

## Success of social forestry programme at community level

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V.D. Joshi

### INTRODUCTION

The ecological imbalance, environmental pollution, erratic behaviour of monsoon, frequent occurrence of drought and soil erosion have been traced to be deforestation that has been taking place throughout the country over the years.

Recognising the villagers' daily needs of small timber, fuelwood, grass, leaf fodder etc. The Government has started a new component of rising village woodlots (VWL) on village common lands under a nationwide Social Forestry programme (Tiwari, 1983).

The success or failure of such programme at community level introduced by the change agency, largely depends on the community composition and the physical structure of the village. This study attempts to analyse the factors associated with the success of social forestry programme at community level i.e. village woodlot raised on the village common lands with following specific objectives :

- (I) To measure the extent of success of village woodlot raised at village level under social forestry programme.
- (II) To identify some of the factors of the village community composition and physical structure of the village affecting the success of the programme.

### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in randomly selected 20 villages of Valsad district of Gujarat in the year 1987-88 where the wood lots (VWL) were planted during the year 1980-81 or 1981-82. The information regarding VWL was largely collected through secondary data and from one member of each selected panchayat, preferably from the Sarpanch. Thus, a sample of 20 village panchayats constituted the sample for the study.

Dependent variable 'success of village woodlot' at community level was measured in terms of adoption of various aspects of woodlot. The parameters considered for the success of VWL were: (i) area covered under woodlot (ii) rate of the seedlings planted (iii) intention of village panchayat to increase area under woodlot in future (iv) participation of panchayat in different activities of social forestry programme and (v) attitude of member of panchayat towards social forestry programme (measured through a scale).

Independent variable 'structural composition of the community' was measured by collecting information about village population, literacy rate, population of cultivators and agricultural labourers in the village.

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1. Associate Extension Educationist, K.V.K., GAU, Waghai (Dangs), Gujarat

Another independent variable 'physical structure of the village' was measured by collection of information like/area under irrigation in the village, culturable waste land in the village and distance of the village from the nearest town.

Null hypotheses fixed for the investigation of association between dependent and independent variable were as follows:

(1) There is no relationship between success of village woodlot and different aspects of community composition.

2. There is no correlation between success of village woodlot and physical structure of the village.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

On the basis of the parameters considered for the success of village woodlot, the success score for each village panchayat was calculated and they were categorised into three different success categories based on standard deviation. The distribution of village panchayat is given in Table 1.

**Table 1 : Distribution of village panchayats according to success of village woodlot programme.**

Success category	No. of village panchayats (N=20)	Mean score ( X )	Standard deviation (SD)	Coefficient of variation (C V %)
Low (score below 41)	6 (30.00)	32.67	7.76	23.75
Medium (score 41 to 62)	8 (40.00)	47.00	4.93	10.49
High (score above 62)	6 (30.00)	77.00	18.99	24.66
Overall		51.70	21.11	40.83

Figures in parentheses indicate corresponding percentage

**Table 2 : Structural composition of community and its correlation with success of village woodlot programme.**

Community Composition	Total Number	Mean per village	Standard deviation (SD)	Coefficient of variation (CV%)	Coefficient of correlation(r)
Total population of the sample village	55,715	2785.75	1670.82	59.98	
1. SC/ST population	44,860	2243.00 (80.51)+	1414.92	63.08	0.387*
2. Literates	22,795	1139.75 (40.91)	692.54	68.76	0.028
3. Cultivators	12,140	607.00 (21.79)	481.84	79.38	0.225
4. Agricultural Laboures	4,826	241.30 (8.66)	175.84	72.87	-0.165

- Figures in parentheses indicate corresponding percentage

\* Significant at 0.10 level.

The data in Table 1 reveal that 40.00 per cent of the panchayats fall under the category of medium success of woodlot programmes, while 30.00 per cent of the panchayats each categorised under high and low success categories respectively. The overall success score of the sample was 51.70 falling under the medium success category. Other attributes like mean score, standard deviation and coefficient of variation for each category of success are also depicted in the table.

The information about structural composition of community is presented in table 2.

The data in Table 2 reveal that population per village of the selected 20 villages was 2785.75 persons, out of which 80.51 per cent belonged to SC/ST. The mean literacy rate of the sampled population per village was found to be 40.91 percent and the mean population of agricultural labourers in the

village was 241.30 persons (08.66%). The coefficient of variation of population composition ranged from 60 to 80 percent.

The table further reveals that the variable SC/ST population in the community was significantly correlated at 0.10 level of probability with the success of woodlot programme. Rest of the variables viz. number of literates, cultivators and agricultural labourers in the community did not show significant correlation with the success of woodlot programme.

Hence, the null hypothesis 'there is no correlation between success of village woodlot programme and different aspects of community composition' is rejected for SC/ST population. This means that the success of VWL programme is higher in those villages where SC/ST population is more.

The findings regarding physical structure of sample villages are presented in table.3

**Table 3 : Physical structure of the village and its correlation with success of village woodlot programme.**

Physical structure of the village	Total Number	Mean per village	Standard deviation (SD)	Coefficient of variation (CV%)	Coefficient of correlation (r)
Total area of the village (ha)	17852.53	892.63	463.22	51.89	-
1. Irrigated area (ha)	2746.00	137.30 (15.38)+	156.25	113.80	-0.060
2. Culturable wasteland area (ha)	1131.86	56.59 (6.34)	53.34	94.26	0.217
3. Distance from the nearest town (km)	159.00	12.95	5.19	40.00	0.228

+ Figures in parentheses indicate corresponding percentage.

The data in table 3 indicate that the average area per village of the selected 20 villages was 892.63 ha. It has been found that the mean area under irrigation per village was 137.3 ha. i.e. 15.38 per cent. The mean culturable wasteland area per village was 56.59 ha (6.34%). The mean distance of the village from the nearest town was 12.95 km.

With respect to coefficient of variation, higher percentage (113.80%) was found in case of irrigated area and lowest (40.00%) in case of distance from nearest town. The coefficients of correlation reveal that none of the variable was found to be significantly correlated with the success of village woodlot programme.

Hence, the null hypothesis 'there is no correlation between success of woodlot programme and physical structure of the village' could not be rejected. This means, the physical structure of the village and

the success of woodlot are independent to each other.

Thus, it can be said that the only variable SC/ST population in the community was significantly correlated with the success of the village woodlot programme. This leads to the conclusion that social forestry programme may be more successful in the community where SC/ST population is more.

The variable (i) culturable wasteland area in the village, (ii) distance of the village from the nearest town and (iii) literacy level of the community, though statistically non-significant, indicated positive association with the success of the village woodlot programme. Similar findings with respect to (i) land cultivation (ii) Distance of the nearest factory employing 100 workers and (iii) literacy level of the community were reported by Whiting et al. (1968).

## REFERENCES

- Tiwari, K.M. (1983) Social Forestry in India. Dehradun : Natraj Publishers.
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It is an illusion to think that more comfort means more happiness. Happiness comes of the capacity to feel deeply, to enjoy simply, to think freely, to be needed.

-Storm Jameson.