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Research Article

COMPLAINTS REDRESSAL MECHANISM OF HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKETING BOARD: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Himachal Pradesh as a land of diversity, geographically as well as ethnically, faces different climatic conditioning that determines the flow of life by and large. Agriculture is the essential occupation of people where survival is found in its varied forms viz. orchards, horticulture, pisciculture, floriculture, apiculture and vegetables. What is paramount for this invigorating sector is an operative mechanism that could regulate the carrying out of marketing so that the direct advantages could be ensured to the producers and consumers as well. Himachal Pradesh State Agriculture Marketing Act, 2005 regulates the mechanism of marketing in the state. Although, the board consistently functions for the stakeholders' welfare yet the people have not sufficient awareness vis-a-vis to the State Agriculture Produce Marketing Board (APMB). The paper focuses on the awareness and use of redressal mechanism of APMB among the people.

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the main and prime occupation of the world. It is the basis of civilization as it provides and executes the food supply to the world's population. It has a significant place in the world economy as it fulfils the basic needs of human beings such as food, feed, fiber, fuel, furniture and raw materials etc. It is the most primary activities of man. It is associated with the production of various crops. Agriculture plays a desperate role in the world's economy. Agricultural sector contributes a large share in the growth and development of the economy. Agriculture is a critical factor for poverty reduction because the majority of the poor lives in the rural areas and depends on agriculture for their livelihood. The rapid increase in the population, agriculture in general and food production in particular, became more important. Development of agricultural sector is more important not only for providing food to the population but also to raise the living of standard of the people who are involved in agriculture. Therefore, a rapid rate of agricultural growth is prerequisite for generating and sustaining the momentum of development. The economy of the Himachal Pradesh is the currently 3rd fastest growing economy in India and ranked 4th in the list of the highest per capita income of the Indian states. The economy of the state is highly dependent on three sources: hydroelectric power, tourism and

agriculture. The Himachal Pradesh state agriculture marketing department doing efforts in strengthening the agrarian economy of the state has been appreciated and it has been conferred 'State Agriculture Leadership Award' in 2010 for its outstanding policy initiatives and performance in agriculture sector. Agricultural Marketing is one of these programs started by the state government for the better regulation of buying and selling of agricultural produce and to safeguard the interests of the agrarian community. To provide for an uniform law relating to the better regulation of buying and selling of agricultural produce and for the establishment of markets for agricultural produce throughout the State, The Himachal Pradesh Agricultural Produce Markets Act, 1969 was enacted in the State and given effect to from 5.2.1972. Later on, for the regulation of agricultural produce in the state, Himachal Pradesh Agricultural/ Horticulture Produce Marketing Act, 2005 has been enforced (implemented). Pal Mahi (2016) in his article "Agriculture and farmers' Welfare: New Initiatives and Challenges" given the significance of agriculture sector in the economy and society, the government of India has initiated several steps for its sustainable development and to enhance the income of the farmers in the country by way of improving soil fertility, improved access efficiency of irrigation, insurance cover to farmers and unified national agriculture market. Report of Niti Aayog Government of India (2015) titled

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‘Raising Agricultural Productivity and Making Farming Remunerative for Farmers’ This report concentrates on a select but important set of policy issues confronting Indian agriculture to come up with recommendations that would help bring about a second Green Revolution in India and carry on forceful growth in agriculture. Five such issues have been chosen: channel required to raise productivity, policies ensuring remunerative prices for farmers, reforms necessary in the area of land leasing and titles, a mechanism to bring quick relief to farmers hit by natural disasters, and initiatives necessary to spread Green Revolution to eastern states. Kumar P. and Sindhu M. (2014) in their paper ‘Globalization of Agricultural Marketing and its Aspects in Relation to Rural India’ describe objective of the basic framework for rural development in where the marketing of agriculture products plays a key role for active growers for their livelihood and economic strength. They provide a major share of total production and marketed surplus in most developing countries of the world.

Research Gap

The authors focused only to increase farmers’ income, productivity and facilities provided to them by government. But the only thing that matters at large is the success rate of such facilities. For this direction is instrumental which has not been paid attention by the researchers. The study endows to fill this gap.

Scope of the Study

The study confines to selected from two APMCs covering four districts (1. Shimla & Kinnaur, 2. Kullu & Lahaul –Spiti)

Objectives of the Study

1. To know about the awareness of the complaint redressal mechanism of Himachal Pradesh State Agricultural Produce Marketing Board.
2. To study the use of complaint redressal mechanism of Himachal Pradesh State Agricultural Produce Marketing Board.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper is based on descriptive research. The data has been collected through interview schedule. The used tools are Percentage and Chi- Square test.

Sample Deigns

Multi- Stage stratified random sample has been used. Out of ten committees of APMB, two have been selected for sample. These are districts eight blocks, sixteen panchayats, thirty two villages selecting 10 respondents from each village and there are the total 320 respondents producers from both the selected APMCs.

Hypotheses

H₀₁ = There is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents with regard to awareness about complaint redressal mechanism.

H₀₂ = There is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents with regard to use of complaint redressal mechanism.

Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis of the responses through Marital Status, Occupation and Education Wise of Himachal Pradesh State Agricultural Produce Marketing Board.

Awareness about Complaint Redressal Mechanism

Marital Status Wise

The following table shows marital status wise regarding awareness of complaint redressal mechanism.

Table No 1 Awareness about Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Marital Status Wise

Marital Status	Yes	No	Total
Married	82(40.8) (56.16)	119(59.2) (68.39)	201(100.0) (62.81)
Unmarried	64(53.8) (43.83)	55(46.2) (31.61)	119(100.0) (37.19)
Total	146(45.6) (100)	174(54.4) (100)	320(100) (100)

Chi-Square=5.081, P= 0.024
 Note: Figures in Parentheses Represents Percentages
 Sources: Computed from Primary Data

The above table analyzes marital status wise about awareness of complaint redressal mechanism of the board/ committee, out of total number of respondents 45.6 percent replied that complaint redressal mechanism of APMB is aware, in which 56.16 percent respondents are married and 43.83 percent unmarried. While, rest 54.4 percent respondents stated that awareness about complaint redressal mechanism is not aware (68.39 percent respondents are married and 31.61 percent unmarried). Since, majority of the respondents replied that there is no awareness about complaint redressal mechanism. While applying Chi-square test and P- value is 0.024 being less than 5 percent level of significance, hence null hypotheses is rejected . It can be stated that there is significant difference in the opinion of people (Marital Status Wise) with regard to awareness about complaint redressal Mechanism of the board. If people are replying yes to the awareness of complaint redressal mechanism of the board then the table number 1.2, given below find the use of complaint redressal mechanism:

Use of Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Marital Status Wise

The following table depicts marital status wise regarding use of the complaint redressal mechanism in different group’s viz. marketing board authority, local bodies of area and customer care.

Table No 2 Use of Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Marital Status Wise

Marital Status	Marketing Board Authority	Local Bodies of Area	Customer Care	All of the above	Total
Married	16(19.5) (51.61)	28(34.1) (77.78)	24(29.3) (64.86)	14(17.1) (33.33)	82(100.0) (56.16)
Unmarried	15(23.5) (48.39)	8(12.5) (22.22)	13(20.3) (35.13)	28(43.8) (66.67)	64(100.0) (43.83)
Total	31(21.23) (100)	36(24.66) (100)	37(25.34) (100)	42(28.76) (100)	146(100) (100)

Chi-Square=17.427, P= 0.024
 Note: Figures in Parentheses Represents Percentages
 Sources: Computed from Primary Data

Majority of total number respondents (21.23%) stated that use of complaint redressal mechanism is marketing board authority, in which 51.61 percent respondents are married and 48.39

percent unmarried. Further, out of total number of respondents 24.66 percent clearly expressed that there is local bodies of area (77.78 percent respondents are married and 22.22 percent unmarried). Similarly, 25.34 percent respondents replied that there is customer care (64.86 percent respondents are married and 35.13 percent unmarried). While, rest 28.76 percent respondents (33.33 percent are married and 66.67 percent unmarried) stated that there is entire mention segments. So, majority of the respondents replied that they used ‘all the bodies’ segment of complaint redressal mechanism. While applying the chi-square test and P-value is 0.002 being is less than 5 percent level of significance, hence null hypothesis is rejected. It can be stated that there is significant difference in the opinion of people (Marital Status wise) with regard to use of complaint redressal mechanism of Marketing Board.

Awareness about Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Occupation Wise

The following table shows the complaint redressal mechanism of state agricultural marketing board according to occupation.

Table No. 3 Awareness about Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Occupation Wise

Occupation	Yes	No	Total
Service	38(41.8) (26.03)	53(58.2) (30.46)	91(100) (28.43)
Business	38(52.8) (26.03)	34(47.2) (19.54)	72(100) (22.5)
Agriculturalist	64(45.1) (43.83)	78(54.9) (44.82)	142(100) (44.37)
Student	6(40.0) (4.11)	9(60.0) (5.17)	15(100) (4.68)
Total	146(45.62) (100)	174(54.37) (100)	320(100) (100)

Chi-Square=2.242, P=.524,
Note: Figures in Parentheses Represents Percentages
Sources: Computed from Primary Data

According to 45.62 percent respondents stated that complaint redressal mechanism of the APMB is aware, in which 26.03 percent are service and business, 43.83 percent agriculturalist and 4.11 percent student. While, rest 54.37 percent respondents stated that complaint redressal mechanism is not aware (30.46% respondent are service, 19.54 % business,44.82 % agriculturalist and 5.17% student). So, majority of the respondents have no awareness of complaint redressal mechanism. While applying the Chi-square test and P- value is calculated 0.524 being is more than 5 percent level of significance, hence null hypotheses is accepted. It can be stated that there is no significant difference in the opinion of people (Occupation wise) with regard to awareness of the complaint redressal mechanism of the board. If respondents are replying yes to the complaint about the Marketing Mechanism of the board then the table number 1.4, given below find the use of the awareness of the complaint redressal mechanism.

Use of Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Occupation Wise

The following table analyzes occupation wise the use of the complaint redressal mechanism.

Table No 4 Use of Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Occupation Wise

Occupation	Marketing Board Authority	Local Bodies of Area	Customer Care	All of the above	Total
Service	3(7.9) (9.68)	12(31.6) (33.33)	14(36.8) (37.84)	9(23.7) (21.43)	38(100) (26.03)
Business	11(29.0) (35.48)	12(31.6) (33.33)	6(15.8) (16.22)	9(23.7) (21.43)	38(100) (26.03)
Agriculturalist	15(23.5) (48.39)	10(15.6) (27.78)	15(23.4) (40.54)	24(37.5) (57.14)	64(100) (43.83)
Student	2(33.3) (6.45)	2(33.3) (5.55)	2(33.3) (5.40)	0(0.0) (0.00)	6(100) (4.10)
Total	31(21.23) (100)	36(24.66) (100)	37(25.34) (100)	42(28.77) (100)	146(100) (100)

Chi-Square=18.155, P=.111
Note: Figures in Parentheses Represents Percentages
Sources: Computed from Primary Data

Out of the total number of respondents 21.23 percent stated that use of complaint redressal mechanism is marketing board authority in which 9.68 percent respondents are service, 35.48 percent business, 48.39 percent agriculturalist and 6.45 percent student. Further, 24.66 respondents stated that there is local bodies of area (33.33% are service and business, 27.78 % agriculturalist, 5.55% student). Similarly, out of the total number of respondents 25.34 stated that there is customer care (37.84% are service, 16.22 % business, 40.54% agriculturalist and 5.40% student). While, rest 28.77 percent respondents stated that there is all the mentioned complaint bodies. So, majority of the respondents is used all the bodies. While applying the chi-square test and P-value is calculated 0.111(more than5%). The null hypothesis is accepted. It can be stated that there is no significant difference in the opinion of people (Occupation wise) with regard to the use of the complaint redressal mechanism of marketing board.

Awareness about Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Education Wise

The following table stated awareness of complaint redressal mechanism of the state agricultural marketing board according to education.

Table No 5 Awareness about Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Education Wise

Education	Yes	No	Total
Illiterate	19(42.2) (13.01)	26(57.8) (14.94)	45(100) (14.06)
Matriculation	56(75.7) (38.35)	18(24.3) (10.34)	74(100) (23.12)
Below graduate	58(56.3) (39.73)	45(43.7) (25.86)	103(100) (32.19)
Above graduate	41(41.8) (28.08)	57(58.2) (32.76)	98(100) (30.6)
Total	146(45.6) (100)	174(54.4) (100)	320(100) (100)

Chi-Square=22.578, P=.000,
Note: Figures in Parentheses Represents Percentages
Sources: Computed from Primary Data

Out of the total number of respondents 45.6 percent stated that complaint redressal mechanism of APMB is aware (13.01% illiterate, 38.35% matriculation, 39.73% below graduate and 28.08% above graduate). While, rest 54.4 percent replied that complaint redressal mechanism of APMB is not aware (14.94% are illiterate, 10.34% matriculation, 25.86 percent below graduate and 32.76 % above graduate). So, majority of

respondents are not aware of complaint redressal mechanism of APMB. While applying Chi-square test and P- value is calculated 0.000 being is less than 5 percent level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. It can be stated that there is significant difference in the opinion of people (Education wise) with regard to complaint redressal mechanism of the board. If people are replying yes to the awareness of complaint redressal mechanism of the board then the table number 1.6, given below use of complaint redressal mechanism.

Use of Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Education Wise

The following table depicts education wise regarding use of the complaint redressal mechanism.

Table No 6 Use of Complaint Redressal Mechanism: Education Wise

Education	Marketing Board Authority	Local Bodies of Area	Customer Care	All of the Above	Total
Illiterate	2(7.7) (6.45)	7(26.9) (19.44)	14(53.8) (37.84)	3(11.5) (7.14)	26(100) (17.80)
Matriculation	5(27.8) (16.13)	4(22.2) (11.11)	5(27.8) (13.51)	4(22.2) (9.52)	18(100) (12.33)
Below Graduate	13(28.9) (41.93)	14(31.1) (38.89)	8(17.8) (21.62)	10(22.2) (23.81)	45(100) (30.82)
Above Graduate	11(19.3) (35.48)	11(19.3) (30.55)	10(17.5) (27.03)	25(43.9) (59.52)	57(100) (39.04)
Total	31(21.3) (100)	36(24.7) (100)	37(25.3) (100)	42(28.8) (100)	146(100) (100)

Chi-Square=27.966, P= .006
 Note: Figures in Parentheses Represents Percentages
 Sources: Computed from Primary Data

Majority of the respondents (21.3%) stated that use of the complaint redressal mechanism is marketing board authority (6.45% illiterate, 16.13% matriculate, 41.93% below graduate and 19.3% above graduate). Further, 24.7 percent respondents replied that there is local bodies of area (19.44% are illiterate, 11.11% matriculation, 38.89% below graduate and 30.55% above graduates. Similarly, out of the total number of respondents 25.3 percent replied that there is customer care (37.84% are illiterate, 13.51% matriculation, 21.62 % below graduate and 27.03% above graduate). So, majority of the respondents replied that there is fall into the category i.e. all compliant redressal body. While applying the chi-square test and P-value is 0.006 hence null hypothesis is rejected because it is less than at 5 percent level of significance. It can be stated that there is significant difference in the opinion of people (Education wise) with regard to the use of complaint redressal mechanism of marketing board.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Complaint redressal mechanism of Himachal Pradesh State agricultural Produce marketing board, created by government, is an autonomous body which provides solution for people regarding agriculture and agricultural marketing Board. Maximum respondents are not aware of the complaint redressal mechanism of APMB. It means people are not getting benefitted by this body. Despite of that married respondents replied that complaint redressal mechanism more than half (56.16%) is aware. On the basis of occupation where the agriculturalist class, as compared to others, 43.83 percent respondents replied is aware regarding the complaint redressal mechanism of APMB. In the educated 38.35 percent matriculate and 39.37percent below graduate are aware of the complaint redressal mechanism of APMB. Regarding use of complaint redressal mechanism, found that 77.78 percent married respondents replied that there is use of local bodies of area, 48.39 percent agriculturalist are use of marketing board authority and 38.89 percent below graduate is use of local bodies of area. The more awareness programmes for the people regarding the redressal mechanism of APMB is required. In order to make the mechanism more participation of experienced business man and the educated one is needed through awareness camps so that maximum people would be benefitted by this mechanism. The young people are required to be aware about the complaint redressal mechanism, the participation of higher learning institutions is needed to be involved in the process especially in agriculture and agricultural marketing sector.

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