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Dimension-wise analysis on livelihood security of farm youth practicing family farming in Parbhani, Maharashtra

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Abstract

A livelihood is sustainable if it can withstand stress and shocks, recover from them, and retain or improve its capabilities and assets in the present and the future without depleting the natural resource base. This study focuses on improvement of the livelihood of the farm youth by making their work in rural economy more visible, in order to move forward and improve living conditions in rural areas through family farming. The present study was carried out using Ex-post facto research design during 2022-23 by purposively selecting state Maharashtra and district Parbhani as the economy of the district is mainly depend on agriculture and attempt made in this research to know the livelihood security of farm youth practicing family farming. From Parbhani district, two taluks were selected based on maximum number of farm youth practicing family farming and from each taluk, four villages were selected. From each village, 20 farm youth were selected by using simple random technique, thus, making a total sample 160 respondents. The data was collected through personal interview method with the help of structured pre-tested interview schedule. The research results will be useful for the policy makers to plan and implement the programmes for upliftment of farm youth involved in agriculture and allied sectors. The findings revealed that in livelihood security, among dimensions namely social security, financial/occupational security, habitat security, educational security, environmental security, health security and food security the statements such as participation in organizing social events, saving habits, house with all facilities (toilet/ water/ electricity/ road etc.), accessibility of primary education, availability and accessibility of drinking water, health service by government hospitals and food availability throughout the year were ranked I under each dimensions respectively. Further, with regard to different dimensions of livelihood security, financial/occupational security ranked I followed by social security (Rank II).

Keywords: Dimensions, livelihood security, farm youth, family farming

Introduction

India is the youngest nation in the world with 36 per cent of the population falling under youth category and 74 per cent of them live in rural areas [Anon.,2022(a)]^[1]. About 37.7 per cent of youth are engaged in primary sector followed by 31.4 per cent in secondary and 30.9 per cent in tertiary sector. Agriculture sector being a largest employer for rural youth, many young farmers engage in high-tech, high risk and high-returns agri-ventures. In India, traditionally farming has been family-based where family farms constitute 85 per cent of total agricultural holdings and contribute to 60 per cent of the production [Anon., 2022(b)]^[2]. Livelihood security is a means of adequate and sustainable access to income and resources to meet basic needs like food, potable water, health, education, community participation and social integration of farm youth. The socio-economic situation of farm youth

practicing family farming mainly depends upon the livelihood pattern of the people living in that region. The term 'livelihood' refers to a means of living, especially of earning enough money to feed oneself, i.e., the financial means whereby one lives.

Livelihoods are the sum of ways in which people make a living. The idea of livelihood security embodies three fundamental attributes *viz.*, the possession of human capabilities, access to other tangible and intangible assets, and the existence of economic activities. The interaction among these attributes defines what livelihood option an individual pursues and their livelihood resources within the limits of their context and use their institutional connections to pursue a number of different livelihood options. Such options can include various types of production and income generating activities. Thus, each farm youth practicing family farming can have several possible sources of

entitlement, which constitute its livelihood.

In India, farm youth are major producer of food in terms of value, volume and number of hours worked because agriculture is largely family farming enterprise. In relation to this, family farming is a means of organizing all agricultural and allied activities which is managed and operated by a family and is predominantly reliant on family labour, including men, women and children (Jose Graziano Da Silva., 2014)^[6].

Chambers and Conway (1992)^[4] stated that livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (resources, claims and access) and activities required as a means of living: livelihood is sustainable which can cope up and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation. The livelihood of farm youth family farming depends on the work carried out by each family member. The survival of such farms is highly dependent on the combined effort of both women and men.

The main problems in rural areas to attain secured livelihood are illiteracy, unemployment, poor infrastructure, lack of resources of agricultural production such as capital, credit, appropriate technology, inputs, training, extension and markets, other common problems are poor soils, low and erratic rainfall, poor infrastructural facilities etc. With the fewer opportunities to bring socio-economic change and development, livelihood security has been a major challenge for farm youth. Hence, there is a need to elevate the farm youth to higher level by making their work in rural economy more visible, in order to move forward in improve living conditions in rural areas.

2. Methodology

Since the event had already occurred, *Ex-post Facto* research design was selected. The Parbhani district of Maharashtra state was selected purposefully during 2022-23 for the study as the economy of the district is mainly depend on agriculture. Based on the farm youth practicing family farming two taluks were selected namely Parbhani and Purna, from each taluk, four villages were chosen for the study, the list of farm youth practicing family farming were prepared in consultation with extension personnel. Then, twenty farm youth from each village were randomly chosen for the study, resulting in the final sample size of 160 from selected district.

The index developed by Karuna Jeba Mary and Karthikeyan (2013)^[7] was used to analyze livelihood security with modification to maintain uniformity in scoring. The index comprising of seven dimensions and 41 statements was administered with a four-point continuum representing

'High', 'Medium', 'Low' and 'No' with weightage of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The livelihood security score of a respondent was calculated by adding up the scores obtained on all statements. Thus, the minimum and maximum score one could get is 41 and 164, respectively. Data were gathered through personal interview method with the help of structured pretested interview schedule. The collected data were quantified and analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming

The result from the Table 1 represents that, participation in organizing social events and social status and recognition of farm youth by social organizations /villagers were ranked I and II with 3.33 and 3.01 mean score respectively in social security dimension. The reason might be due to farm youth actively participated in social events arranged in villages like animal and farmers development programs. Hence, expected mutual cooperation and encouragement to farming activities. Being the member of Milk Producers Cooperative Society and other social organizations farm youth developed good social linkages and gets community support as and when required.

The results from the Table 2 reports that the majority of respondents given response to saving habits had ranked I with 3.84 mean score and subsidiary occupation income had ranked II with 3.64 mean score in financial/ occupational security dimension. As many of the respondents are educated and keep the records of their expenses and savings, which help them in their savings habit. With the establishment of financial institutions farm youth saves money and can use at the time of emergency. Income from livestock and animal products like marketing of milk and milk products generated good income resources.

The result from the Table 3 represents that, in habitat security dimension house with all facilities (toilet/ water/ electricity/ road etc.) and own house for the living statements got majority of respondents were ranked I and II with 3.24 and 3.03 mean score respectively.

With the income from family farming occupation in majority the farm youth were able to make their own houses with the better basic facilities. Further, one can observe influence their lifestyle of urban culture, households in rural areas are getting pakka house with modern facilities like mould, cement sheets and tiles etc., some of them received help through the government schemes like Awas Gharkul Yojana in making their shelter secure.

Table 1: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Social Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	I. Social Security	Mean score	Rank
1	Membership and regular touch with social organizations	2.11	VII
2	Participation in organizing social events	3.33	I
3	Participation in decision making of social activities	2.82	III
4	Social status and recognition of farm youth by social organizations /villagers	3.01	II
5	Support of Co-operative Societies/ Self-Help Groups	2.56	VI
6	Social organizations encouragement to stay in family farming	2.69	V
7	Community support	2.76	IV

Table 2: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Financial /Occupational Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	II. Financial / Occupational Security	Mean score	Rank
1.	Saving habits	3.84	I
2.	Migration to cities for better job	2.51	VI
3.	Main occupation income	3.09	III
4.	Subsidiary occupation income	3.64	II
5.	Saving accounts in financial institutions/co-operatives	2.63	V
6.	Spending on clothing/health care/ social and religious activities	2.0	IX
7.	Accessibility to resources	2.46	VII
8.	Accessibility to technological information	2.35	VIII
9.	Accessibility to markets	2.79	IV

The result from the Table 4 indicates that the greater number of farm youth with respect to educational security

Table 4: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Educational Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	IV. Educational Security	Mean score	Rank
1.	Accessibility of Primary education	2.96	I
2.	Affordability of Higher education	2.55	II
3.	Information regarding scholarship, fellowships and other opportunities	2.05	IV
4.	School dropout	1.93	V
5.	Distance of educational institutions	2.32	III

Table 5: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Environmental Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	V. Environmental Security	Mean score	Rank
1.	Availability and accessibility of drinking water	2.95	I
2.	Water availability for farming	2.59	III
3.	Soil health depletion over the years	2.05	V
4.	Adoption of eco-friendly farming practices	2.44	IV
5.	Pollution free environment	2.74	II

The result from the Table 5 revealed that the statements such as availability and accessibility of drinking water and pollution free environment with 2.95 and 2.74 mean score, ranked I and II respectively, in environmental security dimension.

Every village had its own water filter units/ plants to provide potable water and due to the assured rainfall and water bodies in the area made availability and accessibility of water easier to the respondents. Being farming background they been serving their life in pollution free environment.

Table 6: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Health Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	VI. Health Security	Mean score	Rank
1.	Accessibility of Good health services	2.78	II
2.	Affordability to health care facilities	2.77	III
3.	Travel to distant town for better health services	2.43	IV
4.	Affordability to private health services	1.89	V
5.	Health service by government hospitals	2.84	I

dimension accessibility of primary education with 2.96 mean score and affordability of higher education 2.55 mean score were ranked I and II second respectively.

Due to the various scholarship and programs like ‘Mid-Day Meal Scheme’, ‘Vidyasiri scholarship’, ‘SC/STs Scholarship’ etc., respondents were able to access and afford the education up to higher level.

Table 3: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Habitat Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	III. Habitat Security	Mean score	Rank
1.	Own house for the living	3.03	II
2.	Renovation of house with tiles and concrete structures	2.97	III
3.	House with all facilities (toilet/water/electricity/road etc.)	3.24	I
4.	Housing problem during rainy seasons	2.17	IV
5.	Problems in getting good shelter	2.10	V

The result from the Table 6 highlighting that, with respect to health security dimension, health service by government hospitals were ranked first and accessibility of good health services was ranked second with mean score 2.84 and 2.78 respectively.

However, along with the government health service centres like primary, district health centres there existed few small private clinics to access better health services to secure their health in rural area.

The result from the Table 7 represents that, statements such as food availability throughout the year and utilization of own family farm produce for balanced nutrition were ranked I and II respectively with respect to food security dimension at 2.90 and 2.84 mean score respectively. Similar findings were reported by Harshitha (2018) [5].

Table 7: Statement wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming under Food Security dimension (n=160)

Sl. No.	VII. Food Security	Mean score	Rank
1.	Food availability throughout the year	2.90	I
2.	The quality of available food	2.72	III
3.	Affordability of balanced food to all the family members	2.45	V
4.	Consumption of nutritionally balanced food	2.64	IV
5.	Utilization of own family farm produce for balanced nutrition	2.84	II

3.2 Dimension wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming

The results in Table 8 indicated that the dimension financial / occupational security ranked I with 2.81 mean score and social security Ranked II with 2.75 mean score, followed by food security (Ranked III), habitat (Ranked IV), environmental security (Ranked V), health security (Ranked VI) and educational security (Ranked VII)

Table 8: Dimension wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming (n=160)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Financial / Occupational Security	2.81	I
2.	Social Security	2.75	II
3.	Food Security	2.71	III
4.	Habitat Security	2.70	IV
5.	Environmental Security	2.56	V
6.	Health Security	2.54	VI
7.	Educational Security	2.36	VII

The reason might be the credit management ability of the respondents through maintenance of their expenses and savings records, their interest and risk-taking ability of investment in subsidiary income generating activities like mini dairy units, fodder & feed sales, poultry, fishery etc. The participation in social activities, village development activities, maintaining better harmony in the neighbourhood and holding membership in social institutions like Gram Panchayat and FPOs etc. made respondents to bring livelihood security.

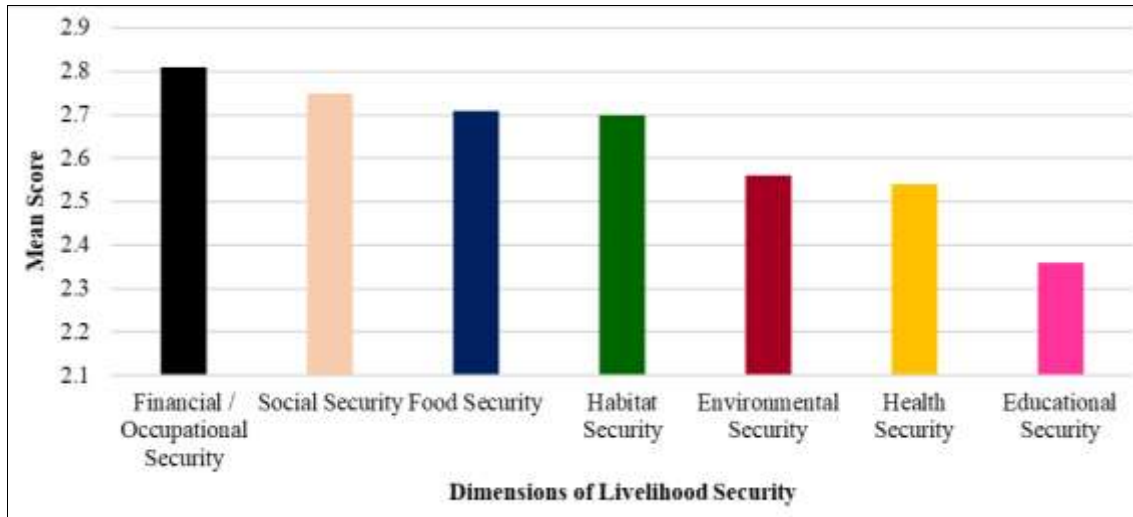


Fig 1: Dimension wise Livelihood Security of Farm Youth practicing Family Farming

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded from the study, among dimensions of livelihood security namely social security, financial / occupational security, habitat security, educational security, environmental security, health security and food security the statements such as participation in organizing social events, saving habits, house with all facilities, accessibility of primary education, availability and accessibility of drinking water, health service by government hospitals and food availability throughout the year were ranked I under each dimensions respectively. Further, with regard to ranking of different dimensions of livelihood security, financial security ranked I followed by social security (Rank II). Hence, there is a need the concerned organization should implement the programme to carry out farm youth practicing family farming effectively with respect to improve the livelihood security by providing social, educational, health and habitat securities and facilities.

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