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Short Communication

Peoples' Participation in Integrated Watershed Management Programme in Haryana

Rupender Kumar, D.K. Sheoran and Jogender Singh

[1]*Chaudhari Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar-125 004, Haryana*
[2]*Department of Extension Education, Chaudhari Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar-125 004, Haryana*
[3]*DES (Ext. Edu.), Chaudhari Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sonipat-131 001, Haryana*

Email: jstomerv@rediffmail.com

In the developmental process, it is essential to integrate short-term production objectives to feed the growing human and livestock population with long term objectives of upgrading and conserving the land and water resource base (Oswal, 1999). The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) has been set up in November 2006, keeping in mind the need to give a special thrust to watershed development. A close analysis of various types of rainfed situations would reveal that soil and water conservation, watershed development and efficient water management are the key to sustainable development of rainfed areas. The watershed approach has been accepted as a major theme for development of rainfed areas with a view to conserving natural resources of water, soil and vegetation by mobilizing social capital. Various studies have pointed out the central preoccupation of watershed development projects with soil and water conservation and relative neglect of issues relating to balanced use of natural resources and livelihoods. Therefore, keeping in view the importance of watershed development project, a study was conducted to assess extent of people's participation in process of implementation of integrated watershed management programme (IWMP).

Two districts namely, Bhiwani and Yamunanagar were selected purposively, from South and North Haryana, respectively for the present study. The watershed villages namely, Bhaganwala, Sawad and Dhanaura and Salapur villages were selected randomly from Bhiwani and Yamunanagar districts. Further, from each of the selected villages, 20 farmers were selected randomly.Therefore, a total of 80 farmers' were selected as respondents from watershed. The correlation between the extent of participation and the socio-psychological characteristics of respondents were studied.

Profile of respondents

Majority of the selected farmers were in the middle aged group (31-50 years), possessed medium level of education (matric) including family members, belonged to medium socio-economic status, possessed medium size of land holding (6-10 acres), medium level of mass media exposure, medium level of extension contacts, medium level of scientific orientation, medium level of risk orientation and high level of economic motivation.

Levels of people's participation in IWMP

The study reveals that majority (48.75%) of the respondents represented to medium level of participation followed by 28.75% and 22.50% represented to low and high levels of participation, respectively at resource analysis and planning stage of integrated watershed management programme. During the execution stage, majority (56.25%) of the respondents reported to medium level of participation followed by 27.50% and 16.25% to low and high level of participation at this stage, respectively. Further perusal of the data pertaining to people's participation at progress evaluation and reconsideration stage revealed that majority (47.50%) of the respondents reported to medium level of participation followed by 30.00% and 22.50% to high and low levels of participation, respectively. Analysis of overall people's participation revealed that quite a larger number of respondents (51.25%) reported medium level of participation followed by 32.50% and 16.25% reported high and low level of people's participation in Integrated Watershed Management Programme. Hence, it is clear that majority of the respondents had medium level of participation in all the stages of Integrated Watershed Management Programme. The results of the study are in conformity with the findings of Padmaiah *et al.* (2001) and Singh *et al.* (2001) who also reported medium level of participation.

Extent of participation to the maximum score at different stages of IWMP

The people's participation was recorded higher (67.36%) out of maximum score in resource analysis and planning stage followed by execution stage (59.50%) and progress evaluation and reconsideration stage (49.00%) as against the overall participation of 60.17%. The results of the study are in confirmation with the findings of Singh (1991), Padmaiah *et al.* (2001) and Nagabhushanam (2003).

Correlation coefficient of peoples' participation vs socio-economic factors in implementation of IWMP

Mass media exposure (0.305) registered higher, positive and significant correlation with extent of participation in implementation of Integrated Watershed Management Programme followed by socio-economic status (0.232), risk orientation (0.226), educational back-ground of the family (0.219) and self educational status (0.214). This indicates that respondents having, these socio-economic characteristics have high level of participation in the process of watershed programme. Singh *et al.* (2001) found that people having high educational level and high exposure to information sources had high extent of participation in social forestry programme.

People's participation was fairly high at resource analysis and planning and execution stages of Integrated Watershed Management Programme. As peoples' participation is the key for successful implementation of any programme in general, efforts to increase people's participation in Integrated Watershed Management Programme lead to substantial improvement in the livelihoods of the people, in particular.

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