

Productivity and its Constraints on Tribal Farms in Malwa Region of Madhya Pradesh

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1. Introduction

The tribal people command special economic, social and political status under present economic development of the country. Truly speaking they have little economic role in their communities or in the society at large. Tribals mostly live in the forest hilly regions which are very picturesque and rich in forest and mineral wealth. This is the beautiful part of the tribal story. The other part of the story is very dark. They are in the grip of poverty, ignorance and exploitation. Over 90 per cent of the tribals are engaged in primary sector as against 70 per cent of the national average. As per constitutional provisions tribals belong to the most weaker sections of the country. There had been specific efforts made to improve their condition through Special Tribal Block Development Programme, for connecting them in the main stream of the country. The tribals are exploited not only by the money lenders, contractors, petty traders, but also by the petty officials appointed for productive supervision and regulatory control in these areas.

Although the massive efforts were made to develop the tribal agriculture, which is the basic source of their livelihood, but there had been a slow pace of agricultural development while the other farmers of the country are reaping the benefits of green revolution. The present study was designed to conduct with the following objectives:

- To study the productivity of the major crops.
- To find out the major constraints in raising crop production on tribal farms.
- To suggest strategies to increase productivity on tribal farms.

2. Methodology

The present study was undertaken in West Nimar district of Madhya Pradesh which was selected purposively as it has quite a large percentage of tribal population of Madhya Pradesh.

From the selected five villages, a list of tribal farmers of each selected villages was prepared with the land holding owned by them. The list was arranged in the ascending order of size of land holdings. The farmers in the list were divided into three categories viz., small (up to 2.0 ha) medium (2.01 to 6 ha) and large holding (above 6.0 ha) and from each categories twenty five farmers were randomly selected. Total 75 farmers from five villages were selected for intensive study of the problem.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Productivity of Crops

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that the average yield of soyabean, wheat and gram was highest on large farms followed by small and medium farms. Large farms realized highest yield because of better resource availability and their efficient use, but in case of small farms, they had sufficient labour force per ha and as such they had better management capability for crop production.

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In case of medium farms neither they have better resource availability nor labour force for efficient management of farms.

Table 1 Productivity of Different Crops on Sample Farms

Size group	Crop	No. of farmers	Area (ha)	Main product (q/ha)	By product (q/ha)	% area under crops
Small	Soyabean	25	27.55	11.0	11.00	59.30
	Wheat	25	11.87	18.0	18.00	25.57
	Gram	13	7.00	9.50	9.50	15.07
Medium	Soyabean	25	90.67	10.50	10.50	58.96
	Wheat	25	46.35	16.25	16.25	30.14
	Gram	10	16.75	8.67	8.67	10.89
Large	Soyabean	25	180.86	11.50	11.50	60.43
	Wheat	25	100.32	19.50	19.50	33.52
	Gram	9	18.08	9.75	9.75	6.04
Overall	Soyabean	75	300.00	11.00	11.00	59.56
	Wheat	75	158.54	17.90	17.90	29.74
	Gram	32	41.83	9.30	9.30	10.66

3.2. Major Constraints

The study critically analysis major constraints in soyabean, wheat and gram production on tribal farms.

(i.) Low Market Price of Produce

The problem of low market price of farm produce was faced by 76 per cent, 68 per cent and 48 per cent farmers of the small, medium and large farms respectively and over all 64 per cent farmers faced this problem as a constraints in the study area.

(ii) Lack of Technical Knowledge

Out of 75 farmers, 46 (60 per cent) farmers indicated lacking technical know-how as one of the impediment for higher production.

(iii) High Price of Fertilizer

High price of fertilizer was another major constraints of production for 88 per cent, 60 per cent and 36 per cent farmers of small, medium and large farms respectively.

(iv) Lack of Irrigation Facility

Lack of irrigation facility also was an important constraint which affected wheat and gram crops adversely. This constraint was reported by 80 per cent of small, 64 per cent of medium and 56 per cent of large farmers.

(v) Labour Problem

The shortage of labor was another major constraint for 37 per cent respondents which adversely affected the production of crops. Particularly large farmers suffered most due to this problem, whereas, small farmers were the least sufferers because they have own manpower. That was the main reason that productivity was second highest on small farmers as they could managed their enterprise most efficiently.

(vi) Other constraints

It was observed that only 30 farmers i.e. 40 per cent could not grow the desired crop variety because of its non availability of seed at the right time. Most of the farmers faced the constraints of high transplantation charges and poor electricity supply for irrigation and other operations. Therefore, these problems badly affected the production of crops. Whereas, about 50 per cent farmers experienced the problem of poor power supply and high transportation cost of their farm produce.

Table 2 Major Constraints in Production of Tribal Farms.

Constraints	Small		Medium		Large		Total No.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Lack of technical know-how	20	80	16	64	10	40	46
Low price of farm produce	19	76	17	68	12	48	48
Lack of communication	15	60	12	48	6	24	33
High price of fertilizers	22	88	15	60	9	36	46
Lack of marketing facilities	19	76	16	64	13	52	48
Non availability of fertilizers	23	92	18	72	15	60	56
Non availability of desired fertilizers	17	68	13	52	14	56	44
Lack of capital	20	80	10	40	8	32	38
Non availability of timely credit	22	88	12	48	8	32	38
Small size of farm	20	80	15	60	13	52	48
Non availability of desired seed	15	60	10	40	5	20	30
Shortage of labour	7	28	10	40	20	80	37
Lack of continuous electricity supply	12	48	18	72	20	80	50
High transportation charge	20	80	17	68	15	60	52
Lack of irrigation facility	20	80	16	64	14	56	50
Lack of storage facility	18	72	15	60	12	48	45
Margin of middlemen in marketing	20	80	15	60	118	72	53

4. Conclusion

It is concluded from the results of study that production on tribal farms was found low and less profitable because of low market price of their produce, high prices of fertilizer, irregular supply of electricity, lack of irrigation facility, shortage of labour, seed quality, non availability of credit in time, and high margin of profit of middlemen.

The government should execute a well planned programme to enhance the soyabean, wheat and gram production keeping in view the food security of tribals. Some improvements also desired in the infrastructure of credit supply by the government agencies. The network of approach roads and transportation facilities should be developed for the upliftment of tribal areas. The watershed development projects should be started to raise water table for irrigation water in the tribal area. Electricity supply should be maintained for the purposeful irrigation.

The quality as well as quantity of produce are reduced due to untimely field operations because of shortage of labour. The shortage of labour at critical crop growing stages is the most important limiting factor affecting crop production. Therefore, this constraint must be taken care of by providing loans for purchase of small implements to enhance labour efficiency. The government may seriously consider for

providing additional employment to rural people in rural areas itself so that they get better wages in their areas and don't think to run towards urban areas. Thus, labour migration towards urban areas can be checked as farmer would be able to earn more in rural areas itself. It will ultimately maximize farmers' profit and bring prosperity to all concerned. Regarding marketing of farm produce, margin of middlemen should be reduced by proper management of Mandis and extending marketing facilities to farm producers.

5. References

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