

Original Research Article

<https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2021.1001.125>

Attitude of Farmers towards Livelihood Diversification

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

Attitude, Livelihood diversification, Friends, Extension participation

Article Info

Accepted:

12 December 2020

Available Online:

10 January 2021

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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How to cite this article:

Lakshman Reddy, B. S., M. S. Nataraju and Lakshminarayan, M. T. 2021. Attitude of Farmers towards Livelihood Diversification. *Int.J.Curr.Microbiol.App.Sci.* 10(01): 1032-1039.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2021.1001.125>