

An Enquiry on the reasons for the fatigue of Rubber Cultivation in Kerala

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The small rubber growers play a significant role in the total production of rubber in our country. These farmers are widely scattered in the Rubber producing areas of the country living in thousands of villages. The twin problems faced by these farmers are the low yield they are getting from their rubber plantations and very low market price they are getting from the sale of their produce. As the farmers do not have proper roots for selling their produce and as they do not have facilities for sharing proper agricultural practices self help groups called Rubber Producer's Societies (RPS) have been put in place. The RPS offers a strong foundation for protecting the interests of the growers. Since the RPS is based on cooperative principle the mutual cooperation leads to strong foundation. An RPS is registered as per the Charitable Societies Act functioning as an NGO that helps in better bargaining for higher economic returns and for reducing the red-tapism – prevalent in the official functioning of the extension wing of the Government agencies.

Need of the study

The hardly attraction that steady is transform. Consumer's desires, requirements, activities are varying rapidly. In such a swift changing marketing settings, the Rubber farmers are facing a variety of challenges. The circumstances are not so diverse for the RPS in Kerala. In fact, in Kerala, RPSs are facing ruthless and decisive competition, particularly from the private parties. Since the Rubber farmers are also getting the support of private

parties, it is very essential to scan its performance. In this regard, an endeavour has been done by the researcher to observe the performance of the RPS in Kerala. Thus it is clear that continuation of RPS is extremely essential. Since the import of the rubber is on the half way, it is very indispensable to endure the rubber production and its management. Environmental, economic, and social pointers can be used to explain the performance of RPS in rubber sector, which was also evident from the present chapter. Efforts to build up indicators to assess and appraise social scale of RPS on agricultural frontage, especially in rubber cultivation are the need of the hour. Recently there has been a talk in Kerala that there is decrease in the interest in Rubber cultivation among farmers. May be to a great extend this informal discussion is true in Kerala. In this back drop an attempt has been done by the researcher to examine the reasons behind it.

Objective of the study

Objective: - To assess the reasons behind for the decrease in the interest in Rubber cultivation among farmers.

Hypothesis of the study

Hypothesis (Ho):- The reasons behind for the decrease in the interest in Rubber cultivation among farmers are same.

Methodology of the study

The present study has been designed as a sample survey method where the respondents are members of RPSs in Kerala. In the present study the entire respondents groups are classified into three categories, namely President, Vice President and Board of Directors of RPS. Primary data is the main data collected from primary source used for evaluating the current research problem. Accordingly, the researcher selected Kollam and Pathanamthitta as the

sample districts of Southern Region, Kottayam and Ernakulam from Central Region and Kannur and Kasaragod revenue districts are included in the Northern Region of Kerala. The sampling method adopted by the researcher for the present study is systematic sampling.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1.1
Friedman Test on the reasons behind for the decrease in the interest in Rubber cultivation

Reasons	Mean Rank
Increase in Cultivation cost	3.72
Decrease in Profit Margin	4.01
Easy availability of Jobs / more remunerative jobs	2.48
Reduction /Absence of support from Government	4.24
Reduction /Absence is support from Rubber Board	4.13
More profit if land is given for industrial / commercial purpose	2.42
N	990
Chi-Square	1358.963
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	<0.001
Result	Significant

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is clear that the lowest rank assigned by the members of RPS on the reasons behind for the decrease in the interest in Rubber cultivation in Kerala is More profit if land is given for industrial / commercial purpose, whose mean score 2.48. The same is followed by Easy availability of Jobs / more remunerative jobs (Mean rank -2.48) and Increase in Cultivation cost (Mean rank -3.72). Again the reasons are Decrease in Profit Margin (Mean rank -4.01) , Reduction /Absence is support from Rubber Board (Mean rank - 4.13) and Reduction /Absence of support from Government (Mean rank -4.24).

Friedman Test on the reasons behind for the decrease in the interest in Rubber cultivation was assessed with the help of Chi-Square test and Chi-Square test value is 1358.96 and p value<0.001 (P,0.05),showed there is difference among the reasons and null hypothesis is rejected.

Figure 1.1
Mean rank on the reasons for the decrease in the interest in rubber cultivation

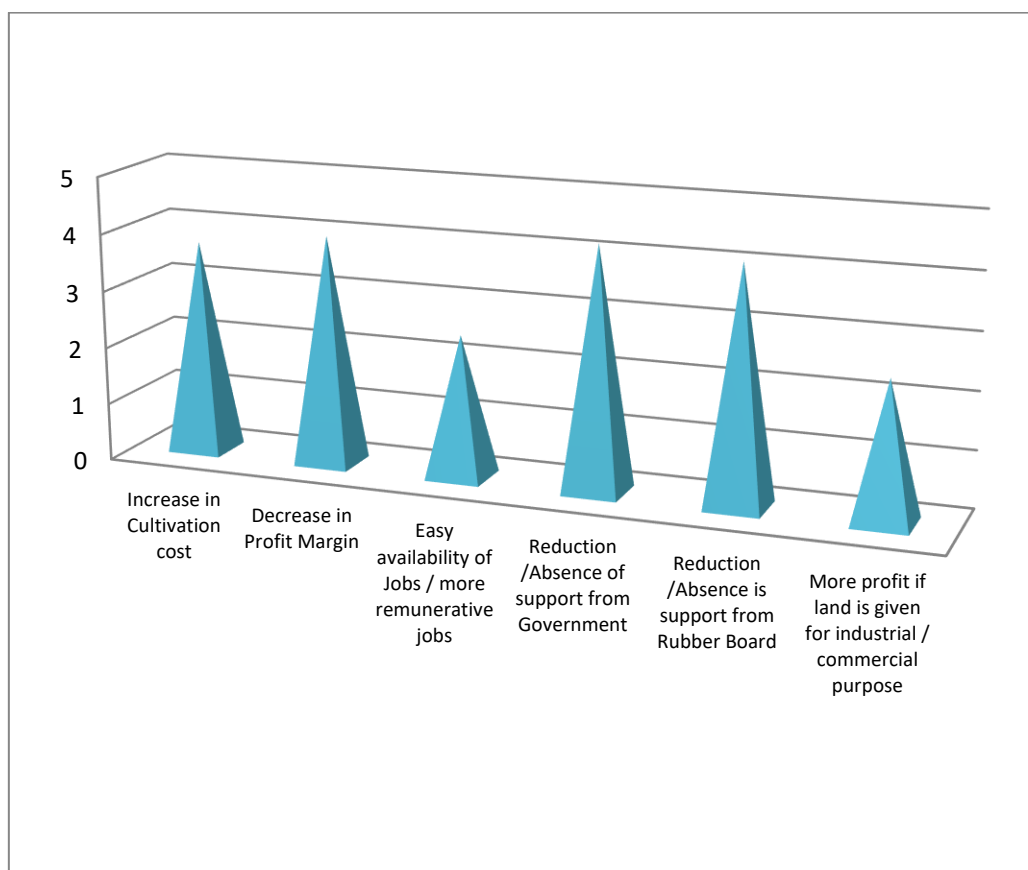


Table 1.2

Rubber Cultivation – ‘With’ and ‘Without RPS’

Finally the researcher decided to compare the extend of importance given to various factors on the Rubber cultivation criteria while selecting a factor of marketing “without” and “with” Rubber producers’ Society. This type of analysis is critical with reference to evaluate the

presence of RPS on the Rubber cultivation in Kerala. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used to assess the mean score to make a proper distinction between the factors. The details are given in table 4.36

Table 1.3
Comparison on the factors that influence Rubber cultivation-without and with RPS

Comparison on the factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supply of farm inputs	990	2.316*	0.6376	4.604***	0.837
Skill Development Training	990	2.452*	2.0319	4.44***	0.8304
Quality improvement supports	990	2.693*	2.2019	4.006***	2.2058
Hybrid Planting	990	2.329*	0.5192	2.898*	2.4548
Financial support	990	2.477*	2.0484	4.052***	2.1414
Infrastructural facility	990	2.486*	0.9113	4.306***	2.3073
Value added benefits	990	2.552*	2.075	3.703***	2.2982
Marketing assistance	990	2.486*	2.0533	3.897***	2.2452
Soil Testing	990	2.465*	2.1007	2.83*	2.6552
Leaf Analysis	990	2.521*	2.2393	2.978*	2.6604

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is clear that the mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Supply of farm inputs without the support of RPS is 2.316 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 4.604(High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Skill Development Training without the support of RPS is 2.452 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 4.44(High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Quality improvement supports without the support of RPS is 2.693 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 4.006(High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Hybrid Planting without the support of RPS is 2.329 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 2.898 (Low influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Financial support without the support of RPS is 2.477 (Low influence) and with the support

of RPS is 4.052(High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Infrastructural facility without the support of RPS is 2.486 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 4.306 (High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Value added benefits without the support of RPS is 2.552 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 3.703(High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Marketing assistance without the support of RPS is 2.486(Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 3.897 (High influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Soil Testing without the support of RPS is 2.465 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 2.83(Low influence). The mean score assigned by the Rubber farmers on Leaf Analysis without the support of RPS is 2.521 (Low influence) and with the support of RPS is 2.978(Low influence).

Table 1.4

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test on comparison on the factors that influence Rubber cultivation-without and with RPS

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Result
Supply of farm inputs	-27.842	<0.001	Significant
Skill Development Training	-26.677	<0.001	Significant
Quality improvement supports	-25.197	<0.001	Significant
Hybrid Planting	-19.079	<0.001	Significant
Financial support	-26.241	<0.001	Significant
Infrastructural facility	-26.937	<0.001	Significant
Value added benefits	-25.504	<0.001	Significant
Marketing assistance	-25.775	<0.001	Significant
Soil Testing	-16.688	<0.001	Significant

Leaf Analysis	-10.803	<0.001	Significant
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Source: Primary Data

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test on comparison on the factors that influence Rubber cultivation without and with RPS was done. The details are explained above table. It is clear from the table that in all cases statistically there is significant difference between without and with influence of RPS on Rubber cultivation in Kerala as the p values for all factors are below 0.05. But it is also imperative to note that with reference to the variables Hybrid Planting, Soil Testing and Leaf Analysis the role of RPS on Rubber farmers or its influence on Rubber cultivation is found very stumpy.

Findings and Conclusion:

The role of RPS on various aspects of Rubber cultivation in Kerala needs to be reoriented towards promoting the process of rubber production in the state – especially in the Northern and Southern region. The role played by these RPSs has been partially successful in the rubber sector. Speedy pace of scientific advancement has revolutionized almost every sphere of social, economic, political and cultural life all across the world. Subsequent radical transformations are perceptible in the way rubber farmers produce, in the way they lessen costs, distribute the produced goods, and anticipation about higher profits. The focal point is on drumming the uncultivated areas and geographical advantage. The support mechanism extended by RPS has made the rubber cultivation into a new dimension. Liberalization of trade restrictions and deregulation of markets have further deepened the association. Since the scope of import to Kerala is a reality, the association with RPS by the Rubber farmers is vital in the current scenario. Because foreign companies are now trying their best to tap the rural market. Thus Rubber farmers must clear maintain significant bond with the RPS, which are evident from the article.

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