

A Study of Marginal Cardamom Farmers Livelihood and Occupational Pattern in Munnar District

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Abstract

Objective: The current study focuses on the livelihood and the occupational pattern of cardamom farmers in Munnar district. The livelihood of the people has been changed radically nowadays, due to globalization. The current study analyzes various perspectives of the livelihood of Cardamom farmers in Munnar because, the farmers who indulge in hill area cultivation have poor earnings, fund management, and suffer from seasonal problems. **Methods/Analysis:** The data have been collected by the interview method from 75 cardamom farmers in Munnar district. The simple random sampling method was followed by the researcher and the data was collected from them. The seventy five data collected from cardamom farmers of Munnar district have been analyzed by using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis were carried out. **Findings:** The major finding is out of 3 factors affecting the livelihood: occupational pattern issues, livelihood issues, saving pattern; income pattern from the occupational issues affects the livelihood in greater manner. **Applications/Improvements:** The study will be an eye opener for the economist, government officials and social activist in enhancing the welfare measures of cardamom farmers.

Keywords: Cultivation, Livelihood, Savings

1. Introduction

Cardamom is generally known as “Ilaichi or Elaichi” in India. And it is also known as “Queen of spices”. In India in and around Karnataka, Kerala and TamilNadu the cardamom is harvested. Cardamom is a very expensive and demanding spice because of its aroma and flavor. The species *Elettaria cardamom* is generally called as True or Green cardamom (when it is bleached, white cardamom) is exported from India to Malaysia. The distribution of Black cardamom is mainly to Asia and Australia where, the Black cardamom comes from two species *Amomum Costatum* and *Amomum Subulatum* and it is generally called as brown, long, greater, Nepal cardamom. The Greek father of botany, Theophrastus distinguished these two kinds of cardamom in the 4th century B.C. But these varieties were originally cultivated from India. And this was known by Theophrastus and the informants. Due to

this, the cardamom productions have increased and the farmers started exporting to other countries. In Asia this cardamom was used in sweets and savories. Especially in the South, the usage and production are high. Green cardamom is used in all common Indian sweets. And in Masala Chai (spiced tea) also this green cardamom is used. In chewing gum individual seeds are used or it is simply chewed.

The current study analyzed the cardamom farmer's individual's life, culture, values concludes about their typical livelihood.

Cardamom farmer's livelihood comprises land holding, working time, knowledge regarding cultivation methods, awareness about the crop insurance, mode of market used for trading, the mechanism used for cultivation, type of shelter, shopping provision, the type of vehicles they hold, consumer durable hold, type of entertainment they prefer, monthly expenditure, saving patterns.

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The study will be an eye opener for the economist, government officials and social activist in enhancing their welfare measures

The forest area of the East Usambara Mountains (EUM) in Tanzania has the capacity to store large amount of carbon to withstand the climatic changes. So the farmers in those areas work culture did not change very much¹. The native farmers in Nepal practiced shifting cultivation. The scientists and researchers found those methods are unproductive and wasteful of natural resources so they ignored it. But this unsupported policy environment made the land to degrade in shifting cultivation due to their change in work culture².

The success story of Mr. Augustine Lepcha, a farmer from Kalimpong, Darjeeling District of West Bengal. The traditional way of cultivation of cardamom did not yield him much enough to run his family. The scientists suggested him for scientific cultivation and implementation of various IPM and IDM measures. They told him the marketing strategy and he succeeded in it and his livelihood has totally changed³. The ITK on cardamom based agro forestry in the region of the Himalayas. The natural resource availability and the nature of the environment is inevitable to that traditional cultivation. So the farmers used an integrated system of cultivation, which includes traditional and scientific method of cultivation to increase their income level⁴. Rita Sharma (2007) et.al studied the traditional and scientific method of cultivation. The traditional cultivation is agro forestry and this cultivation yields more profit than scientific method. So the farmers did not change their work culture and they also got more income and benefits⁵. An impact of climatic conditions in Sikkim Himalaya. The farmers in those regions tried to change the strategy of their cultivation towards an alternative to improve the yield, income and benefits⁶. About the Traditional Farming Systems' (TFS) traditional method of agriculture called as Agro forestry. The scientists found that the traditional cultivation able to sustain the changes in climate and also the farmers got so many benefits and improved their income level⁷. The changing of farmers from traditional agricultural method on West Sumatera Indonesia. They included IK in traditional farming systems (TFS) and the food security survey role. But the result showed positive on food security and the traditional way of cultivation was still in practice and gave more benefits⁸.

The information about the declining of the production

rate of crops in Nepal due to the shifting from cereal crops. The changes in practices of agriculture majorly affect the production which also includes the hurdles such as overgrazing, climatic condition etc⁹. The farmers in the Nagaland areas followed have shifted cultivation so their income rate decreased. To overcome these farmers shifted their cultivation from shifting to the integrated system. This new strategy improves the level of their living¹⁰. The farmers in the Sikkim area use the TFS as the farming activities and practises which give them an effective change in the agriculture and ecosystem change¹¹. The knowledge for sustainable development in agriculture is given and the research is made to understand the local wisdom and for maintaining the food security¹². Nepal has been continuously changing its cultivation practises to develop the livestock and to develop the people's livelihood¹³. As if the farmers continuously changes the crop and those in the minimum period then the soil content changes in Organic wise but if the particular crop which suites for the soil is founded and it is maintained in cropping¹⁴.

2. Methodology

The current study "Livelihood management of the cardamom farmers" includes primary data collected from cardamom farmers of Munnar where the cardamom is cultivated more in TamilNadu. The basic livelihood and their approach towards the trendy cultivation methods are analyzed. The questionnaire was administered to 75 farmers by using simple random sampling method. The life style mostly depends upon the income they earn. The knowledge about the methods of production, etc. The data collected has been analysed by using the SPSS software and the results are given below.

3. Data Analysis

From the Table 1 the majority of the farmers; are in the age group 30-40 years and are in age group of 20-30 years it was 46.1 % of 33.3 % of total respondent. 29.3% of farmers have qualified between 5th-12th std with 41.3 % of the total respondent are between 5th standard. 53.2 % of the total respondent comes under the category of small scale farmers (up to 2.5 acres) with the income of 2-3Lakhs, 24.0 % of total respondent income was between 3-4Lakhs and they are called as marginal farmers (up to 5.5 acres).

Table 1. Socio Economic background of the cardamom farmers in Munnar district

Age(years)	Percentage	Qualification	Percentage	Income	Percentage
20-30	33.3	Illiterate and below 5 th std	29.3	Below 2 lakhs	10.7
30-40	46.1	5 th -12 th std	41.3	2-3 lakhs	53.2
40-50	10.7	Diploma	17.3	3-5 lakhs	24.0
Above 50	9.3	UG/PG	12.0	Above 5 lakhs	12.0
Total	100.0	Total	100.0	Total	100.0

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of occupation pattern of cardamom farmers

Particulars	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
Land holding	69.3	1.6933	0.46421
Working Time	56	2.5067	0.60120
Updating knowledge for cultivation	33.3	2.8133	1.07419
Crop insurance	86.7	1.1333	0.34222
Marketing of cardamom	53.5	2.667	0.74132
Mechanism used for cultivation	49.3	1.5600	0.49973

By interrogating with the cardamom farmers in Munnar from Table 2 69.3 % of people do cultivation in leased land where the 56 % of farmers work normally 7-8 hours per day 33.3 farmers get updated about the pesticides to be used from radio/TV/newspaper. 86.7 % of cardamom farmers are aware of the crop insurance provided by the government 53.5 % of farmers market their cardamom through government agencies. 49.3 % of farmers use tractor for ploughing. K.P. Aryal et.al has studied about the work culture and concluded that by changing the pattern of cultivation and methods mechanism the income earned by them is high. By our survey, we too studied that the work culture has a great impact on income can be increased. This study too confirms that.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of livelihood of cardamom farmers

Particulars	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
Type of shelter	90.7	1.0933	0.29286
Shopping provision	68	2.1067	0.55928
Type of Vehicles	33.3	2.3733	1.06255
House hold articles	64	1.6800	1.04183
Entertainment	64	1.6667	0.94916

The type of shelter they prefer is concrete houses and 90.7 % of people live in concrete houses. When it

comes for preferring of markets for their shopping the 68 % of the respondents chooses weekly market. Type of vehicles they use commonly is tractor and 33.3 % people uses tractor. 64 % of cardamom farmers in Munnar told that the common household they have is TV and TV is their best entertainment. A.K. Vijayan (2008) et.al has studied about the marketing strategy and changed method of cultivation can yield more income. This study also concluded that by changing the marketing style and cultivation methods more income can be yield, which causes a great positive impact on livelihood. These above information are concluded from the Table 3.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of saving patterns of cardamom farmers

Particulars	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
Purchasing of Gold	54.7	2.3467	0.70315
Children's education	62.7	3.4133	1.02790

While cross examining about the saving patterns the farmers, saves lots of money in purchasing of gold and 54.7 % of people's interest on the same. The 62.7 % cardamom farmers in Munnar spend lots in children's education. Majority of cardamom farmers in Munnar District earn 2-3 Lakhs per cultivation period. So, it is only possible to adapt themselves towards their livelihood, children's education and it is used in farm for the next cultivation. For this process itself their earned money would be utilized. So, there is a negative correlation between income and saving pattern. These information are discussed with the Table 4.

Table 5. Correlation of Income vs livelihood of cardamom farmers

Particulars	r	Sig. (2 tailed)	Correlation
Occupation pattern	-0.108	0.358	Negative correlation
Livelihood	0.702	0.000	Positive correlation
Saving pattern	-0.046	0.698	Negative correlation

Table 6. Regression Analyses

Particulars	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Unstandardized coefficient B	F	Sig.
Occupation pattern	0.108	0.012	-0.02	-0.222	0.857	0.358
Livelihood	0.702	0.493	0.486	1.750	71.054	0.000
Saving pattern	0.406	0.002	-0.012	-0.069	0.152	0.698

From the Table 5 it was found that there was significant a positive correlation (0.702) between livelihood and income.

From Table 6 the R value indicates the correlation coefficient. R can be contemplated to be characters of prediction of occupation related, livelihood, saving pattern. The R square value (0.493) concludes that 49.2% of the cardamom farmer's livelihood is impacted by the issue which is less than 50%. The model also has a good fit. It concludes the necessity for the sort to promote measures for livelihood.

4. Conclusion

There is a positive correlation between income and livelihood. Therefore, the income has a great impact on livelihood. Whereas, by changing the occupation of the farmers and exporting of large quantities of products their income gets improved through which the livelihood gets changed. Thus, through our study about the livelihood of cardamom farmers in Munnar District, we conclude that income has a greater impact on livelihoods and this study also will help the government to provide effective measures to improve their livelihood.

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