

## Marketing of Maize in Gobichettipalayam Taluk

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### ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the marketing of maize in Gobichettipalayam Taluk, focusing on the current marketing channels, factors influencing the choice of these channels, and the challenges faced by maize farmers. The research utilizes a combination of primary data collection through surveys and interviews with maize farmers, wholesalers, and retailers, along with secondary data from local agricultural reports. The findings reveal that local markets, middlemen, and cooperatives play a dominant role in maize marketing, but farmers face significant challenges including price fluctuations, poor infrastructure, and limited access to larger retail markets. Factors such as price, transportation costs, and market knowledge heavily influence the choice of marketing channels. The study concludes by recommending the adoption of digital platforms, better coordination between farmers and buyers, and improved infrastructure to enhance the efficiency and profitability of maize marketing. These strategies could alleviate the existing challenges and optimize maize sales in the region.

**Keywords:** Maize Marketing, Gobichettipalayam Taluk, Marketing Channels, Challenges, Price Fluctuations, Infrastructure, Digital Platforms.

### INTRODUCTION

Marketing plays a critical role in meeting the overall goals of food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable agriculture, particularly among smallholder farmers in developing countries [1]. For the marketing of agricultural products, channel decisions are among the most critical decisions facing an organization and the chosen channels intimately affect all other marketing decision [2]. Marketing channel is a set of interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for consumption or use.

An efficient marketing system will increase the income level of the farmers and satisfaction of the consumers. The movement of agricultural produce from the farmers to the consumers at the lowest cost is decided by the farmers/producers. A consumer derives maximum satisfaction when goods are available at the lowest cost. The modernization of agricultural market is essential for the development of the farmers and consumers in India. A good marketing system is very useful for the development of agricultural sector. This system is one of the factors that determine the economic development of the nation. The determining factors are proper marketing system, and the active role that are profitable to the farmers. In addition to these, a well organized agricultural marketing is very helpful to the farmers for the promotion of their well-being. The marketing system and the government help the farmers and the consumers attain the maximum benefits [3].

Choice of marketing channels is one of the important factors for producers because different channels are characterized by different profitability and cost. Understanding the factors influencing the channel selection and how the restrictions associated with these factors can be alleviated is also essential not only in marketing channel development but also in increasing farm income and investment condition. This paper was therefore aimed at identifying the factors affecting the marketing channels choices of maize farmers so as to be able to point out the necessity of farmers for increase production and investment and also formulate the strategic plans and policies for the development of marketing abilities.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Naik, C., & Mohan, B. C. (2025) identified how marketing channels influence price realization over the Minimum Support Price (MSP). It uses data from NSSO-SAS surveys for 2012–13 and 2018–19 and applies logit regression to determine factors impacting price realization. The findings indicate that government agencies offer better prices for MSP-covered crops like paddy, wheat, and cotton. However, larger land size and higher social status increase the likelihood of receiving better prices. Additionally, crops like jowar, bajra, maize, and ragi that don't benefit from MSP require more state-level procurement.

Prakash, D., & Zechariah, J. (2024) explored maize marketing in Etah district, Uttar Pradesh, focusing on smallholder farmers. The study finds that most farmers are marginal, young, and female, and face constraints such as price volatility, high market fees, transportation costs, and lack of credit. Three marketing channels are identified, and the study emphasizes the need to address these constraints for better maize marketing in the region.

**Mmbando, F. E., Wale, E., Baiyegunhi, L. J. S., & Darroch, M. A. G. (2016)** examined the factors influencing marketing channel choices for maize and pigeonpea farmers in northern and eastern Tanzania. Using Multinomial Logit Analysis, the study finds that transaction costs, household wealth, access to credit, extension services, and social capital significantly affect farmers' marketing channel choices. The study suggests that policies reducing transaction costs and improving access to resources can help integrate smallholder farmers into markets.

**May, P. P. (2024)** analyzed how transaction-specific factors and relationship dynamics influence marketing channel choices for maize farmers in Nyaung Shwe Township. Price, payment, and trust positively affect direct marketing choices, while transportation, personal relationships, and bargaining power impact indirect choices. The study recommends improving pricing and payment systems and focusing on strengthening direct marketing channels to increase farmers' revenue.

**Kausar, A. K. M. G., & Alam, M. J. (2016)** determined the marketing efficiency of different maize marketing channels in Bangladesh. It identifies five prominent channels, with the Farmers-Araddars-Feed mills channel being the most efficient. The study suggests reducing intermediaries and promoting direct buying from farmers and selling to Araddars or feed mills to improve marketing efficiency and increase farmers' income.

**Chirwa, E. W. (2009)** investigated the factors affecting the choice of marketing channels for maize in rural Malawi. It uses a multinomial logit model and identifies various channels, including state agencies, private traders, and local markets. Education, repeated dealings, and market proximity positively influence the choice of private traders, while distance to infrastructure such as roads and post offices hinders this choice. The study emphasizes the importance of trust, reputation, and infrastructure development in supporting agricultural marketing liberalization.

**Masuku, M. B., Makhura, M. T., & Rwelamira, J. K. (2001)** identified factors influencing maize marketing and the decision to sell maize in Swaziland. Logistic regression is used to analyze the decision to sell and the choice of marketing chain (formal or informal). The study finds that factors such as off-farm income, marketing experience, access to information, and farm size influence the decision to sell, while transportation costs and farm size affect the choice of marketing chain. Policies that reduce transportation costs and improve access to agricultural information are recommended.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The marketing of maize in Gobichettipalayam Taluk faces several challenges that hinder the efficient distribution and profitability of this vital crop. Despite its significance as a key agricultural product in the region, farmers often encounter issues such as price volatility, lack of proper market information, limited access to reliable marketing channels, and high transaction costs. Additionally, the presence of multiple intermediaries in the supply chain often results in unfair pricing and reduced income for the producers. These challenges are exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, limited access to credit facilities, and the absence of organized farmer groups to negotiate better prices. As a result, farmers struggle to maximize the potential of their maize production, leading to lower returns and inefficiencies in the maize marketing system. This study aims to analyze these issues and explore the factors influencing the marketing channels and strategies for improving the marketing efficiency of maize in the taluk.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the socio economic factors of the farmers
- To evaluate the current marketing channels for maize.
- To assess the factors affecting the marketing channel choices of maize farmers.
- To examine the challenges faced by maize farmers in marketing.
- To recommend strategies for improving maize marketing systems.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- It will evaluate the current marketing channels for maize, identifying the various formal and informal channels available to farmers in the region, including local markets, private traders, cooperatives, and government procurement systems.
- The study will then assess the factors influencing farmers' choices of marketing channels, considering elements such as price, accessibility, trust, and relationships with intermediaries.
- Furthermore, the study will examine the specific challenges faced by maize farmers in the marketing process, including issues such as price volatility, high transaction costs, inadequate infrastructure, limited market access, and the role of intermediaries in price determination.
- The study will recommend strategies to improve the maize marketing system, aiming to reduce inefficiencies, enhance profitability, and ensure fairer price realization for farmers.
- The outcomes of this study will provide insights into how to optimize the marketing channels and overcome barriers to improve the overall maize marketing system in Gobichettipalayam Taluk.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Research Design:** The research adopted a descriptive research design.

**Sources of Data:**

**Primary Data:** Primary data was collected through field surveys, interviews, and observations. The data was gathered directly from maize farmers, traders, and other key stakeholders involved in the marketing process.

**Secondary Data:** Secondary data were gathered from published reports, government publications, academic studies, market analysis reports, and institutional sources.

**Sampling Technique:** Stratified Random Sampling.

**Sample Size:** 180

**Sampling Universe:** The sampling universe consist of maize farmers, traders, intermediaries, and key stakeholders involved in the marketing of maize within Gobichettipalayam Taluk.

**Tools used for the study:** Percentage analysis, Descriptive statistics, and Oneway Anova.

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- The study is confined to Gobichettipalayam Taluk.
- The sample size is limited due to practical constraints such as accessibility, cost, and time.
- As the study involves interviews with farmers from rural areas, language barriers or differences in literacy levels could limit the quality of data collected, especially for those with low educational levels or limited proficiency in the language used for the survey.
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**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION****Demographic Variables of the Respondents**

Demographic variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	98	54.4
	Female	82	45.6
Age	Below 25 Years	42	23.3
	25-35 Years	26	14.4
	36-45 Years	34	18.9
	46-60 Years	54	30.0
	Above 60 Years	24	13.3
Education Level:	No formal education	37	20.6
	Secondary school	43	23.9
	Undergraduate	41	22.8
	Postgraduate	41	22.8
	Others	18	10.0
Occupation:	Farmer	45	25.0
	Agricultural labour	73	40.6
	Agricultural business owner	40	22.2
	Private sector employee	17	9.4
	Student	5	2.8
Annual Household Income	Less than Rs.50,000	45	25.0
	Rs.50,000 - Rs.1,00,000	84	46.7
	Rs.1,00,000 - Rs.2,00,000	31	17.2
	More than Rs.2,00,000	20	11.1
Type of Household	Nuclear family	61	33.9
	Joint family	91	50.6
	Extended family	28	15.6
Total		180	100.0

The demographic analysis of respondents in Gobichettipalayam Taluk shows that the majority are male (54.4%), with females making up 45.6% of the sample. Most respondents fall within the 46-60 years age group (30.0%), followed by those below 25 years (23.3%). Regarding education, a significant portion has secondary education (23.9%), while 22.8% each hold undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. In terms of occupation, the largest group comprises agricultural laborers (40.6%), followed by farmers (25.0%) and agricultural business owners (22.2%). The majority of respondents have an annual household income between Rs.50,000 - Rs.1,00,000 (46.7%), indicating a modest financial background. Most households follow a joint family structure (50.6%), with nuclear families (33.9%) being the second most common. This demographic profile helps in understanding the economic and social factors influencing maize marketing in the region.

**Socioeconomic Factors of the Respondents**

		Frequency	Percent
Landholding Size (in acres):	Less than 1 acre	61	33.9
	1-2 acres	79	43.9
	2-5 acres	38	21.1
	More than 5 acres	2	1.1
Grow maize on farm	Yes	91	50.6
	No	89	49.4
Average production of maize per year	Less than 10 quintals	42	23.3
	10-20 quintals	32	17.8
	21-50 quintals	9	5.0
	More than 50 quintals	8	4.4
Other crops grow alongside maize	Rice	26	14.4
	Cotton	40	22.2
	Groundnut	47	26.1
	Pulses	50	27.8
	Vegetables	17	9.4
Usually selling maize	Direct sale to local markets	29	16.1
	Through middlemen or agents	36	20.0
	Cooperatives or farmer groups	55	30.6
	Retail outlets	31	17.2
	Export	29	16.1
Major challenges faced in marketing maize	Low prices	24	13.3
	Lack of storage facilities	51	28.3
	Lack of access to markets	65	36.1
	Lack of information on market trends	25	13.9
	Competition from other regions	15	8.3
Total		180	100.0

The majority of respondents have 1-2 acres of land (43.9%), while 33.9% own less than 1 acre. About 50.6% of respondents grow maize, but their production levels remain relatively low, with most producing less than 10 quintals per year (23.3%). Alongside maize, farmers also cultivate pulses (27.8%), groundnut (26.1%), and cotton (22.2%). In terms of maize sales, the highest percentage of farmers sell through cooperatives or farmer groups (30.6%), while others rely on middlemen (20.0%) or direct local markets (16.1%). The biggest challenge faced by farmers in maize marketing is lack of access to markets (36.1%), followed by insufficient storage facilities (28.3%) and low prices (13.3%).

**FACTORS AFFECTING THE MARKETING CHANNEL CHOICES OF MAIZE FARMERS****Marketing channels for maize**

	N	Mean	SD
Direct marketing channels allow farmers to receive higher prices for their maize compared to other channels.	180	2.53	.988
Direct marketing channels are more profitable for their farm.	180	2.51	1.086
Maize farmers value the opportunity to communicate directly with consumers and educate them about their maize products.	180	2.59	1.045
Indirect marketing channels are more scalable and less labour-intensive.	180	2.82	1.404
Indirect marketing channels provide broader market access for their maize products.	180	2.41	1.166
Valid N (listwise)	180		

The above table shows that the farmers disagree with direct marketing channels helps farmers to receive higher prices for their maize compared to other channels (2.53), direct marketing channels are more profitable for their farm (2.51), maize farmers value the opportunity to communicate directly with consumers and educate them about their maize products (2.59), indirect marketing channels are more scalable and less labour-intensive (2.82) and indirect marketing channels provide broader market access for their maize products (2.41).

**Economic Factors**

	N	Mean	SD
Price stability in the marketing channel affects my choice of selling maize.	180	2.28	1.182
The higher the price offered by the marketing channel, the more likely I am to choose that channel.	180	2.77	1.238
The cost of transportation affects my decision to choose a particular marketing channel.	180	2.86	1.441
The payment terms offered by the marketing channel (e.g., immediate payment) influence my choice.	180	3.16	1.492
Valid N (listwise)	180		

The above table shows that the farmers disagree with price stability in the marketing channel affects the selling maize (2.28), choosing the channel that offer higher price for maize (2.77), cost of transportation affects the decision to choose a particular marketing channel (2.86) and agree with the influence of payment terms offered by the marketing channel (e.g., immediate payment) (3.16).

**Trust and Relationship with Buyers**

	N	Mean	SD
I prefer marketing channels where I have an established relationship with buyers or intermediaries.	180	3.37	1.634
Trustworthiness of the buyer/market channel is an important factor in my decision-making.	180	3.03	1.250
I would choose a marketing channel based on recommendations or reputation in the community.	180	3.34	1.211
Valid N (listwise)	180		

The above table shows that the farmers agree with prefer marketing channels with established relationship with buyers or intermediaries (3.37), trustworthiness of the buyer/market channel is an important factor in decision-making (3.03) and choosing a marketing channel based on recommendations or reputation in the community (3.34).

**Challenges Faced by Maize Farmers in Marketing**

	N	Mean	SD
I face difficulties in accessing local or regional markets to sell maize.	180	2.39	.828
The price of maize fluctuates significantly, making it difficult to predict my earnings.	180	2.63	.957
Middlemen or intermediaries take a large portion of the profit from the sale of my maize.	180	2.69	1.173
I am unable to negotiate fair prices with buyers due to limited market knowledge.	180	2.92	1.157
Poor road infrastructure makes it difficult to transport maize to markets.	180	3.92	1.232
Weather conditions and climate change affect the availability and marketing of maize.	180	2.81	1.123
There is insufficient storage or warehousing infrastructure to keep my maize safe until sold.	180	2.74	1.168
Valid N (listwise)	180		

The above table shows that the farmers disagree with facing difficulties in accessing local or regional markets to sell maize (2.39), price fluctuations of maize making it difficult to predict the earnings (2.63), middlemen or intermediaries take a large portion of the profit from the sale of maize (2.69), unable to negotiate fair prices with buyers due to limited market knowledge (2.92), weather conditions and climate change affect the availability and marketing of maize (2.81), insufficient storage or warehousing infrastructure to keep the maize safe until sold (2.74) and agree with poor road infrastructure makes it difficult to transport maize to markets (3.92).

**Comparison between the Demographic Variables (Occupation) of the Farmers and Various Dimensions for Marketing of Maize**

Ho: There is a significant difference between the demographic variables (occupation) of the farmers and various dimensions for marketing of maize.

	Occupation	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Marketing Channels for Maize	Farmer	45	2.44	0.629	1.369	.247
	Agricultural labour	73	2.58	0.566		
	Agricultural business owner	40	2.59	0.570		
	Private sector employee	17	2.74	0.551		
	Student	5	2.92	0.363		
	Total	180	2.57	0.581		
Economic Factors	Farmer	45	2.68	0.679	.400	.809
	Agricultural labour	73	2.73	0.975		
	Agricultural business owner	40	2.84	0.856		
	Private sector employee	17	2.88	0.973		
	Student	5	3.05	0.647		
	Total	180	2.77	0.869		
Trust and Relationship with Buyers	Farmer	45	2.82	0.645	1.656	.162
	Agricultural labour	73	2.92	0.781		
	Agricultural business owner	40	2.94	0.714		
	Private sector employee	17	3.26	0.827		
	Student	5	3.43	0.461		
	Total	180	2.95	0.738		
Challenges Faced by Maize Farmers in Marketing	Farmer	45	2.97	0.505	1.263	.286
	Agricultural labour	73	2.87	0.552		
	Agricultural business owner	40	2.88	0.559		
	Private sector employee	17	2.70	0.445		
	Student	5	2.57	0.320		
	Total	180	2.87	0.530		



There is a significant difference between marketing channels for maize (0.247), economic factors (0.809), trust and relationship with buyers (0.162), challenges faced by maize farmers in marketing (0.286) and the occupation of the respondents.

## FINDINGS

### Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Most of the respondents are male. Most of the respondents have an age group within 40-60 years. Most of the respondents finished their secondary school education. Most of the respondents are agricultural labours. Most of the respondents belong to joint families and having an annual household income of Rs.50,000-Rs.1,00,000.

### Socioeconomic Factors of the Respondents

Most of the respondents own 1-2 acres of land. Most of the respondents grow maize in their farm. Most of the respondents have an average production of less than 10 quintals of maize per year. Most of them grow pulses along with maize in their farm. Most of the respondents sell their maize to cooperatives or farmer groups. Most of the respondents reported lack of access to markets as a major challenge in marketing of maize.

### Marketing Channels for Maize

The farmers disagree with direct marketing channels helps farmers to receive higher prices for their maize compared to other channels, are more profitable for their farm, maize farmers value the opportunity to communicate directly with consumers and educate them about their maize products, indirect marketing channels are more scalable, less labour-intensive and provide broader market access for their maize products.

### Factors Affecting the Marketing Channel Choices of Maize Farmers

#### Economic Factors

The farmers disagree with price stability in the marketing channel affects the selling maize, choosing the channel that offer higher price for maize, cost of transportation affects the decision to choose a particular marketing channel and agree with the influence of payment terms offered by the marketing channel (e.g., immediate payment).

#### Trust and Relationship with Buyers

The above table shows that the farmers agree with prefer marketing channels with established relationship with buyers or intermediaries, trustworthiness of the buyer/market channel is an important factor in decision-making and choosing a marketing channel based on recommendations or reputation in the community.

### Challenges Faced by Maize Farmers in Marketing

The above table shows that the farmers disagree with facing difficulties in accessing local or regional markets to sell maize, price fluctuations of maize making it difficult to predict the earnings, middlemen or intermediaries take a large portion of the profit from the sale of maize, unable to negotiate fair prices with buyers due to limited market knowledge, weather conditions and climate change affect the availability and marketing of maize, insufficient storage or warehousing infrastructure to keep the maize safe until sold and agree with poor road infrastructure makes it difficult to transport maize to markets.

## SUGGESTIONS

- Developing programs to educate consumers about the quality and benefits of locally grown maize could create a loyal customer base, increasing the demand for maize through direct channels.
- Workshops and training sessions could be organized for farmers on the advantages of direct marketing channels, focusing on how these can help them achieve higher prices and profitability.
- Farmers may focus on negotiating better deals with intermediaries to allow farmers to retain a larger portion of the sale price.
- Farmers may seek government or NGO support for creating dedicated maize marketing centers or establishing direct links between farmers and large-scale purchasers (such as feed mills or processors).
- Encourage government support or subsidies for infrastructure development (such as storage facilities, transport, or cold chain systems) that could make direct marketing more viable for farmers in the region.
- Marketing channels should ensure stable prices or at least offer mechanisms to protect against price fluctuations. Marketing channels should prioritize building strong, trustworthy relationships with farmers.
- Since transportation costs are a key factor influencing decision-making, initiatives to reduce transportation burdens would be beneficial. This could involve subsidies for transport, development of infrastructure such as rural roads, or organizing farmer cooperatives that can share transportation costs.
- The development of direct marketing channels, farmer cooperatives, or contract farming agreements can help reduce the profit share taken by intermediaries. Educating farmers about market conditions and creating platforms for communication between buyers and farmers can improve bargaining power.

## CONCLUSION

The marketing of maize in Gobichettipalayam Taluk faces numerous challenges and opportunities. Direct marketing channels, which allow farmers to engage with consumers directly, have limited appeal for most respondents. The opportunity to communicate directly with consumers and educate them about their maize products is also rated moderately. Indirect marketing channels, which offer more scalability and broader market access, are perceived as slightly more favorable but come with significant drawbacks, particularly in terms of profitability.

Price stability is not a major determining factor for most farmers, but the price offered by the marketing channel is more important. Transportation costs are another factor influencing channel choice, but payment terms offered by the channel, particularly immediate payment, emerge as more influential. Farmers prioritize liquidity and the ability to access cash quickly, which highlights the importance of favorable payment conditions in their decision-making.

Trust and relationships play a significant role in farmers' choice of marketing channels. They prefer established relationships with buyers or intermediaries and the importance of trustworthiness. Farmers also face challenges in accessing markets due to inadequate road infrastructure, fluctuating prices, and the inability to negotiate fair prices due to limited market knowledge. Weather conditions and climate change continue to affect maize production and marketing, underscoring the vulnerability of maize farmers to environmental factors.

To enhance the marketing system, improvements in transportation networks, better market access, and support for direct marketing channels can be made. Strengthening trust and relationships between farmers and buyers, improving market knowledge, and ensuring better storage facilities can also improve marketing efficiency and profitability.

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