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The Hungry Rural India: Their Cacophony and Silence

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Abstract- In spite of being a nation mostly dependent on agriculture, the scenario of Indian agriculture and its farmers are very poor. Not only the farming community, the non farming community of rural India is also living under a miserable situation. They are even sometimes facing huge struggle to arrange their bread and butter. They are the bleak background behind the silver screen; the ground zero level really of shinning India. Our present study was conducted in two rural localities: one is farm locality and the other is non farm locality. There were 21 independent variables for the farm sector and 19 were for the non farm sector, while the dependent variable(hunger) remaining the same. From each locality 75 respondents were chosen (150 respondents in total) and they were being interviewed through a structured interview schedule. The data were analysed through step down regression method and it was revealed that the parameters of hunger for farm sector were very much different from that of the non farm sector though it was linked with a wire of ignorance and silence.

Keywords: *farm sector, non farm sector, hunger, silence.*

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The Hungry Rural India: Their Cacophony and Silence

Anannya Chakraborty [α], SK Acharya [σ] & Chandrasekhar Chatterjee [ρ]

Abstract- In spite of being a nation mostly dependent on agriculture, the scenario of Indian agriculture and its farmers are very poor. Not only the farming community, the non farming community of rural India is also living under a miserable situation. They are even sometimes facing huge struggle to arrange their bread and butter. They are the bleak background behind the silver screen; the ground zero level really of shinning India. Our present study was conducted in two rural localities : one is farm locality and the other is non farm locality. There were 21 independent variables for the farm sector and 19 were for the non farm sector, while the dependent variable(hunger) remaining the same.From each locality 75 respondents were chosen(150 respondents in total) and they were being interviewed through a structured interview schedule. The data were analysed through step down regression method and it was revealed that the parameters of hunger for farm sector were very much different from that of the non farm sector though it was linked with a wire of ignorance and silence.

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I. Introduction

Ever since independence in 1947, agricultural development policies in India have aimed at reducing hunger, food insecurity, malnourishment and poverty at a rapid rate. Keeping this overarching goal in mind, the emphasis, which was initially (for 15 years or so) on keeping food prices low, shifted to macro food-security and subsequently to household and individual food-security. Later, the food security of vulnerable, sustainable use of natural resources, and equity between rural and urban or farm and non- farm population became the issues of dominant discourse related to agricultural development. The policies and programmes related to marketing and trade were obviously guided by the overall objective sought to be achieved from the agricultural development strategy. The changes in marketing environment and production performance of the Indian agricultural sector should, therefore, be viewed in the context of weightage attached to these objectives at different points of time.

Even with the swashbuckling claim on growth and prosperity on the present civilization, the other side of this prosperity is so bleak and disastrous that have no match for the past centuries even. Out of around 7 billion population of the world , 1.5 billion are hungry. They don't have adequate access to food, if it is there, the quality doesn't stand any where near to fulfil their calorie requirement. In India 350 million people are living below the poverty line and of them, 200 million people have become victim to moderate to extreme hunger indexes. 42 per cent of the new born babies are under weight. 60 per cent of the children are suffering from moderate to high level of anaemia experiencing stunted growth.

Beyond the curtain of hunger, there is another problem that is chronic hunger. Based on hunger index we the nation is occupying 100th position in the world (IFPRI Report,2017). The scenario of chronic hunger is even worse and astoundingly it is worse than African nations as well.

Nobel laureate Abhijitt V. Banerjee and Ester Duflo's research finds a large percentage of households with at least one member of the family owning their own business; however entrepreneurship is not a common aspiration of the poor. What they really want is for their children to land government jobs – such as teachers .Duflo recounts a very interesting anecdote about the correlation between Mexican maquiladoras (manufacturing centres) located in a mother's village, and strongly increased nutrition of her children. The additional income the mother earned at the maquiladoras was not enough to explain the substantial increase in the children's nutrition. Instead she proposes that "Perhaps the sense of control over the future that people get from knowing there will be an income coming in every month – and not just the income itself – is what allows these women to focus on building their own careers and those of their children" . A predictable, dependable income separates the poor from the middle class and alleviates the stress that was so additionally detrimental.

Objectives

1. To bring out the parameters caused hunger in rural farm sectors.
2. To bring out the parameters caused hunger in rural non farm sector.
3. Comparative and holistic analysis of farm vs. non farm sector as far as the dependent variable hunger is concerned.

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II. Research Methodology

- The present study has conducted in two separate socio-ecological strata. One study has conducted among the farm families and the other one has conducted on the non farm families. Here we have only selected women at the age group of 15-60 as respondents.
- The farm locality is Beraberi gram panchayat, Habra II Block, North 24 pgs and the non farm locality is Bilkanda gram panchayat, Barrackpur 2 block, North 24 pgs.

III. Materials and Methods

An extensive interview schedule was formed and 75 respondents were randomly selected from each sector. They were interviewed in a wholesome manner. The data was analysed through step down regression method.

IV. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Step down Regression Analysis, hunger vs. all 21 Causal variables to find out the independent variables which are retained at last of this data reduction process. (farm sector)

Sl no.	variables	Beta value	B value	Std. error	t value
1	age	-1.056	-9.424	8.922	-1.056
2	education	-0.054	-6.736	21.666	-0.311
3	Family size	-0.073	-32.350	68.835	-0.470
4	Economic motivation	-0.068	-66.776	175.312	-0.381
5	Risk orientation	-0.457	-1089.172	346.538	-3.143
6	Management orientation	0.085	15.675	27.913	0.562
7	Stress perception on hunger	-0.146	-35.350	34.502	-1.025
8	Stress perception on poverty	0.219	41.973	27.647	1.518
9	Stress perception on voice	0.090	36.269	56.083	0.647
10	Size of holding	0.321	48.793	57.272	0.852
11	Cropping intensity	0.484	3.004	1.078	2.787
12	Livestock count	-0.489	-249.398	76.649	-3.254
13	Livestock yield	0.039	9.483	32.694	0.290
14	Pond and fish	0.031	83.957	437.689	0.192
15	Total crop yield	-0.832	-0.027	0.017	-1.527
16	Cost of cultivation	0.370	0.002	0.003	0.660
17	No. of fragments	-0.078	-9.770	28.743	-0.340
18	Communication variables	0.014	4.940	46.004	0.107
19	Marketed surplus	-0.163	-2.370	2.905	-0.816
20	Energy consumption	-0.127	-25.125	30.471	-0.825
21	BMI	-0.055	-5.613	15.177	-0.370

R square value 50.6 %
SE 0.47

Table 2: Regression Analysis, Hunger (Y1) vs 3 causal variables(x11,X12 and X15) which have been retained at the last step of step down regression.

Sl no.	variables	Beta value	B value	Std. error	t value
1.	Cropping intensity(X11)	0.367	2.274	0.734	3.096
2.	Livestock count(X12)	-0.473	-241.297	58.466	-4.127
3.	Total crop yield(X15)	-0.408	-0.013	0.004	-3.417

R square value 30.3%
SE 0.48

V. Result

Table 1 presents the multiple regression analysis between exogenous variable Hunger (Y)vs. 21 causal variables. It has been found that the variable cropping intensity(X11), livestock count(X12) and total crop yield(X15) has contributed to the substantive variance embedded with the consequent variable Y.

The R^2 value being 0.506, it is to infer that 50.60% of variants in the consequent variable has been explained by the combination of these 21 causal variables.

Table 2 presents the step wise regression and it has been depicted that the 3 causal variables that are cropping intensity(X11), livestock count(X12) and total crop yield(X15) have been retained at the last step.

The R2 value being 0.303, it is to infer that 30.30% of variants in the consequent variable has been explained by the combination of these 3 causal variables.

Cropping intensity is the provider of food and nutrition as well as integrated to the food security. So, the higher is the crop the higher has been the cropping intensity and for the growers, it offers better security for them. The livestock count is an indicator for directing and determining the spill over amount for the livestock raisers' own family.

So these three variables the terms of managing hunger can be traced as marker variables which has contributed collectively 30.30 per cent variance in hunger.

Table 3: Step down Regression Analysis, hunger vs. all 19 Causal variables to find out the independent variables which are retained at last of this data reduction process. (non farm sector)

Sl no.	variables	Beta value	B value	Std.error	t value
1	age	0.575	15.614	6.021	2.593
2	education	0.373	33.200	12.647	2.625
3	Family size	0.297	77.111	41.345	1.865
4	Economic motivation	0.110	54.123	71.593	0.756
5	Risk orientation	0.001	1.128	23.799	.005
6	Management orientation	-0.088	-13.162	20.002	-0.658
7	Stress perception on hunger	0.059	15.146	43.976	0.344
8	Stress perception on poverty	0.056	10.077	24.862	0.405
9	Stress perception on voice	-0.174	-47.557	37.629	-1.264
10	Homestead land	0.016	41.681	35.848	0.116
11	occupation	-0.117	-3.937	7.177	-0.549
12	Ancillary income	-0.156	-0.458	0.421	-1.087
13	expenditure	0.270	0.124	0.071	1.764
14	savings	-0.095	-0.155	0.224	-0.690
15	Bank account	0.180	70.338	34.465	1.078
16	Communication variables	0.089	17.750	31.191	0.569
17	Management variables	-0.006	-0.017	0.428	-0.041
18	Energy consumption	0.049	4.420	13.807	0.320
19	BMI	0.101	5.139	7.362	0.698

R square value 47.9%
SE 0.24

Table 4: Regression Analysis, Hunger (Y) vs 3 causal variables(x1,X2 and X9) which have been retained at the last step of step down regression

Sl no.	variables	Beta value	B value	Std. error	t value
1.	Age(X1)	0.502	13.631	2.780	4.904
2.	Education(X2)	0.330	29.381	9.043	3.249
3.	Stress perception on voice(X9)	-0.199	-54.232	27.240	-1.991

R square value 35.7%

SE 0 .23

VI. Result

Table 3 presents the multiple regression analysis between exogenous variable Hunger (Y)vs. 19 causal variables. It has been found that the variable age(X1), education(X2) and stress perception on voice(X9) has contributed to the substantive variance embedded with the consequent variable Y.

The R^2 value being 0.479, it is to infer that 47.9% of variants in the consequent variable has been explained by the combination of these 19 causal variables.

Table 4 presents the step wise regression and it has been depicted that the 3 causal variables that are age(X1), education(X2) and stress perception on voice(X9) have been retained at the last step.

The R^2 value being 0.357, it is to infer that 35.70% of variants in the consequent variable has been explained by the combination of these 3 causal variables.

Age and education are the two important factors as far as the hunger status of an individual is concerned. In case of the non farm sector women are involved in tailoring, sells, shop owning and most of them are mere housewives. So as a youngster they can earn more and spend more on nutrition, but as they grow older their ability to earn become less, so as their nutrition status. As far as the education is concerned, higher education means higher chances to get employed and better understanding about nutrition. Another parameter which is crucial in this regard is stress perception on voice. This clearly indicates that the women who cant cry out for their needs and desires are very much under stress and this stress leads to many physical and mental illnesses.

VII. Similarities and Differences in between Farm and Non Farm Sector

As we can see in the results that the parameters responsible for hunger in farm sector are different than that of the non farm sector. In case of farm sectors the parameters are mostly of agricultural sectors which is quiet different from the non farm sector where the parameters are related to individual development cognitive and stress due to unuttered words.

VIII. Conclusion

The causes of hunger is embedded within the socio economic, ecological and economic factors of an individual. In the rural areas where agriculture is predominating occupation, the core agricultural factors are responsible for hunger. Here the voices are better cried and better heared. But in case of the non farm sectors, the stakeholders are less vocal, so automatically the government is less bothered. Farmers and the farming community is spreading their wings of fire. After thousand years' of silence, they finally cry out in an outrageous manner. The example is right in front of us, the Maharashtra outrage where nearly one lakh farmers marched to words Delhi to draw the attention of the government and policy makers.

Some reasons of being hungry vis a vis poor

1. No or less voice for the rights and against the injustice.
2. Low cropping intensity and low yield.
3. Less emphasis on the agricultural allied sectors.
4. Low educational status.

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