



International Journal of Research in Agronomy

E-ISSN: 2618-0618
P-ISSN: 2618-060X
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NAAS Rating (2026): 5.20
www.agronomyjournals.com
2026; SP-9(2): 119-122
Received: 23-11-2025
Accepted: 28-12-2025

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A analysis of paddy farmers liaison with the other stakeholders of rice exports in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/2618060X.2026.v9.i2Sb.4918>

Abstract

Strong connections with institutional and market stakeholders play a vital role in shaping farmers' access to credit, export opportunities, technical support, and timely market information. In today's interconnected agricultural system, farmers cannot function in isolation if they aim to improve productivity and income. Keeping this in view, the present study explores the extent to which paddy farmers maintain liaison with key stakeholders involved in rice export—exporters, rice millers and processors, APEDA officials, and bank officials—in the major rice-exporting districts of Telangana (Nizamabad and Nalgonda) and Andhra Pradesh (East and West Godavari). An ex post facto research design was followed, and 160 experienced paddy farmers (80 from each state) were purposively selected. Data were gathered using a structured interview schedule and questionnaire to understand both the frequency and overall level of their interactions with these stakeholders. The results reveal that farmers' engagement with exporters is strikingly low in both states. A large majority of farmers—93.75 per cent in Telangana and 91.25 per cent in Andhra Pradesh—reported that they never interact with exporters. Only a small fraction had occasional contact, and none maintained regular liaison. Interaction with APEDA officials was even more limited, with 87.50 per cent of Telangana farmers and 95.00 per cent of Andhra Pradesh farmers reporting no contact at all. These patterns suggest that most farmers remain distant from formal export promotion systems and may not be fully aware of the support and opportunities available to them. On a more positive note, farmers showed moderate engagement with rice millers and processors. Around 60.00 per cent in both states reported occasional interaction, and a noticeable share maintained regular contact (40.00% in Telangana and 60.00% in Andhra Pradesh). Interaction with bank officials was comparatively stronger, indicating the importance of institutional credit in farming activities. Overall, 58.75 per cent of respondents fell into the low liaison category, followed by medium (29.38%) and high (11.87%) levels of engagement. This predominance of low interaction highlights the need for stronger institutional outreach and awareness initiatives. Strengthening farmer–stakeholder relationships can help improve market integration, income opportunities, and the long-term sustainability of rice export systems.

Keywords: Paddy farmers, liaison, rice exports

Introduction

Agriculture today is no longer a standalone activity carried out in isolation. Farmers operate within an increasingly interconnected value chain where their success depends not only on production but also on their relationships with various institutional, financial, and market actors. In this evolving system, effective liaison with stakeholders such as exporters, processors, financial institutions, and regulatory agencies has become a critical factor influencing agricultural growth, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability. Strong stakeholder engagement enables farmers to access timely market information, institutional credit, technical guidance, and government support schemes, thereby enhancing their decision-making ability and income prospects (Freeman, 1984; World Bank, 2008) ^[2, 6].

In developing countries like India, where small and marginal farmers constitute the majority of the agricultural population, the need for institutional connectivity becomes even more significant. Despite their central role in food production, many smallholders face constraints in

accessing high-value markets and export opportunities due to limited awareness, inadequate networks, and weak institutional linkages. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2017) ^[1] emphasizes that strengthening vertical and horizontal linkages within agricultural value chains substantially improves productivity, bargaining power, and market participation. Similarly, Porter's (1985) ^[4] value chain framework underlines the importance of coordination among supply chain actors to achieve competitive advantage and improved economic outcomes.

In the specific context of rice cultivation, stakeholder coordination assumes even greater importance. Rice is not only a staple food crop but also a major contributor to rural livelihoods and export earnings. States such as Telangana and Andhra Pradesh play a vital role in India's rice production and trade, making effective engagement with export promotion agencies and market intermediaries particularly relevant. Institutions like the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) are instrumental in promoting agricultural exports, facilitating quality certification, and linking producers to global markets. However, the benefits offered by such institutions can only be realized when farmers actively engage with them and possess adequate awareness of available support mechanisms.

Empirical evidence suggests that farmers who maintain stronger relationships with stakeholders are more likely to adopt improved technologies, access formal credit systems, and participate effectively in markets (Hellin, Lundy & Meijer, 2009; Smitha & Jahagirdar, 2019) ^[3, 5]. On the other hand, limited liaison often results in information gaps, reduced bargaining capacity, restricted financial access, and ultimately lower income realization. In many cases, farmers continue to depend on traditional marketing channels due to weak institutional interaction, which may constrain their growth potential.

Against this background, the present study examines the extent of liaison between farmers and key stakeholders — exporters, rice millers and processors, APEDA officials, and bank officials — in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The findings reveal that a majority of farmers in both states demonstrate low levels of engagement, particularly with exporters and APEDA officials. Overall, 58.75 per cent of respondents fall under the low liaison category, indicating that a substantial proportion of farmers operate with limited institutional and market connectivity. Understanding these patterns of interaction is essential for designing targeted interventions that can strengthen farmer–stakeholder networks. Enhancing institutional outreach, improving awareness, and promoting collaborative mechanisms can contribute significantly to better market integration, improved farm incomes, and sustainable agricultural development in the region.

Objective of the study: To study the farmers liaison with the other stakeholders of rice export in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

Methodology

Research design: Ex post - facto research design was adopted for the investigation.

Locale of the study: This study was conducted in the Nizamabad and Nalgonda districts of Telangana, East Godavari and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh in rice export regions, which are among the top rice exporting districts of their respective states, two states were selected to study the difference among farmers liaison with the other stakeholders of rice export of both states.

Sampling procedure

40 farmers from each district were selected purposively, with good experience in paddy farming, therefore 80 farmers from Telangana and 80 farmers from Andhra Pradesh states were selected making a total of 160 farmers from both the states.

Data collection method: The Data collection was done with the use of a well-structured interview schedule and Questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

As shown in Table.1 and Fig.1., it is evident that the majority of Telangana farmers (93.75%) never liaise with exporters, followed by those who occasionally interact with them (06.25%), while none have regular contact. In the case of rice millers and processors, most Telangana farmers (60.00%) occasionally liaise with them, whereas 40.00 per cent do so regularly. Regarding APEDA officials, 87.50 per cent of the respondents never interact with them, while 12.50 per cent do so occasionally and none maintain regular contact. When it comes to bank officials, most Telangana farmers (60.00%) occasionally liaise with them, followed by those who never interact (21.25%), while 18.75% have regular contact.

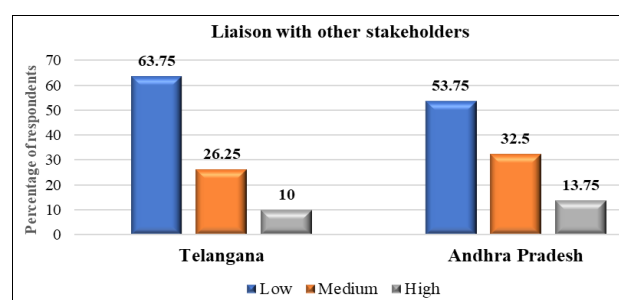


Fig 1: Distribution of farmers according to liaison with other stakeholders

Table 1: Distribution of farmers according to liaison with other stakeholders

S. No.	Frequency of contact	Respondents(n=160)															
		Telangana farmers (n=80)								Andhra Pradesh farmers(n=80)							
		Exporter		Rice Millers & Processors		APEDA officials		Bank officials		Exporter		Rice Millers & Processors		APEDA officials		Bank officials	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Regularly	00	00	32	40.00	00	00	15	18.75	00	00	48	60.00	00	00	19	23.75
2	Occasionally	05	06.25	48	60.00	10	12.50	48	60.00	07	08.75	30	37.50	04	05.00	50	62.50
3	Never	75	93.75	00	00	70	87.50	17	21.25	73	91.25	2	02.50	76	95.00	11	13.75
	Total	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100

For Andhra Pradesh farmers, a similar trend is observed, where the majority (91.25%) never liaise with exporters, 8.75 per cent occasionally interact and none have regular contact. In the case of rice millers and processors, 60.00 per cent of the farmers have occasional contact, whereas 40.00 per cent maintain regular interactions. Regarding APEDA officials, most farmers (95.00%) never liaise with them, followed by 5.00 per cent who occasionally interact, and none have regular contact. With bank officials, 62.50 per cent of the respondents interact occasionally, 23.75 per cent maintain regular contact and 13.75% never liaise with them.

From the above findings, it is evident that most farmers in both Telangana (93.75%) and Andhra Pradesh (91.25%) never liaise with exporters. However, a significant proportion of farmers maintain occasional interactions with rice millers and processors

(60.00% in both states) and bank officials (60.00% in Telangana and 62.50% in Andhra Pradesh). APEDA officials receive minimal engagement from farmers in both states, with the majority never liaising with them (87.50% in Telangana and 95.00% in Andhra Pradesh)

As results indicated in the Table 2, it is clear that most of the respondents (63.75%) of Telangana state had low liaison with other stakeholders followed by medium liaison with other stakeholders (26.25%) and high liaison with other stakeholders (10%). Whereas in case of Andhra Pradesh state, most of the respondents (53.75%) of them had low liaison with other stakeholders, followed by medium liaison with other stakeholders (32.50) and high liaison with other stakeholders (13.75%).

Table 2: Distribution of farmers according overall liaison with other stakeholders

S. No.	Category	Class Interval	Respondents (n=160)					
			Telangana farmers (n=80)		Andhra Pradesh farmers (n=80)		Total	
			f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Low	1-3	51	63.75	43	53.75	94	58.75
2	Medium	3-5	21	26.25	26	32.50	47	29.38
3	High	5-7	08	10.00	11	13.75	19	11.87
Total			80	100.00	80	100.00	160	100.00

From the above results, it is evident that the majority (58.75%) of respondents of both states had low liaison with other stakeholders, followed medium (29.38%) and high (11.87%) liaison with other stakeholders.

The findings are in accordance with Smitha and Jahagirdar (2019) ^[5].

A majority of farmers having low engagement with stakeholders suggests that many farmers operate in isolation, with limited interactions with other stakeholders like Rice millers, exporters, APEDA officials, the reasons for this could be, lack of awareness about available agricultural support services, limited mobility to reach out and a preference for working independently rather than engaging in partnerships or collaborations. Farmers with medium liaison are likely occasionally interacting with other stakeholders, they may attend meetings and seek advice from the stakeholders. Farmers with high liaison actively collaborate with other stakeholders, this engagement helps them gain access to loans, government subsidies, market linkages, and technical support for improved productivity and profitability.

A low level of interaction with stakeholders can result in reduced awareness of financial assistance schemes, market opportunities, and technological advancements, ultimately impacting farm productivity and income levels.

Key Implications

Based on the findings, several important implications emerge:

1. Limited Export Orientation

A significant proportion of farmers (93.75% in Telangana and 91.25% in Andhra Pradesh) never liaise with exporters, suggesting weak integration into export markets. This may restrict farmers from accessing better price realization and global market opportunities.

2. Minimal Institutional Linkages with APEDA

The majority of farmers (87.50% in Telangana and 95.00% in Andhra Pradesh) never interact with APEDA officials. This reflects poor awareness and limited utilization of export promotion schemes and quality certification support.

3. Moderate Engagement with Rice Millers and Processors

Around 60% of farmers in both states occasionally liaise with rice millers and processors. This suggests that engagement is largely transactional and may not translate into long-term strategic partnerships.

4. Access to Credit through Banks

Interaction with bank officials is relatively better compared to other stakeholders, with more than 60% maintaining occasional contact. This indicates the importance of institutional finance in agricultural operations.

5. Predominance of Low Liaison Category

With 58.75% of farmers falling under the low liaison category, it is evident that most farmers operate in relative isolation. Limited stakeholder interaction may result in:

- Reduced awareness of government schemes
- Lower adoption of improved technologies
- Limited market intelligence
- Reduced farm income and competitiveness

These findings support the observations of Smitha and Jahagirdar (2019) ^[5], who emphasized that weak stakeholder engagement constrains agricultural development and farmer empowerment.

Conclusion

The study clearly indicates that farmers in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh exhibit predominantly low levels of liaison with key agricultural stakeholders. While moderate interaction exists with rice millers, processors, and bank officials, engagement with exporters and APEDA officials remains minimal. Such limited connectivity restricts farmers' access to export markets, institutional support, and advanced agricultural services. Strengthening stakeholder linkages through farmer training programs, institutional outreach initiatives, and policy interventions is essential to enhance market integration and overall farm performance. Improving liaison mechanisms can foster better access to financial assistance, government schemes,

technological innovations, and export opportunities, ultimately contributing to increased productivity, profitability, and sustainable agricultural development.

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