



RURAL LIVELIHOOD IN ODISHA: A CASE STUDY FROM TWO BLOCKS OF WESTERN ODISHA

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Abstract: A sizable portion of the economy lives in rural areas of an underdeveloped state like Odisha. Odisha is an agriculturally oriented state, yet the majority of the rural population relies on it. Additionally, the opportunities for different forms of employment in rural locations are relatively restricted. Due to a lack of advanced technology, agriculture and other forms of livelihood are characterised by a weak economy. Due to the nature of the sources of livelihood and the lower value chain of rural products, it is now quite typical for rural households to be in poor condition. The rural population has a number of challenges in making good livings, including chances in agriculture, livestock, fishing, handicrafts, and small domestic businesses. This paper makes an effort to identify the numerous rural sources of income. It also includes information on the difficulties rural residents face in making a living. Primary and secondary data are the foundation of the paper. The original data came from the Bargarh and Balangir districts of Odisha's Khaprakhol and Paikmal blocks (604 sample), while the secondary data came from a variety of publications that dealt with rural livelihoods. According to the research findings of the study, farming and agriculture-based activities account for the majority of rural livelihood sources in the designated study region. Lack of education, ignorance, access to financing, inadequate technical progress, and a lack of improved inputs are just a few of the obstacles that rural households must overcome in order to increase their income. Other than farming, there is a need for livelihood diversification to help rural households make a good living.

Keywords: livelihood, Income, rural, challenges, Odisha

INTRODUCTION

The majority of people in India reside in rural areas, where there are little opportunities for employment. Farming is a major source of income in rural areas, as opposed to other options.

Possession of a farm-based source of income and poverty levels are closely associated in rural areas. In general, their reliance on agriculture for a living does nothing to raise their level of living. Due of the lower output, farmers are unable to earn lucrative incomes and profits. The lack of infrastructure, credit, poor farming practices, a lack of technology, and a lack of improved inputs and seeds are the main causes of the lack of productivity. Odisha is a poor state with a large agrarian population, and the majority of its residents live in rural areas and main source is agriculture. Numerous natural disasters have had a severe negative impact on the state's economy. The choice for non-farm work is hampered by the lower levels of education and ability among rural residents. Even if the rural population had certain innate skills and expertise, they would not be able to access employment prospects. Rural areas lack the cutting-edge technologies that have recently expanded across the globe. The western-most districts of Odisha, Bargarh and Balangir, are not very developed. Importantly, the research region has very few urban areas. Agriculture, ranching, raising livestock, logging, and day labourers are the main sources of income in rural areas.

There are typically two regions in the nation. There are two types of locations: urban and rural. Depending on the needs or resources available, both types of areas have a variety of livelihood choices. In this post, we'll discuss about rural livelihoods, or the numerous kinds of income that rural residents might use to support themselves. Sources of income for rural residents are known as rural livelihoods. The information in this essay will aid students in comprehending this idea and building a foundation for rural India. Countryside Living The rural population of India, which is concentrated in areas where rain-fed agriculture is the main source of income, has been an attempt to be incorporated into the country's fast economic growth. However, due to limited and unequal access to productive resources including land, water, better inputs and technology, microfinance, as well as drought and other natural disasters, poverty still exists. People who lack fundamental skills and literacy are unable to assert their rights or participate in extracurricular activities that might earn them money or help them build an asset, which contributes to their continued poverty. It's not only about reducing poverty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Natural woods offer a variety of resources for sustenance as well as serving as a savings account for those who live there and nearby. These forests are utilised to produce timber, fibre, or NTFPs for industrial application. On the other hand, non-industrial production is mostly used to produce fuel wood and charcoal, restore landscapes, revitalise damaged areas, prevent desertification, and safeguard soil and water (Cord, 2005). Because they reduce poverty, help individuals escape it, and keep those on the periphery from falling into it, forests and trees are important for all facets of poverty reduction. Even if the items do not help the poor people escape poverty, better forest management and processing of some products can enhance earnings or improve the health of the poor. A more comprehensive plan for assisting people to escape poverty can also be built around improvements in forestry (Anon., 2005a). According to Shah and Sah's study from 2007, tribal people often live in mountainous, wooded locations and rely on woods for their

cultural, spiritual, and economic requirements. Tribal people's weak bargaining power, unequal political representation, subpar local government, and restricted access to land, water, and forests all contribute to the increased prevalence of tribal poverty. According to a 2007 research by Sunderlin et al., people reliant on forests may not gain anything from integrated rural development. The majority of communities around forest edges rely largely on forest-based livelihoods. Agriculture development will be essential to pulling the lowest portion of the population out of poverty until these communities have access to better quality forests for fuel wood, feed, lumber, and other NTFPs from standing forests. In Khammam and Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh, Redappa (2007) noted that the efficient exploitation of forest resources by the tribal communities through vana sanrakshana samithies built up the five livelihood assets (physical, natural, financial, human, and social capital) for rural development. In the villages under study in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh, Gumla, and Simdega districts, collecting, adding value to, and selling NTFPs account for an average of 16% of all family income (Gharai and Chakrabarti, 2009). Contribution of the forest to the Khori Village Forest Protection Committee's total economy in the Sheopur forest division of M.P. reportedly represented 38 per cent (Mishra and Horo, 2008). The economic evaluation of six significant non-timber forest products (NTFPs) taken from the woods by the tribal people in the Bandgaon and Goelkera blocks of the West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand by Singh and Quli (2011) revealed significant NTFP contribution in the tribe.

The tribal people identified twelve major issues with generating a living through the collection and sale of NTFPs (non-timber forest products), including the Large Area Multipurpose Society's (LAMPS) low wage rate, wild animals, the depletion of forest resources, the distance of forest areas, the remoteness of the areas, prompt payments, the involvement of poachers and others, the perishability of the products, the distance to the marketing point, the absence of storage facilities, and the lack of industries in Kolli Hills, Sa (Krishnamoorthy *et al.*, 2003). The respondents listed the following factors as the main deterrents to tree farming on farm lands in Bidar, Gulbarga, and Raichur district of the north eastern plains of Karnataka: competition with crops; small land holding; inadequate irrigation facilities; the threat posed by stray cattle; a lack of a market facility for tree products; fear of theft; a long gestation period; and the lack of seedling availability (Madiwalar *et al.*, 2007). According to Ali and Chaturvedi's (2008) research, the main obstacles to farmers' adoption of various agro-forestry systems in north Bihar were a lack of group interest, a labour shortage, a lack of healthy planting materials, frequent floods, a lack of knowledge/skill, a lack of technological know-how, a lack of family interaction, and a lack of marketing facilities. According to a study conducted by Das *et al.* (2008), the people in the Dhenkanal district of Orissa perceive illiteracy, a lack of practical knowledge, a lack of exposure to training programmes, problems with financial support, family discouragement, and a heavy burden due to dual responsibility as the main barriers to the tribal livelihood and gender empowerment in rice-based farming systems. In the Akola district of Maharashtra State, the main obstacles to the adoption of teak plantations by teak growers were the high costs of fertilisers and plant protection chemicals, the lack of loans and skilled labour for planting, the difficulty in obtaining information about teak plantations,

and the need for permission to fell teak plantations (Khandagale et. al., 2012). In the Eland watershed in the Thrissur district of Kerala, the sample farmers encountered major obstacles to livelihood diversification through watershed development programmes due to the following factors: lack of irrigation water, timely availability of inputs and subsidies, lack of knowledge about the beneficial programme, lack of supervision and follow-up, lack of technical guidance, political interference, inadequacy of sanctioned amount, and limited credit availability (Thomas et. al., 2009). In the Tamil Nadu state's Krishinagri taluk of Dharmapuri district, Sekar et al. (2010) noted that the main obstacles faced by the respondent in enhancing the forest cover and biodiversity through the Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project (TAP) included a lack of water to nurse the young saplings, a lack of connections with higher officials, a lack of agricultural and related enterprises, and a lack of marketing facilities. Reddy (2011) came to the conclusion that the main challenges faced by agro-forestry farmers in India are a lack of acceptable technical know-how and inadequate understanding of the market for the goods.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is necessary to disclose the study methods since it will be useful to other researchers conducting similar studies in the future. Both primary and secondary data are used to support the study. To support the original research, secondary data from sources including news articles and livelihood-related publications was acquired. In order to fully understand the livelihood issue, the study was done in rural area of two districts of Odisha using a primary survey in 2022. The study involved group discussions, involvement in everyday activities, and in-depth interviews with local homes conducted using the direct observation approach (Yen, 2003). The essential strategy for getting the opinions of stakeholders was to conduct in-depth interviews and use the observation method. Tribal people that live close to the forest make up the majority of responders. Through an interview schedule, the sources of the locals' income and the difficulties they confront in making a living have been developed.

DISCUSSION

Table 1: Livelihood sources of study area

<i>Sources (main)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Primary (Agriculture)	515	85.26
Secondary(Industry)	59	9.76
Tertiary (Services)	30	4.96
Sources (Secondary)		
Agriculture	17	2.8
Livestock	93	15.4
Forest	281	46.5
Forest+Livestock+Agriculture+Daily Wage Worker	213	35.3

Source: Primary survey (2022)

A major portion of the rural population in the two districts relies on agriculture as their primary source of income (85.26 percent). The primary sector, or agriculture, usually comes behind the workforce in the services sector and industry in India. The industry sector's dependent on the primary sector is quite low at 9.79 percent, while the service sector's dependency is even lower at 4.96 percent. Due to the study area's proximity to the Gandhamardan hill, forestry is a significant source of income for the local population. Despite the low cost of forest goods, they are not rely on the forest as their main source of income. The locals' secondary sources of income are centred on the nearby forest goods that are readily available. The native people of the region are almost entirely dependent on the forest for their means of subsistence.

Income from various sources (monthly)

<i>Sources</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean (Rs.)</i>
Agriculture	604	1879.47
Agricultural worker	604	1538.25
MGNREGA	604	846.85
Livestock Allied	604	301.33
Forestry	604	3341.75
HH Industry	604	167.22
Pvt Salaried	604	211.92
Govt Salaried	604	1850.99
Remittances	604	112.58

Source: Primary survey (2022)

The average value of the revenue from different sources shows that the forest income is higher than the average value of the income from other sources. A larger portion of the local population works in forestry. The occupation is heavily dependent on agricultural operations for revenue. The mean revenue from agriculture is Rs. 1879, which is close to the mean income from the forest, but the mean income from the other sources is lower than that from the forest and agriculture.

CHALLENGES OF RURAL LIVELIHOOD

According to a literature assessment, the main issues in many rural regions include poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, homelessness, crime, social ills, inferior living standards, and a lack of infrastructure and services.

Natural disasters

Agriculture is the foundation of the Indian economy, creating work through paid employment or self-employment in both the formal and informal sectors. However, only 40 per cent of the land used for agriculture has access to irrigation systems, leaving the other 60 per cent

at the mercy of the weather and vulnerable to natural catastrophes and climate change. The local people of the study area have claimed the drought hit the area badly to their agricultural production. Most of the agricultural lands are not irrigated which propel them to depend on rainfall. Disasters nearly always have an impact on people's livelihoods and their capacity to provide for themselves in the future. In other situations, the interruption to livelihoods might take years to recover from, especially in regions where repeating catastrophes occur more frequently. Every year, millions of people, the global economy, and development are negatively impacted by natural catastrophes, with poor nations being the most severely impacted. One of the most disaster-prone states in India is Odisha. This research examines how cyclones, floods, droughts, and heatwaves affect Odisha and how resilient the state is to them, as well as identifying the government policies that might be used to lessen their effects. The majority of the original data we used came from a qualitative survey conducted in three districts of Odisha between April 2017 and June 2017. We held focus groups and in-depth interviews with community residents and important stakeholders at all levels. Additionally, DesInventar, a disaster information management system data source, was used in our study to assess secondary data on natural disasters. The results demonstrate how the people of Odisha have been badly impacted by recent heatwaves, lightning, cyclones, floods, and drought. These natural catastrophes have catastrophic effects, especially on livelihoods, food security, health, access to clean water, and sanitation. These natural catastrophes have both short- and long-term repercussions on the livelihoods of people in Odisha, leaving them with few work possibilities. They have impacted agriculture, fisheries, prawn farming, roadside sellers, and daily wage labourers. The most badly impacted groups of people are those who are weak and disadvantaged, and popular coping strategies for them include selling off animals, borrowing food, taking out loans and mortgages, and migrating. The impact of catastrophes on rural populations is significantly reduced because to government initiatives and programmes like the Indira Awas Yojana, the Public Distribution System, and Multipurpose Cyclone Rehabilitation Centers. Our research shows that the financial, physical, and psychological well-being of the state's people has been affected by natural catastrophes. Income, food security, and health are all adversely affected by the impact on livelihoods, both directly and indirectly. Focusing on lowering people's underlying vulnerabilities through preventative measures, including the community in decision-making and creating alternative and sustainable livelihoods is urgently needed.

Covid-19

For nations with low per capita incomes, the security of livelihoods continues to be a major problem. The government of India has launched a self-employment style poverty reduction initiative called the National Rural Livelihood Mission to give stable livelihood to rural poor (NRLM). The impact of NRLM membership on the livelihood security of rural poor people is experimentally examined in this research. Through the use of a structured questionnaire, information was gathered from 220 respondents (both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) in the Odisha district of Sonepur (India). A livelihood security index (LSI)

was created to measure the respondents' economic, food, health, and habitat security as well as their sense of livelihood security. Propensity score matching (PSM) has also been used to measure the program's impact. The study concludes that participation in the programme has a favourable and significant impact on livelihood security. In order to increase the security of their means of subsistence, the poor should be encouraged to engage in the programme.

Since 2020, the covid-19 outbreak has devastated the local livelihood harshly. Although all the sectors have disrupted by the infection, the rural livelihood is not an exception.

Lack of Infrastructure

For the local people to meet their fundamental requirements and lead a socially and economically productive existence, rural regions require infrastructure assets such rural roads, rails, bridges, irrigation systems, water supply, schools, health facilities, and marketplaces. Better rural road infrastructure promotes connection and secure transportation. Access to healthcare, education, and employment possibilities are all impacted. There is no urban area located in the study area as per 2011 census. The area lacks the basic infrastructure facilities which hinder the local livelihood to progressive. The universal electrification still lacks in rural areas and also power supply not regular in rural areas. The transportation facilities are also very poor which could connect to better marketing facilities. The infrastructures such as road, electricity, telecommunication, transportation are in a vulnerable condition in rural.

Lack of Skill

The rural people are not well skilled for any industrial skill and for new techniques for different livelihood sources. The skill and training plays vital role for the better livelihood sources. Therefore, due to lack of skill, most of the people of study area involves in primary sector.

Lack of Technologies

Technology is a main factor for any kind of development process but in rural areas it is very hard to have a better technological advancement. Even though there are some technological improvements in agriculture sector, the local people are not able to afford the technology.

Price Uncertainty

Wide fluctuations in agricultural revenue may result from the unpredictability of the weather, yields, pricing, government regulations, international markets, and other factors that affect farming. Choosing among options that lessen the potential financial consequences of these uncertainties is part of risk management. The four primary categories of uncertainty encountered in agriculture are highlighted in the following sentences. They include: 1.

Uncertainty in yield Prices are uncertain. 3. Tenurial Insecurity 4. Uncertainty over the cost/quality of the inputs.

The challenge which faced by the rural people are price fluctuation in agricultural products and forest products. The natural disaster hits the cultivation along with the price fluctuation which is not permit to produce more amounts. The cost of production also not meets with the agricultural products and also forest products.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Skill Enhancement

There is a huge problem such as lack of skill in rural area. It is very essential to initiate the skill improvement programme. Most of the people of study area are in agriculture sector. Therefore, government should focus on the skill enhancement to uplift the non-farm sector development. This initiative would encourage more people to involve in non-farm other than farming.

CONCLUSION

Rural Balangir and Bargarh districts feature a variety of livelihood options, most of them are focused on farming. The majority of the population works in agriculture's primary sector. Forestry is a vital secondary source of income for the region. The revenue from forestry and agriculture is also more typical. Natural catastrophes and disease outbreaks are a couple of the issues that rural residents face in their daily lives. The rural poor are the most impacted, and they have posed major dangers to their way of life. Floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, landslides, and other natural calamities are examples. Natural catastrophes result in the destruction of lives, homes, and livelihoods. Natural catastrophes rob rural communities of their human capital since their way of life depends on the land and other natural resources. People experience agricultural, livestock, and income losses, which result in a reduction in their financial capital. People have also lost their houses, leaving the neighborhood without anything as it works to recover from the calamity. Natural disasters can cause poverty because they take away sources of income and resources that can provide revenue. The challenges such as price uncertainty, lack of skill, lack of technology and Covid-19 are prevalent in the study area.

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