

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 7

Issue: 2

Month: April

Year: 2019

ISSN: 2320-4168

Received: 09.03.2019

Accepted: 30.03.2019

Published: 01.04.2019

Citation:

Hasan Banu, S., and  
P. Sahaya Princy.  
“Marketing Problems  
of Betal Leaf A Study  
with Reference to  
Sholavandan at .”  
*Shanlax International  
Journal of Commerce*,  
vol. 7, no. 2, 2019,  
pp.38-42.

DOI:

[https://doi.org/10.34293/  
commerce.v7i2.335](https://doi.org/10.34293/commerce.v7i2.335)



This work is licensed  
under a Creative  
Commons Attribution-  
NonCommercial-  
NoDerivatives 4.0  
International License

# Marketing Problems of Betel Leaf A Study with Reference to Sholavandan at Madurai District in Tamil Nadu

**P.Sahaya Princy**

*Research Scholar, Department of Commerce  
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India*

**S.Hasan Banu**

*Research Supervisor & Head, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce  
Hajee Karutha Rowther Howdia College. Uthamapalayam, Tamil Nadu, India*

## Abstract

*Any production does not become economic until it reaches the consumers and the producers get their share out of consumer's rupee which is worth the utility of his product. It is well known that betel leaf is a highly perishable commodity and does not last long. As such it has very low endurance level in the adverse weather. At the same time, even a little damage to the leaves of betel makes it defective leading to a reduction in demand. Consequently its prices declines sharply. Hence it causes many marketing problems at an alarming scale. Betel leaf agricultural market is characterized by high dominance of market intermediaries, non-availability of the storage facility, lack of market information, no proper organized market, high transportation cost. E-Marketing of agricultural products is an electronic trading portal for agricultural products through which many of the farmer's problems can be solved. Using internet as a way of selling agricultural products is changing marketing channels in the agribusiness industry. This paper analysis the nature and importance of e-marketing of betel leaves in the study area.*

**Keywords: e-marketing, agriculture, betel leaf, farmers, internet and technology, e-NAM.**

## Introduction

In countries like India, agriculture is the backbone of its economy. No planning for economic growth can be fruitful without the development of agricultural sector. This sector in India assumes importance in the context of population explosion, and it is required that agricultural planning should be so devised that agricultural productivity should keep pace with the growing population.

Efficient agricultural management to ensure better productivity may make a valuable contribution to the balanced growth of the Indian economy, because India is an agricultural country, which is endowed with abundant natural resources. The development of agriculture to its fullest potential is therefore, the king-pin of the Indian economy. Agricultural growth has a direct impact on poverty eradication. Its growth also helps in controlling inflation, rising of agricultural wages and increasing employment generation.

Still, agriculture remains the largest employer with about 60% of the population depending on agriculture for its livelihood. Agriculture provides an immense opportunity for trading activities which extend from wholesaler to retailer. What is more important is that in spite of these substantial material gains to the economy, it is a way of life, unique and irreplaceable in human values. About 80% of farmers in India belong to marginal (land holding less than 1 ha) or small farmers (land owner between 1 to 2 ha) category. Agriculture supports nearly 50% of the employment but contributes only 15% to the GDP.

Of late there have been reports of farmers' suicides probably due to their poor financial condition emanating from a large family to support, empty pockets and mounting debts. Most of the farmers are in the clutches of money-lenders and middlemen. They are on the mercy of these middlemen to sell their produce who arbitrarily fix the price and declare the quality of the produce. All the functionaries in the supply chain are at beneficial preposition excluding the farmer. With mounting expenses, the real income of farmers is declining. Due to irregular income and uncertainty of earnings more and more people are leaving the farming practices and rushing to the cities putting pressure on urban resources.

### **National Agriculture Market or e-Nam**

It is one of the best online trading platforms for agricultural commodities in India. This market helps farmers, traders, buyers for online trading in commodities. The e-NAM markets are proving their greatness, as it is witnessed with some aspects like the crops are weighted immediately, and the stock is lifted on the same day, and the payments will be cleared online. The e-NAM platform facilitates farmers to trade directly on their own through the mobile app or registered commission agents. The e-NAM is linked with 585 markets in 16 states and two union territory. Forty five lakh farmers got membership in 15 states. This market is facilitating traders and exporters, in acquiring quality produce in bulk, at one place and it will ensure transparent financial transactions. E-marketing is referred to those strategies and techniques which use online ways to reach target customers. E-marketing is also known as Internet Marketing, Web Marketing, Digital Marketing or Online Marketing.

e-Marketing is most useful to the farmers since the benefits are high and electronic systems are ready to serve customers all over the world and open for 24 hours in a day and the cost incurring is also low.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The betel leaf plays a vital role in the Indian culture especially in traditional ceremonies such as offering money to the temple priests and exchanging betel leaves during family functions such as betrothal. It is an evergreen and perennial creeper which is planted widely in India. No doubt, it increases

the National economy and provides employment opportunity directly and indirectly to several people in rural areas.

The origin of the well known Tamil phrase -"Thenur vethalai, Manoor sunnaambu"(Betel leaf from Thenur, Lime from Manoor) indicates the popularity of betel leaf grown in Thenur. The betel leaves from Thenur are sent to Alagarkoil for Lord Sundararaja Perumal. Farmers used to exclusively cultivate betel leaves. But owing to water scarcity and farmers shifting to other vocation have resulted in a drastic decrease in cultivation of betel leaves here. In this same area, a few farmers who cultivated other crops still dedicated a small space of their farm land for the cultivation of betel leaves, which they send to Kallalagar temple as per tradition. It is also believed that Europeans came to the village in the past to purchase betel leaf from them as it was believed to be the best in the region.

The marketing of betel leaf has come down to a great extent due to decline in rain and migration of labour and the bad opinion among the people that chewing betel leaves with other ingredients like panparag can cause cancer. Cultural changes have also resulted in the decline of betel leaf usage among the younger generation. The above - mentioned reasons resulted in the decline of betel leaf consumption and in turn betel leaf cultivation by the farmers. These reasons induce the researcher to analyse the problems faced by the cultivators in marketing the betel leaf.

### **Profile of the Study Area**

The study area of the research is Sholavandan Taluk of Madurai District. The City of Madurai lies on the flat and fertile plain of the river Vaigai, which runs in the Northwest-South east direction through the city, dividing it into two almost equal halves. The land in and around Madurai is utilized mainly for agricultural activity, which is fostered by the Periyar Dam. Madurai lies Southeast of the Western Ghats, and the surrounding region occupies the plains of South India and contains several mountain spurs. Paddy is the major crop, followed by pulses, millet, oil seed, cotton and sugarcane. Sholavandan taluk is an import taluk of Madurai District. Sholavandan lies on the left bank of the river Vaigai. It can be

stated to be lying in some sort of a valley – between the Nagamalai hills and the Sirumalai. Sholavandan is also the name of the forest range under Madurai division. Due to the fertility of the soil and availability of Vaigai Water various types of crops, like rice, sugarcane, banana, coconut plantations and betel leaves are cultivated throughout the year. According to Madurai people Sholavandan is a small “coconut island”.

## Review of Literature

**Kalyani Kanti Das et al.,(1995)<sup>1</sup>** has made a study of, “Economic Efficiency of Betel leaf marketing system in West Bengal”. However, the state of West Bengal is considered to be the rich supplier of the country’s requirement. It has been reported that West Bengal produced on an average about 3.04 thousands crores of leaves per year.

**Subramanyam (1996)<sup>2</sup>**, conducted a study on the present status and future requirements of marketing of horticultural crops in Karnataka. The study brought out the fact that nearly 65 per cent of the sample respondents marketed their produce only through commission agents.

**G.C . Srivastava and B.Prasad (1996)<sup>3</sup>** made a study entitled “An Economic Analysis of Betelvine in Bihar”. The main reason for comparatively lower price obtained by the farmers on the one hand and higher price paid by the consumers on the other hand is due to the existence of more marketing intermediaries resulting into a disproportionate amount of gross marketing margins.

**N.B. Pradhan and K. Sibagopal Rao (1999)<sup>4</sup>** made a study entitled “Marketing of Betel Leaves; A case study of Golanthra Area in Orissa”. The betel leaf market of this area is an unorganized and unregulated market. Formation of “Betel Leaves Growers Society” is recommended to counteract the exploitation of commission agents and traders. To some extent Government intervention and market regulation were necessary to attain maximum advantage by the growers.

## Objectives of the Study

1. The study analyzes the problems faced by the farmers in marketing of betel leaf in Sholavandan Taluk, Madurai District.
2. To give suggestions to improve the marketing and sales of betel leaf.

## Sampling Design

Totally 500 families are involved in the cultivation of betel leaf for the last 20 years in Sholavandan. Nearly 2000 farmers are engaged in cultivating betel leaf in this area. Village wise probability proportion method was used for the selection of betel leaves growers in the Sholavandan taluk in Madurai district. 25% of the betel leaf growers formed the sample of the study.

## Tools for Data Collection

The researcher used the interview schedule for analyzing the marketing problems of betel leaf farmers in the study area. Other relevant data relating to the study has been collected from books, journals, government agencies and used as secondary data.

## Analysis

The marketing problems relating to market of Betel leaves in the study area were analyzed with the statistical tools of Garret Ranking

## Marketing Problems

Problems faced by the farmers in marketing the betel leaves in the study area.

- 4 N.B. Pradhan and K. Sibagopal Rao, “Marketing of Betel Leaves; A Case Study of Golanthra Area in Orissa”, Indian Journal of Agricultural Marketing, July 1999, p.116.

- 1 Kalyani Kanti Das, B.N.Banerjee and M.D. Hasrat Ali, “Economic Efficiency of Betel Leaf Marketing System in West Bengal”, Indian Journal of Agricultural Marketing, Conference special, 1995, p.49.
- 2 Subramanyam, K.V., “Marketing of horticulture crops in Karnataka : Present status and future requirements”, Indian Journal of Agricultural Marketing, Vol. 52 : No. 3, 1996, pp. 15-22.
- 3 G. C. Srivastava and B. Prasad, “An Economic Analysis of Marketing of Betel Vine in Bihar”, The Bihar Journal of Agricultural Marketing, Vol. IV, No.2, April-June, 1996, pp 157-165.

### Marketing Problems

Sl. No.	Problems	Total Score	%	Rank
1.	High dominance of market intermediaries	41,925	83.85	1
2.	Non-availability of storage facility	37,205	74.41	2
3.	Lack of market information	31,035	62.07	3
4.	No proper organized market	29,090	58.18	4
5.	High transportation cost	28,320	56.64	5

**Source:** Primary data

The above table listed out the different problems faced by the betel leaf growers at the time of marketing the betel leaves.

The first rank is given to the (83.85%) problem of high dominance of market intermediaries. In betel marketing, a large number of intermediaries are involved and large margins are taken up by them. However, it is inevitable because the produce is highly perishable and required personal care and quick handling.

Non-availability of a storage (74.41%) facility, is considered as the second major problem. Since there is no proper arrangement for storage and preservation the growers are being forced to sell the betel leaves, even if there is lower prices prevailing in the market. If there is any storage facilities available in the villages, the growers can store betel leaves and can wait for better prices.

As per the table, the lack of market information is given the third rank (62.07%) by the sample growers. Marketing is a big process, and it needs much experience about customer behaviour, knowledge about supply, demand, price fixation, transport, export etc. But the village level farmers are not having awareness, about the latest marketing technology.

The betel leaf farmers don't have a proper organized market system. It is considered as the fourth (58.18%) major problem. Due to the absence of regulated market, middlemen generally fix the prices, and this causes adverse and unfavourable prices for the growers. The information regarding demand, supply, price, market conditions are essential to the

growers of betel vine. But they can collect all these information only through middlemen, Association, merchant, auction market. Because of the non-regulated markets, the growers have to act according to the ideas given by intermediaries, which is not fair.

As per the table, the fifth rank is given to the (56.64%) high transport cost. The farmers have to spend their own money on transporting the betel from the field to the selling point.

### Suggestions

1. The government should provide cold storage facilities to the farmers of betel leaf growers.
2. Common National Market should be introduced (CNM) to promote the sale of betel leaves.
3. E-NAM portal will provide single window service to the betel leaf farmers.
4. The government should take steps to establish the betel leaf Research Centre for promoting cultivators to cultivate betel leaf.
5. The Government should prohibit to make sale of Gud-ha and create an awareness among the public about the medical benefits of consuming the betel leaves.
6. Many of the mandis have set up assay laboratories to grade the produce. Assayed commodities get farmers a better price.
7. Farmers can draw the benefits of better price discovery through e-NAM.
8. At e-NAM platform through Bluetooth, it is deterring commission agents from falsifying weights and cheating farmers.
9. The government should take initiative steps to educate the farmers, about e-marketing and internet operations in improving the marketing of betel leaves.
10. In Sholavandan all the betel leaf farmers gathered in one place to sell their produce, which can be called as "VETTRILAI KODIKAL VIVASAYA SANGAM". But this sangam has no direct link with the government. The government must take initiative steps to get connection with this sangam to overcome the problems faced by the betel leaf farmers.

## Conclusion

Traditional marketing for betel leaves suffering from many drawbacks. Introduction of E- Platform for betel leaf is helpful from the point of farmers as well as governments. In this process every citizen of the country should support to the farmers. Development of nation depends upon development of farmers because farmer is the backbone of the country. By giving online marketing education to farmers, farmers will get marketing opportunity to their products that will contribute a lot to the development of the nation.

## References

- Abhishek A G, Bharathwaj M & Bhagyalakshmi L, "Agricultural marketing using web and mobile based technologies", 2016
- Anon, Marketing of Betel leaves in India, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, Ministry of Rural Development, Faridabad, 1996, 1983b.
- Gadre N A & Galgatar V D, Economic Analysis of Betel Leaf production and Marketing in Maharashtra, paper presented in workshop on betel vine, Calcutta University, Calcutta, The

Agricultural Society of India, Calcutta, 1988, 1984, pp. 189-96.

Habbib Ullah Khan, "The development of internet marketing in the development of agricultural industry" *Journal of Internet Commerce*, March, 2015

Hinge B J & Tilekar S N, Economics of Production and Marketing of Betel Leaves in Nasik district. A case study in Western Maharashtra, 1987.

Mohammad Sadegh Allahyari, "Adoption of Agricultural E-marketing", *Journal of International Food and Agribusiness Marketing*, vol. 27, 2017

Saniyapan R & Marimuthu T, "Is Betel Vine Cultivation profitable to Farming Community" *Report on National workshop on Betel vine, Calcutta, 1982.*

## Web Sources

- [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)  
[www.enam.gov.in](http://www.enam.gov.in)  
[www.agrifarming.in](http://www.agrifarming.in)  
[www.dedellseeds.com](http://www.dedellseeds.com)

## Author Details

### Ms.P.Sahaya Princy

Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India.

Email ID: lawrencesahayaprincy@gmail.com

### Dr.S.Hasan Banu

Research Supervisor & Head, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Hajee Karutha Rowther Howdia College, Uthamapalayam, Tamil Nadu, India.