RURAL WOMEN FARMERS’ PERCEPTION OF COMMERCIALISATION OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

The inability of public extension service system to adequately respond to the challenges of agricultural development and modernisation in Nigeria calls for alternative systems, including commercialisation of extension service. Because of their strategically significant role in national food production and farm family systems, this paper studied the perceptions of women on commercialisation of extension service in Kwara State. A four-stage systematic random sampling technique was used to select 230 respondents, while a structured questionnaire was used in data elicitation. The questionnaire also consisted of ten positively presented perceptions of commercialisation on a 5-point Likert-type scale that was used to calculate Extension Commercialisation Perception Coefficient (ECPC) for each respondent. Data analysis revealed that respondents were generally negatively disposed to commercialisation ($\bar{x}=2.69$). Furthermore, most respondents believed that farmers should be encouraged to support commercialisation ($\bar{x}=4.35$) and that charges, if at all, should be based on farming income ($\bar{x}=4.40$). Correlation analysis showed that education ($r=.644, p=.002$), farming income ($r=.754, p=.005$), and farm size ($r=.776, p=.013$) were positively significant correlates of ECPC among respondents. Also significant were income and size of personal farm. It is thus imperative that any form of commercialisation of extension service be preceded by farmer empowerment and proper orientation to ensure widespread acceptability.

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THE ROLE OF SHGs AS MICROFINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES: A STUDY IN SABARKANTHA DISTRICT OF GUJARAT

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ABSTRACT

The current strategy of linking informal groups with financial institutions (FIs) under the Self-Help Group (SHG)–Bank Linkage Programme (SBLP) is aimed at helping the poor in easily accessing financial services from the formal system. The linkage, made possible by the policy recognition given to informal SHGs, represents the institutional economics approach to finding a solution to the problem of market failure through adaptive institutions, formal and/or informal, to achieve efficient and possibly equitable outcomes. SHGs being informal are perceived theoretically as potential institutional arrangements that can help reduce the cost and risk associated with lending to the poor. The paper examines how the concept of SHG has been adopted under the linkage programme and in what ways SHGs are able to help the poor obtain access to savings and credit facilities from the formal institutions in a relatively backward district (Sabarkantha) of Gujarat State in western India. The paper reveals that the linkage programme has given a fillip to the formation of SHGs in the study district. The SHGs studied exhibit some of the features commonly associated with such groups with regard to their profile and functioning. About the role of SHGs as microfinancial intermediaries, the paper reveals a few potential strengths as well as some inherent constraints of SHGs. An adaptive behaviour of SHGs could be seen especially in tackling challenges relating to the monitoring and enforcement of loan transactions. Social backwardness of members, including poor development of skill and ability in self-managing group affairs, and the varied responses of FIs to the needs of SHGs are identified as major factors influencing the performance of SHGs. While increased investment by and coordinated efforts among the promoting agencies in SHG formation and development are advocated for improving the performance of SBLP, it is concluded that given the many limitations that exist currently, SBLP is able to serve as only a second-best solution to the problem of financial exclusion. The paper hence calls for other more effective strategies to supplement, or even supplant, the efforts of SBLP.

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in distress-prone districts namely, Akola and Buldana of Western Vidarbha region of Maharashtra State with exploratory design of social research. The study revealed that, nuclear type of families, low annual income coupled with absence of any supplementary occupations, indebtedness and more income liability gap were proved as important causes of suicide of farmers in Western Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.
AGRICIAN INSTITUTIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A MICRO STUDY IN THE DISTRICT OF BURDWAN, WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

The strategy of sustainable rural development warrants effective institutional reforms to create an enabling environment for tackling distortions in the process of social transformation of the rural economy. Using a primary survey covering 203 rural households of four villages under Burdwan district of West Bengal, this paper shed some lights on the micro foundations of the operation of two fundamental agrarian institutions (namely, land tenancy and rural credit) and their operational implications on the process of sustainable rural development. The institution of tenancy acts as a redistributive mechanism to reduce rural inequality by making the distribution of operational holding more egalitarian than the ownership distribution. On the other hand, an access to rural credit has the capacity to reduce rural inequality by harnessing the excess capacity of the rural masses. It is expected that institutional intervention by integrating these two agrarian institutions will create an appropriate environment for enhancing the operational efficiency of rural institutions so as to ensure sustainable rural development.

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PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITISATION OF RESEARCH OPTIONS: THE PRA AND AHP APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

In India the growth rate of agriculture was less than one per cent during the nineties compared to two per cent growth during the eighties. Considering this past status of agricultural growth, achieving 4 per cent growth envisaged in National Agricultural Policy 2000 is an uphill task. In recent years there are several problems faced by the farmers like low productivity, inappropriateness of technology, high variability in rainfall, pest and disease incidence etc., besides several socio-economic and policy bottlenecks. Due to the above problems, the agricultural growth is declining in many parts of India. This declining trend has to be reversed to make India a developed nation with strong agricultural base. The technology is one important key factor that can undo the decelerating agricultural growth. The appropriate technology generation based on the need of different stakeholders and adopting the same by them are the two most vital factors in boosting agricultural growth. In India, only 15-20 per cent technologies generated by the scientific institutions are adopted by the farmers. There are several socio-economic factors that are responsible for slow or non-adoption of technology besides the merit of the technology. Hence, the stakeholders or the farmers should be involved right from problem identification to technology generation stage, so that, the technology generated fits according to the farmers' needs. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise executed in the current study involved farmers in the problem identification and also helped in prioritising the important problem encountered by the farmers. Based on farmers-scientists' perception evolved through PRA approach, the topmost researchable problem identified in the study area was high pest incidence in cotton. To solve this problem research can be carried on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), development of transgenic variety; development of improved agronomic packages. However, due to financial, organisational and other constraints, research areas have to be prioritised. The Analytic Hierarchical Process AHP results revealed that the IPM strategy is best suited for the study area. Prioritising the research options based on different criteria undertaken in the current study by the multi-disciplinary scientific group using AHP will not only economise the research investment but also help the farmers due to its inherent cost and environmental advantage.

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ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF BACKYARD RABBITRY FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN OYO - STATE

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ABSTRACT

Nigerians are finding it difficult to adequately feed and provide basic necessities of life to their families. This is in spite of the country's numerous and diverse natural resources. For rural Nigerians to be provided with much needed animal protein, efforts have to be doubled towards producing meat at a reasonably affordable price and at the shortest possible time. The study investigated how backyard rabbitry can bring about economic recovery and self-sufficiency in Oyo State, Nigeria. Two hundred and twenty farmers were randomly drawn from thirty-two villages in the study area. Structured questionnaires were used to collect information from the respondents. Statistical analysis was accomplished by means of frequency distribution, means, percentages, budgetary analysis, profitability ratio and multiple regression technique.

The results of the analysis showed that average total cost per head of rabbit was N190.33 and the average total revenue per head of rabbit was N465.62. This gives a gross margin of N357.20 and net return of N275.29 per head rabbit. The multiple regression results showed that there is a significant relationship between total revenue and the educational level, farm size, labour and cost of feed. The study further revealed that the sum total of elasticities of variables was less than unity (0.977) which indicates that rabbit production in the study area fell in the rational stage of production (stage II). It is concluded that the backyard rabbitry can be used as a source of protein and cash income thereby enabling the farmers to attain both nutritional self-sufficiency and economic recovery.

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ABSTRACT

The study looks into the participation and usefulness of the Akshara Bharathi (adult literacy) Programme among the people belonging to fishing community in the State of Andhra Pradesh (India). Out of the three literacy components—reading, writing, and simple arithmetic—more achievement was observed in reading skills than the other two. Fisherwomen actively participated and the level of achievement was more than the fishermen due to their consciousness to learn the 3 "R"s, which are needed, in their fish marketing activity. The literacy skills learned from the Akshara Bharathi have a positive impact on people belonging to fishing community on socio-economic development of the family in terms of increase in the family income, children's education, and health situation and family welfare. There is a need to cover all the leftover illiterate persons, particularly males, by propagating the usefulness of the programme through various mass media channels. Proper supervision is very much essential to achieve better results for the existing programmes. The government has to initiate the establishment of "Corpus Fund" exclusively for attainment of total literacy in the fishing villages by deducting some percentage of foreign exchange earned from fish exports.
ABSTRACT

The present paper is based on facts derived from empirical investigation of the two tribal villages namely, Argandi and Bagmundi in Barhait and Borio blocks of Sahibganj district, which represent low density forest regions in Jharkhand. It highlights the nature and pattern of rural development in the region as a result of Joint Forest Management (JFM). The paper is divided into three sections. Section I is introductory which conceptualises the notion of Joint Forest Management and Rural Development. It also includes the objectives and guidelines of JFM in India. Section II deals with universe and sample of the study, which describes the demographic and socio-economic profile of the region as well as the respondents. Section III presents the empirical findings. Facts include the nature of employment generation from forest activities, a comparative account of management practices in pre-JFM and post-JFM periods, composition of income from forest resources, overall ecological, economic and social impacts of JFM in the region. It also covers the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of JFM in the concerned area.
UNDERUTILISATION OF CAPACITY
AND THE PROBLEM
OF OPTIMISATION IN
ERICULTURE IN ASSAM: AN
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Manjit Das*

ABSTRACT

Eriiculture, a major component of sericulture has been a traditional practice of the poor tribal villagers of Assam since times immemorial. It has been a secondary occupation of the womenfolk during their leisure time which adds to their family income to some extent. Moreover, their by-product pupae which is full of protein is a favourite delicacy of the tribals. Though the occupation requires very small amount of investment, the rearers are not utilising it to their full capacity. It is because of the fact that the rearers are highly dependent on wildly grown feed leaves of castor, the primary feed leaf of eri worm. It is observed that even if the rearers cultivate castor, it will undoubtedly raise their costs of production. However, it will certainly help them to raise their level of income and thus their profit even at the present technological set-up. This paper tries to find out the underutilised capacity of ericulture and suggests means to develop this traditional primary occupation of Assam.

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