

## **Extent of Awareness Regarding Natural Resource Management Among Rural Women in Shahdol District of M.P.**

**Uttam Singh Bagri<sup>1</sup>, Kinjulk C Singh<sup>2</sup> and C J Singh<sup>3</sup>**

### **ABSTRACT**

A research on awareness of rural women was conducted during 2011 - 2012 to know their extent of awareness regarding Natural Resource Management. Six villages of Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh province were selected as study area. A sum of 120 women was selected as respondents using equal proportion method. The data was collected through structured, pretested interview schedule. The study confirms that most of the respondents had medium level of knowledge regarding ITK of Natural Resource Management and high extent of awareness regarding management of natural resources. Education, social participation, type of family, land holding, mass media exposure, attitude towards natural resource management were found to have significant association with extent of awareness regarding natural resource management at 0.005 level of significance whereas ITK regarding natural resource management was found to have significant association at 0.01 level of significance. They should be motivated to practice and participate more in such activities.

**Keywords:** Natural resource management, extent of awareness, rural women, indigenous technical knowledge (ITK)

### **INTRODUCTION**

The practices regarding natural resource management are imbibed in our culture through various religious and spiritual values and beliefs. Natural resources due to increasing human interference and changing climate are most prone for deterioration. It was estimated that natural resources had been depleted at a faster rate in last fifty years. Realization of this fact leads to a universal phenomenon to protect and conserve the natural resources in their possible purest form. The conservation of natural resource, to a great extent is dependent on the awareness of human population of the particular area.

It has been felt that awareness regarding natural resource management is crucial for their sustainability. Looking to the high rate of destruction and deterioration this is the critical time to conserve the natural resources through revival and duplication of indigenous technical knowledge of that particular area. In resource conservation, environment management, protection and rehabilitation, results show that involvement of women especially rural women in planning stage was found to be very low as compared to execution stage of natural resource conservation. (Khandelwal, Neeta *et. al.* 2012) to involve women in planning and to reduce gender biasness

in planning of natural resource management, level of awareness of women should be analyzed. Considering above points the study was undertaken:-

To know the attitude and level of ITK of respondents towards natural resource management to find out relationship between the awareness and personal, socio-economic and communicational attributes of the beneficiaries.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Shahdol district has richness in natural resources. This Tribal District is situated in the northeastern part and consists of five blocks. Jaisingh-nagar and Beohari block were selected purposively on account of larger forest area ie 28.43 per cent and 25.09 per cent respectively. In Beohari and Jaisinghnagar blocks there are 12 and 35 villages under forest protection society. A list of women member of the forest society in each village was prepared in descending order and from both the blocks 3 villages each were selected for the purpose of study. A total of 120 respondents were selected from these 6 villages applying equal proportion method. The data were collected through personal interview methods with the help of structured schedule. Secondary data were obtained from forest department, Agriculture statistics department, block and

district head quarters. Statistical tools like percentage, average, Chi-square test and co-efficient of association were applied for drawing the inference of the study. Extent of association was calculated by using Karl Pearson formula for coefficient of association.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Extent of Indigenous Technical Knowledge regarding Natural Resource Management

The data in table 1 showed that the indigenous technical knowledge of respondent regarding natural resource management. The data reveals that more than half of respondents (51.66 %) indicated high level of indigenous technical knowledge followed by medium (44.17%) and only few (4.17%) had low indigenous technical knowledge.

**Table 1: Extent of Indigenous Technical Knowledge regarding Natural Resource Management**

n=120		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
High	62	51.66
Medium	53	44.17
Low	05	4.17
Total	120	100

### Extent of awareness regarding natural resource management

The data presented in Table 2 showed extent of awareness of respondent. Awareness of natural resource management is divided into four components; ie. soil resource management, water resource management, energy resource management and forest resource management. The data revealed that higher percentage of respondents (59.17 %) showed a high level of awareness, followed by (31.66%) medium and least percent (9.17%) indicated low extent of awareness.

**Table 2: Distribution of respondent according to their extent of awareness**

Categories	Respondents (n=120)	
	No. of respondents	Percentage
Low (125 to 138 scores)	11	9.17
Medium (139 to 151 scores)	38	31.66
High (151 above scores)	71	59.17
Total	120	100.00

### Association between attributes of respondent with extent of awareness regarding natural resource management

The data presented in table 3 association between attributes of respondent with extent of awareness regarding natural resource management. It shows that education, social participation, type of family, land holding, mass media exposure, attitude towards natural resource management were found to have significant association with extent of awareness regarding natural resource management at 0.005 level of significance whereas ITK regarding Natural Resource Management were found to have significant association at 0.01 level of significance. These results were somewhat similar to that of Tripathi (1999). It indicates that the indigenous technical knowledge has deep rooted association with Natural Resource Management. Excellent degree of association was observed in case of age, caste, size of family and occupation with extent of awareness regarding natural resource management.

**Table 3: Association between the extent of awareness regarding natural resource management and attributes of the respondents**

Characteristics	$\chi^2$ value	d.f.	Coefficient of contingency	Degree of association
Age	0.773**	2	2.426	Excellent
Caste	1.217**	2	3.033	Excellent
Education	4.050*	1	0.016	Negligible
Social Participation	5.125*	1	0.018	Negligible
Size of family	0.701**	1	2.312	Excellent
Type of family	2.147*	1	0.011	Negligible
Land holding	6.594*	2	0.012	Negligible
Occupation	0.292**	2	1.497	Excellent
Annual income	2.269**	2	0.012	Negligible
Mass media	15.490*	2	0.0290	Negligible
Attitude towards natural resource management	6.519*	1	0.020	Negligible
ITK regarding NRM	14.701*	1	0.028	Negligible

\*\*Non Significant \*Significant At 0.005 level of significance

## CONCLUSION

Higher percentage of respondents showed a high level of awareness, followed by medium and least percent indicated low extent of awareness. Attributes like education, social participation, type of family, land holding, mass media exposure, attitude towards natural resource management and ITK regarding Natural Resource Management were found to have significant association with extent of awareness regarding natural resource management. The study concludes that since most of rural farm women had high level of awareness; it may certainly lead to management of richness of natural resource of Shahdol district

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