

**MARKETING OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS - POSSIBILITIES TO
START FARM SHOPS IN VILLAGES AND ORGANIC STORES IN URBAN AREA**

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ABSTRACT

Modern agricultural system is demanding high usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Scientific community proved that modern agricultural products have chemical contents and leading to various health issues of human being. Health awareness is increasing in both rural and urban area of the country. The demand for organic agricultural products which are free from chemicals is increasing and farmers are also expressing their willingness to gradually switch over to organic agriculture if the demand arises. In such a condition, is there a possibility to start a farm shop in every village and organic stores in urban area to store and disseminate the organic products to consumers? This study is conducted in eight selected villages of Ramanagara district and Bangalore, capital city of Karnataka state located in southern part of India to know the possibilities to start farm shops in villages and organic stores in urban area to meet the increasing demand of organic agricultural products.

KEYWORDS: Farm Shop, Organic Store, Rural Livelihood, Organic Agriculture

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I. INTRODUCTION

The modern agricultural system is demanding high usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The targeted output of high yield varieties (HYV) is highly impossible without high usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The increased use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in modern agricultural system is leading to various health issues of human being. It is proved by the scientific community that food products of modern agricultural system have chemical contents and usage of such agricultural products is leading to various health issues. With or without

knowledge, people are consuming the modern agricultural products and health issues are increasing day by day. With effect of increasing diseases, medical expenditure is increasing in the country and people are struggling to meet the increasing medical expenses.

Both rural and urban structure of the country is restructuring. Due to fluctuation of livelihood in rural area, rural population is decreasing and urban population is increasing. Sufficient livelihood opportunities in urban area for both skilled and unskilled people are attracting rural population to urban area. Due to changing lifestyle, consumption pattern and ecological pollution, the ratio of people suffering from diseases are increasing in urban area. Health awareness is increasing in both rural and urban areas of the country and the demand for organic agricultural products which are free from chemicals is increasing. This research revealed that farmers are expressing their interest to gradually switch over to organic agriculture if the demand arises. This research is also explored that urbanites are aware that modern food products contains chemical contents and willing to go for organic food products.

Farmers are already in threat due to increased input cost and decreased profit for agricultural products. Farmers are connected with global network today and Indian agricultural products are finding difficulty to compete in global market. Though farmers are expressing their willingness to gradually go for organic agriculture and urbanites are expressing their interest to use organic agricultural products, how to link the demand and supply of these two communities is a challenging task. It is well known truth that farmers are in threat due to non-profitability and switching over to urban area in search of livelihood. Since health awareness is increasing in the country and people are eyeing towards organic products, is there a possibility to make use of this trend to strengthen the living standard of farmers? If the farmers switch over to organic agriculture, rural people can access the organic agricultural products easily. But, how to store and supply organic agricultural products to the increasing urban population of the country is a challenging issue. Is there a possibility to start farm shops in villages and organic stores in urban area to store and disseminate the organic agricultural products to the urban population? This study is conducted in eight selected villages of Ramanagara district and Bangalore, capital city of Karnataka state located in southern part of India

to know the possibilities to start farm shops in villages and organic stores in urban area to meet the increasing demand of organic agricultural products in urban area.

II. METHODOLOGY

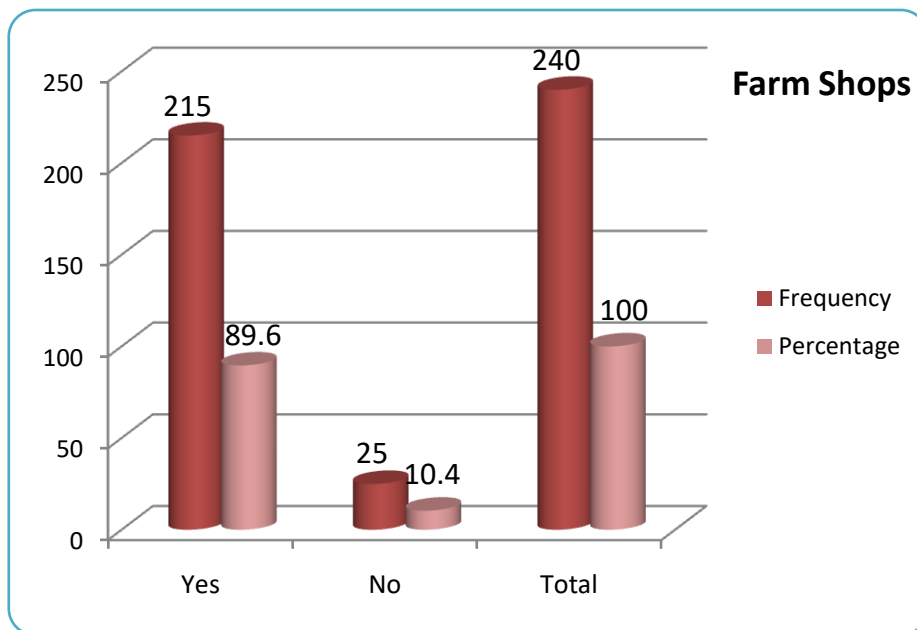
This research is based on field study and field study is intended to carry in both rural and urban area. Random sampling method is followed while choosing the respondents. The total sample size is 340 and out of the total sample size 240 are rural respondents and 100 are urban respondents. Ramanagara, a district of Karnataka state located in southern part of India is chosen for rural field study. The district has four taluks and two villages from each taluk were selected based on irrigation and dry land, totally eight villages were chosen for this study. The key parameters such as distance from urban area, population, caste structure, occupation, literacy rate, gender etc. were followed while choosing respondents of the villages. Bangalore, a metropolitan and capital city of Karnataka state, which is located in southern part of India is chosen for the urban field study.

A structured interview schedule is used for this study. Two different set of interview schedules were prepared and used to collect the data from both rural and urban respondents. The schedule also prepared in bilingual (Kannada & English) mode for better operation in rural area. Statistical software is used for data analysis. Classification of data is made very carefully and statistical analytical methods such as percentage, frequency and average etc were used in calculation of primary data. Even though primary data is collected with intensive care, but reliability of primary data depends on the accuracy and loyalty of the respondents.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

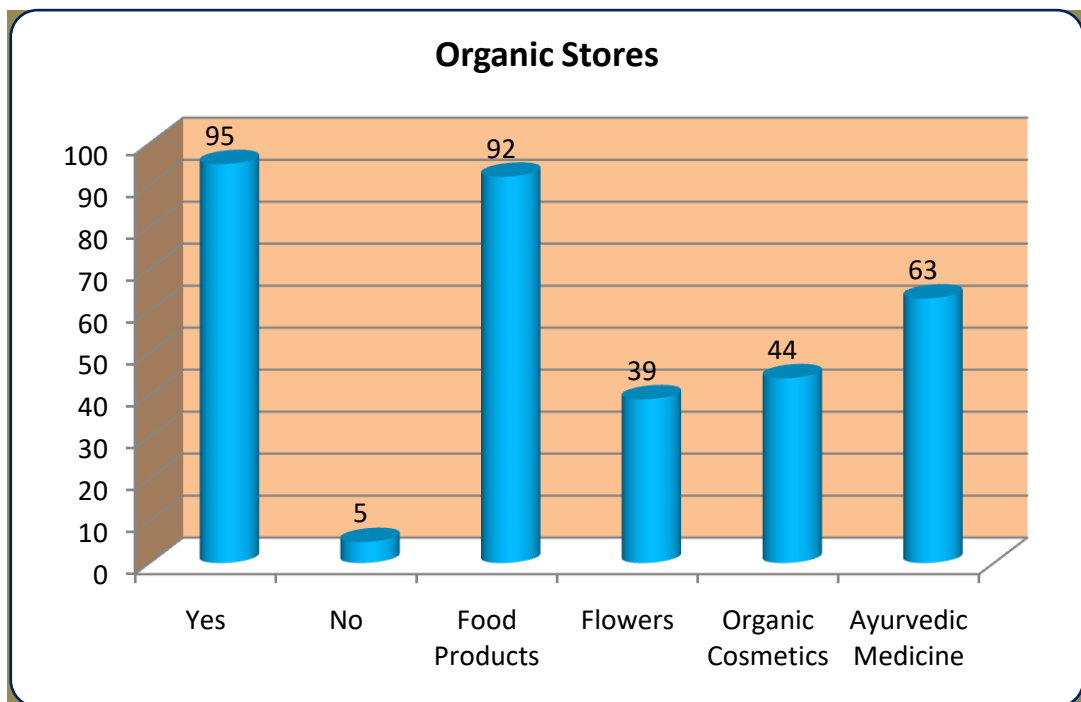
Indian villages are kept open for the outer world today and they are in the chain link of global marketing system. Though vary in size, every village has shops within its territory to meet the demand of villagers. Villages are not only vote banks in India but also good market for urban and global products. Efforts are enhancing day by day to spread the products to rural area through rapid advertisement. Urban area is not only draining rural population but also rural wealth through marketing strategy. Entry of urban products to rural area is also a reason behind increasing rate of expenditure in rural life.

As we discussed earlier, villages have shops in their territory which contains majorly urban products to meet the demands of village community. Products of village shops are normally transported from urban area according to the demands and size of village community. Village shops are fulfilling the various demands of village community and urban products are flowing towards rural area. Since the demand for organic agricultural products is increasing in urban area, urbanites are expressing their willingness to visit the village and buy products from villagers, is there a possibility to start a farm shop in every village to store the village organic agricultural products to fulfill the demand of urban community? Is there a possibility to supply the products from these farm shops according to the demand of urbanites?



Out of the 240 rural respondents of eight villages of Ramanagara district of Karnataka state, 89.6% (215) of them says that there are possibilities to start farm shops in villages and 10.4% (25) of them says that there is no possibility to start farm shops in their villages. Since there are enough possibilities to start farm shops in every village, organic agricultural products can be stored and market through farm shops. Urbanites those who are willing to visit rural area to come out of stress in the name of rural tourism, agriculture tourism, medical tourism and rural stay etc can buy the organic products from village farm shops. Farm shops can also supply organic agricultural products to urban area according to the demands of urban community.

The day to day schedule of urban life is little busy compare to rural life and the chances are very less for urban community to walkout of urban area. Since urbanites are tired with modern chemical mixed food products and cannot reach the rural farm shops, are there any possibilities to start '*Organic Stores*' in urban area for easy access of organic products? Is there a demand for such organic stores in urban area? If such kinds of shops are going to start, what kind of organic products are in demand in urban area?



This research inquired hundred respondents of Bangalore city, out of the hundred respondents 95 of them wish to have organic stores in their city and 05 of them says no. When it comes to the question, what kind of products urbanites wish to buy from such organic stores, urbanites have chosen multiple products. 92 of them wish to buy food products, 39 of them wish to buy flowers, 44 of them expressed their interest to buy organic cosmetics and 63 of them are interested to buy ayurvedic medicine from organic stores. The above graph clearly indicates that there are enough possibilities to start farm shops in city like Bangalore. The study also observed that there are few organic stores exist in different parts of the city and the buyers are in dilemma to differentiate between organic and modern agricultural products. There should be a strict marketing mechanism in such shops in terms of quality of products and loyalty to the customers. There should be a strict eye on urban organic shops to not to misuse this trend.

IV. CONCLUSION

Modern agricultural products have chemical contents and usage of such products is leading to various health issues. Due to change in lifestyle and consumption pattern, number of diseases and people suffering from such diseases are increasing day by day. Health awareness is increasing in the country and the demand for organic agricultural products is increasing. This study revealed that there are enough possibilities to start farm shops in villages to store and disseminate the organic agricultural products to urban consumers. This study also proved that urbanites wish to have organic stores in urban area for easy access of organic products. Urbanites wish to buy food products, flowers, organic cosmetics and ayurvedic medicine from urban organic stores.

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