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Marketing of wool in Kashmir

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Abstract

Jammu and Kashmir is the country's largest fine wool producer. In 2018-19, it produced 74 lakh kg of wool, accounting for 18.1 percent of the country's total wool production. However, due to a lack of wool processing facilities, nearly all the wool produced in Jammu and Kashmir is exported to neighbouring states for processing/value addition which is being imported back into J&K at higher rates. The data was collected by interviewing different actors. A total of 270 producers, 10 middlemen, 10 wholesalers & 4 processors were taken. The study revealed in Kashmir region marketing channel involved a number of channels & not just a single channel. The marketing channels are limited to producers, Middlemen, Wholesellers & processor. The highest mode of sale was from channel-I 85%. The total marketing cost was highest in channel-IV Rs 64. The net price received by producer was highest in Channel-II Rs 23.25 again producers share was highest in channel-II Rs 11.20 and marketing efficiency was 3.84. The wools marketing for actors are non-competitive due to existence of wool oligopolistic market. Producers suffered a loss which suggests they have less bargaining power as compared to other actors.

Keywords: Marketing, wool, Kashmir, producer, net price

Introduction

Jammu and Kashmir is the country's largest fine wool producer. In 2018-19, it produced 74 lakh kg of wool, accounting for 18.1 percent of the country's total wool production (Anonymous, 2020a) ^[7]. However, due to a lack of wool processing facilities, nearly all the wool produced in Jammu and Kashmir is exported to neighbouring states for processing/value addition which is being imported back into J&K at higher rates. Because of the availability of wool in Jammu and Kashmir, the new Handloom and Handicrafts policy aims to make wool processing easier by establishing wool processing/de-hairing units throughout the state. Setting of wool processing units will make adequate supply of raw material, enabling volume production of handloom and handicrafts products (Ravina, 2019) ^[29].

Due to a shortage of wool processing units in the UT, Jammu and Kashmir now sells 70% of its wool in raw form. Despite generating about 70-75 lakh kg of raw wool, J&K lacks enough processing units/facilities to value add, and as a result, the majority of raw wool is exported at low prices to other regions of the country (Anonymous, 2020b) ^[8]. A large amount of raw wool is also sold to Rajasthan. The quality of raw wool deteriorates during transportation besides increasing transportation and handling costs. Despite this, wool sectors face a number of challenges, including poor economic conditions among largely illiterate woolgrowers, a lack of awareness about traditional management practices, inadequate processing facilities, inadequate marketing facilities and infrastructure, a shortage of technicians and trained manpower, inadequate testing facilities and quality control measures, a lack of operational and technical benchmarks, and a lack of research and development of value addition (Anonymous, 2020b) ^[8].

Research Methodology

Marketing is the practice of identifying and promoting the attributes of products for the benefit of and buyers in the exchange of goods. The different actors in the supply chain transaction were chosen randomly. A producer is someone who creates and supplies goods or services. A Producer here is the one who is producing wool e.g. Sheep rearers, govt farms/industries. The sheep rearers/producers were divided into three categories as small, medium and large according to flock size as seen from the previous literature. From each category 30 producers were taken making a total of 90 from each district (Table 1). Total sheep producers were 270.

Table 1: Selection of Producers

Producer		
Category	Flock Size	No of Producers
Small	1-30	30
Medium	30-60	30
Large	60 & above	30
		90/district Total=270

Table 2: Selection of Processors

Processors	
Processing units	Number
Shoddy spinning plant	1
Bemina Woollen mills	1
Govt spinning mill, Nowshehra	1
Matto spinning mill	1

For middleman & wholesalers were taken randomly as whoever was available.

Results

Marketing of wool & woollen products

The marketing of wool in Kashmir regions involved numerous actors & various marketing functionaries. The wool should move from producer to ultimate consumers through various channels. So different costs involved by different actors are calculated showing the margins, efficiency and the total marketing costs etc. The marketing of wool & woollen products is presented under the following domain as shown in figure 1.



Fig 1: Marketing domains

Actors involved in Marketing of wool

Actor

Actor means a person who is involved in the supply chain transaction of wool

Producer

Farmers were the main producer’s wool; they were the initial link in the chain of the wool marketing. Results in Fig. 2 demonstrate that multiple routes were used by Producers to sell their wool. The primary three buyers were middleman, wholeseller and processor.

Middleman: A middleman acts as an intermediary in a supply or transaction chain, promoting communication between the parties concerned. Middlemen are experts in carrying out critical tasks related to the purchase and sale of goods as they move from producers to final consumers.

Wholesellers: An intermediary merchant who sells primarily to retailers, other merchants, or industrial, institutional, and commercial consumers, usually for resale or business usage

Amritsar: A retailer, sometimes known as a merchant, is a business that sells products directly to consumers, such as vehicles, food, or apparel, with the intention of making a profit.

Marketing channels of wool: The marketing of wool in various markets is handled by a highly complex marketing system that includes a variety of marketing channels. Numerous functionaries are active in each channel, (Shown in table 1, 2) executing a variety of commercial tasks known as marketing roles. The channels of wool that were most frequently seen in are listed below. Wool marketing includes the transfer of wool from the producer to the final customer. Unless the producer sells the wool straight to the customer, the wool must go through multiple functions during this procedure. The chain, also known as the marketing channel, includes a number of middlemen, including middleman, contactors, wholesalers, processor, retailers, etc.

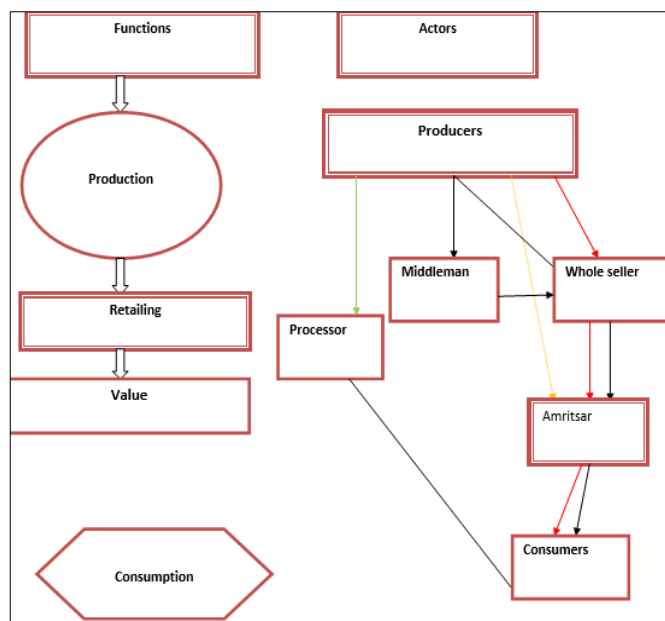


Fig 2: Actors involved in marketing of wool

Marketing channels of wool: The marketing of wool in various markets is handled by a highly complex marketing system that includes a variety of marketing channels. Numerous functionaries are active in each channel, (Shown in table 3) executing a variety of commercial tasks known as marketing roles. The channels of wool that were most frequently seen in are listed below. Wool marketing includes the transfer of wool from the producer to the final customer. Unless the producer sells the wool straight to the customer, the wool must go through multiple functions during this procedure. The chain, also known as the marketing channel, includes a number of middlemen, including middleman, wholesalers, processor, retailers, etc.

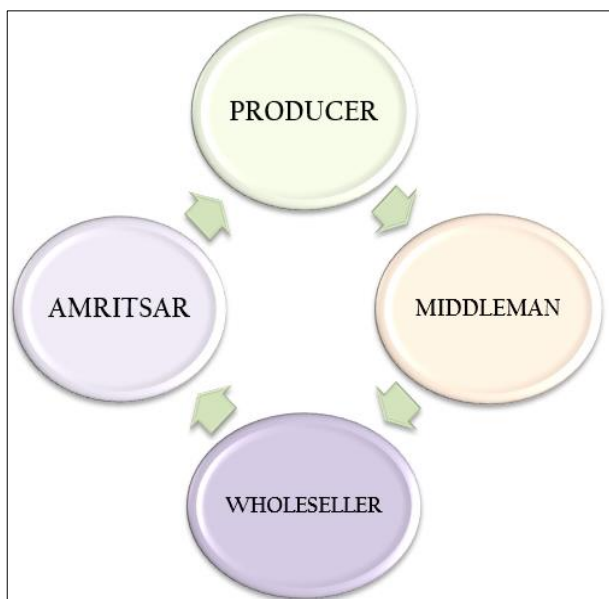


Fig 3: Marketing channel-I

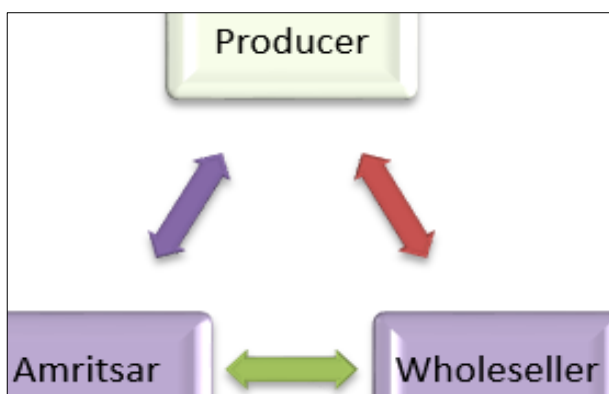


Fig 4: Marketing channel-II

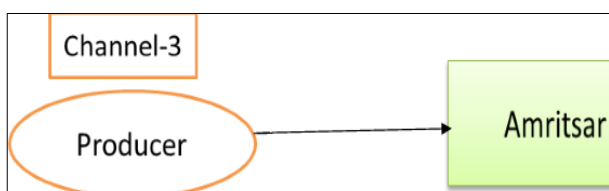


Fig 5: Marketing channel-III

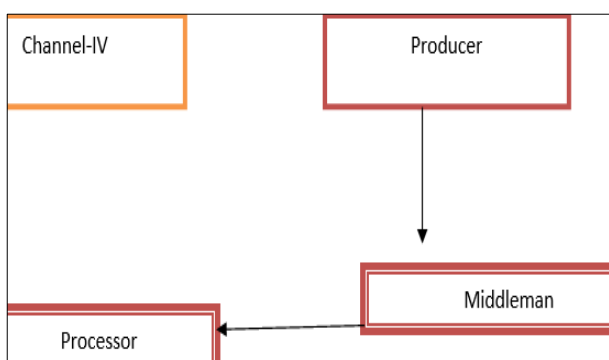


Fig 6: Marketing channel-IV

Table 3: Marketing channels of wool

Channel-I	Producer-Middleman-Wholeseller-Amritsar
Channel-II	Producer-Wholeseller-Amritsar
Channel-III	Producer-Amritsar
Channel-IV	Producer-processor

Table shows different marketing channels

Mode of sale in different channels

With 85 percent of produce passing through it, the marketing channel was the most popular among the wool producers in the research area. In channel II, the mode of sale was 9% of the produce passing through it. In channel-III, 2.5% of the produce was passing through it & channel IV 2.9% was moving. (Table 4).

Table 4: Distribution of actors according to highest mode of sale for the year 2021

S. No.	Marketing channel	Number of producers	Per cent
1.	Producer-Middleman-Wholeseller-Amritsar	230	85
2.	Producer-Wholeseller-Amritsar	25	9
3.	Producer-Amritsar	7	2.5
4.	Producer-Middleman- Processor-Mills	8	2.9
Total		270	100

Figures represent producers and the % of produce passing in each channel

Average marketing cost incurred in channels for 1 KG of wool for the year 2021

The average marketing cost incurred in channel-I for shearing is Rs 30. The middleman grading charges were Rs 2 & the cost of gunny bags was Rs 5. The loading & unloading charges were Rs 1 whereas the charges from village to highway were Rs 4. The forwarding charges were Rs 6. The charges of freight to Amritsar were Rs 9 and loading & unloading charges were Rs 1. Total marketing cost incurred in channel-I was Rs 21. The miscellaneous costs were Rs 2. Total marketing cost were Rs 60 in case of channel-I. Similarly for channel-II the average shearing cost of producer was Rs 28. The grading charges were Rs 3 & the cost of gunny bags were Rs 5. The loading & unloading charges were Rs 2. The charges from village to highway were Rs 4. The forwarding charges were Rs 6. The charges from freight to Amritsar were Rs 9. The unloading charges were Rs 1. The total marketing cost incurred in channel-II was Rs 62. In case of channel-III the average shearing costs were Rs 30. The grading charges were Rs 3 & the charges for gunny bag were Rs 5. The loading & unloading charges were Rs 2. The charges from village to highway were Rs 4 & the forwarding charges were Rs 6. The charges of freight to Amritsar were Rs 9. The unloading charges were Rs 1. The miscellaneous charges were Rs 4. The total marketing cost incurred in channel-III were 64. For channel IV the average shearing costs were Rs 30 & the grading charges of processor were Rs 3. The cost of gunny bags were Rs 5. The loading charges were Rs 2. The charges from village to highway were Rs 4. The forwarding charges were Rs 6. The freight to Amritsar was Rs 9. The unloading charges were Rs 1. The miscellaneous costs were Rs 4. The total marketing costs incurred in channel-IV were Rs 64.

Table 5: Distribution of Actors according to average marketing costs incurred for 1 kg of wool for the year 2021

S. No.	Cost Components	Amount (Rs.)							
		Producer				Processor	Middleman	Wholeseller	Amritsar
		(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(IV)	(I)	(II)	
1	Procurement cost								
	Shearing cost	30	28	30	30		-		--
1	Pre-packing cost	--		--					
(b)	Grading charges			3.00		3.00	2.00	3.00	-
	Total			3.00		3.00	2.00	3.00	-
2	Packing cost								-
(a)	Cost of gunny bags			Rs 5		Rs 5	Rs 5	Rs 5	-
	Total			Rs 5		Rs 5	Rs 5	Rs 5	--
3 Transportation cost									
(a)	loading & unloading charges			2.00		2.00	1.00	2.00	-
(b)	village to highway			4.00		4.00	4.00	4.00	-
(c)	Forwarding charges			6.00		6.00	6.00	6.00	-
(d)	Freight to Amritsar			9.00		9.00	9.00	9.00	-
(f)	Unloading at destination			1.00		1.00	1.00	1.00	--
	Total						21		
4	Unforeseen and Miscellaneous costs			4.00		4.00	2.00	4.00	-
	Grand Total			64		64	60	62	-

Figures represent average marketing cost incurred by the actors

Average marketing margins in channels for 1 kg of wool

The producers selling price was Rs 25. The marketing margin of producers was negative & it was -Rs 5. The producers had suffered a loss of Rs -5 while selling the wool. The middleman's buying price was Rs 25 and he sold the wool for Rs 35. The middleman had earned a margin of Rs 5 while selling the wool. The Whole sellers cost price was Rs 22 and he sold the wool for Rs 28. The wholesalers had earned a profit of Rs 6 while selling the wool. The processors were buying. The cost price of producer in channel-IV was Rs 25 & the cost price of middleman while buying the wool was Rs 36. The middleman had earned a margin of Rs 11 while selling the wool to the processor.

Table 6: Distribution of actors according to average marketing margins in channels for 1 kg of wool for year 2021

Functionary	Marketing Channels			
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)
Selling price of producer	25	22	34	25
Producers margin	-5	-6	-4	-5
Cost price of middleman	25	-		25
Sale price of middleman	30	-		36
Middlemans margin	5	-		11
Cost price of wholeseller		22		
Sale price of Wholeseller		28		
Wholesellers margin		6		
Cost price of processor				36

Figures represent average marketing margins of wool

Table 7: Distribution of actors according to marketing efficiency of wool in channels for the year 2021

Marketing Channels		Net price received by producer	Producers share in consumer rupee	Marketing efficiency	Total marketing cost
Channel -II	AVG ± S.D	23.25±3.53	11.20 ± 1.45	3.84 ± 0.48	60.43 ± 3.28
Channel-III		22.36 ± 3.1	11.10± 1.40	3.5 ± 0.27	60.5 ± 3.48
Channel-i		20.5 ± 0.76	10.65 ± 1.42	3.51 ± 0.13	63.16 ± 2.11
Channel-iv		21 ± 1.41	10.89 ± 1.66	3.45 ± 0.36	60.3 ± 3.59

Figures represent average net price, producers share in consumer rupee, marketing efficiency and total marketing costs

Discussion

The value chain map illustrates the many players in the wool value chain, from the lowest-level producers all the way up to the final customers. The main value chain actors diverse roles

are displayed on the left. Farmers, middlemen, whole sellers, processors, and retailers were discovered to be the key actors involved in production and trading. Wool marketing is still a challenging chore in the entire process. A research has been

performed to examine key aspects of wool marketing, including market actors, marketing expenses and profit margins, concerns with efficiency, the price realized by producers, and price variation in the study area. The report showed every wool marketing strategy. Gunny bags were used to package the wool since they were less expensive. The freight incurred to lift the wool from the village to retailers as well as the loading, unloading and forwarding fees as well as the various marketing costs were assigned themselves because no fixed authority was there who fixes the prices. The sampled producers marketing strategy consisted of four channels. The tested farmers sold their produce across all channels without spending any money on marketing. The actors, though, paid the farmers less. Farmers in Channel-III make their own money by selling their produce straight to shops. As a result, they receive a higher price for their produce than those who sell through channels where intermediaries are present. The main terminal hub, which consumes the majority of the production of wool, was the market, and a critical insight of the findings revealed that a very large expenditure was paid on transporting the wool from the road head to market. It was because there weren't many transportation options, routes, or models that could save money on this expense. Another factor was the absence of cooperative organizations to transport the wool to far-off markets. Another reason is that costs like packaging and transportation should be taken into consideration by technical Committee while fixing the scale of finance for wool. The investigation discovered that wool was transported through a variety of pathways, from producers to middlemen to final consumers. The evaluation of market channels intended to clarify the responsibilities performed by wool chain actors in supplying the product with time, form, and location utilities. Thus, a well-designed network with members performing roles that are well defined is necessary for market efficiency. Participants in the market achieved their personal and social goals thanks to this network. Since farmers were the main sources of wool, they formed the initial link in the chain of the wool market. Middlemen, whole sellers, retailers, and processors made up the top three buyers. This might be attributed by that the majority of farmers relied on middlemen to facilitate their trading activities and moreover they were unable to facilitate transportation costs to market places in town, where wool is sold. Those producers who owned transportation facilities sold their produce themselves directly to retailers, while the rest sold through other channels, where actors was involved. Wholesalers engage in direct price negotiations with farmers. The farmers sell their wool to the wholesalers. Retailers typically purchase wool from wholesalers or middlemen. As a result of the middlemen in this group, who are essential to the transportation of wool to retailers since they possess all the marketing data, the results demonstrate that the majority of the produce was going through channel I. The major buyers of this wool was retailer because all the processing facilities of this wool as found in Amritsar so they were making a high profit compared to others. The retailers were buying the wool & several activities like transportation, loading was done. Loading & unloading was done manually. Wool was transported from villages to finally Amritsar. The channels demonstrated that each activity included different functionaries. As far as we are aware, farmers, middlemen, whole sellers, and processors were the principal recipients of wool. Additionally, each channel's

volume and actor participation were examined, and the results indicated that channels I and IV were the longest. Channel III was the shortest of all because it involved the direct sale of wool from farmers to shops and then to customers, therefore there were fewer actors involved and less volume than with other channels. The results also indicate that the wool marketing for is non- competitive due to the existence of a weak oligopolistic market structure. This encourages the existence of actors who potentially collude to set prices of the wool. Price collusion by actors reduces market competitiveness which in turn, reduces market efficiency. A regular profit is encouraged in a competitive market, preventing any tendency for customer happiness and services to decline. For full sellers, middlemen, and processors, the marketing margin was high. Compared to other actors, farmers were obtaining poor marketing margins. The huge marketing margin means that the other actors will make a lot of money while the farmers will receive less. This highlights the need for the Kashmiri government to step in and help actors establish infrastructure that sets minimum prices, as such infrastructure is lacking in Kashmir. The data, on the other hand, demonstrate that farmers' prices to other actors fluctuated, leading to an unstable market equilibrium. Furthermore, farmers' low prices suggest that they have less negotiating leverage than actors, who retain a sizable share of the final prices as compensation for their services. Incentives, prices, and a sufficient supply are crucial for any agricultural enterprise activity to run smoothly. Kashmir's wool marketing strategy is still ineffective as a result. Farmers have been found to accept low prices because of factors such as lack of awareness of the prevailing market prices, lack of cash, or mean to efficiently transport their produce to the markets. Furthermore, other actors incurred higher costs compared to farmers. Generally, the wool marketing is still inefficient. The total marketing cost was highest in channel-III as the number of intermediaries involved in this channel was low as compared to other channels. Because the farmer sold their produce directly to the middlemen, channel I received the highest net price received by the farmer, followed by channels III and IV. In conclusion, NPRF is more prevalent in channels with fewer intermediaries. It could be concluded that producers received higher proportion of consumer's price as net return in channels with lower number of intermediaries. It was seen that net price received by farmer decreased considerably with increase in number of intermediaries in marketing chain of wool. In order to improve net profit of producer/farmer and provide competitive price to consumer, it is necessary to reduce number of intermediaries in marketing supply chain. According to the findings about the marketing effectiveness of various channels, channel II is the most economical, followed by channel III and channel IV, and channel I is the least economical. In the channel where produce was sold directly to whole sellers, it was noticed that the producer received the greatest percentage of the consumer's rupee. Due to their greater negotiating strength, the middleman sells their produce to wholesalers at prices higher than those of the producer. Since the produce was sold straight to the whole seller, the channel's highest percentage of consumers' price was seen. In the channel where the number of intermediaries was falling, marketing effectiveness was strong. Distress sales, however, are a result of a lack of liquidity potential and market illiteracy, among other factors. A generous, affordable loan facility and other incentives for

producers would unquestionably improve their bargaining position. Therefore, by offering adequate and effective logistic and marketing facilities to supply chain partners, marketing efficiency can be increased by minimizing costs, losses, and margins in marketing channels.

Conclusion

The study revealed in Kashmir region marketing channel involved a number of channels & not just a single channel. The marketing channels are limited to producers, Middlemen, Whole sellers & processor. The wools marketing for actors are non-competitive due to existence of wool oligopolistic market. Producers suffered a loss which suggests they have less bargaining power as compared to other actors. The producers suffered a loss for the year 2021; Whereas Middlemen had higher market margins compared to the producer. The net price was found to be more in channel-II followed by channel III. The producers share in consumers rupee was highest in channel-II.

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