DECENTRALISED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:
A STUDY OF WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN
THE STATE OF KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT
The paper examines the practices and processes, and the role of principal actors in such processes striving to implement watershed development under Hariyali guidelines. More specifically, the paper aims at assessing the extent of autonomy that the institutions like gram panchayats have in the implementation of watershed development activities. An important lesson that emanated from the analysis is that no institution or organisation — be it a panchayat, a NGO, a government department, or a CBO — can work in isolation. Hence, it is necessary to create complementalities among these formal and semi-formal governing institutions for addressing different needs and aspirations in natural resource management.
NON-AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION NEEDS AND SEEKING BEHAVIOUR AMONG RURAL DWELLERS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines non-agricultural information needs and seeking behaviour among rural dwellers in Oyo State, Nigeria. This is predicated on the fact that livelihood activities in rural areas where agricultural activities predominate go beyond farming activities. Rural non-farm income generating activities offer more remunerative activities to supplement or replace agricultural income, absorb surplus labour in rural areas, help farm-based household spread risks, offer income potential during agricultural off-season and provide a means to cope or survive when farming fails. Due to the importance of information in the production system, the changing information environment calls for meeting the need of information users.

The study was carried out in Oyo State in the South Western Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was used. From 33 Local Government Areas, three were selected for the study because they are classified as highly rural (NPC, 2007). From the Local Government Area, 3, 4, and 5 villages were selected from Ibarapa, Iwajowa and Orire, respectively. Ten households were randomly selected from each village to make a total of 120 for the study. Data were collected from the respondents sampled for the study using interview schedule. The results show that majority are males belonging to 40-49 years age group, married, Christians, without formal education and have a family size of between 10-14 members (56.7). Prominent sources of information among rural dwellers are neighbours/friends, job colleagues, Radio, Television and commercial agents. Prominent activities for which information is needed are petty trading, grinding of products, dress making, carpentry and leather work. The types of information needed are knowledge/skill information, equipment information and marketing information. The study concludes by advocating that the extension messages should be expanded to cover the non-agricultural income generating activities in order to enhance the livelihoods of people engaged in it.
In rural areas of Tripura, fishing is one of the important economic activities supporting the livelihood of 73,264 fishermen population (Anon., 2002). This study is aimed at examining the socio-economic conditions of fishermen of Rudrasagar Lake of Tripura and analysing the economic viability of fishing operations. The Rudrasagar Lake of West Tripura district was purposively selected as it is a big water body covering 365.61 ha water area with annual fish production of 41,683 kg (2006-07). From 15 fishermen villages, which are mainly dependent on fishing in Rudrasagar Lake, 5 villages were randomly selected. Then altogether 119 fishermen were randomly chosen from these sampled villages for interview. A linear regression model was used to find out the relationship between average catch per day and investment on fishing gears and crafts. The results obtained showed that the fishing is a primary occupation of fishermen of the study area. However they are also dependent on agriculture or daily wages for off-season employment and income.

The fishing community of Tripura has low level of education (70 per cent below matriculation) which has kept the fishermen’s children to remain in fishing business. In the peak season fishermen do fishing in groups by pooling their fishing resources such as fishing gears and crafts and share the catch accordingly. After deduction of non-recurring and recurring costs, a fisherman family earned about Rs 14,481 per annum. The output-capital ratio was found to be 1.87 which indicates that present fishing operations in the study area are feasible. A direct relationship was observed between average daily catch and investment on fishing gears and crafts. It is interesting to note that 60 per cent fishermen families have savings, though in small amounts with different financial agencies. However, the credit requirements of fishermen were mainly met by money lenders, fish traders or SHGs. The high interest rate 2-5 per cent on monthly basis charged by money lenders or high commission charged (10 per cent) by fish traders are clear indication of exploitation of fishermen. It brings out that despite fishing being economically viable and fishermen getting good returns on investment in fishing gears and craft, they are still unable to have access to institutional loan.
Empowerment of women constitutes one of the central issues in the development mechanism of almost all countries. This paper makes an attempt to analyse whether the development intervention made by the government achieves its objective of empowerment of women. The survey result reveals that participation in income earning activities by women alone cannot wipe out the social and cultural norms and male domination in the society. Family structure and culture followed in the State has played a significant role in determining the bargaining power of women. Though the participation in SHGs and NHGs have succeeded in empowering women to some extent, women’s active involvement in local planning and use of their collective bargaining strength for improving their status in society and at home are yet to take place.
DYNAMICS OF RURAL POVERTY IN BIHAR : THE MALADY AND PANACEA OF THE MALAISE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the incidence of rural poverty in Bihar. It is a renewed and indepth analysis of the poverty problem in its various regional, social and institutional dimensions. To study the malaise of poverty, the relationship between growth and poverty; agricultural growth and poverty; agrarian relations and poverty are analysed. Further, the impact of various poverty alleviation programmes especially with reference to new poverty schemes on poverty has been analysed. Finally, main conclusions and policy initiatives to be taken are presented. The study is based on secondary data of National Sample Survey (NSS) to identify the linkages between growth and poverty. The data on sectoral growth pattern are obtained from estimates of Net Domestic Product (NDP) of Central Statistical Organisation (CSO). To assess the impact of anti-poverty programmes, various poverty alleviation studies conducted earlier have been used as an important source material. The study reveals that (a) rural poverty in Bihar is a consequence of poor and lopsided growth of the economy of the State (b) the trickle-down effect of agricultural growth is limited in making significant dent in removing poverty (c) in a predominantly agrarian economy of Bihar, poverty is due to highly iniquitous agrarian relation (d) the poverty alleviation programmes implemented so far have been partially responsible for increasing the incidence of poverty in rural Bihar. To conclude, since poverty has multi-dimensional aspects, the panacea for the problem of poverty is multi-dimensional. Growth must be inclusive. Apart from focusing on agriculture, non-farm and infrastructure sector; stricter governance reforms, catalytic change in the political will power, focusing on development of certain castes and groups need prior attention to make a significant dent on the poverty problem plaguing the State for the last several decades.

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RURAL POVERTY AND CORRELATES IN PASCHIM MEDINIPUR DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL: A NOTE

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ABSTRACT

Paschim Medinipur district being ecologically diverse with high concentration of scheduled tribe population shows rural poverty varying widely across the blocks of the district. Rural poverty across the blocks is significantly related with their foodgrains productivity, literacy rate, proportion of non-agricultural workers, crop diversification, road length and credit. Reduction of the poverty incidence, therefore, requires laying stress on increasing productivity of land, expansion of non-agricultural employment, extension of minor irrigation that enhances crop diversification, skill upgradation that helps increase in non-agricultural employment and better implementation of Work Guarantee Programmes that would reduce the proportion of marginal workers, and also financial inclusion, promotion of micro-credit institution and development of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) as well as increase in literacy, particularly female literacy.
TRADITIONAL FARMING SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES: A CASE FOR THE GARHWAL HIMALAYA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the traditional farming systems and their sustainability, in terms of food security, and what measures to be adapted for enhancement of livelihood of the inhabitants in the Garhwal Himalaya. The Garhwal Himalaya is located in the centre of the Himalayan Mountain System. Characterised by harsh climatic conditions, rough, rugged and precipitous terrain, fragile landscape and economic backwardness, about 95 per cent of the total population are inhabited in rural areas. Traditional cereal farming is the main occupation of the populace as about 80 per cent population are engaged in the production of cereal crops and livestock farming. The farming system in Garhwal Himalaya is peculiar, which is based upon the centuriesold practices and carried out mainly on the narrow patches of the terraced fields. The main crops grown are paddy, wheat, barley, millets, pulses, and oilseeds. The economic viability of these crops is insufficient even to meet the food requirement of the populace but these crops are environmentally sound and suitable for this ecologically fragile terrain. The scope for further expansion and modernisation of agriculture practices is not viable due to the fragility of terrain and precipitous slope. Therefore, an exodus of population emigrated to the foothills of Himalaya and major urban centres of country for the search of job or recruited in national Army. Enhancing and diversifying livelihood options, other than biomass-based production, will definitely raise the income and food-security of the rural mountain people, as the agro-climatic conditions in this region are very much feasible for the cultivation of cash generating crops. Therefore, the scope of cultivation of off-season vegetables, fruits, medicinal plants and collection of non-timber based forest products are tremendous. Cultivation of fruits will also manifest a way for ecological restoration of the fragile terrain and will enhance the economic level and sustainable livelihood of the inhabitants. Thus, it is suggested that the optimum harnessing of these products will surely provide a base for sustainable livelihood in the region. Data on farming systems were gathered from the primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered through structured questionnaire and household survey was done to study agricultural pattern and production trend. Case studies of the villages were also done for collection of data on horticultural practices.
ROLE OF POLYTECHNICS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN JHARKHAND

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ABSTRACT

The community polytechnic programme is a national programme sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources Development of Government of India to ensure a fair share of benefits of technical education and scientific research for the rural society. Based on the infrastructure, intellectual manpower, experience and capacity of the polytechnics, such institutions were entrusted with community polytechnic programme for their active involvement in the process of rural development. These institutions are expected to act as focal points for technology transfer and promotion of local innovativeness in rural areas. In the State of Jharkhand, appropriate technology may be transferred to the rural people for the sustainable growth of that area. Despite its achievement, the rural masses are not being benefited as has been expected. In order to identify the gap, this research study has been undertaken. An attempt has been made to evaluate the role of polytechnics of Jharkhand (India) in community development. The study reveals that various training programmes have benefited a large number of respondents. It is only after proper need assessment, the programmes can be successfully organised in a meaningful way. Technology transfer and technical-support services are the most urgent components to be diffused in rural areas of Jharkhand. Technical-support services, technology transfer, and need assessment are the prime areas of concern of the community polytechnic programme. By making the local villagers more aware of S&T inputs, the impact level can be further improved.
TRAINING NEEDS OF WOMEN
FARMERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR
RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN
KWARA STATE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The main purpose of the study is to determine the training needs of women farmers in Kwara State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling design was used to select one hundred and fifty women farmers. Data were obtained by the use of interview schedule and analysed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean score and chi-square. The result indicated that about two-thirds (66.0 per cent) of the women were between 40-59 years and majority (78.67 per cent) were Moslem. Also, high percentage (98.67 per cent) of them were married with 88.67 per cent having not less than 16 years farming experience and 72.67 per cent with no formal education. The result further showed that women farmers ranked the plant production as the highest priority for training followed by animal production, food processing is the third priority while bee keeping became the last priority for training. The lack of information ranked highest, followed by time as constraints to training. Chi-square result revealed that there was no significant relationship between training needs and age ($X^2 = 4.020, P = 0.251$), farming experience ($X^2 = 3.018, P = 0.697$), and religion ($X^2 = 1.661, P = 0.436$) of these women farmers. The implication for rural development is that empowerment of women farmers through adequate training in all the aforementioned areas where women farmers indicated need for training is a predisposing factor to sustainable livelihoods.