RESEARCH ARTICLE

SITUATION OF VEGETABLE PRODUCTION AND ITS MARKETING IN THE CONTEXT OF RURAL FARMERS: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Diversified agro-ecological zones and the variation in the weather and climate with a year favors the production of Vegetables in Nepal at large extent. Production could be effective only if the Marketing is well adapted there. Marketing plays the vital role in the proper management of the produced product and help in raising the living standard of the respective farmers. Marketing not only focus on improving the earning capacity and employment opportunities of the respective vegetables producing farmers but also provide the fresh vegetables to the needy consumers at affordable price and their demands for vegetables seems to be fulfilled. To increase the efficiency of vegetables marketing in Nepal, there need to focus on building improved market information system which will provide the market information about the demand, supply to the producers, traders and consumers which will help in making proper production and marketing decisions. To make the Nepal, a self-dependent country on its own vegetables production, Marketing need to be highly focused. To know about the gender role in Agricultural production and marketing, crops they produce and the selling rate and the marketing status, problems and solution expected by farmers, I did a case study in the Chatakpur area of Dhangadhi, Kailali.

KEYWORDS

Diversified, Agroecological, Wholesale Prices, Gender Role, Market Information, Self-Dependent

1. INTRODUCTION

Vegetable production is the major sub sector of employment opportunities for the Nepalese people as it contributes 9.71% to total AGDP and it has covered 5.4% of total cultivated area. They depend on vegetables production for their survival and uplifting their living standard (Ellis, 2000). There are three types of cropping practices namely rice-based, maize-based and vegetables based in Nepal (Thapa and Poudel, 2003). Production benefit depends more on its postharvest management before, during and after the marketing of the produced vegetables and is labor intensive than cereals (Ali et al., 2000 cited in Paudyal 2006). Around 250 vegetables are grown in Nepal, from with more than 50 are common and the numbers of vegetable crops grown are increasing (Kathmandu, 2014). The per capita vegetable consumption has increased to 105 kg from 60 kg over last two decades due to massive rise in agriculture and production area in Nepal.

Vegetable production, productivity and growing areas are increasing rate in the context of Nepal (Awasthi, 2007). Nature of market and their role in price determination are the central to economics (Verhees, 2005). The spatial price behavior in regional markets are important indicators of market performance (Mishra and Kumar, 2012). Some crops can be grown a year round but due to the long distance transportation cost, the price changes seasonally. Integrated markets have limited price differences in time, from and space when it comes to market cost. Vegetable gardening is also used as market gardening, home gardening and Fresh vegetable market gardening basically grown for fulfillment of urban demand and the cropping pattern of depends on the local market demand.

Women are found to be involved in household activities and vegetable

production than men and they uses Farm Yard manure (FYM) for vegetable production (Shtrii Shakti, 1995; Hossain et al., 2020). The demand of vegetable is increasing day by day because of rapid population growth, urbanization, awareness of health Irrigation facility, promotion by government and NGOs High return, development of improved and hybrid varieties, road networks connecting markets Low economies of scale, micro-credit availability from GO/NGOs and institutions, establishment of cooperative schemes and for this marketing is play a crucial role (Gill and Hoebink, 2003). The daily requirement of vegetables per capita per meal in proportion of 4.5% of total volume of food to maintain a balanced diet. Marketing need to be focused more widely for providing the fresh vegetables to the needy people.

South East Asia marketing links are jumping from the traditional shops to supermarkets as well as hypermarkets but still majority of fresh vegetables are sold to urban go through the local market (Cadilhon, 2003; Shepherd, 2005). Government should increase marketing system through government and private sector participation (Tracey-White, 2003). Clear marketing channel supporting the both producers and consumers benefit need to be enhanced for effectiveness in proper management of vegetables. Many farmers are facing the problems of vegetables spoilage due to unavailability of proper market facility and shortage of vegetables in the market occurs from season to season (Singh, 2005). Offseason vegetable production is another emerging concept for availability of vegetables all year around and reduces poverty and malnutrition mostly prevalent in hilly areas (Weinberger and Lumpkin, 2005; Shrestha, 2008).

In spite of being high production they are facing the problems of losses. Many farmers nowadays had left over the agricultural production and had started new employment due to failure in getting benefit from their production. Marketing information including the post-harvest knowledge

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are the prerequisites for the successful vegetable production (Van Mele et al., 2005). Linkage between the producers, traders and consumers need to strengthen more n more. Lack of road, transportation facilities, communication facilities, marketing of vegetables become difficult in some areas especially in rural areas of Nepal such as Manang, Mustang, Khotang and many more (Tiworthy, 2005). Irrigation is another problem for vegetable producers along with unavailability of improved and hybrid seeds (Sharma, 1992). Government focus and the effective policies and budgets regarding its successful marketing and management seems to most needed one. Agricultural marketing will not be flourished unless then infrastructure and other supports are providing (Thapa, 2014).

1.1 Objectives

Familiar with the role of agriculture marketing on improving the living condition of people and helps in maintaining health as well as needs of consumers around the country, we had chosen our objective as:

- To evaluate gender role in agriculture production and Marketing.
- To know what crops they produces and among them, how much they sell.
- To find out the status of Marketing, problems and their expectations regarding its management.

1.2 Database and Methodology

This study is completely based on Primary source of data collected through the field survey in the month of June, 2020 through a process of direct questionnaire method using stratified random sampling technique. I collected information by arranging the gram sabha in the community hall area. Members from more than 45 household were involved in that meeting which makes us easy to extract data from the members of different households to make our study more effective. To know and maintain the accuracy of the information obtained, I visited their houses, farms and the wholesaler of our area who buys the farmers produces.

1.3 Study Area

I selected the Chatakpur ward no.3 of Dhangadhi city which fall under the Kailali district of Sudurpaschim Province of Nepal. It shares borders with Uttar Pradesh of India in south, Kailali rural municipality in east, Kanchanpur District in West part and the Godawari and Gauriganga Municipality in North. It is at elevation 180m above sea level and lies between 28°41'6.88"North latitude and 80°37'17.73"East longitude. We selected this area for our case study knowing that Tharu community of this area is involved in Vegetable farming in a commercial way. Other community were also involved but mostly for their home consumption only. This area is my home area too so it makes me easier to get more valid information as I'm familiar with it. To know more about their marketing condition of their produces, I had conducted this survey

2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

2.1 Gender role in agriculture and marketing

I asked every member's present there about their involvement in agriculture production and marketing. I found that women were highly involved in agriculture sectors and men were involved in marketing of the agricultural produces. Women were involved in household activities as well as in vegetable production and men thinks that they were perfect in producing high produces. Men also involves in vegetable production but mostly during field preparation only as they are masculine to do the laborious job. Female of that area were mostly uneducated or some has studied only few standards due to which men thinks that they couldn't handle the money related problems and loading, transporting and unloading is a laborious job which women less likely can do every day. Another reason behind women involvement in vegetable production is foreign employment. Male from the family had gone to foreign countries to earn money to run their houses.

I had also found some women were both involving in vegetable production and marketing due to absence of male member in the family. In our studies, we found that women were highly involved in vegetable production in comparison to men. Life of not only men but also of women were improved through vegetable production. The findings is similar with the findings which had stated the role of women empowerment in vegetable production and improvement of their lifestyle (Shri, 1995; Hossain et al., 2020). It also resembles which explains about the migration and employment effect on vegetable production (Gill and Hoebink, 2003).

2.2 Crop they Produce, Input used and Their Sale

In our studies, I asked them about the vegetables they produce in their farms. I found that they grow mainly Brinjal, Tomato, Okra, Chilli and cucurbits such as bottle gourd, snake gourd, bitter gourd, Ridges, cucumbers, pumpkins etc in their fields in summer whereas they grows cauliflower, Cabbage, onion, garlic, Radish, Coriander, etc in winter. They also grow vegetables especially tomato in off-season making poly house, plastic tunnels etc and earns income throughout the year. They said that they used Farm Yard Manure come out from their livestock farm and they prepare them, store them by making pits on the ground. They use them during the time of field preparation and incorporate them in the soil by ploughing the field with MB plough, sometimes tractor is used for this purpose. They prepare the seedlings in their own farm making the nursery bed for their growth while producing vegetables for commercial purpose. For household purposes, they buy seedlings from the nearby market. They uses fertilizer in small quantity, they focus more on FYM and composts.

The vegetable produced in this area is somehow organic because they do not use fertilizer and depends on organic inputs. I also asked them about their selling amount among the total produce. I found more than 70% of the members involved in meeting were selling their 80% of their produce to markets and rest for their home consumption. Remaining around 30% members were growing vegetables only for their home consumptions. They were involved in vegetable production for their survival, improving their living standard and earn money for their children's education. Vegetable production is their employment source and they are engaging widely in it. This findings is similar with which tells about the commercially important vegetables grown by the farmers , with findings which explains about the role of off-season vegetable production in aiding rural life and with which states that vegetable production plays important role in poverty alleviation and uplifting the rural peoples living standard (Purushottam and Nakayasu, 2014; Shrestha, 2008; Weinberger and Lampkin, 2005).

2.3 Marketing status, Problem and Expectations of Farmers

During case-study, I get to know the marketing status of the produce of the farmers. Marketing condition is somehow good but input availability is satisfactory. They sell their vegetables in the near market at wholesale rate. Due to importing of vegetables from the border countries, farmers are facing problem of getting low price for their vegetables. Market is covered with vegetables came from import phenomena from border countries. Imported vegetables are available at cheap rate in the market due to which wholesaler don't want to pay high price to the farmers for their agricultural produce. Every members had expressed their problems regarding this issue in the meeting. Sometimes, they directly sell their vegetables at Hatbazaar and they carry vegetables in cycles, auto and visit the village and sell the products to the consumers. They also said that they are investing more and gaining less due to low price of their produce. I asked them to tell their problems and find out the problems as ranked below:

Table 1: Ranking of problem arising in Vegetable production	
Problems	Rank
Lower market price for their produce	I
Unmanaged Market and lack of market information	II
Lack of improved and hybrid seeds	III
Lack of subsidies available	IV
Disease and pest problem	V
Lack of training programs	VI
Storage problems	VII
Irrigation problems	VIII

Farmers in this area were facing these problems and have expectations with government regarding these problems. They want subsidies for commercial agricultural production to motivate them for involving more in vegetable production. They want suitable and high yielding hybrid varieties for enhancing their productivity. They want marketing to be perfect and want to get appropriate prices or their produce. They want training regarding the use of suitable varieties, identifying the correct planting and harvesting time, knowing how to use new technologies and method of cultivation for increasing their production. They want to get what they deserve and return back of their investment through profit. The findings is in accordance with the findings of which stated the need of

planning and designing of rural market for vegetables, with which states about need of irrigation, with which illustrated the market oriented product innovation in small firms, with which had explained the pricing is the major problems and need of its stabilization (Tracey-white, 2003; Sharma et al., 1992; Verhees, 2005; Mishra and Kumar, 2012).

3. CONCLUSION

Vegetable production is the important part of the people residing in this area. It is the source of their income and helps in improving their living standard. It is found that women were involved in household activities and vegetable cultivation and male were involved in land preparation and marketing of the vegetable produce due to the low literacy rate of women which prevent them from involving the marketing and monetary activities. More than 70% were involved in commercial vegetables production from which 80% of total produce is used for selling purposes and remaining 20% were involved in vegetable production for own home consumption. They grows many winter and summer vegetables in their field and earn money by selling them in near market. Main problem was found to be low price of their produce followed by unmanaged market, lack of improved and hybrid seeds and many more. They expect from government for fulfillment of their needs by eradicating the problems from the root level.

Government should focus on making and implementing price stabilizing plans and policies to prevent the farmers from the pricing problems. Export promotion and import substitution programs must be carried out in this area and in other area facing the similar problems. Government should focus on eradication of illegal trading which had created negative impact to the farmers. Facility of transportation, communications, improved and hybrid varieties, access to market and marketing information must be provided to every farmers. Storage is another problems causing losses to the vegetable products. Government should carried out suitable irrigation schemes for the favorableness for increasing their production and storage facility to prevent the agricultural produces from being destroyed and losses will be reduced. Vegetable production is feasible here and many people were also involved in it, there is just a need of government focus on enhancing this sector and its proper marketing and motivating the farmers to continue vegetable production.

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