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### Problems faced by the tribal women during collection and marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFPs) and suggestions given by them to overcome the problems

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#### Abstract

The present research was carried out in the Kanker district of the state of Chhattisgarh in 2022–2023. Each of the Kanker Forest Department's (3) divisions were purposefully chosen for this study because they have the maximum number of tribal and the greatest amount of forest area. From each selected divisions, 40 tribal women beneficiaries of Van Dhan Yojna were selected. In this way, total 120 tribal women were considered as respondents for this study. The data were collected with the help of well structured pre-tested interview schedule through personal interview. The findings of this study with regard to problems faced by the respondents revealed that 90.00 percent of respondents faced problems during the collection of MFPs was scattered distribution of MFPs and majority 88.33 percent of respondents faced problems regarding to the marketing of MFPs are perishable nature of MFPs, while; 90.83 percent respondents suggested for forestation should be done in village level/forest land, to overcome the problems faced by them in the collection and marketing of MFPs.

**Keywords:** MFPs, tribal women, collection & marketing, suggestion, problems

#### 1. Introduction

It is widely recognized that India's forest thrived primarily in areas where there is a significant tribal population. This phenomena is mostly explained by the historical desire of tribal people to protect and enhance their forests. Forests always had a vital role in their economy, culture, and other aspects of life.

All forest products of plant origin except timber, such as bamboo, brush wood, stumps, cane, tussar, cocoons, honey, wax, lac, tendu or Kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tubers, and the like, are referred to as "minor forest produce."

India has about 16000 plant species; out of which 3000 yield NTFPs providing 40% of forest revenues and 55% forest based employment (Shit and Pati, 2012) [8]. According to World Resource Institute, over 500 million people in India are dependent on NTFPs for their subsistence and cash income (Sarmah and Arunachalam, 2011) [7].

Chhattisgarh is gifted with the most pristine and abundant set of natural resources in the country. The total forest cover area in the state is 55,717 km sq, which is 41.21 percent of its geographical area (Indian forest report, 2021) [9].

The Kanker (Uttar Bastar Kanker) district possesses a forest cover spanning 3,396.01 square kilometers, which constitutes 47.42% of its overall geographical expanse. The tribal population of this district stands at 414,770

individuals, comprising 55.4% of the total population within the Kanker (Uttar Bastar Kanker) district in Chhattisgarh.

Among these alternative sources of income, Minor Forest Products (MFPs) hold a particularly crucial role in enabling their sustainable livelihoods. MFPs provide a source of income and employment that significantly contributes to the well-being of the tribal population.

#### 2. Materials and Methods

The research was carried out in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh. The Forest Department of Kanker has been divided into 3 divisions namely Kanker, west Bhanupratapur and East Bhanupratapur. From each forest division, 40 tribal women beneficiaries of Van Dhan Yojna were selected randomly, thus total of 120 (40×3=120) beneficiaries were selected for the study. The data was collected personally by using a pretested structured interview schedule. Collected data was tabulated and processed by using appropriate statistical tools and methods.

#### 3. Results and Discussion

##### 3.1 Problems faced by the respondents during collection and marketing of MFPs

The result shows that the majority 90.00 percent of respondents faced problems during the collection of MFPs was scattered distribution of MFPs, followed by 79.17

percent of respondent faced unpleasant weather during MFPs collection, while 70.83 percent of respondent faced long-distance travel required to collect MFPs, followed by 70.00 percent respondent faced more time required for collection of MFPs, followed by 69.17 percent respondent faced inadequate availability of MFPs, while 66.67 percent respondents faced by fear of attacks of wild animal, and

65.00 percent respondents faced deforestation during collection of MFPs. Gupta *et al.*, (2015) <sup>[2]</sup> reported some prevailing problems like low and fluctuated market price, lack of developed market, existence of bad weather causes significant interruption in collection and marketing of NTFPs. Almost same findings were also reported by Patel *et al.* (2008) <sup>[4]</sup> and Nedanovska (2012) <sup>[3]</sup>.

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents according to the problems faced by them in the collection and marketing of MFPs

| Sl. No.                                       | Problems                                      | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|-----------|------------|
| <b>A</b>                                      |   |           |            |
| <b>Problems related to collection of MFPs</b> |   |           |            |
| 1.  | Scattered distribution of MFPs                | 108       | 90.00      |
| 2.  | Unpleasant weather during MFPS collection     | 95        | 79.17      |
| 3.  | Long-distance travel required to collect MPFs | 85        | 70.83      |
| 4.  | More time is required for collection of MFPs  | 84        | 70.00      |
| 5.  | Inadequate availability of MFPs               | 83        | 69.17      |
| 6.  | Fears of attacks of wild animal               | 80        | 66.67      |
| 7.  | Deforestation                                 | 78        | 65.00      |
| <b>B</b>                                      |   |           |            |
| <b>Problems related to marketing of MFPs</b>  |   |           |            |
| 1.  | Perishable nature of MFPs                     | 106       | 88.33      |
| 2.  | Low and fluctuated market price of MFPs       | 96        | 80.00      |
| 3.  | Exploitation from purchasers                  | 90        | 75.00      |
| 4.  | Distant location of market from home          | 85        | 70.83      |
| 5.  | Lack of transport facilities                  | 75        | 62.50      |
| 6.  | Delay in payment                              | 72        | 60.00      |

The majority 88.33 percent of respondents faced problems regarding to the marketing of MFPs are perishable nature of MFPs, followed by 80.00 percent respondents faced low and fluctuated market price of MFPs, followed by 75.00 percent respondents faced exploitation from purchasers, while 70.83 percent respondents faced distant location of market from home, while 62.50 percent respondents faced lack of transport facilities, and 60.00 percent respondents faced a delay in payment. PUNEETH, J. (2015) <sup>[5]</sup> reported some similar problems related to marketing are perishable nature of MFPs and delay in timely payment. Ahenkan and Boon (2010) <sup>[1]</sup> reported that the NTFPs marketing in rural areas of Ghana are unorganized, far from home and farmers also

lack the necessary marketing skills, lower cost of NTFPs and information required for optimal performance. Tejaswi (2007–2008) <sup>[10]</sup> reported nearly identical outcomes.

**3.2 Suggestions were given by the respondents to overcome the problems related to the collection and marketing of MFPs:** It portrays that the majority 90.83 percent of the respondents suggested that forestation should be done in village level/forest land, followed by 84.17 percent respondents suggested for MSP for MFPs marketing should be followed, while 82.50 percent of respondents suggested that programs for forest regeneration to enhance the forest productivity be organized,

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents according to the suggestions given by the respondents to overcome the problems faced by them in the collection and marketing of MFPs

| Sl. No. | Suggestions  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|--|-----------|------------|
| 1.      | Forestation should be done in the village level/forest land                      | 109       | 90.83      |
| 2.      | MSP for MFPs marketing should be followed  | 101       | 84.17      |
| 3.      | Programs for forest regeneration to enhance the forest productivity be organized | 99        | 82.50      |
| 4.      | Checking of over-collection of MFPs  | 92        | 76.67      |
| 5.      | Subsidy & bonus should be given in time  | 90        | 75.00      |
| 6.      | Timely market information about MFPs   | 87        | 72.50      |
| 7.      | Springiness in forest rule and regulations for MFPs collection                   | 77        | 64.17      |

followed by 76.67 percent respondents suggested for checking of over collection of MFPs, 75.00 percent of respondents suggested for subsidies & bonus should be given in time, and 72.50 percent of respondents suggested for timely market information about MFPs, respectively 64.17 percent of respondents suggested for springiness in forest rules and regulations for MFPs collection. Reported similar suggestion like forestation should be done in the village level, market information.

#### 4. Conclusion

Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is an essential source of food,

nutrition, medicine, revenue, and employment which are essential to the sustainable livelihoods of tribal populations living in forested area. However, a number of obstacles stand in the way of effectively collecting and promoting of MFPs was scattered distribution of MFP; perishable nature of MFPs; low and fluctuating market prices; and unpleasant weather during collection of MFPS, which seriously disrupts MFP collection and promotion of MFPs. Due to Deforestation, inadequate availability of MFPs, exploitation from purchasers, distant location of market from home the respondents weren't getting adequate prices for their MFPs. As a result, they made a smaller profit from marketing of

MFPs. In this context, suggestion that obtains from the respondents to overcome these problems that the majority of the respondents suggested for forestation should be done in village level/forest land, MSP for MFPs marketing should be followed, Programs for forest regeneration to enhance the forest productivity be organized in localized level.

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