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Attitude of Farmers towards Livelihood Diversification

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

Attitude, Livelihood diversification, Friends, Extension participation

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The present study was carried out in Kolar district in Karnataka state during the year 2018-19 to analyze the attitude of farmers towards livelihood diversification. One hundred and fifty farmers were personally interviewed using a pre-tested schedule. The results revealed that the farmers had favorable attitude towards livelihood diversification. Majority of farmers (70.67%) were motivated from their friends to practice livelihood diversification and more than three-fourth (79.33%) of the farmers expressed that due to less income from cropping they are practicing livelihood diversification. The results of the path analysis revealed that extension participation had direct and indirect effects in developing favourable attitude towards livelihood diversification.

Introduction

Diversification consists of diversified activities maintaining over time and in adjusting it according to contingencies in order to maximize the profit, spread risk or achieve other goals of the household. With the paradigm shift in agriculture from subsistence farming to sustainable farming, the focus on livelihood diversification is gaining an importance. Even though, agriculture continues to be the main source of livelihood for more half of the population in the rural areas, it is not remunerative option to continue in the same passion as they are trapped in low returns, rainfed condition, lack

of other remunerative options and inability to break away from impoverishing agrarian arrangement. Hence, livelihood diversification is one of such dynamic phenomena now taking place in rural areas which act as driver of economic growth. The overall development of rural poor with a focus on improving the capabilities of the farmers in order to secure their own livelihood is inevitable. Livelihood diversification depends on the opportunities available for the rural people and their response for it. It is gaining renewed importance for rural population seeking sufficient livelihood under limitations of traditional farming and increasing cash needs.

The livelihood diversification by the farmers is influenced by their attitude. Attitude is nothing but the way of thinking or feeling about diversification. It is found in the fact that some characteristic feeling or emotion is experienced as we expect accordingly some definite action. It is also influenced by so many factors of farmers like social factors, family, prejudices, personal experience, media exposure, educational and religious institutions and physical factors. The family is the most powerful source for the formation of attitudes. The parents, elder brother or sister provide information about various things. Attitudes developed by an individual, whether positive or negative are the result of family influence, are very powerful and difficult to change. In this backdrop, the present study is carried out with the following specific objectives include to analyze the attitude of farmers towards livelihood diversification. To find out the motivational sources of farmers in practicing livelihood diversification. To document the reasons for following livelihood diversification as perceived by farmers. To know the direct, indirect and largest indirect effects of profile characteristics of farmers on their attitude towards livelihood diversification

Materials and Methods

The present study was undertaken two taluks of Kolar district in Karnataka state during the year 2018-19. Kolar and Mulbagal taluks in Kolar district were also purposively selected for the study since the taluks in the sample district were having more number of small and marginal farmers and highly diversified. From each taluk, five villages were randomly selected. In each village, five marginal, five small and five big farmers who are practicing two and more diversified activities for their livelihood were selected randomly. Thus, the total sample constitutes 150 farmers comprising of 50 marginal farmers, 50 small

farmers and 50 big farmers. Ex-post facto research design was followed in the study.

A scale was specifically developed for the study to analyze the farmers' attitude towards livelihood diversification (dependent variable). The attitude scale consists of 15 statements (Table 1) along a five point continuum indicating strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree with weightage of 5,4,3, 2 and 1, respectively. The score of a respondent can be calculated by adding up the scores obtained on all statements. The attitude score of this scale ranges from a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 75. Higher the score on this scale indicates that the respondent has favourable attitude towards livelihood diversification.

Information on 19 personal, socio-economic, psychological and communication characteristics of farmers (independent variables) (Table 4) were collected using a structured schedule with suitable scales. The collected data was, quantified and analyzed using frequency, percentage and path analysis.

Results and Discussion

Statement-wise attitude of farmers towards livelihood diversification

The results in Table 1 reveal that statement wise attitude of farmers towards livelihood diversification. With regard to the attitude of farmers,, it was found that the statement: 'livelihood diversification serves as an insurance to farmer during crisis' received the first rank, followed by the statements such as, benefits of government scheme direct the people towards livelihood diversification (Rank II), livelihood diversification leads to inefficient utilization of resources (Rank III), livelihood diversification ensures livelihood insecurity (Rank IV), scarcity of farm labour

results in diversification to non-farm activities (Rank V), livelihood diversification is a boon to farmer (Rank VI), competitive spirit among the people promotes livelihood diversification (Rank VII), livelihood diversification do not arrest the migration of farmers to towns and cities (Rank VIII), livelihood diversification increases the social status in the community (Rank IX), social capital enables households to diversify in main sources of livelihood including farm and non-farm activities (Rank X), livelihood diversification provides no scope for acquiring new knowledge and skills (Rank XI), livelihood diversification is a strategy for risk mitigation (Rank XII),

livelihood diversification is a strategy for risk mitigation (Rank XIII), livelihood diversification does not ensure economic efficiency and sustainable livelihood (Rank XIV) and successive progress in one enterprise and wealth lead to livelihood diversification (Rank XV) in the order of importance. Livelihood diversification is a risk mitigation strategy wherein it serves as an insurance to farmers during emergencies, leads to efficient utilization of available resources, ensures livelihood security, thereby livelihood is a boon to the farmers, hence the farmers possessed favourable attitude towards livelihood diversification.

Table.1 Statement-wise attitude of farmers towards diversification

Sl. No.	Attitude statements	Total (n=150)	
		Mean score	Rank
1	Livelihood diversification serves as an insurance to farmer during crisis	3.84	I
2	Benefits of government scheme direct the people towards livelihood diversification.	3.76	II
3	Livelihood diversification leads to inefficient utilization of resources	3.74	III
4	Livelihood diversification ensures livelihood insecurity	3.72	IV
5	Scarcity of farm labour results in diversification to non-farm activities.	3.70	V
6	Livelihood diversification is a boon to farmer	3.68	VI
7	Competitive spirit among the people promotes livelihood diversification.	3.65	VII
8	Livelihood diversification do not arrests the migration of farmers to towns and cities	3.63	VIII
9	Livelihood diversification increases the social status in the community	3.61	IX
10	Social capital enables households to diversify in main sources of livelihood including farm and non-farm activities	3.59	X
11	Livelihood diversification provides no scope for acquiring new knowledge and skills	3.58	XI
12	Livelihood diversification is a strategy for risk mitigation	3.57	XII
13	It gives me happy when others respects me for adopting livelihood diversification	3.55	XIII
14	Livelihood diversification does not ensures economic efficiency and sustainable livelihood	3.52	XIV
15	Successive progress in one enterprise and wealth lead to livelihood diversification	3.51	XV

Table.2 Motivational sources of farmers in practicing livelihood diversification (n=150)

Sl. No.	Source of information *	Farmers	
		Number	Per cent
1.	Friends	106	70.67
2.	Neighbours	57	38.00
3.	Development Department officials	35	23.33
4.	Farm scientists	31	20.67
5.	Non-Government organizations	28	18.67
6.	Progressive farmers	15	10.00
7.	Relatives	10	6.67
8.	Local leaders	7	4.67

* Multiple responses

Table.3 Reasons for adopting livelihood diversification as perceived by farmers (n=150)

Sl. No.	Reasons*	Farmers	
		Number	Per cent
1.	Inadequate income from cropping	119	79.33
2.	Personal factors	109	72.67
3.	Lack of natural resources	66	44.00
4.	Competition among farmers	61	40.67
5.	Adequate skilled labour	52	34.67
6.	Financial incentives by government	48	32.00
7.	Adequate management skills of the household members	46	30.67
8.	Inadequate market	22	14.67
9.	Lack of suitable technology	21	14.00
10.	Adequate potential demand of the product	18	12.00
11.	Forward and backward linkages	16	10.67

*Multiple response

Table.4 Direct, indirect and largest indirect effects of personal, socio-economic, psychological and communication characteristics of farmers on their attitude towards livelihood diversification (n=150)

Factor No.	Factor/ Characteristics	Correlation co-efficient	Direct effect	Rank	Total Indirect effect	Rank	Three largest indirect effects channeled through
X ₁	Age	+ 0.4094 **	0.006	15	0.168	14	0.057X ₆ 0.044X ₁₉ 0.020X ₁₆
X ₂	Education	+ 0.3152 **	0.010	13	0.063	17	0.032X ₁₅ 0.019X ₄ 0.006X ₁₆
X ₃	Family size	+ 0.1076 ^{NS}	-0.032	16	0.075	16	0.043X ₁₆ 0.029X ₅ 0.010X ₁₉
X ₄	Annual family income	+ 0.1784 *	0.078	8	0.273	7	0.135X ₅ 0.044X ₁₆ 0.021X ₁₈
X ₅	Farming experience	+ 0.4183 **	0.492	1	0.178	12	0.063X ₁₉ 0.053X ₁₆ 0.031X ₇
X ₆	Awareness about livelihood diversification	+ 0.1625 *	0.099	7	0.054	18	0.044X ₁₅ 0.031X ₉ 0.010X ₁₉
X ₇	Material possession	+ 0.1426 ^{NS}	0.015	12	0.384	1	0.105X ₁₅ 0.043X ₁₉ 0.024X ₁₈
X ₈	Livestock possession	+ 0.1409 ^{NS}	-0.040	17	0.018	19	0.044X ₁₀ 0.019X ₁ 0.005X ₉
X ₉	Farming commitment	+ 0.1268 ^{NS}	0.019	10	0.194	11	0.109X ₅ 0.050X ₁₆ 0.036X ₁₉
X ₁₀	Economic motivation	+ 0.3821 **	0.009	14	0.281	5	0.108X ₆ 0.034X ₁₉ 0.028X ₁₈
X ₁₁	Achievement motivation	+ 0.1429 ^{NS}	0.196	2	0.206	9	0.034X ₁₉ 0.023X ₁₈ 0.012X ₅
X ₁₂	Aspirations	+ 0.1827 *	-0.057	18	0.251	8	0.118X ₅ 0.066X ₁₉ 0.032X ₁
X ₁₃	Credit orientation	+ 0.1435 ^{NS}	0.001	19	0.173	13	0.011X ₅ 0.028X ₁₆ 0.019X ₉
	Risk orientation	- 0.1208 ^{NS}					0.106X ₁

X₁₄			0.066	9	0.162	15	0.024X ₁₆ 0.021X ₁₉
X₁₅	Management orientation	+ 0.3913 **	0.018	11	0.319	3	0.121X ₁₀ 0.053X ₁₆ 0.029X ₁₈
X₁₆	Innovative proneness	+ 0.4202 **	0.194	3	0.205	10	0.044X ₁₉ 0.033X ₁₈ 0.012X ₅
X₁₇	Market accessibility	- 0.1157 ^{NS}	0.101	6	0.274	6	0.108X ₁₀ 0.041X ₁₈ 0.020X ₁
X₁₈	Mass media participation	+ 0.4135 **	0.106	5	0.356	2	0.115X ₅ 0.048X ₁₉ 0.023X ₁₆
X₁₉	Extension participation	+ 0.5071 **	0.166	4	0.301	4	0.117X ₅ 0.047X ₁ 0.032X ₁₈

Residual effect = 0.265

Motivational sources of farmers in practicing livelihood diversification

A perusal of Table 2 reveals that a majority of farmers (70.67%) were motivated from their friends to practice livelihood diversification, while less than half of the farmers were motivated by neighbours (38.00%), development departments officials (23.33%), farm scientists (20.67%), Non-government organizations (18.67%), progressive farmers (10.00%), relatives (6.67%) and local leaders (4.67%) to practice livelihood diversification. Among motivational sources, friend’s stands first as they are one’s who like, trust, help, share each other and also bond together for betterment of one another, hence as high as 70.67 per cent of the respondent farmers were motivated by their friends to practice livelihood diversification.

Reasons for adopting livelihood diversification as perceived by farmers

It is observed from Table 3 that more than three-fourth (79.33%) of the farmers mentioned that due to less income from cropping the farmers were adopting livelihood

diversification, while the second highest reason expressed by 72.67 per cent of farmers was personal factors for adopting livelihood diversification. It is also seen from Table 3 that less than half of the farmers expressed that due to lack of sufficient natural resources (44.00%), competition (40.67%), adequate skilled labour (34.67%), financial incentives by government (32.00%), adequate management skills of the household members (30.67%), lack of market (14.67%), lack of suitable technology (14.00%), potential demand of the product (12.00%) and forward and backward linkages (10.67%) as reasons for adopting livelihood diversification. The findings implies that every individual will have an urge for having better assets to improve their socio-economic status in the society. Farm households engage and pursue diverged off-farm and non-farm livelihood activities coping varied challenges such as drought, inadequate natural resources base, etc. To cope up with the varied challenges the farmers had adopted livelihood diversification. The present research findings is in line with the findings of Dio Nathan Dansallah (2015), SikhaDutta (2016) and Jackson and Anele (2018).

Direct, indirect and largest indirect effects of the personal, socio-economic, psychological and communication characteristics of farmers on their attitude towards livelihood diversification

The direct, indirect and largest indirect effects of the personal, socio-economic, psychological and communication characteristics (factors) of farmers on their attitude towards livelihood diversification is presented in Table 4.

In respect of the total direct effects on the farmers attitude towards livelihood diversification, the findings reveals that farming experience (x_5) had more direct effect on the farmers attitude followed by achievement motivation (x_{11}), innovative proneness (x_{16}), extension participation (x_{19}), mass media participation (x_{18}), market accessibility (x_{17}) in that order. The last five variables which have less direct effect are age (x_1), family size (x_3), livestock possession (x_8), aspirations (x_{12}) and credit orientation(x_{13}).

With regard to the total indirect effect, material possession(x_7) is ranked the highest effect followed by in the rank order are mass media participation(x_{18}), management orientation (x_{15}), extension participation(x_{19}), economic motivation (x_{10}),market accessibility(x_{17}) and family income(x_4) while the last five variables having least indirect effects are livestock possession(x_8), awareness about livelihood diversification(x_6), education(x_2), family size(x_3) and risk orientation(x_{14}).

Further, it is evident from the findings that three largest indirect effect channeled through with majority on the variables was extension participation (x_{19}) for 12 variables followed by innovative proneness (x_{16}) for 10 variables, farming experience (x_5) for nine variables,

mass media participation for eight variables, age (x_1) for five variables and farming commitment (x_9), economic motivation (x_{10}), management orientation (x_{15}) for three variables each. The residual effect was found to be 0.265.

In conclusion the research results revealed that farmers had favourable attitude towards livelihood diversification since it is a risk mitigation strategy to cope up with the crisis, leads to efficient utilization of available resources and ensures livelihood security. Friends played an important role in motivating the farmers for practicing livelihood diversification and low income from crops was the major reason for the farmers to practice livelihood diversification. The results of the path analysis revealed that extension participation had direct and indirect effects in developing favourable attitude towards livelihood diversification, hence the Development departments and non government agencies should motivate farmers to practice both on-farm and off-farm livelihood activities for getting additional and sustained income.

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