

Original Research Article

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Constraints Perceived by Tribal People in Implementation of Watershed Development Programme – A Study in Odisha

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ABSTRACT

Watershed Development Programme is of completely new dimension and empowered people in designing and implementing the programme along with fund utilization, accounting and record maintenance. It has been observed that significant developments not been made to the tribal people living in watershed area. A study was conducted with 192 respondents from 12 watersheds covering 4 blocks in Kalahandi and Nuapara districts in Odisha. Gram panchayat / village not consulted sufficiently, no transparency in selecting committee members, Watershed Association meeting not held regularly, monopoly of the committee members, inadequate programme for women, no permanent approach to each programme, insufficient demonstration, inadequate funds to cover all farm based activities, no revolving fund facilities for SHG activities, inadequate funds for training and other educational activities, lack of sincerity and dedication of project personnel, no regular review meetings as well as problems and difficulties arise in field situations not solved were the pertinent constraints expressed by the respondents. The District Watershed Advisory Committee members have to monitor all these constraints, ensure all these facilities and strictly adherence to the guidelines along with possible supports for effective implementation of the programme benefiting tribal people living in the watershed areas.

Keywords

Constraint,
Programme,
Tribal people,
Watershed
development.

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Introduction

The basic purpose of the Watershed Development Programme is to make the people sufficient in food, fodder and water (Kumar and Bansal, 2014). The success of the programme demands individual efforts, dedicated leadership, participatory mode and community approach (Parvathi, 2013). The programme is of completely new dimension and empowered people in designing and implementing the programme along with fund utilization, accounting and record maintenance. In spite of all flexibility in operational procedures, significant changes

have not been made towards upliftment of people and more particularly tribals in the watershed area (Bhalla *et al.*, 2013).

Moreover; lack of awareness, high cost of inputs, indifferent behavior in the administration, lack of guidance and technical supervision that affects effective implementation of the programme (Indra and Kushawaha, 2007). The present study is an attempt to assess the constraints experienced by the tribal people in implementation of the Watershed Development Programme.

Materials and Methods

The study was undertaken in Western Undulating Agro-Climatic zone covering Kalahandi and Nuapara districts in Odisha dominated by tribal community. A sample size of 192 tribal people was selected randomly from 12 watersheds of four blocks as the respondents of the study. Institutional arrangements, planning, programme development and implementation, funding pattern, monitoring and supervision were selected as the variables for analyzing the constraints. Data collected on scale point of strongly agree, agree and disagree were analyzed with score value of 3, 2 and 1 respectively to reveal the results.

Results and Discussion

The guidelines of the Watershed Development Programme clearly spelled out well defined institutional arrangements assigning responsibility to each individual in the implementation process. Training programmes are also organized for all the stakeholders to have a clear understanding of the duties and responsibilities. But the study revealed (Table 1) that the respondents of both the districts had agreed for priority analysis, compulsory membership and user group as well as Self Help Groups formed properly. Conducting Watershed Association meeting regularly, adequately consulting Gram panchayat and village sufficiently, transparency in selecting committee members and no monopoly of the committee members that were not being followed which may create problems in effective implementation of the programmes.

Proper planning is the pre-requisite to achieve the end results of any programme. The guideline developed for the implementation of the Watershed Development programme envisages the detailed procedure starting from Agro-ecosystem analysis, problem diagnosis

and feasible programming from the perspectives of the watershed people incorporating their wisdom and experience. The findings revealed that (Table 2), the respondents of both the districts had not expressed many constraints in planning. However; the Performa developed for reporting needs to be simplified as it was exhaustive one.

Each family living in watershed area must have adequate programme for optimum utilization of resources and adequate income generation. The data reflected in table 3 indicated that the respondents of both the districts had agreed for the programming on all farm based activities, use of available resources, sustainable programming and attempting for self-employment. However, adequate programming for women and priority towards poverty alleviation were not being followed that needs to be considered during programme development.

Implementation of approved programmes is the sole responsibilities of the watershed beneficiaries. Therefore, close monitoring, supervision and proper guidance are required for effective implementation of the programme. The respondents of both the districts had favorably (Table 4)opined for no overlapping of programmes, role specification of related organisations, systematic steps being followed and flexibility in implementation of programmes. But, sufficient demonstrations to enrich knowledge and skill competency, permanent approach to each programme and transparency in implementation were lacking which are to be well taken care for effective implementation of the programmes planned in Watershed Development Programme.

The guideline has fixed specific norms in fund allocation and utilization. The beneficiaries have to receive funds from the Watershed Association released by DRDA

and spent as per the approved programmes. Tribal people living in watershed area are relatively resource poor. They need adequate financial support to cover the entire farm based approved programmes. They also require sufficient training to develop competency to manage the activities properly.

Moreover, revolving fund facilities must be there for the vocational activities to landless family. These were the major constraints expressed by the respondents of both the districts (Table 5) which are to be considered favorably.

Table.1 Constraints experienced on institutional arrangements

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		Pooled mean score (n = 192)	Rank
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)		
1.	G.P./ Village not consulted adequately	2.33	2.25	2.29	II
2.	User and Self Help groups not formed properly	1.89	1.74	1.82	V
3.	Priority analysis not done	0.69	0.60	0.65	VI
4.	No transparency in selection of committee members	2.36	2.18	2.27	III
5.	Membership not compulsory	0.47	0.39	0.43	VII
6.	Association meeting not held regularly	2.30	2.40	2.35	I
7.	Monopoly of the committee members	2.10	2.13	2.12	IV

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Table.2 Constraints expressed on planning

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		Pooled mean score (n = 192)	Rank
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)		
1.	Not participating in PRA exercise	1.53	1.34	1.44	II
2.	Problem diagnosis not done properly	0.74	0.99	0.87	IV
3.	Planning not done from people's perspective	0.51	0.33	0.42	VI
4.	Planning not done by experienced personnel	1.32	0.86	1.09	III
5.	No simple and sustainable programming	0.26	1.32	0.79	V
6.	Exhaustive proforma in reporting	2.06	2.15	2.11	I

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Table.3 Constraints expressed on programme development

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		Pooled mean score (n = 192)	Rank
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)		
1.	Not covering all farm activities	1.13	0.89	1.01	VI
2.	Insufficient attempt for Self employment	1.80	1.85	1.83	III
3.	No sustainable programming	1.71	1.53	1.62	IV
4.	Not concerned for use of available resources	1.34	0.84	1.09	V
5.	Priority not towards poverty alleviation	1.98	1.89	1.94	II
6.	No adequate programme for women	2.27	2.21	2.24	I

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Table.4 Constraints expressed on programme implementation

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		Diff (%)	Pooled mean score (n = 192)	Rank
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)			
1.	No role specification of related institutions	0.89	0.65	26.97	0.77	VI
2.	No transparency in implementation	2.12	2.31	8.23	2.13	III
3.	Systematic steps not followed	1.29	1.02	20.93	1.16	V
4.	Overlapping of programmes	0.66	0.44	33.33	0.55	VII
5.	No permanent approach	2.39	2.22	7.11	2.31	II
6.	Insufficient demonstration	2.40	2.28	5.00	2.34	I
7.	No flexibility	1.25	1.28	2.34	1.27	IV

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Table.5 Constraints expressed on funding pattern

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		Pooled mean score (n = 192)	Rank
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)		
1.	Inadequate funds to cover all activities	2.22	2.37	2.30	I
2.	Insufficient funds for training	2.16	2.10	2.13	III
3.	No revolving fund for SHG activities	2.18	2.40	2.29	II
4.	Fund not released in time	0.99	0.95	0.97	IV
5.	No funds for community organization	0.54	1.10	0.82	V
6.	No freedom in fund utilisation	0.33	0.96	0.65	VI

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Table.6 Constraints expressed on monitoring and evaluation

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		Pooled mean score (n = 192)	Rank
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)		
1.	Lack of sincerity and dedication of the project team spirit	2.27	2.40	2.34	I
2.	Inadequate team spirit	1.43	1.55	1.49	V
3.	Approach to complete the targets only	2.27	2.16	2.22	III
4.	Insufficient knowledge of project personnel	0.47	0.65	0.56	VII
5.	Problems and difficulties not taken care	2.10	2.25	2.18	IV
6.	Lack of friendly approach	1.34	1.52	1.43	VI
7.	No regular review meeting	2.31	2.21	2.26	II

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Table.7 Comparative analysis of the constraints

S. No.	Constraint	Mean Score		C.R. Value	Pooled mean score (n =192)
		Nuapara district (n = 96)	Kalahandi district (n = 96)		
1.	Institutional arrangements	1.73	1.67	0.032	1.70
2.	Planning	1.07	1.17	0.066	1.12
3.	Programme development	1.71	1.54	0.093	1.63
4.	Programme implementation	1.57	1.46	0.062	1.52
5.	Funding pattern	1.40	1.65	0.141	1.53
6.	Monitoring and evaluation	1.74	1.82	0.042	1.78

(Maximum obtainable score – 3)

Close supervision, constant monitoring and evaluation of day-to-day activities are the basic requirements to achieve the end results. All the project officials and committee members are sufficiently exposed through training for proper monitoring and evaluation. The project personal should have sincerity and dedicational spirit in effective implementation of the programmes.

Problems and difficulties arise in the field situation must be solved immediately. Besides, regular review meeting are to be organized to assess the progress and future course of action to achieve the end results. These were the deficiencies expressed by the respondents of both the districts (Table 6) for which the District Watershed Advisory Committee have to ensure all these aspects for proper monitoring and evaluation of the programmes implemented.

Comparative analysis of the constraints revealed that (Table 7) the respondents of both the districts were of similar opinions as no significant differential gaps were observed through critical ratio test. The data in the table as a whole revealed that the respondents had not expressed acute constraints in any aspects mentioned in the table. It implies that the respondents had some constraints in all the aspects in implementation of the watershed development programme.

In conclusion, the Govt. of India has implemented nationwide Watershed Development Programme considering all possible factors for effective implementation of the programme. The guideline developed has a clearly defined operational procedure assigning the duties and responsibilities to all the stakeholders. But the study revealed that the tribal people in watershed area had stated constraints in all the aspects of implementation of the programme. The pertinent constraints stated were Gram Panchayat / village not consulted adequately, no transparency in selection of committee members, watershed association meeting not held regularly, monopoly of the watershed committee members, adequate programme not developed for women, no permanent approach to each programme, insufficient demonstration, inadequate funds to cover all farm based activities, no revolving fund facilities for SHG activities, inadequate funds for training and other educational for SHG activities, inadequate funds for training and other educational activities, lack of sincerity and dedication of the project personnel, no regular review meeting as well as problems and difficulties arise in field situation not solved.

Watershed Development Programme has been designed for the all-round development of the people and particularly tribals living in

watershed area. The constraints expressed by the respondents indicated that the guideline developed for the purpose has not been followed. It is therefore suggested that the District Watershed Advisory Committee members have to monitor all the constraints identified and ensure all possible supports for the development of the tribal people in watershed areas.

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