ABSTRACT

The study on the ‘‘Problems and Prospects of Saffron Marketing in Kashmir Valley’’ is undertaken to examine the various problems faced by the saffron trade in Jammu and Kashmir in general and growers in particular. The study identifies the main marketing channels involved in the marketing of saffron viz-a-viz grower preference to such channels. Moreover, it estimates marketing costs, marketing margins and price spread. The year 2017 is the reference year. By and large the year was normal. The primary data was collected from 221 selected respondents in the sampled villages of Pampore namely Letpora, Ledhu and Konibal based on a well administered and semi-structured interview schedule. Interview with saffron associations, cooperative societies and experts in the field of agriculture and marketing also proved helpful for the present study. Purposive Stratified-cum-Proportional sampling framework was followed for selecting the respondents of the study.

The present study observed the presence of large number of intermediaries in the marketing of saffron. Majority of the growers (small) dispose of saffron through dalals and local traders. Channel-V (grower-dalal & local traders -firm-wholesaler-retailer-consumer) is most popular marketing channel followed by channel-IV, III, VI, I and II respectively. Comparison between the channels reveal that channel-V is most popular marketing channel in case of small growers who usually sell their produce through dalals and local traders. Large saffron growers sell their produce through channel-III (grower-firm-retailer-consumer). That is to say that large saffron growers sell their produce through firms and firms sell it to retailers, who enjoy maximum share in consumer’s rupee. There are lengthy marketing channels in saffron due to which grower’s share in consumer’s rupee remains very low. Moreover, it is found that
choice of marketing channel is highly dependent on income of saffron growers and the saffron income and production varies according to the size of land holding. Saffron plays a significant role in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir. There is lack of research and development (R&D), low capacity/Knowledge of saffron stakeholders and growers are ignorant of the marketing channels and market structure of saffron. Saffron is the most expensive agricultural product and a good example of profitability, sustainability, cultural and social values, and high labour demand. Adulteration has hit the saffron industry very hard. Jammu and Kashmir State needs good industrial support for saffron processing and rejuvenation of saffron industry. The present study will prove a catalyst in renovating saffron industry in the Kashmir valley and in transforming this sector into a successful business venture.