

A Study of farmers Preference of Agricultural Marketing Channels: APMC vs. NAFED in Amravati District

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Abstract

Agricultural marketing systems play a vital role in determining farmers income stability, price realization, and overall economic sustainability. In India, farmers largely depend on regulated markets operated by the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) and cooperative procurement agencies such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) for selling their agricultural produce. The present study examines farmers preference for agricultural marketing channels, with specific reference to APMC and NAFED in Amravati District, Maharashtra, focusing on cotton, soybean, and tur crops.

The study analyzes the factors influencing farmers choice of marketing channel, including price realization, assurance of Minimum Support Price (MSP), timeliness of payment, transparency in transactions, market accessibility, and availability of infrastructure. A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted. Primary data were collected directly from 35 farmers in Amravati District through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were obtained from government reports, institutional publications, and relevant literature. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis, comparative analysis, and the chi-square test.

The findings indicate that APMC is widely preferred due to ease of access and immediate payment facilities,

whereas NAFED is favored for price stability and MSP assurance. The study provides practical insights for policymakers and marketing institutions to improve agricultural marketing efficiency and strengthen farmer welfare.

Keywords: Agricultural marketing, APMC, NAFED, farmer preference, MSP, Amravati District.

1. Introduction

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of the Indian economy, particularly in regions such as Vidarbha, Maharashtra, where a large proportion of the population depends on farming for livelihood. Amravati District holds special significance due to the extensive cultivation of cotton, soybean, and tur, which are major contributors to regional agricultural income. However, farmers cultivating these crops face persistent challenges such as price volatility, market inefficiencies, delayed payments, and inadequate infrastructure, all of which adversely affect income stability and marketing decisions. In this context, the effectiveness of agricultural marketing channels becomes critical for ensuring fair price realization, reducing post-harvest losses, and strengthening rural livelihoods.

Traditionally, regulated markets governed by the Agricultural Produce Market Committee have served as the primary platform for agricultural marketing, facilitating auction-based sales through licensed traders

under a regulated framework. In contrast, the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India operates as a cooperative procurement agency responsible for implementing government price support measures through Minimum Support Price procurement. Although both institutions are designed to safeguard farmers' interests, they differ considerably in terms of operational efficiency, payment mechanisms, transparency, accessibility, and overall farmer satisfaction. Despite policy reforms and initiatives aimed at improving agricultural marketing systems, farmers' choice of marketing channel continues to be shaped by a range of economic and operational factors, including price realization, MSP assurance, timeliness of payments, transparency in transactions, market infrastructure, and awareness of institutional procurement options. Existing studies have largely focused on policy-level or state-wide assessments, while district-level, farmer-centric comparative analyses of APMC and NAFED remain limited.

To address this gap, the present study undertakes an empirical, farmer-centric analysis based on primary data collected from Amravati District to examine farmers' preferences between APMC and NAFED. Focusing on cotton, soybean, and tur crops, the study compares the performance of the two marketing systems and identifies the key factors influencing marketing channel choice. As part of an MBA dissertation, the research aims to generate practical, evidence-based insights that can assist policymakers, marketing institutions, and other stakeholders in strengthening agricultural marketing mechanisms and improving income stability for farmers.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the presence of regulated markets and cooperative procurement mechanisms, farmers in Amravati District continue to face several challenges in marketing their agricultural produce. Although APMC markets are well established and widely accessible, they are often associated with the dominance of intermediaries, limited price transparency, and multiple marketing-related costs, which reduce farmers' net returns and affect overall satisfaction with the marketing process. In contrast, NAFED provides procurement support through Minimum Support Price operations and offers price assurance to farmers, but its utilization is frequently constrained by procedural complexities, delayed

payments, and limited village-level accessibility. Consequently, many farmers are unable to fully benefit from this channel despite its potential advantages.

At present, there is limited district-level empirical evidence examining how factors such as price realization, MSP assurance, payment timeliness, transaction transparency, market accessibility, and infrastructure availability influence farmers' preferences between APMC and NAFED. This gap limits the ability of policymakers and market institutions to design targeted and effective interventions to improve agricultural marketing outcomes. In this context, the present study systematically examines farmers' preferences in Amravati District and identifies the key factors influencing their choice between APMC and NAFED. Using primary data collected directly from farmers, the study provides practical insights to support the development of more efficient, transparent, and farmer-centric agricultural marketing systems.

3. Review of Literature

Existing research underscores the importance of efficient agricultural marketing channels in improving farmers' income, price realization, and risk mitigation while reducing market inefficiencies. Regulated markets under the APMC system continue to be the most widely used channel due to their accessibility, established infrastructure, and familiarity among farmers. In contrast, MSP-based cooperative procurement agencies such as NAFED are valued for providing price assurance and income stability during periods of price volatility, although their effectiveness is often limited by procedural complexity, delayed payments, and inadequate procurement infrastructure. Studies from the Vidarbha region show that farmers, particularly small and marginal ones, prioritize immediate payment and proximity to markets over potentially higher MSP prices. Research on pulse and oil-seed marketing in Maharashtra further indicates that awareness of procurement schemes, quality of infrastructure, and operational simplicity significantly influence participation in cooperative marketing. However, most existing studies focus on policy or macro-level performance, with limited district-level comparative analysis. Addressing this gap, the present study offers a farmer-centric, district-level examination of farmers' preferences and experiences with APMC and NAFED in Amravati District, highlighting the

economic, institutional, and operational factors shaping marketing channel choice.

The Maharashtra Project on Climate Resilient Agriculture (PoCRA) (2018) highlighted that a significant proportion of cotton, soybean, and tur farmers in Vidarbha, including Amravati District, continue to rely on Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) markets due to their proximity, ease of access, and direct trader interactions. The report noted that nearly 60–70 percent of farmers preferred APMC channels for immediate transactions, despite experiencing post-harvest losses ranging between 12–15 percent. At the same time, cooperative procurement agencies such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and SFAC were found to offer 20–30 percent higher income realization through Minimum Support Price (MSP) procurement, particularly when supported by Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) interventions and capacity-building initiatives.

Kad et al. (2013), in their study on the marketing behaviour of pulse growers in Amravati District, reported that a majority of farmers exhibited a medium level of marketing behaviour. The study found that education, extension contact, market orientation, cosmopolitanism, and access to mass media had a positive influence on marketing decisions, while age and farming experience showed negative correlations. The findings emphasized the need for targeted extension services to enhance farmers awareness and adoption of alternative marketing channels beyond traditional APMC-based sales.

A report by *The Indian Express* (2017) on tur marketing in Amravati District revealed that small and marginal farmers largely preferred APMC and open market channels despite the availability of MSP-based procurement through NAFED. The preference was attributed to procurement delays, staff shortages, limited availability of gunny bags, and storage constraints at procurement centers. The report documented instances where delayed procurement led to storage losses and financial setbacks for farmers during periods of sharp price decline, highlighting the importance of timely payment and operational efficiency in marketing channel selection.

The National Food Security Mission (NFSM) (2012) final report on pulses and oilseeds in Maharashtra observed that although MSP procurement through

NAFED benefited a substantial number of farmers, nearly 70 percent continued to sell through APMC markets due to the availability of immediate cash payments, even when prices were relatively lower. The report further noted that institutional interventions such as FPO linkages helped increase participation in cooperative procurement by reducing intermediary margins and transaction costs.

Gulati and Saini (2017), in their assessment of the Price Support Scheme (PSS) for pulses, found that MSP-based procurement through NAFED played a complementary role to APMC markets, particularly during periods of market surplus. However, farmer participation in procurement remained limited due to procedural delays and situations where open market prices exceeded MSP. The study concluded that while PSS improved income stability during distress years, farmers continued to favor APMC channels for speed and transactional convenience.

Birthal, Joshi, and Roy (2019) analyzed factors affecting pulse production and marketing in Maharashtra and reported that while a significant proportion of farmers used APMC markets to access MSP, utilization of cooperative procurement channels remained relatively low among tur growers due to information gaps and distance barriers. The study recommended strengthening extension services and improving procurement infrastructure to encourage wider adoption of cooperative marketing channels.

The NAFED Annual Report (2023–24) documented the expanding role of MSP-based procurement in stabilizing farmer incomes across India, including Maharashtra. The report highlighted large-scale procurement of pulses and oilseeds and noted that infrastructure development and farm-gate procurement initiatives have contributed to reducing distress sales. However, it also acknowledged the need for further expansion of storage and procurement facilities to improve accessibility for farmers in regions such as Vidarbha.

Commodity-specific studies further reinforce these findings. **Shelke et al. (2016)** reported that although public procurement agencies captured a higher farmer share during periods of market glut, procedural delays limited the volume traded through such channels, leading many farmers to prefer private traders and APMC markets for immediate cash. **Swami et al. (2019)** found that APMC-dominated channels

remained dominant in pigeon pea marketing due to transparency and enforceability, despite losses in longer marketing chains. Similarly, **Chopde et al.** (2023) observed that in soybean marketing in Amravati District, high marketing costs and intermediary margins within APMC channels reduced net returns, prompting farmers to explore more direct marketing options.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that while both APMC and NAFED play important roles in agricultural marketing, farmers preferences are strongly influenced by operational efficiency, payment timeliness, accessibility, and awareness. Despite extensive research at the state and national levels, there remains a lack of district-level, farmer-centric comparative studies focusing specifically on APMC and NAFED. The present study seeks to address this gap by providing empirical evidence from Amravati District based on primary data collected from farmers.

4. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the key factors that influences farmers preference among Cotton, Soybean, Tur towards APMC and NAFED.
2. To compare farmers satisfaction level of farmers using APMC or NAFED channels.
3. To Examine ways to improve the working and efficiency of agricultural marketing channels.

5. Research Hypotheses

H₀: There is no significant difference between farmers preference for APMC and NAFED as marketing channels.

H₁: There is significant difference between farmers preference for APMC and NAFED as marketing channels.

6. Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the systematic and scientific approach adopted to conduct a study, explaining the procedures used for data collection, analysis, and interpretation to achieve the research objectives. The present study adopts an appropriate research methodology to examine farmers' preferences for agricultural marketing channels, with specific reference to APMC and NAFED in Amravati District, Maharashtra. The study is based on primary data

collected from farmers cultivating cotton, soybean, and tur.

6.1 Research Design

The study employs a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive design is used to explain existing agricultural marketing practices, farmers' awareness levels, and their preferences between APMC and NAFED, thereby providing an understanding of the current marketing scenario. The analytical design is applied to examine relationships among variables such as crop type, price realization, MSP assurance, payment timeliness, transparency, market accessibility, and farmer satisfaction, without manipulating the research environment.

6.2 Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to farmers from Katkumbh (Churni), Kund (Sarjapur), and Ibrahimpur villages of Amravati District. The questionnaire captured information on demographic characteristics, farm size, crops cultivated, marketing channels used, price realization, MSP awareness, payment practices, satisfaction levels, and marketing-related problems, reflecting farmers' actual experiences and perceptions. Secondary data were collected from government reports, agricultural department publications, NAFED annual reports, research journals, newspapers, and online databases to provide conceptual support and contextual background for the analysis.

6.3 Sample Design

The population of the study comprises farmers cultivating cotton, soybean, and tur in Amravati District. A sample of 35 farmers was selected using a convenience sampling technique based on accessibility and willingness to participate. The sample included farmers using both APMC and NAFED marketing channels, enabling a comparative assessment of farmers' preferences.

6.4 Data Collection Tools

A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool, consisting of closed-ended questions, multiple-choice questions, and Likert-scale statements to collect quantitative data efficiently. The questions were framed in simple and clear language,

and personal interaction with respondents helped ensure accuracy, completeness, and clarity of responses.

6.5 Statistical Tools Used

Collected data were edited, classified, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Percentage analysis was used to examine demographic characteristics and preference patterns, comparative analysis was employed to compare APMC and NAFED in terms of price realization, MSP assurance, payment practices, and satisfaction levels, and the chi-square test was applied to assess the association between farmers' characteristics and their preferred marketing channel. Microsoft Excel was used for data processing and statistical computation, while bar charts and pie charts were used for effective presentation of results.

6.6 Reliability and Validity of the Study

Reliability was ensured through direct personal interaction with farmers and uniform administration of the structured questionnaire, with responses recorded at the time of interaction to minimize recall errors. Content validity was maintained by designing the questionnaire based on an extensive review of relevant literature, discussions with subject experts, and alignment with the research objectives, ensuring clarity and accurate understanding among respondents.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretations

The data analysis is based on primary data collected from 35 farmers from Katkumbh (Churni), Kund (Sarjapur), and Ibrahimpur villages of Amravati District. The data reflect prevailing agricultural marketing practices and farmers perceptions related to cotton, soybean, and tur cultivation. The analysis was carried out using percentage analysis, chi-square test, and comparative analysis in accordance with the objectives of the study.

7.1 Percentage Analysis

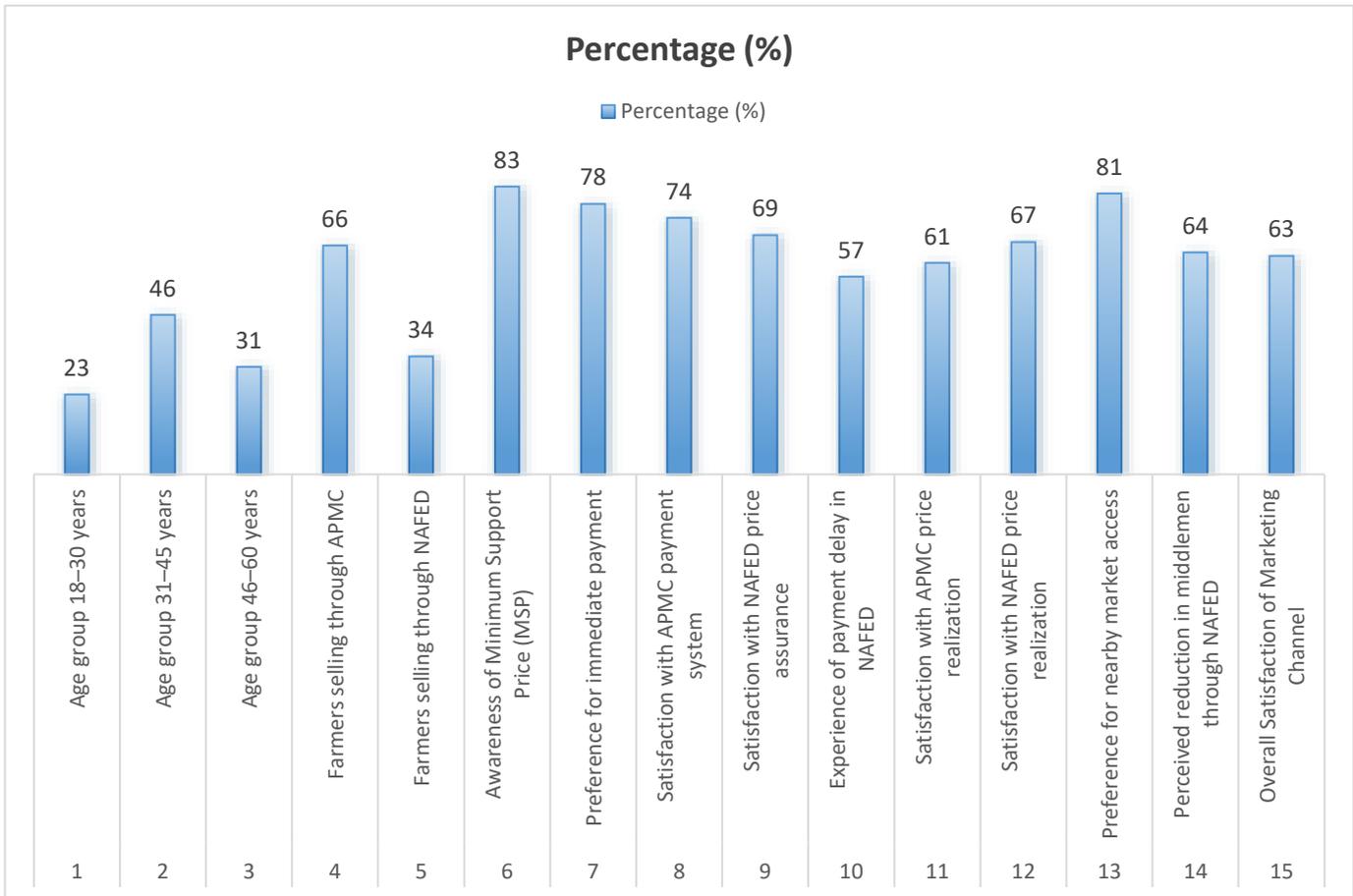
The percentage analysis indicates that the 31–45 years age group (46%) constitutes the largest segment of farmers actively involved in marketing decisions, followed by farmers aged 46–60 years (31%). This suggests that middle-aged farmers play a dominant role in agricultural marketing activities in the study area.

A majority of farmers (66%) reported selling their produce through APMC markets, highlighting the continued dominance of regulated markets in Amravati District. Factors such as proximity of markets, familiarity with procedures, and faster payment contribute to this preference. Although awareness of MSP was high (83%), only 34% of farmers used NAFED, indicating a gap between awareness and actual participation.

The preference for immediate payment (78%) and nearby market access (81%) emerged as the most influential factors in marketing channel selection. While farmers expressed higher satisfaction with APMC payment speed (74%), NAFED was viewed positively in terms of price assurance under MSP (69%). However, payment delays experienced by 57% of farmers reduced the attractiveness of NAFED procurement.

Sr. No.	Indicator	Percentage (%)
1	Age group 18–30 years	23
2	Age group 31–45 years	46
3	Age group 46–60 years	31
4	Farmers selling through APMC	66
5	Farmers selling through NAFED	34
6	Awareness of Minimum Support Price (MSP)	83
7	Preference for immediate payment	78
8	Satisfaction with APMC payment system	74
9	Satisfaction with NAFED price assurance	69
10	Experience of payment delay in NAFED	57
11	Satisfaction with APMC price realization	61
12	Satisfaction with NAFED price realization	67
13	Preference for nearby market access	81
14	Perceived reduction in middlemen through NAFED	64
15	Overall Satisfaction of Marketing Channel	63

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics and Marketing Channel Preferences of Farmers



Graphical Representation of Demographic Characteristics and Marketing Channel Preferences of Farmers

Interpretation of the Graph

The consolidated horizontal bar graph presents an overall view of farmers demographic profile, marketing preferences, awareness level, and satisfaction with agricultural marketing channels in Amravati District. The graph indicates that the largest proportion of farmers belongs to the 31–45 years age group, reflecting active involvement in marketing decisions.

A majority of farmers sell through APMC markets, mainly due to immediate payment and nearby market access, despite high awareness of MSP and institutional procurement mechanisms. Satisfaction levels vary across parameters, with APMC performing better in payment speed and NAFED showing stronger performance in price assurance and reduction of middlemen.

Overall, the consolidated analysis highlights that farmers marketing decisions are influenced more by operational convenience and liquidity needs than by price alone.

7.2 Comparative Analysis: APMC vs NAFED

The comparative analysis shows that APMC is preferred for operational convenience, while NAFED is preferred for price stability and MSP assurance. Farmers, especially small and marginal farmers, tend to prioritize liquidity and ease of transaction over potential price advantages.

Table 2 : Comparative Analysis: APMC vs NAFED

The above bar graph presents a comparative analysis of APMC and NAFED based on key marketing parameters. It is evident that APMC performs better in terms of market accessibility, payment speed, and overall farmer preference. This explains its dominant usage among farmers in the study area. On the other hand, NAFED shows stronger performance in price stability and transparency due to its MSP-based procurement system and reduced involvement of middlemen. The comparison highlights that while APMC provides operational convenience and immediate payments, NAFED offers price assurance and income stability. Thus, both channels play complementary roles in the agricultural marketing system.

7.3 Chi-Square Test Analysis

H₀: There is no significant association between farmers age group and their choice of marketing channel (APMC or NAFED).

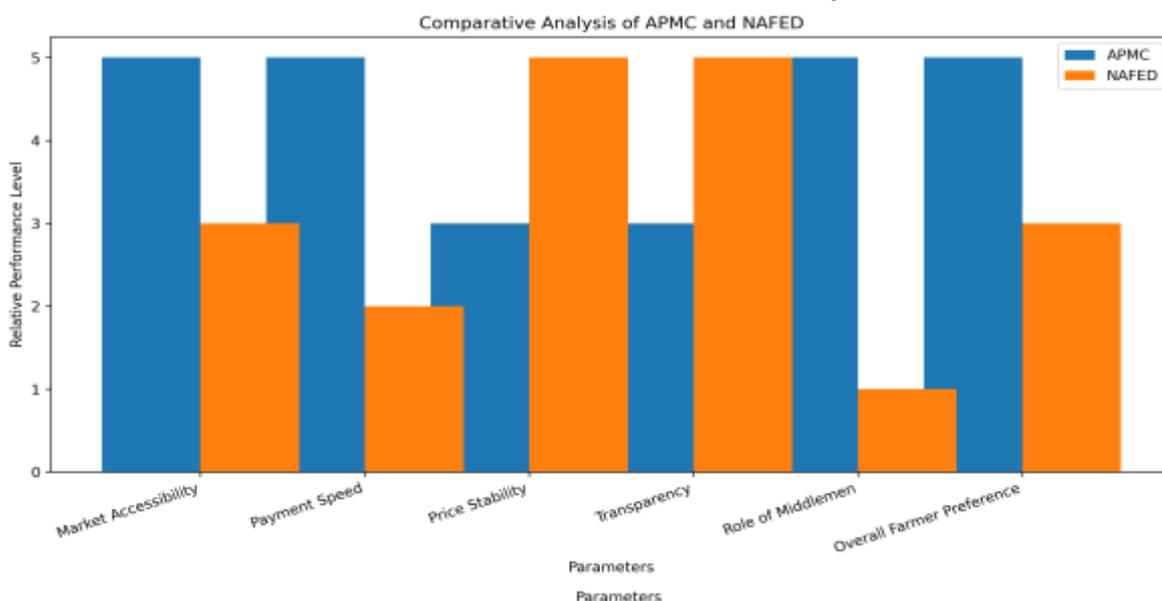
H₁: There is a significant association between farmers age group and their choice of marketing channel.

7.4 Result and Interpretation

The chi-square test was applied to examine the relationship between age group and marketing channel preference. The calculated chi-square value was found to be greater than the table value at the 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Parameter	APMC	NAFED
Market Accessibility	High	Moderate
Payment Speed	High	Low to Moderate
Price Stability	Moderate	High (MSP)
Transparency	Moderate	High
Role of Middlemen	High	Low
Overall Farmer Preference	Higher	Lower

Interpretation of the graph



This indicates that age significantly influences farmers choice of marketing channel. Younger and middle-aged farmers show relatively greater openness towards NAFED due to awareness of MSP benefits, while older farmers prefer APMC because of familiarity and quicker payments.

7.5 Overall Interpretation

The analysis reveals that APMC continues to be the dominant marketing channel in Amravati District, primarily due to accessibility and faster payments. NAFED plays a crucial stabilizing role during price fluctuations through MSP support, but operational challenges limit wider adoption. Addressing procedural delays and improving infrastructure can enhance farmer participation and overall marketing efficiency.

8. Findings of the Study

The study reveals several important findings regarding farmers' preferences for agricultural marketing channels in Amravati District with specific reference to APMC and NAFED. A high level of awareness about the Minimum Support Price and institutional marketing channels was observed among farmers, indicating that information related to agricultural marketing policies has effectively reached the farming community. However, the findings also reveal a gap between awareness and actual participation, particularly in the case of NAFED procurement.

APMC continues to be the most preferred marketing channel among farmers due to its proximity, familiarity with procedures, and faster payment mechanisms. Immediate payment and ease of transaction emerged as critical factors influencing farmers' marketing decisions, highlighting the importance of liquidity, especially for small and marginal farmers. Despite challenges such as the presence of intermediaries and price fluctuations, APMC remains a reliable and convenient option for most respondents.

At the same time, NAFED is primarily valued for providing price stability and Minimum Support Price assurance during periods of market volatility. Farmers who participated in NAFED procurement reported higher satisfaction with price realization and perceived reduced income uncertainty. NAFED was also viewed

as a more transparent system with a reduced role of middlemen, offering more direct transactions compared to APMC markets. However, procedural complexity and delays in payment were identified as major constraints limiting wider adoption of cooperative procurement, despite its perceived benefits.

Market accessibility and transportation costs were found to strongly influence marketing channel preference, with farmers showing a clear inclination toward nearby markets. This made APMC more attractive than distant procurement centers and reinforced the significance of physical accessibility in shaping farmers' marketing behavior. Further, chi-square analysis revealed a significant association between age and marketing channel preference, with younger and middle-aged farmers showing greater openness toward NAFED, while older farmers largely preferred APMC due to familiarity and established trading relationships.

Overall, the findings indicate that APMC and NAFED perform complementary roles in the agricultural marketing system of Amravati District. While APMC ensures operational convenience and immediate cash flow, NAFED contributes to price assurance and income stability. The study highlights the need to improve payment timelines, simplify procurement procedures, and strengthen local procurement infrastructure to enhance the overall effectiveness of agricultural marketing systems.

9. Managerial Implications

The findings of the study highlight important managerial implications for agricultural marketing institutions, policymakers, and cooperative agencies in Amravati District. Improving payment efficiency in NAFED procurement is a key priority, as immediate and predictable payments strongly influence farmers' preference for APMC. Faster payment mechanisms can enhance farmer trust and participation in cooperative procurement.

The study also emphasizes the need to improve market accessibility by expanding village-level or cluster-based procurement centers under NAFED to reduce transportation costs and logistical challenges. Simplifying procurement procedures, reducing documentation, and improving communication through digital tools and on-ground facilitation can further enhance operational efficiency and transparency.

Additionally, awareness initiatives should be supported with practical assistance, grievance redressal mechanisms, and stronger coordination with extension services to build farmer confidence. From a strategic perspective, APMC and NAFED should function as complementary channels, with APMC ensuring liquidity and transaction ease and NAFED providing price stability during market distress. Regular farmer feedback and data-driven decision-making can help develop a more efficient, transparent, and farmer-centric agricultural marketing system.

10. Limitations of the Study

Despite offering valuable insights into farmers' preferences for agricultural marketing channels in Amravati District, the study has certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. The study is based on a small sample of 35 farmers drawn from Katkumbh (Churni), Kund (Sarjapur), and Ibrahimpur villages, which limits the generalization of the results to the entire district or other regions. Additionally, the research focuses only on APMC and NAFED, excluding other relevant marketing channels such as private traders, Farmer Producer Organizations, contract farming, and online platforms, thereby restricting the scope of comparison. The findings rely on self-reported data collected through questionnaires and personal interactions, which may be affected by respondent bias, recall errors, or subjective perceptions.

Further, the study uses a cross-sectional approach, capturing farmers' opinions at a single point in time and not accounting for changes in market conditions, government policies, MSP levels, or procurement operations. Finally, due to time and resource constraints, the study employs a limited sample size and basic statistical tools such as percentage analysis, comparative analysis, and chi-square tests, which may reduce the depth of quantitative analysis.

11. Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the study findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of agricultural marketing channels, particularly APMC and NAFED, in Amravati District. A key priority is improving payment timelines under NAFED procurement, as delayed payments were identified as a major constraint. Adoption of faster and more reliable payment systems, such as direct bank transfers within a

fixed time frame, can strengthen farmer confidence and increase participation in MSP-based procurement.

The study also recommends expanding village-level procurement facilities through additional local centers or mobile units to improve accessibility and reduce transportation costs, making NAFED more competitive with nearby APMC markets, especially for small and marginal farmers. Simplification of procurement procedures through reduced documentation, clearer guidelines, and on-site assistance is essential to improve ease of participation, supported by stronger coordination with agricultural extension services.

Further, enhanced awareness and capacity-building programs focusing on practical aspects such as registration, quality standards, and grievance redressal can encourage wider adoption of cooperative procurement. At a system level, better integration between APMC and NAFED is suggested, with APMC ensuring liquidity and ease of transactions and NAFED acting as a price-stabilizing mechanism during market fluctuations. Finally, establishing regular feedback mechanisms to capture farmers' experiences can enable continuous monitoring and farmer-centric policy adjustments, thereby strengthening the overall agricultural marketing system.

12. Scope for Future Research

The present study provides insights into farmers' preference for agricultural marketing channels in Amravati District with reference to APMC and NAFED. However, there are several areas where future research can be extended to gain a more comprehensive understanding of agricultural marketing systems.

Future studies can be conducted with a larger sample size and wider geographical coverage, including more villages and districts, to enhance the generalizability of findings and capture regional variations in farmers' marketing behavior.

Further research may include a comparative analysis of additional marketing channels such as private traders, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), contract farming arrangements, and digital marketing platforms to provide a broader perspective on farmers' marketing choices.

Longitudinal studies can be undertaken to examine changes in farmers preferences over time, particularly in response to policy reforms, changes in MSP levels, market prices, and the expansion of cooperative procurement infrastructure.

Future researchers may also focus on crop-specific studies, analyzing marketing preferences separately for cotton, soybean, and tur, as marketing challenges and institutional support vary across crops.

Another potential area for future research is the impact assessment of technological interventions, such as digital procurement portals, e-NAM integration, and direct benefit transfer systems, on payment efficiency and farmer satisfaction.

Finally, qualitative research approaches such as in-depth interviews and case studies can be employed to gain deeper insights into behavioral, social, and institutional factors influencing farmers marketing decisions.

13. Conclusions

The present study examined farmers' preferences for agricultural marketing channels in Amravati District with specific reference to APMC and NAFED for cotton, soybean, and tur crops, using primary data collected from selected villages. The findings reveal that APMC continues to be the dominant marketing channel due to its accessibility, familiarity, proximity, and faster payment mechanisms, which are especially important for small and marginal farmers who prioritize immediate liquidity. Despite challenges such as intermediaries and price fluctuations, APMC plays a vital role in ensuring ease of transaction and regular cash flow.

At the same time, the study highlights the importance of NAFED in providing price stability through Minimum Support Price procurement, with participating farmers reporting better price assurance and reduced exposure to market volatility. However, operational issues such as procedural complexity and delayed payments limit wider farmer participation. The analysis indicates that farmers' marketing channel choices are shaped by a mix of economic and operational factors, including payment speed, accessibility, transportation costs, and awareness levels. Chi-square analysis further confirms that demographic

factors, particularly age, significantly influence marketing channel preference.

Overall, the study concludes that APMC and NAFED perform complementary roles within the agricultural marketing system of Amravati District. While APMC ensures operational convenience and immediate cash flow, NAFED contributes to income stability during periods of price uncertainty. Improved coordination between these channels, along with faster payments, simplified procedures, and expanded local procurement infrastructure, can strengthen the marketing system and enhance farmer welfare.

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