

ECONOMIC TRANSITION AND LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS A STUDY ON THE CHANGING DEPENDENCE ON FORESTS AMONG TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN THE JANGALMAHAL AREA OF JHARGRAM DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL

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Abstract

Protecting forests and the resources they contain, as well as improving the lives of forest residents, are two of the many key goals of the Joint Forest Management initiative. Jhargram, West Bengal's participatory forest management project is the inspiration for the program. The indigenous peoples of West Bengal's forests are mostly of tribal origin. The survival of these indigenous communities, which are located in or near woods, is dependent on the forest and its supplies. Through JFM initiatives, a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations are striving to improve indigenous peoples' ability to make a living in the forest. Field research has shown that JFM assists tribal gatherings with decreasing weaknesses at the family level and contributes altogether to the improvement of the five capital resources of livelihood structure (DFID model). Using the livelihood assessment technique, this research attempts to evaluate how the livelihood of the tribal group living in the forest has changed within the framework of JFM in the Jhargram district of West Bengal. When it came to providing shelter and means of subsistence,

the land and forests were indispensable. Few of their ancillary vocations are directly related to the ecology-based economy, according to the pattern of their overall economic life. Their traditional livelihood shifted from hunting and gathering today labor for non-farming employers. The conventional social fabric is beginning to unravel as a result of the shift in subsistence practices.

Keywords: *Livelihood patterns, Economy, Forest, Tribal communities, Subsistence, Economic transition*

1. INTRODUCTION

Depending on the specific natural resources and occupations practiced by each indigenous group, each indigenous culture has developed its own distinct way of life and set of traditions. They hadn't been damaging the forest while they were taking resources from it. Their food and means of subsistence are guaranteed by the forest. Locally specific and innovative livelihood methods grounded in indigenous knowledge have developed among tribal people due to their proximity to bio-diversity rich areas. Preservation and responsible use of bio-diversity benefited greatly from this information, which had been handed down through many generations. In most cases, they had to rely on Mother Nature to keep them alive. So, in primitive societies, there was always a natural harmony between people and their surroundings. Thus, their culture and the natural world were inseparable and interdependent.

The management and utilization of various natural resources have been influenced by a wide range of methodologies and technologies, driven by social and cultural diversity and the complexity of the surrounding environment. What makes a livelihood sustainable is its ability to withstand and recover from shocks and stresses, keep or improve its assets and capabilities, and pass these advantages on to future generations while also benefiting other livelihoods locally, nationally, and internationally, both in the short and long term. Industrialization, urbanization, and the rise of the cash economy have all had significant impacts on tribal peoples' ability to make a living. The lives of those living in the no monetized, biomass-based subsistence economy are being profoundly affected by the deforestation that results from the loss of biomass to satisfy urban and industrial needs. The real-life examples of people's livelihoods altering are shown in an Indian village. The

local government system in the area has significantly changed the agricultural environment since then, leading to a high demand for both agricultural labour and service centerlabor.

Not only has the current paradigm of development, which places an emphasis on urbanization and industry, has accelerated this process, but it has also caused the displacement of tribal populations from the ecosystems in which they had previously lived. The forest, which was the home of a great number of tribes, was taken away from them, and in the majority of cases, its inhabitants were forced to leave in order to make way for development. In spite of the fact that there are environmental imperatives that support the need for natural resources and that there is measurable evidence on the contributions that natural resources make to the rural economy, natural resources are decreasing in every portion of India's dry tropical areas. Numerous academics have brought attention to the depletion of natural resources and the influence that this phenomenon has on the people involved. Additionally, they make it abundantly evident that the uniform process of development results in a decline in diversity, which in turn results in the depletion of resources, the collapse of traditional institutional arrangements, and the destruction of resource management systems, which were previously responsible for facilitating the sustainable use of resources.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Saha and Kuri, (2014) studied to led an examination concerning the impact that women's dynamic commitment to JFM has on the drawn out feasibility of forest assets in the towns that were reviewed in the regions of Bankura and Purulia in the province of West Bengal. According to the findings of the survey, female members of the family generate a greater number of man days of employment through CPR collection in comparison to male members of the household. One of the most noteworthy discoveries made by this research is that the active participation of women members in JFM has a favorable and significant impact on the sustainability of forest resources in both districts.

Chavan, (2013) studied that the creator concurs that forests are very critical for various reasons, including social, economic, biological, and ecological contemplations. However, despite the evident significance of forest ecosystems, human activity is bringing challenges to forest ecosystems that have never been ever seen before. Joint forest management (JFM) was crucial in reducing the unlawful cutting of trees, reducing the area that was subject to illegal encroachments,

preventing and controlling forest fires through the involvement of the community, and increasing the amount of forest cover through the implementation of an afforestation program .

Bhattacharya et.al., (2010) Devastated communities that depended on trees for their livelihoods may find this kind of administration engaging and helpful in increasing their livelihood security. Despite a number of issues, including a fragile institutional design, inadequate individual assistance, a wasteful responsibility structure, a failed collaborative effort between SFDs and communities, and a lack of a compromise component, the program has persisted. Fostering forest livelihoods, reducing destitution, and preserving and revitalizing forests were the primary goals of the state's JFM arrangements. However, due to these factors, the program has persisted.

Ghosal, (2010) this study depicted that the importance of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) should not be minimized, even though the socio-cultural event is gradually reducing its demands on forest resources. The importance of forest residents' involvement in forest protection was brought to the attention of the Forest Department by the implementation of participatory forest management systems. The 14 basic needs of indigenous communities' families are met entirely by the materials found in the forest. As a result, through participatory forest management, the forest's inhabitants are able to strengthen the bonds between themselves and the natural environment. No forest policy could ever disregard the inextricable emotional bond between the two.

Sinha & Behera, (2009) demonstrated that the majority of households are primarily dependent on agriculture as their primary method of maintaining their standard of living. This includes shifting cultivation and the collecting of forest products. According to the findings of the study, the second most common type of employment in the area under investigation is that of casual labour. Although there are many different types of casual labour, the majority of people who engage in this type of work are employed in agriculture, mining and quarrying, forest department work, employment in various rural development initiatives, and other related fields. Only 12.35 percent of the families in the sample villages are engaged in the principal occupation of collecting forest products. This is a relatively low percentage. The number of households that participated in government services was quite low. During the span of time from 2001 to 2009, the study witnessed an increase in both the income and expenditures of the households that were included in the sample.

Sarker & Das, (2008) it was found that since JFM was implemented, all types of households, including those without land, marginal farmers, and small farmers, have become extremely reliant on income from the forest. The forest continues to be the principal means of subsistence for all communities that rely on it, both before and after JFM is put into place. According to the findings of the study, the annual net income of communities who are located on the forest fringe has experienced a significant increase since the introduction of the JFM plan. This empirical study reveals that the economic effect of the JFM program is advantageous for various groups of individuals belonging to marginal landholding, small landholding, and landless agricultural households. This is the conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of the study.

Reddy, (2008) it is examined that the improvements in assets, savings, economic independence, activities related to animal husbandry, the value of forest output, employment, and migration are the primary areas of focus in this area of research inquiry. Furthermore, it has been discovered that a number of socio-economic factors played a substantial impact in influencing the benefit flows that were provided to the sample respondents.

Sarker & Das, (2008) it is exposed that the reliance of all classifications of families, including landless, negligible rancher, and little rancher families, on pay from the forest has fundamentally expanded since the execution of JFM. When the execution of JFM, it shows that the forest is the essential kind of revenue for all gatherings of people who are reliant upon the forest. As per the discoveries of the review, the yearly net gain of communities who are situated on the forest periphery has encountered a huge increment starting from the presentation of the JFM plan. This observational review uncovers that the economic impact of the JFM program is invaluable for different gatherings of people having a place with minor landholding, little landholding, and landless horticultural families. This is the end that can be drawn from the discoveries of the review.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The review is principally founded on the essential study that was led at the field level. With the end goal of this review, three towns in the Jhargram region — specifically, Mahadebsinam, Barapacha, and Panijia — have been picked. The Jhargram region is viewed as one of the areas in West Bengal that is generally seriously impacted by destitution. There are two rules that are used for the choice of towns: (I) the towns should have a Forest Protection Committee (FPC) to take

part in the JFM Program, and (ii) most of the individuals from the Forest Protection Committee (FPC) must be members of the tribal community. In the course of the research project, standardized questionnaires were utilized to collect information from the families that were selected as samples. In addition to the home survey, talks have also taken place with major functionaries, functionaries of PRIs, and members of the FPCs in the area that was surveyed. Additionally, secondary data acquired from a variety of published sources and materials found on the internet have been utilized in order to enhance the primary data. Simple descriptive statistics and spider diagrams were utilized in order to conduct the analysis of the data.

Livelihoods Improvement influence Pathways are a tool that may be used to evaluate the influence that the livelihoods of tribal communities have. Additionally, the instrument was initially utilized in a study that was carried out in Indonesia at the Centre for International Forest Research (CIFOR). The impact route illustrates the trajectories of JFM operations, as well as their impact on capitals and the interrelationships between the five capitals/assets, which are Natural Capital, Financial Capital, Physical Capital, Social Capital, and Human Capital.

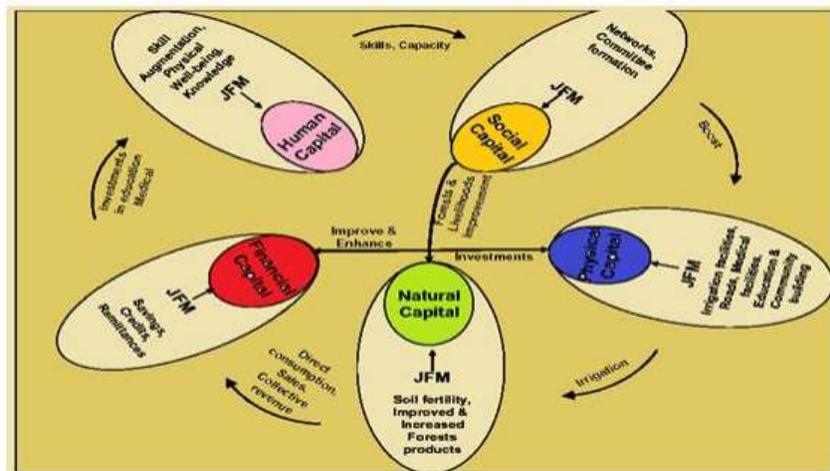


Figure 1:Improvement Impact Pathways for Livelihoods

Consequently, the conceptual framework, also known as impact pathways, is a way of describing the cause-and-effect link between the membership of FPCs in the JFM programmed before and after the program's implementation, as well as the potential impact that the programmed may have on the patterns of livelihood in tribal communities.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Socio-Economic Condition of Sample Households:

After conducting an analysis of the findings from the field survey, the following observations concerning the socio-demographic conditions of the population that was examined were discovered.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Sampled Household

Age Groups	Sex	Name of Villages					
		Mahadebsinam		Barapocha		Panijia	
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
0-6	Male	7	70	6	54.55	4	44.44
	Female	3	30	5	45.45	5	55.56
	Total	10	10.87	11	10.48	9	9.18
6> to 18	Male	7	43.75	8	42.11	14	12.5
	Female	9	56.25	11	57.89	2	87.5
	Total	16	17.39	19	18.1	16	16.33
18> to 60	Male	29	49.15	30	47.62	33	49.25
	Female	30	50.85	33	52.38	34	50.75
	Total	59	64.13	63	60	67	68.37
<60 above	Male	3	42.86	9	75	2	33.33
	Female	4	57.14	3	25	4	66.67
	Total	7	7.61	12	11.43	6	6.12
Total	Male	43	46.74	53	49.52	41	41.84
	Female	49	53.26	52	50.48	57	58.16
	Total	92	100	105	100	98	100

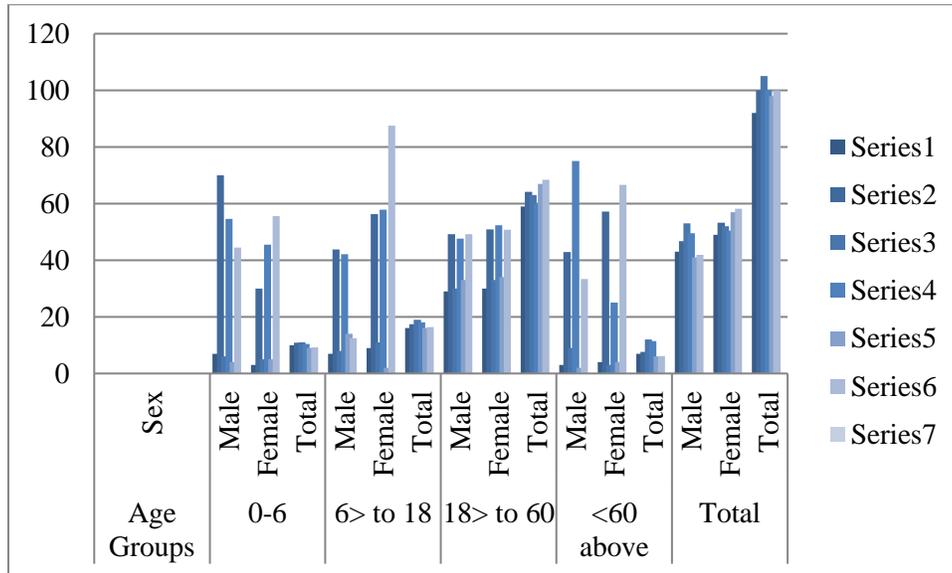


Figure 3: Characteristics of the Sampled Household

From Table-1 among the three villages that were surveyed, the percentage of female population, among sampled homes, is somewhat greater in Barapacha, however in the case of the other two villages, the percentage of male population is larger. It is evident that 53.26 percent of the population that was surveyed contains females, while 46.74 percent of the population consists of males. Not only that, but it has also been noticed that the percentage of individuals in the working age group (that is, those between the ages of 18 and 60) is higher than the percentage of persons in other age groups.

Table 2: Small-scale Employment in the Sample Home

Minor occupation									
Village	Mahadebsinam			Barapocha			Panijia		
	% of Male	% of Female	% of Total	% of Male	% of Female	% of Total	% of Male	% of Female	% of Total
Forest product collection	26.52	27.92	27.17	7.68	22.65	15.24	12.27	34.16	21.43
Animal husbandry	10.21	32.57	20.65	0.00	5.66	2.86	1.74	14.64	7.14

Wage earning	6.11	2.34	4.35	3.84	3.78	3.81	29.81	2.45	18.37
Housewife	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.90	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00
Student	24.48	20.94	22.83	26.93	22.63	24.76	22.80	9.77	17.35
Unemployment	8.17	13.94	10.87	7.68	24.54	16.19	12.27	12.21	12.24

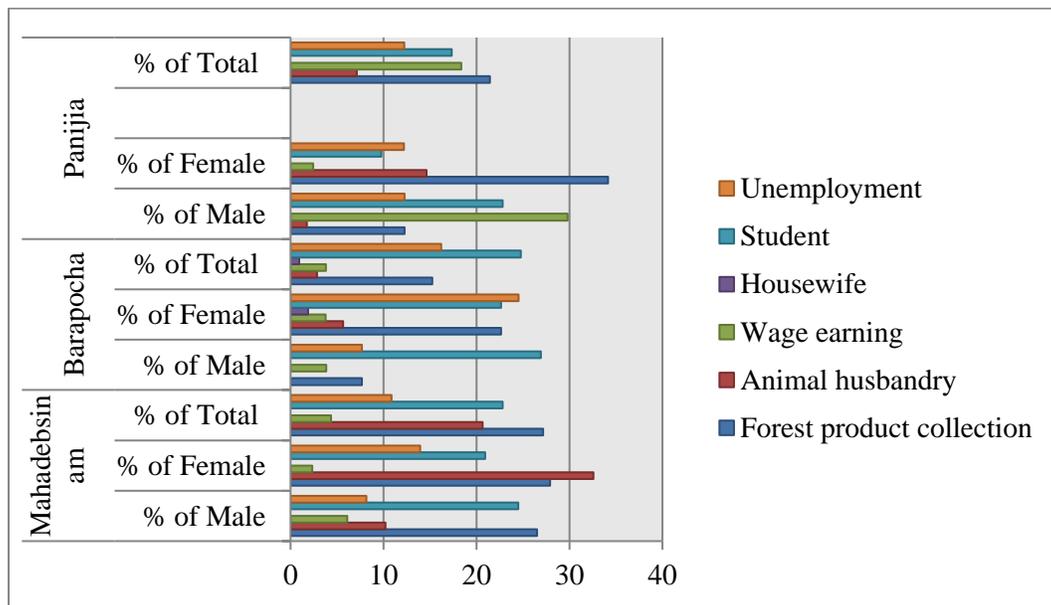


Figure 3: Small-scale Employment in the Sample Home

Assuming we consider the minor occupations that are pervasive in every one of the three towns, it is likewise clear from Table-2 that most of tribal ladies are taken part in the gathering of forest items, trailed by the raising of domesticated animals, as well as completing their family or other critical exercises. Notwithstanding their essential occupation, countless guys in every one of the three communities are likewise participated during the time spent gathering forest items. There is a huge piece of individuals in Mahadebsinam town that is taken part in creature farming as an optional occupation. This rate is 26 and 65 percent. In the town of Mahadebsinam, the level of people who are reliant upon the social occasion of forest items as a minor occupation is the most elevated (27.17 percent), trailed by the town of Panijia. Hence, in every one of the three example towns, a critical piece of the tribal populace is subject to the gathering of forest items, the raising of domesticated animals, or whatever other movement that depends on the forest as a piece of their essential or optional occupation.

5. CONCLUSION

Various studies on Joint Forest Administration in West Bengal have shown how JFM affects forest dwellers. JFM is an inclusive and participatory approach to managing forests and their resources and developing forest-based livelihoods for forest communities. To support their families and make extra money as a side gig, tribal people who live in example families in the review area are active in the social event of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), fair woods, creature grub, and other forest products. In Mahadebsinam and Borapocha, a large portion of the workforce works for income, whereas in Panijia, they depend on traditional farming. Female residents of the analysed villages mostly participated in home-related activities including gathering forest products and raising animals. Evaluation device based on Livelihoods Improvement Effect Pathways Field testing of the livelihood evaluation tool showed that JFM's effects in three towns in the exploratory locality are predictable for certain variances in five capital resource enhancements. This contrasts with other cities. As the other two towns weaken faster, Panijia does too. JFM's mediation reduced deficits and strengthened the area's physical, human, and social capital, according to the study. This has led to greater expansion in physical and human capital in those areas. Since obtaining help from the Joint Forest Administration, tribal people living in the forest within the investigated area have observed significant changes to their livelihood pattern. This research shows that families living near tribal societies adapt to many challenges to survive. However, many factors affect families' decisions on these outcomes, which should be investigated more thoroughly. Quick developments at the full-scale level in India during the mid-1990s have made the livelihood pattern of the poorest provincial and tribal families unstable. These changes began in the 1990s. Globalisation has contributed to the rise of the urban region, yet tribal and rural communities have not been abandoned. Industrialization has depleted forest assets, forcing labourers to find alternative sources of income. The wonderful harmonic relationship between people and nature was disrupted. At the time of the evaluation, no family in that mindset relied solely on forest assets for livelihood. They made the forest their fantasy. Residents who recently traded forest goods are now buyers. Since it has become less profitable, horticulture, the most rigorous career field, is no longer successful.



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