

The socio-economic status of the vegetable farmers: A case study of the lumding development block of assam

¹Dr. Amith Roy

¹HOD cum Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Lumding College, Lumding-742447, District-Hojai, Assam.

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Abstract: Socio-economic study helps to observe the dynamics of insights' human progress in society both economically and socially. The present study is an attempt to focus on the socio-economic status of the vegetable farmers in the five (5) selected villages of Lumding development block of Assam. The study is based on primary data collected from the selected villages. For data analysis, simple statistical tools like chart, diagram and tabulation methods have been used. The data collected and analyzed to find out the various aspects of the vegetable farming witnessed by the vegetable farmers in the study area. The vegetable farming is a challenging profession required hard work and close attention to grow vegetable. In the data analysis, we tried to cover-up various socio-economic parameters that can influence socio-economic position of the farmers in the society. The result of the study highlights the various indicators related to socio-economic position of the vegetable farming households. The result of the study confirms the improvement in living condition of the vegetable farmers. The study also confirms satisfactory socio-economic position of the vegetable farmers in the society.

Keywords: Vegetable, Farming, Socio-economic, Farmer etc.

Introduction:

The socio-economic study is a study which focuses on social and economic life of the people. The social scientists witnessed a poor socio-economic scenario among the rural population of India. Social position and economic viability together determine an individual's quality of life. A person having better social position and a stable income can provide access to better housing, healthcare, education, and other amenities that can enhance social experiences and contribute to overall well-being. Vegetable farming is a traditional practice and a type of crop production where farmers involve in growing vegetables intended for self-consumption and for commercial purposes. Basically, vegetable farming is a labor-intensive practice but with the development of science and technology farmers widely use various machineries and tools for growing vegetables. Presently the growing demand of the vegetable turn into a profitable profession but continuous hike in cost of growing vegetable discourages the farmers towards the vegetable farming. So, it is become quite interesting to know ground reality of the farmers and their socio-economic condition. The paper is mainly based on primary field survey and the survey conducted in the selected villages of Lumding Development Block. For field survey, five villages are selected purposively on the basis of availability of vegetable farmers. The Lumding Development Block comes under Hojai district of Assam state. The total population of the Lumding Development Block is 255872, where the male and female populations are 130677 and 125195 respectively. The total size of the Lumding Development Block area is about 574.92 square kilometer.

¹HOD cum Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Lumding College, Lumding-742447, District-Hojai, Assam.
Email: amithroy2008@gmail.com

The present study is an attempt to focus on the socio-economic status of the vegetable farmers in the selected villages of Lumding development block of Assam. Present socio-economic study in Lumding development block is conducted to get

the dynamics of fact regarding human progress in society both economically and socially. The study also intended to find out real position of respondent's household in society as per various socio-economic parameters.

Objectives:

The following the prime objectives of the study

1. To analyse the demographic features of people, involve in vegetable farming.
2. To find out the level of accessing good social indicators by the vegetable farmers and their family.
3. To highlights the status of economic condition of the respondents.

Literature Review:

Reviewing related literature guide the researcher and help to understand the pros and cons of the research in said area, it also helps to design the objective and methodology for new research by finding out the gap of research in same field.

The socio-economic status comprises not just quantitative attributes like income and education; it also comprises financial position, good housing, sanitation etc. The socioeconomic status also can be judge by quality-of-life attributes and opportunities can afforded within society. Like, economic condition of a person can't assess by not just income rather it is the result of multiple factors like education, opportunities of income, skill, physical and psychological health etc.

According to Dutton and Levine (1989), socio-economic status is "a composite measure that typically incorporates economic status, measured by income; social status, measured by education; and work status, measured by occupation". The lifestyle of an individual depends largely on their economic status. The social position of a person is therefore dominated by his or her income. There is general consensus that income, education, and occupation together represent Socio-economic status better than any of these alone (White 1982) Krieger, Williams, and Moss (1997) define socio-economic position as "an aggregate concept that includes both resource-based and prestige-based measures, as linked to both childhood and adult social class position" Although they suggest that the term Socio-economic status clouds the distinction between resource-based measures such as income and education, and prestige-based measures such as occupation (Krieger et al., 1997).

Research indicates that children from low socio-economic status (SES) households and communities develop academic skills slower than children from higher SES groups (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, & Maczuga, 2009). Many studies confirms that economic stability and quality social status together improves the chances of better future for the kids. The low SES in childhood is related to poor cognitive development, language, memory, socio emotional processing, and consequently poor income and health in adulthood. The school systems in low-SES communities are often under resourced, negatively affecting students' academic progress and outcomes (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008).

Individual measures of Socio-economic status such as income, education, and occupation reflect the opportunities and resources people might have (Lynch & Kaplan, 2000), and are part of one's intrapersonal environment. Inadequate education and increased dropout rates affect children's academic achievement, perpetuating the low-SES status of the community. Improving school systems and early intervention programs may help to reduce some of these risk factors; therefore, increased research on the correlation between SES and education is essential (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008). The safe drinking water and the availability of basic amenities including health care to the poor households would improve the probability of their moving out of poverty (Kumari and Singh, 2009). It is said that socio-economic position of an individual, family or a group is an important determinant of livelihoods, as they influence the level of knowledge, skills and income that they have to live on (Debajyoti et al. 2022).

Data and Methodology of the Study:

The present study is based on primary data. The data collected from five selected villages from Lumding Development Block. For data collection, Purposive random sampling technique has been applied. The five villages from Lumding Development Block have been selected purposively on the basis of availability of vegetable farmer and after that 20 household (involved in vegetable farming) from each villageshas been selected randomly. The structured survey schedule has been used for data collection and data collected by interviewing the household members engaged in vegetable farming. Total 100 household has been interviewed from five selected villages by 20 household from each village. The used survey schedule covered various information related to socio-economic aspects of the vegetable farmers.

For data analysis simple statistical tools like charts, diagram and tabulation methods have been used. The collected data has been properly arranged to highlights the real scenario of the vegetable farmers of the study area. The present study tries to cover and present all the members of the household covered in the study.

Analysis of the Study:

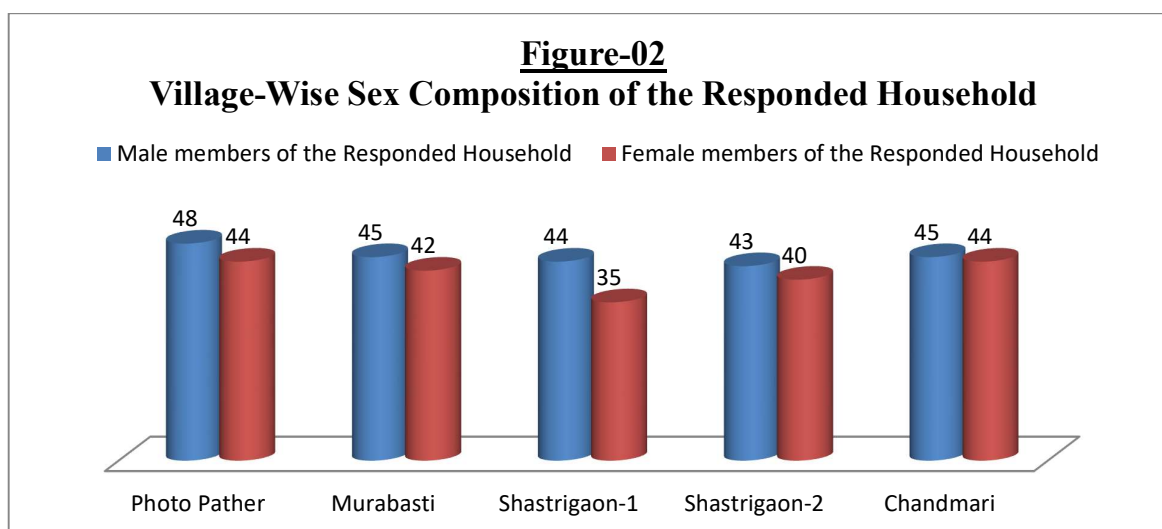
The socio-economic status is a key indicator to judge about the living condition of a person and household. The data collected for the study are analyzed properly with the help of various tables and charts. The following figures covered socio-economic dimensions of the vegetable farmers systematically. There are several parameters like income, education, health, housing condition, sanitation etc. to know about the socio-economic status of a person. Present study is an attempt to highlight the socio-economic status of the vegetable farmers in the study area. The study has been conducted on 5 selected villages of the Lumding development block and from each village, 20 vegetable farmer household and total 100 household from 5 villages has been selected for the study.

Figure-01**Details of the Vegetable Farmers' Interviewed for the study**

Category	No. of Household	Total Family members of the Responded Household	Male members of the Responded Household	Female members of the Responded Household
Photo Pather	20	92	48	44
Murabasti	20	87	45	42
Shastrigaon-1	20	79	44	35
Shastrigaon-2	20	83	43	40
Chandmari	20	89	45	44
Overall	100	430	225	205

Source: Primary field survey

The figure-01 highlights the overall scenario about of the data collected for the study. From the 5 selected villages sum total 100 households cum 430 individuals are covered for the study. From each village 20 Households are surveyed purposively from the households involved in vegetable farming and no. of individuals are covered from each village are depend on the family size of the respective surveyed households.



Source: Primary field survey

Sex-wise distribution of the family members covered in the study is shown in figure-02. Shastrigaon-1 shows major gender gap and Chandmari shows less gender gap among the surveyed households.

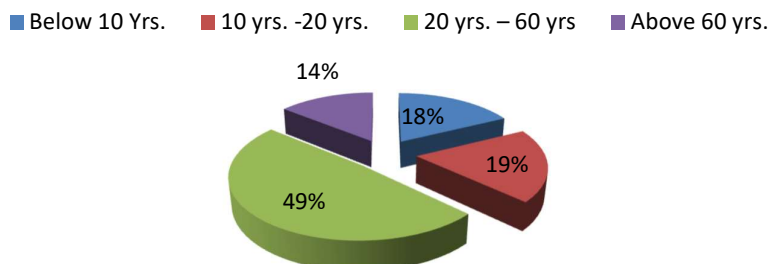
Working population of any country is considered as a asset or capital for the country. Whereas, minor population are considering as future working population of the country.

Figure-03**Age distribution of the Family Members of the Responded Household**

Category	Below 10 Yrs.	10 yrs. -20 yrs.	20 yrs. – 60 yrs	Above 60 yrs.
Photo Pather	16	16	49	11
Murabasti	17	15	45	10
Shastri gaon-1	10	16	41	12
Shastri gaon-2	15	19	34	15
Chandmari	18	17	41	13
Overall	76	83	210	61

Source: Primary field survey

Figure-03 demonstrates the various age group of the population covered in the study. The village Photo Pather shows highest working population i.e. between age group 20 to 60 is considered as a working population of the country. On the other hand, village Shastri gaon-2 has lowest working population among the villages and sample collected.

Figure-04**Age Groups of the Total Population of Surveyed Household
(in Percentage)**

Source: Primary field survey

Overall percentage-wise population structure shows by the figure-04. It has been observed that overall, 49% population belongs to working age group (i.e. between 20 to 60 ages) and total 32% (14+18) are below working age category i.e. future working population. The figure also shows that only 19% of the populations are above 60 age categories. The majority of the working populations are directly involved in vegetable farming and earning their livelihood from vegetable farming.

Education is a process of learning, which enhancing the capabilities and improving the human condition through updated knowledge, better living conditions, health, productivity and for social progress. It helps to develop moral value and capable to understand how to restrict the obstacles or barriers in the way of social development.

Figure-05**Details of the Education Level of the Responded Household**

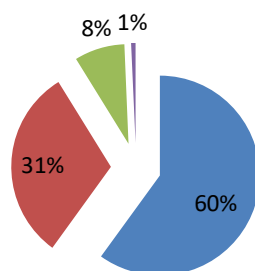
Category	Below Primary (Below Class V)	Up to HSLC (Up to HSLC Appeared)	Up to Graduation (Up to Graduation Appeared)	Above Graduation
Photo Pather	56	29	7	0
Murabasti	54	26	6	1
Shastri gaon-1	51	23	5	0
Shastri gaon-2	46	27	8	2
Chandmari	51	29	9	0
Overall	258	134	35	3

Source: Primary field survey

The above figure-05 displays the level of education among the family members of surveyed household. Traditionally the surveyed villages are famous for their vegetable cultivation; the people of said villages either involve in vegetable farming or engage themselves as labourers in nearby town. The attention towards education is relatively poor but now the scenario is changing and more and more children are motivated towards education.

Figure-06
Education Level of the Members of the responded Household

■ Up to Primary Level ■ Up to HSLC ■ Up to Graduation ■ Above Graduation



Source: Primary field survey

The Figure-06 highlights that education level of the 60% of the population are below primary level, 31% of the population reported education level up to HSLC, 8% studied up to graduation level and only 1% of the population crosses the education level above graduation level.

Figure-07

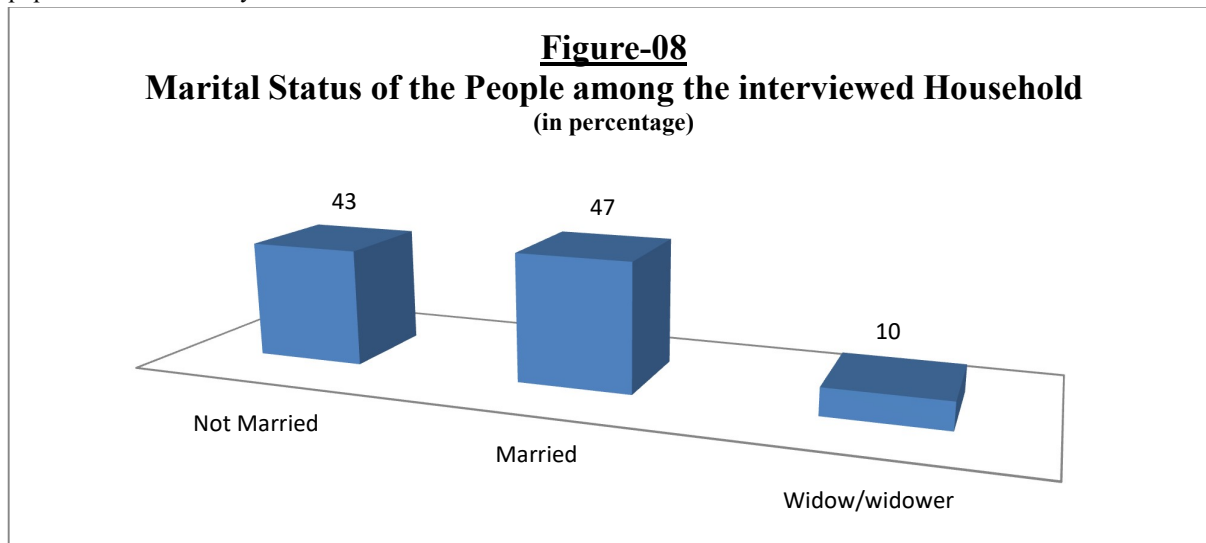
Marital status of family members of the Interviewed household

Category	Not Married	Married	Widow/widower
Photo Pather	39	42	11
Murabasti	34	43	10
Shastri gaon-1	33	38	8
Shastri gaon-2	38	37	8
Chandmari	40	42	7

Overall	184	202	44
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Source: Primary field survey

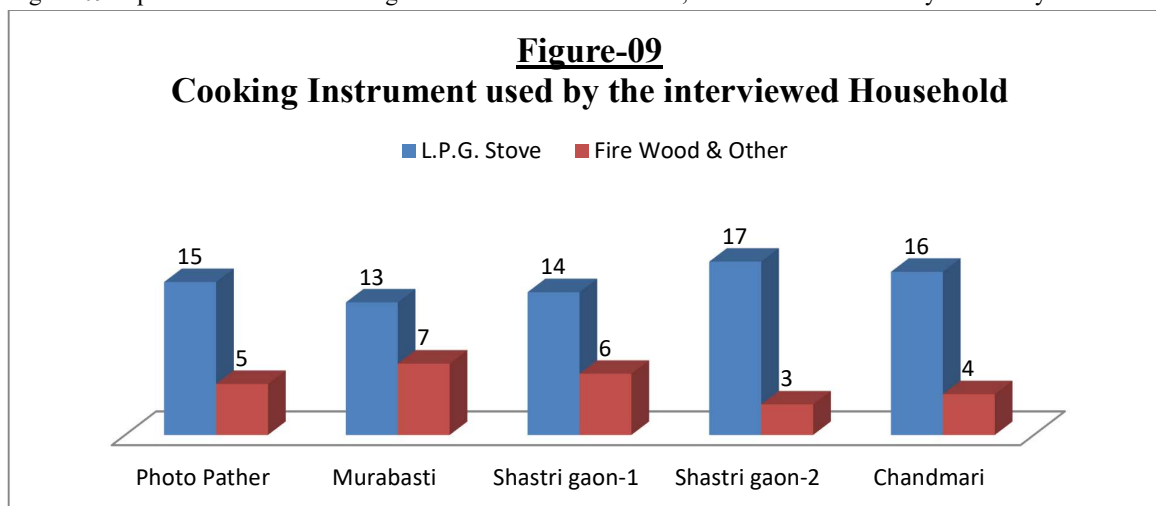
It is believed in our society that getting married is a sign which indicates that a person is capable and ready to take the responsibility. Due to said reason, during data collection we also collected information regarding the marital status of the population of the surveyed household.



Source: Primary field survey

The overall picture regarding marital status are explained from Figure-08, it is shown in the said figure that 47% of the total population from surveyed household are married and 43% of the population not married (Which includes Minors also). It is also seen that 10% of the total population are reported as widow/widower.

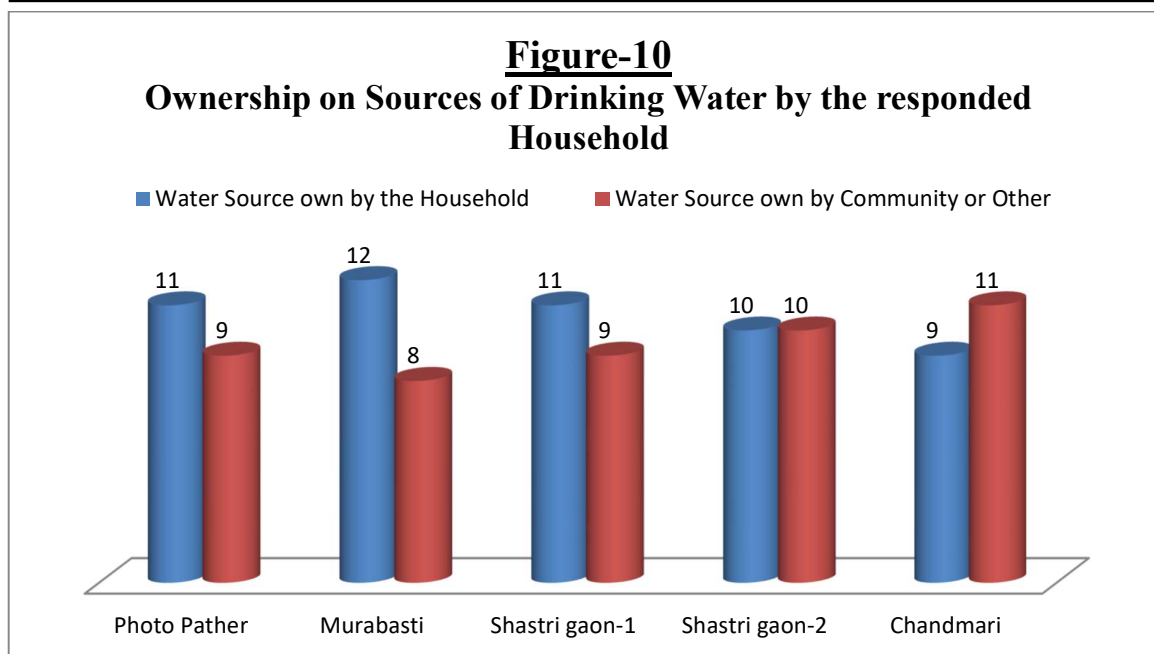
Figure-09 explains the uses of cooking instruments like LPG Stove, Fire wood and others by the surveyed households.



Source: Primary field survey

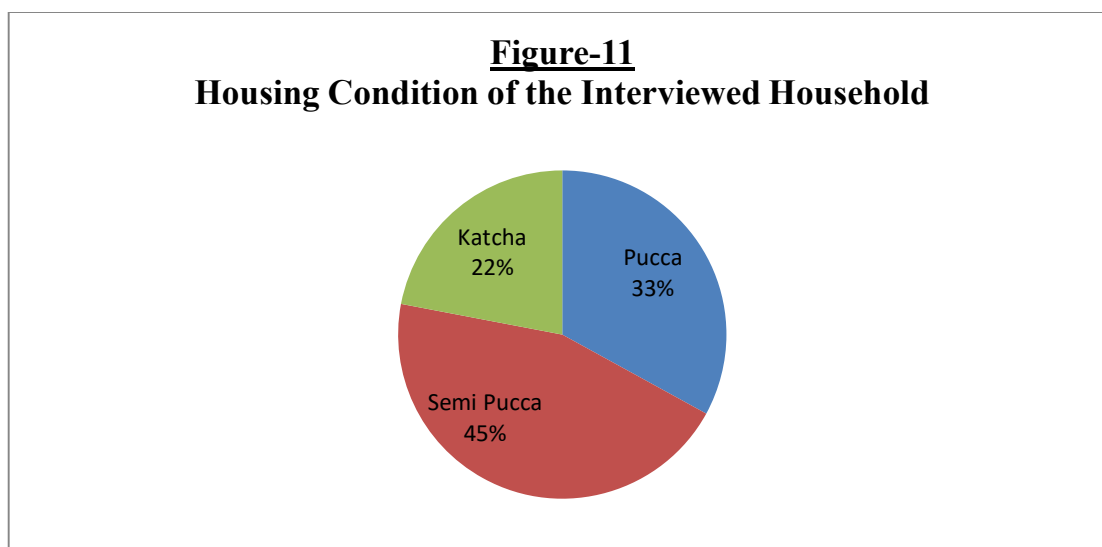
It has been seen in the above figure is that majority of the household uses LPG Stove as a primary cooking instrument and very less numbers are reported Fire Wood and Others as a primary cooking instrument uses in their family. The households motivated to use LPG stove; one primary reason is the Prime Minister Ujjala Scheme.

Ownership on any assets indicates the ability and socio-economic position of an individual in a society. Safe and clean drinking water is the prime requirement for healthy life. Figure-10 shows the ownership on drinking water source by the responded household.



Source: Primary field survey

The green columns are indicating the households having ownership on drinking water and the red columns are highlighting the household not having own drinking water source, i.e. depends on water source owned by community and others.

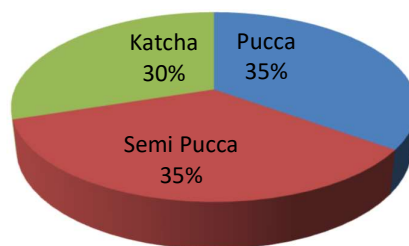


Source:

Primary field survey

The housing condition i.e. the house where people live speaks the real condition of a household. The figure-11 shows the housing conditions of the household interviewed. From the figure, it has been observed that around 33% of the household having Pucca house, 45% reported semi pucca and only 22% reported living in katcha house.

Figure-12
Sanitation of the Responded Household

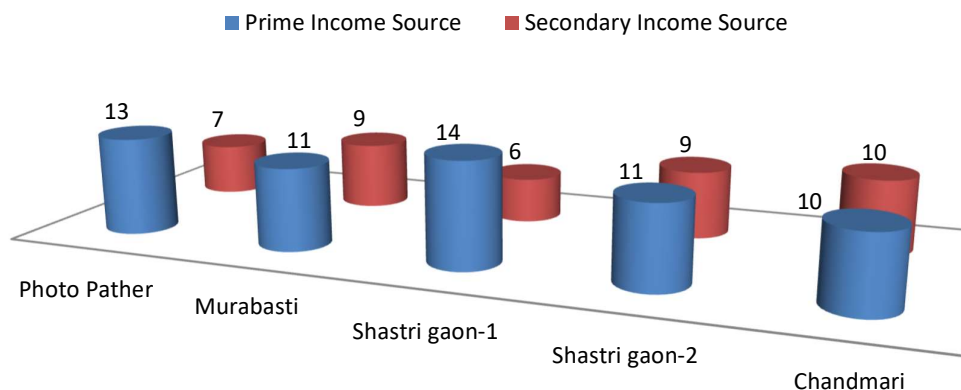


Source: Primary field survey

Like housing, one of the fundamental needs of civilized society is better sanitary facility. Sanitation facility of the household can depicts the real scenario of the household. In the figure-12, the sanitary facility of the responded households is shown. Total 35% of the households reported of having pucca, 35% household also having Semi-pucca and only 30% of the surveyed household reported of having katcha sanitary facility.

The following figure (Figure-13) highlights the nature of earning from vegetable farming. It has been observed that vegetable farming is not the primary occupation of all vegetable farmers. Some of the vegetable farmer reported vegetable farming as their secondary profession. In the Chandmari village, it has been seen that half of the surveyed household reported vegetable farming as a secondary income source and in the Shastri gaon-1 only 6 surveyed household reported vegetable farming as a secondary income source.

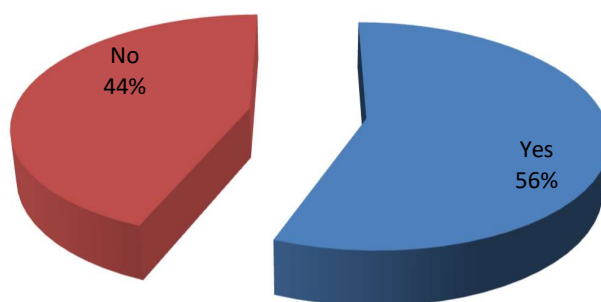
Figure-13
Income from Vegetable Farming as Reported by the Responded Household



Source: Primary field survey

Satisfaction in a profession matter a lot. The vegetable farmers are facing various problems in growing vegetables and after that still they feel satisfied, it indicates the profession is the profitable one. The Figure-14 indicates that majority of the farmers are satisfied in vegetable farming.

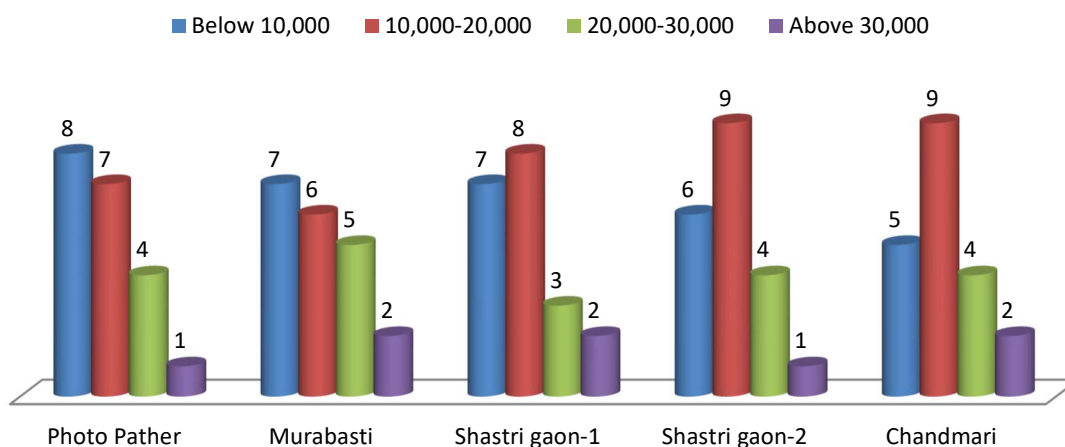
Figure-14
Percentage of Household Reported satisfactory income from Vegetable Farming



Source: Primary field survey

The figure-15 highlights the village-wise per-capita income of the vegetable farming households. The village Photo Pather and Murabasti shows highest number of surveyed households having per-capita income below Rs. 10,000. Whereas, Village Shastri gaon-2 and Chandmari shows 9 households reported of having per-capita income between Rs. 10,000 to 20,000.

Figure-15
Per-Capita Income Reported by the Interviewed Household (Yrly.)



Source: Primary field survey

Participation and position in society related events indicates the social position and activeness of a person. So, participation on such events by the vegetable farmer represents present profession not only providing them an earning source but also it empowers the vegetable farmers to ensure active participation in society related events.

Figure-16

“Participation and Position in Society related Activities” Reported by the Interviewed Household

Category	Actively Involved	Partially Involved	Not Involved
Photo Pather	06	10	04
Murabasti	05	11	04
Shastri gaon-1	05	12	03
Shastri gaon-2	04	12	04
Chandmari	04	11	05
Overall	24	56	20

Source: Primary field survey

Figure-16 highlights the village-wise participation in society related events by the vegetable farmers. The data shows in the above figure confirm satisfactory participation and empowerment of the vegetable farmers.

Conclusion of the Study:

The present study is an attempt to focus on the socio-economic status of the vegetable farmers in the 5 selected villages of Lumding development block of Assam. Total 100 household has been interviewed from five selected villages by 20 household from each village. The study is based on primary data collected from the 5 selected villages. The collected data covered various information related to socio-economic aspects of the vegetable farmers. For data analysis, simple statistical tools like chart, diagram and tabulation methods have been used. The data collected and analyzed to find out the real pros and cons of the vegetable farming witnessed by the vegetable farmers in the study area. It has been observed that vegetable farming is a challenging profession required hard work to grow vegetable. To analyze the socio-economic status of the vegetable farmer, we have gone through various socio-economic indicators in the study. The results of the study covered all the objectives of the study and find out the answers of statements mentioned in the objectives. The data collected in the study analyzed various aspects of the socio-economic conditions and it revealed that, there is an improvement in living condition of the vegetable farmers. Though the vegetable farming is unable to provide constant and certainty in income to the farmers still a good number of people in the study area are having it as a primary profession. Regarding socio-economic status the study confirms satisfactory socio-economic position of the vegetable farmers in the society.

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