FACTORS AFFECTING LESS YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE IN SRI LANKA

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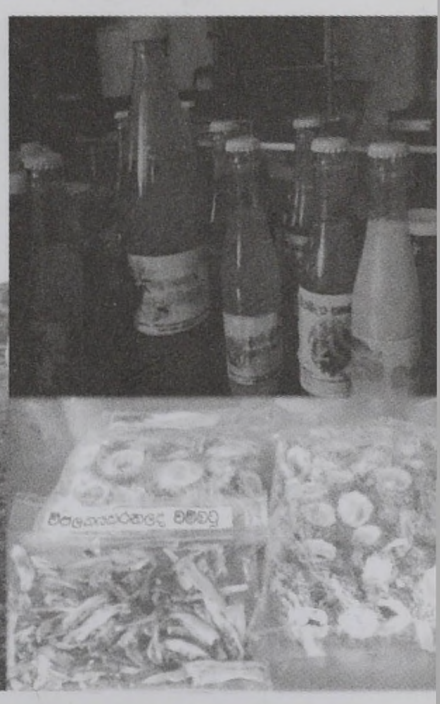

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FOREWORD

One of the invaluable resources of the country is youth, which consists of approximately 1/3 of the total population. However, great majority of the total unemployed persons are in the category of youth. On the other hand, according to public discourses, youth participation is less in agriculture though 33 percent of the labour force contributes to agriculture sector.

This study aims to find out the factors affecting less youth participation in smallholder agriculture in Sri Lanka. Study reveals that approximately 70 percent of the youth are engaged in smallholder agriculture full time, part time or as family labourers. Further, study reveals that number of factors such as marketing problems and less profit for their labour, lack of social recognition for farming as a job, uncertainty, problems related to availability and accessibility of basic resources, trainings and information, extension services and social security system influence less youth participation in agriculture. At the end of the study, research team recommended number of valuable strategies to encourage youth in agriculture.

I congratulate the research team for successfully undertaking this research and hope the findings and recommendations would be very useful to policy makers to enhance youth participation in smallholder agriculture in Sri Lanka.

E. M. Abhayaratne
Director

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M.K. Nadeeka Damayanthi
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall objective of the study is to examine the factors affecting less youth participation in smallholder agriculture sector in Sri Lanka. The specific objectives are to examine youth perception on farming as an occupation, identify and analyze pull factors and push factors of youth participation in agriculture and discuss ideas of youth and other stakeholders to increase youth participation in smallholder agriculture. Primary data were collected through questionnaire survey, key informant discussions and focus group discussions. Field survey was carried out in Nuwara Eliya, Matale, Hambantota, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Kurunegala, Ampara, Batticaloa and Monaragala districts. Total sample was 533 including 33 agricultural graduates and undergraduates from various universities. The respondents belonged to age group 15- 29 years.

Type and degree of youth participation differ by farming system or crop cultivated. Of the total sample 70 percent were engaged in agriculture related various activities full time, part time or as family labourers while 7.3 percent were engaged in agriculture related industries or businesses. Of the total sample, 58.2 percent stated that they would like to engage in full time farming while 39.6 percent and 2.3 percent of respondents said that they do not like to engage in full time farming and do not have clear idea respectively.

Majority of the respondents who were willing to engage in full time farming have agriculture related long time experience, land and labour. On the other hand most of them do not have adequate skills, training and education for a 'good job'.

Youth participation in smallholder agriculture is significantly associated with the factors of age, marital status, availability and accessibility of highlands, paddy lands, extension services, market facilities and higher education. Further, factors like gender, size of paddy land, family income, and non availability of social security scheme or pension system, lack of or non recognition for farming also affect youth participation in agriculture.

To attract youth for farming several suggestions are made such as strengthening existing young Farmer Organizations, establishing new young Farmer Organization in an effective way such as providing necessary assistants, establishing corporate industries and businesses for youths, increasing the number and enhancing the quality of AIs service, introducing high tech agriculture, assisting youth to practice them and making sure quota system for agriculture related government jobs (specially for para- statal bodies and extension service) for members of farm families, providing special facilities to young farmers such as training and loans with minimum interest rates.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Agrarian Development Centre
APRA	Agricultural Production and Research Assistant
AI	Agriculture Instructor
CBSL	Central Bank of Sri Lanka
EAP	Economically Active Population
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GCE A/L	General Certificate of Education -Advanced Level
GCE O/L	General Certificate of Education -Ordinary Level
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HARTI	Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute
IPHT	Institute of Post Harvest Technology
KVS	Krushikarma Viyaptha Sevaka (Village Level Extension Worker)
LKR	Sri Lankan Rupees
NCEUS	National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector
NYS	National Youth Survey
NYSC	National Youth Service Council
OFC	Other Field Crop
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

In Sri Lanka nearly 28 percent of total population belongs to 15-29 years age group. Furthermore, over 75 percent of the youth lived in rural sector during the period of 1960-2000 (Ibargüen, 2004). As shown in Table 2.4, during the period of 1990-2011 country's youth unemployment accounted for 72.7 percent to 84.4 percent of the total unemployment. Since great majority of youth live in rural areas, youth unemployment is a rural phenomenon in Sri Lanka. There are number of factors associated with high rate of youth unemployment in Sri Lanka such as education and skills mismatch and queuing for an opportunity to find a "good job" in the public sector (Ibargüen, 2004 Central Bank of Sri Lanka and Department of Census and Statistics, 2009, Ministry of Labour Relations and foreign Employment, 2006, Seers, 1971, Rama, 2003, Heltberg and Vodopivec, 2008). However, as some researchers argue majority remain unemployed in Sri Lanka voluntarily and not due to lack of employment opportunities (Seers, 1971, Rama, 2003). Karunagoda (2004) pointed out that level of education has a strong influence on voluntary unemployment in Sri Lanka.

In Sri Lanka, agricultural labour force has been reduced from 52 percent in 1977 to 32.7 percent in 2010 while ageing population has increased significantly. The study findings of Paddy Marketing in Polonnaruwa District revealed that 50.4 percent of the paddy farmers in the district belonged to 50+ years age group[1] while only 5.1 percent belonged to age group 20-30 years (Damayanthi and Bulankulama, 2006). Another study conducted by HARTI in 2007 revealed that average age of paddy farmers were 52 years while 16 percent of the paddy farmers were over 64 years (Gamage and Damayanthi, 2012)[2].

With regard to agricultural sector, many countries including both developed and developing world have been experiencing the same situation as Sri Lanka. It has revealed that level of education, size of farm (in terms of land area and livestock units) and existing levels of farm income are significantly associated with occupational choices among nominated farm heirs in Ireland (Hennessy and Rehman, n.d.). In rural China, social factors such as gender, marital status, availability of land per worker of household, family size, dependency ratio of family, household income, market factors including education and skills significantly influence the selection of occupation both farm and

[1] Sample size of farmer survey was 500.

[2] Survey covered 914 households in Polonnaruwa, Matale, Anuradhapura, Ampara, Galle, Matara, Puttalam, Hambantota and Kurunegala districts,

non-farm. Furthermore, political factors such as being a party member or local government officer and geographical factors such as distance to nearest city and availability of transportation facilities are greatly influencing factors for selection of farm or nonfarm occupation among rural Chinese (Xia, n.d.). Even though Australia needs more labour for farming they cannot attract youth for the sector. The reasons are lack of professionalization of farming, different youth aspirations and perception toward white collar jobs (Livingstone, 2011). As Sharma (2007) explained, around 34 percent of youth in India are involved in agriculture as part-time activity to assist their farther or uncle while it has increased to 46 percent in villages closer to town. The number of factors has influenced youth participation in agriculture in India such as size of land holdings, value of agricultural production per capita, level of education, skills and caste system (around 60% of the involvement from Scheduled caste and backward castes in full-time agriculture).

In Sri Lanka, some argue that landlessness, lack of managerial and technical skills, negative perception toward farming (Jayatissa, Seneviratne and Sankar, 2005) and perception towards white collar jobs (Hettige and Mayer, 2002) influence for less contribution of youth in the farming sector. A survey conducted in Polonnaruwa district in 2011 reveals that number of factors such as age, experience in agriculture, formal agricultural education, vocational training, higher paddy land extent and availability of livestock influence the selection of farming as an occupation (Chandrasiri, C. and Karunagoda, K., 2011).

1.2 Problem Statement

During the last decade, unemployment has declined in Sri Lanka. However, the existing data shows that there is high rate of youth unemployment in Sri Lanka. As explained in the background section, of those unemployed during the period of 1990-1st quarter of 2011, great majority were from the age cohort of 15-29 years. In contrast, youth contribution in agricultural sector is low. What are the factors affecting for less youth contribution in smallholder agricultural sector in Sri Lanka?

1.3 Objectives

Overall objective of the study is to examine the factors contributing less youth participation; (specially farming as an occupation) in smallholder agriculture in Sri Lanka.

Specific objectives

1. To examine youth perception on farming as an occupation.
2. To identify and analyze factors of youth participation in smallholder farming sector in Sri Lanka

3. To examine ideas of other stakeholders on youth participation in smallholder agriculture sector.
4. To inform and educate policy makers and planners

1.4 Hypothesis

1. High level of education causes less youth contribution in smallholder agriculture
2. High level of family income causes less youth contribution in smallholder agriculture
3. Less opportunity to access lands, non availability of lands and small size of land plots cause less youth contribution in smallholder agriculture
4. Lack of social recognition for farming sector causes less youth contribution in smallholder agriculture
5. Less profitability/ less income or losses causes less youth contribution
6. Hard work and uncertainty of the farming sector causes less youth contribution in smallholder agriculture

1.5 Research Method

1.5.1 Sources and Collection of Data

For the sample selection of this study multi stage stratified random sampling method was used. In the first stage nine districts were selected based on contribution of agricultural production and crop cultivation. Second, Agrarian Development Centers were selected with the basis of crop cultivation. At the third stage two *Grama Niladhari* divisions were selected with the consideration of crop cultivation and youth involvement in agriculture. Then youth (15-29 years) including both male and female as well as employed and unemployed were selected for the sample.

The study employed both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from youths (age between 15-29 years) in agricultural areas, officers of farmer organizations, key informants such as Agriculture Production and Research Assistants (APRSs), Agriculture Instructors, Agrarian Development Officers and members and officers of Youth Farmer Organizations using methods of key informant discussion, focus group interview, questionnaire survey and case studies. Secondary data was collected from published reports and articles in print and electronic media. Field survey was carried out in April to May 2012.

Following indicators have been used to gather data and information related to objectives

Objective 1: To examine youth perception on farming and agriculture related industries as an occupation.

i. Willingness to engage in full time farming as an occupation
ii. Willingness to engage in industry/business related to agriculture

Objective 2: To identify factors contributory for less youth participation in smallholder farming sector in Sri Lanka

i. Socio economic background of youth (level of education, type of vocational training, age, gender, marital status, parents' occupations, family income, number of family members and number of depended family members)

ii. Availability and accessibility of agricultural resources and facilities (availability of land, size of land, agricultural machines – two wheel, four wheel tractors, harvesting machine, availability of labour, farm power, credit, seed and other inputs, marketing and extension services)

iii Social recognition for farming as an occupation

1.5.2 Study Area and Sample Size

1.5.2.1 Study Area

Field survey was conducted in April and May 2012 in nine districts. From each district two Agrarian Service Centers and of them two *Grama Niladhari* Divisions were selected by considering type of crop cultivation. After collecting the lists of youth (15-29 years) from relevant Agricultural Production and Research Assistants (APRAs), the youth for survey covering males and females were randomly selected. Furthermore, this sample included both employed and unemployed persons. To verify the information obtained from unemployed persons data was collected from employed youths. In addition, information was gathered from members of Farmer Organizations and members and officers of youth farmer organizations through focus group discussions. Table 1.1 presents the field locations.

1.5.2.2 Sample Size

For the questionnaire survey 25 youth respondents were selected from each Agrarian Development Centre (ADC) area based on crop and livestock farming. In addition, 33 agriculture graduates and undergraduates selected from different universities were interviewed. Therefore, total sample was 533.

Table 1.1: Field Locations and Major Crops Cultivated in the Relevant Area

District	Agrarian Development Centre	*Grama Niladhari* Division	Specified Crops Cultivation in the Area
Nuwara Eliya	Nuwara Eliya	Shanthipura and Pattipola	Up country vegetable
Nuwara Eliya	Kandapola	Jayalanka and Kandapola	Up country vegetable and horticulture
Matale	Dambulla	Kiralassa and Pollaththawa	Big Onion
Matale	Kimbissa	Kiralagolla and Palutava	Big Onion
Matale	Yatawatta	Walpola and Idamgama	Beans and tomatoes
Polonnaruwa	Sewagama	Sewagama and Menikwila	Paddy-Major irrigation and Papaya
Polonnaruwa	Welikanda	Wijayabahupura and Singhapura	Paddy-Major
Kurunegala	Nikaweratiya	Divulleva and Kebelleva	Chena crops, Paddy-rain-fed
Kurunegala	Mawathagama	Vadiyagoda and Akade	Paddy- minor and bettle, low country vegetables
Ampara	Dehiaththakandiya	Bihirisorowwa and Bakmeedeniya	Paddy-Major
Ampara	Uhana	Himidurava and Kumarigama	Paddy- Major, low country vegetables
Hambantota	Tissamaharama	Vijithapura and Sandungama	Cattle farming
Hambantota	Meegahajadura	Ranmuduwewa and Nambadagaswewa	Banana, Papaya and low country vegetables
Hambantota	Angunukolapellessa	Metigathwala and Helekada	Banana, vegetable and paddy-Major
Monaragala	Thelulla	Ethiliwewa and Pubuduwewagama	Red onion and vegetable
Monaragala	Ethimale	Siripura and Waththegama	Chena crops
Anuradhapura	Nochchiyagama	Thimbiriwewa and Katupeththawa	Paddy-minor and major, OFCs
Anuradhapura	Thanthirimale	Nelumwila and Oyamaduwa	Paddy-minor, OFCs
Batticaloa	Karadiyanaru	Marappalama and Mawalaiaru	Paddy-rain-fed, chena crops
Batticaloa	Valachchenei	Siththandi and Oddamawadi	Paddy-Major, Chena crops

1.6 Data Analysis

Basically, quantitative data were analyzed using simple statistical methods. For the analysis of qualitative data and information descriptive methods were employed.

1.7 Structure of the Report

The report consists of eight chapters. First chapter presents introduction including background of the study, objectives, problem statement, hypothesis and methods of the study. Second chapter presents literature review related to youth and youth contribution in smallholder agriculture. Third chapter illustrates relevant socio-economic background of the sample. Chapter four presents data on youth participation in smallholder agriculture. Chapter five discusses youth's perception related to agriculture specially, focusing full time farming, agro based industries and job preferences. Chapter six analyze problems faced by youth, when they attempt to be involved in agriculture. Suggestions made by youth and farmer organization representatives are presented in chapter seven. Chapter eight concludes with the study findings and presents policy implications and further research areas identified within the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of concepts of the study by reviewing existing literature. It briefly examines the concepts related to youth, youth unemployment and smallholder agriculture sector. The chapter also focuses on empirical studies which have been conducted in international, regional and national level related to study area.

2.2 Smallholder Agriculture Sector

Smallholder agriculture is based on small size farms which is very common in developing countries. Small farms, also known as family farms, have been defined in a variety of ways. However, the most common measure is farm size. Many sources define small farms as those with less than 2 hectares of crop land (Ganesh and Raghav, 2011). Some describe small farms as those depending on household members for most of the labour or those with a subsistence orientation, where the primary aim of the farm is to produce the bulk of the household's consumption of staple foods (Hazell, Poulton, Wiggins and Dorward, 2007). The World Bank's Rural Development Strategy (2003) defines smallholders as those with a low asset base and operating less than 2 hectares. FAO identified smallholders as farmers with limited resource endowments, relative to other farmers in the sector (Dixon, Taniguchi and Wattenbach, 2003).

Agriculture in Asia is characterized by smallholders cultivating small plots of land. The area operated by smallholder farms in developing countries currently appears to be increasing rather than decreasing (Zhoul, 2010). Average farm size has been decreasing in many Asian countries during the decades. The average size of operational holdings is only 0.5 hectares in Bangladesh, 0.8 hectares in Nepal, 1.4 hectares in India and 3.0 hectares in Pakistan. About 81 percent of farms in India have land holdings of less than 2 hectares, whereas their share in total cultivated area is about 44 percent (National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector, 2008). Therefore, smallholder farmers in developing countries will continue to be the guardians of agricultural land for at least several decades in future.

Smallholder farms tend to grow a wide variety of cultivars, many of which are landraces. As National Commission for Enterprises in the Unrecognized Sector (NCEUS) in 2008, pointed out Clawson (1985), most of these crops are genetically more heterogeneous when compared with modern varieties and offer greater resilience against vulnerability. In the mean time these landraces enhance harvest security in the midst of stress such as diseases, pests and drought. However, considerable portion of food production has been

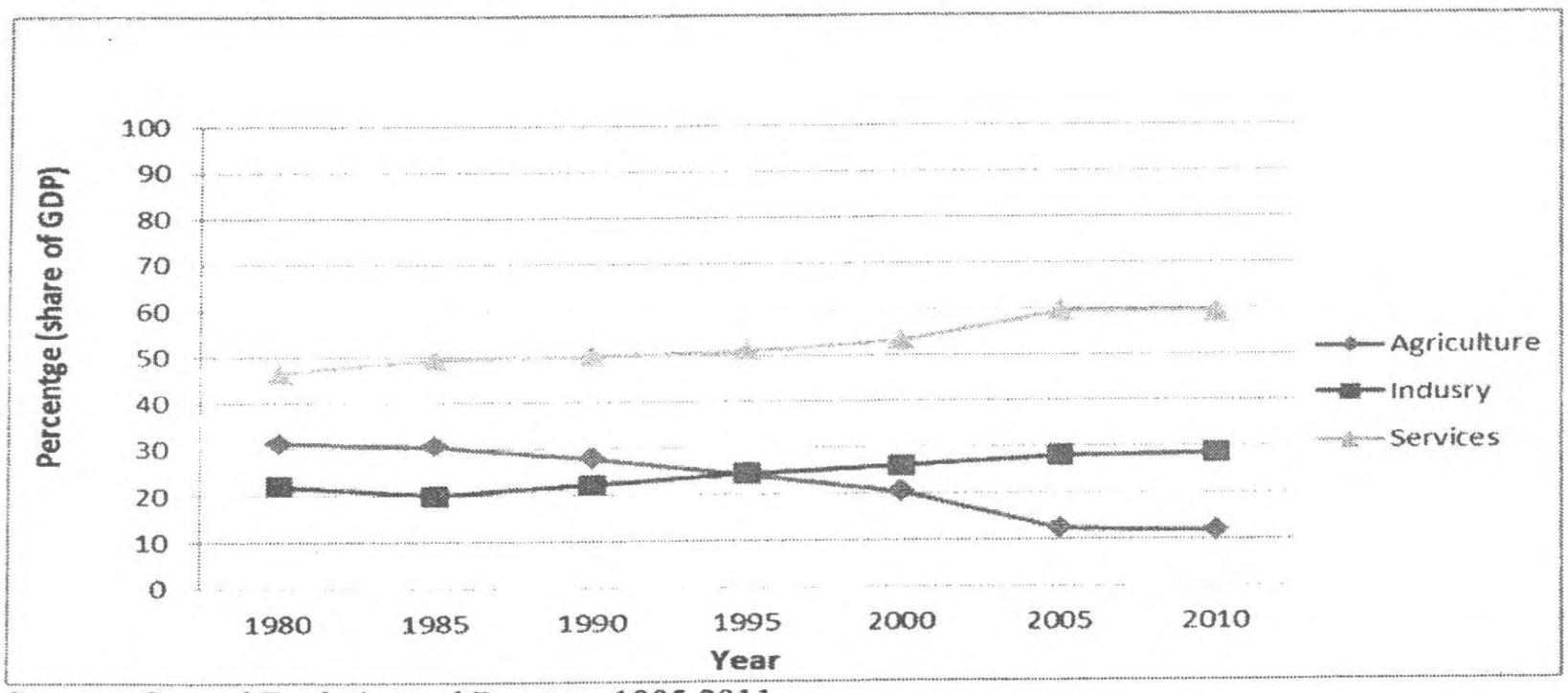
provided by the smallholder sector especially in developing countries. Small farms are the key economic units of majority of rural population of those countries.

Smallholders' contribution to the total value of agricultural output is also significant in many countries in Asia. For example, in India their contribution to total farm output exceeds 50 percent although they cultivate only 44 percent of land. Many studies have also confirmed the inverse relationship between farm size and productivity per hectare. Smallholder farmers are characterized by smaller applications of capital but higher use of labour and other family-owned inputs, and a generally higher index of cropping intensity and diversification. The inverse relationship between farm size and productivity is a powerful rationale for land reform policies, including land redistribution for both efficiency and equity gains (Clawson, 1985).

2.3 Smallholder Agriculture Sector in Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan society is been traditionally dominated by agriculture. Still mainstream of the population live in rural areas and majority of them are dependent on Agriculture. In general, agriculture sector is comprised of crops, livestock, forestry and fishing. One of the most significant characteristics of the agricultural sector in Sri Lanka is the declining trend of sectorial contribution to the GDP while labour force participation remains at a high level. For example, agricultural sector contribution was 46.3 percent in 1950 (Damayanthi and Gamage, 2011) while it has declined to 11.2 percent in 2011. Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 depicts sectorial composition of GDP and labour force participation in Sri Lanka respectively.

Figure 2.1: Sectorial Composition of GDP in Sri Lanka (1980 -2010)



Source: Central Bank Annual Reports, 1985-2011
Economic and Social Statistics in Sri Lanka, 2011, Central Bank of Sri Lanka

In 2011, agriculture labour force was reported as 32.9 percent of total labour force. Despite the declining of agricultural sector share of GDP, agriculture labour force has been increasing slightly (Table 2.1) in 2011. Though majority of rural labour force is engaged in agriculture activities for their livelihood, their productivity is questionable.

Table 2.1: Employed by Main Economic Activity ('000)

Year	Total Number of Employed Persons	Labour Force in Agriculture Sector	Percentage of Total (%)	Labour Force in Industry sector	Percentage of Total (%)	Labour Force in Services Sector	Percentage of Total (%)
2003	6,609,466	2,223,691	33.6	1,539,035	23.3	2,846,760	43.1
2004	6,704,006	2,215,282	33.0	1,663,383	24.8	2,825,341	42.1
2005	6,788,119	2,059,293	30.3	1,787,274	26.3	2,941,552	43.3
2006	7,105,322	2,287,268	32.2	1,889,953	26.6	2,928,101	42.1
2007	7,041,874	2,202,098	31.3	1,873,857	26.6	2,965,919	42.1
2008	7,174,706	2,344,414	32.7	1,888,003	26.3	2,942,288	41.0
2009	7,139,536	2,318,620	32.5	1,822,684	25.5	2,998,231	42.0
2010	7,235,641	2,353,598	32.5	1,777,129	24.6	3,104,913	42.9
2011	7,894,000	2,602,000	32.9	1,915,000	24.3	3,380,000	42.8

Source: Sri Lanka Labour force Survey, Department of Census and statistics 2011-1st quarterly report, Annual Report, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2011

The major characteristics of Sri Lanka's agriculture is sectorial dualism in which the plantation sector produces major export crops (tea, rubber and coconut) while the non plantation sector or smallholder farming sector produces rice and other crops mainly for the domestic market (Damayanthi and Gamage, 2011). Some consider agriculture is still the main economic activity in rural Sri Lanka. Especially the smallholder farming is closely related with the rural economy[3].

Though agriculture sector in Sri Lanka has been dominated by peasant agriculture before the British colonial administration, it has changed with the expansion of plantation agriculture in the nineteenth century. Therefore, agriculture in the island has been dominated by four principal crops: rice, tea, rubber and coconut since early twentieth century. The government has introduced and implemented a number of public policies and programmes towards poverty alleviation and improvement of agriculture since

[3] Many scholars mainly consider the population density to define rural economy. According to Department of Census and Statistics in Sri Lanka rural area is defined as residual category, and covers all areas excluding urban areas (defined as those areas which are governed by municipal and town councils) and the estate sector defined as plantations with more than 20 acres, 10 resident labours, with the single administrative body) areas.

independence. Thus, it has shown a tendency towards transformation of agriculture in smallholder agriculture sector by mid 1960s. Paddy sector underwent a drastic change as the area under irrigated paddy farming was expanded and use of productivity improving technologies like high yielding varieties and inorganic fertilizers started to spread. However at present the majority of the smallholder farmers produce crops for sale rather than for domestic consumption (Damayanthi and Gamage, 2011).

According to Sri Lanka Agriculture Census in 2002, total number of smallholdings of the country was 3,264,678 and their total land extent was 1,531,461 hectares (Table 2.2). Of them 1,477,308 and 1,787,370 smallholdings mainly produce for home consumption and for sale respectively. In addition, the average farm extent of a smallholding was 0.47 hectares in 2002.

Table 2.2: Number of Smallholdings and Land Extent- 2002

	Number of Holdings	Area (ha)
Total small holdings	3,264,678	1,531,461
Small holdings producing		
Mainly for home consumption	1,477,308	82,119
Mainly for sale	1,787,370	1,449,342

Source: Sri Lanka Agriculture Census-2002

As revealed by Census of Agriculture in 2002, there were 162,904 land holdings whose land extent was less than or equal to ¼ acres and total extent of these lands was 81, 822. The total number of holdings in this category tends to increase due to decrease of cultivable land, high demand of limited land and land fragmentation.

2.4 Youth

The definition of 'youth' differs in various ways. Psychologists define youth as 'the period between puberty and adulthood' while legislators define it based on age. In economic sense, "youth" is a period in the life of an individual in which he develops his occupational capacities. Considering social level, youth can be defined as a period of investment (Sessional Paper III, 1967).

The United Nations defined youth as 'persons those within the age range of 15 to 24 years' while Sri Lanka National Youth Service Council (NYSC) defined youth as 'persons within age range of 13-29 (Ibargüen, 2004). Apart from age limit, some countries like Sri Lanka use some socio - cultural aspects such as marriage and employment to define youth. The National Youth Survey (NYS) in Sri Lanka conducted by 2000, adopted definition of youth as 15-29 years old unmarried population. This study adopts definition of youth as 15-29 years old population including both male and female.

2.5 Definitions of "Economically Active", "Employment" and "Unemployment"

Concepts of unemployment, employment and economically active are closely related to each other and are important to a country in terms of economic, social and political aspects. Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka define 'Economically Active Person' as a 'person who is either employed or available for employment'. The 'Economically Active Population (EAP)' is defined broadly as covering all persons above a specific age (10 years and above in the case of Sri Lanka) of both sexes, who supply labour for the production of economic goods and services during a specified time period. When it is measured for a long reference period (one year), it is referred to as 'Economically Active Population'. If it is measured for a short reference period (one week or one day) it is conceptually referred as 'Labour Force'.

According to Department of Census and Statistics, employed persons are all household members who have performed some work for a wage or salary, or profit or family gain, in cash or in kind during the reference period. The internationally accepted definition for currently employed person is 'a person who has worked (i.e. an engagement in any economic activity) for at least one hour during the reference period (previous calendar week when the short reference period of 'one week' is considered, when measuring the 'current' status of employment) as an 'Employee' or 'Employer/own account worker (self-employed)' for a profit; or as an 'unpaid family worker' for family gain (Nanayakkara, 2004).

As defined by the Department of Census and Statistics, the 'Unemployed Population' comprised of all persons belonging to 10 years (or 15 years) and above, who are available for work (paid or self-employment) and seeking work, but do not pursue work in paid or self-employment during the specified reference period.

2.6 Youth Unemployment in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka nearly 28 percent of the total population belongs to age group of 15 to 29. Furthermore, over 75 percent of the youth live in rural sector during the period of 1960-2000 (Ibargüen, 2004). As shows in Table 2.3, during the period 1990 – 2011 country's youth unemployment accounted for 72.7 percent to 84.4 percent of the total unemployment. Since great majority of youth live in rural areas, youth unemployment is a rural phenomenon in Sri Lanka.

The unemployment rate has declined during the period 1990-2011. This trend is most likely due to a combination of job creation, demography change and outward migration (Nanayakkara, 2004). Nevertheless, youth unemployment remains a serious problem, accounting for more than half of total unemployment. As shown in Table 2.3, the youth unemployment in Sri Lanka is very high and has remained several times that of the

average rate of unemployment for a country. As a result of high level of achievement in education, Sri Lankan youth have clear and defined aspirations of getting "good jobs" in certain areas of work. Most of the scholars also stated that there is a significant mismatch between the pattern of jobs the economy creates and the pattern of job preferences of those waiting to be employed.

Table 2.3: Youth Unemployment (Age group of 15-29 years)

Year	Percentage of Unemployment (15-29 years) from Total Number of Unemployed Persons	Total Number of Persons Unemployed	Total Unemployment Rate (% of Total Labour Force)
1990	79.9	953,794	15.9
1991	78.2	861,680	14.7
1992	80.5	845,957	14.6
1993	77.8	830,910	13.8
1994	79.2	797,591	13.1
1995	79.4	749,021	12.3
1996	81.4	704,604	11.3
1997	83.0	658,297	10.5
1998	80.3	611,285	9.2
1999	81.6	590,846	8.9
2000	82.3	517,168	7.6
2001	84.4	537,246	7.9
2002	83.5	625,967	8.8
2003*	82.9	640,961	8.4
2004**	81.4	667,324	8.3
2005****	80.7	623,341	7.7
2006***	78.3	493,440	6.5
2007***	76.6	447,021	6.0
2008*	75.1	433,397	5.4
2009*	72.7	471,254	5.8
2010*	74.7	215,578	7.7
2011 (3rd quarter)*	77.6	323,033	3.9

Up to 2nd quarter of 2002, both Northern and Eastern provinces are excluded

* Including Eastern Province but excluding Northern Province

** Excluding Mulathivu and Kilinochchi districts

*** Excluding Northern and Eastern province

**** All the districts are included

Source: Department of Census and Statistics, (2009) Labour Force Survey- Annual Report-2009, Labour Force Survey – Quarterly Report –2011, 3rd quarter

When compared to demands of the economy, there is an over-supply of labour for professional and white collar type of jobs but lower-supply for manual and elementary jobs in sectors like agriculture, fishing, crafts and services. As stated by Hettige and Mayer (2002), unemployment rate is high among Sri Lankan youth whilst a very high proportion of youth are continuing to engage in studies. Thus, many youths are economically dependent on their families for their basic needs.

As reported in labour and social trends in Sri Lanka 2009, analysts have tried to explain the persistence of country's youth unemployment in terms of three hypotheses;

1. The most frequently cited **skills mismatch** hypothesis maintains that educated workers possess inappropriate, non marketable skills because of weaknesses in the education system.

2. The queuing hypothesis, formulated in relation to the public sector, holds that the unemployed **wait for an opportunity to take up "good jobs" in the public sector**, which are characterized by security, generous fringe benefits and high social status. Concurrently, political pressures that drive continuous recruitment to the civil service exacerbate the problem.

3. The institutional hypothesis promotes the view that existing labour market institutions raise the **cost of formal job creation**, thereby dressing job creation rates in the formal sector and forcing a large share of workers into informal employment. In particular, highly restrictive employment, protection legislation raises labour costs and imbedded job creation.

There are number of other factors which influence the increase of youth unemployment rate and underemployment. For example social values, lack of enterpranual culture and skills are some of factors influencing high rate of unemployment among youth. However, in the absence of decent and well-paid job opportunities, people are forced to accept ill-paid and often unsafe wage employment or unstable income in the self- employed in the informal sector or on low-yielding plots of lands in developing countries (Geest, 2010). Sri Lankan youth faces similar situation.

2.7 Previous Studies

A global study conducted by FAO focusing on youth employment in developing countries has paid attention to youth in agriculture. According to this study, visible under employment in agriculture occurs principally when there is a strong seasonality in the agricultural cycle. In such farming systems, labour demand peaks only at certain periods in a year. During the slack season, the considerable portion of the rural labour force is underutilized. With this situation, seasonal migration and occupational mobility are important tactics to combat seasonal idleness. Such livelihood adaptations have existed

for centuries, but do change over time. Visible under employment may also be common in land scarce areas where people have very small farms that do not require full-time attention. Invisible under employment in agriculture is a crucial problem in the poorest countries. Due to unfavourable agro-ecological conditions, low levels of technology, poor market access and lack of investment capital, the returns to farm labour are often low in developing countries (Geest, 2010).

This study also focuses on quality of the employment of rural youth. Accordingly, young people in less developed countries are generally better educated than their parents' generation and are likely to be more open to change. Therefore, focusing agricultural extension efforts on youth seems promising. Quality youth employment in agriculture is only possible if young people can make a decent living by working the land, be it as farm labourer, contributing family worker or independent farmer.

According to Bennell (2007), unemployment is not much of a crucial issue regarding youth in developing countries, because most of the rural youth are either employed (waged and self-employed) or 'not in the labour force'. However, serious under-employment and low productivity of the household-based activities is the problem in developing countries. Furthermore, as revealed by Bennell, approximately one forth of the households' where youths live in, daily income per head is less than one US dollar. There is an increasing trend among rural youth towards moving from smallholder farming and out migration (both nationally and internationally) for jobs.

In rural China, social factors such as gender, marital status, availability of land per worker of household, family size, dependency ratio of family, household income, market factors including education and skills significantly influence selection of occupation, both farm and non-farm. Furthermore, political factors such as being a party member or local government officer and geographical factors such as distance to nearest city and availability of transportation facilities are greatly influencing factors for selection of farm or non-farm occupation among rural Chinese (Xia, n.d.).

It was revealed that level of education, size of farm (in terms of land area and livestock units) and existing levels of farm income are significantly associated with occupational choices among nominated farm heirs in Ireland (Hennessy and Rehman, n.d.). According to Hennessy and Rehman, there is an increasing trend of youth in farm families to be involved in tertiary education. Consequently there is a decrease in number of full-time farmers and total farm numbers in Ireland. Therefore, decision to be involved in tertiary education negatively impacts on farm income.

The study findings of role of rural youth in agricultural and rural development in Pakistan, shows that though youth are an important asset of the nation they were exploited by different agencies and their capabilities/competencies were not fully utilized by the government or nation (Tahir. & *et.al.* 2011). Even though Australia needs more

labour for farming sector they can not attract youth for the sector. The reasons are lack of professionalization of farming and youth aspiration and perception towards white collar jobs (Livingstone, 2011).

Sharma (2007) pointed out that there is enough evidence showing the rising trend in withdrawal of youth from farming in India. At the individual or household level, the trend is stronger among higher caste, better educated and youth with non-farm skills. As Sharma (2007) explains, around 34 percent of the youth in India are involved in agriculture as part-time activity to assist their father or uncle while it has increased to 46 percent in villages closer to town. The number of factors influenced youth participation in agriculture in India such as size of land holdings, value of agricultural production per capita, level of education and skills and caste system. With regard to full-time farming, almost 60 percent of farmers from scheduled and backward castes in India are involved in fulltime farming. Interestingly, both the small and marginal landholding class and the large landholding class show a trend towards withdrawal.

In Sri Lanka, some scholars argue that landlessness, lack of managerial and technical skills, negative perception towards farming (Jayatissa, Seneviratne and Sanker, 2005) and perception towards white collar jobs (Hettige and Mayer, 2002) influence less contribution of youth to the farming sector. A survey conducted in Polonnaruwa district in 2011 reveals that number of factors such as age, experience in Agriculture, formal agriculture education, vocational training, higher paddy land extent and availability of livestock influence the selection of farming as an occupation (Chandrsiri, C. and Karunagoda, K., 2011)

According to the national study conducted by UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) organization, *in* Sri Lanka a large number of people are engaged in small farms as owner, wage workers or share croppers. Those in paddy farming are of particular significance in the country. There are various institutional and structural features characterizing this segment of the agrarian society. They are the predominance of land holdings which are small and uneconomic to operate, archaic tenurial practices such as sharecropping, absentee landlordism, traditional power structures in village life, dominance of informal credit institutions in spite of the diffusion of formal credit organizations into the countryside, the hold of middlemen in marketing agricultural produce, the absence of effective cooperative and other farmer organizations preventing young people from entering the agriculture sector.

CHAPTER THREE

Socio Economic Background of the Respondents

3.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates the socio economic background of the respondents of the study. Accordingly demographic background of the respondents, their participation in agriculture related activities, land ownership, land use patterns of the respondents and vocational trainings are focused in the chapter.

3.2 Demographic Background of the Respondents

The study was conducted in nine districts in Sri Lanka namely: Nuwara-eliya, Kurunegala, Matale, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, Hambantota, Monaragala, Batticaloa and Ampara. The study sample consisted of 533 young people whose age is between 15 and 29.

Table 3.1: Sample by Age and Gender

Age Group	Sex				Total (N=533)	
	Female (N=181)		Male (N=352)			
	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	Percentage (%)
Age=15	13	7.2	22	6.3	35	6.6
15<Age<=20	63	34.8	127	36.1	190	35.6
20<Age<=25	52	28.7	81	23.0	133	24.9
25<Age<=29	53	29.3	122	34.6	175	32.8

Source: Field survey, 2012

Of those in the study sample, 35.6 percent of respondents (190) belonged to age category of 15<Age<=20 years while 24.9 percent (133) and 32.8 percent (175) of respondents belonged to age category of 20<Age<=25 and 25<Age<=29 respectively (Table 3.1). Among the total respondents of the study sample, 34 percent (181) were females while 66 percent (352) were males (Table 3.1).

Table 3.2: Sample by Age Group and Marital Status

Age Group	Marital Status			
	Married		Unmarried	
	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	Percentage (%)
Age=15	0	0.0	35	9.9
15<Age<=20	10	5.6	180	50.8
20<Age<=25	44	24.6	89	25.1
25<Age<=29	125	69.6	50	14.1
Total	179	100.0	354	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 3.2, 66.4 percent of respondents (354) were unmarried while only 33.6 percent of respondents (179) were married. Among married respondents, 69.6 percent of respondents (125) belonged to age category 25<Age<=29. In the age category of 15<Age<=20, only 5.6 percent respondents (10) were married.

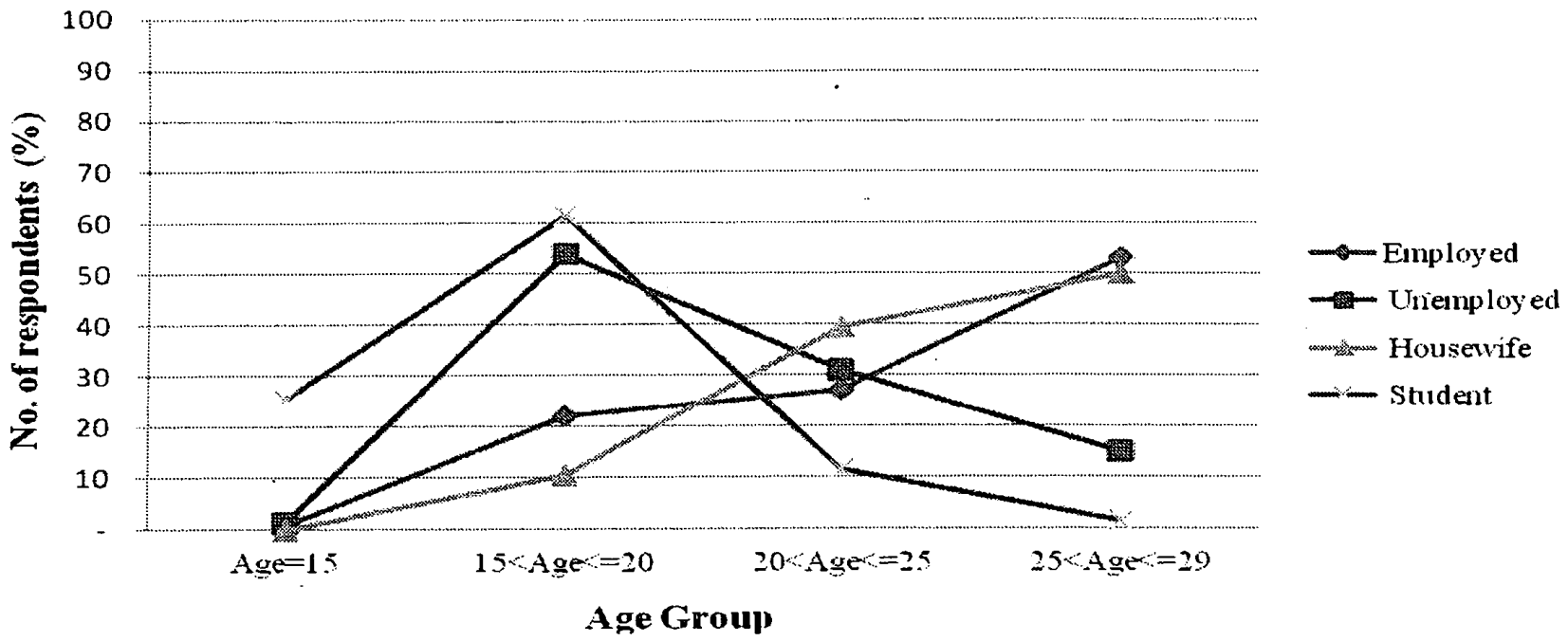
Table 3.3: Sample by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Gender				Total	
	Female		Male			
	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	Percentage (%)
Sinhalese	162	89.5	313	88.9	475	89.1
Sri Lankan Tamil	9	5.0	17	4.8	26	4.9
Indian Tamil	8	4.4	16	44.5	24	4.5
Muslim	2	1.1	6	1.7	8	1.5
Total	181	100.0	352	100.0	533	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

Of those in the study population 89.1 percent of respondents (475) were Sinhalese, while 4.9 percent (26), 4.5 percent (24) 1.5 percent (8) respondents were Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils and Muslims respectively (table 3.3).

Figure 3.1: Sample by Function and Age

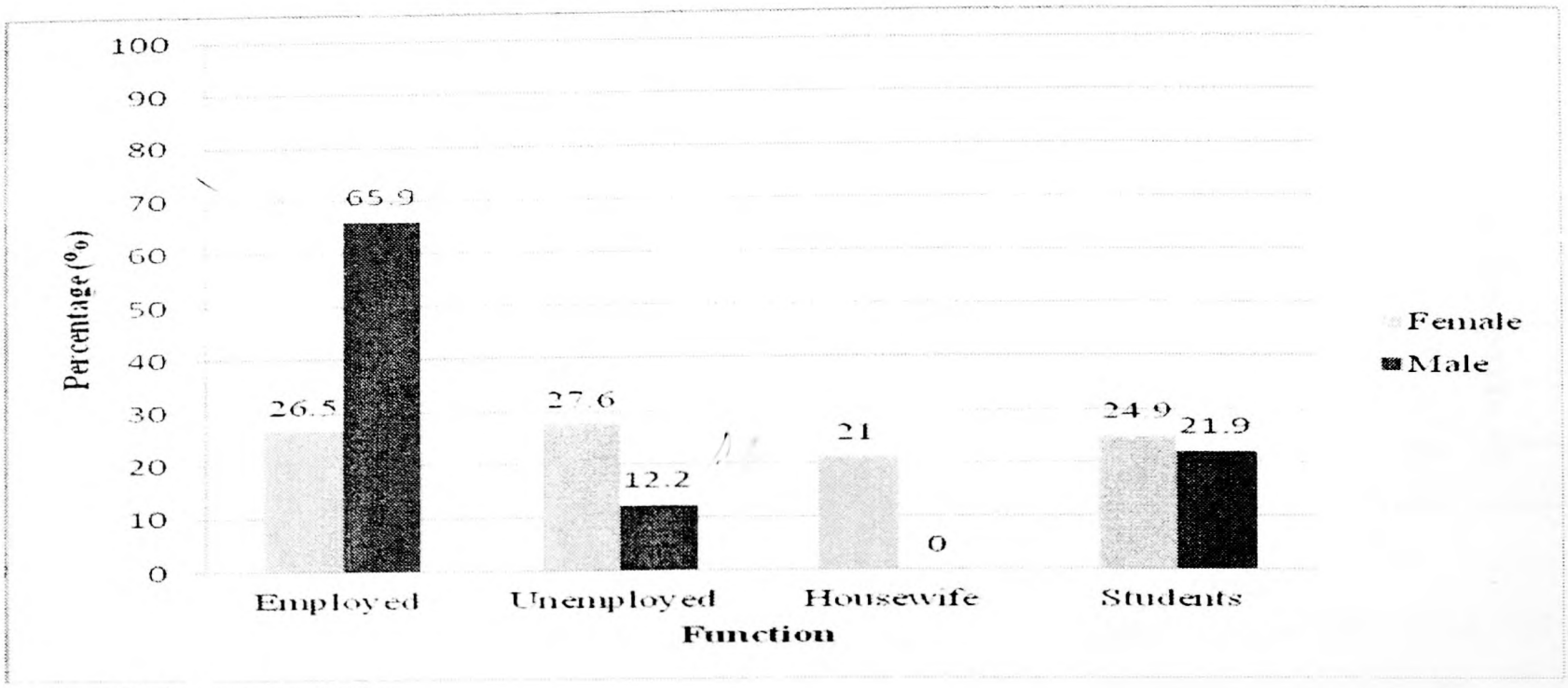


Source: Field survey, 2012

There were more students in age categories of 15 years and 15<Age<=20 in the sample (Figure 3.1). Accordingly, 25.4 percent (31) and 61.5 percent of respondents (75) who are engaged in studies belonged to age categories of 15 years and 15<Age<=20 respectively. Majority of employed respondents belonged to age category 25<Age<=29. Among respondents who were employed, 53 percent (148) and 27.2 percent (76) belonged to age categories 25<Age<=29 and 20<Age<=25 respectively. There is a remarkable increase of employed respondents, in the age category of 25<Age<=29 when compare to respondents below 25 years.

However, there is a significant relation between the age and the function. Accordingly, there were more students and unemployed youths among respondents whose age is below 20 years. On the contrary, the employed rate was high among respondents whose age is above 20.

Figure 3.2: Sample by Function and Gender



Source: Field survey, 2012

Among male respondents, 65.9 percent (232) were employed while 12.2 percent (43) were unemployed (Figure 3.2). Among female respondents there were no significant differences between employment and unemployment. Accordingly, 26.5 percent (48) female respondents were employed while 27.6 percent (50) were unemployed.

Majority of male respondents were economically active while significant numbers of female respondents were involved in household chores especially after their marriage. Although it was observed that, sometimes female's economic contribution remained as a hidden factor despite their economic contribution for the family. For instance there was considerable number of family labourers among female respondents. But, they were identified as unemployed even by themselves.

Table 3.4: Sample by Primary Occupation and Age

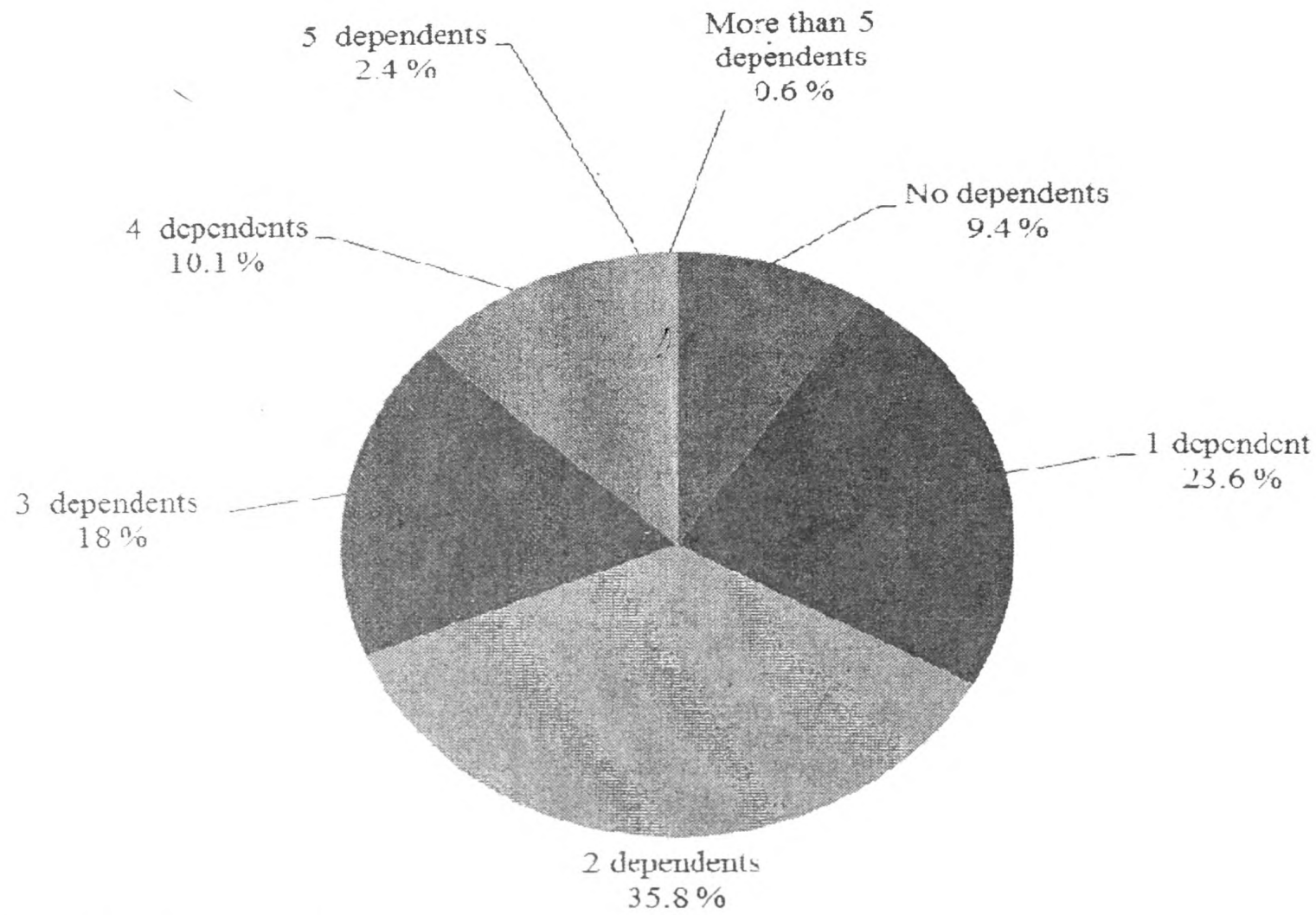
Occupation	Age group				Total % (N=283)
	15 years	15>Age<=20	20>Age<=25	25>Age<=29	
	% (N=2)	% (N=65)	% (N=76)	% (N=145)	
Farmer	100	55.4	56.6	69.6	64.3
Unskilled laborer	0	11	6.6	2.8	5.7
Clark/teacher	0	0	2.6	1.4	1.4
Self-employment/ business	0	7.7	3.9	9.7	7.8
Executive job	0	0	0	0.7	0.3
Skilled labor	0	4.6	10.5	7.7	7.8
Forces/security/Police	0	6.1	2.6	2.8	3.5
Other - private sector	0	7.7	11.8	2.1	6.1
Other-Government	0	7.7	5.3	2.9	2.8
Banks, co-operatives , and other financial institutes	0	0	0	0.7	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

Among respondents who had a primary occupation, 64.3 percent (183) were farmers while 7.8 percent (22) were skilled labourers and 5.7 percent (16) were unskilled labourers (Table 3.4). Only one respondent had an executive job and another respondent had a job in the financial sector which are generally considered as well paid and more recognized jobs.

Majority of employed respondents of all categories were farmers. Accordingly, in the age category, 25<Age<=29, 69.6 percent (101) respondents' primary occupation was farming. 55.4 percent (36) and 56.6 percent (43) respondents were farmers in age categories of 15<Age<=20 and 20<Age<=25 respectively. In age 15 years, two respondents worked as farmers despite still been in their schooling age.

Figure 3.3: Sample by Number of Dependents in the Households



Source: Field survey, 2012

Majority of respondents had less than 5 dependents in their households. Of those in study sample, 35.8 percent of respondents (191) had only 2 dependents while 23.6 percent of respondents (126) and 18 percent of respondents (96) had 1 dependent and 3 dependents respectively in their households. Furthermore, 9.4 percent of respondents (50) did not have any dependents while 0.6 percent of (3) respondents had more than 5 dependents in their households (Figure 3.3).

Table 3.5: Level of Education by Gender

Level of Education	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Not attended to school	1	0.6	1	0.3	2	0.4
Year 1 to 5	1	0.6	3	0.9	4	0.7
Year 6 to O/L	69	38.1	166	47.2	235	44.1
Studying O/L	7	3.9	20	5.7	27	5.1
Passed O/L	30	16.6	62	17.6	92	17.3
Studying A/L	15	8.3	22	6.3	37	6.9
Up to A/L	25	13.8	15	4.3	40	7.5
Passed A/L	21	11.6	35	9.9	56	10.5
Diploma in Agriculture	0	0.0	2	0.6	2	0.4
Undergraduate	4	2.2	13	3.7	17	3.2
Graduate - Agriculture	4	2.2	10	2.8	14	2.6
Graduate - Other	3	1.7	2	0.6	5	0.9
Other	1	0.6	1	0.3	2	0.4
Total	181	100.0	352	100	533	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 3.5, 44.1 percent (235) of respondents had studied up to year 6 to O/L while 17.3 percent of (92) respondents had passed O/L and 10.5 percent (56) of respondents had passed A/L. In the study sample, there were 2.6 percent (14) agriculture graduates and 3.2 percent (17) undergraduates. In contrast, 0.4 percent (2) of respondents had not attended school. Among agriculture gradates in the sample, only one respondent (7.1 percent) was engaged in agriculture related activities full time while 2 agriculture graduates (14.2 percent) were engaged in part time agricultural activities. As revealed in the field study, majority of young people in the farming communities had obtained a better education than their parents and they also experienced difficulties faced by farmers since their childhood. On the other hand, some respondents prefer to have socially recognized, easy and well-paid jobs compare with farming when their education level is high.

3.3 Youth Involvement in Agriculture Related Activities

In the sample, some respondents were engaged in agriculture related activities in any form such as full time or part time occupation and as family labourers (not as an occupation),whilst some were not engaged in agriculture related activities. As observed

in the field study, a number of respondents despite coming from agricultural background families, were not engaged in any kind of agriculture related activities.

Table 3.6: Involvement in Agriculture Related Activities

Whether Engage in Agriculture Related Activity	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Engaged in agricultures related activities	375	70.4
Not engaged in agricultures related activities	158	29.6
Total	533	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in Table 3.6, of those in the study sample, 70.4 percent of respondents (375) were engaged in agriculture related activities. Respondents who were engaged in agriculture related activities were involved in these activities fulltime, part time, as wage laborers or as family laborers.

Table 3.7: Type of Engagement in Agriculture Related Activities by Gender

Type of Engagement in Agriculture Related Activities	Gender				Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
	Female		Male			
	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	Percentage (%)	No.	
As full time occupation	26	26.3	122	44.2	148	39.5
As part time occupation	13	13.1	86	31.2	99	26.4
As a family labourer (not as an occupation)	60	60.6	67	24.3	127	33.9
Other	0	0.0	1	4.0	1	0.3
Total	99	100.0	276	100.0	375	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

Of those respondents engaged in agriculture related activities, 39.5 percent (148) were fulltime agriculture employees while 26.4 percent (99) respondents were involved in agriculture related activities as part time employees (Table 3.7). Of fulltime employees, 44.2 percent (122) were males and 26.3 percent (26) were females. 33.9 percent of respondents (127) worked without wages or salaries as family labourers and among them

the field study, some part time employees of the agriculture sector were in agriculture related activities as seasonal workers. Majority of them were involved in non-agricultural alternative livelihood activities such as masons, carpenters or wage laborers especially in construction field during the slack season.

Table 3.8: Cultivated Crop/Activity

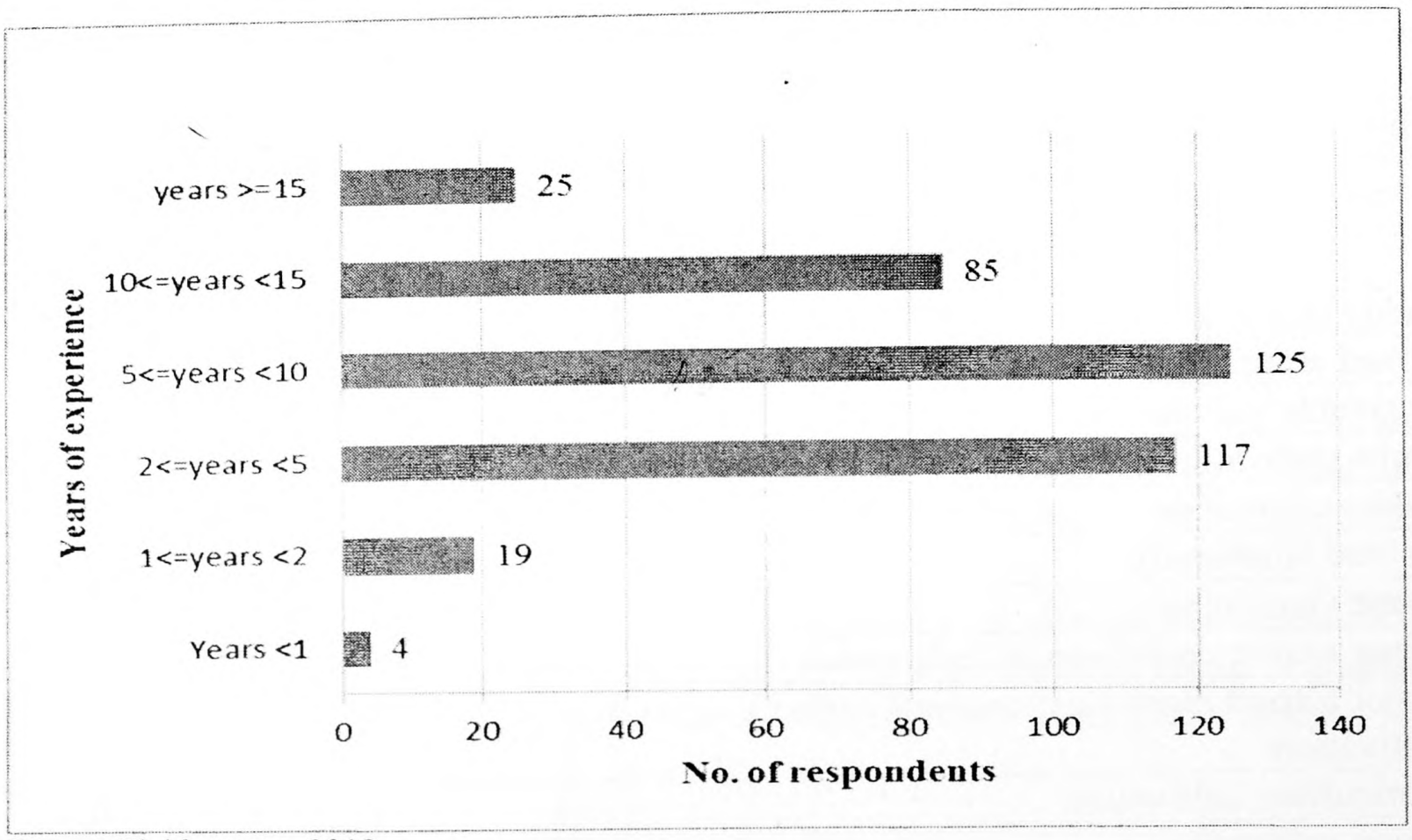
Type of Crop/Activity	Number of Respondents	Percentage N= 375 (%)
Paddy farming	275	73.3
Mixed cropping	22	5.9
Vegetable cultivation	192	51.2
Fruits cultivation	45	12.0
Pulses cultivation	81	21.6
Animal Husbandry	21	5.6
Home Gardening	14	3.7
Minor export crops/ spices cultivation	10	27.0
Major Export crops (tea, coconut, rubber) cultivation	7	1.9
Floriculture cultivation	3	0.8
Onion cultivation	27	7.2
Mushroom cultivation	2	0.5
Betel cultivation	5	1.3
Other	3	0.8

Note: since same respondent responses that he/she cultivate more than one crop, total percentage do not equal to 100.

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 3.8, 73.3 percent respondents (275) cultivated paddy by as full time, part time or family labourers. Fifty one percent of respondents (192) cultivated vegetables, while 21.6 percent (81), 12.0 percent (45) and 7.2 percent (27) respondents cultivated pulses, fruits and onions respectively (Table 3.8). Flowers, mushroom and betel were cultivated by only few respondents. In the table, other category consists of different agricultural activities including maintaining a plant nursery, agriculture products sales outlet or engaged in government employment related to agriculture.

Figure 3.4: Years of Experience in Agriculture Related Activities



Source: Field survey, 2012

As demonstrated in Figure 3.4, majority of respondents engaged in farming activities (70.7 percent) had less than 10 years of experience. Among them 31.2 percent (117) and 33.4 percent (125) and 22.7 percent (85) respondents had 2<=years <5 and 5<=years <10 and 10<=<15 years of farming experience respectively. It was revealed from the field study that, most respondents had considerable years of farming experience, because they had helped their parents farming activities since their childhood, especially after school hours and during the school holidays.

Table 3.9: Type of Involvement in Farming

Type of Involvement	Responses	
	No.	Percentage (%)
Maintaining a self owned farm	106	28.3
Maintaining a farm with Family members	61	16.3
Providing labor to family owned farm	187	49.9
Maintaining a farm with friends/non-relatives	13	3.5
Daily labor/wage labor	5	1.3
Home Gardening	4	1.1
Tenant farming (paddy)	1	0.3
Other	1	0.3

Note: since same respondent responded that he/she was engaged in several type of activities, total percentage do not equal to 100.

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 3.9, of those involved in farming activities 49.9 percent (187) respondents worked as family laborers in their family owned farms while 28.3 percent (106) respondents maintained a self owned farm and 16.3 percent (61) maintained a jointly owned farm. Only 1.3 percent (5) respondents worked as daily wage laborers as well.

3.4 Land Use Pattern of the Respondents

Table 3.10: Ownership of Lands Plots

Ownership	Type of Land					
	Highland		Paddy Land		Chena Land	
	No. of Respondents having Land Plots	%	No. of Respondents having Land Plots	%	No. of Respondents having Land Plots	%
Self-owned	124	26.8	84	23.9	11	16.4
Parents	283	61.3	195	55.4	33	49.3
Other relatives	27	5.8	23	6.5	4	6.0
Encroached	6	1.3	2	0.6	12	17.9
Leased/Mortgaged/ Tenancy	17	3.7	47	13.4	4	6.0
Spouse	5	1.1	1	0.3	3	4.5
Total	462	100.0	352	100.0	67	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2012

Around eighty seven percent of the respondents or their family members (462) had high lands while 66.4 percent of respondents or their family members (352) had paddy lands. Only 12.6 percent of respondents (67) reported that they utilized *chena* lands (Table 3.10). By type of lands, 61.3 percent of respondents' (283) highlands, 55.4 percent of respondents' paddy lands (195) and 49.3 percent (33) of respondents' *chena* lands were owned by parents while, 26.8 percent of highlands (124), 23. 9 percent of paddy lands (84) and 16.4 percent of *chena* lands (11) were self-owned. Majority of *chena* lands were encroached lands. Considerable number of *chena* lands belonged to government and were under reservations. On the other hand, majority of leased out, mortgaged or tenant lands were used for paddy farming. However, it was observed in the field study, that majority of young people did not own lands which they used. Some respondents said that the non availability of lands and ownership is a problem to engage in agriculture in a systematic manner. Without land they could not even get a loan to develop the farmlands or become a member of farmer organization. Further, it was revealed in the field study that young people were engaged in farming activities more enthusiastically if they had ownership of lands. This could be seen especially in the areas like Sooriyawewa (Hambantota) and Nuwara-eliya to a great extent as they can earn good profits from cultivating their own lands.

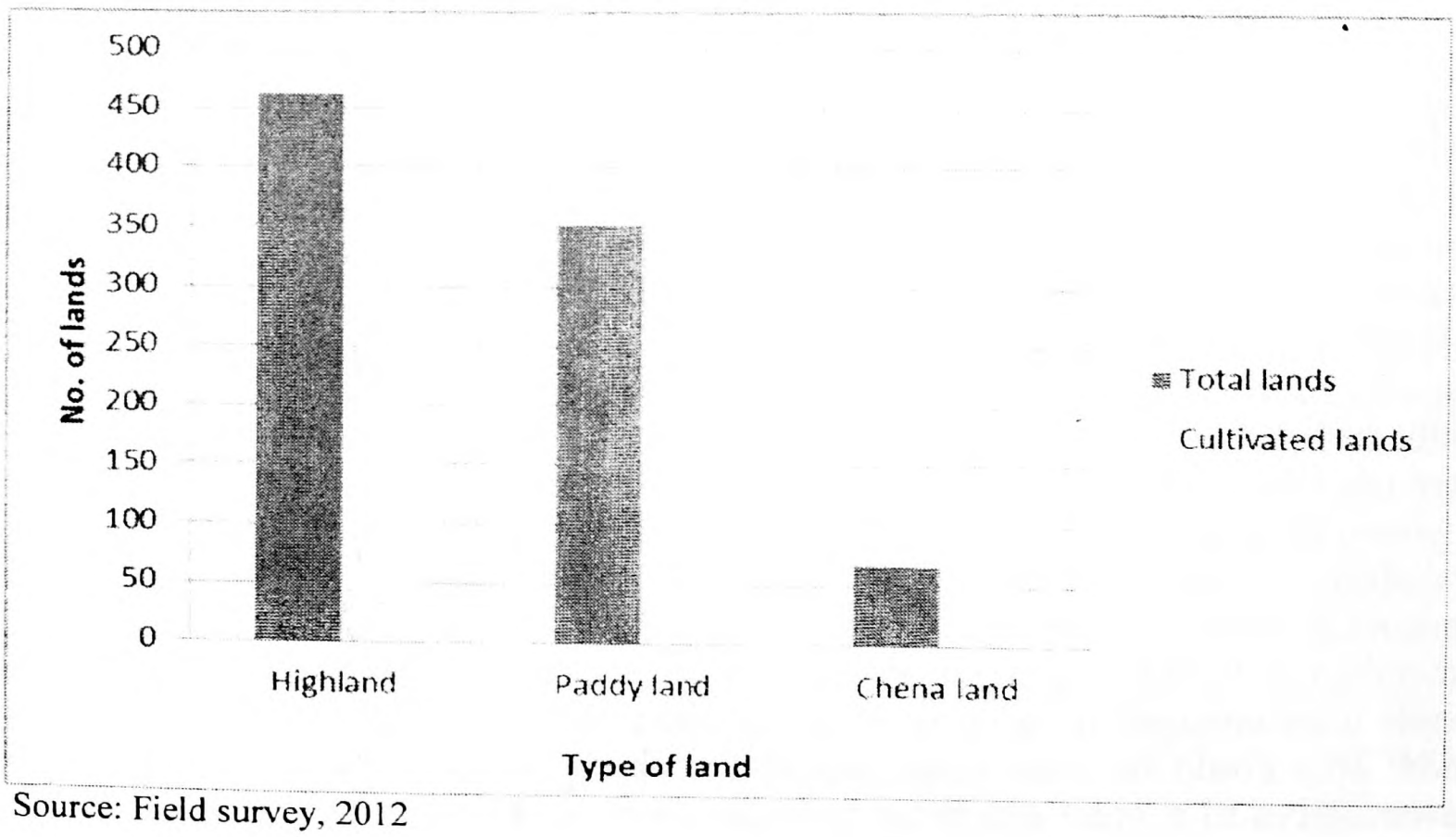
Table 3.11: Average Land Extent

Average Land Extent	Type of Land						Total	
	Highland		Paddy Land		Chena Land			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than ¼ acres	42	9.1	2	0.6	0	0.0	44	5.0
1/4 -1/2 acres	44	9.5	13	3.7	0	0.0	57	6.5
1/2- ¾ acres	87	18.8	36	10.2	8	11.9	131	14.9
1 acres	10	2.2	4	1.1	0	0.0	14	1.6
1-2 acres	116	25.1	109	31.0	18	26.9	243	27.6
2 -5 acres	134	29.0	154	43.8	21	31.3	309	35.1
5 -10 acres	23	5.0	34	9.7	16	23.9	73	8.3
More than 10	6	1.3	0	0.0	4	6.0	10	1.1
Total	462	100.0	352	100.0	67	100.0	881	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 3.11, from total lands of respondents 35.1 percent of land plots (309) were between 2-5 acres, while 27.6 percent of lands (243) were between 1-2 acres. Size of 10 plots were more than 10 acres which is significant. Out of these 10 plots, 4 were self owned highlands. On the other hand, considerable numbers of highland plots (28 percent) were less than 01 acre and great majority of *chena* lands (88.1 percent) were more than 1 acre.

Figure 3.5: Average Total Extent and Average Cultivated Extent of All Type of Land



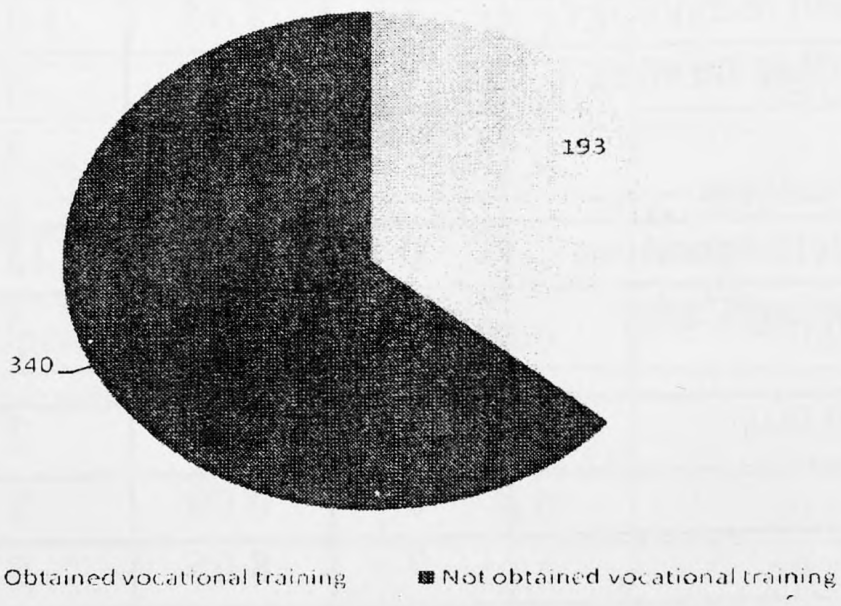
Source: Field survey, 2012

According to field study, of total land plots, 88.2 percent (779 plots) were cultivated. Average land extent of all lands and cultivated lands was 2 acres. As shown in the Figure 3.6, of the total highland plots, 79 percent of land plots (365 plots) had been cultivated while of the total paddy lands 98.8 percent of land plots (348 plots) and 98.5 percent of total *chena* land plots had been cultivated. There is no significant gap between total lands and cultivated lands of paddy and *chena* lands. However, 21 percent (97 plots) of the highlands had not been cultivated. In some places respondents said that, there was not enough space to cultivate in their highlands as houses are built on a part of those lands. On the other hand, in some places successful home gardens could be seen.

3.5 Status of Vocational Trainings

The pressure of change within agriculture confronts farmers with regularly upcoming and new challenges: the structural changes as well as technical, economical and ecological improvements increase the requirements for the farm manager's knowledge. Thus, being successful in profession and business is not only a matter of qualification and fundamental professional knowledge but also of the constant participation in vocational trainings (Spiller & Voss 2006 cited in N. N. 2006). Therefore, vocational training plays an important role in order to develop skills of an individual and maintain competitiveness.

Figure 3.6: Participation in Vocational Trainings



Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Figure 3.6, 63.8 percent (340) of respondents had not obtained any kind of vocational training, while 36.2 percent (193) had obtained trainings (Figure 3.6). Some respondents had followed more than one training course under different fields or different institutes. As observed by study, reasons for not having trainings by majority of respondents were lack of awareness, lack of accessibility and lack of facilities to obtain trainings including financial difficulties.

As shown in the Table 3.12, computer training was the most popular vocational training among respondents. Accordingly, among respondents who had followed vocational trainings 37.8 percent of respondents (73) both male and female had followed at least one computer course. Some had followed more than one computer course. Around 12 percent of respondents (23) had followed training courses related to technical work including electrical mechanical, motor mechanical and engineering. Of those respondents, who obtained trainings on welding, electrical mechanic, motor mechanic and engineering 100 percent were males which show the gender preference for selecting of vocational trainings.

Table 3.12: Type of Vocational Training and Gender

Type of Training	Gender					
	Female Responses (N=87)		Male Responses (N=125)		Total Number of Respondents (N= 193)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Computer	40	45.98	33	26.4	73	37.8
Electrical mechanic/Motor mechanic /Engineering	0	0.00	23	18.4	23	11.6
Welding	0	0.00	6	4.8	6	3.1
Carpenter/Masonry	1	1.15	14	11.2	15	7.8
Food producing/Food technology	1	1.15	1	0.8	2	1.0
Animal Husbandry/Bee farming	0	0.00	4	3.2	4	2.1
Sewing / Juki/Handicrafts/Weaving	27	31.03	3	2.4	30	15.5
Driving/Heavy vehicle operating	0	0.00	15	12	15	7.8
Security related training/Cadet training	0	0.00	5	4	5	2.6
Beauty culture	2	2.30	2	1.6	4	2.1
Hotel Training	0	0.00	5	4	5	2.6
Social work	7	8.05	9	7.2	16	8.3
Other	9	10.34	5	4	14	7.2

Note: Since same respondents had followed more than one training course multiple responses are been calculated

Source: Field survey, 2012

Vocational trainings on Food producing and food technology which are directly related to agriculture had been followed by only 1.0 percent of respondents (2), while trainings on

contrast, sewing, Juki/Handicrafts and weaving trainings had been followed by significant number of respondents. As such 30 respondents had obtained some training and among them 90 percent of respondents (27) were females while only 10 percent of respondents (3) were males. As revealed by the study, among young females in the rural community there are job opportunities in garment factories or to start a self-employment after following these trainings rather than following other courses. In the Table 3.12, other category includes training courses on photography, accountancy, business and preschool teaching. However, among respondents there was less demand for training courses related to farming activities. On the contrary, private sector job oriented training courses were popular among them to a great extent.

Table 3.13: Sample by Vocational Training and Usefulness

Type of Training	Useful to obtain a Job	Not Useful to obtain a Job	Not Taken an Effort to obtain a Job
	%	%	%
Computer (N =73)	8.2	72.6	19.2
Electrical mechanic/Motor mechanic /Engineering (N=23)	30.4	65.2	4.3
Welding (N=6)	33.3	66.7	0.0
Carpenter/Masonry (N=15)	46.7	53.3	0.0
Food producing/food technology (N=2)	50.0	50.0	0.0
Animal husbandry/bee farming (N=4)	75.0	25.0	0.0
Sewing / Juki/Handicrafts/weaving (N=30)	26.7	63.3	10.0
Driving/heavy vehicle operating (N=15)	60.0	40.0	0.0
Security related training/cadet training (N=5)	0.0	100.0	0.0
Beauty culture (N=4)	0.0	50.0	50.0
Hotel training (N=5)	40.0	20.0	40.0
Social work (N=16)	18.8	75.0	6.3
Other (N=14)	28.6	64.3	7.1
Total	24.5	64.2	11.3

Source: Field survey, 2012

When considering the usefulness of the vocational training courses followed by the respondents, 64.1 percent of respondents (136) mentioned that the trainings were not useful to obtain a job while 24.5 percent of respondents (52) mentioned that trainings

were useful to obtain a job (Table 3.13). Of the respondents who had followed vocational training 11.3 percent (24) had not taken any effort to obtain a job. Despite the fact that a significant number of respondents had obtained computer trainings, it was useful for only 8.2 percent of respondents (6) to obtain a job. The respondents who followed the vocational training on sewing, Juki, Handicrafts and weaving, only 26.7 percent of respondents (8) had obtained jobs. Out of 4 respondents who followed trainings on animal husbandry and bee farming, 75 percent (3) mentioned that training was useful to obtain a job or enhance their livelihood pattern. In general, it is clear that most vocational trainings of the respondents had not been useful to access the job market.

3.6 Conclusion

Among total respondents of the study sample, 66.0 percent were males while 34.0 percent were females. 66.4 percent of respondents were unmarried and majority of respondents were Sinhalese. The employment rate was high among respondents whose age was above 20 years. Most young people in the farming communities had obtained a better education than their parents. A number of respondents despite their families have had agricultural background, were not engaged in any kind of agricultural related activities. However, 70. 4 percent of respondents were engaged in agriculture related activities while 29.6 percent of respondents had not engaged in agriculture related activities in any form. Of those respondents who were engaged in agriculture related activities, only 39.5 percent were fulltime farmers. Main crops cultivated by respondents engaged in farming were paddy, vegetables and pulses. Majority of respondents engaged in agriculture related activities had less than 10 years experience. Fifty percent respondents worked in their family owned farms while 28.4 percent respondents maintained self-owned farms. Average extent of all lands and cultivated lands was 2 acres. 63.8 percent of respondents had not obtained any kind of vocational training. However, agriculture related vocational trainings such as food producing, food technology and animal husbandry were not popular among respondents and only few respondents had obtained such trainings.

CHAPTER FOUR

Youths' Participation in Smallholder Agriculture

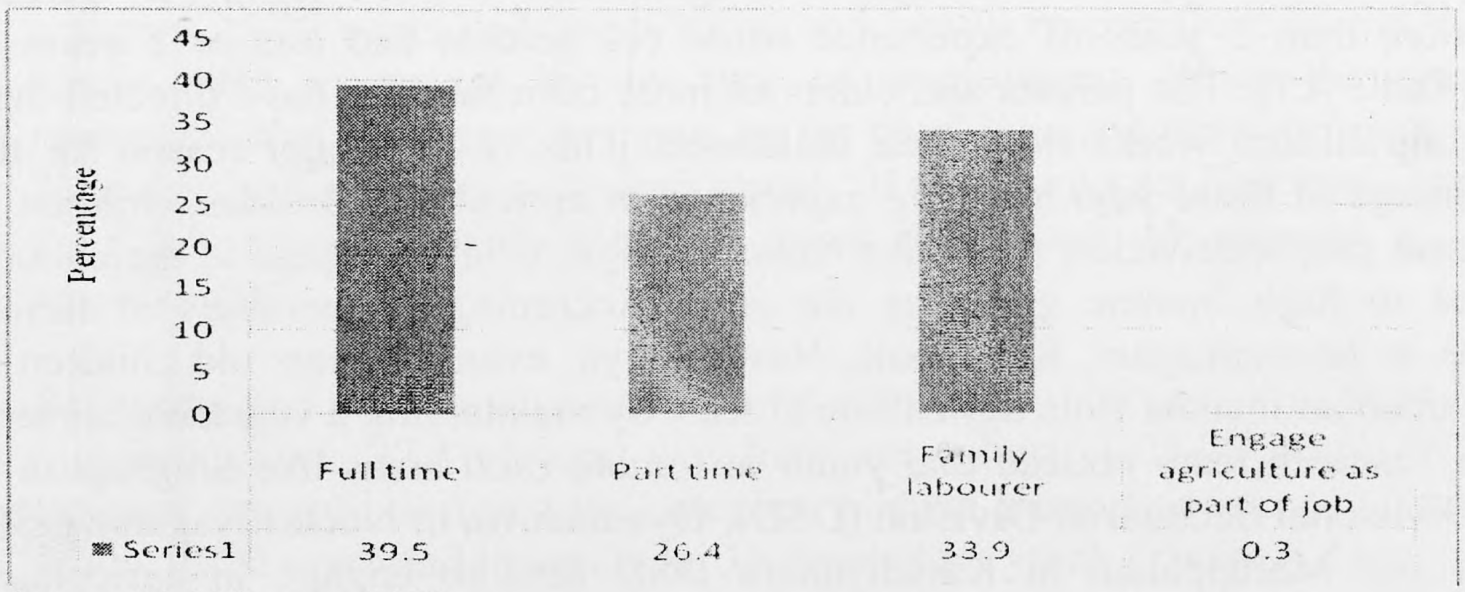
4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents youth participation in smallholder agriculture both in farming activities as well as in agriculture related industries/business. Furthermore, chapter analyses differences of youth participation by gender, age, level of education and crop.

4.2 Youth Participation in Farming

Of those respondents, 70.4 percent (375 respondents) said that they were engaged in agriculture activities in various ways. Of them, 39.5 percent (148) and 33.9 percent (127) respondents were engaged in agriculture as full-time farmers, non wage or family labourers respectively (Figure 4.1). In other words, of the total sample 27.8 percent were engaged in full time agriculture. Twenty six percent (99) were engaged in agriculture as part-time farming while 0.3 percent (1) were engaged in farming as a part of his/her duty. The last category includes members of civil forces who should have cultivated assigned land extent by their authority.

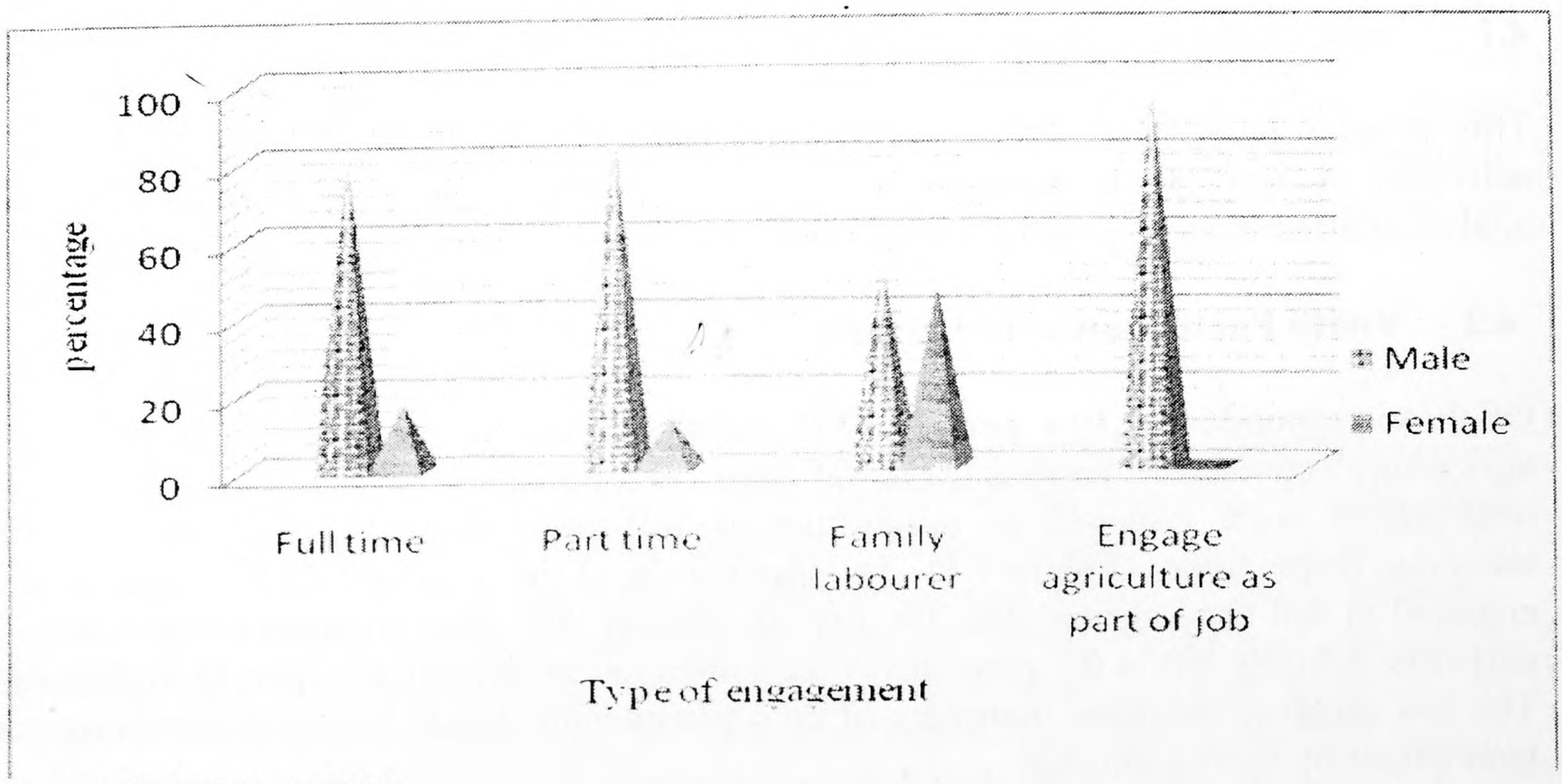
Figure 4.1: Respondents by Type of Involvement in Agriculture



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Of those involved in agriculture, 73.6 percent was male while 26.4 percent was female. As shows in Figure 4.2, there is a wide gap between male and female involvement in agriculture except as non wage or family labourers. Of the full time farmers, 82.4 percent was male while rest was females. Of those engaged in agriculture part time 86.9 percent was male and others were females. However, pattern has changed related to family labourer showing that 52.7 percent and 47.2 percent were male and female respectively.

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Respondents Engaged in Agriculture by Gender



Source: Field Survey, 2012

As revealed by the survey, of those engaged in agriculture in some form, 61.7 percent (231) had more than 5 years of experience while 6.2 percent had less or 2 years of experience (Table 4.1). The parents and elders of most farm families have directed their children for agriculture works from their childhood. This is one major reason for the higher percentage of those who had long experience in agriculture. Besides, children in high value cash crop cultivation areas like Nuwara Eliya, tend to engage in agricultural activities due to high income given by the crop. According to members of farmer organizations in Jayalankagam, Kandapola, Nuwaraeliya, even 12 years old children in the village earned an income from agriculture at least by maintaining a vegetable nursery. Furthermore, research team noticed that youth in remote rural areas like Singhapura in Welikanda Divisional Secretariat Division (DSD), Oyamaduwa in Nochchiyagama DSD, Mavalaiyaru and Marappalam in Karadiyanaru DSD tend to engage in agricultural activities due to number of reasons such as lack of education facilities and high level of poverty at household level and non existence of anybody else to bear family responsibilities and cultivate family owned lands. However, as stated by many representatives of farmer organizations, it is difficult to get support from younger generation for paddy farming because they did not like to work in muddy fields. Furthermore, they stated that younger generation were discouraged by losses or less profit from paddy farming. Youth participation differs by crop cultivation.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents Engaged in Agriculture by Number of Years of Experience

Number of Years	Number	Percentage of Total Number of Respondents who engage in Agriculture
Less than 1	4	1.1
1-2 years	19	5.1
2-5 years	117	31.2
5- 10 years	121	32.3
10 – 15 years	85	22.7
More than 15 years	25	6.7
Not reported	4	1.1
Total	375	100.0

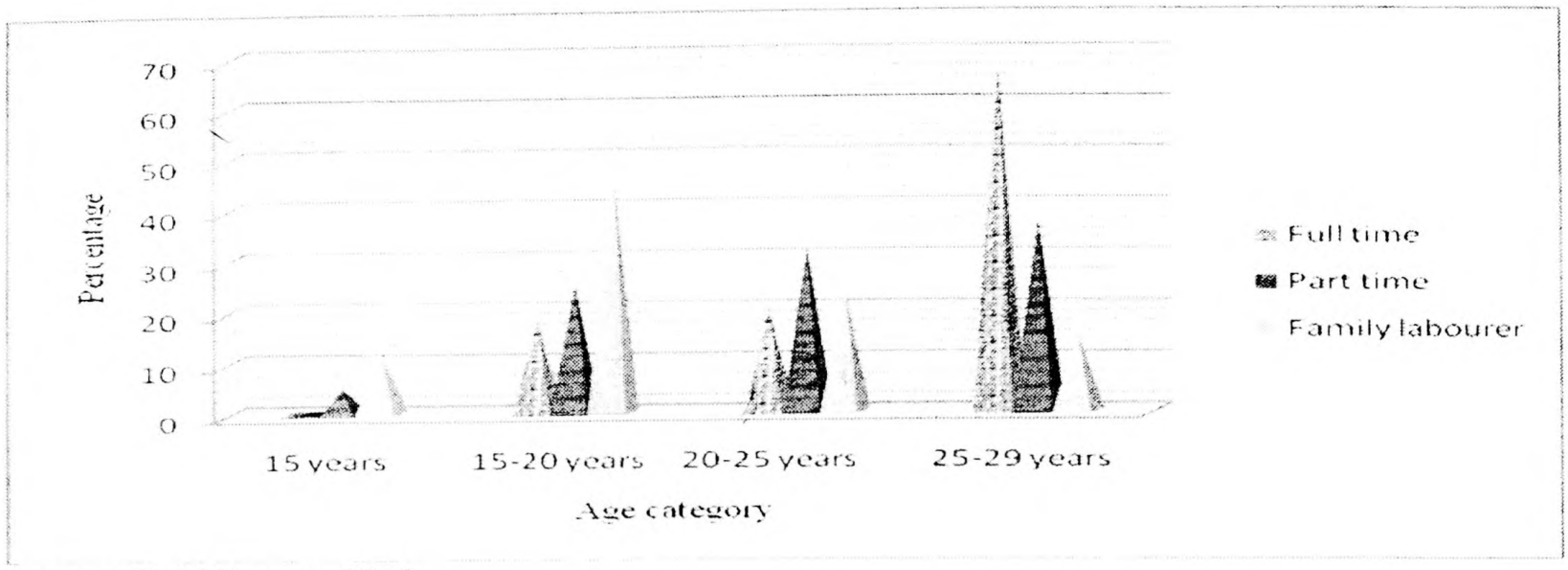
Source: Field Survey, 2012

Of those engaged in agriculture, the highest percentage (38.9 percent) belonged to 25-29 years age category while lowest percentage (5.3 percent) was represented in 15 years category. Next to highest portion, 30.7 percent represents 15-20 years age cohort and 24.8 percent represent 20-25 years age cohort.

Nobody at 15 years is engaged in agriculture as full time employment whilst highest number was (68.0 percent) from age cohort of 25-29 years. Those who were in the age category 25-29 years had many social and family responsibilities and this situation had forced them to engage in any type of employment. When they mature and hold responsibilities, they have to queue up for good jobs and have to find a job for survival. As many farmer leaders and youth stated, "if they could not find employment suitable for their educational qualification, at least they have to engage in agriculture for employment".

Regarding part time involvement, lowest number (5.0 percent) was from 15 year olds and highest number (37.4 percent) was from age cohort of 25-29 years. Of those in family labourer category or non wage category, highest proportion was (49.6 percent) from age group 15-20 years and lowest from 15 years older youth (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Distribution of Respondents Engaged in Agriculture by Age Groups



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Of those engaged in agricultural activities, 50.1 percent (187 respondents) provided labour for family owned farm while 28.4 percent (106 respondents) maintained a privately own farm. 16.4 percent and 3.5 percent of respondents engaged in agriculture maintained jointly own farm with family members and jointly own farm with non-relatives or friends respectively. Only 1.1 percent (4 respondents) worked as daily wage labourers.

As shown in Table 4.2, majority of the respondents educated up to grade 5 (66. 6 percent), up to O/L (46.2 percent) and passed O/L (52.4 percent) were engaged in full time farming. In other words, 57.4 percent of the full time farmers had educated only up to O/L. In contrast, majority of the respondents were studying at O/L classes (50.0 percent), educated up to A/L (48.4 percent), studying in A/L classes (79.2 percent), undergraduates (46.2 percent), agriculture graduates (66.6 percent) and postgraduate holders (100.0) engaged in agriculture as family labourers. Thus, above data affirmed the previous study findings of inverse relationship of education and engagement in farming as an employment (Chandrasiri and Karunagoda, 2011, Sharma, 2007).

Table 4.2: Respondents Engaged in Agricultural Activities by Level of Education and Type of Engagement

Level of Eeducation	Full Time		Part Time		Family Labourer		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	No	%
No schooling	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
Educated up to 1-5 grades	2	66.6	1	33.3	0	0.0	3	100.0
Educated up to O/L	85	46.2	48	26.1	50	27.2	184	99.5*
Passed O/L	32	52.4	12	19.6	17	27.9	61	100.0
Studying in O/L classes	4	25.0	4	25.0	8	50.0	16	100.0
Educated up to A/L	7	22.6	9	29.0	15	48.4	31	100.0
Studying in A/L classes	1	4.2	4	16.7	19	79.2	24	100.0
Passed A/L	11	36.7	13	43.3	6	20.0	30	100.0
Diploma in Agriculture	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	2	100.0
Undergraduate	2	15.4	5	38.5	6	46.2	13	100.0
Graduate other than Agriculture	1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
Agriculture Graduate	1	33.3	0	0.0	2	66.6	3	100.0
Postgraduate- other than agriculture	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	100.0
Total	148	39.6	99	26.5	127	33.9	375	100.0

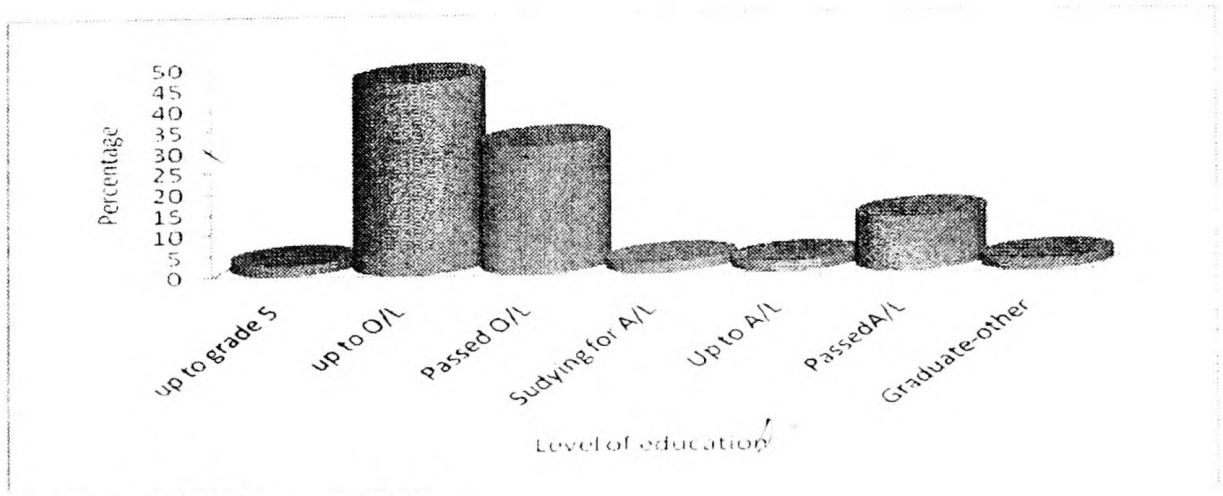
Note: * 0.5 (1 person) of the category of educated up to O/L, engage in agriculture as a part of his job.
Source: Field Survey, 2012

4.3 Youth Participation in Agro Based Industries and Businesses

Of the total respondents, 7.3 percent (39 respondents) reported that they were engaged in agriculture related industries or businesses. Of them, 84.6 percent (33 respondents) was male while 18.4 percent (6 respondents) was female. Of those engaged in agriculture related business/industry, 51.3 percent belonged to age group of 25-29 years. Around twenty six percent and 23.1 percent belonged to age groups of 15- 20 years and 20-25 years respectively. Out of the respondents engaged in agriculture related industries/business, the highest portion of the respondents (46.2 percent) were educated up to O/L while only 2.6 percent were graduates (Figure 4.4).

The majority of the respondents engaged in agriculture related industries and businesses (18.9 percent) maintained grinding mills. As shown in Table 4.3, 16.2 percent respondents were engaged in producing curd/yoghurt and wholesale trading of vegetable, fruits and another 16.2 percent other crops. Interestingly, most of the activities are agriculture related small scale businesses rather than industries.

Figure 4.4: Respondents Engaged in Agriculture Related Industries/Business by Level of Education



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 4.3: Respondents Engaged in Agricultural Industries/Business by Type of Industry/Business

Industry/ Business	Number of Persons	Percentage (N=39)
Maintaining a grinding mill	7	18.9
Hiring of agricultural machineries	5	13.5
Producing sweets	1	2.7
Packeting and selling of spices and pulses	3	8.1
Producing of seeds and seedlings	1	2.7
Producing exotic plants	1	2.7
Producing curd/yoghurt	6	16.2
Wholesale trading of vegetable/fruits and other crops	6	16.2
Producing and selling organic fertilizer	2	5.4
Producing and selling mushrooms	2	5.4
Maintaining poultry farm and shop	2	5.4
Selling areconuts	1	2.7

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Of the respondents who were not engaged in agriculture related industries or businesses, 73.2 percent (360) were willing to engage in them in future. Of them, 65.2 percent (234) were male.

4.4 Conclusion

Of the total sample 70.4 percent was engaged in agriculture but degree and type of engagement was different. Of them around 40 percent of the respondents were engaged in full time farming while almost 34 percent were engaged as non-wage labourers or family labourers. Survey findings reveal that level of education and involvement in agriculture had an inverse relationship. Though around 7 percent of the respondents engaged in agriculture related industry or businesses, most of them were engaged in small scale business.

CHAPTER FIVE

Youth Perceptions of Agriculture

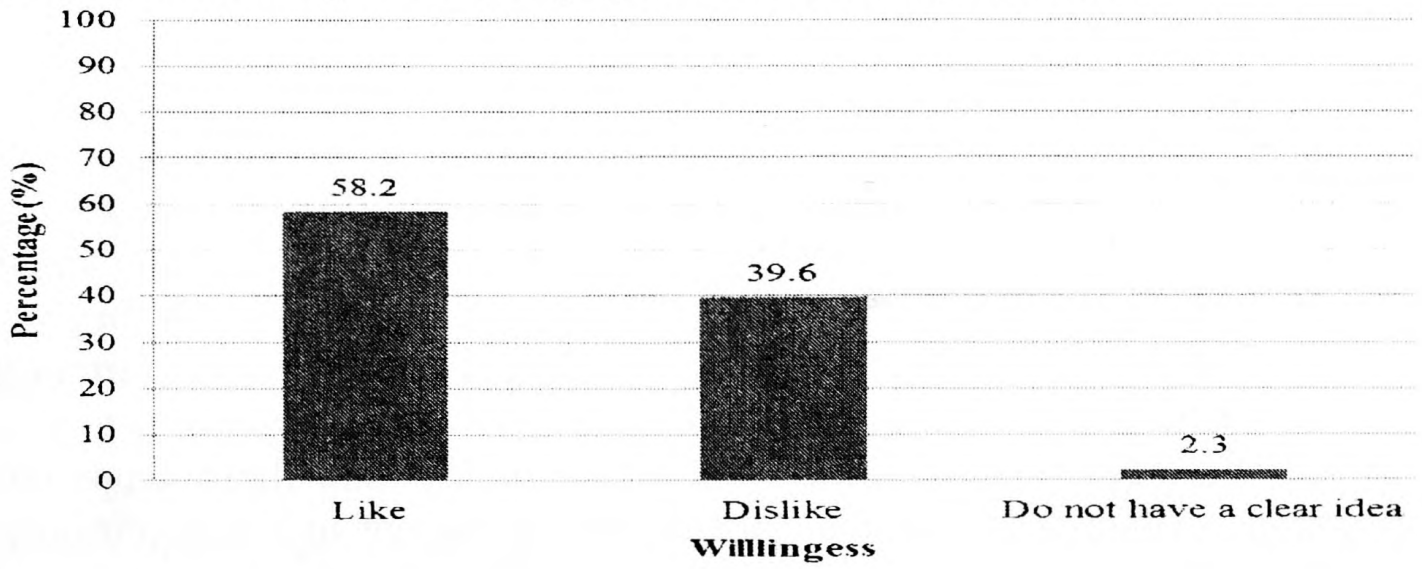
5.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the youths' perception of agriculture related activities especially as a fulltime occupation. It is also focused on ways of involvement and reasons behind youths' involvements in agriculture related activities in order to identify the real situation. Youth perception on agro based industries is also explained in this chapter. In addition, most preferred job categories of youths who do not have fulltime occupation are also discussed.

5.2 Willingness to Engage Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation

Of those in the study sample, 58.2 percent of respondents said that they liked to engage in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation while, 39.6 percent of respondents said that they did not like to engage in agriculture related activities as a fulltime occupation (Figure 5.1). In addition, 2.3 percent of respondents said that they did not have a clear idea regarding their willingness to engage in agricultural activities as full time occupation. They mentioned that the agriculture sector had both benefits and disadvantages.

Figure 5.1: Willingness to Engage in Fulltime Agriculture



Source: Filed Survey, 2012

Reasons for respondents' willingness to engage in agriculture related activities as a fulltime occupation are diverse and are based on their experience, knowledge, economic benefits and personal characteristics. Therefore, majority of respondents who liked to engage in agriculture as fulltime occupation had skills to carry out agriculture related activities as they had work experience since childhood. On the other hand, they had a

sufficient labour force (especially family labourers) and basic assets including land. Therefore, they preferred to choose agricultural activities rather than moving away for another job in the open job market without adequate skills, training and education.

On the other hand, majority of agriculture related activities were based on respondents' own villages and some youth proffered to do agricultural activities without going away from their neighbourhood. In addition, a number of young people among respondents had various obligations in their households. Accordingly, some youths in the villages were engaged in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation because they have difficulties to leave their households. In some households only children, women, differently able, unwell or elderly people lived in their houses and there were no other relatives to carry out farming in their own inherited agriculture lands. Some have to assist their parents in agriculture related activities. Hence for them it was difficult to move away from villages to do other jobs. This was confirmed by leaders of farmer organizations as well.

As revealed by filed study, a number of young people left their houses after finishing the education for jobs in the private sector and informal sector. According to experiences of some of the respondents who had left the village for outside jobs, they had been paid low salaries and it was difficult to cover monthly expenses. Majority of respondents who had such experience, were fed up with doing jobs in the open job market. Therefore, proffered to do agricultural related activities. According to views of such respondents, in spite of the fact that they earned less money than what they have earned before they proffered agricultural activities in the village. Therefore they still liked to engage in agricultural related activities and live in village with less living expenses, less stress and much freedom. Apart from these reasons self-interest and self-satisfaction to do farming were considered as reasons for their preference to do agricultural related jobs.

Profitable agriculture activities also played an important role in deciding youth's willingness to engage in agriculture related activities fulltime. According to field study in Nuwara-eliya district, young generation among up country vegetable farming families were willing to engage in agriculture related activities than in other areas as they could earn good income even by cultivating small plots of land. Furthermore farming of vegetables, fruits and other field crops were more profitable than resorting to paddy farming in general. Therefore, youths were interested in cultivating these crops rather than paddy farming. However more youths did not like to engage in paddy farming as fulltime occupation due to reasons such as difficulties in selling the harvest at reasonable prices, high production cost, lack of land and water shortage. Especially, most youths did not like to engage in tenant farming to a great extent and as a result number of abandoned paddy lands could be seen in the villages.

On the other hand according to focus group discussions, some members among the young generation in farming communities did not like to engage in farming as it was traditional

way of farming. Most youths liked to follow modern life style and therefore disliked to work under extreme working conditions. .

Table 5.1: Age and Willingness to Engage in Agriculture as Full Time Occupation

Age Group	Willingness					
	Like		Dislike		Do not have Clear Idea	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Age15	19	54.2	14	40.0	2	5.8
15<Age<=20	87	45.8	100	52.6	3	1.6
20<Age<=25	82	61.7	47	35.3	4	3.0
25<Age<=29	122	69.7	50	28.6	3	1.7
Total	310	58.2	211	39.6	12	2.2

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in Table 5.1, among respondents in age category of 25<Age<=29, 69.7 percent (122) liked to engage in agriculture as a fulltime occupation while, those respondents belonging to age category 20<Age<=25, 61.7 percent (82) like to engage in agriculture as a fulltime occupation. On the other hand, in age category 15<Age<=20, 52.6 percent of respondents (100) said they did not liked to engage in agriculture as fulltime occupation.

Many respondents who were below 25 years said that they did not like to engage in agricultural activities fulltime, had the intention of moving for jobs in open job market or continue their education. Among them less educated youths preferred well-paid jobs such as three wheeler driving, jobs in factories, foreign jobs and jobs in construction fields. Those who had experience in construction field could earn a good income within a short period of time which they could not earn from farming. More importantly as they said, these jobs were less risky and their income was assured unlike in farming.

Consequently, most of the respondents above 25 years said that they liked to engage in fulltime agricultural activities. As revealed by the field survey, various reasons are behind their willingness. More importantly, when they matured and possessed life experience, they tend to think about a most suitable job. Some respondents had engaged in various kinds of jobs from their teenage or early 20s. However, after been engaged in such jobs for many years, they were fed up with those jobs and realized that farming had more freedom. They also experienced the harshness of working in factories and several unskilled fields without fair payment.

Table 5.2: Farming Activity and Willingness to Engage in Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation

Type of activity	Willingness							
	Like (N=238)		Dislike (N=130)		Do not have Clear Idea (N=7)		Total (N=375)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
As full time occupation	115	77.7	31	20.9	2	1.4	148	100.0
As part time occupation	56	56.6	38	38.4	5	5.1	99	100.0
As Family labour (Not as an occupation)	67	52.3	61	47.7	0	0.0	128	100.0

Note: This table includes only respondents, who mentioned that they were engaged in agriculture related activities as family labourers, fulltime and part time employees

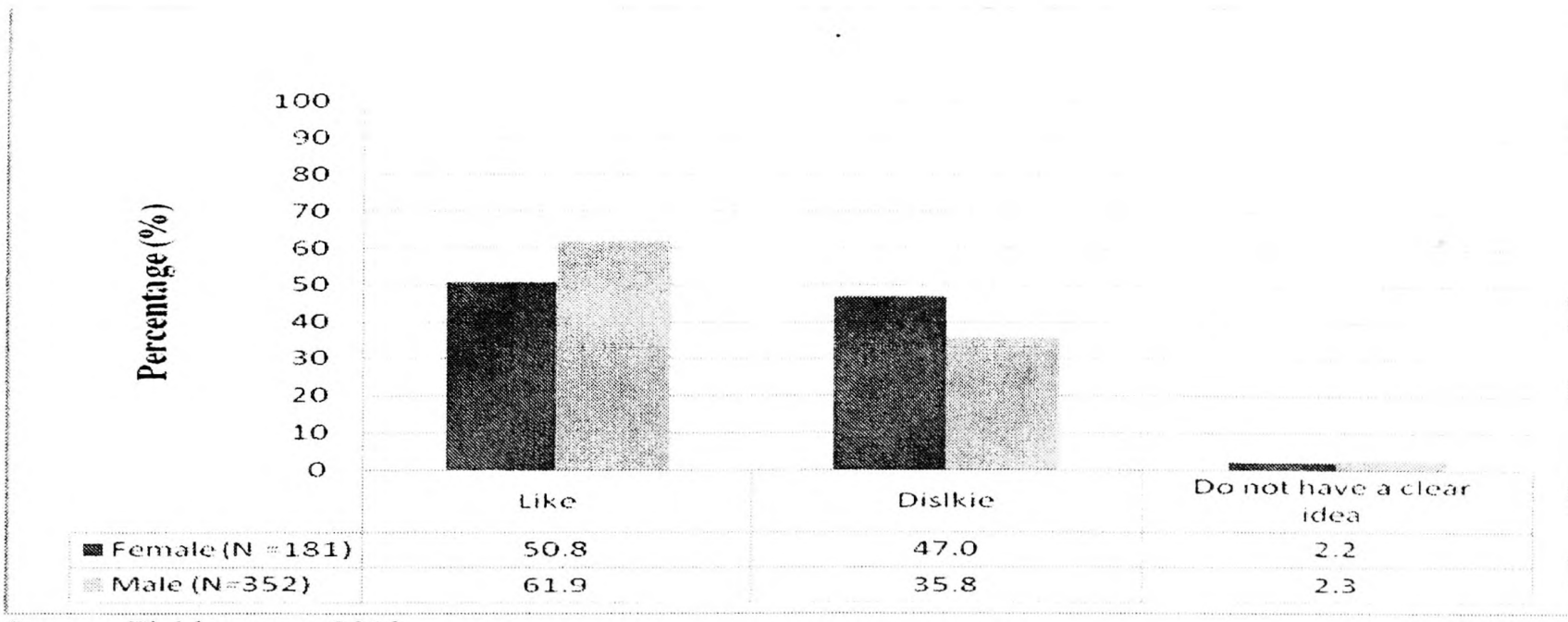
Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in Table 5.2, Majority of fulltime agriculture employees (77.7 percent) said that they were willing to engage in agricultural activities fulltime continuously. Further, 56.6 percent of part time agriculture employees said that they liked to engage in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation. Further 52.3 percent of respondents who work as family laborers currently, said they liked to engage in agricultural activities fulltime.

According to study most of the fulltime agriculture workers in the sample had their own farm assets including land. Therefore they made a good effort to develop their own lands because all benefits of the lands were to themselves. In addition they had sole responsibility of their work as entire farm or business was governed by them.

In the case of family labourers, they did not have ownership of land and benefits were not ensured. On the other hand, some family labourers were given money as rewards by their parents after they sold their products. But most of the time parents spent their money for children's daily needs and for fulfilling other necessary requirements including education. Especially, some respondents who worked as family labourers were doing studies with the intension of having a professional job.

Figure 5.2: Gender and Willingness to Engage in Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation



	Like	Dislkie	Do not have a clear idea
Female (N =181)	50.8	47.0	2.2
Male (N=352)	61.9	35.8	2.3

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Figure 5.2 male respondents were more likely to engage in agricultural activities as fulltime occupation than females. Accordingly, 61.9 percent of male respondents said that they like to engage in agriculture related activities while 50.8 percent of female respondents expressed their willingness to engage in agriculture as fulltime occupation.

According to views of some female respondents, it was difficult to engage in agriculture fulltime with the household chores. Especially in agrarian society they have specific tasks such as helping their husbands in farm work and preparing food for them. In addition, they have responsibility of looking after their small children. On the other hand, some women said that they did not like to do agriculture or any other job as their husbands earn money and ask them to stay at home as housewives. Then again some women said that they like to engage in agriculture related activities or in self-employment or work as an entrepreneur. In the case of males, considerable number of males said that they like to engage in agriculture related work as they had responsibility to take care of their families. On the contrary some males, who were engaged agriculture activities fulltime, said they dislike doing agriculture as a fulltime occupation as it provide only low income with high production cost.

Table 5.3: Marital Status and Willingness to Engage in Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation

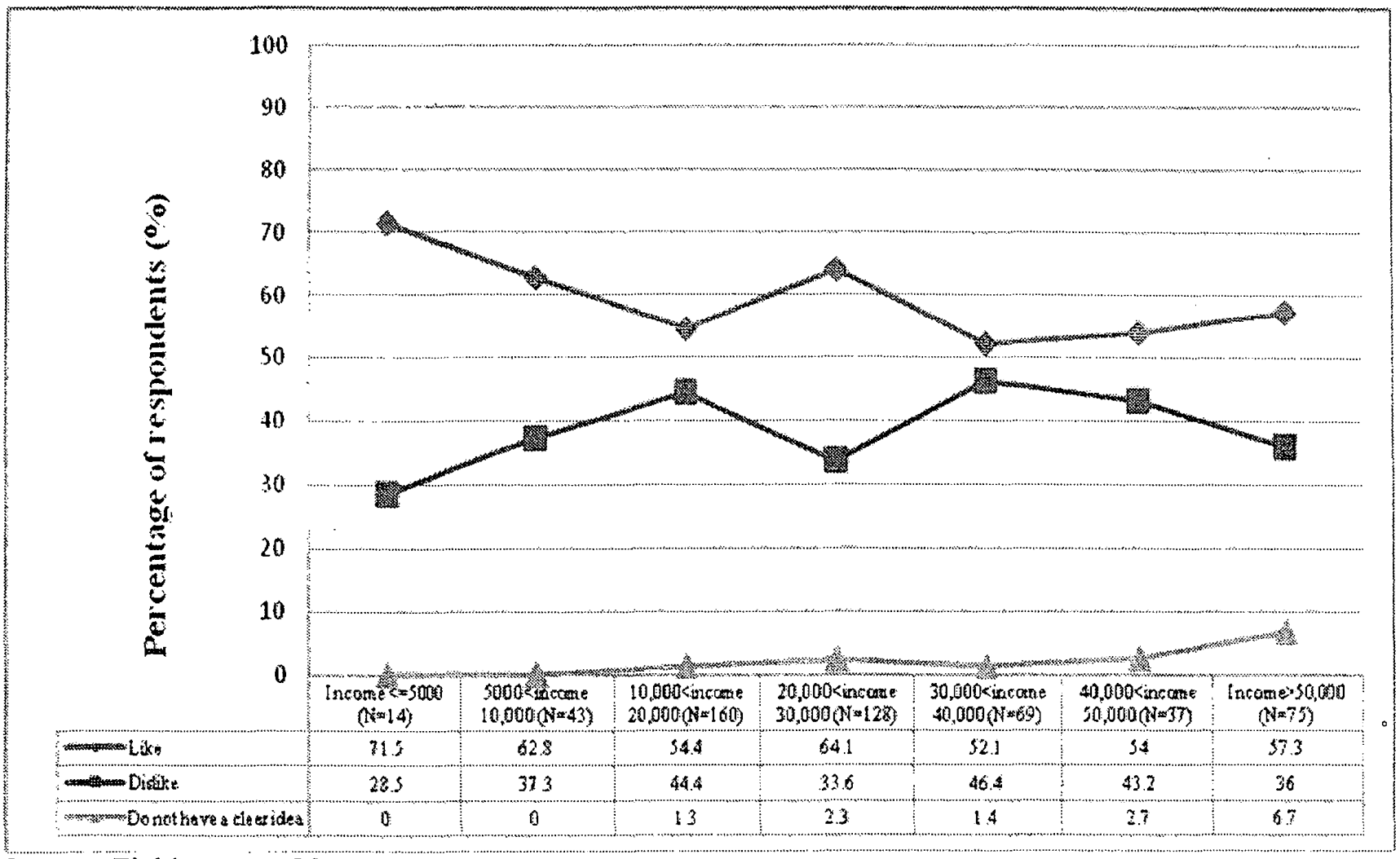
Marital Status	Willingness							
	Like		Dislike		Do not have Clear Idea		Total	
	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	No.	(%)
Married	127	70.6	50	27.8	3	1.7	180	100
Unmarried	183	51.8	161	45.6	9	2.5	353	100
Total	310	58.2	211	39.6	12	2.3	533	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

Majority of married respondents liked to engage in agriculture as a fulltime occupation (70.6 percent), while 51.8 percent of unmarried respondents liked to engage in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation (Table 5.3). According to study, majority of young unmarried respondents (teenage and early 20s) depended on their families fully or partially. However, married respondents had to bear the family responsibility than unmarried people. Thus, majority of them like to engage in farming rather than leaving farm work.

As shown in the Figure 5.3, there was no significant difference between income of the family and willingness to engage in agriculture related activities, except in some income categories. Accordingly 71.5 percent of respondents whose income level was less than Rs.5,000 liked to engage in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation. Further, 62.8 percent of respondents whose income level was between Rs. 5,000 to 10,000 and 64.1 percent of respondents whose income level was between Rs. 20,000 – Rs.30,000 liked to engage in agriculture related activities fulltime.

Figure 5.3: Level of Monthly Income of the Family and Willingness to Engage in Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation

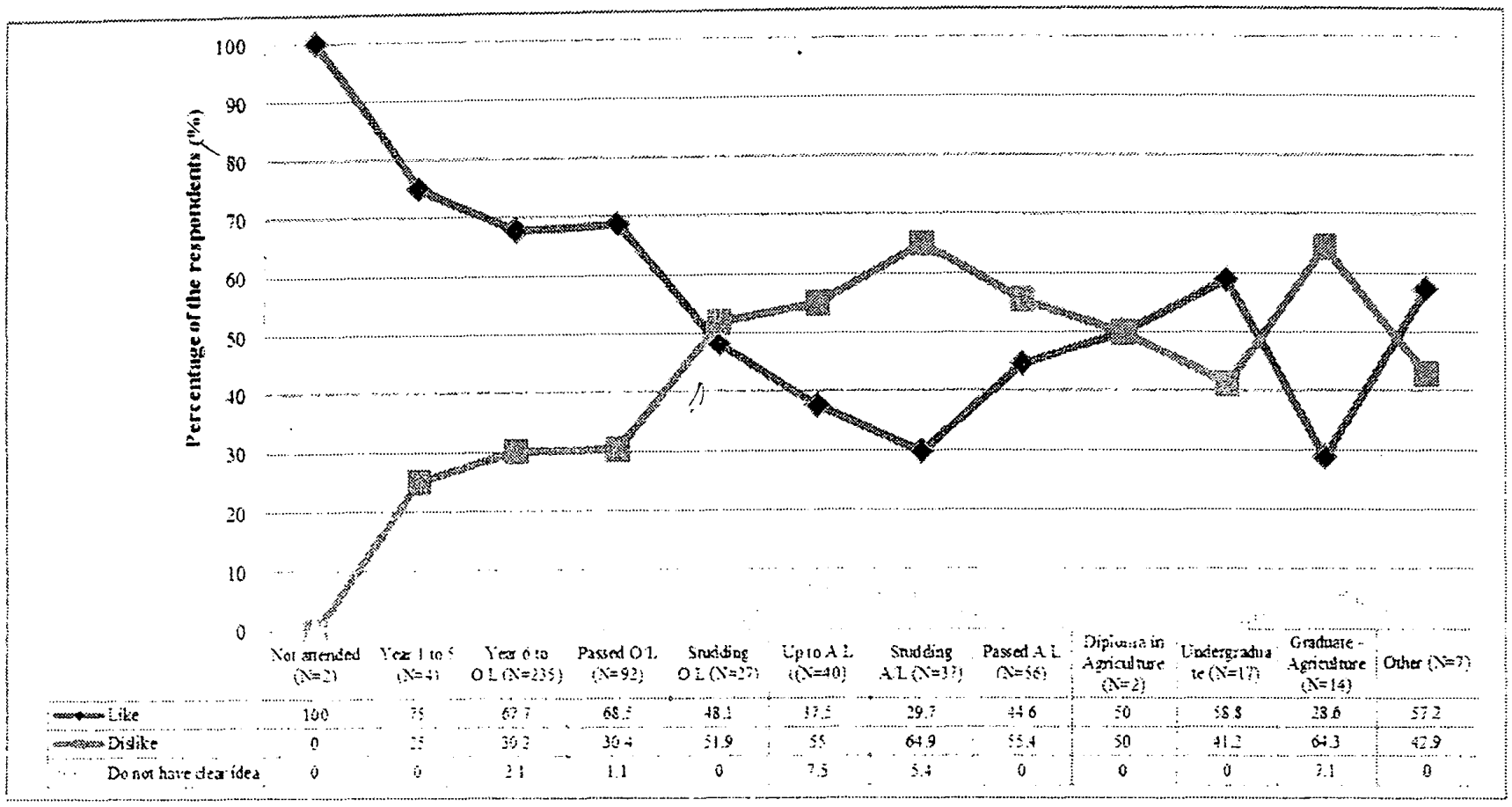


	Income<=5000 (N=14)	5000<income 10,000 (N=43)	10,000<income 20,000 (N=160)	20,000<income 30,000 (N=128)	30,000<income 40,000 (N=69)	40,000<income 50,000 (N=37)	Income>50,000 (N=75)
Like	71.5	62.8	54.4	64.1	52.1	54	57.3
Dislike	28.5	37.3	44.4	33.6	46.4	43.2	36
Do not have a clear idea	0	0	1.3	2.3	1.4	2.7	6.7

Source: Field survey, 2012

The reasons for this pattern are not very clear. However, respondents who belonged to lower income level had fewer assets and less access to moving away for jobs other than farming. This was due to lack of financial facility, education and less access to open job market which hindered their choice of jobs. On the they were living in the agricultural villages and they had facilities to do agriculture related activities even at the very basic level. The respondents who were in higher income categories had resources and opportunities to access other livelihood opportunities with their economic setting. As such even youths of those families were able to start a business or move for another job including foreign jobs as they had better economic stability unlike lower income groups.

Figure 5.4: Level of Education and Willingness to Engage in Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation



	Not attended (N=2)	Year 1 to 5 (N=4)	Year 6 to O/L (N=235)	Passed O/L (N=92)	Studding O/L (N=27)	Up to A/L ((N=40)	Studding A/L (N=37)	Passed A/L (N=56)	Diploma in Agriculture (N=2)	Undergraduate (N=17)	Graduate - Agriculture (N=14)	Other (N=7)
Like	100	75	67.7	68.5	48.1	37.5	29.7	44.6	50	58.8	28.6	57.2
Dislike	0	25	30.2	30.4	51.9	55	64.9	55.4	50	41.2	64.3	42.9
Do not have clear idea	0	0	2.1	1.1	0	7.5	5.4	0	0	0	7.1	0

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Figure 5.4, in general, less educated respondents liked to engage in agriculture related activities as full time occupation than respondents who possessed a higher education level. Especially majority of respondents whose education level was less than O/L were likely to engage in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation. On the contrary, if the respondents had studied up to O/L or further educated, majority said that they did not like to engage in agriculture related activities fulltime.

Accordingly, 75 percent of respondents who had studied up to year 1 to 5, said that they liked to engage in agriculture related activities on fulltime basis while 67.7 percent of respondents who had studied from year 6 to O/L and 68.5 percent of respondents who had passed O/L said that they liked to engage in agriculture related activities fulltime. The pattern was reversed when the respondent's education level was higher. Accordingly, 55 percent of respondents who had studied up to A/L and 64.9 percent of respondents who were studying A/L said that they did not like to engage in agriculture related activities on fulltime basis.

Undergraduates of the sample had somewhat different perceptions and 58.8 percent said that they would like to engage in fulltime agricultural activities in future. Among agriculture graduates only 28.6 percent respondents said that they liked to have agriculture related jobs. This was a controversial factor as their education was totally based on agriculture. However according to their views, it was difficult to engage in agricultural related activities fulltime in Sri Lanka unlike in developed countries.

However, it was clear that there was close relationship between the willingness to engage in agriculture related activities as fulltime occupation and education level. In the Figure 5.4, other category consisted of diploma holders in different fields including agriculture and partly qualified respondents of other professional exams such as accountancy.

On the other hand youths who had obtained education similar to A/L and continued their education were keen to have well recognized, well paid and secured jobs in government or private sector. Most of them always waited for a job which matched with their education level. It had increased their dependency on their families. Despite their dependency burden, their parents also encouraged them to find such jobs. According to discussions with farmer organizations, some members said that, they did not like to encourage their children to do farming mainly due to uncertainly of income. They further said that they liked to see their children doing permanent jobs without suffering in agricultural activities which they had experienced. On the other hand most young people in farming communities, specially educated youths, aspired for government of private sector jobs and when they did not meet their expectations as a last option they obliged to engage in farming activities.

Table 5.4: Reasons for Selecting Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation

Reason	No. of Responses	Percentage (N=148)
The job has a freedom/self-driven job	125	84.5
Did not obtain another job/no other option	104	70.3
Because of self-satisfaction	33	22.3
Parents/family members are engaged in agriculture sector	31	20.9
Availability of basic facilities	29	19.6
Can earn good income	24	16.2
Dislike moving to town	21	14.2
Have obtained agriculture related education/ experience	13	8.8

Note: Since same respondents had given multiple responses the sum of the percentage is not equal to 100
Source: Field survey, 2012

There were 148 respondents in the sample who had selected agriculture as fulltime occupation and they had specific reasons for the selection. As shown in the Table 5.4 these reasons were based on social factors and personal characteristics rather than economic factors. Accordingly, 84.5 percent (125) of fulltime agriculture employees mentioned that they had selected agriculture related livelihood as it had freedom. As most agriculture related activities engaged by respondents were self-driven and thus the decision making power of the job was with them except some hidden constraints such as

informal loan agreements with agro chemical sellers. Especially in farming activities they did not have much barriers and obstacles on doing their household chores and family duties which had also affected the selection of a job.

Of the full time farmers, 70.3 percent (104) mentioned that they were engaged in agriculture as an occupation as they did not obtain another job. Therefore as a last option they had selected agriculture, which means if they could obtain alternative jobs there was a tendency to leave agriculture. According to Focus Group discussions, majority of youths involved in full time farming were less educated. They remained in agriculture sector as they had difficulties of finding other jobs without adequate education and professional qualifications. On the other hand, most educated and professionally qualified youths were moving away to towns for jobs. Even, considerable number of well experienced and older farmers mentioned that if they had an alternative job, they also liked to move away from farming due to difficulties of sustaining farming as a livelihood activity.

According to respondents, other reasons for selecting agriculture as fulltime occupation were self-satisfaction (22.3 percent), parents/family members were engaged in agricultural activities (20.9 percent), availability of basic facilities (19.6 percent), can earn good income (16.2 percent), did not like to move to towns (14.2 percent), obtained agriculture related education and experience on those activities (8.8 percent).

Table 5.5: Reasons for not Willing to Engage in Agriculture as Fulltime Occupation

Reasons	Responses No.	Percentage of Total (%) N=211
Difficult/cannot fulfill the basic facilities		
i. Land	83	26.0
ii. Financial facilities	31	9.7
iii. Labour	17	5.3
iv. Inputs (Fertilizer and seeds etc.)	27	8.5
v. Irrigation and water facilities	28	8.8
Uncertainly of market and low income	186	58.1
Personally preferred another job	50	15.7
Not suitable with education qualifications	41	12.9
Engage in studies	39	12.2
Do not have recognition from society	39	12.1
Unavailability of job security	36	11.3
Alternative income generation activities are more successful	34	10.7
Unavailability /lack of awareness/training on farming /not introducing modern technology	31	9.7
Parents'-preference for another job	27	8.5
Have to work hard/Heavy work load	24	7.5
Have not enough time	17	5.3
Obtain a job in another field	16	5.0
Unavailability of crop insurance	11	3.4
Not attractive	9	2.8
Health problems/ Tendency to having health hazards	8	2.5
Other	12	3.6

Note: Since same respondents had given multiple responses the sum of the percentage is not equal to 100
Source: Field survey, 2012

Despite economic factor being one of the main criteria for selecting a fulltime livelihood activity, some (16.2 percent) respondents said that they had selected agriculture as fulltime occupation because they could earn good income.

As mentioned, economic factor had not much influence in the selection of agriculture as fulltime occupation. However according to respondents, who did not choose agriculture as fulltime occupation their decisions had greatly influenced by economic factor. According to views of those respondents, lack of basic facilities was one of the major reasons to dislike fulltime employment in agriculture sector. In fact 26.0 percent (83) respondents said that they had problems with the lands while 9.7 percent (31, 8. 8 percent

(28), 8.5 percent (27) 5.3 percent (17), respondents said they did not have sufficient financial facilities, sufficient water/ irrigation facilities, agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and seeds and sufficient labour respectively (Table 5.5)

In addition 58.1 percent of respondents (186) said that uncertainly of market and low income of agriculture discouraged them to engage in agriculture as fulltime occupation. According to a number of respondents, if they could earn a good income through agricultural activities they liked to engage in agriculture fulltime. The members of farmer organizations also confirmed this mentioning that a number of young people moved away from farming due to losses. According to farmer organizations of the Matale district, earlier there was much demand among youth for cultivating crops like tomato and beans as they could obtain a good profit, However, due to uncertainty of prices, young farmer had left from farming in recent years. This problem is discussed in chapter six in detail.

Furthermore, 15.7 percent of respondents (50) said that they personally preferred another job and, did not like to engage in agricultural activities fulltime. Especially most young people among respondents did not own land and thus, without ownership they could not control farming or industry as independent farmers or entrepreneurs.

The other major reasons which hindered the youth participation in agriculture fulltime were not suitable for education qualifications (12.9 percent), engaged in studies (12.2 percent), did not have recognition from society (12.1 percent), unavailability of job security (11.3 percent), other income generation activities were better (10.7 percent), unavailability/lack of awareness/training including technology gap (9.7 percent), parents' preference for another job (8.5 percent), have to work hard/heavy work load (7.5 percent). Other category of the table consists of the reasons such as family has good economic stability, unable to do without help, unwillingness of husband, has to help husbands' livelihood activities, not matured to do a job and still in younger age and hindrance of the social mobility through agriculture activities.

5.3 Youths Perceptions on Agro based Industries

Agro based industries can be considered key livelihood activities related to agriculture. However as revealed by the study agro bases industries were not much popular among rural youth. 23. 6 percent of total respondents (126, mentioned that they did not like to engage in agro based industries due to many reasons (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: Reasons for not Willing to Engage in Agro based Industries

Reason	Persons who Dislike to Engage in Agro Based Industries (N=126)	
	No.	%
Uncertainly of achieving success	39	31.0
Low income	26	20.9
Not suitable for education qualifications	25	19.7
No/Lack of awareness /trainings	25	19.7
No proper market /market demand	16	12.7
No time	20	16.2
Alternative income generation activities are more effective	20	16.2
Cannot/difficult to obtain basic facilities	18	13.9
No/lack of influence from the parents	10	8.1
No recognition from society	10	8.1
Other	10	8.1

Note: Since same respondents had given multiple responses, the sum of the percentage is not equal to 100
Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 5.6, 31.0 percent of respondents (39) said that they did not like to engage in agro based industry due to uncertainty of success. Therefore engaging in some other job is more attractive and secure than agro based industries for youth generation. Most agro-based industries were traditional, small-scale, less profitable and less dynamic. These characteristics of agro based industries are not attractive to young generation.

Other reasons for youth to dislike in agro based industries are low income (20.9 percent), not suitable for their education qualifications (19.7 percent), No/lack of awareness and trainings (19.7 percent), no proper market or market demand (12.7 percent), non availability of adequate time (16.2 percent), other income generation activities are more effective than agro based industries (16.2 percent), cannot/difficult to obtain basic facilities (13.9 percent), no/lack of support from the parents (8.1 percent) no recognition from the society (8.1 percent). Other category consists of reasons such as engaged in studies, not fit to rural setting where the respondents live, engaged in good job and no adequate experience in agro based industry.

As shown in the Table 5.7, major reason for not engaging in agro based industries among respondents who were interested to initiate agricultural related activities is lack of basic facilities. Accordingly, 63.6 percent of respondents (232) specifically mentioned that they did not have financial strength to start or continue agro based industries. Of those who were willing to engage in agro based industries but do not engage in them, 25.2 percent mentioned that they did not have suitable location or building to engage in agro based

industries while 28.8 percent and 3.8 percent of respondents said that they had problems in obtaining machinery and raw materials and sufficient number of suitable workers. For a considerable number of respondents (38.1 percent), difficulties and less accessibility of obtaining knowledge and training was obstacles to start an agro based industries. Even though parents of some of youths owned such industries, these youth could not enhance these industries due to knowledge gap including lack of technical know-how. As a result it was difficult for them to compete with other entrepreneurs at least at regional level especially with large and medium scale business competitors. More importantly, lack of awareness (23.6 percent) was one of the major factors which hindered the youth involvement in agro based industries as well. This means that most of the youths who did not engage in agro based industries did not have awareness on how to do agro based industries even at basic level and without that awareness they could not look forward as entrepreneurs in agro based industry.

Other reasons for not engaging in agro based industries are engaged in studies (18.4 percent), unavailability/lack of market facilities (18.1 percent), time constraint (8 percent), family burden (2.2 percent) engaged in another job (2.2 percent), unavailability of proper plan (1.4 percent) to start agro based industry and uncertainty/ risk about achieving success (0.8 percent).

Table 5.7: Reasons for not Engaging in Agro based Industries/Business

Reason	Respondents (N=365)	
	No.	%
Cannot/ Difficult to obtain basic facilities		
i. Financial facility	232	63.6
ii. Location	92	25.2
iii. Knowledge/training	139	38.1
iv. Machinery and raw materials	105	28.8
v. Labor	14	3.8
No awareness regarding the industry	86	23.6
Due to engage in studies	67	18.4
No/lack of market facilities	66	18.1
Unavailability of adequate time to spend in agro based industry	29	8.0
Family burden	8	2.2
Engaged in another job	8	2.2
Uncertainty/risk about achieving success	3	0.8
Unavailability of proper plan	5	1.4
Other	4	1.2

Note: Since same respondents had given multiple responses, the sum of the percentage is not equal to 100
Source: Field survey, 2012

According to views of respondents, as a result of unavailability of market facilities there was high risk to start such industry. Most youths had limited access to financial facilities and under these circumstances they were unable to initiate such industry with fewer tendencies for success. Consequently, knowledge gap has also hindered the young entrepreneurs in rural sector.

5.4 Most Preferable Jobs and Reasons for Selecting the Job

There were respondents in the sample who did not have fulltime occupations (283) and they preferred to have various kinds of jobs in different sectors.

Table 5.8: Most Preferable Job of the Respondents who did not Engage in Fulltime Occupation by Gender

Preferred Job	Gender				Total	
	Female		Male			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Government job	80	48.2	86	51.8	166	58.7
Private sector job	11	35.5	20	64.5	31	11.0
Foreign job	0	0	7	100.0	7	2.5
Agriculture sector job (including farming)	13	35.1	24	64.9	37	13.1
Industrial sector job	2	28.6	5	71.4	7	2.5
Self-employment /Business	18	81.8	4	18.2	22	7.8
A job in the security forces/sector	0	0	2	100.0	2	0.7
No intention to do a job	4	100	0	0.0	4	1.4
Do not have a clear idea	6	85.7	1	14.3	7	2.5

Source: Field survey, 2012

As shown in the Table 5.8, most preferable job sector of 58.7 percent of respondents, who did not engage in full time occupation, was government sector, indicating the high demand for government jobs in rural areas. Key reasons behind their preference for a government job are social recognition, job security, pension schemes and fixed income. Considerable proportion of the respondents (13.1 percent) also said that they liked to engage in agriculture related jobs. Eleven percent and 7.8 percent of respondents said that they liked to have a private sector job and do a self- employment/business respectively.

There was no significant difference between male and female respondents' preference to having a government job. However, preference for having some job indicates the gender difference of selecting jobs. Accordingly having a private sector job, agriculture related

jobs, foreign jobs, jobs in security sector and jobs in industrial sector were preferred by male respondents than female respondents. On the contrary self-employment /business were preferred by 18 (81.8 percent) female respondents and 4 (18.2 percent) male respondent. Some female respondents also said that they did not have any intention to do a job as they were married and have to be engaged in domestic duties fulltime.

As shown in the Table 5.9, most preferable job of respondents of all age categories was a government job. Especially among respondents in age categories of age 15 and 15<Age<=20, 76.7 percent and 70.4 percent of respondents preferred to have a government job respectively. Considerable number of respondents in age categories of 20<Age<=25 and 25<Age<=29 preferred in engage in agricultural related job.

Table 5.9: Most Preferable Job of the Respondents who did not Engage in Fulltime Occupation by Age

Preferred Job	Age group (N=283)					
	Age=15 (N=30)	15<Age<=20 (N=145)	20<Age<=25 (N=67)	25<Age<=29 (N=41)	Total (N=283)	
	%	%	%	%	No.	%
Government job	76.7	70.4	46.3	24.4	166	58.7
Private sector job	10.0	10.3	14.9	7.3	31	11.0
Foreign job	6.7	0.7	1.5	7.3	7	2.5
Agriculture sector job (including farming)	0.0	9.7	20.9	22	37	13.1
Industrial sector job	3.3	2.8	3.0	0.0	7	2.5
Self employment /business	3.3	4.2	9.0	22.0	22	7.8
A job in the security forces/sector	0.0	0.7	1.5	0.0	2	0.7
No intention to do a job	0.0	0.0	3.0	4.9	4	1.4
Do not have a clear idea	0.0	1.4	0.0	12.2	7	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	283	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

As revealed by the field study young people when they were getting matured they realized the gap between their expectations and the difficulties of achieving their

aspiration in real situation. On the other hand, they had more experience and knowledge on agriculture related jobs. Under these circumstances young people in age categories of 20<Age<=25 and 25<Age<=29 preferred to be fulltime agricultural workers than people in younger age groups.

There were many reasons behind the preference of jobs among respondents who did not have a fulltime occupation currently. Some respondents had only one reason for selecting of job while some respondents had several reasons behind their job preference.

Table 5.10: Reasons for the most Preferable Job

Reason	No. of Responses (N=283)	Percentage (%)
Economic stability/can earn good income	129	45.6
Job security	90	31.8
High standard of social recognition	75	26.5
Match with education and professional qualifications	75	26.5
Job is attractive	35	12.4
Because of parents' willingness	30	10.6
Availability of pension	25	8.8
No need to work hard physically /Lack of tiredness	21	7.4
A job has a freedom	19	6.7
Availability of clear working hours	17	6.0
Can do the job staying at home	10	3.5
No clear idea	9	3.2
Have experience, practice and training	8	2.8
Other	10	3.5

Note: Since same respondents had given multiple responses, the sum of the percentage is not equal to 100
Source: Field survey, 2012

As for the reasons for the preferable job, 45.6 percent of respondents (129) mentioned that they preferred economic stability through preferred job. Around 32 percent of respondents (90) mentioned job security while 26.5percent of respondents (75) said that they wished to have jobs with high standard of social recognition. Another 75 (26.5 percent) respondents said that they preferred a specific job as the job was suitable to their professional and educational qualifications. Other reasons for preference of specific jobs were job is attractive (12.4 percent), parents willingness for specific job (10.6 percent), availability of pension (8.8 percent), no need to work hard physically (7.4 percent), freedom (6.7 percent), specific working hours (6.0 percent), can do the job staying at home (3.5 percent), have experience, practice and training related to preferred job (2.8

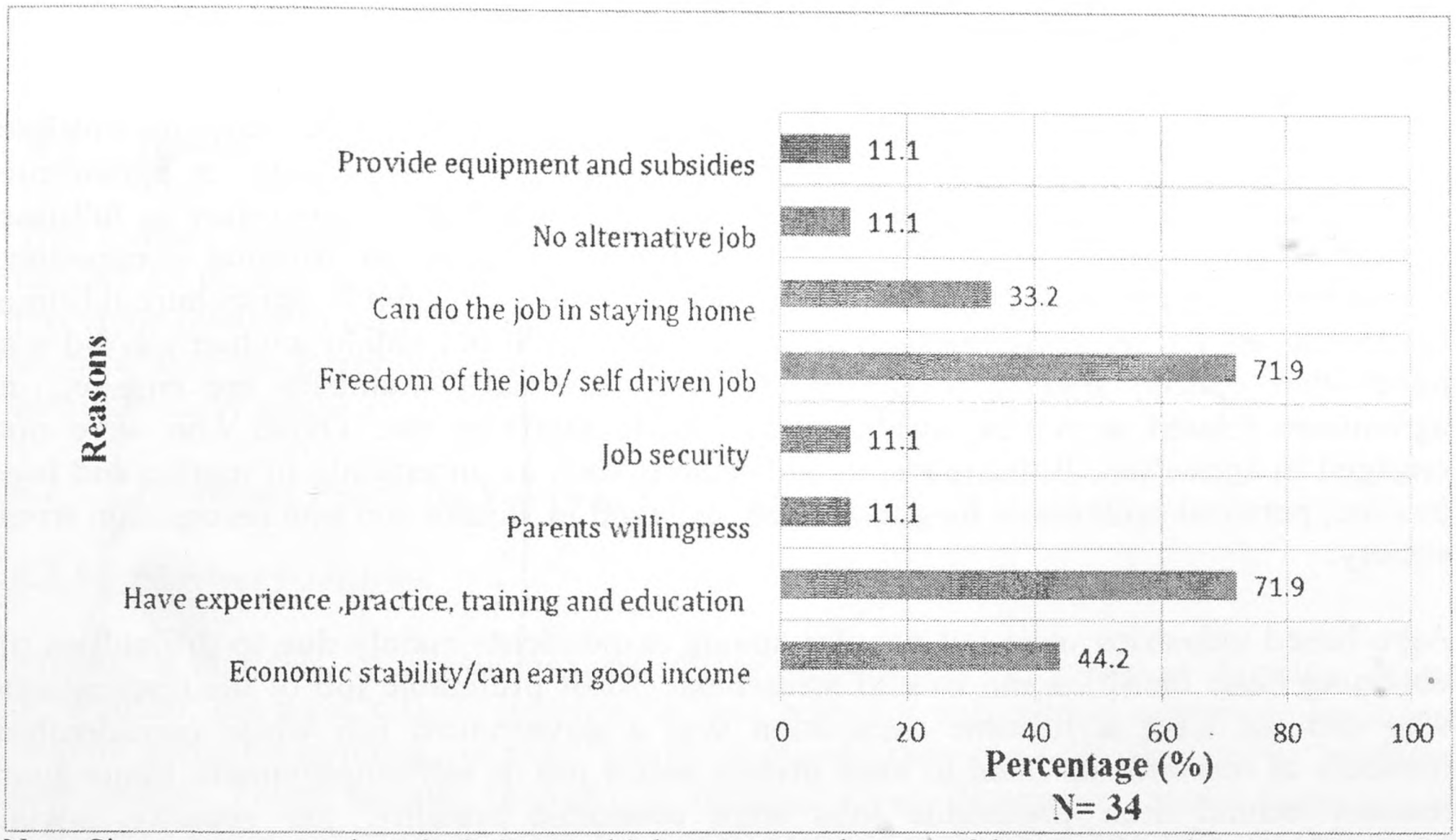
percent) (Table 5.10). Some respondents (3.5 percent) also mentioned that they did not have a clear idea regarding their preference for specific job. Other category consists of specific reasons including able to serve the country, self-satisfaction, difficult to obtain another job and easy to find a marriage partner through the job etc.

As revealed by the field survey, many young people in rural areas consider income they could obtain from the job when they select a job. That is a very common phenomenon in the urban society too. As a result a number of young people move away to towns for work as unskilled workers especially in the construction field.

However, of those respondents who said that they prefered to have a government job, considered the recognition of the job despite the low salary scales of some jobs. As mentioned, job security is also a considerable factor for preference of a job among respondents. Job security is always connected with income, particularly fixed income through a government or private sector.

Another salient factor for preference to have a specific job is education qualification. Still in Sri Lankan society, farming is considered as a job done by less educated people. Some members of the farmer organizations confirmed this idea saying that they liked to educate their children and wished to see they do recognized jobs. This idea also influenced youths of farmer families. Therefore most of the times, youths of farmer families who obtain somewhat better education such as passed A/L or above, are often looking for permanent jobs in public or private sector. Even if they have sufficient assets to engage in agricultural activities they tend to move for a job which suits their education. Sometimes they wait for such jobs for years and years.

Figure 5.5: Reasons for Preference to having Agriculture Related Jobs



Note: Since same respondents had given multiple responses, the sum of the percentage is not equal to 100 (Total number of responses is 47)

Source: Field survey, 2012

According to field survey some young people are really enthusiastic about agriculture related work including farming and agro based industries. However due to many constraints to start and continue these activities. Of those in the sample who did not have fulltime occupation, 13.1 percent of respondents (34) were willing to engage in agriculture related activities as full time occupation. Those respondents had different responses and perceptions regarding their preference of having a job. Among them, 71.9 percent respondents said that they liked to choose agriculture as a fulltime occupation in the future because the job has freedom and most agricultural activities are self-driven. They defined freedom in different aspects. Accordingly, it is not needed to depend on others as they can carry out the job without supervision of others. On the other hand, they can do farming activities and other agriculture related activities by performing their domestic and personal duties. The decision making power is also with the farmer or entrepreneur most of the times when they do agriculture related job. Moreover, village living has much freedom and comfort than urban living.

Another 71.9 percent respondents said that the job is preferred by them because they have obtained agriculture related experience, practice, training and education. 44.2of respondents mentioned that they could earn a good income by doing agriculture related jobs fulltime. This shows that some youths like to do agriculture related job considering

the economic benefits regardless of the perception that agriculture is not always profitable.

5.5 Conclusion

Majority of respondents were willing to engage in agriculture related activities fulltime while considerable number of respondents were not willing to engage in agriculture fulltime. Economic reasons had not much influenced selecting of agriculture as fulltime occupation. However, those who did not select agriculture as fulltime occupation, economic reasons were the main factors. Those who were engaged in agriculture fulltime major reasons for selecting their job were freedom, could not obtain another job/did not have other option, able to obtain self-satisfaction, family members are engaged in agriculture related activities, availability of basic facilities etc. Those who were not engaged in agriculture fulltime mentioned reasons such as uncertainly of market and low income, personal preference for another job, engaged in studies and non recognition from society.

Agro based industries were not popular among respondents mainly due to difficulties of obtaining basic facilities and lack of awareness. Most preferable job of the respondents who did not have a fulltime occupation was a government job while considerable numbers of respondents liked to have private sector job or self-employment. Major four reasons behind their preferable jobs were economic stability, job security, social recognition and match with education qualifications.

CHAPTER SIX

Problems Faced by Youth in Farming

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the problems and difficulties faced by young generation when they attempt to engage in farming as an occupation. The chapter specially pays attention to problems related to basic facilities, assets and social recognition on farming. In addition chapter uses the information given by representatives of farmer organizations to clarify ideas given by youth.

6.2 Problems Faced by Youth in Farming

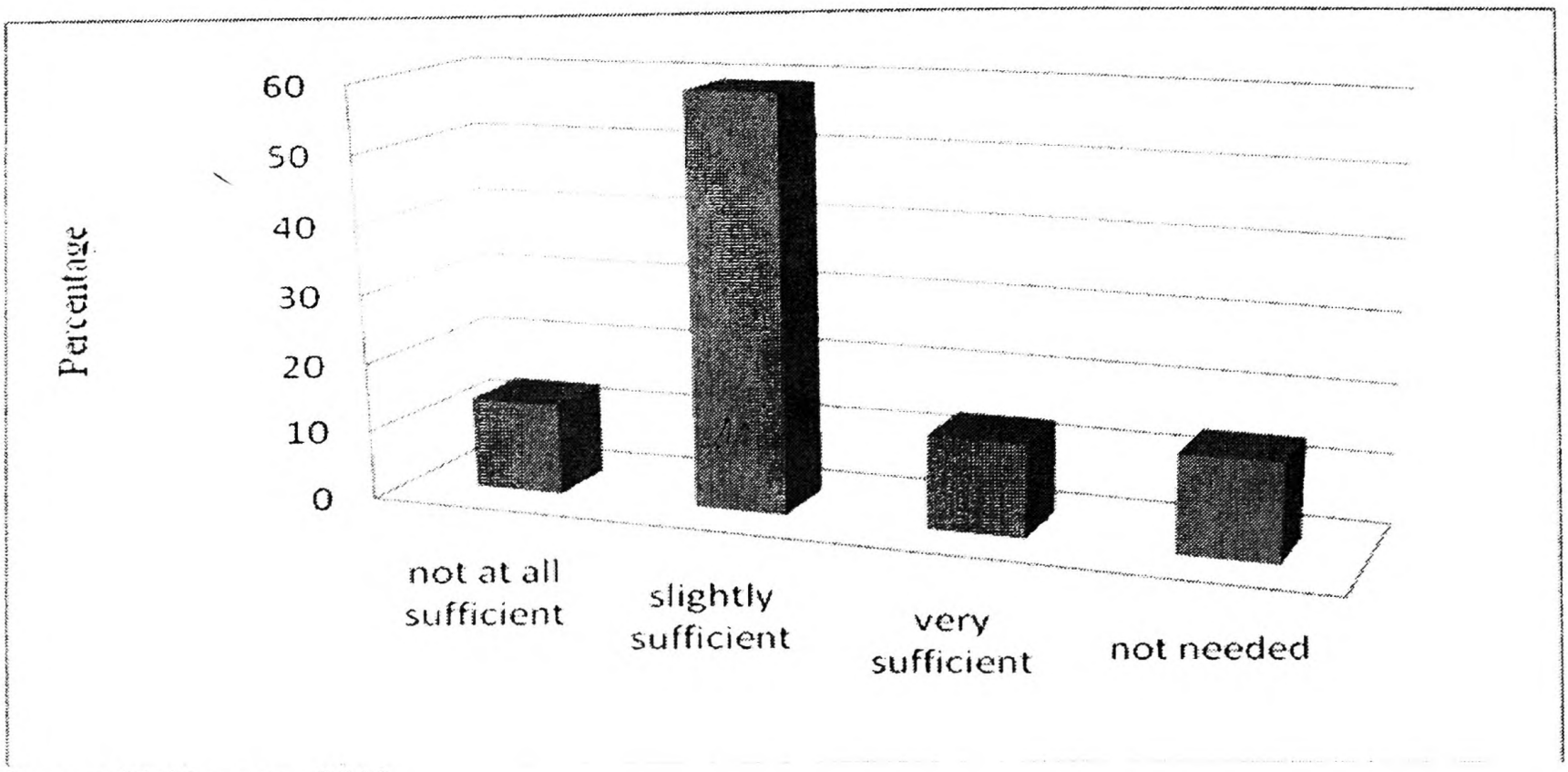
6.2.1 Market Facilities

Among a number of problems and difficulties faced by youth in farming as an occupation, the most crucial problem is low price for agricultural commodities or less income given by farming. As many youths explained they were discouraged by low farm gate prices. Young people engaged in farming as an occupation, leave farming and migrate to Colombo or other areas for casual employment when they were unable to get a satisfactory income due to low farm-gate prices. The situation is explained further in the Case Study 6.1. Furthermore, as most of the youth explained, though they were willing to engage in farming, they pull out from farming when they hear their parents' grievances on marketing problems and matters arising on low income from farming.

According to field survey data, 13.4 percent of total respondents did not have sufficient market facilities at all. They included reasonable price for commodities and inputs, quality of inputs, machinery charges and collecting centre etc as market facilities. 14.3 percent, 12.2 percent and 13.4 percent of full time farmers, part time farmers and family labourers mentioned that they did not have sufficient market facilities for their products (Figure 6.1).

Approximately 59 percent of the total respondents mentioned that they had slightly sufficient facilities while it varied from 64 percent of full time farmers to 70.4 percent for family labourers. Those who mentioned market facilities were very sufficient were 13.4 percent while it varied from 10.3 percent of family labourers to 17 percent for full time farmers (Table 6.1). These figures imply that they have marketing problems.

Figure 6.1: Degree of Sufficiency of Market Facilities



Source: Field survey, 2012

Table 6.1: Degree of Sufficiency of Market Facilities by Farming Activities

Degree of Sufficiency	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)
Not at all sufficient	14.3	12.2	13.4
Slightly sufficient	64.0	61.3	70.4
Very sufficient	17.0	11.2	10.3
Not needed	4.8	15.3	6.3

Source: Field survey, 2012

Though they face a number of problems and difficulties related to market facilities, most prominent problem is low farm gate price for their produce for all crops. Paddy purchasing price was around LKR 20/kg[4] during the survey period in all the study locations. As revealed by respondents if somebody needed to purchase quid *(bulathvita)* he/she had to sell at least 1kg of paddy. As they further explained, most of the farm households needed a piece of soap per a day or two days. If they need 30 pieces of soap per a month, they had to spend LKR 1,200 per month. To earn such amount of money paddy farmers needed to sell 60 kg of paddy. Therefore, without another income source it has difficult to meet day-today needs. Due to above mentioned situation, young generation tended to move away from farming sector. Further, even though they were

[4] This price varied from LKR 20-24 for Samba, 16-19 for naadu

used to engage in farming they tended to occupy in other income generation activities, considering farming as a second income source.

Case Study 6.1: Mr. Sujeewa, Ranmuduwewa, Sooriyawewa.

24 years old sujeewa Paranamanna is a full time farmer. He lives in Sooriyawewa, with his wife and daughter. His farm land is around 2.5 acres and he cultivated a number of crops such as brinjals, capsicum, green chillies, cucumber and tomatoes. He used to invest at least LKR 150,000/= for a season. When the farm gate price was reasonable or high he earned at least LKR 75,000/= profit from one acre per season.

In the year 2010 and 2011 vegetable prices went down drastically. eg. LKR 2-5/1kg of brinjals. During that time, he couldn't sell vegetables even at the Hambegamuwa market, though he brought his production, bearing some amount of transportation cost. Three times he threw out his production with gunny bags at the Hambegamuwa market and came back home empty handed. He did not earn a single rupee from his production during this time. Therefore, he used to borrow money from village money lender to pay transportation fee and to meet day-today expenses. As he explained, though he wanted to borrow money from formal institutions he could not access loan schemes of any bank, because he did not have collateral (even deed of his land) to submit to the bank.

When he came back empty handed, his little daughter asked him what he brought for her from market. He was totally helpless. Due to losses from his cultivation he was not willing to engage in farming furthermore and he migrated to Colombo as a helper in a building construction site.

As revealed by many farmer leaders in study areas, major reason for the withdrawal of youth from smallholder farming sector was the marketing problem. Though the government implemented paddy purchasing programme, it was unable to provide a solution for even paddy marketing problem due to bad practices and poor planning. One of the leaders in Farmer Organization in Himidurawa, Uhana expressed his view related to marketing problems as follows,

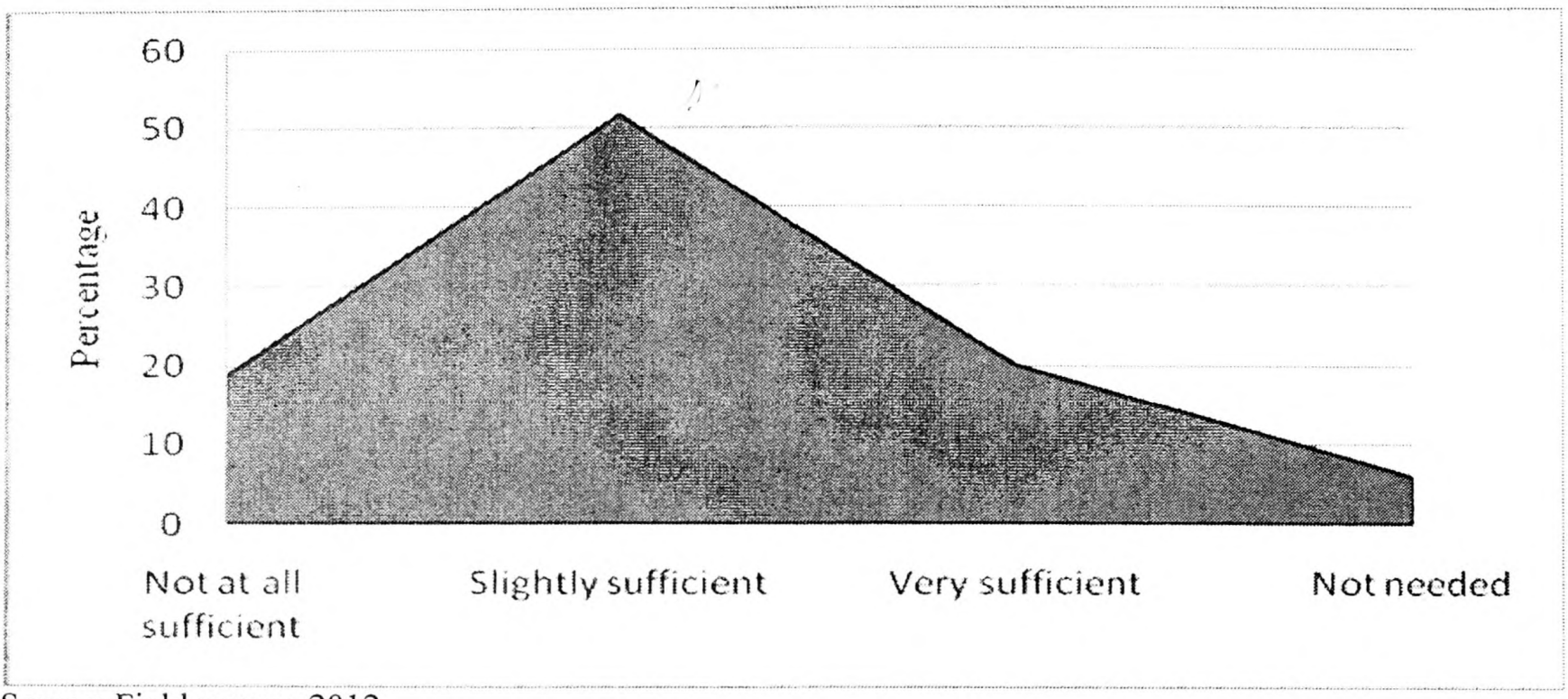
" Yam deyak nipadana- minisa milak pavasana
Eya nomathi govithena- thibe mudalalila badugena" (if somebody produce something, producer has right or ability to take decision on selling price, but farmers do not have such power due to monopoly or oligopoly of buyers).

6.2.2 Extension Services

Weakness of extension services is another problem faced by young farmers. Though there were large number of field workers under the Department of Agrarian Services, according to farmers and youth respondents most of them do not have enough knowledge

on agriculture practices and crop diseases. 18.7 percent of the respondents stated that agriculture extension service was not at all sufficient while 51.7 percent stated it was slightly sufficient. Of the total respondents, 5.9 percent stated that they did not need extension services while 20 percent of the respondents mentioned that extension service was sufficient for their farming activities (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Respondents by Degree of Sufficiency of Extension Service



Source: Field survey, 2012

The percentage of young farmers who mentioned the extension service was not at all sufficient differ from 16.9 percent of full time farmers to 21.3 percent of family labourers while percentage of category on slightly sufficient differ from 48.6 percent of full time farmers to 63.3 percent of part time farmers (Table 6.2). Though 20 percent to 30 percent of young farmers mentioned that the extension services were very sufficient, higher proportion of the respondents said that it was not sufficient. Therefore, above data affirmed that young farmers suffer from lack of extension services.

Even though considerable proportion of farmers mentioned that extension service was very sufficient, research team couldn't find any young farmer engaged in high tech agriculture within the sample.

Table 6.2: Degree of Sufficiency of Extension Facilities by Farming Activity

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of whose Engage in Farming		
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)
Not at all sufficient	16.9	14.3	21.3
Slightly sufficient	48.6	63.3	53.8
Very sufficient	30.4	21.4	22.1
Not needed	4.1	1.0	3.1

Source: Field survey, 2012

As revealed by other studies, there was an institutional fragmentation of the extension services after the establishment of Provincial Council system. Furthermore, It had created huge gaps between divisional and village level with the transfer of 2400 village level extension workers (KVSs) to Ministry of Home Affairs (as *Grama Niladharies*) in 1988. After that, the extension-farmer ratio increased to about 3,000 farm households per one Agricultural instructor. In some areas the ratio has increased to 7,000 farm households per one Agricultural instructor. In 1990s, government recruited about 9,600 field workers (Agriculture Research and Production Assistants) to the Ministry of Agriculture. Though they should assist the Agricultural Instructors to implement extension work for three days a week, only 10 percent of them possessed agriculture diplomas as at 2008 (Damayanthi and Nanayakkara, 2008).

Some of the farmers stated that Agriculture Research and Production Assistants (*Krupanisas*) did not have knowledge about farming practices or even what farmers know within their experiences. Due to the above problem, farmers were unable to get satisfactory extension services. Therefore, many youth stated they had to consult agro chemical traders when their cultivation was affected by diseases. However, sellers always recommended the seeds and agro chemicals in order to increase their sales but not considering need of the farmers.

In the mean time lack of qualified agriculture teachers in village schools to provide basic scientific knowledge to the children was another contributed factor for the lack of agriculture awareness.

6.2.3 Agriculture Training

Poor accessibility and availability of agriculture related training is another problem faced by young farmers. 58.9 percent of the total respondents stated that they did not receive training facilities related to agriculture or training facilities were not sufficient at all (Table 6.2). On the other hand respondents who stated that the training programmes were

extremely sufficient were negligible. These situations were common for all type of engagements in farming full time, part time and as family labourers.

Table 6.3: Degree of Sufficiency of Training Facilities by Farming Activities

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of whose Engage in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=99)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	61.4	55.1	67.7	58.9
Slightly sufficient	32.5	38.8	22.1	29.3
Very sufficient	7.4	5.1	8.7	7.4
Not needed	2.0	1.0	1.6	4.4

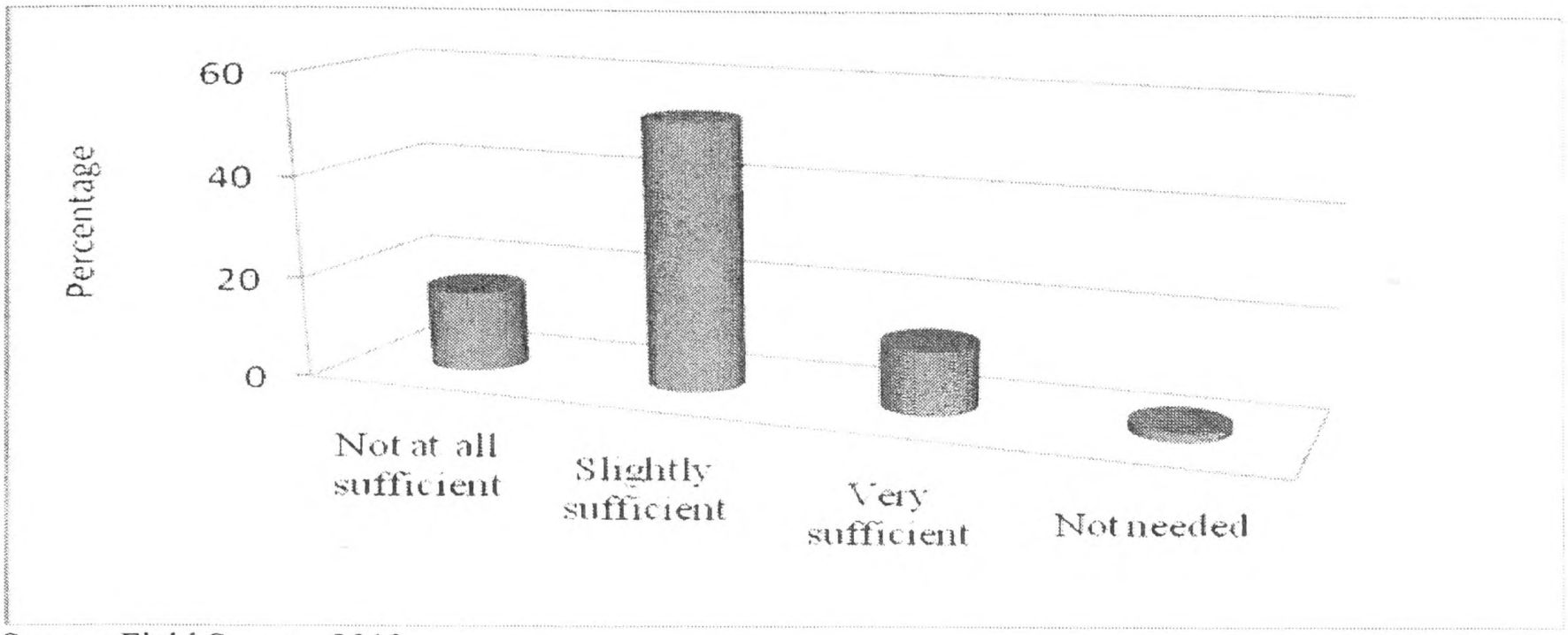
Source: Field survey, 2012

Though traditional farming practices result in losses or less profit, some farming practices such as high tech agriculture, livestock and floriculture give a fairly high profit. But they did not have knowledge, experience, capital and marketing information to do such type of farming. Furthermore, though number of government institutions such as Institute of Post Harvest Technology (IPHT), Department of Agriculture and Industrial Development Board had new technology for value added production and reduce post harvest losses, these technologies did not reach grass root levels. For example IPHT has technology to produce fruit Jam, Cordial, instant fruit juice, tamarind pulp, preservation of vegetables through fermentation, biscuits and rice based products etc. However, these technologies do not sufficiently reach to grass root levels due to expenses of the trainer, lack of information about technology and training programmes and lack of willingness to obtain training due to implementation problems.

6.2.4 Land

According to youth respondents, availability and accessibility of highland was another problem faced by them. 16 percent of the respondents mentioned that they could not engage in farming as an employment due to shortage of high lands. Specially, youth in commercialized crops cultivation areas such as Nuwara Eliya, Matale districts and Sooriyawewa (Mahaweli area) frequently mentioned the above problem. Respondents those who mentioned availability and accessibility of highland were very sufficient were 24.2 percent. 58.7 percent of the respondents mentioned that availability and accessibility is slightly sufficient (Figure 6.3).

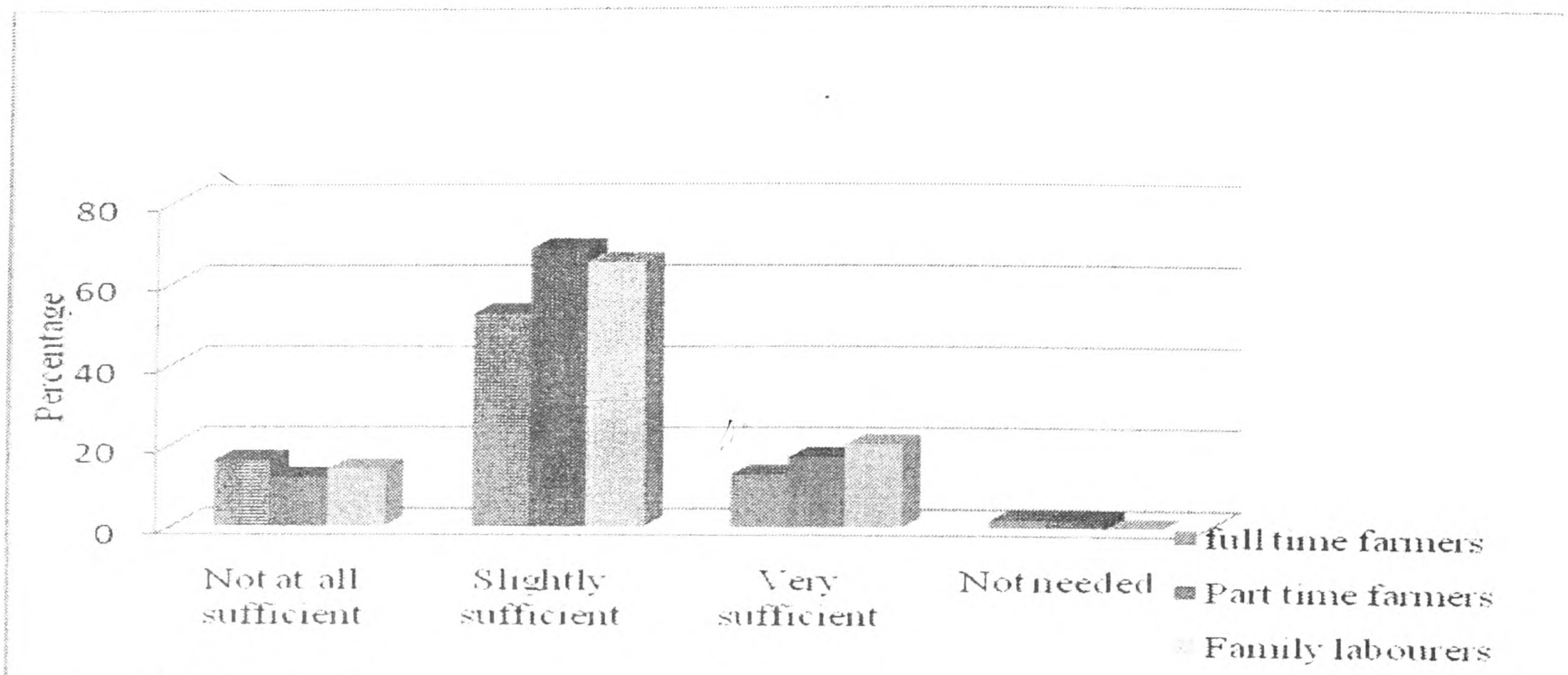
Figure 6.3: Respondents by Degree of Sufficiency of Highland



Source: Field Survey, 2012

The responses about availability and accessibility of highland varied by type of farming activity. The responses on high land was not sufficient at all differed from 12.1 percent of part time farmers to 16.2 percent of full time farmers. Respondents on slightly sufficient differed from 58.7 percent of part time farmers to 68.7 percent of family labourers. The responses on very sufficient differed from 12.9 percent of full time farmers to 20.4 percent of family labourers (Figure 6.4). This imply that non availability of highland was one of the problems for young generation wishing to engage in farming. As most of the young farmers in high value cash crop cultivation areas explained, they did not have money to purchase land, they had to cultivate their parents' land or leased-in land. If family has a number of children it was difficult to cultivate enough lands. Furthermore, since the land fee was high in high value cash crop cultivation areas, it was difficult to even leased land.

Figure 6.4: Degree of Availability of Highland by Farming Activities



Source: Field survey, 2012

Around ¼ of the total respondents stated that availability and accessibility of paddy land was very sufficient while it was reported as high as 29.4 percent in the category of full time famers. However, 17.9 percent of the respondents said that availability and accessibility of paddy land was not at all sufficient while 19.9 percent of the full time famers stated the same. Furthermore 28.5 percent of the total respondents informed that availability and accessibility of paddy land was slightly sufficient. This ratio is high as 57.9 percent and 45.2 percent in the categories of part time famers and full time farmers respectively (Table 6.4). Specially some family labourers mentioned that "if we have enough land, we could have cultivated instead of wasting time and money for searching jobs." This implies that lack of accessibility of paddy land was one of the obstacles faced by the young generation to engage in farming sector as an employment.

However, 9.8 percent of the total respondents said that they did not need paddy land while 27.4 percent of family labourers stated the same. Two reasons affected the above situation viz, lack of willingness to engage in paddy farming and possession of enough land by their families to cultivate.

Table 6.4: Degree of Availability of Paddy Lands by Farming Activity

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of whose Engage in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	19.9	10.5	16.0	17.9
Slightly sufficient	45.2	57.9	42.7	48.5
Very sufficient	29.4	23.2	16.2	23.7
Not needed	5.5	8.4	27.4	9.8

Source: Field survey, 2012

People live in remote rural areas like Ethimale in Monaragala district, Uhana in Ampara, district and Thanthirimale and Nochchiyagama in Anuradhapura district engage in chena farming as one of livelihood methods and it becomes one of important income source for them. However, higher percentage (38.1) of total respondents stated that they did not need *chena* lands for cultivation while 53.8 percent of part time farmers stated the same. Around 14 percent of total respondents stated that availability and accessibility of *chena* lands were not at all sufficient (Table 6.5). 33.5 percent of total respondents stated that they had *chena* lands but slightly sufficient. It varied from 31.9 percent for part time farmers to 42.7 percent for family labourers. These figures imply that though they were willing to engage in *chena* farming they did not have availability and accessibility of lands for *chena* cultivation.

Table 6.5: Degree of Sufficiency of *Chena* Lands by Farming Activity

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of whose Engage in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	14.6	5.5	13.7	14.3
Slightly sufficient	32.3	31.9	42.7	33.5
Very sufficient	18.4	7.7	16.2	14.1
Not needed	34.6	53.8	27.4	38.1

Source: Field survey, 2012

6.2.5 Agricultural Machineries

As revealed by Table 6.6, considerable portion of total respondents suffer from lack of availability and accessibility of agricultural machineries. Approximately 15 percent to 20 percent of total respondents stated that agricultural machineries were not sufficient at all for their farming activities. The percentage of total respondents who said that availability and accessibility of agricultural machineries were very sufficient differs from 4.3 percent in agrimec to 24.3 percent in sprayers. The percentage of slightly sufficient varies from 41.2 percent in Agrimec to 46.5 in sprayers. Almost 1/3 of the total respondents said that they did not need agrimec, tsunami, combine harvester or four wheel tractors because they use substitute machineries.

Table 6.6: Respondents by Degree of Sufficiency of Agricultural Machineries

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of Total (N=525)					
	Two Wheel Tractors	Four Wheel Tractors	Sprayers	Thresher (Agricmec)	Thresher (*Tsunami*)	Combine Harvester (*Bhoothaya*)
Not at all sufficient	17.3	19.2	14.6	16.4	18.5	16.6
Slightly sufficient	44.2	43.6	46.5	41.2	44.2	42.3
Very sufficient	16.7	4.5	24.3	4.3	7.8	4.7
Not needed	21.9	32.6	14.8	38.1	29.2	36.4

Source: Field survey, 2012

The respondents who stated that availability and accessibility of agricultural machineries were not enough for their farming activities explained the situation giving number of reasons such as high cost of machines as well as high cost of hiring machineries(thresher, tsunami or combine harvester) and difficulty of getting service in time during the harvesting period. For example farmers had to pay LKR 4,000-5,000 per hour for tsunami the machine.

Youth involved in full time farming mostly suffered from shortage of four wheel tractors (Table 6.7). Cumulative percentage of both availability and accessibility was not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient is high as 74.3 percent for four wheel tractors. Cumulative percentage of full time farmers who stated not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient was more than 60 percent for the Agrimec (63.5 percent), tsunami (70.3 percent) and combine harvester (66.2 percent). This clearly shows youth engaged in full time farming suffer from lack of availability and accessibility of those machineries.

Table 6.7: Full Time Farmers by Degree of Sufficiency of Agricultural Machineries

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of Total (N=98)					
	Two Wheel Tractors	Four Wheel Tractors	Sprayers	Thresher (Agrimec)	Thresher (*Tsunami*)	Combine Harvester (*Bhoothaya*)
Not at all sufficient	16.9	24.3	18.9	18.9	19.6	20.6
Slightly sufficient	43.3	50.0	53.3	44.6	50.7	45.6
Very sufficient	27.7	3.0	22.9	2.7	8.7	2.2
Not needed	12.2	22.3	4.7	33.8	20.3	31.3

Source: Field survey, 2012

According to Table 6.8, those engaged in farming part time mostly suffered from lack of availability and accessibility of machineries other than sprayers. Cumulative percentages of not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient were more than 60 percent for two wheel tractors (70.4 percent), four wheel tractors (67.4 percent), sprayers (63.7 percent), Agrimec (67.7 percent), tsunami (72.6 percent), and combine harvester (64.6 percent).

Table 6.8: Part time Farmers by Degree of Sufficiency of Agricultural Machineries

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of Total (N=127)					
	Two Wheel Tractors	Four Wheel Tractors	Sprayers	Thresher (Agrimec)	Thresher (*Tsunami*)	Combine Harvester (*Bhoothaya*)
Not at all sufficient	23.5	27.6	17.2	24.7	28.4	23.7
Slightly sufficient	46.9	39.8	46.5	43.0	44.2	40.9
Very sufficient	17.3	7.1	27.3	2.2	7.4	4.3
Not needed	12.2	25.5	9.1	30.1	20.0	31.2

Source: Field survey, 2012

Sharing is a similar situation for agrimec (68.0 percent), tsunami (72 percent), combine harvester (70.9 percent) and four wheel tractors (73.1 percent), two wheel tractors (73.0 percent) and sprayers (68.5 percent) among family labourer category (Table 6.9). This

clearly shows that youth respondents engaged in farming as family labourers or part time workers faced problems in getting those machineries.

Table 6.9: Family Labourers by Degree of Sufficiency of Agricultural Machineries

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of Total (N=127)					
	Two Wheel Tractors	Four Wheel Tractors	Sprayers	Thresher (Agrimec)	Thresher (*Tsunami*)	Combine Harvester (*Bhoothaya*)
Not at all sufficient	12.7	11.9	7.9	10.4	13.6	12.1
Slightly sufficient	60.3	61.2	60.6	57.6	58.4	58.8
Very sufficient	11.9	5.6	21.2	4.8	5.6	6.4
Not needed	15.1	21.4	10.2	27.2	22.4	22.6

Source: Field survey, 2012

6.2.6 Crop Insurance

Though government implemented crop insurance scheme, most of the farmers were not satisfied with it (Rambukwella *etal*, 2008). As revealed by the data, 61 percent of total respondents were not aware of crop insurance facilities. 73.8 percent of total respondents stated that availability and accessibility of crop insurance were not at all sufficient. It is high as 73, 74 and 59.2 percent for full time farmers, part time farmers and family labourers respectively. On the other hand percentage of very sufficient varies from 1.0 percent in part time farmers to 5.4 percent full time farmers. Since farming is a risky job, many of the youth respondents strongly mentioned the needy of a crop insurance scheme. When their cultivation was damaged or lost due to natural disaster or deceases, insurance scheme is the only way to recover. But, due to inefficiency and ineffectiveness of present crop insurance scheme, farmers cannot recover their damage. As youth respondents stated, this situation push youth away from farming.

Table 6.10: Degree of Sufficiency of Accessibility and Availability of Crop Insurance by Farming Activity

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of those Engage in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	73.0	59.2	74.0	73.8
Slightly sufficient	18.3	34.6	20.4	12.3
Very sufficient	5.4	1.0	1.6	2.7
Not needed	3.4	5.1	3.9	7.6

Source: Field survey, 2012

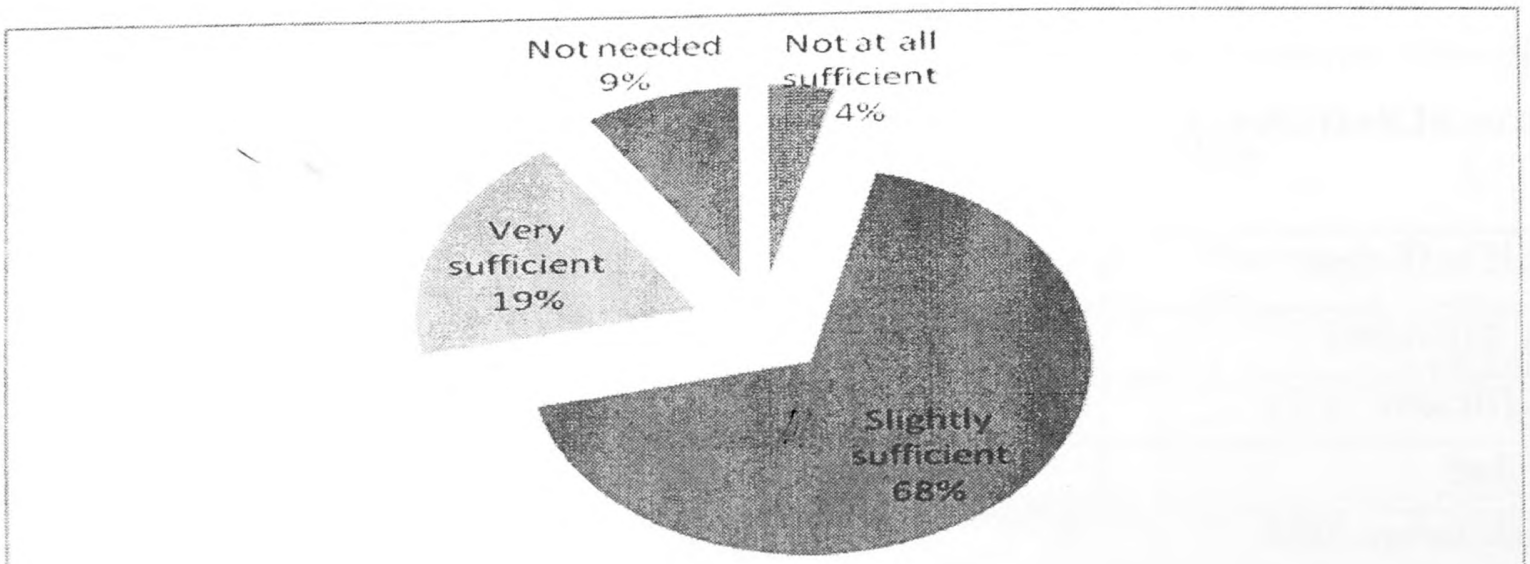
6.2.7 Agricultural Inputs

6.2.7.1 Fertilizer

As depicted in Figure 6.5, percentage of total respondents who stated that availability and accessibility of fertilizer were not at all sufficient is around 4.0 percent. However, percentage of respondents in the category of slightly sufficient was 68 percent while it differed from 6.2 percent of full time farmers to 77.6 percent of pat time farmers (figure 6.6). As revealed by above information, respondents engaged in farming activities were facing some kind of problems related to availability and accessibility of fertilizer. The reasons behind the above situation are, delay of subsidized fertilizer delivery (9.7 percent), non availability of fertilizer subsidy for crops other than paddy[5] (12.5 percent) high cost of fertilizer (17.2 percent) and difficulty in getting adequate quantity (7.3 percent).

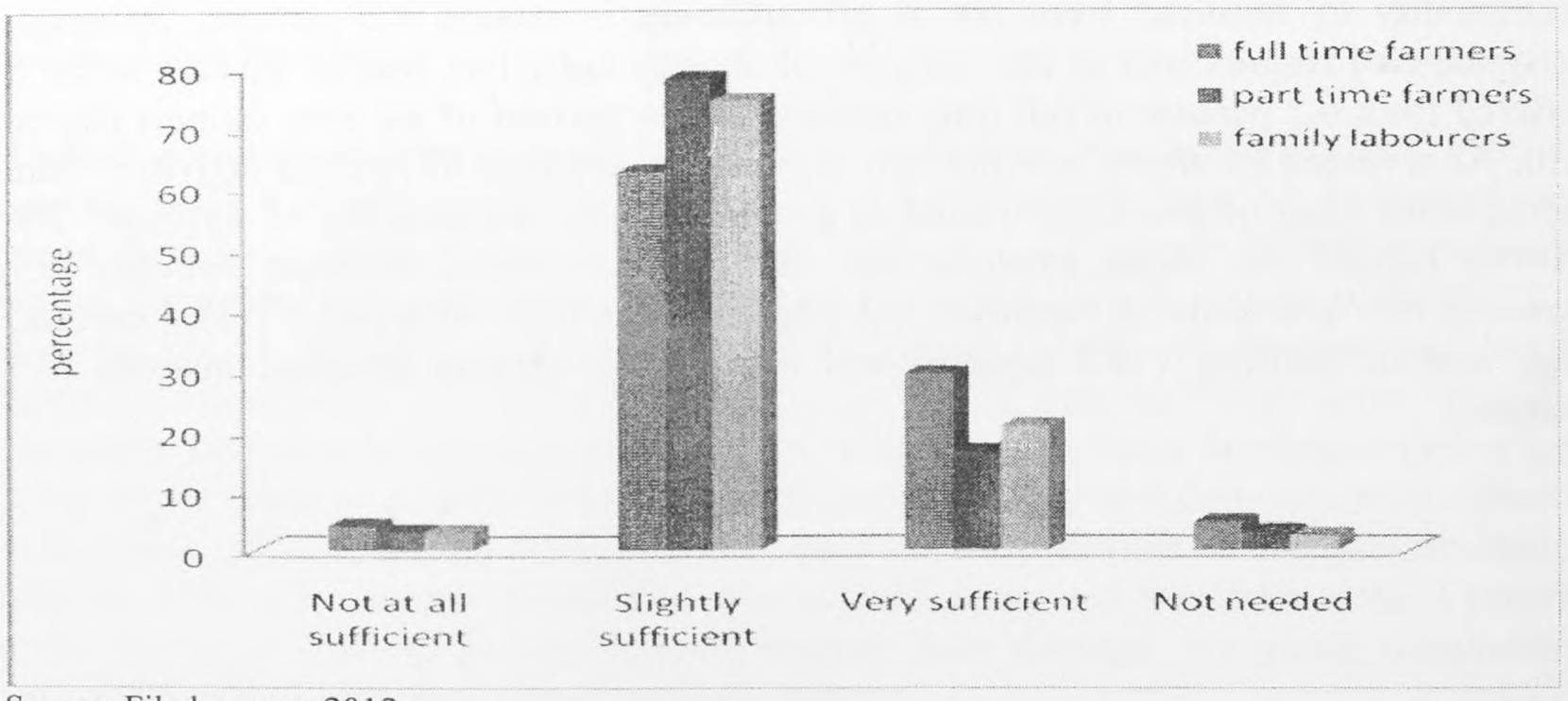
[5] Though government took action to provide subsidize fertilizer for all crops including vegetable it was not implemented during the period of field survey.

Figure 6.5: Degree of Sufficiency of Accessibility and Availability of Fertilizer for Total Sample



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 6.6: Degree of Sufficiency of Accessibility and Availability of Fertilizer by Type of Farming



Source: Filed survey, 2012

6.2.7.2 Seeds/ Seedlings

As revealed by youth respondents, accessibility of quality seeds and seedlings was another problem due to high cost (34.4 percent), difficulty in obtaining adequate quantity during peak time (26.7 percent), low quality (6.8 percent) and need to pay high interest rate to the trader when bought on loan (9.5 percent) and informal bond with trader. Such type of bond was harmful to farmers forcing them sell their products to trader without bargaining. According to data presented in Table 6.11, 77.2 percent (cumilative

percentage of not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient) of total respondents said that accessibility of seeds was not sufficient. This ratio was high as 78.2 percent for full time farmers and 84.6 percent for part time farmers while it was recorded as 83.5 percent for family labourers.

Table 6.11: Degree of Sufficiency of Availability and Accessibility of Seeds by Farming Activity

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of whose Engage in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	12.9	12.2	8.7	10.9
Slightly sufficient	65.3	72.4	74.8	66.3
Very sufficient	17.7	12.3	13.3	13.9
Not needed	4.1	3.1	3.1	8.8

Source: Field survey, 2012

6.2.7.3 Pesticides/Weedicides

Furthermore, accessibility of pesticides and weedicides was also difficult to youth due to high price (32 percent), high interest rate when obtained on loan (28.4 percent) and low quality (26.2 percent). Of total respondents, 82.7 percent (both categories of not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient) mentioned that accessibility of pesticides and weedicides was not sufficient (Table 6.12). The above ratio varied from 83.5 percent among family labourers to 91.8 percent among part time farmers as presented in Table 6.12.

Table 6.12: Degree of Sufficiency of Availability and Accessibility of Pesticide/ Weedicide by Farming Activity

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of whose Engage in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	14.2	16.5	11.8	13.2
Slightly sufficient	73.6	75.3	71.7	69.5
Very sufficient	8.1	5.1	12.6	8.0
Not needed	4.1	3.1	3.9	9.2

Source: Field survey, 2012

6.2.8 Agricultural Information

As revealed by youth respondents at the focus group discussions, they were willing to engage in agriculture profitably but did not have relevant information about new technologies and facilitating institutes, training and other facilities for enterprises and high-tech agriculture, price, land extent under different crops etc. Therefore, lack of information was a barrier to them. As shown in Table 6.13, 14.1 percent and 65.7 percent of total respondents stated that accessibility of information was not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient for them respectively. The percentage of respondents who stated that accessibility of information facilities was not at all sufficient varies from 6.3 for family laborers to 16.3 for part time farmers. Furthermore, the percentage of respondents who stated accessibility was slightly sufficient varied from 68.9 percent of part time farmers to 79.5 percent of family labourers. In contrast, the percentage of total respondents who stated accessibility of information was very sufficient is 15.4 percent while it varies from 10.2 percent of part time farmers to 13.4 percent of family labourers.

Table 6.13: Degree of Sufficiency of Availability and Accessibility of Information Facilities by Farming Activities

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of those Engaged in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full time farmers (N=148)	Part time farmers (N=99)	Family labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	15.5	16.3	6.3	14.1
Slightly sufficient	68.9	70.4	79.5	65.7
Very sufficient	12.8	10.2	13.4	15.4
Not needed	2.7	3.1	0.8	4.8

Source: Field survey, 2012

6.2.9 Irrigation Facilities

Regarding availability and accessibility of irrigation facilities for farming activities 38.7 percent or the respondents stated that the facility was very sufficient while 10.2 percent stated it was not sufficient at all (Table 6.14). 47.2 percent of total respondents said that irrigation facilities were slightly sufficient. Most of the respondents who mentioned that irrigation facilities were not enough for farming and it acted as a push factor for engaging in smallholder agriculture fulltime in Batticaloa, Kurunegala, Hambantota and Anuradhapura districts. Those who mentioned that the irrigation facilities were not enough to cultivate their land explained the situation by giving number of reasons. Irrigation facilities were not available at the area or water was not distributed properly due to decayed channels and tanks (37.9 percent), due to non availability of irrigation

facilities farmers needed to take action to provide water using water pump from wells (27.1 percent). Even though irrigation facilities were available, due to lack of water in reservoirs and mismanagement of water resources prevented providing water on time or adequately (20.8 percent) was another reasons presented by youth. Specially farmers in the Siththandi and Ovaliaru areas in Batticaloa district and Himidurawa and Dehiaththakandiya areas in Ampara district faced the problem of irrigation water due to blasted dams, anicuts and channels during the war these had not been repaired for a long time.

Different perceptions on irrigation facilities among youth can be identified by type of farming. Of those stated the irrigation facilities were not sufficient at all, the highest percentage, (16.3 percent) was from part time farmers (Table 6.14). Cumulative percentage of not at all sufficient and slightly sufficient varied from 56.1 percent of full time farmers to 67.3 percent of part time farmers. Therefore, it can be argued that shortage of irrigation facilities acted as a push factor for youth in farming.

Table 6.14: Degree of Sufficiency of Irrigation Facilities

Degree of Sufficiency	Percentage of those Engaged in Farming			Percentage of Total Respondents (N=525)
	Full Time Farmers (N=148)	Part Time Farmers (N=98)	Family Labourers (N=127)	
Not at all sufficient	9.5	16.3	7.1	10.2
Slightly sufficient	46.6	51.0	59.0	47.2
Very sufficient	40.6	31.6	33.8	38.7
Not needed	3.4	1.0	0.0	3.8

Source: Field survey, 2012

6.2.10 Social Values

As many youths and farmer representatives explained, though farmers produce food for the country, they do not have recognition from society or formal institutions. As they stated even though there is a Sinhalese utterance which explains dignity and importance of farmer *(mada soodagathkala goviya rajakamatath sudusuya-* farmer fitting to kingship after washing his mud*)* in the present context society as well as bureaucrats treat farmer as a pauper. According to youth, if somebody chooses farming as his/her occupation, when they go to a formal institution (without differences of government or private sector) they are treated as their subordinates although they had good educational qualifications as well as satisfactory income than officers.

As some youth respondents mentioned, some times engagement in farming as an occupation was a disqualification for marriage. Even jobs like office assistant or disabled

soldier/member of civil security force (*Gramarakshaka*) were treated better due to permanent monthly income and social security. Thus youths tend to search 'good jobs' than involving in farming as an occupation even though they have land and other facilities.

Since farmers do not have a proper pension scheme or social security system, most often they tend to be vulnerable. The situation becomes most complex, if they do not have enough land or do not engage in farming with high-tech in small land plots. Therefore, they think that, even if somebody has land, it is better to cultivate it as a secondary income source.

6.3 Other Institutional Mechanisms

The successive governments and Provincial Councils have taken steps to promote youth participation in smallholder agriculture. Therefore, from time to time government has implemented various programmes such as establishing Young Farmer Organizations. However, these programmes had some weaknesses as well as strengths. Case studies number 6.2 and 6.3 illustrate this phenomenon.

Case Study 6.2: Ranorawa Young Farmer Organization

Ranorawa young farmers' organization was formed in 1992 with the youth participation of the Ranorawa area in Nochchiyagama. However, the organization functioned only for 6 years after its establishment. Founder members left the organization from time to time due to its poor functioning. In 2007, organization was reestablished with 39 members.

Currently, the Organization consists of 15 members whose age is between 14 to 30 years. Members of the Ranorawa young farmers organization can be divided in to three age categories namely 14-18 years, 18-25 years and 25-30 years. Office bearers of the organization should be in the age group of 18 to 25 as a rule. Despite the fact that there were male members in the Organization when it was formed, all current members of the organization are females. The male members of the newly formed organization left the organization as they obtained other jobs. As a result only 15 female members have remained at present.

The membership fee of the organization is Rs.10 and if a member of the organization has not attended the monthly meetings they should pay a fine of 25 rupees for each absent occasion. This fine is not applicable if the member is absent due to acceptable reasons. Normally the meetings are held in the presidents' house of the organization.

If it is necessary they have an opportunity to invite Agriculture Instructor to participate at monthly meetings. The value of the current fund of the organization is Rs.36,000 and in the farming period the members are given money as a loan from this fund at 5 percent monthly interest rate. The maximum limit of the loan is Rs. 2,900. The members who obtained the loans should pay the amount with the interest within 3 months. If a member failed to repay the loan within 3 months, interest rate is increased up to 10 percent and they are obliged to pay the loan within 6 months. However, Ranorawa young farmers' organization has their own bank account at the people's bank of Nochchiyagama and the current account balance is only Rs. 4,000.

Members of Ranorawa young farmers' organization could acquire some benefits as members. Each member of the organization was provided black gram seeds for an acre in 2008. In 2007, they were provided fertilizer at concessionary price for 1 acre maize cultivation. In December 2011, 6 members engaged in paddy farming were provided rice steaming barrels free of charge. However, the training on rice steaming using those barrels is not provided yet. Apart from those benefits selected members of the farmer organization have obtained special trainings in Mahaillukpallama farm and Gannoruwa farm on compost producing and big onion cultivation. The agriculture Instructor from time to time visit the field to monitor whether members use those trainings in a proper way. However, the Agriculture Instructor is not in a position to visit them frequently as she has to cover a large area.

Moreover, they have obtained trainings on food processing from Institute of Post-Harvest Technology (IPHT) in 2007. Under this training they are trained on manufacturing natural fruit drinks and biscuits together with trainings on packeting and storing of those products. As soon after they obtained trainings some members used to make biscuits, packet them and sell them to their neighbours. Members who were engaged in processing biscuits using rice floor could receive a profit of Rs. 20 for each packet. However, in some periods like after harvesting, they were able to sell the products as their neighbours had money to purchase those products. Most of the times it is difficult to sell the products as there are no proper market for the product. However, during the cultivation and harvesting seasons they do not produce such products. Therefore, after the cultivation and harvesting seasons some members have forgotten the procedure of making biscuits and other products which they were trained to do.

Another popular activity of the farmer organization is participation in "*Govi-Pena* Programme" (farmer quiz programme), which is created to measure the farming knowledge of young farmers. In this program they could meet the other young farmers who represent different young farmer organizations and share their experiences. However, on most occasions, despite the fact that members are enthusiastic in participating in such programs they are informed about these programs, only on the day before the program. The major crops cultivated in Ranorawa area are ash pumpkins, pumpkins, green chilies, maize and black grams. For their farming products they do not have proper market facilities. The profit of the harvest is also decreased due to increase of production cost. Members of the organization do farming only with their minimum experience and thus, not cultivating crops using proper methods, which affect the quality of harvest as well. Current farming knowledge of most of the members is not sufficient to develop farming as livelihood activity due to inability of obtaining sufficient knowledge from anywhere.

Members of Ranorawa young farmers' organization expect to have proper guidance and training to do farming in a better way. Furthermore, as young farmers they expect new knowledge, new crops and new farming techniques to become successful farmers which they have not received yet.

Case Study 6.3: Gemunu Young Farmer Organization in Monaragala District

The Gemunu young farmers' organization was established in 2002 and the current membership of the organization is 25. However of the total membership, only 18 members are actively participating at present. The youths in the area between years 15 to 30 can obtain the membership of the organization. The Gemunu Young Farmers Organization has been award the best young famers' organization awarded of the Uva Province in 2010. Reasons for this achievement were, won the 2nd place of the *Govi–Pena* Programme (farmer quiz programme) in Uva Province and engaged with public and welfare work actively than other young farmers' organizations in the province.

One of the major activities of the organization is distribution of seeds to the members of farmer organization as well as to adults through the Agricultural Instructor. Accordingly chilies, black gram, green gram and cowpea seeds have been provided to members of the farmer organization. In addition, the members who cultivate ground nuts, have received 50 percent of contribution for seeds as a benefit of being a member of farmer organization.

The members of farmer organizations have received training on compost producing 3 times. As a result they produce compost for use in their own farms. However, they do not do compost manufacturing as a business. In addition, members of farmer organization are organizing and participating in *shramdana* campaigns including cleaning, developing roads and temples.

Once in a while the agriculture instructor visits the field and provides trainings to members. In addition, they are not provided adequate training related to agriculture. Furthermore, the members expect effective trainings on agro based industries/businesses, but they have never received such training. Furthermore, finding a proper market for their product and difficulties in obtaining quality seeds from a trusted place are major challenges faced by them.

6.4 Conclusion

As revealed by youth respondents, they faced problem related to accessibility and availability of market facilities, agricultural information, cultivable lands, crop insurance, extension services, accessibility of credit and finance facilities, low farm gate price for their products, non availability or lack of accessibility of training facilities and new technology, limited availability of irrigation water, high cost and low quality of seeds and agro chemicals, high cost of agricultural machineries and higher cost for hire agriculture machineries. Furthermore, non availability of suitable social security scheme or pension system, lack or non social recognition of agriculture related occupations act as push factors for youth to move away from farming.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Suggestions to Improve Youth Participation in Agriculture

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the suggestions made by youth respondents to increase their participation in smallholder agriculture in Sri Lanka. In addition chapter explains points of view of representatives of farmer organizations to increase youth participation in smallholder agriculture.

7.2 Suggestions to Increase Youth Participation in Crop Cultivation

As shown in Table 7.1, respondents have given number of suggestions. Though there are number of suggestions, most of them are affiliated to marketing problems of their products. Around 43 percent of the respondents suggested that government should take action to provide reasonable/ good prices for farm products while almost 15 percent of the respondents mentioned that government needs to take action to ensure benefits for expenses or hard work of farming. Furthermore, 29.5 percent of the respondents said that responsible ministries need to take action to ensure the market facilities at village or divisional level. In this regard some of them suggested that government should take action to establish food processing factories considering major crops cultivated in the district. This idea has been confirmed by representatives of Farmer Organizations with whom research team conducted focus group discussions in the study areas. Most of the youth respondents claimed that they cannot get quality inputs specially pesticides, weedicides and improved seed varieties. Furthermore, they stated that though there were maximum prices printed in the label of the seed packet or tin, farmers had to pay rather high amount of price for seed varieties, at the planting period or period of peak demand. Indeed, most of the respondents mentioned that when they buy agro chemicals on spot cash seller provides discount prices but when they buy on loan, they do not provide any discount. In addition they have to pay some amount of money as interest to seller when they settle the loan. On the basis of these problems, youth have made some other suggestions related to marketing problems such as the need of the government to take action to ensure the availability of high quality inputs (seeds, seedling and agro chemicals) at the market (29.7 percent), provisions of tax holidays and simplification of the rules and regulations (2.5 percent) and reduction of input prices (2.5 percent).

As explained in the earlier section, representatives of farmer organizations also identified marketing as a major reason for withdrawing young generation from farming. Therefore, they suggested a number of actions to resolve marketing problem and consequently increase youth participation in agriculture sector. These suggestions are, establish linkages with co-operative societies and farmer organizations, provide postharvest knowledge, implement guaranteed prices for all crops, regulate control price for

agriculture inputs, establish economic centres at the regional level, control/bann importation of the agricultural commodities at the harvesting time, ensure the availability of high quality seeds in the market, prepare and implement project to export the surplus production and link it with farmer organizations at the grass-root level, cultivate under a proper plan, control excess supply of seed varieties at the market, increase loan facilities (input) provided by Agrarian Development Centres based on needs of the area.

Beside suggestions towards resolving marketing problems, youths have made some other suggestions related to training needs. Around one quarter of the respondents said that though there are a number of employment, entrepreneur and business opportunities available at the agricultural sector, they do not have a clear idea about those and it is difficult to get information as they live in remote rural areas. Therefore, 26.5 percent of the respondents suggested that government should take action to conduct awareness programmes related to agricultural employment and business opportunities of youth. These include information on availability of marketing, credit and other facilities. As revealed by youth respondents as well as representatives of Farmer Organizations, farmers have faced the problems of lack of extension facilities. Therefore, 21.4 percent of the respondents have suggested providing modern farming technology including practical sessions for youth. Another 21.4 percent of the respondents suggested that Government, Provincial Councils or any other related agency need to take action to conduct training programmes related to farming including organic agriculture. Most of them mentioned that it is better to provide this type of training programme at their village level as practical sessions. Another 7.9 percent of the respondents mentioned that government or other related agencies need to take action to motivate youth through providing opportunity to observe best practices and models of farming. This can be done through organized educational trips to government or private farmers for youth. Around 7 percent of the respondents suggested that youth participation could be increased through providing training facilities related to management, specially in farm management.

According to representatives of the farmer organizations, farmers have faced severe problems related to extension. Previous research studies also argued that due to fragmentation of mechanism after implementation of devolution of power, farmers were unable to get proper extension services (Damayanthi and Nanayakkara, 2008). Furthermore, farmers mentioned that when they need advice for crop diseases, they use to consult agro chemical traders due to lack of officers and problems of accessibilities. Therefore, farmer representatives suggested that the Government need to take action to increase the number of extension officers and enhance extension service and implement proper evaluation system for extension services.

Youth have made some suggestions related to redistribution policies to increase their participation in smallholder agriculture sector. Almost 50 percent of the respondents suggested that government need to take action to provide basic facilities such as agriculture machineries, irrigation and suitable lands for youth while another 3.8 percent

and 3.2 percent of the respondents specifically suggested that government need to take action to distribute agricultural lands and machineries for youth respectively. 34.4 percent of the youth respondents suggested providing subsidies by the government as a method of increasing youth participation in smallholder agriculture. This includes fertilizer for each crops, subsidiary price for seeds, seedlings, pesticides and weedicides. Though Government fertilizer subsidy programme was implemented during the period of field survey it was not provided for crops other than paddy.

Ten percent of the respondents made suggestions towards monitoring and evaluation of government programmes saying that government need to monitor and evaluate programmes conducted by using public funds. Around 15 percent of the respondents mentioned that government should take action to create good attitudes towards farming from the school level. As revealed by most of the representatives of Farmer Organizations, farmers do not get enough respect from society for farming as a job.

In addition representatives of the farmer organizations mentioned that government needs to take action to implement social protection and insurance schemes for farmers. In this regard, they suggested that there is a need for proper evaluation of the present farmer pension scheme and crop insurance scheme so that they can be improved.

Table 7.1: Respondents' Suggestions to Increase Youth Participation in Smallholder Agriculture

Suggestion	Number (N=529)	Percentage of Total Sample
Provide basic facilities	264	49.9
Take action to provide reasonable/good price for products	226	42.7
Provide subsidies from the government	182	34.4
Ensure the availability of high quality inputs at the market	157	29.7
Make sure market facilities	156	29.5
Conduct awareness programme on agriculture related other jobs for youth	140	26.5
Conduct training programmes related to farming for youth	113	21.4
Provide technical knowledge to youth	113	21.4
Take action to create good attitudes towards the farming from the school level	79	14.9
Ensure the benefits for expenses/hard work of the farmers	79	14.9
Provide assistance and guidance by the government	53	10.0
Monitor the programmes conduct by the government	47	8.9
Motivate youth through best practices and models	42	7.9
Provide training related to management	35	6.6
Distribution of land	20	3.8
Provide agricultural machineries by the government	17	3.2
Provide tax holidays and make simplify the rules and regulations	13	2.5
Reduce the input prices	13	2.5

Source: Field Survey, 2012

As presented in chapter one, the sample includes 28 agriculture graduates and undergraduates from various universities. Their suggestions for increasing youth participation in smallholder agriculture are presented in Table 7.2. These suggestions are similar to total respondents' suggestions.

Table 7.2: Suggestions Made by Agricultural Graduates and Undergraduates to Increase Youth Participation in Smallholder Agriculture Sector

Suggestion	Number of Respondents (N=28)	Percentage of Total Agriculture Graduates/ Undergraduates
Provide subsidies from the government	15	53.6
Provide tax holidays and simplify rules and regulations	7	25.0
Provide basic facilities	12	42.9
Take action to ensure availability of high quality inputs at the market	20	71.4
Take action to create good attitude towards farming from the school level	18	64.3
Conduct awareness programmes on agriculture related other employment opportunities	16	57.1
Organize and conduct training programmes on farming	7	25.0
Provide training on management	6	21.4
Provide technical knowledge to youth	12	42.9
Provide assistance and guidance by the government	7	25.0
Motivate youth through best practices and models	8	28.6
Create linkages with private sector	8	28.6
Take action to provide reasonable/good price for products	19	67.9
Provide market facilities	7	25.0
Monitor and evaluate programmes conducted by the government	4	14.3
Ensure the benefits for expenses/hard work of the farmers	13	46.4

Source: Field Survey, 2012

According to data given in Table 7.2, higher percentage of agriculture graduates/undergraduates mentioned that solution for the marketing problem is the most important activity to increase youth participation in smallholder agriculture. For example ensuring availability of high quality inputs at the market (71.4 percent), providing reasonable price for production (67.9 percent), ensuring the enough benefits for hard work of farming (46.4 percent) and creating linkages with private sector (28.6 percent) were considered as important. However, they have given the most important place to changing social attitudes towards farming (64.3 percent).

7.3 Suggestions for Increasing Youth Participation in Agricultural Industries/Businesses

Regarding agricultural industries and business, youth respondents have given number of suggestions to increase youth involvement. These suggestions also can be categorized in to four major categories viz, solutions for marketing problem, policy and legal problem, training needs and social values.

Following suggestions related to marketing are made by respondents (Table 7.3). Related agencies and institutions need to take action to ensure reasonable price/ profit for producers (30.4 percent), availability of high quality inputs at the market (9.7 percent) should be increased, action should be taken to build up link with the private sector (7.5 percent), importation of agro based products which can be produced in country should be stopped/reduced (0.6 percent) and market facilities and availability and accessibility of market information should be ensured (22.6 percent).

Provision of basic facilities such as machineries and land by the government and other stakeholders (51.2 percent), provision of subsidies for industries (32.9 percent) and simplification of the rules and regulations and provision of tax holidays (5.4 percent) are the suggestions related to policy and legal aspects made by respondents. Some of the respondents mentioned that when they try to register their businesses or industries they have to face number of problems at various institutions. Therefore, they suggested simplifying rules and regulations related to businesses and industries specially for registration.

With regard to training needs, respondents suggested ideas such as giving technical knowledge (31.9 percent), providing management training to youth (16.9 percent), motivating youth through organizing educational tours to visit best practices and model farms (9.9 percent), conducting awareness programmes related to agriculture related industries/business opportunities for youth (26.0) and providing assistance and guidance by the government (10.9 percent).

Related to social values, respondents have made suggestions that government as well as society need to take action for creating good attitudes and values towards agriculture related industries and businesses (10.1 percent). Same suggestions are made by agriculture graduates and undergraduates as presents in Table 7.4.

Table 7.3: Suggestions for Increasing Youth Participation in Agriculture Related Industries

Suggestion	Number (N=529)	Percentage of Total Sample
Provide basic facilities	258	51.2
Take action to provide reasonable/good price for products	153	30.4
Provide subsidies from the government	166	32.9
Ensure the availability of high quality inputs at the market	49	9.7
Make sure market facilities	114	22.6
Conduct awareness programmes related to agriculture related industries/business opportunities for youth	131	26.0
Conduct training programmes related to industries for youth	123	24.4
Provide technical knowledge to youth	161	31.9
Take action to create good attitudes towards agriculture related industries from school level	51	10.1
Provide assistance and guidance by the government	55	10.9
Follow up the programmes conducted by the government	45	8.9
Motivate youth through best practices and models	50	9.9
Provide training related to management	85	16.9
Provide tax holidays and simplify rules and regulations	27	5.4
Build up link with private sector	38	7.5
Stop/reduce importation of agro based goods	03	0.6

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 7.4: Suggestions made by Agricultural Graduates/Undergraduates to Increase Youth Participation in Agricultural Industries and Business

Suggestion	Number of Respondents (N=28)	Percentage of Total Agriculture Graduates/ Undergraduates
Provide subsidies the government	14	50.0
Provide tax holidays and simplify rules and regulations	11	39.3
Provide basic facilities	14	50.0
Take action to ensure availability of high quality inputs at the market	12	42.9
Take action to buildup good attitude/values towards agriculture related employment from childhood	13	46.4
Conduct awareness programmes related to agriculture and employment opportunities	17	60.7
Organize and conduct training programmes on agriculture related industries/business	13	46.4
Provide training on management	10	35.7
Provide technical knowledge to youth	12	42.9
Provide assistance and guidance by the government	7	25.0
Motivate youth through best practices and models	9	32.1
Create linkages with private sector	11	39.3
Take action to provide reasonable/good prices for products	18	64.3
Provide market facilities	10	35.7
Monitor and evaluate programmes conducted by the government	6	21.4
Ensure the benefits for expenses/hard work of the farmers	15	53.6

Source: Field Survey, 2012

7.4 Conclusion

Youths as well as representatives of farmer organizations have made a number of suggestions to increase youth participation in smallholder agriculture sector in Sri Lanka. In a broad sense these suggestions can be categorized in to areas of marketing, training, policy and legal problems, enhancing social values on farming, social protection for farmers and redistribution policies and programmes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Summary and Recommendations

8.1 Summary

The study was carried out in nine districts: Nuwara-Eliya, Ampara, Monaragala, Matale, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Hambantota, Kurunegala and Batticaloa with the major objective of examining the factors affecting less youth participation in smallholder agriculture in Sri Lanka. Total sample was 533 including 33 agriculture graduates and undergraduates from various universities. The respondents belonged to age 15-29 years while 35.6 percent, 24.9 percent, 32.8 percent and 6.6 percent belonged to age group 15-20 years, 20-25 years, 25-29 years and 15 years respectively. In the ethnic context, 89.1 percent, 4.9 percent, 4.5 percent and 1.5 percent were Sinhalese, Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils and Muslims respectively. Of the total sample, majority were males.

Of the total sample, 44.1 percent were educated up to year 6 to O/L while 17.3 percent and 10.5 percent had passed O/L and A/L respectively. Of those respondents, 7.1 percent were diploma holders, undergraduates or graduates. Of the total respondents 36.2 percent (193) had obtained vocational training in computer science, electrical and motor mechanical engineering, carpentry, masonry, animal husbandry and bee keeping, beauty culture, sewing, weaving, handicraft, hotel training, social work and driving.

Around 34 percent of the respondents were married while rest were unmarried. Fifty two percent of respondents were employed while 17.5 percent, 7.1 percent and 22.9 percent were unemployed, house-wives and students respectively. There was a significant relation between age and the function. Accordingly, employed rate was high among respondents whose age was above twenty. Among employed respondents, 64.3 percent (183) were farmers while 7.8 percent (22) and 5.7 percent (16) were skilled and unskilled labourers respectively.

Majority of the respondents did not have ownership of lands. Around 27 percent (124 plots) respondents had ownership of highland while it was reported as 23.9 percent (84 plots) for paddy lands. Of the total land plots, 88.2 percent (779 plots) were cultivated. An average land extent of all lands and cultivated lands was 2 acres. Of the total lands, 5 percent was less than ¼ acres while 1.1 percent was more than 10 acres.

Around 70 percent (375 respondents) were engaged in agriculture related activities full time, part time or as family labourers. Of those respondents, who were engaged in agriculture related activities, 39.5 percent (148) and 26.4 percent (99) were engaged in agriculture full time and part time respectively while 33.9 (127) were engaged as family labourers. Of the females engaged in farming activities, 60.6 percent (60) were family labourers. However, of the male respondents family labourers were 24.3 percent (67).

Furthermore, type and degree of youth participation differed by farming system, crop and geographical regions. For example, percentages of youth participation in agriculture of *chena* and pulses cultivation areas were nearly 100 percent while percentages of youth participation in cultivating in crops like up country vegetables, low-country vegetables and rain-fed paddy farming were around 60 percent. Major reasons for the less youth participation in up country vegetables was shortage of land in the Nuwara-eliya area while reasons for less youth participation in low-country vegetables were lack of availability and accessibility of lands and persistent marketing problems. Majority of respondents engaged in farming activities (61.7 percent) had less than 5 years experience while 6.7 percent had more than 10 years experience.

Of the total sample, 58.2 percent mentioned that they would like to engage in full time farming in future also while 39.6 percent and 2.3 percent of respondents said that they did not like to engage in full time farming and did not have a clear idea respectively. Majority of the respondents willing to engage in full time farming had agriculture related long time experience, land and labour. On the other hand they did not have adequate skills, training and education for 'good job'. Some of them could not leave village due to issues allied with their households such as non availability of any one in the village to cultivate their lands, as they were only children and women and disable or elderly people at home. They could earn more income from outside jobs than farming in the village. But outside expenses were much higher than earnings. Respondents who were not engaged in full time farming gave reasons such as uncertainty of market and low profit, willingness to engage in another preferred job, willingness to engage in studies, not having social recognition and unavailability and lack of accessibility of agricultural assets for their situation.

Of the total respondents, 7.3 percent (39 respondents) were engaged in agriculture related industries or businesses. Of them, 84.6 percent was male and 51.3 percent belonged to age group 25-29 years. Majority of these activities were agriculture related small scale businesses rather than industries. Of the total sample, 76.4 percent mentioned that they would like to engage in agro based industries or businesses. Those who mentioned that they did not like to engage in such activities (23.6 percent) gave a number of reasons such as uncertainty of achieving success (20.6 percent), low income earned from agro industries (14.3 percent), not matching with educational qualifications (13.5 percent), difficulty in obtaining basic facilities (9.5 percent), lack/non recognition from society (5.6 percent), non/lack of training and awareness (13.5 percent), personal unwillingness (54.7 percent) and non availability of market for the products or difficulty of find market (8.7 percent).

Of those mentioned they would like to engage in agro industries but do not engage in them yet, have given number of reasons for their decisions. The reasons were difficulty in obtaining finance facilities (63.6 percent), difficulty in obtaining training (38.1 percent),

difficulty in getting machinery and inputs (28.8 percent), difficulty in finding suitable location/building (25.2 percent), do not have training or awareness (23.6 percent), engage in studies (18.4 percent), lack of market facilities (18.1 percent), risk (0.8 percent), due to engage in another job (2.2 percent), family burden (2.2 percent) non availability of proper plan (1.4 percent) and labour shortage (3.8 percent).

As revealed by youth respondents, they face problems related to accessibility and availability of market facilities, agricultural information, cultivable lands, crop insurance, extension services, accessibility of credit and finance facilities, low farm gate price for their products, non-availability or lack of accessibility of training facilities and new technology, insufficient availability of irrigation water, high cost and low quality of seeds and agro chemicals, high cost of agricultural machineries and higher cost for hire agriculture machineries. Furthermore, non-availability of a suitable social security scheme or pension system and lack or non-social recognition for agriculture related occupations act as push factor for youth from farming.

Several suggestions were made by youth respondents as well as representatives of farmer organizations to increase youth participation in smallholder agriculture as well as agro based industries in Sri Lanka. To increase youth participation in farming as well as agro based industries, youths suggested that government or private sector should take action to provide reasonable prices for products, provide basic facilities, provide subsidies from the government, ensure availability of high quality inputs at the market, make sure sufficient market facilities, conduct training programmes, provide technical knowledge, take action to create social recognition for farming from school levels, distribute of land, provide agricultural machinery, reduce input prices, motivate youth through best practices and models, stop/reduce agro based importation, provide tax holidays and simplify the rules and regulations and monitor the progrmmes which conduct by the government.

8.2 Policy Recommendations

8.2.1 Lack of Social and Institutional Recognition for Farming as an Employment

(a) Government need to encourage young farmers making necessary arrangement to give some amount of marks for school admission for their children. For example 5 marks can be given for families engaged in smallholder farming, agro based self employment or agro based industries/business.

(b) Government can encourage the young farmers by implementing special scholarship programme for children of the smallholder farm families who failed the grade 5 scholarship examination but having nearest marks to cut off marks and having highest marks of the G.C.E. O/L examination at the agrarian service centre areas. For this purpose government can utilize *'Govisetha'* lottery fund or

Farmer Banks fund. If, government implement the programme, schools in island wide should be informed. Further, with the implementation of awareness programmes (how can apply and criteria of the selection etc) through electronic media it can make sure to provide benefits to children in remote rural areas.

(c) Implement quota system for children of smallholder farm families for all agriculture related courses at the university level including private universities. Students selected for the private universities on the above basis, need to be excluded from the payment of tuition fee. Scholarships should be granted to them under the *"Govisetha"* lottery fund.

(d) According to present data, 33 percent of the total labour force has engaged in agriculture related employment. Therefore, government should take action to provide at least 20 percent quota system for young members of smallholder farm families with qualifications for government employment. Furthermore, this quota system can be increased up to 30 percent for agriculture related government employment specially in semi government organizations and extension services.

(e) Motivating the youth to involve in agriculture can be started at the school level as suggested by some respondents. For disseminating theoretical as well as practical knowledge on agriculture training should be given for each and every child. It is better to start the programmes from primary level by using simple practices and make them compulsory at secondary level. For giving practical knowledge in addition to cultivating school lands as a group they can be promoted to be involved in home garden cultivation continuously. Holding competition every year will be a pull factor for them to be involved in them.

(f) There is a perception in society that farming is the last option for employment. Because of these perceptions youth go away from farming as everybody like to have an acceptable decent job. Therefore there is a need to change these kinds of inferior attitudes towards farming through interventions specially through arranged programmes of the relevant institutions such as the ministry of agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Media, Department of Agriculture, schools and media. Following specific programmes are suggested to be implemented. Hold competitions among young farmers and provide foreign training tours for the best farmers. Select young to have more exposure about how farming is successfully practiced as a way of life in other countries. Celebrate a young farmers' day in addition to the farmers' day.

8.2.2 Problems Related to Extension Services

(a) As revealed by respondents, extension service is not adequate for agricultural activities. It was observed that there were no sufficient AIs to cater to the farmers in the villages. Therefore increasing the number and quality of the AIs service is necessary at the moment. If it is difficult to obtain approval for increasing number of AIs at the Provincial Council level, newly recruited agricultural graduate trainees can be used to perform AIs duties. According to necessity, one agriculture graduate can be utilized for number of *Grama Niladhari* Divisions. Further, best monitoring system on their work should be implemented and targets and evaluation system for target achievers should be established. Since, agricultural extension is a devolved subject decisions should be taken with the discussion of Provincial councils on required number of officers, evaluation system and targets.

(b) Further a strong and cooperative relationship between AIs/extension officer and youth farmers should be made effective.

(c) There is a considerable demand from young farmers for new technology, more productive seeds/ seedlings and sustainable agriculture. Therefore, extension officers' knowledge should be updated to provide efficient and effective service.

(d) Some of the Agriculture Research and Production Assistants have two year agriculture diploma though they do not have activities of extension services in their duty list. Therefore, laws should be regularize to take their contribution for agriculture extension service and necessary arrangements should be made to supervise or monitor their activities. Accordingly, geographical area of present *Grama Niladhari* Division can be utilized by them for the extension services.

(e) It is necessary to expand the information technology facilities, to provide extension services at the village level. Though, some areas having *NANASALA* centres to provide IT facilities, some areas do not have them. Therefore, it is useful to provide IT facilities through Young Farmer Societies/ offices of the Agriculture Research and Production Assistants or any other field officers. Some portion of cost can be covered by providing services at a concessionary rate.

(f) Encourage and train the youth through introducing poly tunnel, drip irrigation system and other high tech agricultural practices in selected school farms in agricultural areas. Further, optimum utilization of resources should be made by providing training facilities to pupils at the surrounding schools.

(g) The youth can be attracted to agriculture by conducting workshops, seminars and exhibitions for school level students on potential opportunities for agro based industries, enterprises and new technologies.

(h) Include the subjects matters on agriculture and sustainable development, importance of agriculture in food security in school curricula and organize workshops/seminar at zonal or school level to enhance students' knowledge. Further, students can be encouraged by organizing agriculture related literary competitions from school level to national level. In addition, publishing and distributing of winners' articles to school and other public libraries, can help to increase their knowledge and interest on agriculture.

8.2.3 Problems Related to Young Farmer Societies

(a) Though young farmer societies are implemented under the direction of Agriculture Instructors, they are not much effective as expected. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen the available young farmer societies and establish new young farmer societies at potential areas in an effective way by providing necessary assistance like land for young farmer societies to establish corporate farms, training and financial assistance for high tech agriculture, management training, proper knowledge on application of agro chemicals and agro based industries and building up link with private sector as well as potential markets. These trainings should be provided after identifying market facilities for relevant activities to get the maximum benefits of the trainings and also ensure the sustainability of their livelihood activities.

(b) Basically present young farmer societies are engaged in public activities like reconstructions of roads, cleaning of hospitals and religious places and attending for quiz competitions etc. These organizations should move from the present situation and must be directly linked with agriculture activities and agro enterprises. These organizations can activate more effectively with the assistance of newly recruited graduates for public service.

(c) Instead of present selection criteria of the best young farmer society (quiz competition), it is needed to apply more practical criteria. Young farmer societies' should take action to increase employment opportunities and income level and current knowledge and application on farming. The electronic media coverage of competitions and activities of the best young farmer societies will help to encourage youth for faming activities.

(d) Educational trips and workshops will help to enhance the members' knowledge on agriculture and agro based industries. But most of the young farmer societies

do not have enough funds for such activities. Therefore, providing of financial facilities for above functions will help to enhance their knowledge on the subject.

(e) High cost of machinery is one of push factors from agriculture. Therefore, providing machineries for young farmer societies (at least one set of machines for few young farmer societies) will help to attract youth on farming.

(f) Encourage successful young farmers by providing special facilities such as trainings and loans with minimum interest rates. Successful young farmers can be used as models to attract youth towards agriculture.

8.2.4 Problems Related to Agro Based Industries and Enterprises

(a) Establish corporate industries and businesses for youths which follow the trainings and for those who are interested and have capacities and skills with the proper supervision and guidance by responsible agencies. Research team highly recommends establishing and assisting cooperate industries selecting suitable young graduates. Some strategies can be followed to encourage youth under such programmes like tax holidays for around ten years. They should be provided enough financial facilities with minimum interest rate or basic cost born by the government and take back early decided portion by installment after some years back. If government implements such recommendations, it is better to select suitable persons through paper advertisements and interviews. After preparation of the programme, government needs to take action to give wider publicity for the programme through electronic media, government officers as well as universities.

(b) In addition to agricultural trainings, entrepreneurial and management training as well as information technology training will help to maintain sustainable livelihood of young farmers.

(c) Build a private public partnership to promote farming and agro based industries for youth. Public private partnership can introduce contract farming opportunities for young farmers, establish value addition industries and establish agro-based industries in order to enhance youth participation in agriculture sector.

(d) Even at present, number of credit schemes are conducted by banks for young entrepreneurs, but most of the rural youth are not informed about them. Therefore, it is needed to give enough publicity for such credit schemes.

(e) Relevant and useful information on agricultural entrepreneur opportunities, training and other assistance from various institutions should be delivered to village level without delay. Though Agriculture Research and Production Assistant *(Krupanisa)* is responsible for agriculture related activities, villagers

have more connection with *Grama Niladhari* at the village level. Therefore, it will be useful to deliver such information through both *Grama Niladhari* and *Krupanisa*.

(f) Information such as availability and accessibility of credit, machinery and inputs for agri-business/industries are very useful for new entrepreneurs. Therefore, such information can be provided at the training programmes.

(g) New entrepreneurs are discouraged by complex and lengthy registration procedures of business/industries. Therefore, registration procedure should be simplified reducing the number of steps to be followed without wasting time by using information technology.

(h) One of the weaknesses of the technical trainings related to agro enterprises is that after a training programme there is no any direction, monitoring/evaluation on trainers' activities. Therefore, though youth participate and get technical training on agro enterprises through the intervention of some institutions, they have no much interest to start agro enterprises. On the other hand, though they start an enterprise, possibility to collapse is greater due to lack of experiences, competition and other reasons. Therefore, more attention should be paid to systematic supervision on infant industries or enterprises by village level field officers as well as all relevant officers at the higher level.

8.2.5 Problems Related to Market Facilities

(a) Though agriculture inputs could be bought from agrarian service centers, it is difficult to buy them on time and in sufficient quantities. Therefore, government should take action to strengthen farmer banks funds and Agrarian Service Centres, as they can provide the inputs on time and in sufficient quantities.

(b) In most of cases, there is considerable amount of distance between farm household and Agrarian Service Centers. Therefore, farmers tend to buy inputs from private traders even at a high cost. If facilities are provided to buy agriculture inputs from *Krupanisa* office at the village level Agrarian Service Centers they can provide better and efficient service to farmers.

(c) As pointed out by members of the farmer organizations as well as youths, one of the major reasons for less youth participation in agriculture is less profit or loss from agricultural activities. Further, as revealed by the research, youth participation in agriculture is as high as 80 percent to 90 percent when prices are high for commodities. Therefore, internal and external markets for food commodities should be find out and link/co-ordination mechanism with farmer organizations/farmers and buyers should be built up. A mechanism for co-

ordinating the Multi Purpose Co-operative Societies island wide, large scale business, agro based industries, farmer organizations and young farmer societies should be established.

(d) There is a demand for Dedicated Economic Centers in some areas due to marketing problems. However, it is not possible to establish Dedicated Economic Centers throughout the all island but collecting centers can be established after feasibility studies at the remote rural areas where farmers do not have enough facilities to sell their products.

(e) Establish food processing factories by considering availability of inputs and market potential.

8.2.6 Problems Related to Basic Facilities

(a) Provide public or private owned, cultivable but not used for agricultural activities or underutilized lands young farmer societies or group of young farmers under short term lease system for temporary agricultural activities.

(b) Make necessary arrangement to reconstruct irrigation schemes destroyed due to war and not reconstructed for a long time on priority basis.

(c) Provide opportunity to enhance national peace and understanding on different cultural practices to youth through North-South young farmer societies' labour exchange programme for the above mentioned reconstruction activities.

(d) Provide necessary equipment and trainings for high tech agriculture practices such as drip irrigation and poly tunnel to a selected young farmer society in a Divisional Secretariat Division at suitable areas. After providing equipments and trainings it is needed to supervise their activities at least for three years by to Agrarian Development Officer and Agriculture Instructor and they should report the situation to relevant institutions.

(f) There are number of complaints regarding seeds/seedlings such as difficulty of buying necessary quantity at seasons, traders selling seeds/planting materials at high price on seasons, planting percentage is less than mentioned in package, cost of production is increasing as planting material should be brought again and again. Therefore, it is needed to implement the Seeds Act properly and take action to import seed/planting materials which can be used for a few generations.

(g) Most of the farmers and young generation have enough knowledge on bad effects of agro chemicals on health as well as economy. Young farmers in most of the study areas show their willingness to cultivate traditional crops using minimum

agro chemicals. Further, research team met considerable number of farmers who wishes to cultivate traditional crops (due to high demand, healthy as well as good income, less cost) but cultivate improved varieties due to lack of availability of traditional varieties. Therefore, it is needed to intervene by the Ministry of Agriculture and Provincial Agriculture Ministries to establish a programme to assist such farmers and coordinate all stakeholders such as NGOs involved in traditional farming, government institutions which have resources for traditional farming and farmer organizations wish to cultivate such crops.

(h) Youths in the remote, rural agricultural areas have more interest to produce organic fertilizer (due to high demand for paddy lands) and seeds. Therefore, it is useful to implement a programme to assists them including mechanism for technical knowledge, link with quality assurance services and link with markets available within a district.

(i) Most of the youth face difficulties of having basic capital for engaging in agriculture or agro based enterprises. Though commercial banks provide credit for the youth/ agricultural activities under different schemes, due to many reasons such as lack of knowledge on such schemes, not having assets to keep as collateral and banks not trusting first time borrowers as their regular customers they do not use such facilities. On the other hand, though farmer banks are implement for farmers, it is difficult to get credit for youth from these banks. Further, the National youth survey done by the National Youth Council in 2008/09, revealed that 1/3 of the youth did not have any type of bank account. Therefore, it is needed to implement special savings and credit schemes providing comparatively high interest rate for saving and less interest for credit, issuing enough amount of money with less conditions.

8.2.7 Problems Related to Social Security System and Crop Insurance Scheme

(a) Update the farmer pension scheme and insurance scheme by considering current situation of society. It is better to do a comprehensive research before changing the policies and programmes on such schemes.

(b) Most of the farmers do not have trust or confidence on crop insurance scheme due to some reasons such as delay in issuing insurance and difficulties in getting enough money for crop damages. The currently relevant recommendation of study on crop insurance scheme completed by Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute few years ago can be utilized to improve the insurance scheme.

8.2.8 Age Limit for Youth

(a) In some aspects and for some purposes age limit for youth in Sri Lanka is considered as years 18-30 but sometimes years 14-29 are considered as youth. In Sri Lanka, however, life expectancy at birth has been increasing considerably and age limit for engaging in job has increase as youth spend longer time for education. Therefore, it is better to consider age limit of years 15-40 as youth for programmes implemented for increasing youth participation in agriculture.

8.2.9 Social Equity, Good Governance and Equality

(a) As revealed by previous studies and Presidential Commission on Youth (1990) Sri Lankan society has been facing severs problems related to social justice and good governance. As revealed by Kalinga Tudor Silva *etal* in their research publication on Casteless or Caste-blind? Dynamics of Concealed Caste Discrimination, Social Exclusion and Protest in Sri Lanka (2009), 20 percent to 30 percent of the population in Sri Lanka has been treated as second tire citizen due to their caste. According to Nandasena Rathnapala (1982), one of the major driving forces for first youth rebellion in Sri Lanka was feelings of social injustice and lack of opportunities for employment. As revealed by National Youth Survey (2008/09), though 81 percent of youth have voted, their trust on political institutions are less. According to above survey, 29.1 percent, 25.8 percent, 25 percent and 31 percent stated that they have confidence with Parliament, Provincial Councils, Municipal Councils and *Pradeshiya Sabhas*. Further, 54.4 percent of the youth stated that they did not have any confidence with their Parliament or Provincial Council representatives. As analyzed by Laksiri Fernando (2002) in "Youth and Politics: Why they Rebel?" youth who have fully confident with government institutions including forces, courts, police and civil service was 26.3 percent while 20.4 percent of the youth do not have any confident with those institutions. However, according to the above study, only 8.1 percent and 4 percent of the youth stated that they had full confidence with the civil service and political parties while 47 percent of the youth stated that they did not have any confidence with political parties. These studies revealed that politicization of whole society and lack of implementation of good governance policies as reasons for less youth confidents on government and political institutions. Above situation has also been thoroughly emphasised in Presidential Commission on Youth (1990).

Though the study on "Factors affecting Less Youth Participation in Smallholder Agriculture in Sri Lanka" did not examine the youths' attitudes on government institutions and politicians, it was apparent in views of respondents that they believe that government institutions are not much closer to good governance practices when they implement their policies and programmes. It is an essential

factor for peoples' trust in a democratic political system. Therefore, research team highly recommend the implementation of any of the programme focused on increasing youth participation in smallholder agriculture in Sri Lanka by strengthening youth confidence/trust with the programme and officers. Thus, all benefits, facilities and encouragements need to provide covering all marginalized groups with the merit basis using good governance practices.

8.3 Further Research Areas

1. Most of the farmers presented their grievances regarding low quality and high price of agro chemicals and seeds. Furthermore, it was observed that agro chemical traders tried to control farmers using informal bond (issuing agro chemical and seeds under credit basis) between farmer and trader. This seems to affect farmers and their families in many ways. Therefore, present situation of relationship of farmer and agro chemical traders and its effects on farmer and their families is a further research area.

2. There are large numbers of young people in one parent families or parentless families in the war affected areas or adjacent villages of the conflict zone. Research team observed that their needs and aspirations differ from those of youth in other areas and they are vulnerable in many ways. Therefore, there is a need to do in-depth study to identify their problems as well as strength. Furthermore, it is better to conduct an action research aiming their wellbeing.

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