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**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHALLENGES FACED BY THE FARMERS**- Vishnu Dharshini M.<sup>1</sup>**ABSTRACT**

Agriculture, which has a long history in human history, is currently facing a challenge due to an increasing number of farmer suicides, which are primarily caused by high debt and crop failure. Given the seriousness of the situation, the government has enacted laws to assist farmers proactively. This study explores the general opinion of various age groups about possible ways to lessen the difficulties faced by farmers. Using an easy-to-use sampling technique, the research finds a notable consensus: most respondents strongly support buying produce directly from farmers. The results highlight the significance of raising public awareness of the difficulties faced by farmers and the need for both the Indian government and the people to recognize and value the hard work and dedication of farmers. The study's conclusion makes a case for more efforts to improve farmers' lives and support the nation's agriculture industry's sustainable growth.

**KEYWORDS**

Agriculture, Farmer, Government, Issues, Reason, Solution.

**INTRODUCTION**

Human civilization has been deeply entwined with the development of agriculture. Farmers have faced a wide range of difficulties throughout history. This study examines the problems that farmers are currently facing and attempts to provide workable answers. The present crisis originated on March 14, 2017, when P. Ayyakannu, then 72 years old, started the JantarMantar protest in Delhi. This movement garnered national attention and resulted in the hospitalization of over 141 farmers, stemming from the alarming rates of farmer suicides caused by high debts and crop failures. Laws that enable interstate trade, like the Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce

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(Promotion and Facilitation) Act of 2020, and those that address dispute resolution, like the Farmer's (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act of 2020, have been introduced. The list of essential commodities was amended with the enactment of the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020. The dissatisfaction among farmers was brought to light by the Anti-Farm Laws movement, which organized recent protests in 2020–2021. Demands for the revocation of the three farm acts were sparked by concerns about low income and discontent with them. Protests continued even after the government called a committee meeting on January 15 to discuss repealing the laws. On November 19, farmers made another attempt to enter the city limits, but Delhi police blocked their way. Farmers face a wide range of challenges in addition to those related to legislation, including resource availability, population growth, market dynamics, climate change, capital constraints, and socio-political influences. Given that appropriate management of food resources is essential for the welfare of future generations, these challenges must be handled effectively. Major food-producing countries worldwide include China, Russia, the United States, and India. Producing more than 10.3% of its workforce and exporting agricultural products valued at \$118.3 billion, the United States is the leader in production. On the other hand, despite having a sizable workforce in agriculture, India, where more than 54.6% of the population works in agriculture, exports \$50.21 billion.

### OBJECTIVES

- To Understand the difference between the essentiality of Farmers and the Marital status of the Respondents.
- To Examine the Relationship between the seasonal price hike of vegetables and the age of the respondents.
- To find the association between farmer's living conditions and the gender of the respondents.
- To determine the difference between level of agreeability towards solutions to farmer's issues among the age of the respondents.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

**K.RAVI SHANKAR EC.AL**(2009) discussed the issues that farmers face and the repercussions that follow. Secondary data is used for research. The importance of agriculture and the necessity

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of rescuing farmers through the implementation of new laws for the improvement of farmers' incomes and, consequently, the economy of our nation, are discussed in the paper's conclusion. **MEGHWAL PANKAJ KUMAR EC.AL**(2016) carried out this study in the Madhya Pradesh districts of Manasa, Neemuch, and Malhargarh, Mandasaur. A random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of sixty farmers. It has been discovered that farmers require mitigation and adoption practices for climate change and that knowledge management portals should supply these practices promptly. It is determined that, according to respondents, the most pressing issue was a lack of knowledge about suitable adaptation options.

**S.SUNDARAMOORTHY EC.AL** (2021) centered on learning about the issues farmers face and transitioning from agriculture to non-agriculture; a 350-person sample size was obtained through secondary data collection, and SPSS software was used to analyze the results. It is determined that the biggest influences on non-agriculture are traditional cultivation, lack of planning in agricultural land, and a short-term view of monsoon failure. **C.PRASANNA KUMARAN EC.AL** (2018) Various statistical tools, including SPSS software, are used to analyze the data collected, with a focus on the constraints faced by farmers, such as production, marketing, and finance-related issues. Conclusion: Aggregate land can be formed using the newest technology, and the use of advanced form missionaries and equipment will assist marginal farmers in increasing agricultural productivity.

**ANWESHA BORTHAKUR EC.AL** (2012) determined that it is necessary to adopt a comprehensive approach to the operation of ARS and implement methodical modifications. In this study, the descriptive sampling method is employed. It is concluded that the establishment of the ICAR development of the crop improvement project at the Agricultural University of All India contributes to the advancement of agriculture in the postcolonial era.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This Research on public opinion on the farmer's issue is descriptive and attempts to study the characteristics of the group of people. A convenient sampling method was adopted where the sample was chosen based on the convenience sample. The sample size is 213 and the sample frame was Chennai. The independent variables collected from the people were age, gender, and

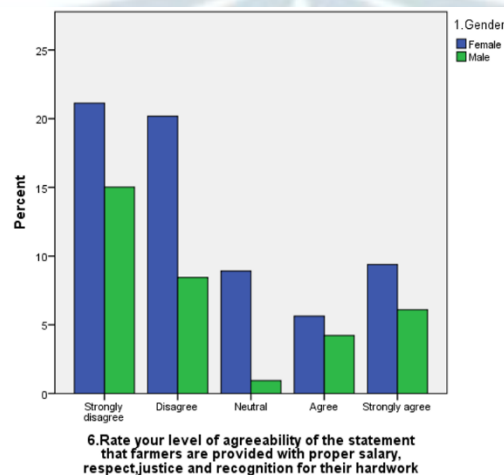
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marital status for a better and brief approach to the research. The dependent variables are the farmer’s essentiality, the reason for the seasonal price hike, the farmer’s living conditions, directly buying vegetables from farmers, promoting farmers at every possible time, encouraging entrepreneurs, and spreading awareness. The statistical tools used for analysis are complex charts, chi-square test, correlation, independent sample t-test, and ANOVA.

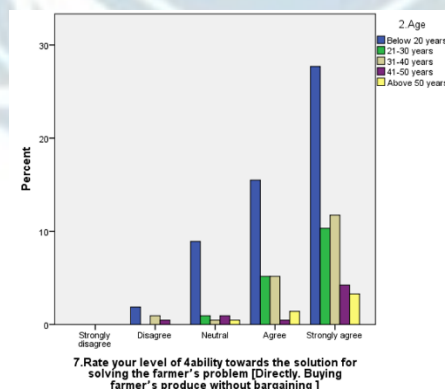
**ANALYSIS**

**Figure 1**



**Legend:** Figure 1 shows the gender distribution of the sample population in Chennai and their agreeability with the statement that farmers are provided with proper living conditions.

**Figure 2**

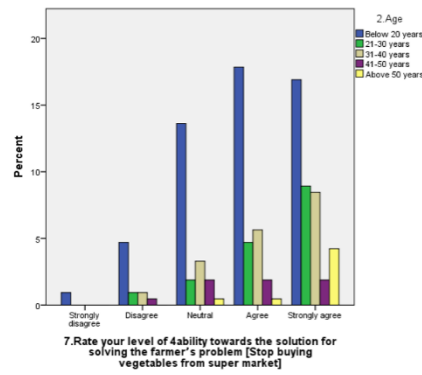


**Legend:** Figure 2 shows the age distribution of the sample population in Chennai and their agreeability towards the solution for solving the farmer’s problem.

**Figure 3**

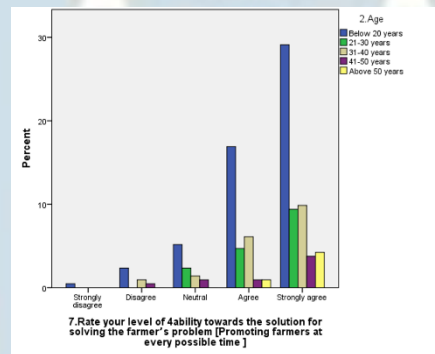
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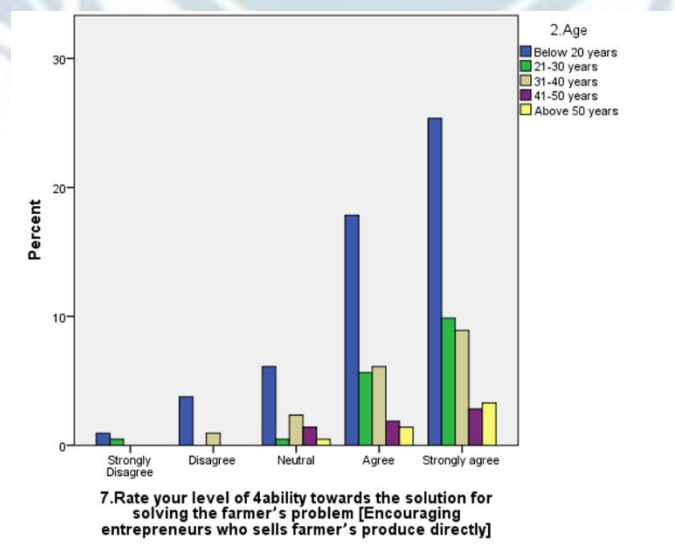
**Legend:** Figure 3 shows the age distribution of the sample population in Chennai and the respondents' agreeability towards the solution for solving the farmer's issue.

**Figure 4**



**Legend:** Figure 4 shows the age distribution of the sample population in Chennai and the respondents' agreeability towards the solution for solving the farmer's issue.

**Figure 5**

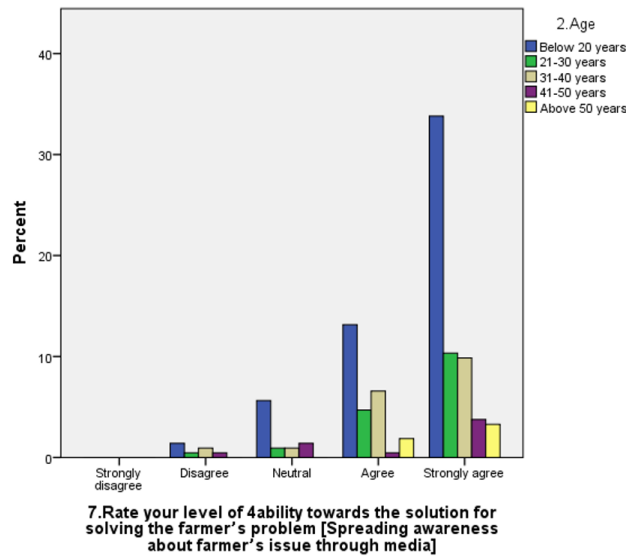


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**Legend:** Figure 5 shows the age distribution of the sample population in Chennai and the respondent's agreeability towards the solution for solving the farmer's issue by encouraging entrepreneurs who sell farmer's produce directly.

**Figure 6**



**Legend:** Figure 6 shows the age distribution of the sample population in Chennai and the respondent's agreeability towards the solution for solving the farmer's problem by spreading awareness about farmer's issue through media.

**Table 1**

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the essentiality of farmers and the marital status of the respondents

Alternate hypothesis: There is a significant difference between the essentiality of farmers and the marital status of the respondents

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
4. Do you think that farmers are essential for our daily life?	Equal variances assumed	20.545	.000	-2.102	211	.037	-.0845	.0402	-.1638	-.0053
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.548	210.466	.012	-.0845	.0332	-.1499	-.0197

**Legend**

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Table 1 uses an independent sample t-test to show the difference between people’s opinions on farmer’s essentiality and their marital status.

**Table 2**

Null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between the seasonal price hike of vegetables and the age of the respondents

Alternate hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the seasonal price hike of vegetables and the age of the respondents

Correlations				
			5.What could be the reason for sudden seasonal vegetables price hike ?	2.Age
Spearman's rho	5.What could be the reason for sudden seasonal vegetables price hike ?	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.169*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.014
		N	213	213
2.Age		Correlation Coefficient	-.169*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.
		N	213	213

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Legend**

Table 2 uses the correlation test to analyze the relationship between people’s opinion on the reason for sudden seasonal vegetable price hike and their age.

**Table 3**

Null hypothesis: There is no significant association between farmer’s living conditions and the gender of the respondents

Alternate hypothesis: There is a significant association between farmer’s living conditions and the gender of the respondents.

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1.Gender \* 6.Rate your level of agreeability of the statement that farmers are provided with proper salary,respect,justice and recognition for their hardwork

			Crosstabulation					
			6.Rate your level of agreeability of the statement that farmers are provided with proper salary,respect,justice and recognition for their hardwork					
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
1.Gender	Female	Count	45	43	19	12	20	139
		% within 1.Gender	32.4%	30.9%	13.7%	8.6%	14.4%	100.0%
		% within 6.Rate your level of agreeability of the statement that farmers are provided with proper salary,respect,justice and recognition for their hardwork	58.4%	70.5%	90.5%	57.1%	60.6%	65.3%
Male	Male	Count	32	18	2	9	13	74
		% within 1.Gender	43.2%	24.3%	2.7%	12.2%	17.6%	100.0%
		% within 6.Rate your level of agreeability of the statement that farmers are provided with proper salary,respect,justice and recognition for their hardwork	41.6%	29.5%	9.5%	42.9%	39.4%	34.7%
Total	Total	Count	77	61	21	21	33	213
		% within 1.Gender	36.2%	28.6%	9.9%	9.9%	15.5%	100.0%
		% within 6.Rate your level of agreeability of the statement that farmers are provided with proper salary,respect,justice and recognition for their hardwork	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.131 <sup>a</sup>	4	.058
Likelihood Ratio	10.433	4	.034
Linear-by-Linear Association	.063	1	.802
N of Valid Cases	213		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.30.

**Legend**

Table 4 uses a chi-square t-test to show the association between the farmer’s living conditions and the gender of the respondent.

**Table 5**

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the level of agreeability towards solution to farmer’s issue among the age of the respondents

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Alternate hypothesis: There is significant difference between the level of agreeability towards solution to farmer's issue among the age of the respondents

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
7. Rate your level of 4ability towards the solution for solving the farmer's problem [Directly. Buying farmer's produce without bargaining ]	Between Groups	3.442	4	.861	1.286	.277
	Within Groups	139.215	208	.669		
	Total	142.657	212			
7. Rate your level of 4ability towards the solution for solving the farmer's problem [Stop buying vegetables from super market]	Between Groups	13.861	4	3.465	3.696	.006
	Within Groups	195.021	208	.938		
	Total	208.883	212			
7. Rate your level of 4ability towards the solution for solving the farmer's problem [Promoting farmers at every possible time ]	Between Groups	2.558	4	.640	.890	.471
	Within Groups	149.395	208	.718		
	Total	151.953	212			
7. Rate your level of 4ability towards the solution for solving the farmer's problem [Encouraging entrepreneurs who sells farmer's produce directly]	Between Groups	3.724	4	.931	1.081	.367
	Within Groups	179.075	208	.861		
	Total	182.798	212			
7. Rate your level of 4ability towards the solution for solving the farmer's problem [Spreading awareness about farmer's issue through media]	Between Groups	1.356	4	.339	.536	.709
	Within Groups	131.470	208	.632		
	Total	132.826	212			

## Legend

Table 5 uses the ANOVA to find the difference between the level of agreeability towards the solutions for solving the farmer's problem and the age of the respondent.

## RESULTS

More than 20 percent of the female sample population and 15 % of the male sample population strongly disagree with the statement that farmers are provided with proper living conditions. This graph concludes that the major sample population disagrees with this statement (**fig 1**). From this

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graph, it is interpreted that more than 20 percent of the people below 20 years strongly agree to buy the farmer's produce without bargaining with them (fig 2). One percent of the respondents strongly disagree with stopping buying vegetables from super market. Whereas more than 15 percent of the respondents below 20 years strongly agree to stop buying vegetables from the supermarket (fig 3). Almost 60 percent of the respondents strongly agree to promote the farmers at every possible time. It is noted that nearly thirty percent of respondents are below 20 years of age (fig 4). Almost 25 percent of the respondents aged below 20 strongly agree with the solution for solving the farmer's issue by encouraging entrepreneurs who sell farmers' produce directly. It is also noted that the respondents who strongly disagree with this statement are below 5 percent (fig 5). More than 30% of the respondents of the age below 20 years have strongly agreed and more than 10 % of the respondents of the age groups 31- 40 and 21 -30 have strongly agreed to spread awareness about farmer's issue through media (fig 6).

**Table 1** shows the difference between the essentiality of farmers and the marital status of the respondents. The p-value is 0.037 which is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore there is a significant difference between the essentiality of farmers and marital status of the respondents. **Table 2** shows the relationship between the seasonal price hike of vegetables and the age of the respondents. The p-value is 0.014 which is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected therefore there is a significant relationship between the seasonal price hike of vegetables and the age of the respondents. **Table 4** shows the association between farmer's living conditions and the gender of the respondents. The p-value is 0.058 which is greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is no association between the farmer's living conditions and the gender of the respondents. **Table 5** shows the difference between the level of agreeability towards a solution to a farmer's issue among the ages of the respondents. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 for bargaining farmer's produce without bargaining (0.27), stop buying vegetables from supermarkets (0.006), promoting farmers at every possible time (0.471), and encourage entrepreneurs who sell farmers' products directly (0.367), except for spreading awareness on farmer's issue through media where the p-value is more than 0.05 (i.e., 0.709) the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore there is a significant The p-value for buying a farmer's produce without bargaining is 0.27.

## DISCUSSION

In a country like India where more than half of the population is involved in agriculture it is a sad reality to note that Indian farmers are not getting their deserved living conditions for their hard work. Thus every Indian citizen should work sincerely in this and we should find a solution to the farmer's issue (**fig 1**). Finding a solution for farmers' issues is not so hard in a country like India, but the actual problem lies in executing it properly throughout the country. Farmers work hard to feed the large population of the country. Therefore giving respect and avoiding bargaining (**fig 2**). The perspective of each respondent differs from one respondent to the other. Thus there is a huge diversity in their opinions. And here from this graph, it is concluded that more respondents strongly agree with avoiding buying vegetables from the supermarkets instead of promoting the farmers by buying vegetables from them (**fig 3**). It is interpreted from the graph that people who are youngsters that is teenagers are always interested and enthusiastic to contribute themselves towards any social issues and show a keen interest in finding the solution by promoting the farmers at every possible time (**fig 4**). A large number of respondents have strongly agreed that encouraging entrepreneurs who sell farmers' produce is one way of solving farmers' problems. This could be because entrepreneurs always find people's issues and try to solve them. Therefore it is a great idea to encourage entrepreneurs (**fig 5**). The respondents irrespective of their age strongly agreed to the fact that spreading awareness about farmer's issues through media is one of the solutions for the farmer's issues. It is important to note that no one disagreed with the fact, hence supporting the fact (**fig 6**).

This is because married people know the importance of food as there is more demand for food for the family (**table 1**). This is because of the people's experience with the price hike (**table 2**). There is an association between farmer's living conditions and the gender of the respondents. This is because farmers work hard even though they don't get the deserved salary, recognition, and respect (**table 4**). The difference between the level of agreeability towards the solutions for solving the farmer's problem and the age of the respondent. This is because people's solutions to the farmer's problem differ from their experience with age (**table 5**).

## CONCLUSION

The rare event time farmer's issue protest was started by P. Ayyakannu who was 72 years old. The protest was named JantarMantar in Delhi. It arose because of farmer suicide at an

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alarming rate. The major objective of this research paper is to focus on the farmer's living conditions along with the gender of the respondents. From the findings, it is inferred that the respondents strongly disagree that farmers are not provided with proper salaries, respect, justice, and recognition for their hard work. Both the government and the people should do the necessary things to resolve farmer's livelihood. The living conditions of farmers should be improved.

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