

Problems Experienced By Farmers and Project Officers in Watershed Management

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ABSTRACT

Study was conducted in 2 watersheds namely Akhnoor and Bari-Badhori in Jammu district to observe the changes in cropping pattern in watershed areas. To get first hand information 400 respondents were interviewed from both areas. It was observed that the respondents of participatory managed watershed experienced fewer problems as compared to watershed managed by government officials. It was found that "lack of immediate returns in the program" was most serious problem in both watersheds. On the other hand government official of watershed-1 revealed that 'there is a poor involvement of farmers at the planning stage' as well as "Poor participation of farmers in training, campaign, and meetings. Incase watershed-2 project functionaries faced 'Lack of transport facilities and contact farmers do not disseminate new technology to fellow farmers'

Key words : Watershed; Participation; Problem; Officer; Farmers; Crop production

Our very own survival on earth essentially depends on two basic resources-soil and water, nature's two valuable gifts to mankind. Mother Nature gives protection to these resources through natural vegetation. This protective shield of land is disturbed by our interference, making the soil susceptible to detachment and transportation. A no-care attitude and gross negligence coupled with our ever-increasing needs and demands over the years have taken the problem to a threatening dimension.

Farmers in non-irrigated areas counter daunting natural conditions by generally following traditional, low-risk cultivation practices that typically yield low returns. Soils are often severely eroded, infertile, and deficient in organic matter. Because of rapid population, growth, cultivation of slopes and of even more marginal lands is increasing a trend that only accelerates erosion. One of the major dimensions of watershed is the people whom the integrated development is expected to benefit. It would be appropriate to involve all sections of watershed population at various stages of the management.

The watershed development must lead to people's self-reliance, self support and self esteem, if must enrich the life of the people and improve its quality at the grass root level. Land use adjustment is very vital to the implementation of watershed programmes. Meaningful and effective adjustment can be achieved only if landowners are aware of the advantages that will accrue. Through people's institutions people's action can be organized. It is necessary to develop local capabilities and local initiatives. Also the planning process must be

decentralized if comprehensive watershed / micro watershed is to be carried out on regional or micro basis. Therefore an effort was made to explore the problems which were faced by the beneficiaries of watershed managed by peoples' participation and with out peoples' participation since planning to execution of the programmes.

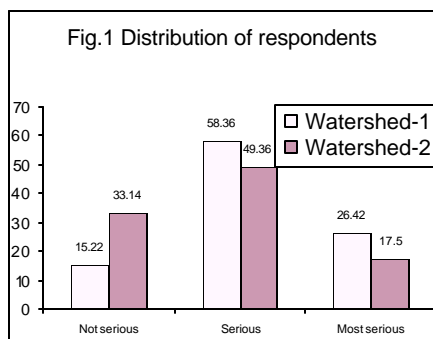
METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Jammu district. The district has 2 watersheds namely Akhnoor (no involvement of people in planning and management stage) and Bari-Badhori (people participated in each stage of management). Fourteen out of 72 villages under the command area of Akhnoor watershed were selected randomly to represent the whole watershed area. Where as all 6 villages of Bari-Badhori watershed was selected for the present investigation. From each watershed area 200 respondents were selected randomly. In total there are 20 villages and 400 respondents in this study. Here, Akhnoor (no involvement of people in planning and management stage) and Bari-Badhori (people participated in each stage of management) were treated as watershed -1 and watershed-2, respectively in the entire study. Problems were measured in three point continuum scale and on the basis of weighted score rank was assigned to each problems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of farmers : The finding depicted on problems in fig. 1 revealed that the majority of respondents experienced serious problems i.e.watershed-1 (58.36%)

and watershed-2 (49.36%). Where as most serious problems were experienced by 26.42 and 17.50 percent respondents in the area of watershed-1 and watershed-2, respectively. The respondents of participatory managed watershed experienced less problems as compared to watershed managed by government officials.



Problems faced by the farmers in watershed management

Severity problems experienced by the farmers : The data presented in table -1 indicated that in the study area “lack of immediate returns in the program” was most serious problem as experienced by the farmers of watershed-1 where as same was ranked 2nd by the farmers of watershed-2. The problem was logically true farmers’ wants immediate return so that they could improve their economic conditions. On the basis of severity score, “Poor contact between

farmers and officers” and “non availability of appropriate literature“ was the 2nd and 3rd most serious problem but in case of watershed-2 these problems were ranked as 7th and 5th serious problems. In other form it could be inferred from the table that five most serious problems as experienced by farmers of watershed-1 were “Lack of immediate returns, Poor contact between farmers and officers, Non availability of appropriate literature, Lack of communication facilities and Lack of proper marketing facilities”. Where as farmers of watershed-2 experienced “Poor education status of farmers, Lack of immediate returns in the program, Lack of proper marketing facilities, Poor financial condition, Transport problem and Non availability of appropriate literature”. Similar type of problems were mentioned by Kumar and Dhawan (1991) and Urade *et.al.* (1993).

The findings were logically true as watershed-1 was completely managed by government officers and planning, implementing and managing were done without participation of local people. On the other hand watershed-2 was completely managed with the active participation of local people. During the course of investigation, researcher himself observed that farmers of watershed-2 were explaining less severity of problems whilst farmers of watershed-1 having more severity of these problems.

Table 1. Problems faced by the farmers in watershed management

S.No.	Problems	Watershed-1		Watershed-2	
		Severity	Rank	Severity	Rank
<i>General problems</i>					
1	Poor education status of farmers	52.66	V	52.00	I
2	Conservativeness of villagers	39.42	VII	26.48	VII
3	Transport problem	42.08	VII	38.04	IV
4	Poor financial condition	39.42	VIII	38.04	IV
<i>Administrative problems</i>					
1	Different character of the individual officers of the watershed program	38.40	IX	25.33	VIII
2	Lack of proper marketing facilities	52.66	V	40.56	III
3	Lack of incentives	39.42	VIII	23.33	IX
4	Poor contact between farmers and officers	66.60	II	26.54	VII
5	Irregular visit and advice of officers	18.00	XIII	11.66	XIII
<i>Input problems</i>					
1	Inadequate and untimely supply of inputs	38.40	IX	32.00	V
2	Grant sanctioned were inadequate for a particular type of work	15.75	IVX	12.78	XII
3	Discrimination in sanctioning and dispersing the plants.	22.22	XII	10.08	IVX
4	Non-availability of any plant materials causes failure of the watershed work	18.00	XIII	12.78	XII
<i>Technical problems</i>					
1	Lack of technical supervision	45.02	VI	29.66	VI
2	Lack of communication facilities	53.46	IV	26.54	VII
3	Lack of immediate returns in the program	83.33	I	44.38	II
4	The officials are technically incapable	23.62	XI	18.36	X
5	Lack of proper training at grass root level	28.00	X	17.28	XI
6	Non availability of appropriate literature	54.22	III	32.00	V

Problems faced by project officers in watershed management : The data presented in table -2 indicated that in the study area in case of watershed- 1, there is a poor involvement of farmers at the planning stage as a result it was ranked 1st most serious problem in watershed management. The severity of that problem was 88.33 percent. The 2nd most serious problem was “Poor participation of farmers in training, campaign, and meetings according to project officers severity of that problem was 72.66 percent. Where as poor planning at grass root level and lack of transport facility for the

field work were the 3rd and 4th serious problem having the severity mean score 71.76 and 55.33 percent. Whereas contact farmers sometimes do not disseminate new technology among the farmers and sometimes there is a lack of teamwork feeling among staff members, another problems as faced by project officers. In watershed -2 the project functionaries faced “Lack of transport facilities and contact farmers do not disseminate new technology to fellow farmers, the percentage as 48.88 and 48.00 as a result they ranked 1st and 2nd serious problems.

Table 2. Problems faced by the project officers in watershed management

S.No.	Problems	Watershed-1		Watershed-2	
		Score	Rank	Score	Rank
1	Poor planning at grass root level	71.66	III	32.66	V
2	Many activities are taken at a time	38.03	VIII	36.00	IV
3	Poor involvement of farmers at planning stage	88.33	I	12.00	X
4	In effective coordination with other line departments	36.33	X	32.00	VII
5	Lack of team work feeling among staff members	39.22	VII	32.33	VI
6	Non cooperation from subordinate staff	36.90	IX	37.66	III
7	Inadequate skilled labour	55.00	V	28.44	VIII
8	Poor participation of farmers in training, campaign, meetings, etc.	72.66	II	12.88	IX
9	Contact farmers do not disseminate new technology to fellow farmers	50.66	VI	48.00	II
10	Lack of transport facilities for field work	55.33	IV	48.88	I

Sometime the project officials suffers the non-cooperation from the subordinate staff, also lack of team work feeling among staff members having the severity 37.66 and 32.33 percent, respectively and ranked as 3rd and 4th. The other problems as experienced by the project officers were inadequate skilled labour and in effective coordination with other line departments. Findings are in the line of the findings of Lakhan *et.al.*(1999)

CONCLUSION

Finally, it could be inferred form above findings that project officers, who were working in watershed-2, were facing comparatively less severity of problem as comparison to watershed-1. Thus, the role of people participation in the management of watershed programme has a positive impact on project officer as well as local farming community.

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