

**THE MEMBERS' EXPECTATIONS FROM THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE
ACTIVITIES: A CASES OF ÇELTIKÇI DISTRICT IN THE BURDUR PROVINCE**

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Abstract

In this study, the satisfaction levels of the members of the agricultural cooperatives operating in Çeltikçi district of Burdur province, Turkey were measured. Various characteristics of cooperative members were examined, and their expectations from services of the agricultural cooperatives were ascertained. The data were obtained through questionnaires from 122 members of agricultural cooperatives in Çeltikçi district of Burdur province during March-2013. It was understood that agricultural cooperative membership was widespread in the region. Animal husbandry was an important production field focused on. According to the findings, cooperative members were generally primary school graduates. The average age was 53.54 years. They had over 31 years of experience in agricultural activity. One in four was holding a non-agricultural job as well. Therefore, the critical item of annual costs was feed costs and credit usage and borrowing had increased in the region compared to the 2000s. About 77% of the amount of milk sold by surveyed individuals in 2012 was brought to the market through co-operatives. The members received 70% of the amount of feed they used through cooperatives. In order to increase the use of agricultural cooperative products by the members of the cooperatives in the region, it was stated that cooperatives should provide adequate credits, set input prices at appropriate levels and lower interest rates. In order to increase efficiency of cooperatives due to their members, the cooperatives should increase the quality of service they offer their members.

Key words: Agricultural cooperatives, expectations, farmer, Burdur, Turkey

Received: 20.09.2018

Accepted: 10.04.2019

Published (online): 10.04.2019

INTRODUCTION

Cooperatives aim to solve the economic and social problems that the individual fail to solve alone. One of the main functions of agricultural cooperatives is to contribute to the realisation of local and regional development by marketing cheap inputs and products to their partners (Çıkmın and Yercan, 1995). Cooperative is based on the foundations of social and economic development in developed and developing countries and is used as an important tool in the world to spread democracy, provide peace, protect the environment, create employment, mobilise resources and create investment (Mulayim, 1998; Mulayim, 2003; Özüdoğru, 2004).

The most important role of agricultural cooperatives is to protect the economic rights of farmers. In addition, it plays an important role in regional and rural development. Number of agricultural cooperatives had risen considerably in Turkey in the recent years. It is stated that cooperatives are not sufficient regarding business (Acar and Yıldırım, 2000). Agricultural Credit Cooperatives, Agricultural Sales Cooperatives, and Agricultural Development Cooperatives are the most important cooperative types in Turkey (Özdemir, 2005). Agricultural Development Cooperatives are specialised in specific fields with a rather clearly defined focus, at least at the time of their establishment (Okan and Okan, 2013).

The Çeltikçi district of Burdur, which was selected as a research area, is a region where the cooperatives of producers are concentrated. More than half of the farmers in the region are members of a cooperative.

Cite this article as:

Gül, M., Ar, A (2019). The members' expectations from the agricultural cooperative activities: a cases of çeltikçi district in the burdur province. Int. J. Agric. For. Life Sci. 3(1): 121-130.



The literature on agricultural cooperatives is quite extensive. Some of these studies in Turkey are as following. Alçiçek and Karlı (2016) found that cooperative members' expectations from cooperatives were fulfilled on an intermediate level in Burdur province. Özdemir (1996) examined the types of agricultural cooperatives in Tekirdag province and claimed that agricultural development cooperatives are more successful regarding cooperative principles. Karlı and Çelik (2003) examined agricultural cooperatives and cooperative-members relations in the South-eastern Anatolia Project area and found that the rate of utilisation of Agricultural Development Cooperatives was 50.0% in animal feed in the region. They claimed that the majority of the members do not reach the services of the producer organisation and the producer organisations are not successful. Özudođru (2004) stated that almost all of the cooperative members sold the milk to the cooperatives, and received fuel-oil from the cooperative in Kirikkale province. Kılıç (2011) investigated cooperative relations in agricultural development cooperatives in Samsun and found that 75.4% of the members who produce milk and 24% of the members who produce vegetables sell their products to the cooperatives. Şahin et al. (2013a) identified that the most effective cooperative membership factors were the understanding of the economic power, volunteerism and reliability and accessibility of managers in Turkey. Şahin et al. (2013a) reported that 70.2% of the cooperative members found cooperative as successful, but 29.8% of them considered vice versa. Şahin et al. (2013b) determined that 54.6% of cooperative members were receiving inputs from cooperatives and 26.3% of members were selling the product to a cooperative.

In this study, the satisfaction levels of the members of the agricultural cooperatives operating in the province of Burdur, Çeltikçi were measured. Various characteristics of the members were examined, and their expectations from the services of the agricultural cooperatives were ascertained.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data were obtained from farmers that are members of an agricultural cooperative via face to face survey method from Çeltikçi district (Figure 1), where cooperative membership was concentrated in Burdur province. Fieldwork was conducted during March-2013.

There are six cooperatives in Çeltikçi district (Table 1). 122 farmers were interviewed that are members of an agricultural cooperative in the study area. This number accounted to 24.21% of the total members.

The farmers interviewed were divided into two groups according to the farmland criteria. The first group used to own less than five hectares, while the second group had five hectares and more farmland. The data collected were used to make calculations, and descriptive tables were created. These tables were interpreted using absolute and relative distributions.

Table 1. Number of agricultural cooperative members in the research area (except agricultural credit cooperative)

Cooperative	Members numbers
Burdur KöyKoop	251
Bağsaray Village Agricultural Development Cooperative	124
Ovacık Village Agricultural Development Cooperative	12
Tekke Village Agricultural Development Cooperative	15
Güvenli Village irrigation cooperative	38
Kuzköy Village irrigation cooperative	64
Total	504



Figure 1. Research area

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The educational status of the interviewed farmers in the research area was given in Table 1. When determining the educational status of interviewed farmers, the concurrent education levels of the farmers were taken into account. According to this, small-scale farmers' education level of cooperative members was 55.67% primary school, 29.90% middle, 12.37% high school and 2.06% junior college graduate. Large-scale farmers have educational levels; 68% of the farmers were primary school graduates. 12% of farmers were lower secondary (5 years + 3 years), 8% were upper secondary (high school) graduates and 12% were junior college graduates. Farmers' education levels were predominantly at primary school level (Table 2).

Table 2. Education levels of interviewed farmers (%)

Group	Primary school	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Junior college	Total
I	55.67	29.90	12.37	2.06	100.00
II	68.00	12.00	8.00	12.00	100.00
Total	58.20	26.23	11.48	4.10	100.00

Various socio-demographic characteristics as farmers' age, years of experience in agricultural activity were given in Table 3. The average age of the interviewed farmers was calculated at 53.54 years. There was no statistical difference between farmers' ages and farm width groups.

Farmers' average experience in agricultural production was 31.81 years. The experience of small-scale farmers was slightly higher (Table 3). However, there was no statistical difference between farmers' experience durations and farm width groups. Famer family was composed of four persons on average (Table 3).

The 13.11% of interviewed farmers were given training on agricultural activity. This ratio was generally low. 14.43% of small-scale farmers were trained, while 8% of large-scale farmers were trained with respect of agricultural activity. Farmers had received training and education in their own places and the training was provided by Provincial and District Directorates of Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and Public Education.

Non-agricultural employment of farmers surveyed in the study area was 24.59% (Table 3).

The record keeping rate of farmers was 19.67% (Table 3). However, this record keeping process seemed not to be professional. Small-scale farmers kept records longer than large-scale farmers. The record keeping approach was low in both groups.

Large-scale farmers' group had more computer ownership and internet access than small-scale farmers interviewed in the study area (Table 3). The farmers' computer and internet usage purposes were children's education, personal development and trade.

The proportion of small-scale farmers having social security was 97.94%, and the proportion of large farmers having social security is 96%. Small-scale farmers have more social security than large-scale farmers (Table 3).

Table 3. Some social-economic indicators of farms

Indicators	I	II	Average
Farmer age (years)	54.01	51.72	53.54
Farmers' education level (year)	6.80	6.80	6.80
Household size (person)	3.51	3.96	3.60
Farmer's experience in production (years)	32.11	30.68	31.81
Trained in agricultural production (%)	14.43	8.00	13.11
Farmer keeping records of operation (%)	17.53	28.00	19.67
Doing non-agricultural business (%)	26.80	16.00	24.59
Ownership of computers (%)	28.87	52.00	33.61
Internet ownership rate (%)	19.59	44.00	24.59
Regular newspaper buying (%)	13.40	16.00	13.93
Credit card (number)	1.52	1.64	1.54
Credit card ownership rate (%)	67.01	60.00	65.57
With social security (%)	97.94	96.00	97.54
The ratio of farmers engaged in livestock (%)	65.98	84.00	69.67
Share of non-agricultural income in total income (%)	38.89	13.57	31.18

Although there is no statistical difference between the land width group and the credit utilisation, it was understood that the farmers' use of foreign resources increases as the farm size increases.

Approximately 30% of the farmers were not engaged in animal husbandry (Table 3). The type of livestock breeding carried out in the interviewed farmers was cattle breeding. It was determined that the primary purpose of the farmers' livestock activities be to produce meat in addition to milk production. Small-scale

farmers had more non-agricultural income than large-scale farmers. The share of non-agricultural income in total income was 31.18% (Table 3).

The first group of farmers had total farmland assets of 1.628 hectares while the second group of farmers had 6.952 hectares. Average farmland assets were 2.719 hectares (Table 4). Nearly half of the farmers' total agricultural land was devoted to grain production (45.79%). This was followed by the production of feed crops (33.21%), vegetable production (12.63%), fallow land (2.98%), fruit field (3.30%) and greenhouse area (2.08%) (Table 4).

The cow presence in the average farmers was about ten head, and the small ruminant presence was about ten head. For large-scale farmers, cow's presence was about 26 head (Table 4).

Table 4. Farmland use and animal number

Farmland use (%)	I	II	Average
Fallow land	2.47	3.45	2.98
Cereal	42.05	49.19	45.79
Feed crops	25.11	40.56	33.21
Fruit	5.67	1.15	3.30
Vegetables	20.71	5.29	12.63
Greenhouse	3.99	0.35	2.08
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total (hectares)	1.628	6.952	2.719
Cattle (head)	6.48	25.56	10.39
Small ruminant (head)	5.79	27.20	10.18

When the distribution of annual gross production value (GPV) obtained by farmers was analysed, 50.8% of the income generated by farmers in one year was from animal production, 35.3% was from crop production and 13.9% from greenhouse farming. Small-scale farmers were found to have more GPVs from greenhouse and crop production, while large-scale farmers had more income from animal production (Table 5).

Table 5. Distribution of farmers' gross production value by branch

	I	II	Average
Crop production	44.53	20.29	35.26
Greenhouse	21.30	1.94	13.90
Animal production	34.17	77.77	50.84
Total	1355.36	69.25	1957.14

The low milk purchasing prices offered by cooperatives and low feed credit limits were the leading reasons for not using the members actively. It was determined that small scaled farmers do not use the cooperative highly (Table 6).

Table 6. The cooperative services which are not used of members

Groups	I (%)	II (%)	Total (%)
Sell of milk to the cooperative	32.99	16.00	29.51
Milk cooling system	34.02	16.00	30.33
Feed	47.42	24.00	42.62
Technical information	15.46	8.00	13.93

When the satisfaction level of the farmers is examined from the cooperative services; it was found that the farmers were not particularly satisfied with the milk purchasing price, feed sales prices and feed loan services (Table 7).

The services that the farmers were satisfied with for the cooperative are the cooperative's sales environment, service quality, payment conditions, feed quality and diversity (Table 7).

It was determined that there are statistically differences at 8%, 6%, 1% for cooperative services such as milk purchase price, purchase quality, milk cooling system sufficiency, milk cooling system quality, feed prices, feed loans with respect to the farm scale groups (Table 7). However, according to the survey data, it was determined that the members were not sufficiently satisfied with the services provided by the cooperatives.

Table 7. Satisfaction levels of members from agricultural cooperatives

Cooperative products/services	I	II	Average
The sales environment of the cooperative	3.39	3.76	3.47
Payment condition	3.33	3.80	3.43
The approach of employees to members in the cooperative	3.33	3.72	3.41
Service quality of the cooperative	3.30	3.44	3.33
The duration of the credit	3.21	3.60	3.29
Milk cooling system quality **	2.82	3.52	2.97
Feed supply time	2.84	3.36	2.94
Feed variety	2.82	3.36	2.93
Technical information provision condition	2.80	3.40	2.93
Milk cooling system sufficiency *	2.78	3.44	2.92
Feed quality	2.74	3.36	2.87
Milk reception quality *	2.74	3.32	2.86
Feed price **	2.19	2.64	2.28
Feed credit ***	2.07	2.44	2.15
Milk purchase price *	2.11	1.92	2.07

* There are differences in the level of 8% ** There are differences in the level of 6% *** There are differences in the level of 1%

Scales 1. Very bad 2. Bad 3. Middle 4. Good 5. Very good

Low milk prices and high feed prices were considered as the reasons for not actively using cooperatives. There is no statistically significant difference between the average and the farmer's width (Table 8).

Table 8. Reasons why members do not actively use the cooperative

Reason	I	II	Average
The price of feed is high	2.91	3.04	2.93
Low milk prices	2.49	2.44	2.48
Conditions of purchase	2.03	2.04	2.03
Location is not close	1.94	1.48	1.84
Service is poor	1.75	1.60	1.72
The products do not meet my needs	1.69	1.60	1.67
Feed quality is low	1.61	1.68	1.62
Delay in payments	1.58	1.40	1.54
The quality of the cooling unit is low	1.51	1.44	1.49

1. Not important; 2. Average; 3. Important

Agricultural products purchasing share of agricultural cooperatives in Turkey in the 2010/11 season, varied between 3% and 63%. These ratios range from 3% to 40% in the 2017/18 production season. In the EU, agricultural cooperatives have an average of about 50% of the purchase value of agricultural products. In this case, the share of agricultural cooperatives in purchasing agricultural products in Turkey seemed to be low. Therefore, producers sell their products to traders rather than cooperatives (Karli et al., 2018) (Table 9).

Table 9. Purchase quantities shares of cooperatives

Products	Purchase quantities rate (%)	
	2010/11	2017/18
Sunflower	26.51	21.28
Cotton	3.98	4.10
Olive	2.07	2.45
Olive oil	3.92	2.07
Hazelnut	0.06	0.55
Dry fig	6.25	2.96
Rosebush	20.95	11.75
Mohair	63.00	39.33

Source: Karli et al., 2018

When the amount of milk sold by and the amount of feed supplied to the the farmers in 2012 was examined; it was understood that 76.89% of the amount of milk was sold through cooperatives in 2012. Large farmers that are cooperative members seemed to have more milk production than the small farmers. It was also found that the cooperatives were dominant in the feed supply channel of the farmers (69.85% of total feed quantity used) (Table 10).

Table 10. Member's milk marketing channel and feed supply channel

	Cooperative (%)	Other (%)
Milk		
I	79.80	20.20
II	72.10	27.90
Average	76.89	23.11
Feed		
I	70.37	29.63
II	68.96	31.04
Average	69.85	30.15

According to the farmers interviewed, what needs to be done in order to use more cooperative products is emphasising that the quality of service should be increased and the commission rates should be adjusted to the appropriate level (Table 11).

Table 11. According to farmers, things to do for the use of more cooperative products(%)

Things to do	I	II	Total
Input prices should be brought to the appropriate level (feed, pesticide, fertiliser, fuel oil)	44.33	48.00	45.08
Interest rates should be lowered	25.77	12.00	22.95
Service quality should be increased	9.28	20.00	11.48
Product quality should be increased	9.28	16.00	10.66
Credit limit should be increased	10.31	4.00	9.02
Incentives should be given	3.09	12.00	4.92
Diversity should be increased	4.12	4.00	4.10
Milk prices should be increased	3.09	4.00	3.28
Commission rates should be reduced to the appropriate level	3.09	0.00	2.46
Maturity period should be increased	2.06	0.00	1.64

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the findings, cooperative members were generally primary school graduates. The average age was 53.1 years. They had over 30 years of experience in agricultural activity. One in four seemed to hold a non-agricultural job as well. Animal husbandry was an important production area. Therefore, the critical item of annual costs was feed costs. Credit usage and borrowing increased compared to the 2000s in the region. The agricultural cooperative membership in the region is high.

The amount of milk sold through cooperatives in 2012 was 77% of the total amount. The members received 70% of the amount of feed they used through cooperatives.

According to the members of the cooperatives in the region, cooperatives should provide adequate credits and bring input prices to appropriate levels in order to increase the use of agricultural cooperative products. Finally, in order for cooperatives to be more useful to their members, they should increase the quality of services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is a part of the B.Sc. thesis. This study was supported under the scope of the Project no. TÜBİTAK 2209-A. We would like to present our cordial thanks to TÜBİTAK for its financial support.

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