

**ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF SMALL HOLDER PADDY
FARMER'S IRRIGATION PROBLEMS IN MATHUGAMA
AND AGALAWATTA DS DIVISIONS**



By

KANISHKA C. FERNANDO



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Paddy cultivation is a major agricultural event in Sri Lanka and it essentially needs a good irrigation system for a higher production. Irrigation problems cause yield losses in paddy cultivation. This study is focused on major irrigation problems regarding small holder paddy cultivation in Mathugama and Agalawatta DS divisions of Kaluthara district.

A survey was carried out by interviewing a sample of consumers with the face-to-face, using an ad hoc questionnaire in order to collect both quantitative and qualitative information on various socio-economic and cultural aspects regarding the interviewees, as well as their problems regarding Irrigation for paddy cultivation.

The respondents were selected from two DS divisions in Kaluthara district. 100 paddy farmers were interviewed for the survey. Simple random sampling method was used to select the respondents from small holder paddy farmers in study area. The respondents were selected according to the population in each DS division.

Primary data were gathered through personal interviews with 100 paddy farmers. Results found that there were 84 male respondents and 16 female respondents in this study hence making a total of 100 respondents. A majority of the respondent (58%) were from the age group of above 47 years while the 37-46 years old made up 23 percent of the respondents and 19 percent of the respondents were 27-36 years old. According to their marital status 88 percent of the respondents were married and 12 percent of the respondents were single.

71% of respondents mentioned that they have enough water for paddy cultivation in both yala and maha season but the remaining 29% said that they have not received sufficient

amount of water. In maha season, 72% of respondents use rain water as their main water source for paddy cultivation and 18% used water from external sources while 10% use both. 61% of respondents used external water sources like Channel irrigation water in yala season, 16% used Rain water and remaining 1.8% used both for the cultivation in yala season.

Study revealed that, flooding condition in maha season, contamination of irrigation water with industrial wastes and problems in irrigation channels were the major factors affecting the seasonal income of small holder paddy farmers in this area.

Results revealed that only 10 percent of farmers earned an income more than Rs. 75,000 per month 38 percent of the respondents had the income level between Rs. 25,000 - Rs. 50,000, and 20 percent of respondents earned an income between Rs. 50,000 - Rs. 75,000 per month from paddy cultivation. Most of the small-holder farmers acquire water for their cultivations from irrigation channels and problems associated with those channels were the reason for low paddy yield in yala season.

Proper maintenance of channels by farmer organizations is the main solution to overcome problems associated with irrigation system. By improving and extending Irrigation facilities to Rural areas, Farmers can produce more paddy yield and it ultimately earn high-income from paddy cultivation.

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