



Problems Faced By Farmers In Sugarcane Cultivation Special Reference To Erode District - “An Empirical Study”

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Abstract:

Sugarcane cultivation plays an important role in the agricultural economy of Erode district in Tamil Nadu, India. However, farmers in this region face various challenges that affect productivity and profitability. This empirical study aims to identify and analyse the problems encountered by farmers during sugarcane cultivation in Erode district. Data were collected through primary and secondary sources, and a detailed analysis was conducted to highlight the key issues. The study reveals that water scarcity, labour shortages, high input costs, and inadequate access to credit are some of the major challenges faced by sugarcane farmers. The findings of this research will provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders to formulate strategies for improving the conditions of sugarcane farmers in Erode District.

Keywords: Sugarcane cultivation, agricultural challenges, water scarcity, labour shortages, input costs, credit access.

Introduction:

Sugarcane is an important cash crop in the agricultural area of Erode district, contributing significantly to the livelihoods of farmers and the local economy. Sugarcane is cultivated in 30,903 Hectares and it occupied 6th place in area, 3rd place in terms of Cone production & Gur production in Tamil Nadu. In spite of its economic importance, sugarcane cultivation in this region faces several Challenges. Farmers Regularly encounter problems related to water management, labour availability, rising input costs, and market fluctuations. This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of these

challenges, offering a comprehensive understanding of the problems faced by sugarcane farmers in Erode district.

Significance of the Study:

This study is significant as it sheds light on the practical problems faced by sugarcane farmers in Erode district, a region where agriculture remains the backbone of the economy. Understanding these challenges is essential for designing effective interventions to support farmers, increase productivity, and improve overall agricultural sustainability.

Statement of the Problem:

Sugarcane farmers in Erode district face numerous challenges that hinder their ability to cultivate the crop efficiently and profitably. Cauvery river provides irrigation facilities to a limited extent in Bhavani and Erode taluk. Even though there are some issues such as water scarcity, labour shortages, rising input costs, and inadequate access to financial resources pose significant threats to their livelihood. This study aims to systematically identify and analyse these problems, providing empirical evidence to guide future policy decisions.

Objectives of the Study:

- ❖ To identify the key challenges faced by sugarcane farmers in Erode district.
- ❖ To analyse the impact of these challenges on sugarcane productivity and profitability.
- ❖ To assess the effectiveness of current support systems for sugarcane farmers.
- ❖ To provide recommendations for improving the conditions of sugarcane farmers in Erode district.

Hypothesis of the Study:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between water scarcity and the yield of sugarcane cultivation in Erode district.

H₁: There is significant relationship between water scarcity and the yield of sugarcane cultivation in Erode district.

H₀: Labour shortages do not significantly affect the productivity of sugarcane farmers in Erode district.

H₁: Labour shortages not significantly affect the productivity of sugarcane farmers in Erode district.

H₀: High input costs have no significant impact on the profitability of sugarcane cultivation in Erode district.

H₁: High input costs have significant impact on the profitability of sugarcane cultivation in Erode district.

H₀: Inadequate access to credit does not significantly limit the ability of sugarcane farmers to invest in improved farming practices.

H₁: Inadequate access to credit does significantly limit the ability of sugarcane farmers to invest in improved farming practices.

Research Methodology:

Research Design:

This study adopts a descriptive research design to analyse the problems faced by sugarcane farmers in Erode district. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected to provide a detailed understanding of the problems.

Method of Data Collection:

Primary Data:

Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews with sugarcane farmers in Erode district. A total of 200 farmers were surveyed to gather first-hand information on the issues they face during sugarcane cultivation.

Secondary Data:

Secondary data were obtained from agricultural journals, government reports and previous studies related to sugarcane cultivation in Erode district.

Sampling Method:

A Judgmental Sampling was used to select sugarcane farmers from different parts of Erode district to ensure a representative sample of the population.

Sample Size:

The sample size for this study consisted of 200 sugarcane farmers selected on the following proportions of strata in the rural areas of Erode district North Erode - 40% 80 respondents, South Erode - 35% 70 respondents and West Erode - 25% 50 respondents.

Area of the Study:

The study was conducted in Rural areas of Erode district, Tamil Nadu, focusing on areas where sugarcane cultivation is most important.

Limitations of the Study:

- ❖ The study is limited to the Erode district, and findings may not be generalizable to other regions.
- ❖ The sample size of 200 farmers may not capture the full diversity of experiences among sugarcane farmers.
- ❖ The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases.

Analysis:

Data collected from the surveys were analysed using statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentages, and cross-tabulation. The analysis focused on identifying the most common challenges faced by sugarcane farmers and their impact on cultivation practices. Water scarcity emerged as the most significant issue, followed by labour shortages and high input costs.

Table 1: Problems Faced by Sugarcane Farmers in Erode District (2023)

Problems	Impact on Cultivation	Percentage of Farmers Affected (%)
Water Scarcity	Delayed planting, reduced yield	70%
Labour Shortages	Delays in harvesting, higher costs	60%
High Input Costs	Reduced profit margins	55%
Inadequate Credit Access	Limited investment in technology	45%
Market Price Fluctuations	Unstable income	40%
Pest Infestation	Crop damage, increased input costs	35%
Poor Infrastructure	Difficulty in transportation	30%

Findings of the Study:

- ❖ 70% of the farmers reported water scarcity as the primary challenge affecting their sugarcane cultivation.
- ❖ 60% of the farmers faced difficulties in finding adequate labour, especially during peak harvesting seasons.
- ❖ 55% of the farmers mentioned that rising costs of fertilizers, pesticides, and other inputs were reducing their profit margins.
- ❖ 45% of the farmers struggled to obtain financial support, limiting their ability to invest in modern farming techniques.
- ❖ 40% of the farmers mentioned there is no stable income for the sugarcane cultivation.
- ❖ 35% of the farmer's regret on increased input cost and crop damage.
- ❖ 30% of the farmer are mentioned facing difficulty in transportation.

Conclusion:

The study reveals that sugarcane farmers in the Erode district encounter numerous significant obstacles impacting their productivity and profitability. Key issues include limited water resources, shortages of labour, escalating input costs, and insufficient access to credit. To overcome these challenges, a detailed strategy is needed. This should involve enhancing water management techniques, revising labour policies, and boosting financial assistance for farmers. It is essential for policymakers and stakeholders to work together to foster a more sustainable and supportive framework for sugarcane farming in the Erode district.

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