

FARMERS' PERCEPTION OF DROUGHT AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Kunaratnam L.^{1*} and Sajikanthan L.²

¹Department of Sociology, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

²Barathipuram Maha Vidyalayam, Sri Lanka

*luxshekuna@gmail.com

Drought means that a long period when there is little or no rain (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2018). This study mainly focus the drought how to impact on agricultural activities. The main objective of the study was to identify the socioeconomic impacts of drought on farmers' lifestyle and their perception on it. To achieve above objective this study was used primary data collection methods such as direct observation, questionnaire and focus group discussions. Risk concept and Community resilience approach were used in this study. There were 40 farmers selected for questionnaire survey and 10 farmers for focus group discussion. Purposive sampling technique was used for data collection. Farmers faced many challenges because of drought. It impacts on social and economic conditions of the farmers' life. Such as, poverty, psychological problems, increase suicide rates, internal and external migration, conflict circumstances, raised human diseases, reparation of settlement, conflict between wild animals and humans, drinking water problems, insecurity food consumption, income issues, loan, unemployment, decrease local cultivation, law capital its effect on their socio-cultural living, they don't like to go to events and ceremonies because of no jewelry. Further they feel stress, shame on themselves, stigmatization, poor life, dropout children, malnutrition and impact on routine life. Drought is impact on their gardening too. Such as, in the initial, middle and final stage, seed sowing, late germination, pest problems and harvesting. Therefore, farmers' effectiveness lack in export things and increase import in the country. Impact of short period drought was on agriculture in every year. However sometimes, it was going beyond extreme drought. The study area has impact of drought on agriculture land use is there in the Yala season. If one season had drought other season will be the flood. Therefore, in order to reduce impacts of drought, appropriate approach as community resilience should be implemented. Government and NGOs should provide support to empower the farmers. House hold level implementation is needed. Further, alternative farming activities introduce new seeds, adaptation to climate change and awareness programmes in cultivation are recommended.

Keywords: *Farmer, Drought, Socioeconomic, Impact, Challenges*