



Livelihood Perspectives and Rural Development in India

Dr. Jagdeesh R. Lanjekar¹ Mr. Atul Galande²

¹Deccan Education Society's, Brihan Maharashtra College of Commerce, Pune – 04

²Research Scholar, BMCC College, Pune

Corresponding Author- Dr. Jagdeesh R. Lanjekar

Email id: jrlanjekar@gmail.com

DOI- 10.5281/zenodo.7298964

Abstract:

In recent decades the livelihoods approach has become central to rural development thinking and practice. But where do such attitudes come from, what are their ideological roots, and under what influence have they emerged? This article provides a historical overview of key moments in the debate on rural livelihoods in India, identifying the tensions, ambiguities and challenges of such approaches. A number of key challenges are identified, centering on the need to embed a more holistic political analysis at the heart of livelihoods approaches. This will enhance the potential of livelihoods approaches to address key gaps in recent debates with questions of knowledge, politics, scale and dynamics.

Introduction:

In recent decades the livelihoods approach has become central to rural development thinking and practice. But where do such attitudes come from, what are their ideological roots, and under what influence have they emerged? It answers these questions by identifying the tensions, ambiguities and challenges of such approaches, along with a historical examination of key moments in discussions of rural livelihoods in India. By connecting perspectives from different fields of rural development scholarship and study, a complex archeology of ideas and practices is revealed, demonstrating the hybrid nature of such concepts. However, while arguing that livelihoods perspectives are important for integrating insights and interventions across disciplinary or disciplinary boundaries, the article touches on some limitations, pitfalls and challenges. In particular, the paper highlights the problems arising from the simplistic use of synthetic frameworks that have dominated some aspects of application development debates and studies over the past decade. Looking to the future, this paper identifies a number of key challenges that focus on the need to embed deeper political analysis at the heart of livelihoods approaches. A livelihood approach starts with how different people live in different places.

Various definitions are given in the literature, for example, means of livelihood 'or 'combination of resources used and activities undertaken for survival'. Descriptive analysis shows a complex web of activities and interactions that emphasize the diversity of people's lives. It can reduce the boundaries of traditional approaches to rural development that focus on limited activities: agriculture, wage labor, farm labor and small-scale industries, etc. Of course outcomes vary, and how different strategies affect livelihood pathways or pathways is an important concern for livelihood analysis. This dynamic, longitudinal analysis emphasizes terms such as coping, adaptation, progress, diversification, and change. Analyzes at the individual level can be integrated into complex livelihood strategies and even at the household, village or district level.

1. A Brief Archeology of Ideas and Approaches:

Despite the claims of some lineages of subsistence thinking, such approaches did not suddenly appear with the influential Chambers and Conway paper in 1992. Far from it: there is a rich and important history going back 50 or more years, where a cross-disciplinary livelihood approach has profoundly influenced rural development thinking and practice. A prime example of

this is the work of the Livingstone Institute in Odisha today. It involves the collaboration of ecologists, anthropologists, agronomists and economists to address changing rural systems and their development challenges. Although this work is not labeled as such, it is integrated, spatially embedded and cross-sectional, and characterized by deep field engagement and commitment to action. Yet such approaches did not dominate development thinking in the coming decades. As theories of modernization influenced the development discourse, more uni-disciplinary approaches came to dominate. Policy advice is more influenced by professional economists than rural development generalists and field administrators in the past. Forecasting models, supply and demand, inputs and outputs, both micro and macroeconomics in different ways, provide a framing that adapts to the exigencies of the time. Post-World War II development institutions such as the World Bank, the UN system, bilateral development agencies, and national governments in newly independent countries around the world reflect the dominance of policy frameworks linking the economy to specialized technology sectors. Natural, Medical and Engineering Sciences.

It sidelined alternative sources of social science expertise, and particularly cross-disciplinary livelihoods approaches. Although alternative, radical Marxist approaches have engaged with the political and economic relations of capitalism at the macro-level, they have rarely deeply examined the specific, micro-level situational realities on the ground. Studies focusing on livelihoods and environmental change were also important tasks. Geographers, social anthropologists, and socio-economists concerned with dynamic ecology, history and longitudinal change, gender and social differences, and cultural contexts provided an influential rich picture analysis of rural settings during this period. It defines the environment and development sector as well as broader concerns about livelihoods under stress, emphasizing coping strategies and livelihood adaptation.

2. Revitalizing Livelihood Perspectives:

Researchers have argued that the livelihoods approach is a unique starting point for the integrated analysis of complex, highly dynamic rural environments. Drawing on

diverse disciplinary perspectives and spanning disciplinary boundaries, livelihoods perspectives provide an essential counterpoint to the monovalent approaches that dominate development inquiry and practice. Yet it has been argued that subsistence methods are good methods of theory discovery. Is a new meta-theory needed to substantiate the livelihoods perspective? As discussed below, if concrete, field-based, grounded experience is clearly required for theorizing key concepts with a particular focus on understanding power and politics, a more pluralistic, hybrid approach is more appropriate. Position should be centered. But many challenges lie ahead in responding to the new environment. The researcher recognizes the need to articulate a livelihood perspective with concerns about knowledge, politics, scale and mobility. Each provides opportunities to broaden, widen and enrich perspectives on livelihoods in India.

3. Dynamics of Rural Livelihoods in India:

A major challenge for the livelihoods approach is dealing with long-term change. The term sustainable livelihoods means that livelihoods are stable, sustainable, resilient and robust in the face of both external shocks and internal pressures. But which pressures and which shocks are important? How is sustainability assessed? What will future generations be like? Has livelihood become part of the equation? Despite the previous appeal, it is a weak component of most livelihood analyses. Instead, systemic change focuses on coping and short-term adaptation rather than long-term secular change. By not paying attention to changes in these long-term, slow variables, slow changes can be avoided as people intensify production, improve environmental conditions, invest, or migrate. But by the same token, a local, adaptive picture of coping with immediate pressures based on local skills and knowledge may miss long-term changes that, over time, undermine livelihoods in more fundamental ways. Long-term temperature increases may make agriculture impossible, changes in terms of trade may reduce the competitiveness of local production, or labor migration to urban areas may eliminate some livelihood options in the long term. Stability and resilience may not always manifest through local adaptation in highly vulnerable

situations. Instead, livelihoods can undergo dramatic restructuring in response to long-term change. This is particularly highlighted by the challenge of climate change. The language of livelihoods is certainly inherent in thinking about climate adaptation, linking climate change to development goals.

4. Conclusion :

The livelihoods approach provides an important perspective through which to look at complex rural development issues. But to remain relevant and useful, the approach to livelihoods in India needs to be more exploratory and concrete. These are intellectually and practically challenging agendas for Indian policymakers and policy makers. This is a wakeup call for those who believe that the livelihoods approach should be central to development. By the late 1990s a vibrant and dynamic community of practice had drawn its attention away from Ball. A certain complacency, liberal financial flows, comfortable localism and institutional inertia have not addressed some of the larger, emerging issues of rapid globalization, disruptive environmental change and fundamental changes in the rural economy. Innovative thinking and practical experiments to address these challenges have yet to transform livelihoods in India in entirely new ways. But, more positively, a new livelihoods agenda is unfolding around the four themes outlined above. This does not mean abandoning a fundamental commitment to locally embedded contexts, place-based analysis and poor people's perspectives; this does not mean responding slavishly to frames provided by dominant disciplines such as economics.

But there is an urgent need to re-examine, re-examine and re-examine and draw on productivity from other inquiries and experiences to enrich and revitalize approaches to livelihoods for new contemporary challenges. A reaffirmed livelihoods approach requires, first, a fundamental recognition of cross-scale dynamic change and, second, a central position in considering knowledge, power, values and political change. The researcher has argued that the issues of knowledge, scale, politics and mobility constitute an exciting and challenging agenda of research and study to enrich livelihood perspectives for India's future rural development.

5. References :

1. Ellis, F. 2000. Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in Developing Countries. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Farrington, J., d. Ramsud and J. Walker. 2002. Approaches to Sustainable Livelihoods in Urban Areas: General Lessons with Illustrations from Indian Examples. ODI Working Paper, 162. London.
3. Almrigh, F. 1998. Sustainable Livelihood Approaches. General Report of the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, 1995-1997, Rome.
4. Bauman, P. 2000. Sustainable Livelihoods and Political Capital: Arguments and Evidence from Decentralization and Natural Resource Management in India, ODI Working Paper, 136. India.
5. Hayden, G. 1998. Governance and Sustainable Livelihoods. Paper for the Sustainable Livelihoods and Sustainable Development Workshop jointly organized by UNDP and the Center for African Studies, University of Florida, Gainesville, 1 - 3 October 1998.
6. Lipton, M. And M. Moore. 1972. Village Survey Methodology in Less Developed Countries. Brighton: IDS, University of Sussex.
7. Mortimore, M. 1989. Drought, Farmers, Adapting to Drought and Desertification in West Africa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, London.
8. Tagoli, C. 1998. "Rural-Urban Linkages and Sustainable Rural Livelihoods", Odisha: DFID Department of Natural Resources, India.