

“Prioritising Marketing Challenges for Apple Growers”

Dr Narender Singh Chauhan,

Assistant Professor

Jayotirmay Sharma, PhD scholar, Management

[Himachal Pradesh University], India

INTRODUCTION

Apple growing in Shimla has been an integral part of the state’s history . India being the 5th largest apple manufacturing country . Apple growing takes 83.14 per cent of the total fruits production of Himachal Pradesh (Horticulture development in Himachal Pradesh at a glance, 2015) . This research focus on the marketing challenges that the apple growers face and if they are rated equally or they are rated same by the growers.

. The research also utilizes on the government schemes and if growers are aware of it or not plus if they actually get any financial assistance from the schemes .

This study comprises of **150 apple growers** of whom **127** are male and **23** were female , indicating a predominantly male participation in horticulture

The average age of respondents is **46.46** years , with ages ranging from **21 to 85 years**

Problem- With growers in Shimla the challenges are very significant such as conditions of roads , infrastructure , the climate conditions , terrain , marketing issues make the job of growing apples very challenging

Research gap –

1. growers are not aware of the government schemes and the financial assistance
2. Although previous research has documented multiple challenges encountered by growers, to have an ordinal approach to these challenges have been lacked (ranking the challenges)

There are several challenges that play a crucial part in shaping the growing of apples in Shimla such as unpredictable weather conditions , lack of technical knowledge , postharvest management storage difficulties , infrastructure and roads conditions and many more .

This study examines 150 farmers from various Panchayats of Shimla district.

It explores demographic characteristics , landholding patters , educational levels and marketing practices .

This study also studies how the growers rank different challenges faced by them while the growing process.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. (AN INQUIRY INTO THE CHALLENGES OF APPLE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF APPLE GROWERS IN SHIMLA DISTRICT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH K. KIREETI1 & L. R. SHARMA2

This study examines the challenges faced by apple growers in the capital, such as **production** and **marketing** challenges. It provides in-depth talks about the various sub-challenges faced, such as

Production

- Shortage of labour (availability and wages)
- Chemical fertilisers (cost , brand and availability)
- Plant production chemicals (price, availability , sale)
- Other challenges (irrigation facility, non-availability of healthy plant material)

Marketing

- Grading and packing labour
- Packing material
- Storage facility

- Transportation
- Market intelligence
- Malpractices in the market
- Market intervention scheme

Gap - this study fails to identify whether the growers are of the government schemes provided to them or not

2. FARMERS' CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS FERTIZERS FOR APPLE ORCHARDS IN SHIMLA DISTRICT. (PRAGUN BHIMTA H-2020-24-ABM)

This study examines the behaviour of farmers regarding the use of fertilisers in apple cultivation and investigates the challenges faced by farmers in purchasing fertilisers for apple orchards. this studies again fails to determine the awareness levels of the government schemes and the challenges faced by the farmers. This does not show the different levels of government schemes that are there for people.

3. Exploring Constraints in Risk Management Practices: A Study of Apple Growers in Himachal Pradesh, India(Harshit Doda1, Rashmi Chaudhary1, Anupam Singh1, Anshuman Sharma1 and Pankaj Thakur)

This research was based on socio-economic characteristics and constraints faced by apple growers when adopting risk management practices in Himachal Pradesh

Mainly focused on the income levels of the farmers and reveals several important constraints that limit farmers capacity to increase productivity while mitigating risk

Gap – research focused on the whole of Himachal rather than one specific district for a detailed study

OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESIS

1. To know the different schemes and levels of the government schemes that have benefited the growers
2. To rank the challenges faced by apple growers in the cultivation of apples
3. **Null Hypothesis (HO):** There is no association between receiving financial assistance /subsidies and awareness of government policies.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is an association between receiving financial assistance/subsidies and awareness of government policies

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedures applied to a field of study. It involves the procedure of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena to solve a problem; it is the 'how'; the process, or techniques of conducting research (Kothari, 2004)

4.1. Area of Study

The area of study is the area where the study is being conducted. The present study has been conducted in the capital of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla

4.1 Data Collection

Data collection is a process of collecting data for research purposes. Primary data has been utilised for this study

4.3 Sampling Technique

Sampling was done based on different Panchayats of Shimla. Convenience sampling was adopted due to terrain constraints and the limited accessibility of remote orchards.

4.4 Sampling size

The size of 150 respondents of apple growers was taken from different Panchayats

4.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used in the study along with chi square test to answer the research questions.

4.6 Analytical tool

1. TWS is used for making the total weighted score . which would ultimately help to rank different attributes
Likert scale was converted into numbers like 1,2,3,4,5. These numbers were multiplied by the respective column of respondents to calculate the TWS .

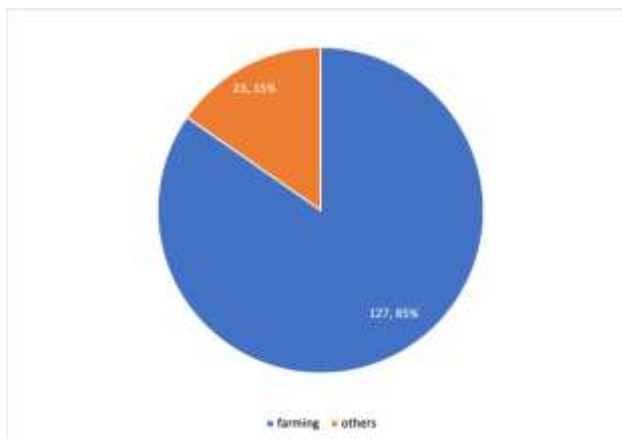
2 . Chi square test was applied to find out the association it is made to not normal distribution and it is Non-parametric test

ANALYSIS

1. Distribution of respondents based of occupation

Occupation	Respondents
farming	127
others	23

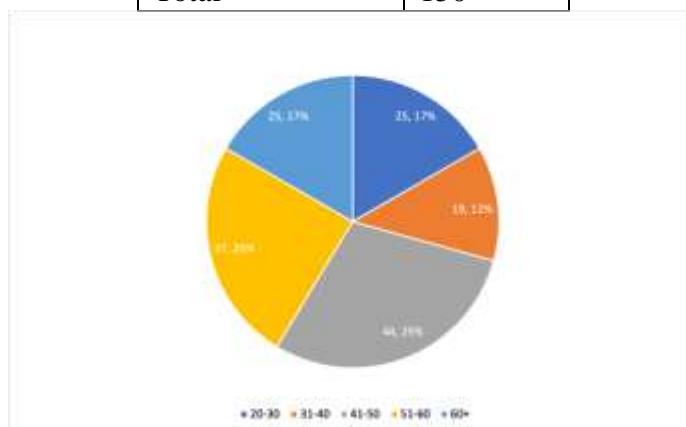
(Table-1)



This table-1 reveals the number of people who are in farming against the ones who are not 85% of the people are into farming, and 15 % are not

2. Distribution of respondents by age group. (Table-2)

age range	Frequency
20-30	25
31-40	19
41-50	44
51-60	37
60+	25
Total	150

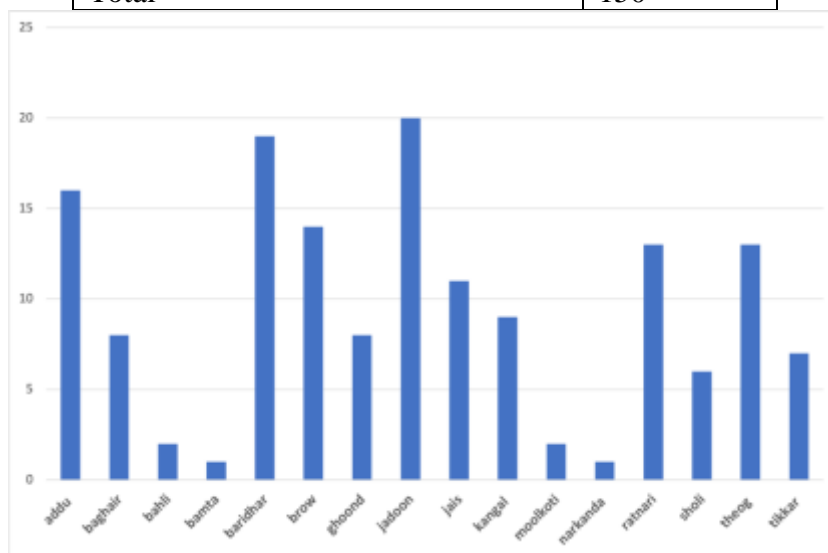


(Distribution of respondents by age group.)

Table -2 reveals that most of the respondents were aged ranging between 41-50 years 29% followed by slightly old people, ranging from 51-60 years 25%. It was observed during the study that largely respondents, ranging from 41-50 years were showing great interest in apple growing .

3. Distribution of respondents across different villages. (Table-3)

Panchayat	Respondents
Addu	16
Baghair	8
Bahli	2
Bamta	1
Baridhar	19
Brow	14
Ghoond	8
Jadoon	20
Jais	11
Kangal	9
Moolkoti	2
Narkanda	1
Ratnari	13
Sholi	6
Theog	13
Tikkar	7
Total	150



(Respondents from different Panchayats in Shimla)

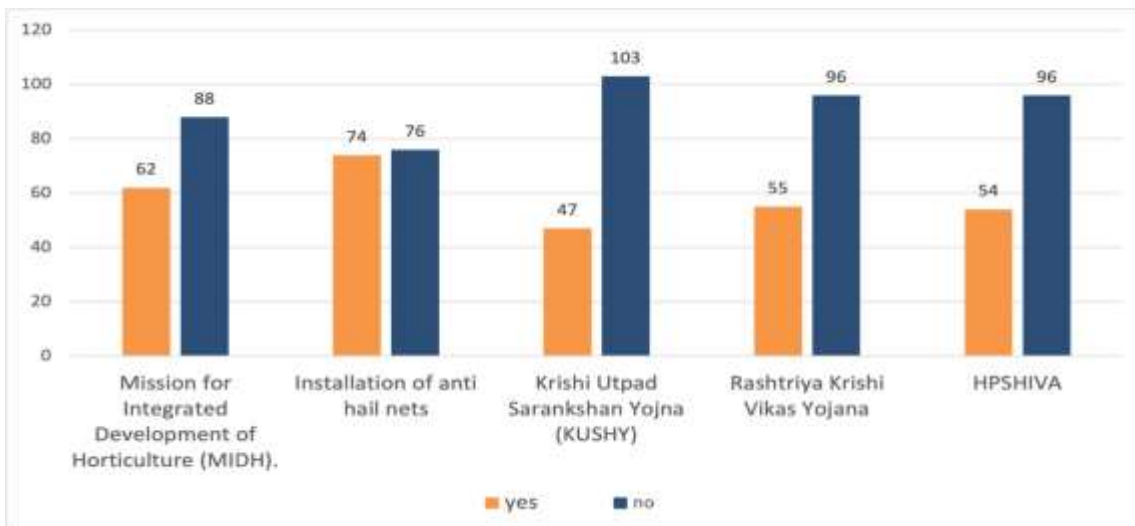
Table -3 reveals the various Panchayats and respective respondents from their where most people for this study are from Jadoon Panchayat, which reveals it is a fairly easier reaching area vs Bamta, which only has 1 respondent, revealing that it is a tougher area to reach out

4 .Have you benefited from any of these schemes or initiatives

S.No	yes	no
Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).	62	88
Installation of anti-hail nets	74	76
Krishi Utpad Suraksha Yojna (KUSHY)	47	103

Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana	55	96
HPSHIVA	54	96

(table-4)



(representation of schemes and people who are benefited)

Table 4 reveals that major government horticulture schemes reveal varied levels of scheme penetration. The installation of anti-hail nets records the highest number of beneficiaries (74 growers), reflecting the importance of protection against hail-related losses. The lowest coverage was observed in **Krishi Utpad Suraksha Yojna (KUSHY)**, with only 47 people who benefited from it.

5. Farmers' ratings of major challenges in horticulture produce marketing in Himachal Pradesh in an ordinal manner

S.No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	very low	low	moderate	high	very high	TWS	rank
Marketing and selling of horticultural produce	3.49	1.27	9	31	32	34	60	603	1
Unpredictable weather conditions	3.96	1.08	2	18	24	46	60	594	2
Pests and diseases	3.78	1.12	6	17	26	56	45	567	3
Availability and affordability of quality inputs (seeds, fertilizers, etc.)	3.65	1.20	6	26	28	44	46	548	4
Post-harvest management and storage	3.53	1.26	12	20	38	36	44	530	5
Lack of technical knowledge and training	3.76	1.36	6	22	47	37	38	529	6
Access to credit and finance	3.41	1.23	15	17	42	43	33	512	7
Lack of irrigation facilities	3.40	1.29	12	29	37	31	41	510	8
Government regulations and policies	3.31	1.30	16	24	45	28	37	496	9
Infrastructure issues (roads, transportation, etc.)	3.25	1.34	20	24	40	31	35	487	10

(Table-5)

Table -5 reveals the farmers’ relative severity of challenges faced in growing oof apples in the capital. The TWS method was used to calculate the ranks.

Among the identified challenges **Marketing and selling of horticulture produce** was noticed as the most challenging part for the farmers. This reveals limited control over the intermediaries and limited control over the market outcomes. The concerns of growers were that they often found themselves in weak bargaining positions within the marketing structures.

Unpredictable weather conditions ranked as the second-highest challenging problem faced by the growers, as most of the apple growing depends on the weather. This can be related to the above table -4 also, farmers were mostly from the **anti-hail nets** scheme, which reveals that weather conditions are a significant challenge for growing apples.

Infrastructure issues (roads, transportation, etc.) were ranked the least challenging, showing that the government has made substantial efforts in the transportation department in the capital. were it is still a challenge out their but it is not the most significant. Though some respondents suggested improvements can always be made. Despite the adverse conditions of the weather government does a fairly good job in preventing roads from being blocked.

Challenges like **Pests and diseases** are also a very significant challenge, rated 3rd in the table, showing they were posing a stress to the orchard productivity.

Following this was the **availability and affordability of quality inputs (seeds, fertilisers, etc), which** reveals it is a challenge to find and get affordable quality inputs.

Post-harvest management and storage, along with a **lack of technical knowledge and training** was also found moderately challenging by the growers. Storage facilities in times of adverse weather or any other natural calamity were hard to get and limited, as was also expressed by the growers.

6. To test the association between receiving financial assistance/subsidies and awareness of government policies

1. **Null Hypothesis (HO):** There is no association between receiving financial assistance /subsidies and awareness of government policies.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is an association between receiving financial assistance/subsidies and awareness of government policies

financial assistance	Aware	Not aware	Total
yes	50	11	61
no	70	19	89
	120	30	150

(TABLE -6)

statistic	Chi-square (χ^2)	Degrees of freedom (df)	pvalue	N
value	.249	1	0.61801696	150

(TABLE – 7)

The Chi-square test was conducted to examine the association between **Receival of financial assistance** and **awareness of government policies**. The results reveal that there is not a **statistically significant association** between the two variables, as indicated by a Chi-square value of **.249** with **1 degree of freedom** and a **p-value of 0.61801696**

As the p-value in Table 7 is more than 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis that there is no association between receiving financial assistance /subsidies and awareness of government policies cannot be rejected

Means that govt policies are independent of the receipt of financial assistance.

This means in simple terms that people who were aware of the government policies do not necessarily mean they are likely to receive financial assistance to people who were not aware

CONCLUSION

Apple cultivation dominates Himachal Pradesh's economy substantially, as 83.14% (Horticulture development in Himachal Pradesh at a glance, 2015). Yet growers rank marketing/selling highest among challenges (TWS 603), followed by weather (594). Schemes like anti-hail nets benefited 74 respondents, but awareness gaps still persist.

While apple growing is the most followed occupation for the farmers here in Shimla, it comes with its challenges. People often face intermediary challenges, and the market is dominated by the middlemen. It is also observed that Shimla has a male-dominating structure in the cultivation of apples, with now women emerging in the area too.

The government should provide better subsidies for women who are really passionate about independently growing apples and making a good living.

Middle-aged people who range from 41 to 50 are the ones who practice this occupation the most, stating that people need some experience before making it their main priority

Cooperatives could strengthen the bargaining power of the growers with the buyers.

Proper marketing and selling of horticulture produce was seen as the most significant challenge, TWS(603), which signifies how much more awareness is needed for the sale of the produce. Cooperative societies need to be strengthened for small farmers, too.

People are more aware of certain schemes than other tells; people are aware of needs like. Anti hail nets (74) who were aware of the schemes, as unpredictable weather conditions are a significant challenge for the growers, which made them aware of the government schemes too. which implies the government should make schemes related to the challenges that are most significantly faced by the growers

The chi-square test revealed that there is no association between the awareness of the government schemes and receipt of financial assistance, and the study could not reject the null hypothesis, showing p value of 0.61801696, which is more than the 5 per cent level of significance. Showing that both are independent of each other

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