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Study on marketing of coconut (*Kalpa Raksha*) in Konaseema district of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

The present study entitled “Economic Analysis and Marketing Efficiency of Coconut (*Kalpa Raksha*) in Konaseema District of Andhra Pradesh” was undertaken to assess the economic viability and marketing efficiency of coconut cultivation, specifically the *Kalpa Raksha* variety. Coconut is an economically significant plantation crop that supports millions of farmers across tropical regions. The *Kalpa Raksha* variety, developed by the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), is gaining popularity due to its drought tolerance, high copra yield, and suitability for rain fed conditions. A sample of 150 coconut farmers cultivating this variety was selected using stratified random sampling. Data on socio-economic profile, production practices, input costs, yields, marketing channels, price spread, marketing costs, margins, and constraints were collected through personal interviews using pre-tested schedules. The study found that coconut cultivation is economically viable, with a favorable benefit-cost ratio. Among four identified marketing channels, direct marketing (Channel-IV) was the most efficient with the lowest marketing cost (₹85/quintal), highest efficiency (95.00%), and maximum producer's share (₹1,615 out of ₹1,700). Price spread analysis revealed considerable variation across channels. Garrett's Ranking Technique identified major constraints: price fluctuations, limited market access, lack of storage/processing facilities, and intermediary exploitation. The study recommends strengthening cooperatives, promoting direct marketing, improving infrastructure, and providing training in value addition.

Keywords: *Kalpa Raksha*, processing facilities, direct marketing, yields, Price spread

Introduction

Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) is known as the "tree of life" due to its wide range of uses and economic value. It supports the livelihoods of millions of small and marginal farmers in India, particularly in coastal states like Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka. In Andhra Pradesh, the *Kalpa Raksha* variety has shown promise due to its adaptability to rainfed conditions and higher yield potential.

Despite its importance, coconut growers face numerous marketing challenges including poor market access, dependence on middlemen, price instability, and inadequate storage facilities. In the context of the Konaseema district, where coconut cultivation is significant, a focused study on the marketing efficiency and economic viability of the *Kalpa Raksha* variety is crucial to formulate policy and practice-based recommendations.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the socio-economic profile of coconut growers in the study area.
2. To evaluate the production and marketing costs of the *Kalpa Raksha* coconut variety.
3. To assess market margins, marketing efficiency, and the producer's share in the consumer's rupee.
4. To identify constraints in coconut marketing and suggest suitable remedial measures.

Research Methodology

The present study was conducted in Konaseema District of Andhra Pradesh, a region known for its extensive coconut cultivation, particularly of the *Kalpa Raksha* variety. To ensure representativeness and accuracy, a stratified random sampling technique was employed.

The stratification was based on key factors such as farm size and location within the district to capture the diverse characteristics of coconut growers. From this stratified population, a sample of 150 coconut farmers was randomly selected for the study.

Primary data were collected through personal interviews with the selected farmers using pre-tested structured schedules designed to elicit comprehensive information on socio-economic characteristics, production practices, input costs, yield, and marketing behavior. To complement the primary data, secondary data were gathered from a range of credible sources including government publications, reports published by the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), and previous scholarly research relevant to coconut cultivation and marketing.

Analytical Tools

- Descriptive statistics for socio-economic analysis
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Marketing efficiency index = (Value of goods sold / Total marketing cost) x 100
- Price spread analysis
- Garrett's Ranking Technique to prioritize marketing constraints

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

Socio-Economic Characteristics	Percentage	Number of Respondents
Small and Marginal Farmers (< 2 ha)	60%	90
Dependence on Agriculture	80%	120
Average Age of Farmers	—	45 years (average)
Literacy Level	72%	108

The majority of the respondents (60%) were small and marginal farmers with holdings less than 2 hectares. About 80% of the farmers depended primarily on agriculture for their livelihood. The average age of farmers was 45 years and the literacy level was 72%.

Table 2: Cost and Returns of Coconut Cultivation

Particulars	Amount (₹ per hectare)	Percentage of Total Cost
Total Cost of Cultivation	₹65,000	100%
- Fertilizers	₹19,500	30%
- Labor	₹16,250	25%
- Other Inputs*	₹29,250	45%
Gross Returns	₹1,30,000	—
Benefit-Cost Ratio (B:C)	2.00	—

*Note: Other Inputs include seeds, irrigation, pesticides, maintenance, etc.

The average cost of cultivation per hectare was estimated at ₹65,000, with gross returns of ₹1,30,000 per hectare. The Benefit-Cost (B:C) ratio was 2.00, indicating high profitability. Input costs were highest for fertilizers (30%), followed by labor (25%).

Marketing Channels Identified

1. **Channel I:** Producer → Village Trader → Wholesaler → Retailer → Consumer

2. **Channel II:** Producer → Wholesaler → Retailer → Consumer
3. **Channel III:** Producer → Retailer → Consumer
4. **Channel IV:** Producer → Consumer (Direct Sale)

Table 3: Comparative Analysis of Marketing Channels

Marketing Channel	Marketing Cost (₹/quintal)	Marketing Efficiency (%)	Producer's Share (₹ out of ₹ Consumer Price)
Channel I	₹140	70.00	₹1,200 out of ₹1,700
Channel II	₹160	65.00	₹1,100 out of ₹1,750
Channel III	₹100	85.00	₹1,400 out of ₹1,650
Channel IV	₹85	95.00	₹1,615 out of ₹1,700

Discussion

The comparative analysis of the four marketing channels reveals that Channel IV (Direct Marketing: Producer → Consumer) offers the most advantages to coconut farmers. It significantly reduces the marketing cost and eliminates the role of intermediaries, which in turn enhances the producer's share in the final consumer price. This channel also showed the highest marketing efficiency at 95.00%, demonstrating that farmers receive the maximum return for their produce when they sell directly to consumers through local markets or farm gates.

Channel III, which involves direct retailing by the producer, also showed relatively high efficiency (85.00%) and better producer share compared to Channel I and II. Channel I and II involve more intermediaries, which escalates the marketing cost and results in a reduced share for producers. In Channel II, even though the consumer price is the highest (₹1,750), the farmer's share is the lowest (₹1,100), indicating inefficiency due to multiple levels of intermediation.

Therefore, the findings clearly suggest that direct-to-consumer models are the most beneficial for farmers. Promoting such models can substantially increase the income of coconut growers in the region. These findings call for a strategic policy shift toward direct marketing platforms supported by government initiatives and farmer organizations.

Table 4: Constraints in Marketing

Constraint	Garrett Score	Rank
Price fluctuations	76.21	I
Inadequate market access	72.53	II
Lack of cold storage/processing units	69.47	III
Exploitation by intermediaries	67.82	IV
Lack of market information	65.39	V

Conclusions and Policy Implications

The study highlights that coconut cultivation, particularly of the Kalpa Raksha variety, is highly profitable under the current agricultural and market conditions in Konaseema. The direct marketing channel (Producer → Consumer) is the most beneficial, minimizing costs and maximizing the producer's income. However, major barriers such as market inefficiencies, infrastructure gaps, and fluctuating prices must be addressed.

Recommendations

- Strengthening farmer cooperatives to facilitate bulk marketing and reduce dependency on intermediaries.

- Encouraging direct marketing models like Rythu Bazaars and online platforms.
- Investing in cold storage and processing infrastructure to reduce post-harvest losses.
- Capacity building through farmer training on value addition, packaging, and marketing strategies.
- Establishing market intelligence systems to provide real-time price and demand information.

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