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A review paper on training needs of tribal farmers and attempts towards their compliance

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Abstract

India accommodates a large part of world's tribal population since ages. Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra states are a home of maximum tribal community in Indian context. Tribals practice agriculture as their major occupation. After being taken tremendous efforts tribal farming community still seems to be deprived of various needs on improved agriculture and allied sectors. The present study is an attempt to integrate the various training needs of tribal farmers in the spheres of crop production, animal husbandry, fisheries, poultry, goat rearing and many more. Previous attempts of scholars and researchers has been analyzed to derive conclusion that policy, programme and management interventions needs to be incorporated with improved efforts to meet the tribal farming needs.

Keywords: Tribal farmers, training needs, interventions

Introduction

A tribe is viewed, developed mentally or historically, as a social group existing before the development of, or outside states. Stephen Corry, Director of Survival International, an organization dedicated to indigenous rights, defines tribal people as those who "have followed ways of life for many generations that are largely self-sufficient, and are clearly different from the mainstream and dominant society."

India being motherland of many tribal dynasties since centuries, ranks 2nd in terms of largest tribal population in the world, next only to Africa ^[1]. There are about 250 Scheduled Tribe communities speaking about 105 languages and 225 subsidiary languages who have scattered along the length and breadth of the country from the Himalayas to the Indian ocean and from the Arabian sea to the Eastern frontiers ^[2].

According to the census of 2011, the tribal population of India is 10.43 crores constituting 8.6% of the total population of the country. The sex ratio among the tribals is found to be 990 as that of 943 against the country. The decadal growth rate of the tribal community from 2001 to 2011 is 23.7%. Madhya Pradesh accounts the maximum tribal population with 1,53,16,784 (14.7% of the total tribal population of the country) tribals followed by Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Similarly, Mizoram possess maximum tribal population per cent (94.4%) followed by Nagaland, Meghalaya. Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. Haryana and Punjab are the exceptional states with no tribal community ^[3].

Tribals in India are classified according to their occupational pattern. They have amongst them primitive people engaged in hunting and food gathering, pastoral people, shifting cultivators, settled agriculturists, artisans, plantation, mining and industrial labourers. One who studies the life of the tribals in India could easily note wide divergence among different tribal communities in their social, cultural, economic, educational and occupational positions ^[4].

The basic source of livelihood among tribals is agriculture or animal husbandry. Even today, after 71 years of independence, tribal farmers remains deprived of resources and inputs as compared to other farmers ^[5]. Hence, present study is an attempt to identify the needs of tribal farmers for enhancing their production and raising standard of living.

Tribal development and life pattern

According to a case study undergone by Dr. Mallick 2014, the life pattern of the tribal farmers lacks responsive leadership. This lacking of responsive leadership widens the gap between the tribes and non-tribes, rich and poor. The beneficiaries of development programme have insufficient need-based schemes. Even the indicators of development for tribals are underdeveloped. Tribals are living in poverty and morbidity.

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Although the tribal economy is now a part of national and local economy, they are drowned in illiteracy, ignorance, hoary superstitions, abysmal poverty and unsettled occupations. Resources for tribals are underdeveloped and income distribution has polarity. They are pleased with cash in hand to improve their living standard but they are headless to development programmes as these programmes have not yet gifted better economic life to them. This is the reason for their less exposure and low participation in development programmes. These people have now quaffed new guidance, services, influences, outlook and belief. They have now initiated taking part in politics and modern political process for accomplishing economic needs which would further satisfy their social needs for pursuing specific values. Tribal societies have interweaved traditional and modern elements which requires conflict, compromise and co-operative to acknowledge that society^[6].

Training needs of tribal farmers

Agriculture and allied activities

The agriculture production drops in absence of proper knowledge regarding chemical weed control, use of micronutrients, seed treatment, use of biofertilizers, plant protection and improved varieties. These needs are found superior among Bhil tribes of Rajgarh district in Madhya Pradesh along with needs regarding allied activities (poultry production, bee keeping and sericulture, animal husbandry and dairy production and fisheries).^[7]

Specified paddy production in northeast regions

Majority of the tribal community are engaged in paddy cultivation as their major crop. Farmers reflected keen interest towards information needs regarding pest management, disease management, nutrients management, seed treatment, varieties, nursery management and planting methods towards. Work in these fields can lead to enhanced paddy production^[8].

Oilseed production

Oilseed tribal growers too found to focus their needs towards pest management, water management, seed treatment, disease management, marketing and fertilizer management. Barman *et al.* 2013, suggested that necessary awareness programme for youth can be an important step for boosting oilseed production. Trainings institutions needs to provide special attention on above mentioned needs. Sincere efforts of govt. and non-govt. organizations are required to meet the training needs of tribal farmers by organising training on improved cultivation. More state and district level processing units have to be established for creating assured domestic market. Massive training and demonstration programmes in tribal areas will reduce the training needs and adoption gap of the crop as well^[9].

Horticulture production

Coefficient of concordance was found maximum for post harvest handling training needs with respect to horticultural crops followed by protection measures, infrastructural needs and agronomic needs^[10]. Tribal potato growers of Meghalaya felt highest training need for plant protection measures followed by manures and fertilizer application and land preparation and planting respectively^[11]. On the other hand some scholars discovered farmers information needs in propagation methods, herbicide application, packing and

processing and pruning for enhancing production of mandarin orange.

Animal husbandry, fisheries and goat rearing

Goswami *et al.* 2013, emphasized necessity of developing infrastructure to realize potential of fish farming and marketing as a premier enterprise in the district^[12]. Majority of the respondents expressed medium training needs in areas like care and management, breeding, feeding, health care and disease control, marketing and record keeping as per goat rearing practices^[13]. Farmers also expressed their desire of conducting training schedule once in a fortnight during summer in the village itself. With respect to animal husbandry practices, tribal farmers revealed needs for proper disposal of animal carcass and waste in management practices, knowledge about different breeds in breeding practices, preparation of balanced ration using locally available feed items among feeding practices and training needs on contagious diseases and its symptoms within health care practices^[14]. The overall training needs in animal husbandry practices was seen in management practices followed by feeding, health care and breeding practices.

Information needs and ICT preference assessment

Tribal farmers prefers information needs mostly on khasi mandarin crop followed by Assam lemon, mango, pepper, paddy, bamboo, market information, litchi, guava and jackfruit. While considering ICT preferences they support use of computer with internet, radio, television and telephone respectively^[15]. Some scholars also added needs on announcements related to the farmers training programme, crop insurance, govt. schemes on agriculture, horticulture and processing, inputs and piggery among tribal farmers of Arunachal Pradesh.

Training needs of tribal women farmers

Most of the animal husbandry operations are female dominated as compared to their male partners^[16]. Thaker and Ahlawat 2012, discussed animal husbandry and dairy based enterprises as preference of tribal farm women of Gujarat^[17]. Training needs on animal husbandry and dairy based enterprises seeks majority among food, agriculture, textile, handicrafts, paper printing, metal and chemical and beauty products based enterprises. Training needs exhibited non-significant correlation with the independent variables i.e. education, type of family, social participation and annual income. However, the dependent variables training need has significant correlation with age, size of family, caste and land holding as analyzed among tribal women SHGs for agriculture development^[18].

Government initiatives towards upliftment of tribal farmers

Many government schemes at central and state level has been launched for upliftment of poor and tribal farmers such as Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Opening of new agriculture colleges in northeast states, E-nam : National Agriculture Market, Neem coated urea, Mobile app for farmers, Blue revolution, Poultry farming, Agriculture research, Kisan T.V. channel, Dindayal Antyodaya Mission, Dindayal Gram Jyoti Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sichai Yojana, Soil Health Card Yojana, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, organic farming Sikkim state, National Food Security Mission,

Student ready Yojana, Pandit Dindayal Upadhyay Unnat Krishi Shiksha Yojana, Aarya Yojana, Krishi Rin Pravah, Rashtriya Gokul Mission, Rashtriya Gojatiya Prajannan, Dairy Development Programme, Gokul Gram, Rashtriya Kamdhenu Breeding centres, Rashtroya Vaniki Karyakram, Bee-keeping and many more. State govt. initiatives taken in M.P. are Beej Gram Yojana, Macro Management Yojana (Integrated Food Development Programme), Krishi Yantrikaran, Annapurna Yojana, Nalkoop Khanan, Bailgadi Anudan etc.

Impact of empowerment programmes for tribal community

Proposed interventions in agriculture, horticulture, poultry, animal husbandry and value addition programmes have enhanced the knowledge, abilities, skills and income level of the tribal families by improving their living standards. A desirable change was brought in economic, social, health and livelihood aspects of tribal farmers^[19]. Bhardwaj and Singh 2016, found that adoption of region specific integrated farming system models with modern agro-technologies has proved a milestone in tribals' empowerment by providing sustainable financial and nutritional security^[20].

Framework of agriculture improvement in tribal areas

According to the Final Report of Impact assessment of agriculture intervention in tribal areas in Madhya Pradesh, agriculture improvement can be done in tribal areas through interventions in policy, programme and management^[21].

Policy interventions

- Formulation of state agriculture policy with emphasis on tribal agriculture and women in agriculture.
- Focus on investments in tribal areas differently than in other areas.
- Result/outcome oriented planning and budgeting.

Programme interventions

- The programme model-need integration and innovations.
- Ensuring critical inputs like credit and risk management as part of programme support.
- Programmatic strategies to improve delivery and extension social mobilization.

Management interventions

- Utilizing community based mechanisms for programme delivery.
- Institutional model-partnerships based.
- Strengthen programme monitoring and evaluation.

Conclusion

Training needs of tribal community varies depending upon their nature of farming practices. In spite of many govt. and non-govt. schemes and approaches, tribal farmers still remains under privileged. Series of efforts in the direction of fulfilling their training needs are required constantly to uplift them and bring in the main stream of the agricultural development. Various interventions based on programmes and policies can prove to be a great milestone in this regard.

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