INFLUENCE OF LIVELIHOOD CAPITALS ON HOUSEHOLD LIVELIHOOD RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN FARM HOUSEHOLDS: EVIDENCE FROM RURAL SRI LANKA

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Climate change poses a significant threat to global agriculture, particularly impacting small- and medium-scale farmers who rely heavily on farming for their livelihoods and are among the most vulnerable. Building resilience to climate change is critical for mitigating vulnerabilities. While debates continue about the extent to which livelihood capital influences resilience, understanding its role is essential. This study examined how different forms of livelihood capital contribute to the resilience of farming households in the climatically vulnerable *Horowpothana* Divisional Secretariat division of the *Anuradhapura* district. Data was collected from 200 farming households through a multistage, purposive, proportionate random sampling technique using a field survey, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The analysis employed a household livelihood resilience approach, considering five key capitals: human, social, natural, physical, and financial. Results revealed that social capital is the most prominent capital, followed by financial, physical, human, and natural capital. However, the overall average livelihood resilience score is low, with the majority of households demonstrating low resilience. Multiple regression analysis indicated that factors such as income diversification through non-farm sources, access to formal credit, participation in agricultural projects, ownership of agro-wells, and access to usable forests significantly ($p<0.05$) enhance household resilience. This highlights the importance of diverse income sources and resource access in enhancing household climate resilience. Conversely, a higher household dependency ratio negatively impacts ($p<0.05$) resilience. The study concludes that while the contributions of livelihood capitals vary, the overall low resilience underscores the vulnerability of farming households in the region. Therefore, it recommends an integrated approach to strengthen resilience by promoting income diversification, improving access to financial services, enhancing agricultural infrastructure, and investing in human capital development. These measures can contribute to building more resilient farming communities capable of adapting to the challenges posed by climate change.

Keywords: Climate adaptation, Income diversification, Livelihood resilience approach, Social capital