



Marketing Behaviour of Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus* L.) Growers in Tapi District

P K Modi¹, P D Verma and S M Chavan

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, NAU, Vyara, Dist.-Tapi 394650 (Gujarat)

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted on marketing behaviour of 100 okra growers from two talukas of the Tapi district by simple random sampling technique. The findings of marketing behaviour of farmers revealed that 75 per cent used bike for transport their produce, 75 per cent used plastic bags as packing material and majority of the farmers sold their produce immediately after harvest in the nearby market. Whereas, 81 per cent farmers reported that they received full payment on the spot after sale. Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (62%) was important source of market information. Major problems in the marketing were price fluctuation (100%), high cost of cultivation (83%), poor quality of seed (69%) and climate change (21%) as well as export of okra very less extent. Independent variable training and experience significantly correlated with the yield of okra. However, regression clearly indicated the importance of experience and training in the farming and marketing of okra.

Key words: Marketing behaviour, okra grower, APMC, packaging, export.

INTRODUCTION

Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus* L.) is one of the most important warm season vegetable grown in tropical and sub-tropical parts of the world and valued for its edible green pods that are popular vegetable in India (Anonymous, 2018). In Tapi district of Gujarat okra grown as off season (September to April) vegetable in 9960 ha area and production of 1,35,954 MT as well as productivity of 13,650 kg/ha (Anonymous, 2019). Major market for okra farmers is Agricultural Produced Marketing Committee (APMC), Vyara, APMC-Buhari, APMC- Dolvan, Sardar market, Surat and some other local market within and outside the district. Though, the farmers were not benefited under this situation. It was necessary to know the marketing behaviour of okra growers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in two okra growing blocks of Tapi district. Five villages from each

selected block were randomly selected for the study. From the universe a sample of about 100 respondents were selected through random sampling technique *i.e.*, 10 respondents from each selected village with a condition that few of the growers should sell their okra to exporters. The marketing behaviour dimensions to be studied were inspired by Kumar (2015). The statements used to analyse marketing behaviour of okra growers were as follows: when do you sell the produce, which the study included mode of transport, packaging, mode of sale, time of sale, grading, mode of payment and so on. On behalf of the above, statement responses were recorded from the respondents. The information collected was processed and analysed by using percentage, correlation and regression coefficient methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the respondents

It was evident (Table 1) that majority of the respondents belonged to age group up to 50 yr

Corresponding Author's Email: pmodi.horti@gmail.com

¹Assistant Research Scientist, Fruit Research Station, NAU, Gandevi. (Gujarat)

Table 1. Distribution of respondent as per their characterises. n=100

Sr. No.	Selected profile	Percentage
1	Age	
	Up to 35 yr	40.00
	More than 35 to 50	45.00
	More than 50	15.00
2	Education	
	Illiterate	12.00
	Up to Primary	15.00
	Up to higher secondary	53.00
	Graduate	20.00
3	Size of land holding (SL)	
	Marginal	58.00
	Small	25.00
	Medium	15.00
	Large	2.00
4	Occupation	
	Agriculture	10.00
	Agriculture & Animal Husbandry	82.00
	Agriculture & Animal Husbandry & others	8.00
5	Farming Experience	
	< 3 yr	44.00
	3 to 5 yr	35.00
	> 5 yr	21.00
6	Training acquired	
	Yes	35.00
	No	65.00
7	Yield (kg/ha)	
	Low < 5025	17.00
	Medium Upto 11385	64.00
	High 1>11385	19.00

(85%), educated up to higher secondary to graduate level (73%), marginal to medium land holding (98%), agriculture and animal husbandry was the main occupation 82%. Seventy nine per cent of the respondents having experience of Okra cultivation up to 5 yr. twenty five per cent respondents acquired

training and majority (65%) of the okra growers obtained yield up to 11,385 kg/ha.

Marketing Behaviour

Mode of transport

It was found that 75 per cent of okra growers transported their produce through bike followed by tempo 25 per cent. This clearly indicated that most of the farmers sold their produce nearby market. The selection of mode of transport depended on quantity of the produce and distance of market. If quantity was large and to sell their produce in far away markets they used tempo as a mode of transport. Small land holding farmers near to market, they used bike for transportation (Phukan *et al*, 2018).

Packing and selling

It was clear (Table 2) that majority (75%) of okra growers used plastic bag whereas, only 25 per cent of the respondents used plastic caskets for packing. The reason behinds to use plastic bag was that the quantity of okra on Bike carry more quantity as compared to plastic caskets. Majority (64%) of the okra growers sold their produce in nearby market (56%) and village itself (8%). However, 36 per cent of the okra grocer sold in far away markets.

Grading and Selling

It was inferred that all the okra growers graded their produce after harvest depending upon size and shape in order to fetch the better return. Further, respondents sold their produce immediately after harvest. The reason behind that farmers sold okra immediately after harvest in order to reduce the damage and weight, quality to gain immediate monetary benefit. It was showed that majority 81 per cent of the respondents received full payment after sale the okra whereas 19 per cent of the growers received payment delayed by 5-7d, there were no issues about any malpractice in case of payment.

Source of Marketing Information

The data (table3) showed that about 62 per cent of the respondents were seeking the market information from the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee.

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Table 2. Category wise distribution of respondents based on their marketing behaviour. n=100

Sr. No.	Category	Percentage
1	Mode of Transport	
	Head load	0
	Bike	75
	Tractor	0
	Bus	0
	Tempo	25
2	Mode of Packing	
	Plastic crates	25
	Gunny bags	0
	Net / Mesh bags	0
	Plastic bags	75
3	Place of sale	
	Village itself	8
	Nearby Market	56
	Far away market	36
4	Time of Sale	
	Immediately after harvest	100
	After initial storage	0
5	Grading behaviour	
	Grading	100
	No grading	0
6	Payment pattern	
	Advance payment	0
	Spot payment	81
	Delayed payment	19

However, 19 per cent of the growers seek from the exporters and only 15 per cent of the respondents getting the information from commission agents. Least important sources were neighbour/relatives and newspapers. The accessibility of exporters was limited and tendency of exports not disclose all the information (Dambazau *et al*, 2015 and Maratha and Badodiya, 2017)

Relationship

An attempt was also made to study the various factors may be responsible for yield kg/ha of okra

Table 3. Source of Marketing Information. N= 100

Sr. No.	Information Source	Percentage
1	Newspaper	1.00
2	Neighbour / relative	3.00
3	Commission agent	15.00
4	Exporter	19.00
5	Direct visit to APMC	62.00
6	Input dealer	0.00
7	Television	0.00
8	Internet	0.00
9	Local traders	0.00
10	Radio	0.00

growers. The variable namely age, education size of land holding experience in okra farming and training were considered as independent variables however, yield was considered as dependant variable (Maratha, 2015).

Table 4. Relationship between selected dependent (Yield) and independent variables n= 100

Sr. No.	Factor	Correlation
1	Age	0.2603
2	Education	0.1632
3	Size of land holding	0.1573
4	Experience	0.7015
5	Training	0.7287
	Value at 2 tail	0.1945

The data (table 4 and 5) that independent variables namely experience and training significantly correlated with the yield of okra. However, in regression analysis both the variables contributed to the extent of about 63 per cent clearly indicated the importance of experience and training in the farming of okra.

The data (Table 6) revealed that the exporters group of farmers were not ready to provide clear picture about their farming as well as price procured by them.

It was noticed (table 7) that the major constraints faced by the growers were price fluctuation, high

Table 5. Relationship between selected dependent (Yield) and independent variables. n= 100

Sr. No.	Factor	Regression coefficient	t value	Partial r ²
1	Age	-17.5812	-0.924	.0091
2	Education	70.2776	1.504	0.0235
3	SL	-236.2829	0.980	0.0101
4	Experience	441.2702	5.422	0.2383
5	Training	3115.5747	5.798	0.2634
	Add. R Square	0.6325		
	R Square	0.6510		
	Multiple R	0.8069	F Ratio	35.073

Table 6. Difference between APMC exports-oriented okra marketing system

Sr. No.	Okra for APMC market	Okra for export market
1	APMC market required 4-6 cm okra pod size	Exporter demand size of okra pod about 8-10 cm
2	Weight of pod is average 8-10gm	Wight of pod is 14-16 gm
3	In the APMC grade I price higher and II grade price about 60-70% only as compare to I grade	For export market price of II grade pods purchased in I grade ultimately farmers get higher price
4	In APMC every lot of okra pods price is changed	For export only one lot is send to APMC market for price check and all farmers get that price. As well as Some exporters give higher price as compared to APMC market
5	APMC doesn't check residual as well as pesticides sprayed by farmers	Exporters weekly check crop status and pesticides used by farmers as well as some exporters provide pesticides and their experts for crop management
6	Payment cash	Payment delayed 5-7 day
7	Some agents of APMC in village purchase but give less price compared to APMC market. Otherwise farmers go to nearby APMC market due to which transport and time expenditures increases.	Some exporters purchased directly from villagers by their vehicle due to which transport expenditure reduced

Table 7. Constraints in marketing. n=100

Sr. No.	Constraint	Percentage
1	Price fluctuation	100
2	High cost of cultivation especially insecticides/pesticides loads	83
3	Poor quality of seed also affects the quality of Okra	69
4	Climate change effect the quality and growth of okra	21

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cost of cultivation, poor quality of seed and climate change. The suggestion offered by the okra growers were availability of good quality okra seeds and export of okra should be on large scale to fetch the better return from the winter season okra (Shrinivas *et al* 2016).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that to promote the winter season okra in tribal areas, there should be common marketing facility in the area of tribal farmers can fetch better return. As the training and experience significantly contributed to get the higher yield of okra indicated the possibility of cluster-based group farming in the area.

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