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Profile of forest villagers participated in joint forest management in Chandrapur district

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Abstract
The present study was conducted in Chandrapur district of Vidarbha region in Maharashtra State. Chandrapur district were selected purposively for the study as Chandrapur have largest forest area of 38,1,000 hac. The data were collected from 120 respondents from 12 villages. Data were collected on personal, psychological, communicational and situational profile of rural farmers with the help of pre structured and pretested interview schedule. It was observed that in case of extension contact, cosmopoliteness and scientific orientation maximum respondents were fall in medium category while in case education (standard), occupational status, land holding maximum respondent were educated up to high school and hold agriculture labour work as a major occupation and had small land holding.

Keywords: JFM, Chandrapur, profile, livelihood, forest

Introduction
India is recognized as unique with its mega bio-diversity. Forest occupies a substantial portion of India's geographical area. Country covers 67.71 million hectares of land, corresponding to 20.60 percent of the total geographical area of the country Nearly 100 million people reside in forests and another 275 million live on the periphery and earn their livelihood from forests. The livelihoods of approximately 370 million people who directly or indirectly depend on forest products and services are therefore mired in poverty. The 1988 forest policy in India marked a pivotal shift by the central government, emphasizing people's involvement in forest management. Broad guidelines were issued to encourage participation. By 2001, 25 states had established their own programs, notably the Joint Forest Management (JFM). This initiative involves an agreement between the government's Forest Department and local communities to jointly protect and manage forests near villages, sharing responsibilities and benefits. JFM signifies a collaborative strategy, fostering a shared commitment to sustainable forest use, conservation, and equitable distribution of benefits, recognizing the crucial role of local communities in responsible forest stewardship. Joint Forest Management (JFM) involving the state and resource users, introduced formally by the Government of India in 1990, has been a source of considerable controversy. On the one hand, the JFM has immense promise and reach, covering by 2006 some 106,482 villages and an area of 22 million ha of forestland in 28 states and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Pai and Dutta, 2006) [4]. The JFM has paved the way for rehabilitating former forestland, and is said to have contributed to sustainable human development, income generation, decentralization and rural empowerment (Prasad and Kant, 2003) [5]. On the other hand, it has come under criticism for the gap between rhetoric and reality in relation to participation (Agarwal, 2001) [1] and devolution (Sarin *et al.* 2003) [8].

Methodology
The research study was carried out in Chandrapur district of Vidarbha region in Maharashtra State. In Chandrapur district there are 15 tehsils, three tehsils namely Chandrapur, Warora, Bhadravati was selected purposively on the basis of a greater number of forest villages covered. From each of selected tehsils, 4 villages were selected randomly. In total 12 villages were selected for present study. The data were collected with the help of interview of schedule. The study was conducted with main aim to know profile of forest villagers participated in joint forest management in Chandrapur district. An ex-post facto research design was used to carry out the research. Collected data were classified, tabulated and analyzed by using statistical methods like frequency and percentage.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Profile of forest villagers participated in joint forest management in Chandrapur district.

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n=120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
	Age		
1	Young (Up to 35 years)	31	25.83
2	Middle (36 to 50 years)	62	51.67
3	Old (Above 51 years)	27	22.50
	Education(standard)		
1	Illiterate (Unable to read or write)	12	10.00
2	Primary school	10	08.34
3	Middle school	14	11.66
4	High school	41	34.16
5	Higher secondary school	31	25.84
6	College	12	10.00
	Occupational status		
1	Agriculture	24	20.00
2	Agriculture labour work	51	42.50
3	Forest work assigned by forest department	14	11.67
4	Forest labour work	18	15.00
5	Forest picking by self	13	10.83
	Land holding (ha.)		
1	Marginal (0.01 to 1.00)	36	30.00
2	Small (1.01 to 2.00)	46	38.33
3	Semi-medium (2.01 to 4.00)	26	21.67
4	Medium (4.01 to 10.00)	11	09.16
5	Large (Above 10.00 ha)	01	00.84
	Family income		
1	Up to ₹ 50,000/- (Very low)	36	30.00
2	₹ 50,001 to 1,00,000/-(Low)	56	46.67
3	₹ 1,00,001 to 1,50,000/-(Medium)	16	13.33
4	₹ 1,50,001 to 2,00,000/- (Medium to high)	04	03.33
5	Above ₹ 2,00,000/-(High)	08	06.67
	Social participation		
1	No participation	44	36.66
2	Medium participation	54	45.00
3	High participation	22	18.34
	Extension contacts		
1	Low	43	35.84
2	Medium	64	53.33
3	High	13	10.83
	Cosmopoliteness		
1	Low	40	33.33
2	Medium	63	52.50
3	High	17	14.17
	Scientific orientation		
1	Low	21	17.50
2	Medium	68	56.66
3	High	31	25.84

Table 1. depicts that in case of age, more than half of the respondents (51.67%) belonged to middle age group (36 to 50 years) and 25.83 percent of respondents found in young age group i.e., up to 35 years while 22.50 percent belong to old age group i.e., above 51 years. An average age of the respondents was found to be 41.40 years. This result was line with Sudheendra (2003) [10]. In context to education 34.16 percent of the respondents were educated up to high school followed by higher secondary school level (25.84%), middle school level (11.66%) and primary school (08.34%) level. The 'college level' education was availed by only 10.00 percent respondents. Ten percent respondents found illiterate in the study area. An average education of respondents was up to 9th Standard. Majority of the respondents were educated up to high school level. This might be due to the fact that farmers had easy access to schools and they had realization of importance of formal education in the present situation. But at the same time ten percent respondents were found illiterate. Education plays a key role in moulding and bringing desirable changes among the JFM members and help to make their attitude positive towards management of livelihood activities. Similar results were reported by Rathod (2014) [6] in his study on watershed development programme.

In respect to occupational status, 42.50 percent of the JFM members were doing 'Agriculture labour work' for their livelihood. The respondents having 'Agriculture' as an occupation was 20.00 percent. The percentage of the respondents follows 'forest labour work (15.00%), 'forest work assigned by forest department' (11.67%) and 'forest picking by self (10.83%) as their occupations. It implies that most of the JFM members were agricultural labourers and their income level was very low to carry out agriculture and more than one occupation. In case of land holding, 38.33 percent of respondents possessed small land holding (1.01 to 2.00 ha.) followed by 30.00 percent of respondents were having marginal land holding i.e., 0.01 to 1.00 ha and 21.67 percent of respondents belonged to semi-medium land holding category possessing land between 2.01 to 4.00 ha. And 09.16 percent of respondents were belonged to medium land holding category having land from 4.01 to 10.00 ha. Only one respondent belonged large land holding i.e., more than 10.00 hectare. The average land holding of selected respondents was 2.26 ha. The fragmentation of ancestors land from generation to generation might have led to a greater number of marginal, small and semi-medium land holdings. Majority of respondents had marginal and small land holdings in the study area. The Table no. 1 indicated that more proportion of the respondents (46.67%) had family income of ₹ 50001 to 100000 followed by 30.00 percent of the respondents had family income up to ₹ 50000 only. Whereas 13.33 percent of respondents had their family income between ₹ 100001 to 150000. Only 6.67 percent and 3.33% respondents had their family income above ₹ 200000 and between ₹150001 to 200000, respectively. The average family income of respondents was ₹ 88,000 only. This was because of majority of the respondents had semi medium and small land holding. Due to labour work and less land holding, income level of JFM members was low. Similar results were reported by Shrivastava (2009) [9].

In case of social participation 45.00 percent of respondents had medium level of social participation while 36.66 percent of respondents had low level of social participation, whereas 18.34 percent of respondents had high level of social participation. Similar findings were reported by Kavita (2016) [3]. A close examination of table 1 revealed that majority of respondents (53.33%) belonged to medium level of extension contacts, followed by 35.84 percent of respondents who were having low level of extension contacts and only 10.83 percent of respondents had high level of extension contacts. It is concluded that, majority of respondents had medium level extension contacts. Similar findings were reported by Sandeepkumar (2013) [7]. The proportion of the respondents who belonged to medium and low cosmopoliteness group is 52.50 percent and 33.33 percent respectively Remaining 14.17 percent of respondents belonged to high cosmopoliteness group. The major reasons for medium cosmopoliteness were good transport facilities and

employment opportunities in the nearby places. The similar findings found by Bhore *et al.* (2014) [2]. Majority of the respondents (56.66%) had medium level of scientific orientation, followed by high (25.84%) and low (17.50%) level of scientific orientation. In respect to scientific orientation as many as 68 respondents out of 120 had medium to low level of scientific orientation. Similar findings reported by Sandeepkumar (2013) [7].

Conclusion

It could be concluded majority of villagers were of middle age group, educated up to high school In case of extension contact, Cosmopoliteness and Scientific orientation maximum respondents were fall in medium category while in case of occupational status, land holding maximum respondent were hold agriculture labour work as a major occupation and had small land holding.

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