

Original Research Article

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Constraints Faced by the Paddy Farmers of Shivamogga District

C. Kavyashree*, Basavaraj Beerannavar, B. M. Dharmaraj and B. Dhananjaya

Department of Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga, India

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

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Rice is the staple food for two-thirds of the Indian population. India ranks second in the world next to China by producing 155.62 million metric tonnes from an area of 43.20 million ha. It accounts for 20 percent of the total production in the world. The present study throws light on the paddy growers' various constraints and possible suggestions to overcome from these suggestions. A total of 120 respondents constituted the study sample from three talukas of Shivamogga district, having the highest area under paddy cultivation. A clear majority (98.83%) of farmers expressed that infestation of pest and disease was the primary constraint followed by low price/less profit margin (95.00 %), non-availability of agricultural labors (72.50 %), more drudgery (68.33 %), lack of information on recent developments in agriculture (62.50 %), unpredictable and irregularity of monsoon (50.00 %), Etc. Among the suggestions offered, enhancement of minimum support price for paddy at regular intervals (95.00 %) ranks first, followed by developing disease/pest-resistant variety (92.50 %), and the government should extend support for paddy farming (86.67 %). The other suggestions include the creation of awareness in farmers on crop insurance schemes (79.20 %), promotion of mechanization/ custom hiring system (76.67 %), conducting IPM related training programs (71.67 %), Etc.

Introduction

Paddy (*Oryza sativa L.*) is life and prince among cereals. Its major pivotal role in the Indian economy is the staple food for two-third of the population (World Bank 1995). India ranks second globally with production of 155.62 million metric tones from an area of 43.20 million ha. It accounts for 20 percent of the total production in the world. The National Commission on Agriculture has estimated that India's food grain requirement by the end of the century is around 225

million tonnes. The possibility of further area expansion for rice has now reached that limit in most rice-growing countries, including India. In this context, there is an imperative need to improve the production of food grains, especially rice crop being the staple food of south India. The total rice-growing area of Karnataka is 15.13 lakh hectares and total production of about 38.02 lakh tonnes with a productivity of 2644 kg/ha. In Karnataka, major rice-growing districts are Bellary, Davangere Mysore, Mandya, and Shivamogga.

Shivamogga district comes under medium productive region with about 1.29 lakh ha, and production of 3.13 lakh tonnes with 2516 kg/ha productivity as the district is having intense fertile soil for the cultivation of paddy crop having both command and rainfed area. Shivamogga district being a malnad area traditionally known for paddy cultivation, and people of the district have been cultivating the crop for ages. In recent years, the area under paddy is declining year by year due to various reasons. Therefore, the present study was conducted to identify the constraints faced by paddy farmers and seek their suggestions to overcome them.

Nguyen Cong Thanh *et al.*, (2006) in their study on constraints faced by the farmers in rice production and export, observed that Farmers perceived dependence on the monsoon as the most important constraint (64.00%); Major Rice diseases and pests such as sheath blight, blast, stem rot diseases and stem borer were perceived as most severe constraints by 80.00 and 78.00 percent of respondents, respectively and lack of proper varieties as perceived by 60.00 percent of respondents.

Maheriya *et al.*, (2015) conducted a study on Constraints experienced, and suggestions offered by farmers in the adoption of recommended paddy production technology reported that lack of knowledge about the recommended dose of fertilizers (70.83 %), High cost of fertilizers and pesticides (70.83 %), labor shortage at the time of transplanting and harvesting (75.00 %), Low market price of paddy (62.50 %), Poor contacts of extension workers with farmers (58.33 %) were the major constraints expressed by the farmers.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in three talukas of the Shivamogga district, namely Bhadravathi,

Soraba, and Sagara. From each taluka, four villages were selected based on the highest area under paddy cultivation. Five farm men and five farm women were randomly selected from each village. From 12 villages of three talukas, 60 farm men and 60 farm women were selected. Thus, a total of 120 respondents constituted a sample for the study. The criteria for selecting respondents were the family having both husband and wife involved in agriculture and cultivating paddy crop for three years. The ex-post facto research design was used, and the data was collected through a personal interview method using a structured interview schedule. Frequency and percentage are used to interpret the results.

Results and Discussion

Constraints expressed by the respondents

The results presented in Table-1 reveal the constraints expressed by the paddy farmers, among that great majority (98.83 %) of farmers expressed that infestation of pest and disease was the major constraint. The probable reason for this could be the Shivamogga district being the malnad area continuous rainfall during Kharif season and due to low-temperature incidence of diseases like blast and sheath rot. Incidence of armyworm, stem borer, and planthoppers was also noticed during recent years. Low price for the paddy produce (95.00 %) was the second major constraint. This was due to paddy procurement from the states like Chhattisgarh and Punjab, where there are a surplus production and inelastic demand from the consumers. The minimum support price announced by the government is around Rs. 1,550/- only, which is low compared to other crops. Non-availability of agricultural labors and more drudgery work were the constraints expressed by 72.50 percent and 68.33 percent, respectively. In the recent past, due to the migration of rural youth and agricultural

laborers to nearby towns/cities, there is a scarcity of labor for farming operations. Due to high wages for the works in areca garden and fewer drudgery works, laborers prefer to work in areca garden rather than in paddy fields. Seventy-five of the respondents (62.50 %) expressed lack of information on recent developments in agriculture followed by less contact of extension workers with farmers (58.33 %) this is due to the wide ratio of extension workers to farmers. Fifty percent of the respondents expressed the problem of

unpredictable and irregularity of monsoon. Smaller sized landholding was the constraint expressed by 46.67 percent of farmers. This was due to the result of the fragmentation of landholding in nuclear families. These farmers grow paddy for domestic purposes only rather than for marketing purposes. The scarcity of water for agriculture (44.17 %) was expressed by farmers of the command area and sorabha taluk due to irregularity of rainfall and the non-availability of water in the command area.

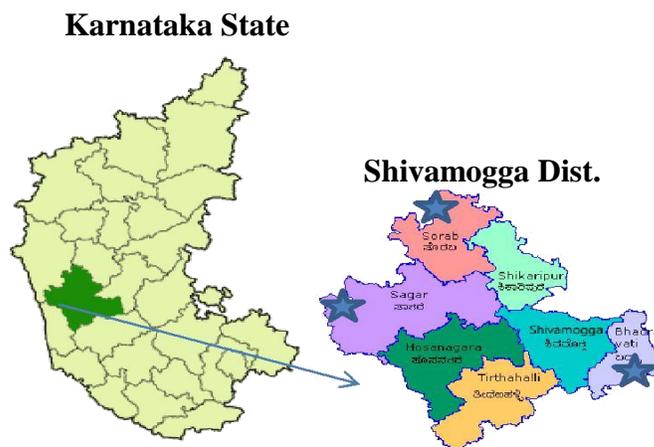
Table.1 Constraints expressed by the respondents n = 120

Sl.No	Constraints	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)	N = 120
				Rank
1.	Pest and disease problem	118	98.33	I
2.	Low price/Less profit margin	114	95.00	II
3.	Non-availability of agricultural labors	87	72.50	III
4.	More drudgery	82	68.33	IV
5.	Lack of information on recent developments in Agriculture	75	62.50	V
6.	Less contact of extension workers with farmers	70	58.33	VI
7.	Unpredictable and irregularity of monsoon	60	50.00	VII
8.	Smaller sized landholding	56	46.67	VIII
9.	The scarcity of water for agriculture	53	44.17	IX
10.	Weed infestation	45	37.50	X

Table.2 Suggestions given by the respondents n = 120

Sl.No	Suggestions	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)	Rank
1.	Enhancement of minimum supportive price for paddy at regular intervals	114	95.00	I
2.	Developing disease/pest-resistant variety	111	92.50	II
3.	The government should extend support for paddy Farming	104	86.67	III
4.	Creation of awareness in farmers on crop Insurance scheme.	95	79.20	IV
5.	Promotion of mechanization/ custom hiring system	92	76.67	V
6.	Conducting IPM related training programs	86	71.67	VI
7.	Proper technical guidance should be given to the Farmers as and when they need.	75	62.50	VII
8.	Promotion of Integrated farming	73	60.83	VIII
9.	Establishment of paddy growers Associations	61	50.83	IX
10.	Developing short duration and less water consuming varieties	36	30.00	X

Plate.1 Locale of the study



Suggestions expressed by the respondents

Table 2 shows the suggestion given by paddy farmers. The majority (95.00%) of farmers suggested that there must be an enhancement of minimum support price for paddy at regular intervals. This suggestion was due to less minimum support price for the paddy given by GOK, i.e., Rs.1550/quintal. Developing disease/pest-resistant variety and conducting IPM related training programs were suggested by 92.50 percent and 71.67 percent, respectively. The farmers of the malnad area had faced a severe reduction in paddy yield due to the incidence of pests and diseases.

About 86.67 percent of farmers suggested that the government should extend support for paddy farming since the area under paddy and the number of farm families cultivating paddy is reducing year by year hence the suggestion. Around eighty percent (79.20 %) of farmers suggested creating awareness in farmers on crop insurance scheme in case of failure of the crop. Since the farmers are not Aware of the crop insurance schemes of the government, hence some of the respondents suggested this. More than 3/4th of farmers (76.67 %) suggested promoting mechanization/ custom hiring due to the scarcity of laborers and the high cost of

machinery. Promotion of integrated farming was suggested by 60.83 percent of farmers because the income from paddy crop is less, which can be enhanced by practicing paddy based integrated farming system. Establishment of paddy growers associations (50.83 %) and developing short duration less water consuming varieties (30.00 %) were the other suggestions offered by the paddy growers.

In conclusion the paddy being the staple crop of the majority of the Indians, it is necessary to retain the area under paddy cultivation. The government should extend additional support for paddy growing the farming community to compensate for less return from paddy cultivation. There is a need to evolve high yielding, disease-resistant, short duration, and less water consuming paddy varieties.

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