

Diversification is a strategy of rural livelihoods: A Study in Cachar districts, Assam

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Abstract

Livelihood practice is a survival approach of a man or woman or a circle of relatives. So, it's miles taken into consideration as a chronic and converting way of economic and social sports on the way to fulfill livelihood wishes. Livelihood techniques are ever converting manner. The sample of livelihood strategies of social agencies varies on the idea of area and time. Rural population in India faces a variety of livelihood problems such as small size of farms, climatic issues, lack of education and gender issues and lack of resources. The rural families have to decide upon the livelihood strategies to meet such challenges. In this light of this thought, this study focuses on finding the factors determining the livelihood strategies in the Cachar district of Assam. The findings indicate that livelihood diversification into non-farm sports is common among most people from rural families. Only a few households followed livelihood diversification to commercial business/entrepreneurship and industrial agriculture, which may be more beneficial strategies and are more applicable to poverty reduction in our website view and specific areas with comparable context.

Keyword: Livelihood strategy, diversification, rural development, Cachar district

Introduction

Livelihood strategy is a person or family survival method. It is therefore taken into consideration a continuous and changing technique of monetary and societal activities to fulfill the requirements of lifestyles. A livelihood in its best feel is a method of earning a living. Consistent with Chambers and Conway (1992), "a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living". Entire strategies of activities and actions that people or households undertake to conquer or cope with pressure and shocks are known as livelihood strategies. Infact, livelihood strategies are the range and combos of various sports and choices that a person makes to obtain their life outcomes (DFID, 1999). Ellis (1998) defined livelihood techniques because the composite activities of family individuals appearing their everyday livelihood. The background and subject material of livelihood strategies can vary in step with the temporal and spatial dimensions (Nyaupane&Poudel, 2011). Humans use the quality strategies as soon as possible from the few alternative livelihood alternatives to be had in a given surroundings.

Livelihood techniques are constantly converting. The pattern of subsistence techniques of social groups varies primarily based on space and time. The existing socio-cultural values of human beings in the identical area can create variations in model styles among man or woman ethnic groups. In addition, the version patterns of the identical ethnic group may also fluctuate in unique locations because of the exchange in social and physical surroundings (Shah et al., 2001). Residing conditions in rural areas of the sector are complicated and dynamic in recent days. Similarly, global adjustments have further multiplied this case. Every rural society cannot escape this example. A huge quantity of rural livelihoods is, at least to some extent, without delay related to an herbal resource (Scoones, 1998). In addition, most rural families depend on more than one sources of income and undertake a wide variety of livelihood strategies for meals safety because of insufficient profits from a unmarried job. Elias (1998) stated that diverse livelihood structures are less inclined compared to non-diverse ones. Diverse farming and farmingrelated earnings/incomes undertakings also are essential in rural areas for livelihood protection. World Bank Group (2016) argues that cataclysmic disaster can also act as a catalyst for community livelihood practices.

Rural areas are areas dominated via vast land use inclusive of agriculture or forestry, or huge open regions of undeveloped land; which incorporates small housing estates of a lower order, which proves the sturdy courting between the development and the surrounding sizable panorama. Most residents perceive it as rural, which is believed to create a manner of existence characterized by using a cohesive identity based totally on admire for the surroundings and behavioral features inside a great landscape. All the above phenomena are grouped below the version of rural community livelihood. To apprehend the pattern of rural livelihoods, there is an urgent need to study humans, place and surroundings in rural regions with special connection with society, financial system, politics and way of life. The phrase "livelihood" can be used in lots of distinct ways. The subsequent definition captures the wide

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concept of livelihood: "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base". A livelihood device is consequently extra than simply a set of physical monetary stipulations for regular existence. Additionally it is the psychosocial dimensions of experiencing existence. Get right of entry to livelihoods puts the household of the negative at the center of hobby. It takes a holistic attention of what makes the terrible prone to the belongings and resources that assist them thrive and continue to exist, the rules and institutions that have an effect on their livelihoods, how the negative reply to threats and opportunities, and what consequences the terrible desire.

Agricultural and allied/related activities are the mainstay of livelihood of India's rural populace. Alas today, the livelihood of small and marginal farmers on the land is turning into an increasing number of unsustainable as their land is unable to meet the family's requirements for meals, fodder and other modern demands for training, health and enjoyment and so on. Rural families are forced to look at opportunity means of helping their livelihoods.

The choice of the livelihood diversification depends upon a variety of factors such as risk of loss of current source of livelihood, family size, age of the family members and head of the family, income index, saving, education, role of women and entrepreneurial tendencies affect the choice of livelihood diversification decision of the rural families. The extant literature has many studies, which suggest about the requirement of the diversification in case of the livelihood crisis or need.

Rural India has confronted many crises inside the recent past which have at once or not directly affected rural livelihoods, human development signs, employment state of affairs, civil rights, displacement and migration, and environmental and environmental sustainability. Rural livelihoods, rural poverty, rural improvement, these phrases frequently seems in development discourse. This paper explores the complexities and dynamics of rural livelihoods and cutting-edge concerns for the way ahead. History shows that there are no short fixes for decreasing rural poverty. Livelihood is a core idea in this trouble, so it turned into deemed important to difficult on what this concept denotes and what livelihood evaluation entails. India's strong financial increase has continually sought to encompass the bad rural population that is concentrated in regions in which subsistence agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. However, poverty persists because of confined and inequitable get right of entry to efficient resources including land, water, better inputs and era, microfinance and advertising and marketing fairness. The value of misery will increase as vulnerability to drought and/or flooding with different natural disasters. Low literacy, and the ensuing loss of practical skills, continues people trapped in poverty, preventing them from claiming their simple rights or undertaking new excessive-earnings sports or earning wealth with multiplier effects.

Rural population in India faces a variety of livelihood problems such as small size of farms, climatic issues, lack of education and gender issues and lack of resources. The rural families have to decide upon the livelihood strategies to meet such challenges. In this light of this thought, this study focuses on finding the factors determining the livelihood strategies in the Cachar district of Assam.

Objectives

The following objectives were taken for our study

- i. To study the rural livelihood strategies adopted by rural households
- ii. To investigate the higher returning livelihood strategies and their relevance to poverty reduction.

Methodology

The present study is empirical in nature in which descriptive research design has been adopted. The research is based the primary data collected from the people of the Cachar district of Assam, India. For this study we have selected two blocks under Cachar district, namely Rajabajar and Barkhola block. A descriptive study establishes the relationship between the variables identified through the extant literature.

Results and discussion

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents of Cachar districts

Nature	Variables	Cachar
Age	18-25	31
	26-35	59
	36-45	51
	>45	19
Gender	Male	128

	Female	32
Marital Status	Married	103
	Unmarried	37
	Widow	14
	Divorced	6
Educational qualifications	Illiterate	41
	Primary	61
	Middle	32
	High	21
	Graduate and above	5
Economic status	BPL	117
	APL	43
Caste	Gen	78
	SC	41
	ST	11
	OBC	17
	Others	13
Religion	Hindu	102
	Muslim	56
	Others	2

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents of Cachar districts. A total of 160 respondents were fully co-operated to fulfill the schedule, so the total no. of respondents is 160. Out of 160 respondents, 59 belonged to (26-35) age group followed by (36-45) age group and least belonged more than 45 plus age. Maximum respondents were male (128) followed by female (32). 103 respondents were married followed by unmarried (37) and least was divorcee (6). 61 people were primary pass, followed by illiterate (41) and least were graduate and above (5). 117 respondents were from Below Poverty Line (BPL) category and 43 were from Above Poverty Line (APL) category. Again 78 respondents were from general category, followed by SC (41) and least was ST (11). According to religion, 102 respondents were from Hindu religion followed by Islam (56) and rests were (2). This table showed the complex heterogeneity prevails in the selected area which again indicated the various livelihood strategy adopted by the respondents.

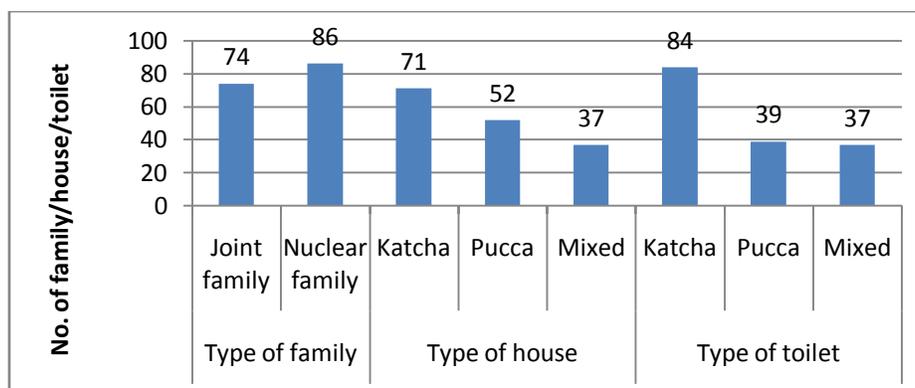


Figure 1: Bar diagram showing (a) type of family, (b) type of house and (c) type of toilets as per no. of respondents. Figure 1 shows the types of family, types of house and toilets. In our study it is found that maximum people reside in nuclear family (86) because of less income followed by joint family (74). Due to less family income and

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livelihood strategy, maximum people reside in kutchra house (71); followed by pucca house (52) and some reside in mixed types of house. It is observed that people who were living in pucca house were having more than one income source which indicate that livelihood strategy is mainly depend on the family income. Same stories were repeated on having toilet where less family income people having kutchra toilet (84) followed by Pucca(39) which were mostly provided by the Govt. scheme.

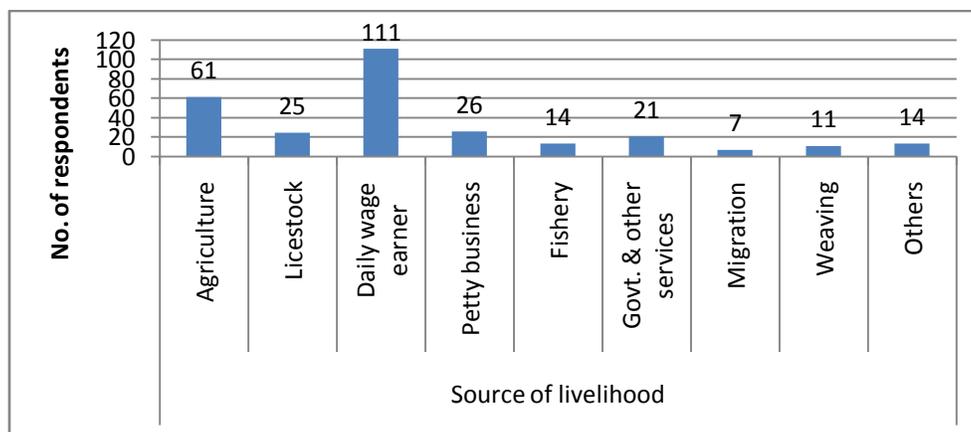


Figure 2: Bar diagram showing source of livelihood as per no. of respondents

In figure 2 it is shown the source of livelihood where most respondents were daily wage earner (111) because these selected places were nearby rural and tea garden area, so in day time they went for the daily wages. Agriculture (61) is one of the major occupations in the selected area basically respondents who were from rural area. Some people earn their livelihood by roaming town to town as migrator (7) and these people were least in number.

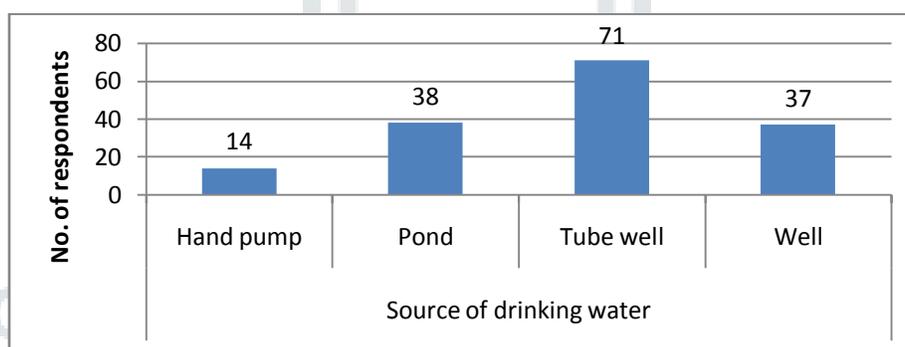


Figure 3: Bar diagram showing source of drinking water as per no. of respondents

Figure 3 shows the source of drinking water. Among the respondents, most of them having their drinking water from tube well (71). In the village area, Govt. and other NGO provide tube well so it is one of the major sources of water in rural area of Cachar district. Again pond (38) and well (37) were also good source of drinking water because easy accessibility and least was hand pump (14).

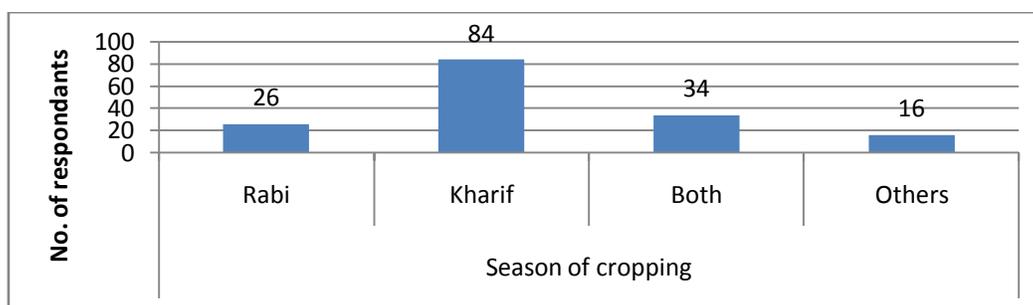


Figure 4: Bar diagram showing season of cropping as per no. of respondents

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Figure 4 shows the season of cropping. In this study it is found that respondents kharif (84) crops were mostly cultivated, these are rice, cotton, maize, sorghum etc. This is followed by the respondents which cultivated both (34) rabi and kharif.

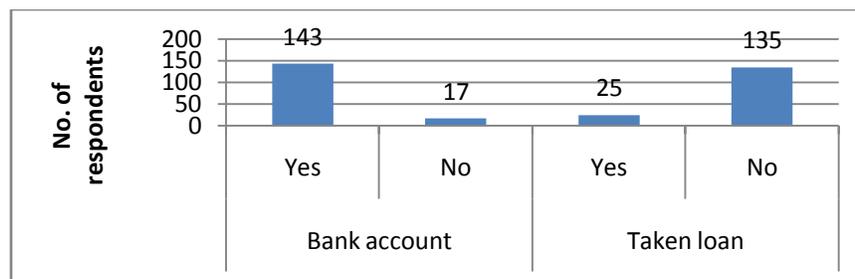


Figure 5: Bar diagram showing bank account holder and loan taken as per no. of respondents

Figure 5 shows that maximum people (143) have bank account because Govt. provided scheme only when you have bank account in your name but still 17 respondents were having no bank account of their name because of negligence and illiteracy. Among 160 respondents, 25 respondents have taken loan from various Govt. and affiliated bank. But maximum number were still lacking of bank loan due to high maintenance of documents and low income profile and bank guidelines.

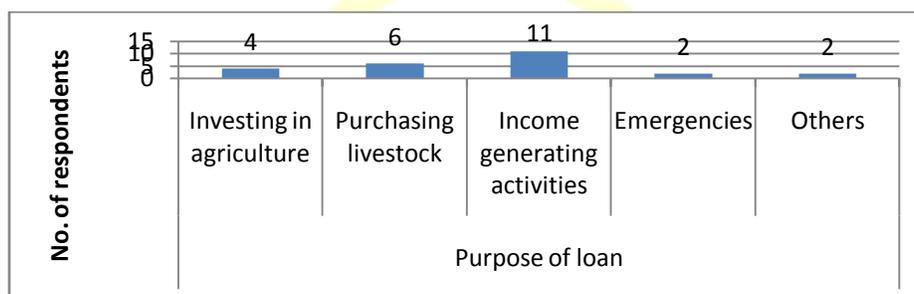


Figure 6: Bar diagram showing purpose of loan taking as per no. of respondents

Figure 6 shows the purpose of loan taken by respondents. In this study it is found that most of the people who have taken loan are for the income generating purpose (11). It is followed by purchasing livestock (6), this is because of that in rural area livestock are the backbone of rural income. Cows and buffalos are used in farming and dairy purpose which gives them a healthy amount of money for their livelihood. This is followed by agricultural purpose (4) followed by emergency and others (2).

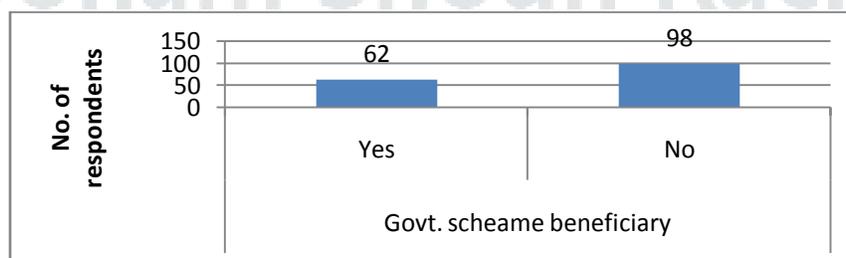


Figure 7: Bar diagram showing Govt. scheme beneficiary as per no. of respondents

Figure 7 shows that maximum respondents (98) weren't Government schemes beneficiaries. Only 62 respondents were govt. scheme beneficiary. Government scheme mostly provide them house, toilets, tube wells and sometime s provide cash incentives.

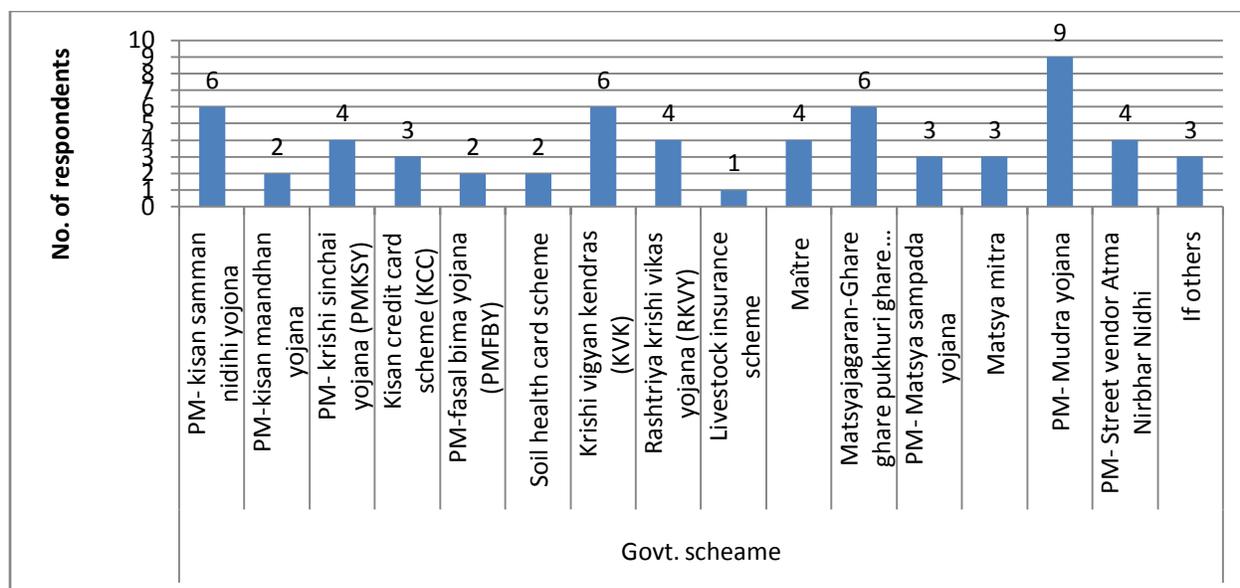


Figure 8: Bar diagram showing various Govt. scheme beneficiary as per no. of respondents

Figure 8 shows that number of beneficiary of various schemes provided by the Government. In this study it is found that PM- Mudra Yojana having the maximum beneficiary because of direct cash transfer to the beneficiary bank account. It is followed by KrishiVigyanKendras, PM-KisanSamma andMatsyaJagan Scheme because all these scheme are related with farmers so people have given interest to this schemes. Least number of beneficiaries is for livestock insurance scheme.

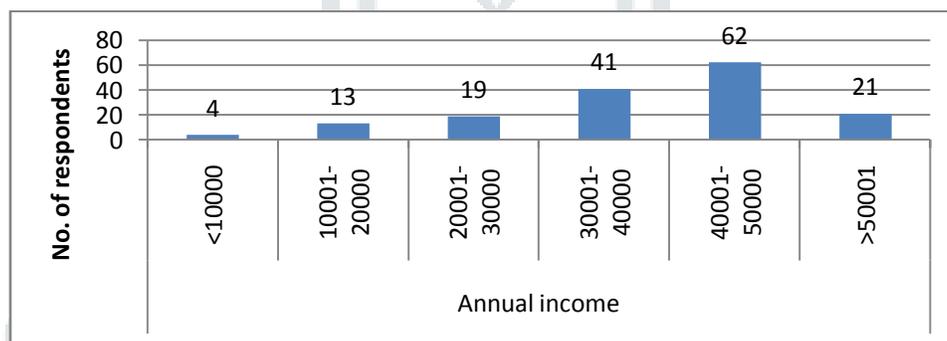


Figure 9: Bar diagram showing season of annual income of respondents as per no. of respondents

Figure 9 shows the annual income of respondents. Most of the respondents (62) earned 40001-50000 rupees yearly; this is because of lower daily wage and seasonal work. They were not getting work 365 days, instead of that they only get 7-9 month yearly. This is followed by 41 respondents who earned 30001-40000 rupees yearly. These are unskilled worker who only work seasonally. Four people earned less than 10000 rupees, among these four, three are seriously ill.

Conclusion

This insight into the study of primary livelihood strategies used with useful resources by rural households, their relevance for poverty alleviation based solely on profit-returning components, and the factors influencing the adoption of better livelihood return strategies within Cachar districts. The findings indicate that livelihood diversification into non-farm sports is common among most people from rural families. Only a few households followed livelihood diversification to commercial business/entrepreneurship and industrial agriculture, which may be more beneficial strategies and are more applicable to poverty reduction in our website view and specific areas with comparable context. Termination results further indicated that schools, education, grounds care, right of entry to credit score, proximity to street and marketplace, and location are the primary influencing elements in the

adoption of better return techniques. Therefore, targeted applications to help awful households should emphasize building human capital through schooling, agriculture, and expertise-based training on the side of strengthening monetary capital by increasing access to credit score evaluation. Improvement obligations should come with guidelines for rural loans aimed at terrible families that could inspire the diversification of traditional livelihoods to more worthwhile commercial enterprise-oriented strategies. However, these efforts must go hand in hand with investments in rural infrastructure, especially agricultural roads and market centers, which will allow you to increase the connectivity of the countryside with the global market.

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