

IMPACT OF SOCIAL FORESTRY PROGRAMME ON FARMING COMMUNITY IN UTTAR PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

A study on socio-economic impact of social forestry programme was carried out in two Districts (Kanpur Dehat and Mau) of Uttar Pradesh. The majority of beneficiaries (51.67%) were highly aware as compared to (26.25%) of non-beneficiaries farmers, which indicate that social forestry programme has created awareness and increased the knowledge level of the beneficiary farmers. There was a significant difference in the socio economic status of the beneficiaries and non-beneficiary respondents. It was also observed that beneficiary respondents were having high (54%) to middle (42%) level of socio economic status, whereas non-beneficiary respondents having lower (32%) to medium (32%) level of socio economic status. The beneficiary farmers were having 91.30 and 8.61 percent full and part time employment, respectively. Where as non-beneficiary farmers gained 55.00 and 45.00 percent full and part time employment, respectively. Further, it was noticed that fruit plants provided maximum employment to the farming community as compared to other plants.

Key words: Social forestry; Awareness; Socio-economic; Employment

INTRODUCTION

Forest contributes to maintain the overall ecological balances and occupy an important place in the economic development of a country. Making social forestry a way of social life is the need of the hour, for this peoples' participation is must. The social forestry programme should be prompted to motivate people and educate them about its urgency and the benefits that will secure them and the community as a whole. The concept of social forestry, which aims at the production of fuel wood, fodder and small timber for local communities, calls for a grassroots initiative, in which local communities have to be both the implementers and beneficiaries of the programme.

Social forestry programme in India are aimed at meeting needs of fuel wood and replacing cow dung for releasing it as manure, increasing the supply of small timber, raising trees on boundaries of private land holdings, to act as windbreaks and protecting agricultural land from corrosive action of winds, meeting the demands for green leaf fodder for livestock and meeting the aesthetics and recreational needs of local communities by encouraging ornamental trees. Therefore, a study on "Socio economic impact of social forestry programme in Uttar Pradesh" was carried out with following objectives:

1. To study the socio economic conditions of the farmers
2. To measure the awareness level of the farmers
3. To calculate the employment of beneficiary through various plants

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Allahabad (Eastern zone) and Lucknow (central zone) social forestry zone of Uttar Pradesh. A multistage random sampling technique was applied in the selection of districts, villages and respondents. Hence,

Kanpur Dehat and Mau districts were selected to find out the socio economic impact of social forestry programme. Sixty beneficiaries and forty non-beneficiaries respondents from each selected district were included in the investigation. Thus, a total of 200 respondents were personally interviewed with the help of pre-tested interview schedule.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic conditions: The impact of social forestry programme on socio-economic conditions of the respondents was studied and relevant data presented in Table 1. Social forestry programme had positive impact on farming community. As a result 45 per cent beneficiaries had upper level of socio economic status followed by 35 per cent middle level of socio-economic status. In case of non-beneficiaries the highest number 40 per cent belong to lower and middle level each and only 20 per cent farmers belonged to upper level. On the basis of data it was stated that beneficiaries of the social forestry programme were having middle to higher level of socio-economic status. On the other hand non-beneficiary were still living in lower and middle level of socio-economic status. The homogeneity percentage of beneficiaries among the individuals of three socio economic conditions was tested by X^2 test. Highly significant value of X^2 indicates that the percentages of beneficiaries among the individuals of different socio economic conditions categories are not homogenous. The highest percentage (77.14%) of beneficiaries belongs to upper level socio economic conditions. The corresponding lowest percentage (42.85%) belong lower level socio economic conditions. X^2 test denoted that there was a significant difference between socio economic-conditions of beneficiary and non-beneficiary farming community. During the course of investigation it was observed that beneficiary farmers were having more material

possession as compared to non-beneficiaries farmers with in the farming community.

Table 1. Socio-economic status of farming community under social forestry programme (N=200)

| Status Level | Beneficiary | Non-beneficiary | Total | Percentage proportion of beneficiaries |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Lower Level | 24 | 32 (20.00) | 56 (40.00) | 42.85 (28.00) |
| Middle level | 42 | 32 (35.00) | 74 (40.00) | 56.75 (37.00) |
| Upper level | 54 | 16 (45.00) | 70 (20.00) | 77.14 (35.00) |
| Total | 120 (100.0) | 80 (100.0) | 200 (100.0) | |

X² ** 11.10 Significant at 1 percent level of probability,

Figure in parenthesis indicates the percentage

Knowledge level: The knowledge level of respondents related to various package of practices of social forestry programme was presented in Table -2.

Table 2. Knowledge level of farmers under social forestry programme (N=200)

| Knowledge Level | Beneficiary | Non beneficiary | Total | % Proportion of beneficiaries |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Low Level | 21 (17.50) | 31 (38.75) | 52 (26.00) | 40.38 |
| Middle level | 40 (33.33) | 33 (41.25) | 73 (36.50) | 54.79 |
| High level | 59 (49.17) | 16 (20.00) | 75 (37.50) | 28.67 |
| Total | 120 (100) | 80 (100) | 200 (100) | |

X² = 20.04, significant at 1 percent level of probability

Figure in parenthesis indicates the percentage

It is evident from the table-2 that the highest number of beneficiaries 59 (49.17%) falls under the category of high-level of knowledge, followed by 40 (33.30%) middle and low 21 (17.50%) level category of knowledge on forestry. In case of non-beneficiary the highest number 33 (41.25%) having low level of knowledge whereas, 16(20.00%) respondents possess high level of knowledge on social forestry programme. The proportionate percentage of knowledge of beneficiaries to the total remained highest in the case of high level category (78.67%), followed by (54.77%) and (40.38%) for middle and

low level category, respectively. X² value indicates that there was significant difference between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social forestry programme. Thus, it was concluded that beneficiary farmers' were having higher level of knowledge among the farming community related to social forestry programme. Sands Tron Erik (1989) and Singh *et.al.* (1996) also reported similar type of findings.

Employment opportunity to the farming community: Farming community greatly depends on wood for fulfilling requirements of fuel and fire. On the other hand, resource poor farmers got the employment under social forestry programme by performing various activities or operations related to different plant species. A cursory look on the table-3 reveals that on average beneficiary respondents obtained 24.23 man-days additional employment opportunity through social forestry programme. The maximum employment (40.52 man-days) was obtained by planting fruit plants under social forestry programme, where as minimum (12.72 man-days) was generated by planting user reclamation plants in the study area. It was observed that the farmers of the study area gave more emphasis on fruit plants to secure the returns when main crops failed.

Table 3. Employment generated under social forestry plantation (in man-days) (N=120)

| S.No | Social Forestry plants | Man-days |
|------|-----------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Fruits plants | 40.52 |
| 2 | Fuel and fire wood plants | 29.03 |
| 3 | Fodder plants | 35.18 |
| 4 | Atmosphere purifying plants | 14.30 |
| 5 | Timber plants | 13.66 |
| 6 | User reclamation plants | 12.72 |
| | Pooled | 24.23 |

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded that beneficiary farmers were having higher level of socio-economic status in the society. Beneficiary farmers possessed more knowledge on social forestry programme. As a result they had sound control and access on the physical and financial resources under social forestry programme. Social forestry programme provides additional employment to the resource poor farmers with in the village, moreover fruit plant secure the livelihood for the farming community.

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