



## A REVIEW OF UZHAVAR SANTHAI: TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURAL MARKETS AND EMPOWERING FARMERS IN TAMIL NADU

### Agricultural Economics

<b>Dr. K. Kalidas</b>	Associate Professor & Head, Department of Agricultural Economics, Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture, Manakkadavu, Pollachi - 642103
<b>K Lohith</b>	UG Scholar, Department of Agricultural Economics, Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture, Manakkadavu, Pollachi - 642103
<b>S Sanjay</b>	UG Scholar, Department of Agricultural Economics, Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture, Manakkadavu, Pollachi - 642103
<b>S Soorya Prabha</b>	UG Scholar, Department of Agricultural Economics, Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture, Manakkadavu, Pollachi - 642103
<b>S Sivasakthi</b>	UG Scholar, Department of Agricultural Economics, Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture, Manakkadavu, Pollachi - 642103

### ABSTRACT

This article provides an analysis of the Uzhavar Santhai scheme – the Tamil Nadu government's landmark farmers' market structure that was set up in 1999. This was done with the intention to bring producers and consumers closer and to reduce the number of middlemen who otherwise cut farmers' returns and make consumer goods expensive, Uzhavar Santhai is such an organization. Through this removal of these middlemen, 'farmers' can be compensated better and on the other end of the scale, consumers are able to obtain fresh and cheaper produce at reasonable prices. This article aims at examining the general development of the Uzhavar Sandhai, the problems that were associated with the stagnation of this market and the measures that were taken to bring back the market. The present context is also discussed and the role of Uzhavar Santhai in the contemporary context stressed as a way of accessing markets, food safety and better lives of the farmers. The discussion also goes to the role of the initiative in enhancing sustainable farming practices and its prospect of development in the age of the digital society, such as the expansion of the use of the online environment. The article thus underlines the overbearing relevance of Uzhavar Santhai in special reference to the agriculture economy of Tamil Nadu and how it can further be expanded in the new paradigm of digitalisation.

### KEYWORDS

Agricultural Marketing, Consumers, Farmers, Middlemen, Uzhavar Santhai

### INTRODUCTION

Agricultural marketing entails all marketing activities associated with the sale of agricultural products and services from planning of the production to the final stage. It is part of the Agri-business management that encompasses all the activities ranging from input management to marketing of the output<sup>[1]</sup>. The strategic marketing also called agricultural marketing has significant responsibility in ensuring the sale of Agricultural goods and the distribution of agricultural marketing between farmer and consumer. The modernisation of agricultural marketing has in recent years been propelled by the developments in digital technologies such as e-commerce platforms and mobile application. Some of these innovation has made it easier to access the market, made the marketing process to be more transparent and has added efficiency to the marketing process. Therefore, Such strategies assists the farmers to secure the better prices for their products, minimize post harvest losses and improve their standard of living.

### Agricultural Marketing In India

Marketing of agricultural products is very vital in India in particular, given that agriculture is one of the leading sectors in the Indian economy. Marketing of agricultural produce in India is highly complex with a large number of intermediaries including producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers<sup>[2]</sup>. In order to bolster this, the government of India has brought out measures like the formation of APMCs and the evolution of e-NAM or the National Agriculture Market. Also, the government has introduced such programs as Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakhan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)

The initiative is the Price Management for Agricultural Supplies and the Advancement of Smallholder Agriculture or PM-AASHA to help farmers receive better prices for their produce and increase their income security. In addition, the programmes like Uzhavar Santhai in Tamil Nadu, Shekar Bazaar in Maharashtra, Rythu Bazaars in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Krushak Bazaars in Odisha are also important for fostering direct marketing sales between farmers and consumers<sup>[3]</sup>. Most of these initiatives assist in achieving a better price for the farmers through reduction of the middlemen. Nevertheless, the agricultural sector is still constrained by issues such as weak supply chain, problem on market access, and price risk which has an impact on the farmers' income. This review is restricted to the

farmers' markets with a special reference to the Uzhavar Santhai in Tamil Nadu.

### Review Of Literature

According to Vinayagam [5], among the successful experiments undertaken by the Tamil Nadu government is the Uzhavar Santhai that is meant to facilitate direct-selling of agricultural produces. It has also helped in cutting the burdens of the farmers and consumers since the scheme has helped in the decongestion of the marketing chain. Shakeel (2012) assessed the effectiveness of farmers' market known as Uzhavar Santhai introduced in several regions of India. Through this initiative, a good channel of distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables through the direct selling has been put in place. However, a comprehensive study of the history of Uzhavar Santhai and its overall impact on the agricultural markets and consumers has not been conducted and therefore a long-term analysis of the impact has to be done to understand the effectiveness of the scheme. Moreover, the assessment of the scheme's viability in the longer term and its impact on the economics of a region may provide different viewpoints for improving and developing similar concepts.

### Research Methodology

This research work uses descriptive research design to analyse the position of the Uzhavar Santhai in the marketing systems of agricultural produce in Tamil Nadu. The study uses secondary data from government institutions, in this case the Government of Tamil Nadu to gather data on the objectives, history and functioning of Uzhavar Santhai<sup>[4]</sup>. Further, published reports, research papers and newspaper articles have been used to assess the effectiveness of Uzhavar Santhai both for the farmers and consumers. This broad perspective gives a broad view of the Initiatives efficiency and its impact on the agricultural industry.

### Uzhavar Santhai In Tamil Nadu

Uzhavar Santhai or Tamil Nadu's farmer's market concept is now emerging as a ray of light for the state's agricultural industry. Through sourcing money directly from the consumers, the program has changed the traditional face of the food supply chain through promoting the farmers' ability and making sure the consumers have fresh produce from their local farmers. In this article the author raises such questions as objectives and implementation of the Uzhavar Santhai, their effect

and the problems solved by them.

### Objectives and Implementation

The main objective of Uzhavar Santhai is to build up a robust structure to enable the farmers to sell their products directly to the consumers, thereby reducing the exploitation of middlemen, the consumer gets fresh produce and the farmers earn a higher percentage of the selling price thus improving their livelihood. It aims to support the organic farming, the safety of the products, and the creation of a community that is focused on the locally produced items[6].

In order to fulfill these objectives, the Tamil Nadu government has employed the following plan. These approach include identifying suitable sites for farmers' markets; ensuring those sites have adequate infrastructure in terms of stalls, storage and sanitation, as well as providing training for farmers on various aspects of the market including quality assurance and pricing. In addition, the government has launched frequent awareness creation among consumers to embrace direct purchase from farmers. All of these measures, in turn, are intended to improve the general effectiveness and stability of the Uzhavar Santhai program.

### Key Farmers' Market Initiatives In India

Uzhavar Santhai, Tamil Nadu: Highlights the direct interaction between Farmers-consumers, promoting organic produce, and strengthening rural livelihoods.

Rythu Bazars, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana: Focuses on market infrastructure, quality control, and stabilizing the prices for farmers.

Apni Mandis, Punjab and Haryana: Emphasizes procurement and marketing of agricultural produce, with a focus on price discovery and fair prices for farmers.

Haats and Weekly Markets: Traditional markets with a strong rural presence, often lacking formal organization and infrastructure. They typically operate informally, leading to challenges in resource access and facilities. Despite these issues, they are vital for local economies and provide fresh produce to rural area.

### Uzhavar Santhai: A Case Study

Uzhavar Santhai in Tamil Nadu has implemented the empowering of small scale farmers and improving their rural income. Through a direct selling channel, it has assisted farmers in managing the prices and getting a better price for their crops. From this initiatives, many farmers embraced use of organic farming practices because of the increasing demand for foods that are produced without use of chemicals such as pesticides. It has been evidenced that Uzhavar Santhai has received the support from the government, implemented properly, and farmers and consumers have been excited in participating in this program, which makes stakeholders feel like owning the program, so it will continuously grow and make impact in the society. Also, the program has made the farmer to gain the trust of the consumers hence making the market to be transparent through the consumption of the locally produced goods. It is slowly and steadily gaining recognition as a model for the same programmes in the rest of the region.

### Impact and Benefits

Uzhavar Santhai have played a very effective role in changing the face of agriculture in Tamil Nadu. This has led to a substantial increase in farmers' income, enabling them to improve their farming techniques and go for sustainable practices. The markets have also helped in encouraging the use of organic farming, due to the increased consumer awareness on the effects of pesticides.

To the consumers, Uzhavar Santhai offer a one-stop-shop to buy fresh, quality and locally produced fruits and vegetables. Consumers feel proud to buy products that are produced by the farmers in their own region and hence improving the sustainability of agriculture system. Furthermore, the markets have become places of social interaction and people are being informed about seasonal and local produce. They promote healthier ways of eating through provision of a wide range of healthy foods and act as a source of information on the importance of organic farming.

### Challenges and Opportunities

While Uzhavar Santhai has achieved remarkable success, it has faced different challenges. Infrastructure limitations particularly in rural

areas, have hindered transportation and storage while Price fluctuations due to seasonal variation and weather conditions have also impacted farmers' incomes. Moreover, maintaining consumer trust and loyalty has demanded ongoing effort and commitment.

Despite these challenges also avenues for growth and improvement. By investing in infrastructure development, providing market intelligence to farmers, and introducing the price stabilization mechanisms that can mitigate the challenges leading to a stronger and more resilient ecosystem. Also broadening of Uzhavar Santhai includes value-added products and leveraging online platforms can open up new avenues for farmers and consumers.

### CONCLUSION

Uzhavar Santhai has established itself as a successful model for farmers' markets in India, showcasing the ability to empower farmers, promote sustainable agriculture, and enhance food security. By providing direct market access, minimizing the role of intermediaries and encouraging the community engagement, Uzhavar Santhai has played a crucial role to the development of a more resilient and equitable agricultural system. Looking ahead, the Tamil Nadu governments plan to expand and digitize the Uzhavar Santhai network reflects its commitment to adapting to modern needs while preserving the initiatives core values. As these development unfolds, Uzhavar Santhai is poised to continue setting an example for other regions, driving positive change in India's agricultural economy.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Jeyaranjan, J., Kavitha, S., & Sakthivel, S. (2015). Uzhavar Santhai: A Study on Direct Marketing of Agricultural Produce. *Journal of Agricultural Marketing*, 8(1), 34-42.
- [2] Joy Samuel, D., & Dhanraj, G. (2019). A Practical and Viable Model For Establishing A Unique Fair Farmer's Market – With Special Reference To Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu. *The International Journal Of Analytical And Experimental Modal Analysis*, XI(7), ISSN 0886-9367.
- [3] Priya, I. (2021). A Study On Customer Satisfaction Towards Uzhavar Shandhai In Ramanathapuram District. *Journal Of Emerging Technologies And Innovative Research*, 8(10).
- [4] Raja, S., & Kumar, V. (2018). Farmers' Markets and Economic Development. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 34, 70-82.
- [5] Vinayagam, A., & Poongothai, R. (2022). A study on Uzhavar Santhai in Tamil Nadu with special reference to Chengalpattu district. *Journal Name*, 20(14), 346-353.
- [6] Vishnu, V., & Kasim Nasheer, S. (2023). Uzhavar Sandhai in Tamil Nadu: Is Empowering Rural Farmers? *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 11(9), 246-250.