

Families engaged in flower business in Bangarpet

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Abstract

India is a land of many festivals. To celebrate these festivals flowers are the main stay. Be it celebrating birth days, anniversaries festivals, functions mainly weddings or valentines saying it with flowers is the heart of the events. In recent years with the disposable income increasing and urban areas expanding at a fast rate, celebrating any program even official ones have become the norm, so much so it has become a highly profitable commercial business today. Flowers are mostly sourced from the farms outside Bangalore mostly from Hoskote and Kolar and Bangarpet which deposit all the truckloads of chrysanthemums, roses and lilies by the thousands in K.R Puram flower market, Rammurthy nagara flower markets. These flowers are sourced mainly from Bangarpet flower fields run by many agricultural families in Bangarpet. This is one of the main income earning business today as there are many event management companies which thrive on the flower cultivation. Both men and women farmers grow flowers and sell it in the main flower market in Bangarpet bus stand. They are then transported to major cities like Bangalore ,Mysore and Kolar. These farmers employed around 2 to 3 farmhands, usually depending on the size of the farm and the investment made (depending on the flowering variety)besides small ponds were lilies were also grown and sold specially to temples for pooja's and marriages. For this study 200 samples were taken from 8 villages of Bangarpet, simple random sampling was carried out and questionnaire method was followed. The main soil used for flower cultivation in Bangarpet was red soil and coupled with many lakes and water bodies growing of flowers for business and livelihood become a major occupation in Bangarpet .The objectives were to study the main problem and challenges faced by these farmers regarding transportation from flowers field to markets, pricing of flowers and availability of space in markets. The other objectives were used to find out their socio-economic status and competition they face from the artificial flower markets. The findings indicated they earned from 1000 rupees to 2000 rupees per month depending on the size of their farm. They identified space in markets and pricing of flowers (due to their perishability) as their major problem and other challenges was most of the time they were ruthlessly elbowed out by the native wholesale flower merchants and established flower stalls.. Their monthly income was very less as they had to support a huge family of 7 to 8 members. Mostly women and some male farmers were engaged in flowers businesses. Research methodology has used both primary as well as secondary data. This study was based mostly on primary data .The main suggestion were to give these flower cultivators a fixed price to sell so that during off season they are not subject to huge losses and creation of separate stalls to sell flowers in markets for them by charging a small rent will go a long way in encouraging their business.

Key words: Flower sellers, Family business, market space, Pricing

1.Introduction

Bangarpet a small agricultural town headquarters of Bangarpet taluk is famous for its agricultural produce as well as fruits ,flowers and vegetables. It's a well connected by rail and road to Bangalore and Kolar.

Floriculture is one of the main stays of Bangarpet. Many farmers grow flowers such as Gerbera Marigolds,Mucuna, centella Asiatica,. Asluwagandha ,Rose, Marigold ,gladiolas crossandra ,Tuber rose ,china aster, Chrysanthamum, yellow and white and scent roses. The importance of floriculture as an important money earner can never be doubted with many young girls and men dropping out of school not interested in education and not able to afford it, flower business has come as an important way of earning money.

The field study consisted of conducting farm to farm meeting of flower cultivators. And their families. Sample size taken for the field study was 200 .The farmers spoke about the types of floriculture such as having plants, potted plants, dried and cut flowers.

Simple random sampling was carried out and questionnaire method were followed .All the responses were recorded .Only authentic responses were taken for the study .The floriculturist spoke that the red soil was Ideally suited for flower cultivation .All the sampled farmers were from eight (8) villages in and around Bangarpet .They cultivated (flowers) on 2 to 3 hectares and grew 8,000 kgs flowers. The farmers employed around 2 to 3 farmhands from their villages or from the neighbouring villages’ .During festival season it was seen that flowers were in huge demand. Per day one 1 kg flower rate was 250 to 300 Rs .The farmhands or workers earned around (male) 550 Rs which females, earned 450Rs .

Fertilizers, mulching papers and chemicals were used to boost the quality of the soil and enhance the growth of the flowers.

The amount spend on chemicals was Rs.60,000 for season, Rs.70,000 for fertilizers and for mulching papers Rs.15,000. . For harvesting the flowers a period of 3 and a half months was needed since planting. Socio-economically they managed to make ends meet. Entire families were needed in their fields. There were eight to ten members in each family. They all worked together on their fields. The women prepared meals and got it from their residences to the flower farms..

2.Research gap

Flowers are perishable commodity so what were the measures taken to transport these cut flowers from the fields to the main markets in Bangarpet for sales?

The main problem was transportation and markets. Market facilities was competitive and limited specially for women sellers so wholesale selling was better of compared to individual sales. Space and timing was a difficult proposition for the sellers as most of the time they were elbowed out by their rival sellers. .So what were the measures taken to overcome all these problems and challenges.

3.Review of literature

Mulu Gebreyesus & Tetsushi Sonobe (2011) in their research “Global Value Chains and Market Formation Process in Emerging Export Activity: Evidence from Ethiopian Flower Industry” identified the problems of flower farming as stringent standards and regulation by the Ethiopian government and also points out that there is a huge export market potential for flower farmers .

Assefa Mitike Janko and Gosa Alemu (2017) in their study “Supply and marketing of floriculture in Ethiopia” pointed out that highly capital intensive, highly controlled time dimension of the logistics process and lack of domestically produced inputs are some of the marketing challenges and government incentives abundant cheap/ trained labour proximity to EU and middle east markets and FDI by global investors are the opportunities for flower farming in Ethiopia.

Jalal Amin (2018) in his study “Marketing channels of different cut flowers under different agro-ecological zones of Nowshera and Peshawar” observed that the lack of knowledge on modern production techniques, latest variety, non availability and poor infrastructure are the problems, related business opportunity, higher standard of living, education and electronic media and high-value floral crops are the opportunities for this sector in Pakistan.

4,Research methodology

Both primary as well as secondary data was used. Basically this article was based on primary findings simple percentage was used to analyse the data and random sampling technique was used to collect the data.

5.Objectives

1. Profile of the flower sellers of Bangarpet

2. The main problems and challenges faced by them regarding transportation pricing and space in markets and competition they faced from artificial flower makers.
3. To find out their socioeconomic status family wise.
4. To suggest a few measures for their upliftment.

6.Data analysis and Interpretation

Table-1 Profile of the flouriest /flower cultivators

| Sl no | Names of sampled villeges | No of sampled respondents | House hold income per month | No of family members | No. of family earning income | Gender | | Percentage having own houses |
|-------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|--------|----|------------------------------|
| | | | | | | M | F | |
| 1 | Arrimanahalli | 25 | 3000 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 15 | 10% |
| 2 | Batavara halli | 25 | 2500-3000 | 6 | 1 | 05 | 20 | 10% |
| 3 | Chikkulgamaddi | 25 | 3000-3500 | 7 | 1 | - | 25 | 15% |
| 4 | Chokkare bandi | 25 | 3000-4000 | 8 | 1 | - | 25 | 10% |
| 5 | Honenahalli | 25 | 3000-3500 | 8 | 1 | 05 | 20 | 10% |
| 6 | Kamasamudram | 25 | 3000-3700 | 10 | 1 | 04 | 21 | 10% |
| 7 | Dasara hosahalli | 25 | 2000-3500 | 8 | 1 | 03 | 22 | 10% |
| 8 | Beth mangala | 25 | 1000-3000 (depending on farm size) | 8 | 1 | 01 | 24 | 20% |
| Total | | 08 | 200 | | | | | |

Source Field Survey October 2022

Table -2 Main problems and challenges faced by them regarding transport, pricing and space in Flower markets.

| Sl no | Names of sampled villeges | No of sampled responded | Transport | Pricing | Space | Profits | Losses |
|-------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|--------|
| 1 | Arrimana halli | 25 | 30% | 30% | 20% | 10% | 20% |
| 2 | Batavara halli | 25 | 20% | 25% | 25% | 10% | 20% |
| 3 | Chikknlgamaddi | 25 | 25% | 25% | 20% | 10% | 20% |
| 4 | Chikkare bandi | 25 | 20% | 30% | 20% | 10% | 20% |
| 5 | Honena halli | 25 | 10% | 30% | 20% | 10% | 20% |
| 6 | Kamnasa mudram | 25 | 20% | 20% | 30% | 10% | 20% |
| 7 | Dasara hosahalli | 25 | 25% | 15% | 30% | 10% | 20% |
| 8 | Beth mangala | 25 | 20% | 20% | 40% | 10% | 20% |
| 08 | | 200 | | | | | |

Source Field Survey 2022 October.

Table -3 Socio-economic status of the respondents.

| Sl no | Names of sampled villeges | No of sampled respondents | Education –primary to Secondary school | Access to medical facility | Consumer durables TV,Fridge,Two wheelers | Access to water and toilet facilities |
|-------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | Arrimana halli | 25 | 10% | 20% | 30% | 20% |
| 2 | Batavara halli | 25 | 10% | 20% | 30% | 20% |
| 3 | Chikknlgamaddi | 25 | 10% | 10% | 40% | 20% |
| 4 | Chikkare bandi | 25 | 20% | 10% | 40% | 10% |
| 5 | Honena halli | 25 | 10% | 20% | 30% | 10% |
| 6 | Kamnasa mudram | 25 | 20% | 20% | 30% | 10% |
| 7 | Dasara hosahalli | 25 | 20% | 20% | 20% | 20% |
| 8 | Beth mangala | 25 | 10% | 10% | 40% | 20% |
| | 08 | 200 | | | | |

Source Field Survey October 2022.

7.Results and Discussion

Totally eight villages were chosen for study.25 samples were taken from each village and each family had only one earning member while number of members in each family ranged from 6 to 10 members. Women formed the majority 86% while the men were 14% only, 47.5 % had own houses and household income was around Rs.4000 per month which was the highest. This table indicates the low income earned by flower cultivators and their struggle for livelihood.

Transport was the biggest issue from the farms to the markets. Most of the time they had to load the flowers in small vans or tractors right next to their farms which led to haggling of prices as the drives charged an exorbitant amount.problem of space was another major problem as they were not let to sit and hawk their flowers on the pavements or any place of their choice but they had to listen to flower stall owners who charged a high rent to these farmers. Most of the time they sold wholesale at low prices. Though the festive October season of Dasara Deepavali Pitru paksha etc; saw heavy demand for flowers and with the marriage season in full swing only those who were able to handle middlemen market trolls and jostle for space could manage to sell their produce. Flower rates were already fixed by market association. So because of all these factors we see that profits are less and losses are more.l

Access to consumer durables like Television and refridgerator and had two wheelers which indicated they had a standard life though they were in debts. The main source of finance was the money lenders availability of restroom and water facilities was less and even access to medical facility was less indicating absence of primary health centre and schooling was only upto primary and secondary and no high school education was given to them.

Suggestion

Giving them a fixed (fair) price to sell and allow them to increase prices during festive season will go a long way in helping them. Besides creating a separate stall for them to sell flowers and fixing timings early morning and in early evening to sell their flowers will be more advantegeous for flower sellers. Providing transport for hire from fields located in their villages to the markets is a tough task It will be better to sell flowers immediately outside the fields post harvest itself as flowers are highly perishable .Using refrigeration for flowers will also help in prolonging their life and use.

Limitations

The main limitation was transporting freshly harvested flowers from fields to main markets in time for festivals was important..

8.Conclusion

Solving the four main problems of the flower sellers will go long way in enhancing their livelihood

1. Vehicular transport from farms to mandis.
2. Providing spaces for them to squat and sell.
3. Provision of restroom and water facilities
4. Pricing in such a way that they don't suffer losses is also important. Thus paying heed to these issues is the core of their solution..

Their earning was meagre and standard of living was below poverty line. They struggled to make both ends meet. They had many problems such as transporting of flowers to markets, severe competition from rival sellers, harassment and exploitation from established sellers and other market elements.

9.References

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