



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Economics

A STUDY ON SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS AND THE PROBLEMS OF RUBBER PLANTERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KADABA TALUK OF DAKSHINA KANNADA DISTRICT, KARNATAKA

KEY WORDS: socio economic, price fluctuation, climate change and support price

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ABSTRACT

The largest and most significant sector of the Indian economy is agriculture. The contribution of agriculture to the national income is 42.5 percent. This study presents the findings from a survey of rubber planters in the Karnataka district of Dakshina Kannada's Kadaba Taluk. 50 rubber planters were given questionnaires in the study region, which is Kadaba Taluk of D.K district. Simple percentage analysis is employed as the study methodology. The project details the socioeconomic situation and issues that rubber farmers encountered. According to the survey, the primary issues that rubber growers had to deal with were price fluctuations, climate change, a lack of support prices, and a shortage of competent workers.

INTRODUCTION

Rubber is a well-known plantation crop in our nation and is quite important to the Indian economy. In the world economy, natural rubber is a significant main product. Rubber is an elastic material derived from latex, which is a milky-white liquid that is collected from the rubber tree's bark by a process known as tapping. The British brought rubber, a native crop of Brazil, to India. Commercial-scale cultivation of rubber began as early as 1873. The first rubber plantation was created in Kerala's Thattakadu, Ernakulam district, in 1875. In 16 States, there are 5.97 lakh hectares of India rubber plantations. Around 55000 hectares of land in Karnataka have been planted with rubber by 60000 farmers. Dakshina Kannada, Shivamogga, Chikmagalur, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Kodagu, Hassan, and Mysore are among the regions where rubber is farmed. Natural rubber is produced in Karnataka in about 40,000 tonnes, and it is used in about 60,000 tonnes.

Production and cultivation of rubber require a huge and skilled labour force; it is not a simple or easy hobby. The tapping of rubber trees requires both talent and a lot of labour. Typically, tapping lasts between 10 and 20 years. Depending on how quickly the bark may be absorbed. The rate of bark consumption will be influenced by the tapper's ability, the tree's age and clone, the soil's fertility, the weather, and the pace at which new tapping techniques are being adopted.

Review Of Literature

Thomas C.A (2004) conducted a study focus on the rubber growers of Kerala. The study states that the small rubber growers face a number of problems from the planting stage to the marketing of the product.

Balz Strasser (2009) explained that the poorest and most marginal holdings derive only a small percentage of their income from their own rubber trees. However, they earn important income from their work as tappers and labourer on neighbouring plantations and are thus altogether very dependent on income from the natural rubber sector.

Karunakaran (2017)The study revealed that prices were so low so that the rubber cultivators cannot even pay workers wages and the recent unprecedented volatility in prices declined rubber production leads to the falling standard of living of the rubber farmers in Kerala. Rubber cultivators in Kerala are mainly small growers and any financial constraints, fluctuations in price or backwardness in technology will affect the growers considerably.

Objectives Of The Study

1. To identify the problems faced by rubber growers Kadaba Taluk in dakshina Kannada district
2. To know socio economic status of rubber planters
3. To access the living condition of rubber planters in the

study area.

Research Methodology

The research design used in the study is descriptive research. The data is collected through the primary and secondary data. Primary data is first hand data which are collected through questionnaire. Questionnaire was distributed to 50 rubber planters in Kadaba Taluk of Dakshina Kannada. Secondary data is the second hand data which we collect through internet, magazine, and newspaper. Percentage analyses were used for analyzing the gathered data.

Scope

It has been thought of as a source of foreign currency. The Indian government has maintained that the rubber industry is a crucial sector for inclusive growth. It will offer some of the fundamental raw materials required for the development of the industrial sector. The livelihood of thousands of people in Kadaba Taluk depends on plantations. The majority of rubber plantation empirical research is focused on the production, product, marketing, and trade aspects of plantations. A fresh investigation of socioeconomic issues and the difficulties faced by rubber planters is necessary.

Analysis And Interpretations

Table 1 Demographic Profile Of Rubber Planters

Sl No	Personal Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
	Age	20 – 30	7	14
		31 – 40	9	18
		41 – 50	15	30
		50 above	19	38
	Education Status	Primary	19	38
		High School	16	32
		PUC	5	10
		UG	4	8
		Others	6	12
	Acres of Plantation	Below 1 acre	10	20
		Up to 2 acres	25	50
		2-5 acres	10	20
		More than 5 acres	5	10
	Adaption of Tapping System	Daily	0	0
		Alternate Daily	34	68
		Third daily	16	32
		Weekly	0	0
	How do you tap?	Self	29	58
		Labourer	21	42

The above table shows the demographic profile of rubber planters of Kadaba Taluk of Dakshina Kannada District. The findings show that majority of the planters are above the age of 40 and their education level is up to high school. 70% of the

planters are small planters and have plantation up to only 2 acres. 60% of the taping system is alternate daily and very rarely planters tap third daily. And majority of the planters are tappers themselves. This is clear indication of the fact that interest shown by the youths towards rubber plantation is comparatively less and the plantation may dwindle in the course of time.

Table 2 Socio-Economic Condition of Rubber Planters

Sl.No	Personal variables		No. of Respondents	Percentage
	Rubber Roller	Owned	27	54
		Not owned	23	46
	Smoke House Facility	Owned	21	42
		Not owned	29	58
	Type of House	RC	19	38
		Tile Roofed	15	30
		Cement/metal sheet	16	32
	Area of House in Sq Ft	Less than 750	20	40
		751-1000	20	40
		1000-1500	6	12
		Above 1500	4	8
	Electricity Connection	Yes	50	100
		No	0	0
	Type of vehicles owned	Two wheeler	30	60
		Car	18	36
		Jeep	2	4
	Savings per annum	Up to 15000	31	62
		16000-25000	8	16
		25000	6	12
		Above 50000	5	10

Table 2 studies the socio-economic condition of rubber planters of Kadaba Taluk. The findings of the study clearly indicate that majority of the rubber planters are average income group. 60% of the planters own only two wheelers and 60% of them have savings only up to 15000. Altogether 62% of them own either tile roofed houses or metal/cement sheet roofed houses. And majority of the houses are less than 1000 sqft.

Suggestions

1. The government should take more steps for bringing price stability for the rubber cultivators.
2. The subsidies program should brought back by the rubber board for the financial assistance.
3. Rubber board should take initiative to give necessary training program to develop skilled rubber tapping.
4. Immature plantation won't give yield for first 7 to 8 years. During this period government should provide subsidies to planters for their livelihood.
5. Insecticides should be made available to the growers at subsidy rate.

CONCLUSION

The goal of the study was to determine the socioeconomic status of rubber planters in the Kadaba Taluk of the Dakshina Kannada region. The study is solely applicable to the Kadaba Taluk and not to any other regions where rubber is farmed. The results show that there are some concerns that rubber growers must deal with, including price volatility, climate change, a lack of qualified labour, and Powdery Mildew diseases of rubber trees that affect young leaves, buds, inflorescences, and other immature tissues, lowering rubber latex. One of the biggest issues that affect growers is price volatility. Because of this, the cultivators are unable to provide a steady income for their family.

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