



## A Study on Satisfaction of The Members of Milk Producers' Cooperatives in Salem District

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### ABSTRACT

*Milk Producers' Cooperatives in Salem District have been rendering various services to its members. The members of these cooperatives shall have the privilege of utilizing these services. The cooperatives are immensely helpful and supportive to their members in procuring cattle feeds, calf rearing, veterinary doctor services, etc. The members supply the milk to the cooperatives. The cooperatives test the milk before buying from the members. The price for milk supplied by members is determined by the cooperatives and the same is paid to the members at regular intervals. However, the satisfaction towards services rendered by the cooperatives is mainly dependent on the utilization by members. An attempt has been made in this study to assess the satisfaction of members towards services rendered by Milk Producers' Cooperatives in Salem District.*

**KEYWORDS :** Cooperatives, services, satisfaction.

### INTRODUCTION

The Government of Tamil Nadu has stepped into the Dairy Development sector in 1958 by establishing a separate department – Dairy Development Department in Tamil Nadu. The department has been given power to take over the statutory control of all the milk cooperatives in the state. According to the Tamil Nadu Milk Cooperatives Act, 1983, the Commissioner for milk production and dairy development has been nominated as the functional Registrar. There was a further development in this sector by the establishment of Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited, popularly known as 'Aavin'. The commercial activities like milk procurement, processing, chilling, packing and sale of milk to consumers, etc. which have been previously carried out by the Tamil Nadu Dairy Development Corporation have been transferred to the newly established Federation, 'Aavin', which is the apex body in the state for dairy development activities. Accordingly, milk producers' cooperatives have been established in rural areas under the control of District level unions and in turn by the state level federation.

These milk producers' cooperatives have been established in villages in order to enable the farmers to earn additional income by sale of milk. These cooperatives help the members to grow and maintain milch animals like cow, buffalo, etc. They help the members to buy and maintain these animals and sell the milk to the consumers through cooperatives. In this context, the cooperatives render various services to the members

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The milk producers' cooperatives render various services and provide various facilities for the welfare of their members. The members utilize or avail these services and facilities according to their requirements. The quality of these services would satisfy the customers of milk producers' cooperatives. It is always prudent to satisfy the existing customers or members than to augment new customers or members. Hence it is important to understand whether the services rendered by milk producers' cooperatives in Salem District have really satisfied their members. In this regard, the present study has been undertaken.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the present study:

1. To understand the level of satisfaction of members of milk producers' cooperatives in Salem District towards the services rendered by them.
2. To offer various suggestions to the milk producers' cooperatives to improve the quality of their services.

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is undertaken in the Salem District of Tamil Nadu. The geographical area of this district is surrounded with agricultural farms and hills. The major occupation of the people of this district is agriculture. The present study has analyzed the level of satisfaction of members of various milk producers' cooperatives in this district towards the services rendered by them.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The source of data required for a research study could be classified as primary data and secondary data. The present study is mainly dependent on the primary data obtained from the sample respondents by using an interview schedule which has been prepared with utmost care to include all the relevant questions. The researcher has conducted survey among 600 respondents sample respondents who have been selected on the basis of stratified random sampling technique. Every district in the State of Tamil Nadu has been divided into revenue taluks for administrative purposes. Salem District has been divided into 9 revenue taluks including Attur, Edapadi, Gangavalli, Mettur, Omalur, Salem, Sankari, Vazhapdi and Yercaud. From each of these revenue taluks, 75 members of milk producers' cooperatives have been selected on random basis. Out of the 675 members selected for the present study, 23 members expressed their unwillingness to participate in the survey and 52 members have been eliminated from the sampling frame owing to poor and incomplete responses. Thus the sample size of the study has been determined to be 600. The data obtained from these sample respondents have been put through analysis by applying appropriate statistical tools like percentage analysis, mean, range, standard deviation and chi square test.

### HYPOTHESES

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, gender, marital status, educational level and occupation) and level of satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between membership variables (membership age and nature of membership) and level of satisfaction.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is subject to the following limitations:

1. Due to time and economic constraints of the researcher, the size of sample has been confined to 600 respondents in Salem District only.
2. Since the present study is mainly dependent on the primary data obtained from the sample respondents, their tastes and preferences are subject to change from time to time and hence care should be taken while generalizing the findings of the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the level of satisfaction has been presented in the following table:

**TABLE 1: LEVEL OF SATISFACTION**

Factors	DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS						CHISQUARE TEST			
	No.	%	Mean	Min	Max	SD	$\chi^2$	DF	Table value	Result
<b>Age</b>										
Below 20 years	178	29.7	16.4	11	22	2.6	4.31	6	12.59	NS
20 to 40 years	261	43.5	16.7	10	24	2.7				
40 to 60 years	116	19.3	16.9	11	23	2.7				
Above 60 years	45	7.5	17.2	12	25	3.1				
<b>Gender</b>										
Male	439	76.5	16.7	10	25	2.7	2.40	2	5.99	NS
Female	141	23.5	16.7	11	24	2.7				
<b>Marital Status</b>										
Single	211	35.2	16.7	10	24	2.6	3.35	2	5.99	NS
Married	389	64.8	16.7	10	25	2.8				
<b>Educational Level</b>										
School Level	244	40.7	16.7	11	24	2.6	3.63	8	15.51	NS
UG Level	150	25.0	16.6	10	25	2.7				
PG Level	84	14.0	16.3	10	24	2.7				
Illiterate	60	10.0	17.1	10	24	2.9				
Others	32	5.3	16.8	11	24	2.9				
<b>Occupation</b>										
Govt. Employee	20	3.3	16.4	11	20	2.2	23.60	10	23.21	**
Private Employee	99	16.5	17.0	10	24	2.6				
Businessman	144	24.0	16.8	10	24	2.9				
Professional	27	4.5	15.1	11	21	2.7				
Farmer	271	45.2	16.8	10	25	2.6				
Others	39	6.5	16.5	12	21	2.2				
<b>Membership Age</b>										
Less than 2 years	145	24.2	16.8	11	24	2.7	17.78	6	16.81	*
2 to 4 years	199	33.1	17.3	10	25	2.7				
4 to 6 years	169	28.2	16.3	11	23	2.7				
More than 6 years	87	14.5	15.9	10	22	2.7				
<b>Nature of membership</b>										
Ordinary member	347	57.8	16.7	10	24	2.7	1.04	2	5.99	NS
Office bearer	253	42.2	16.7	10	25	2.7				
<b>Total</b>	690	100	16.7	10	25	2.7				

NS – Not Significant \* Significant @ 5% \*\* Significant @ 1%

It is observed from the Table 1 that the highest proportion of sample respondents (43.5 per cent) was constituted by respondents belonging to the age group of 20 to 40 years and the lowest proportion of sample respondents (7.5 per cent). The average score of satisfaction was high (17.2) among the respondents belonging to the age group of 20 to 40 years while the lowest score (16.4) was observed among the respondents in the age group of below 20 years. Male respondents constituted 76.5 per cent of the sample respondents while the proportion of female respondents was 23.5 per cent of the total respondents. The average score of satisfaction of both male and female members was found to be 16.7 each. Out of the total respondents, 35.2 per cent of them were single members whereas 64.8 per cent of them were married members. Their score of satisfaction was found to be equal (16.7). The proportion of school level educated members was the highest (40.7 per cent) while the respondents having other levels of education was the lowest (5.3 per cent) among the sample respondents. The average score of satisfaction was the highest (17.1) among the illiterate members while it was the lowest (16.3) among the respondents educated at PG level.

Farmers constituted the highest proportion (45.2 per cent) of the sample respondents while the Government employees constituted the lowest proportion of 3.3 per cent. The highest average score of satisfaction (17.0) was obtained by the private employees while professionals have obtained the lowest average score of satisfaction

(15.1). Those having membership in cooperatives for 2 to 4 years constituted the highest proportion (33.1 per cent) of sample respondents and obtained the highest average score of satisfaction (17.3) whereas those having membership in cooperatives for more than 6 years constituted the lowest proportion (14.5 per cent) of the total respondents and obtained the lowest average score of satisfaction (15.9). The proportion of ordinary members was found to be 57.8 per cent and that of office bearers was found to be 42.2 per cent of the sample respondents. The average score of satisfaction of both ordinary members and office bearers was found to be 16.7.

From the analysis, it could be understood that there is no significant relationship between age of the members and their level of satisfaction towards services rendered by milk producers' cooperatives. The relationship between gender of the members and their level of satisfaction is also found to be insignificant. Marital status of the members and their level of satisfaction are not significantly associated as revealed by the chi square test. It is found that the educational level of the members is not significantly related to their level of satisfaction. However, the relationship between occupation of the members and their level of satisfaction towards services rendered by milk producers' cooperatives is found to be significant. There exists a significant relationship between membership age of members and their level of satisfaction. On the other hand, the relationship between nature of membership and level of satisfaction is not significant and statistically significant. It implies that the level of satisfaction of members towards services rendered by milk producers' cooperatives in Salem District varies significantly according to the occupation and membership age of the members. The other independent variables – age, gender, marital status, educational level and nature of membership do not have any influence on the level of satisfaction of members.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of above findings, the following suggestions have been offered:

- The milk producers' cooperatives should provide financial assistance to the farmers for the purchase of milch animals.
- Technical support should be enhanced to all the members of milk producers' cooperatives.
- Veterinary doctor service should be provided on need basis, instead of weekly visit on a particular day.
- Milk procurement price should be disbursed without any delay on the particular day.

## CONCLUSION

The milk producers' cooperatives in Salem District have been rendering various services for the welfare of their members. The utilization level and satisfaction level of members towards these services found to be good. However, these cooperatives should create awareness among the members about various facilities provided or services rendered in order to enhance the utilization. The level of satisfaction of members of milk producers' cooperatives in Salem District would be increased by providing need based services to the members.

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