

Synopsis Submitted to



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In

Development Management

By

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Synopsis for Dissertation

1. Title - Exploring Non-Farm Livelihood Opportunities for Rural Households: A Case Study Approach Chapter 1 Introduction

Rural India continues to face substantial economic challenges due to declining farm incomes, land fragmentation, and unpredictable climatic events. Traditional agriculture, which remains the primary livelihood source for most rural households, is increasingly becoming unsustainable for small and marginal farmers. As a response to this vulnerability, **non-farm livelihood opportunities** have emerged as vital alternatives to secure rural incomes and improve quality of life.

In Rajasthan, the NGO **Coecoedecon (Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society)** has been working with rural communities to enhance their resilience by promoting sustainable, diversified, and integrated rural livelihoods. Through initiatives such as the **Smart Farmer model, Integrated Farming Model (IFM), Poshan Vatika**, and the **Sheetala Masala Udyog**, Coecoedecon has enabled rural households to explore non-farm options such as spice processing, dairy, horticulture, and food value addition.

Rationale of the Study

This study focuses on the role of non-farm livelihood options in rural development, particularly those facilitated by NGOs like Coecoedecon. Given the multidimensional benefits—including economic empowerment, gender equity, nutrition, and sustainability—understanding these models through a case-based approach offers useful insights for policy, replication, and scaling.

2. Research Question

Q1. What kinds of non-farm livelihood opportunities are emerging in rural Rajasthan?

Q2. How have initiatives like Sheetala Masala Udyog and Poshan Vatika impacted the livelihoods of rural households?

Q3. What are the key challenges and success factors associated with non-farm employment for rural women and small farmers?

3. Objective of the study

To explore and document various non-farm livelihood models promoted by Coecoedecon.

To assess the socio-economic impacts of these models on rural households.

To evaluate the role of women in these livelihood initiatives.

To identify gaps and opportunities for scaling such interventions

Chapter 2 Review of literature

Non-farm employment has increasingly been recognized as a critical pathway for rural development. According to the World Bank, in countries like India, non-farm sectors account for over 30% of rural employment. Literature points to multiple benefits of non-farm livelihoods: income diversification, reduced dependency on erratic agriculture, women's empowerment, and resilience against climate shocks.

Theoretical Context

- **Ellis (2000)** describes livelihood diversification as a strategy for managing risk in rural households.
- **Chambers and Conway (1992)** define sustainable livelihoods as those that can cope with stress and shocks and maintain or enhance capabilities and assets.

In the Indian context, **NABARD (2019)** emphasizes the role of SHGs, agro-processing, and village enterprises in reducing rural poverty.

Empirical Studies

- **Singh & Kaur (2020)** highlight how women-led SHGs in Rajasthan improved family income through value-added agro-processing.
- **Kumar (2017)** documents success stories of organic farming linked with local food businesses, especially under NGO-led models.
- **Coecoedecan's own field reports** showcase evidence of improved nutrition, women's autonomy, and sustainable land practices in projects like Smart Farmer and Poshan Vatika.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a **case study approach**, suitable for exploring the depth and context of interventions in real-life rural settings. The design is qualitative in nature, supported by primary field visits and interviews.

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Hypothesis –

- H1: Non-farm livelihood initiatives have led to improved household incomes and nutritional status.
- H2 : Women's participation in non-farm enterprises is positively associated with household well-being and decision-making power.

Method of study –

- **Case Study Methodology** was employed to understand individual experiences of livelihood models.
- **Qualitative tools:** Observation, interviews, and focused group discussions.
- **Secondary data:** Coecoedecan reports, government documents, and academic literature

Sample Selection

Five case studies were selected to reflect the diversity of non-farm interventions:

1. **Seema Devi** – Sheetala Masala Udyog (Spice Processing)
2. **Laduram** – Integrated Farming Model
3. **Anita Kanwar** – Women-led mixed farming and dairy
4. **Sushila** – Organic farming and Poshan Vatika
5. **Mansha Devi** – SHG empowerment and economic revival

Plan for data analysis –

- **Thematic Analysis:** Categorizing findings into livelihood type, impact on income, empowerment, and challenges.
- **SWOT Analysis:** For each model, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were documented

Chapter 4 Study area Profile

- **Geographic Focus**

- The study was conducted in rural blocks of **Chaksu**, located in **Jaipur district**, Rajasthan. Villages include **Shilki, Akodiya, Damodar ka Bas, Taj ka Bas, and Tambadiya**, which are active centers of Coecoedecon's interventions.

Demographics and Economy

- The villages are primarily inhabited by Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, and economically weaker sections.
- Agriculture is the main occupation, but land holdings are small (2–5 bighas on average).
- Non-farm activities are gaining momentum due to water scarcity and climate risks.

Developmental Context

- The area has seen rising participation in Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- Government schemes like **MGNREGA, Poshan Abhiyaan**, and **Subsidized Livelihood Programs** are present but inconsistently implemented.
- NGOs like Coecoedecon fill critical gaps through training, infrastructure (like spice units), and grassroots mobilization.

COECOEDECON's Role

- Promoting **smart farming** and climate resilience.
- Strengthening **SHGs and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)**.
- Facilitating **non-farm enterprises** like Sheetala Masala Udyog.
- Encouraging **gender-equity** and skill-building, especially among women.

