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Effect of COVID-19 on nursery owners

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Abstract

Kadiyam Nurseries is a crucial component of India's agricultural and biological ecosystem, lying deep within the states of Andhra Pradesh. Plant Nursery owners in Kadiyam were severely affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, which made a study necessary to determine the full scope of the damage and subsequent needs. The respondents were contacted through direct contact. And respondents were selected randomly. This research reveals that most of the respondents were middle aged group from 35 to 55 yrs, had primary education, had marginal land holding, had low experience, had semi moderate participation, medium marketing and medium extension contact. It is studied that 60.76 per cent of the respondents had moderate impact of COVID-19 on Nursery Owners. Whereas, 25.38 per cent of the respondents fell into the high impact of COVID-19, which they faced more difficulties during COVID-19. Only 13.85 per cent of respondents have experienced a low impact of COVID-19.

Keywords: COVID-19, nursery owners, plant

1. Introduction

In 2019, the world faced the outbreak of the coronavirus, which was rapidly declared a global public health emergency by the World Health Organisation. Within days, it had spread worldwide disruption. This lockdown had a profound impact on various industries in India. Especially in nursery sector, it experienced a decrease in demand for nursery plants and challenges imposed by the pandemic, the nursery industry responsible for growing and selling of all type of plants encountered different set of difficulties. Nursery owners in Kadiyam, near Rajahmundry, East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, had to adjust with three-month compulsory closure of operations and the reduction in international transportation adversely affected their plant exports.

This study aims to delve into the profound effect of the COVID-19 on the nursery owners, exploring the complex challenges they confronted and the strategies they adopted to adjusted to the crisis. Through a comprehensive examination of their experiences, this research seeks to illuminate how nursery owners coped with these challenges and reshaped their businesses. Importantly, this study extends beyond the nursery sector, highlighting the on the international stage too. The word-of-mouth marketing strategy thrives here, resulting in the daily production and supply of a multitude of materials, filling nearly 200 lorries with nursery treasures each day. Kadiyam has aptly earned the moniker "Hub of Nursery," both nationally and internationally.

resilience and adaptability of small business owners. Kadiyam's nursery market stands as a vibrant and renowned hub in the heart of the East Godavari district, along with India,

2. Materials and Methods

Study Area

The Present study was conducted in Kadiyam mandal of East Godavari district. Of Andhra Pradesh. Kadiyam is located near Rajahmundry city, approximately 60 to 65 km from East Godavari in Andhra Pradesh. Kadiyam is well known for Nursery growers. This area is completely dominated by nurseries. It is located of 16.917 N and longitude of 81. 833 S.

Sampling size and procedure

Sample size was 130, which was selected randomly and respondents' equal respondents were selected from each village through random sampling. A questionnaire was prepared by keeping objectives in mind. Respondents were contacted directly to collect the data after pretesting of the schedule with 10 respondents.

Selection of villages

Three villages from Kadiyam mandal, East Godavari district, were selected: Kadiyampulanka, Veeravaram, and Burrilanka. The selection of villages through random sampling.

Selection of nursery owners

Nursery Owners were selected from three different villages. 44 from Kadiyam village, 43 from Veeravaram village, 43 from Burrilanka village.

Analytical technique

The data collected were tabulated and analyzed the data by statistical tools like mean, per centage, frequency and Pearsons's coefficient of correlation and range method.

3. Results and Discussion

Socio-economic attributes

The study found in the table no.1 shows that all of the nursery owners were male which is 100 per cent. It clearly states that nursery business is dominated through males. Females are acting as workers and More than half of the respondents (56.90%) belong to the middle-aged group (ages 36-55), with 36.20% categorized as young and 6.90% falling into the older age. The prevalence of middle-aged participants suggests a potential inclination towards nursery-related topics among this demographic. Table 3 displays a breakdown: 31.54% had primary education, 20.77% secondary, and 12.31% higher secondary. Moreover, 16.92% pursued higher education, predominantly in engineering, barring one with an M.Sc. in Horticulture. Notably, 3.84% lacked formal schooling, while 14.62% self-educated through National Literacy Mission or night schools, showcasing diverse educational backgrounds. Among 130 respondents in Table 4, 'Marginal farmers' constitute 47.69%, typically owning up to 1.00 hectare, followed by 'Small farmers' at 32.31% with 1.01 to 2.00 hectares. This trend highlights predominantly small landholdings, likely due to India's population growth leading to land fragmentation. "Within the 130-respondent dataset, Marginal farmers make up 53.07%, emphasizing smaller landholdings. Small farmers follow at 32.31%, while Semi-medium farmers account for 12.31%. Medium and Large farmers are the smallest groups at 1.54% and 0.77% respectively, showcasing the dominance of smaller-scale farming, particularly among Marginal farmers." According to the table, over half (51.54%) of respondents had up to 11.6 years of nursery experience, with 37.69% falling between 11.7 to 21.2 years. The group with 21.3 to 30.8 years of experience accounted for 9.23%. Only 0.77% each had 30.9 to 40.4 years and over 40.4 years of experience, highlighting a majority with limited expertise in the field. Within the 130 respondents, the majority (70.77%) came from small families, typically with 5 or fewer

members. Around a quarter (24.62%) represented medium-sized households with 6 to 8 members, while only 4.61% belonged to large families. This indicates a trend toward smaller, nuclear family structures among the surveyed population. Table 8 summarizes the revenue distribution of 130 nursery owners. The largest group (63.08%) falls within the lowest income range (11.8 lakh to 2.41 crores). Another 19.23% have slightly higher but still modest incomes. Moderately comfortable incomes are seen in 9.23%, while only 3.08% earn the highest annual income, illustrating a notable skew towards lower income levels among respondents. Among the 130 respondents, 44.62% fall into the 'Less Social Participation' category, while 41.54% engage moderately. Those highly involved in social activities constitute 8.46%, and a mere 5.38% show minimal social engagement. The data showcases diverse social participation levels, primarily with respondents leaning towards either less (44.62%) or moderate (41.54%) involvement, possibly influenced by the demanding nature of nursery work impacting their interest in social activities. Among the 130 respondents, 44.61% prioritize 'Semi-Medium marketing orientation,' reflecting a significant moderate interest in marketing. 'Less' and 'Medium marketing orientation' groups each constitute 22.31%, while 'Highly marketing orientation' accounts for 10.00%. 'Least marketing orientation,' at 0.77%, hints at minimal interest, potentially influenced by comprehensive support from local nursery organizations fulfilling their needs, reducing interest in seeking other information sources. "40.00% are in 'Semi-Medium Extension Contact,' 35.38% with 'Less Extension Contact,' signifying limited connections. 'Medium Extension Contact' is at 9.24%, while 'Least' and 'High Extension Contact' are the smallest at 10% and 5.38% respectively. Most maintain moderate connections, preferring internal sources over external authorities."

The table 2 showcases respondents' experiences during COVID-19. The largest group, comprising 42.31% (55 individuals), reported 'Low Impact,' signifying a notable number experienced minimal effect. About 37.69% (49 individuals) fell into 'Moderate Impact,' indicating a moderate level of impact. 'High Impact,' with 15.38% (20 individuals), reflects a smaller but significant group facing severe effects. 'Least Impact,' at 4.62% (6 individuals), denotes minimal impact. The data highlights varying degrees of impact, particularly during the initial lockdown from March to May 2020, where only a small percentage, particularly agriculture, faced severe restrictions.

Table 1: Independent variables

Sl. No	Variable		Number	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	130	100.00
		Female	0	0.00
2.	Age	Young	47	36.20
		Middle	74	56.90
		Old	09	6.90
3.	Education	Illiterate	05	3.84
		Autodidactic	19	14.62
		Primary	41	31.54
		Secondary	27	20.77
		Higher secondary	16	12.31
		Graduation and Post-graduation	22	16.92

4.	Total landholding	Marginal Farmer	62	47.69
		Small farmer	42	32.31
		Semi medium farmer	20	15.38
		Medium farmer	05	3.85
		Large farmer	01	0.77
5.	Type of land	Only owned	69	53.07
		Only rented	23	17.69
		Both owned and rented	38	29.23
6.	Area under nursery	Marginal farmer	69	53.07
		Small farmer	42	32.31
		Semi-medium farmer	16	12.31
		Medium farmer	02	1.54
		Large farmer	01	0.77
7.	Experience in nursery	Least Experience	67	51.54
		Less Experience	49	37.69
		Semi medium Experience	12	9.23
		Medium Experience	01	0.77
		High Experience	01	0.77
8.	Training undergone	None	0	0.00
9.	Family size	Small family	92	70.77
		Medium family	32	24.62
		Large family	06	4.61
10.	Total annual income	Least Annual income	82	63.08
		Less Annual income	25	19.23
		Semi medium Annual income	12	9.23
		Medium Annual income	07	5.38
		High Annual income	04	3.08
11.	Social participation	Least social participation	07	5.38
		Less social participation	58	44.62
		Moderate social participation	54	41.54
		High social participation	11	8.46
12.	Marketing orientation	Least marketing orientation	01	0.77
		Less marketing orientation	29	22.31
		Semi medium marketing orientation	58	44.61
		Medium marketing orientation	29	22.31
		Highly marketing orientation	13	10.00
13.	Extension contact	Least extension contact	13	10.00
		Less extension contact	46	35.38
		Semi medium extension contact	52	40.00
		Medium extension contact	12	9.24
		High extension contact	07	5.38

Table 2: Dependent Variable

Sl. No.	Levels of impact	Respondents(n=130)	
		Number	Per centage
1.	Least impact	06	4.62
2.	Low impact	55	42.31
3.	Moderate impact	49	37.69
4.	High impact	20	15.38
Total		130	100.00

Impact of COVID-19 on Nursery Owners

Conclusion

This study conducted in the Kadiyam mandal near Rajahmundry in east Godavari dist. of Andhra Pradesh. In this research, it is revealed that most of the respondents belonged to the middle-aged group i.e., 36 to 55 years, had primary education, had marginal land holding that up to 1ha, had low experience of the respondents, semi-moderate social participation, medium marketing, and medium extension contact.

It is studied that the 60.76 per cent of the respondents had a moderate impact of COVID-19 on Nursery Owners. Whereas, 25.38 per cent of the respondents fell into the

high impact of COVID-19, which they faced more difficulties during COVID-19. Only 13.85 per cent of the respondents have experienced a low impact of COVID-19.

Suggestions

The primary challenges faced by nursery owners are and "Supply Chain Disruptions," impacting 92 per cent. "Lockdown and Movement Restrictions," affecting 73 per cent of respondents, "Decreased Customer Demand" troubles 29 per cent, while "Labour Shortages" affect 28 per cent. Lockdowns and supply chain issues are the most prevalent concerns, while customer demand and labor shortages are less significant. Most of the respondents suggested that almost similar percentage of marketing and promotion should be done under government for sale promotion in all over year (89.23 per cent) and Online sale support has to be created by the govt, in order to reduce price variation and regulate market was (83.84 per cent).

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