

An attitude of members towards dairy cooperative societies in Madurai district

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Abstract

In India, the need for promotion of dairy industry arises due to several considerations such as low per capital, availability of milk, prevalence of large scale unemployment. Various dairy development programmes were started to ensure supply of adequate quantity of milk at reasonable price to urban consumers and to provide viable subsidiary occupation to unemployed rural poor so as to raise their income earning capacity. In Madurai district, a milk supply union had been started in 1938. It was converted into an elaborate milk project in 1967 by the Government of Tamil Nadu with financial assistance from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). When the entire state of Tamil Nadu came under the effect of the Anand pattern, the Union was renamed as Madurai District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Limited with effect from January 1, 1983. Thereafter the Union had been actively involved in replicating the Anand model in the district under the Operation Flood programme. The researcher, in this paper makes an assessment of members' opinion towards the benefits enjoyed from the Dairy Cooperative Societies in Madurai District. The term 'Attitude' means 'settled behaviour'. In India, the Dairy Cooperative Societies render services to the members in many ways. The level of attitude will indicate the performance of various benefits enjoyed by the members.

Keywords: dairy, attitude, milk, cooperative societies, milk union

1. Introduction

In India, the need for promotion of dairy industry arises due to several considerations such as low per capital, availability of milk, prevalence of large scale unemployment. Various dairy development programmes were started to ensure supply of adequate quantity of milk at reasonable price to urban consumers and to provide viable subsidiary occupation to unemployed rural poor so as to raise their income earning capacity.

Tamil Nadu has major contribution to the development of dairy industry in India. The Dairy Development Department was established in 1958 in Tamil Nadu. The administrative and statutory controls over all the milk cooperatives in the State were transferred to the Dairy Development Department on August 1, 1965. The Commissioner for Milk Production and Dairy Development was made as the functional Registrar under the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies Act. With the adoption of 'Anand pattern' in the State, Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited was registered in the State on February 1, 1981. The commercial activities of the department such as milk procurement, processing, chilling, packing and sale of milk to the consumers, etc., hitherto dealt with by the Tamil Nadu Dairy Development Corporation Limited, were transferred to the newly registered Tamil Nadu Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited.

In 2010, there are 10,554 primary milk cooperatives, 17 district milk producers' cooperative unions and 41 chilling centres functioning in the Tamil Nadu State. The total number of members in these societies is 27.30 lakhs. The production of milk by the societies is 23 lakh litres per day and milk procurement by unions is 16.20 lakh litres per day [1].

In Madurai district, a milk supply union had been started in 1938. It was converted into an elaborate milk project in

1967 by the Government of Tamil Nadu with financial assistance from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) [2]. When the entire state of Tamil Nadu came under the effect of the Anand pattern, the Union was renamed as Madurai District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Limited with effect from January 1, 1983. Thereafter the Union had been actively involved in replicating the Anand model in the district under the Operation Flood programme.

The area covered by the Union is Madurai and Theni districts. The Madurai district consists of five milk procurement teams and Theni district consists of three milk procurement teams. Hence, the researcher has chosen the Madurai District as the area of the study for the current research work. The major departments functioning under the Union are – a) Madurai Milk Project at Madurai; b) Cattle Feed Plant, at Kappalur, Madurai; and c) Milk Chilling Centre at Theni.

In Madurai Dairy Union as on January 1, 2010, a total of 1078 Dairy Cooperative Societies are registered, consisting of 596 in Madurai district and 482 in Theni district and 790 societies are functioning (435 in Madurai district and 355 in Theni district). A total of 192 women dairy cooperative societies are registered, of which 160 are functioning. The number of members in Madurai district is 37,858 and Theni district is 45, 971 making a total of 83,829 members in Madurai Dairy Union [3].

2. Concept of Attitude

The researcher, in this paper makes an assessment of members' opinion towards the benefits enjoyed from the Dairy Cooperative Societies in Madurai District. The term 'Attitude' means 'settled behaviour'. In India, the Dairy Cooperative Societies render services to the members in many ways. The level of attitude will indicate the

performance of various benefits enjoyed by the members. Since ‘Attitude’ is an abstract concept, it cannot be directly measured in quantitative terms. There is no fixed value or score which will help to measure the attitude. But the attitude can be measured indirectly with the help of scaling techniques. The researcher has identified 20 components for measuring the attitude. A five-point scale has been devised for measuring the attitude of members towards the benefits from the Dairy Cooperative Societies with the help of scale developed by Likert.

The level of attitude varies from one member to another and also from time to time. A comprehensive study has been made to highlight the level of attitude, the variation in the levels of attitude and their relative importance to each component is identified for measuring the level of attitude.

3. Attitude Scale

In this study the researcher has identified 20 components to measure the level of attitude of the respondents. As there is no readymade scale to measure the level of attitude, a scale namely ‘The Attitude Scale’ has been developed by awarding scores to the 20 components identified. With the help of this scale, the attitude of members towards the Dairy Cooperative Societies has been measured.

The level of attitude of members towards Dairy Cooperative Societies has been determined by the score values calculated for 20 statements which are related to the benefits enjoyed from the Dairy Cooperative Societies by adopting a scaling technique namely the Likert’s Five Point Scale ^[4]. The statements used for this purpose are –

1. Better access to social support during crisis
2. Better access to market
3. Received incentives for supplying more milk
4. Conveniently located milk collection centres
5. More savings since joining dairy society
6. No exploitation
7. Hopeful to get benefits in future also
8. Availability of loan facility
9. Received remunerative prices
10. Knowledge about quality testing received
11. Received free Artificial Insemination
12. Settlement of accounts promptly
13. Receipt of input services from the Society
14. Gives benefit of direct delivery to the Society
15. Receipt of subsidy
16. No fraudulent activities
17. Acquirement of business skills
18. Voting right received
19. No other middlemen in the village
20. More income from joining dairy society

Expressions such as Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree have been used for measuring each statement. To secure the total score for every positive statement, scores are allotted in the order – 5 for ‘Strongly Agree; 4 for ‘Agree’; 3 for ‘Undecided’; 2 for ‘Disagree’ and 1 for ‘Strongly Disagree’. All the 20 statements in the study are positive in nature. This enabled the respondents to record their responses with proper understanding of the statements.

4. Level of Attitude of Members

The level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies has been classified into three categories, namely low level (unfavourable attitude), medium level (neutral attitude), and high level (favourable attitude) for analytical purpose. For identifying the low, medium, and high level, the Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) ^[5] has been computed. The computed mean and standard deviation score was 60.59 and 7.16 respectively. The score value (Mean + Standard Deviation) and the score value (Mean – Standard Deviation) have been classified as ‘high level’ and ‘low level’ of attitude respectively. The score values in between the ‘low’ and ‘high’ have been termed as ‘medium level’ attitude. It is illustrated as follows:

High Level = Mean + S.D. = 60.59 + 7.16 = 67.75 = 68
 Low Level = Mean – S.D. = 60.59 – 7.16 = 53.43 = 53
 Medium Level = between low and high = 53 to 68

Based on the above, if a member gets total scores below 53, he belongs to low level attitude group. If a member gets total scores between 53 and 68, he belongs to medium level attitude group. If a member gets total scores above 68, he belongs to high level attitude group. Table 1 reveals the level of attitude of the 385 sample respondents under the study.

Table 1: Level of Attitude of Members

Sl. No.	Level of Attitude	Number of Members	Percentage
1.	Low (Unfavourable Attitude)	26	6.75
2.	Medium (Neutral Attitude)	309	80.25
3.	High (Favourable Attitude)	50	13.00
	Total	385	100.00

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from Table 1 that out of the 385 members, 50 (13%) members belong to high level attitude group, 309 (80.25%) members fall under the medium level attitude group and the remaining 26 (6.75%) members come under the category of low level attitude group.

Moreover, the attitude of members has been measured with the help of four variables such as literacy, land size, dairying occupation and experience. In order to find out whether these variables influence the attitude of members towards Dairy Cooperative Societies, chi-square test has been applied. Suitable hypotheses have been framed and tested. These have been explained in the following pages.

4.2 Literacy and level of attitude

The literacy of the members of Dairy Cooperative Societies makes them aware of benefits of the Dairy Cooperative Societies and the changes introduced by the societies as well as by the government from time to time with regard to price, quality checking, provision of artificial insemination, settlement of accounts, etc. Hence, literacy and level of attitude are analyzed together. Table 2 shows the literacy and level of attitude of members.

Table 2: Literacy Vs. Level of Attitude of Members

Literacy	Level of Attitude						Total	
	Low		Medium		High			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Illiterate	4	6.4	49	79.0	9	14.6	62	100.0
Can Read & Write	6	4.8	107	85.6	12	9.6	125	100.0
Primary Level	11	8.6	102	79.0	16	12.4	129	100.0
High School Level	4	6.9	42	72.4	12	20.7	58	100.0
Higher Sec. Level	1	12.5	6	75.0	1	12.5	8	100.0
UG Level	-	-	3	100.0	-	-	3	100.0
Total	26	6.8	309	80.2	50	13.0	385	100.0

Out of 62 illiterate members, 9 (14.6%) have high level attitude, 49 (79%) have medium level attitude, and 4 (6.4%) have low level attitude. In the category of ‘can read and write’, out of 125 members, 9.6 per cent constitute high level, 85.6 constitute medium level, and 4.8 per cent constitute low level attitude members. In the case of primary level literacy, 12.4 per cent belongs to high level, 79 per cent comes under medium level, and 8.6 belongs to low level attitude group. The high level attitude members are more in high school level category (20.7%) when compared to other literacy level. All the 3 members in UG level category have medium level attitude.

The researcher has attempted to ascertain whether any significant relationship exists between level of literacy and level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies. Chi-square test has been adopted to test the following null hypothesis.

Null Hypothesis

“There is no significant relationship between the literacy of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies”.

The chi-square test results are given as follows:

- Calculated Chi-square Value : 7.298
- Table Value at 5% Level of Significance : 18.307
- Degree of Freedom : 10
- Hypothesis Result : Accepted

Since the calculated values are less than the table values, the null hypothesis is accepted in the case of members of Dairy Cooperative Societies. The inference is that there is no significant relationship between the literacy of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies.

4.3 Size of land holdings and level of attitude

There is the possibility of influencing the level of attitude of members based on their size of land holdings. Hence, the researcher has made an attempt to know this fact. This was shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Size of Land Holdings Vs. Level of Attitude of Members

Land Size	Level of Attitude						Total	
	Low		Medium		High			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Landless	6	5.9	83	81.3	13	12.8	102	100.0
Below 3 Acres	13	8.9	115	78.8	18	12.3	146	100.0
3 to 5 Acres	7	7.7	73	80.2	11	12.1	91	100.0
Above 5 Acres	-	-	38	82.7	8	17.3	46	100.0
Total	26	6.8	309	80.2	50	13.0	385	100.0

It is inferred from Table 3 that the percentage of members having high level attitude is higher in the case of members

belonging to the category of ‘above 5 acres’ land holdings. They constitute 17.3 per cent in this category. It is also observed that there is no low level attitude member in this category. Followed by this, the landless category members accounting to 12.8 per cent have high level attitude.

With a view to testing whether there is any relationship between the size of land owned by members and the attitude level, chi-square test has been applied. For this purpose, a null hypothesis is framed as follows:

Null Hypothesis

“There is no significant relationship between the size of land owned by members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies”.

The result of the chi-square test is indicated below:

- Calculated Chi-square Value : 5.225
- Table Value at 5% Level of Significance : 12.592
- Degree of Freedom : 6
- Hypothesis Result : Accepted

It is inferred from the result of chi-square that the calculated value is less than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between the size of land owned by members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies.

4.4 Dairying Occupation and level of attitude

The nature of occupation to a greater extent decides the earning capacity of people. For earning more, most of the people are doing dairying as secondary occupation. Hence, the researcher has taken the dairying occupation as one of the variables influencing the level of attitude. It is explained in Table 4.

Table 4: Dairying Occupation Vs. Level of Attitude of Members

Dairying Occupation	Level of Attitude						Total	
	Low		Medium		High			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Main	11	5.5	167	83.5	22	11.0	200	100.0
Secondary	15	8.1	142	76.8	28	15.1	185	100.0
Total	26	6.8	309	80.2	50	13.0	385	100.0

Table 4 exhibits that out of 385 sample members, 200 members are doing dairying as their main occupation. Of which, 22 (11%) members belong to high level attitude, 167 (83.5%) belong to medium level attitude, and 11 (5.5%) come under low level attitude category. Regarding secondary occupation, 28 members constituting 15.1 per cent have high level, 142 members constituting 76.8 per cent medium level, and 15 members constituting 8.1 per cent have low level attitude.

From Table 4 it is clear that the percentage of members having high level attitude is more in secondary occupation category than the main dairying occupation category.

At this juncture, the researcher has attempted to ascertain whether any significant relationship exists between occupation and level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies. Chi-square test has been used to test the following null hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis

“There is no significant relationship between the dairying occupation of members and their level of attitude towards

Dairy Cooperative Societies”.

The chi-square test reveals the following result:

Calculated Chi-square Value : 2.778
 Table Value at 5% Level of Significance : 5.991
 Degree of Freedom : 2
 Hypothesis Result : Accepted

As the calculated value is lower than the table value, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it is said that there is no significant relationship between the dairying occupation of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies”.

4.5 Experience and level of attitude

Normally, the experienced member can know more about the benefits of Dairy Cooperative Societies than the inexperienced one. So, the researcher has taken experience as the last variable towards analyzing the level of attitude of members. Table 5 point out the experience and level of attitude of members.

Table 5: Experience Vs. level of attitude of members

Experience	Level of Attitude						Total	
	Low		Medium		High			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 5 Years	2	3.3	47	78.4	11	18.3	60	100.0
5 to 10 Years	7	8.3	68	81.0	9	10.7	84	100.0
10 to 15 Years	11	8.8	96	76.8	18	14.4	125	100.0
Above 15 Years	6	5.1	98	84.5	12	10.4	116	100.0
Total	26	6.8	309	80.2	50	13.0	385	100.0

It is understood from Table 5 that the percentage of high level attitude is more in ‘less than 5 years’ category when compared to other categories and also in particular reference to ‘above 15 years’ category. It is 18.3 per cent in ‘less than 5 years’ category and 10.4 per cent in ‘above 15 years’ category.

Regarding the medium level attitude, the ‘above 15 years’ category, accounted for more percentage when compared to other categories.

The researcher has embarked upon ascertaining the relationship between experience and level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies. For this purpose, chi-square test is used to test the following null hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis

“There is no significant relationship between the experience of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies”.

Chi-square test results at 5% significance level are given:

Calculated Chi-square Value : 5.502
 Table Value at 5% Level of Significance : 12.592
 Degree of Freedom : 6
 Hypothesis Result : Accepted

As the calculated value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between the experience of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies.

5. Findings

The following are the findings of the study:

5.1 It is inferred from that out of the 385 members, 50

(13%) members belong to high level attitude group, 309 (80.25%) members fall under the medium level attitude group and the remaining 26 (6.75%) members come under the category of low level attitude group.

5.2 It is inferred that primary level literacy, 12.4 per cent belongs to high level, 79 per cent comes under medium level, and 8.6 belongs to low level attitude group. The high level attitude members are more in high school level category (20.7%) when compared to other literacy level. All the 3 members in UG level category have medium level attitude.

It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between the literacy of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies.

5.3 It is observed that there is no low level attitude member in this category. Followed by this, the landless category members accounting to 12.8 per cent have high level attitude.

It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between the size of land owned by members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies.

5.4 It is clear that the percentage of members having high level attitude is more in secondary occupation category than the main dairying occupation category.

It is said that there is no significant relationship between the dairying occupation of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies”.

5.5 It is inferred that the medium level attitude, the ‘above 15 years’ category, accounted for more percentage when compared to other categories.

It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between the experience of members and their level of attitude towards Dairy Cooperative Societies.

6. Suggestions

- Now-a-days, Dairy Cooperative Societies are not in active position. They should take steps to enroll more number of members to meet the demands of the country’s requirements.
- Provision of credit to the members can be arranged by the dairy societies for meeting the demands of dairy farmers at concessional rate of interest.
- Green fodders should be supplied at concessional rates to the members for improving the milk production.
- To prevent diseases to milch animals, the Dairy Cooperative Societies should arrange for a periodical check-up for animals at free of cost.
- Training should be given to the members for implementation of innovative technology in their dairy farms. In addition, efficient marketing technique should be imparted to the members.
- To safe guard the milch animals from diseases, the dairy farm should be maintained as pollution free environment.
- Superior feeds like the green fodder must be used for increasing the production of milk.
- To increase milk production, more Women Milk Producers’ Cooperative Societies can be started in each and every village.
- The State Government should come forward to give a boost to the dormant dairy societies.

7. References

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