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Title: ROLE OF FOREST IN RURAL LIVELIHOOD WITH REFERENCE TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION - A CASE STUDY OF RARHA VILLAGE

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**Abstract:** Keeping in view the importance of forests' role in rural livelihoods, this research was conducted on the topic entitled "Role of forest in rural livelihood with reference to socio-economic condition – A case study of Rarha village." The objectives of research problem were to evaluate (i) The socio- economic condition of the population (ii) The need of different forest produces (iii) To ascertain the existing scenario of forests which are supporting rural livelihoods, for finally estimating the "Role of forest in rural livelihoods" in Rarha village. Rarha village spread over 22 tolas, is situated at a distance of 18 Km North of Faculty of Forestry B.A.U. Kanke on Ranchi-Patratu Road. It lies near Kanke Forest Range, under Ranchi East Forest Division & covering approximately an area of 2800 Acres in Patratu valley having population of tribes. Study area was surveyed with the help of questionnaire using stratified Random Sampling Technique for the determination of Socio-economic condition of Population & load of livelihood on forest. Market survey has been done to generate annual income by the sale of NTFPs. Quadrante survey of disturbed and undisturbed areas has been done to know the comparative effect on Forest through livelihood pressure. Parameters studied are Baseline Information (Total population, Male population%, Female population%, Child population%), Population

status, Caste profile status, Family structure, Literacy status, Land holding status, Topographical status, Land use pattern, Household Assets, Professional status, Source of Income, Live stock and poultry status, Fuel wood and Fodder consumption Pattern, Small timber and Timber consumption, Annual income from Forest products per household, Metabolic distance of forest from Rarha village, Seasonal Calendar of NTFPs availability, Frequency of important timber and NTFP tree species, Height and Diameter growth status in disturbed and undisturbed areas. Mean male population per tola was found as 32.90%, while for female it is 31.73%. Population trend was found as Child population % > Male population % > Female population %. Mostly female population was found to be engaged in NTFPs collection from forest. Rarha village is dominated by ST (76.92%) followed by OBC (17.06%), SC (5.56%) & GEN (0.17%). Nuclear family (55.01%) was found to be more than joint family (44.99%) and illiterate to primary level education consisted nearly 70% of the total population. Nearly three fourth of the total households belong to small land holding category and mostly upland (76.17%). Agriculture (96.22%) and agrisilviculture (89.31%) are the important land uses followed by household in Rarha village. Most of the households consist of kachha houses (87.66%) and 97.40% of household are having bicycle. Agriculture (96.31%), Animal husbandry (76.40%) and forest products collection (53.11%) are the prominent professions in households of Rarha village. Out of the mean population per tola of Rarha village 96.22% are getting income from agriculture followed by forestry (93.22%). Goat (148.81) and poultry (264.09) are the important livestock. Fuel wood consumption at domestic level was maximum by large farmers (43.69 qt/household yr-1), while at commercial level it was maximum by medium farmers (7.27 qt.yr-1). In case of fodder consumption, maximum domestic and commercial consumption was done by large farmers (18.18 qt/household yr-1), while minimum by small farmers (16.27 and 4.18 qt/household yr-1) respectively. Small timber and timber consumption at domestic and commercial level was done maximum by large farmers (28.90 and 19.68 qt/household yr-1) respectively, followed by medium and small farmers. Same pattern was followed in case of timber consumption at domestic and commercial level and it was maximum 21.72 qt.yr-1 (domestic, large farmers) and 7.13 qt. yr-1 (commercial, large farmers). Maximum annual income from forest products is obtained from sale of small timber (Rs. 20275. yr-1) followed by timber (Rs. 8416.40 yr-1), fuel wood (Rs. 3500.18 yr-1) and fodder (Rs. 842.13 yr-1) for small farmers. Same trend was observed for medium and large farmers. Average distance from each tola to forest area is 3.09 Km and mean metabolic distance for livestock is 14.18 Km. Bamboo & Sal twigs are collected throughout the year by the villagers, while rest of NTFP species is available as per their phenology. In undisturbed forest areas, maximum frequency of *Shorea robusta* was found at sapling (90.46%), pole (84.17%) and mature (80.30%) trees, while minimum frequency was observed for *Terminalia belerica* (32.36%, sapling), *Acacia catechu* (12.25%, pole; 5.57%, mature trees). Most of the NTFP species have shown low frequency particularly at mature trees. In disturbed areas, the frequency of each species recorded drastic reduction and it was maximum for *Shorea robusta* (42.10%, sapling), (32.86%, pole) and 30.45% for mature trees of *Butea monosperma*. *Acacia catechu* was absent, *Terminalia chebula* and *Terminalia belerica* at pole and mature trees were also not found. In undisturbed forest area *Shorea robusta* (3.50 m) & *Bombax ceiba* (3.45m) had good height growth at sapling stage. Minimum growth was observed for *Terminalia chebula* at sapling stage (1.50m), for *Acacia catechu* at pole and mature trees (2.52 - 4.58m respectively). In disturbed areas, maximum height growth was observed in case of *Shorea robusta* as saplings and mature trees (2.82 and 7.42m respectively). Minimum height growth at sapling stage was shown by *Acacia catechu* (0.58m), while at pole and mature trees *Acacia catechu*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia belerica* did not exist. In undisturbed area *Shorea robusta* (10.45 cm) and *Butea monosperma* (10.48 cm) shown good diameter growth at sapling stage. Minimum growth was observed for *Diospyros melanoxylon* at sapling stage (3.52 cm), for *Acacia catechu* at pole and mature trees (4.12 and 8.94 cm respectively). In disturbed areas, maximum diameter growth was shown by *Butea monosperma* at sapling stages (9.43 cm) and at pole and mature trees, it was maximum for *Madhuca indica* (12.48 - 17.35 cm) respectively. Minimum diameter growth at sapling stage was shown by *Diospyros melanoxylon* (3.03 cm), while at pole and mature trees *Acacia catechu*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia belerica* did not exist. Overall on an average, each small farmer earns nearly Rs. 33000.00, for medium farmers, it is nearly Rs. 34600.00 and for large farmers it is Rs. 39400.00 per year from sale of forest products. Overall it can be concluded that the villagers of Rarha area are much dependent upon collection and sale of forest produce. However due to high biotic pressure and destructive NTFPs harvesting, the growth status of forest area has deteriorated. So for

sustainability, appropriate preventive and remedial measures are urgently required for arresting/ reducing the adverse impacts of livelihoods pressures on the existing forests, which are highly indispensable for the valley.

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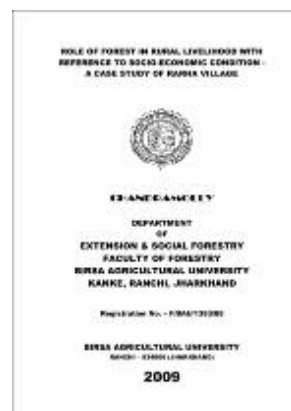
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