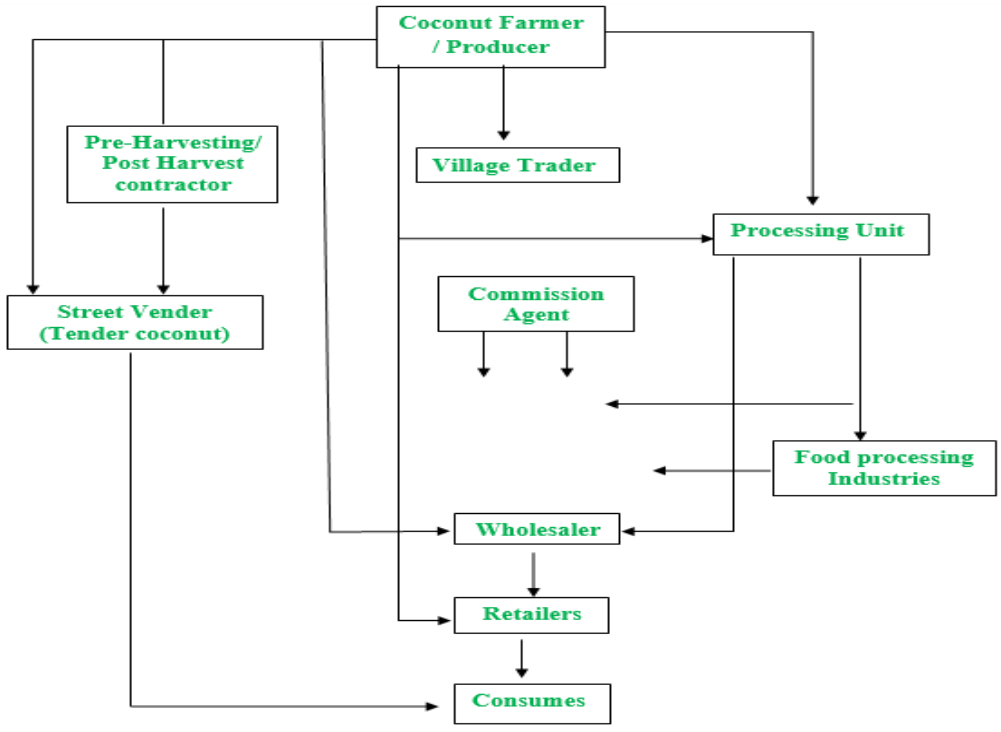

Fig 1

However, in the existing marketing system the functionaries, except the institutional agencies, have not fulfilled the objectives of effective marketing system, towards remunerative price realization, through sale of coconut and coconut products. The price realization reported to be lower than the direct sale by farmers or through farmer's institutions. Even though every addition of marketing functionaries results in widening of the price spread, the dominance of marketing functionaries in the marketing channels of coconut and its products cannot be denied, due to certain limitations which directly or indirectly affect the farmers and producers / manufactures. Majority of the coconut farmers have small and marginal holding and have dearth of holding capacity due to financial crisis, lack of credit facilities from the financial or cooperative institution against coconut trees, compel them for forced sale. The coconut farmers are the worst sufferer in the present marketing practices as they need short term credit especially during off seasons and flush season i.e. during summer days. The farmers thus borrow advances from the middle men / traders, especially those who raise coconut palms in grove as monocrop even to meet their expenses for normal production and consumption. Moreover, they do not have storage facility and holding capacity. Fluctuation in prices of coconut forces them to sell these coconuts on farm immediately after harvest. The farmers are unable to take up value addition activities to their produce. This strikingly affects the effectiveness of marketing of coconut and coconut products.

7. To know the extent of technological awareness of coconut farmers

The research on coconut as an oilseed has yet to reach the bulk of the coconut producers who are smallholders. This gap may be due to the multiple uses of coconut and the diverse farming systems where it is grown. Narrowing the gap may require a new approach that brings farmers, breeders and genetic resource scientists together to define a wider range of uses for coconut diversity from the genetic level to the final products that reach the consumer. Social scientists have traditionally been called in to explain to the breeders why farmers are not adopting an improved variety.

Research and development could aim at the generation of several new coconut varieties, each aimed at a single product: wood, fresh fruit, drink, fibre, etc. With the passage of time and advent of modern scientific knowledge systems, several of these useful traditional practices are continually being lost. Hence, there is an urgent need to systematically document the indigenous practices in agriculture and validate them, before they become extinct.

Hence the time-tested, rational and effective indigenous practices suited to the local situations and local culture may either be suggested as alternatives or blended with modern crop production technologies, which in turn would promote sustainable crop production. Use of bio fertilizers is one of the important components of integrated nutrient management, as they are cost effective and renewable source of plant nutrients to supplement the chemical fertilizers for sustainable agriculture. Several microorganisms and their association with crop plants are being exploited in the production of bio fertilizers.

Training farmers in scientific cultivation and post-harvest processing. Training in the manufacture of coconut based handicrafts. Training youths in harvesting and plant protection. Training to improve technical skills of managerial and supervisory personnel. Training and visits to understand and appraise the technologies. Adoption of all the proven technologies on management of insect pests and diseases as well as on improved cultural practices.

8. Conclusions

Coconut products must be made available in the existing markets in order to have a steady market for the value added coconut products produced by the Coconut Producers Societies. CPS themselves can establish tie up with existing outlets in and around major cities and pilgrim centres. Establishing retail outlets would not be a feasible idea as it requires a huge investment, while many of our farmers won't be able to meet the investment cost. Board would also try to market products through the public distribution system of state governments. Board is making awareness creation on the goodness of coconut through both the print and electronic media. Regular reports are appearing in the print media and social networking sites on the goodness of coconut. This it is creating consumer demand for the products.

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