

Original Research Article

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Study the Extent of Participation and Empowerment of Farm Women in lac Cultivation

R. Ranjan¹, S. Shekhar^{1*}, C.V. Singh² and Satish Kumar³

¹Krishi Vigyan Kendra (ICAR-NRRI), Jainagar, Koderma, Jharkhand- 825324, India

²Central upland Rice Research Station (ICAR-NRRI, Cuttack), India

³GVT- Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Godda, Jharkhand, India

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

The novel experiments was undertaken among 60 on-campus trainees and 60 off-campus trainees spread among three purposively selected villages under two blocks under the domain of KVK Jainagar, Koderma. The 20 on-campus trainees and 20 off campus trainees were selected randomly from each selected villages. For the purpose of this study, Two variables namely, extent of participation and impact of KVKs in empowering rural women has been operationalized as the degree to which farm women participant in various activities in lac cultivation. The respondents were interviewed personally by a well-structured interview schedule. The findings on the extent of participation are given under the overall participation and activity wise participation. The salient findings of the study are, majority (60.80%) of the respondent had medium level of overall participation, followed by high (26.60%) and low (12.50%) level of overall participation. Attending group meeting (2.44), operating commercial ventures (2.29) and attending village development work (2.04) are the major activities in lac cultivation, economic activities and social developmental activities, respectively. It was also found that majority of the respondents (75.00%) had increased their knowledge level after going through these training courses, (40.00%) of the respondents had improved their skill, (39.10%) of the respondents became fully independent. The study also revealed that farm women became socially, economically, psychologically empowered and had the power of taking decisions.

Keywords

Extent of Participation, Empowerment, Training, Lac cultivation, Farm women

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Introduction

The Indian council of agriculture research (ICAR), during fifth five Year plan launched an innovative project for imparting vocational training to farmers, farm women, rural youth and field level extension functionaries in the country by establishing Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Women are no longer confined to their homes as house wives. Different efforts

are being made by Government and other organizations for the empowerment of rural people in general and rural women in particular. Empowerment does not mean empowering in technical area only but women should remember that they are rational and thinking human beings (Banga, 2010). The contribution of women to national development in the current context and its potential is of greater significance.

Involvement of Indian women in national women in national progress at all levels is undisputable reality although the degree of involvement varies from time to time and region to region. Women play a significant and crucial role in lac Cultivation because during lean agricultural season they migrate out to other cities for daily wage employment for their needs, and women and children involve in collection and trading activities of the forest produces (Jonko, 2014) which provide some financial help, but merely sufficient for fulfilling the needs of family. Jharkhand is known for the rich forest area including lac hosts.

Jharkhand alone contributed 42 per cent of the nation's production. Lac production was a traditional practice in tribal families dependent on forests and agriculture and, due to its market importance, had potential for substantial incomes. In Jharkhand, about 500,000 families live in the forest regions and are engaged in lac cultivation resulting in the creation of about 35–50 million person-days of employment per year. In this situation lac cultivation may play a vital role for economic strengthening of the rural women. Cultivation of lac is exploited for its products of commerce, viz. resin, dye and wax. It not only provides livelihood to millions of lac growers (Pal, 2009) and earns foreign exchange (Yogi, 2014), but also provide great scope for socio-economic upliftment of women. Economic upliftment of women is one of the thrust areas in today's social scenario. Despite women's considerable involvement and contribution, their participation in developmental activities has often been underestimated, undervalued and largely ignored. Moreover they are denied of most of the developmental activities. Therefore, the present investigation was designed to study the Extent of Participation and Empowerment of farm women in lac Cultivation especially in koderma district of Jharkhand.

Materials and Methods

The study was undertaken with an attempt to know the Extent of Participation and Empowerment of farm women in lac Cultivation in koderma district of Jharkhand. The sample group for the present study comprised only the rural women trained through KVK's in two blocks (Jainagar and Markacho) of koderma districts. Two blocks viz., Jainagar and Markacho have been selected based on the availability of more number of specific host plants such as *ber* (*Ziziphus mauritania*) and *palash* (*Butea monosperma*.) Sample is collected only from those beneficiaries who have undergone training courses. A total sample of 60 on-campus trainees and 60 off-campus trainees spread among three purposively selected villages under two blocks under the domain of KVK Jainagar, Koderma. The 20 on-campus trainees and 20 off campus trainees were selected randomly from each selected villages for data collection.

Thus, in total, there were 120 respondent. A structured interview schedule was framed through which primary data is collected, the rural women are often illiterate and do not respond to questionnaire technique properly, therefore, interview and observation method was used. The structured interview schedules prepared were pre-tested on 10 percent of the respondents to find out any ambiguity and its work ability before final use. The data collected has been carefully scrutinized and condensed into master chart and tabulated in terms of statistical tools to represent in a meaningful way. To get more information regarding the extent of participation and empowerment of farm women in lac Cultivation of rural women both the primary and secondary sources were used. Literature were also collected from journals, annual progress reports symposia/seminar compendium

Results and Discussion

Extent of participation of the respondent in lac cultivation

The extent of participation in this study has been operationalised as the degree to which rural women participation in lac Cultivation.

Overall participation

The data collected on overall participation of the respondents have been presented in table 1.

From the table 1, it could be observed that majority (60.8%) of the respondents had medium level of participation, followed by high (26.6%) and low (12.5%) levels of participation. It could be interpreted that most of the respondent exhibited moderate to high levels of participation. This might be due to the visible and concrete impact of the benefit of lac cultivation. The benefits might include enhanced increase in household income, and socio- economic empowerment as perceived by women members at village level and observed in the locale of research. Among the activities more participation has been observed in social development activities followed by economic developmental activities. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Kumar (2002), Selvarani (2006) and Meenakshi (2011).

Activities – wise participation

A spectrum of twenty activities with varying degrees of participation in lac cultivation has

been administered and relevant data have been collected. The results are presented in the table 2. The responses were collected on three point continuum as full, occasional and no participation with scores ranging from one to three. Mean scores have been calculated to find that more and the least participation. The activities have been divided into three major components viz., lac cultivation activities, economic developmental activities and social developmental activities.

From the above table 2, mean scores and ranks have been allotted to each activities, attending lac cultivation meetings (2.44) in lac cultivation activities is rank I, operating the commercial venture (2.25) in economic developmental activities is rank I and participation in village developmental works (2.04) in social developmental activities is rank I have been observed in the order of participation. Most of the respondents in the study area are found to be young to middle age categories and had primary education. This might be the reason for majority of respondents who participated regularly in group meeting, formulating plan for the lac cultivation. In respect of social developmental activities most of the members felt delicate to attend gram sabha meeting as they do not vision of importance of it. This might be the reason for low level participation of members in gram sabha meeting. As the group leaders are reported to have motivated the members, more of high levels of participation in social developmental activities has been observed. This finding is in accordance with the finding of Kumar (2002), Selvarani (2006) and Meenakshi (2011).

Table.1 Distribution of respondents according to their Overall participation (n = 120)

Sl. No.	Category	Number	Percentage
1.	Low	15	12.5
2.	Medium	73	60.8
3.	High	32	26.6

Table.2 Distribution of the respondents based on activity- wise participation (N - 120)

Sl. No.	Activities	Mean scores	Rank
A.	Lac cultivation activities		
1.	Attending lac cultivation meetings	2.44	I
2.	Formulation plans for the development for the lac cultivation	2.37	II
3.	Organizing training	1.25	VIII
4.	Sharing the experiences of training undergone	1.23	IX
5.	Imparting skills to other members	1.21	X
6.	Organising exposure visits	1.50	VI
7.	Reviewing the progress made	0.78	XII
8.	Conflict resolution	1.74	IV
9.	Assisting for getting loans	1.71	V
10.	Interacting with governments official	0.98	XI
11.	Participation in taking group decisions	1.92	III
12.	Formulation the rules and regulations for the lac cultivation	1.46	VII
B.	Economic developmental activities		
13.	Operating the commercial venture	2.25	1
14.	Arranging to get resources from supporting institutions	1.11	V
15.	Purchasing raw materials for their commercial venture/ entrepreneurial activity	2.08	III
16.	Marketing of products	2.15	II
17.	Participation in the lac product exhibitions conducted by government/ DRDA	2.06	IV
C.	Social developmental activities		
18.	Participation in village developmenta works	2.04	I
19.	Attending gram sabha meeting	1.34	III
20.	Attending social action programmes	2.02	II

Table.3 Knowledge before and after training (N-120)

Knowledge of Respondents	Before training	%	After training	%
No-Knowledge (low)	112	93.33	03	2.50
Partial-Knowledge (Medium)	08	06.66	27	22.50
Complete (High)	00	00	90	75.00
$\chi^2 = 674.892, P\text{-value} < 0.01$				

Table.4 Dependency of respondents after adoption (N-120)

Dependency has	No. of respondents	% age
No change (low)	19	15.83
Reduced (Medium)	54	45.00
Ended (high)	47	39.10
$\chi^2 = 38.005, P\text{-value} < 0.01$		

Knowledge and skill before and after training

Table 3 presented the distribution of data as per the knowledge of respondents regarding trainings before and after the training. Majority of the respondent (93.33%) were having low knowledge, 06.66 per cent respondents were having medium and no one were having high level of knowledge before training, whereas, majority (75.00%) of the respondents were having high level of knowledge after training, 22.50 per cent were having medium level of knowledge and meager number of respondents (2.50 %) were having low level of knowledge after training. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents 75.00 per cent gained high knowledge level after attending the trainings given by Krishi Vigyan Kendras. Thus positive impact of recommended techniques was found among the respondents.

The perusal of the table 4 revealed that after adoption of the recommendation of various vocational trainings given by Krishi Vigyan Kendras, majority of the respondents (45.00%) became independent, (39.10%) respondents had reduced their dependency and a small number of respondents (15.83%) did not feel any change in their dependency. Thus majority of the respondents had increased their socio-economic status after adoption and were fully independent.

Study shows that most of the respondents exhibited moderate to high levels of participation. This might be due to the visible and concrete impact of the benefit of being a member of lac cultivation. The benefits might include enhanced increase in household income, and socio- economic empowerment as perceived by women members at village levels

and observed in the locale of research. Among the activities more participation has been observed in social developmental activities followed by economic developmental activities. Hence it can be concluded that vocational tanning course plays a positive role for the empowerment of rural women. Majority of the rural women developed their socio economy status, developed their psychological confidence and became able to take decisions.

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