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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF DECLARATION OF INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING ON SHARE PRICE AND RETURN: EVIDENCE FROM TEHRAN STOCK EXCHANGE <i>MANSOUR GARKAZ</i>	1
2.	ODE TO THE FABRIC OF DESERT: THE SANCTUARY WAY <i>DR. ASHA ALEXANDER</i>	5
3.	CASH DIVENDS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPACT ON THE SHARE PRICES OF LISTED COMPANIES IN COLOMBO STOCK EXCHANGE IN SRI LANKA <i>SKANTHAVARATHAR RAMESH</i>	11
4.	THE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES TO ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES IN NORTHERN THAILAND <i>DR. RATTANAN PONGWIRITTHON & SURACHAI UTAMA-ANG</i>	16
5.	FUNDS GENERATION AND MANAGEMENT IN ONDO STATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NIGERIA <i>DR. FELIX OLURANKINSE</i>	22
6.	DEMOGRAPHICAL ANTECEDENTS IN DECISIONAL AUTONOMY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS: A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF LAHORE, PAKISTAN <i>NOREEN ZAHRA & KASHIF MAHMOOD</i>	27
7.	IMPACT OF INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL ON THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF LISTED COMPANIES IN TEHRAN STOCK EXCHANGE <i>MANSOUR GARKAZ</i>	32
8.	HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY CSR WITH MARKETING USP – CASE STUDY OF TAJ HOTELS & IHM-A <i>DR. S. P. RATH, DR. SHIVSHANKAR K. MISHRA, SATISH JAYARAM & CHEF LEEVIN JOHNSON</i>	35
9.	HOUSING IN RURAL INDIA: AN OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES IN KARNATAKA <i>DR. VILAS M. KADROLKAR & DR. NAGARAJ M. MUGGUR</i>	44
10.	TRENDS AND GROWTH OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE IN INDIA DURING 2001-12 <i>DR. MANOJ DOLLI</i>	51
11.	FINANCES OF SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION OF ANDHRA UNIVERSITY, VISAKHAPATNAM: AN APPRAISAL <i>DR. G. VENKATACHALAM & DR. P. MOHAN REDDY</i>	57
12.	THE IMPACT OF MGNREGA ON THE LIVING CONDITION OF RURAL POOR IN RURAL ECONOMY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GULBARGA DISTRICT IN KARNATAKA STATE <i>ANIL KUMAR. B. KOTE & DR. P. M. HONNAKERI</i>	62
13.	CONCERNS OF FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA AMIDST ECONOMIC CRISIS <i>DR. ZEBA SHEEREEN</i>	66
14.	ATTAINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH GREEN BANKING <i>DR. SARITA BAHL</i>	70
15.	A STUDY OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT, TAMILNADU <i>R. RETHINA BAI & DR. G. RADHA KRISHNAN</i>	75
16.	THE EFFECT OF PARENTAL INTERVENTION ON THE FAMILY PROBLEMS OF LATE ADOLESCENTS <i>DR. KALYANI KENNETH & SEENA P.C</i>	83
17.	EFFECT OF INDEX FUTURE TRADING AND EXPIRATION DAY ON SPOT MARKET VOLATILITY: A CASE STUDY OF S&P CNX NIFTY <i>DR. BAL KRISHAN & DR. REKHA GUPTA</i>	86
18.	COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PER SHRE RATIO OF SOME SELECTED INDIAN PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS <i>DR. SHIPRA GUPTA</i>	89
19.	CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF CONVENIENCE GOODS: A STUDY WITH RURAL CONSUMERS <i>V. SYLVIYA JOHNSI BAI</i>	97
20.	MOTIVATORS AND MOTIVATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN RURAL AREAS <i>DR. M. JAYASUDHA</i>	100
21.	HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN RELATION TO ITS PRODUCTION ORGANIZATION: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY IN TWO DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL <i>CHITTARANJAN DAS</i>	103
22.	A STUDY ON PUBLIC ATTITUDE AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS POVERTY ALLEVIATION <i>L. VIJAY & M. GANDHI</i>	109
23.	DETERMINENTS OF PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT: A STUDY IN VISAKHAPATANAM DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH <i>DR. D. NARAYANA RAO</i>	112
24.	AN ECONOMETRIC FRAMEWORK OF POLYTHENE INDUSTRIAL COOPERATIVES IN TAMIL NADU <i>GANDHIMATHY B</i>	117
25.	THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: AN OVERVIEW <i>RAIS AHMAD QAZI & MOHD YASIN WANI</i>	122
26.	FDI INFLOWS IN INDIA TRENDS AND PATTERNS <i>SIRAJ-UL-HASSAN RESHI</i>	127
27.	WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND PREGNENCY COMPLICATIONS <i>ARCHANA KESARWANI</i>	135
28.	A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MGNREGS USING MARSHALLIAN FRAMEWORK <i>MOUMITA BAGCHI</i>	143
29.	A STUDY ON SMALL RUMINANTS AS A SOURCE OF INCOME AMONG THE FARMERS OF PALLIPATTI PANCHAYAT <i>M. ELAGOVAN</i>	147
30.	INSURANCE LEADERS AND ENTREPRENEURS ON EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT <i>DILJOT SOIN</i>	150
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	154

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DETERMINANTS OF PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT: A STUDY IN VISAKHAPATANAM DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

It can be generalized that the performance or the success of the Joint Forest Management strategy is in the hands of the local communities, a little in the hands of forest department officials and the joint efforts of both these stake holders. It can be said that there is dearth of studies conducted on this issue in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh, which has a forest cover of 3445 KM², which is 30.87 per cent of the total geographical area of the District according to the India State of Forest Report 2009. Hence, an attempt has been made in this study to analyse the determinants of peoples' participation in Joint Forest Management and concluded that the satisfaction of the respondents with the present position of the works undertaken by the VSS for forest development, respondents' attendance to the General Body meetings of VSS, respectful treatment of the forest department officials with the VSS members, satisfaction of the respondents with the present position of the species planted, confidence of the respondent on receiving aspired benefits after harvesting the trees, respondent's financial benefit from the forest, provision of training by the forest department to the respondents and family Size of the respondent are the important factors which determines the people's participation in Joint Forest Management in the study area.

KEYWORDS

Logistic Regression, Peoples' Participation, Vana Samrakshana Samities.

INTRODUCTION

According to UNDP participation means that peoples are closely involved in social, economic, cultural and political process that effect their lives. Therefore participation is a process by which the beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of a development programme to enhance prosperity in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values that they cherish.

Hardin's¹ tragedy of the commons suggests either state intervention or privatisation of property rights to preserve common-pool resources. According to the Wade², Ostrom³, Bromley⁴, Sengupta⁵, and Singh⁶, institution building at the community level for managing common-pool resources has emerged as a third possibility. This third possibility has been applied in rural India to the case of forest management. Studies conducted by Chopra⁷ et al., Palit⁸, Sarin⁹ stressed the importance of people's involvement in forest management. These studies show that in many institutional settings of rural India, forests are better managed when voluntary people's participation is secured. Hence, there exist many situations where people's participation is desired, and it is of considerable interest to find conditions under which voluntary participation takes place¹⁰.

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The National Forest Policy of 1988 has recognised the need to involve local people in management of forests for ensuring their effective conservation. The Government of India has issued detailed guidelines in the year 1990 on the concept of implementing Joint Forest Management. Accordingly, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has issued formal orders in 1992 for adopting Joint Forest Management (JFM) as a strategy for rehabilitation of degraded forests. Detailed guidelines were also issued in the year 1993, for taking up JFM through village level committees called "Vana Samrakshana Samithies" (VSS).

Like many other State Governments, the AP Forests Department has also issued comprehensive guidelines for adopting Joint Forest Management as a strategy for rehabilitation of degraded forests in the year 1993, through village level committees called "Vana Samrakshana Samithies" (VSS). Initially, there was lot of skepticism among the foresters about the worthiness of this strategy as a remedy for protection problems. This type of approach for managing forests was new to the people also, hence lot of effort was needed to convince the people also about the assurances of the Government on the returns promised to the people, if they take up Joint Forest Management.

However, with the passage of time, both the local people as well as the forest officials started seeing what JFM can do for rejuvenating degraded forests, and the concept gained more acceptance. The success stories spread from one village to another village. What was started as a small program has today attained gigantic proportions. Keeping in view the tremendous enthusiasm being shown by the people towards this program and the spectacular improvement in forest regeneration due to their efforts, the State Government issued orders on 7-12-96 giving 100 per cent share of timber and bamboo to the VSS members, enhancing it from 50 per cent share envisaged earlier. This is a true sign of the confidence imposed in the ability of the people in managing their forest resources efficiently.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Keeping the above discussion in view and on the basis of the studies conducted by the earlier researchers, it can be generalized that the performance or the success of the Joint Forest Management strategy is in the hands of the local communities, a little in the hands of forest department officials and the joint efforts of both these stake holders. It can be said that there is dearth of studies conducted on this issue in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh, which has a forest cover of 3445 KM², which is 30.87 per cent of the total geographical area of the District according to the India State of Forest Report 2009. Hence, a study on the performance of the local communities (VSS) and participation levels of local people in the protection and sustainable management of forest resources is very

¹ Hardin, G., 1968. The tragedy of the commons. Science 162, 1243-1248.

² Wade, R., 1987. The management of common property resources: collective action as an alternative to privatization or state regulation. Cambridge J. Econ., 11: 95-106.

³ Ostrom, E., 1990. Governing the Commons, The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

⁴ Bromley, D.W., 1991a. Environment and Economy: Property Rights and Public Policy, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

⁵ Sengupta, N., 1991. Managing Common Property, Irrigation in India and the Philippines. Sage, New Delhi.

⁶ Singh, K., 1994. Managing Common Pool Resources, Principles and Case Studies. Oxford University Press, Delhi.

⁷ Chopra, K., Kadekodi, G.K., Murty, M.N., 1990. Participatory Development, People and Common Property Resources. Sage, New Delhi.

⁸ Palit, S., 1993. The Future of Indian Forest Management: Into the Twenty-first Century. Ford Foundation, New Delhi.

⁹ Sarin, M., 1996. Joint Forest Management. The Haryana Experience. Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad.

¹⁰ Wietze Lise, 2000, Factors influencing people's participation in forest management in India, Ecological Economics 34 (2000) 379-392

much essential. So that, this study entitled “Determinants of Peoples Participation in Joint Forest Management (A Study in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh)” is itself addressed to fill this gap in the literature.

THE PROBLEM

As already said earlier, the success of the JFM strategy lies in the joint efforts of the local communities and the forest department officials. In the state of Andhra Pradesh, some studies undertaken by the independent researchers indicated the failure of the JFM in terms of space allowed for people’s participation, the nature of people’s participation being nominal and confined to membership and wage labour in forestry activities. There is a quite few studies undertaken by forest department officials shows a remarkable success of the JFM. Thus the existing literature shows contradictory results with regard to community involvement in JFM and the impact as well as sustainability of the programme. In addition, there is dearth of studies on the performance of VSSs in forestry management in the district of Visakhapatnam in which 42.15 per cent of the reporting area is forest area and the population of Scheduled Tribes account for 14.55 per cent of the population of the district. With this background it is proposed to make an attempt in this study to analyse the factors determining the people’s participation in Joint Forest Management and the extent of participation along with the following specific objectives.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. to analyse the factors that determines the people’s participation in joint forest management in the selected study area i.e., Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh State; and in the three forest Divisions of Visakhapatnam District viz., Narsipatnam Forest Division, Paderu Forest Division and Visakhapatnam Forest Division; and
2. to suggest some measures, in the light of the findings of the study, for ensuring effective and meaningful participation of communities in forest conservation and development.

METHODOLOGY & SAMPLE DESIGN

The study is based on both primary and secondary data available from various published and unpublished sources. The secondary data has been collected from various issues of Statistical Abstracts of Andhra Pradesh, published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of A.P., Hyderabad and Statistical Abstracts of India, Published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of India and other web sites related to the Forest Development agencies and Environmental Protection Departments. The Primary Data have been collected with the help of a pre-tested and well designed schedule, specially designed for the purpose, from a sample of 300 VSS members Constituting 100 from Narsipatnam Forest Division, 100 from Visakhapatnam Forest Division and 100 from Visakhapatnam Forest Division of Visakhapatnam Distrct. For analyzing the factors influencing the people’s participation, Step-wise binary Logistic Regression Analysis has been carried out. The details are as follows:

THE MODEL

To identify factors that may influence the sustained participation of selected respondent (VSS members) in Joint Forest Management, a discrete variable logit analysis was carried out. The opinion of the participants as to whether they were interested in sustained participation in Joint Forest Management can be framed as binary-choice models which assume that individuals are faced with a choice between two alternatives (participation/not participation) and the choice depends on identifiable characteristics. Let T_i represents a dichotomous variable that equals 1 if the respondent is in favor of sustained participation in Joint Forest Management and 0 otherwise. The probability of farmers’ sustained participation in Joint Forest Management, $P_i(T_i = 1)$, is a cumulative density function F evaluated at $X_i\beta$, where X_i is a vector of explanatory variables and β is a vector of unknown parameters. This kind of cumulative density function can be modeled using logistic probability function, which has the following form:

$$P_i(\text{Farmers' sustained participation} = P_i(T_i=1) = \frac{\exp(X_i\beta)}{1+\exp(X_i\beta)}$$

Given the hypothesized factors of respondents’ attitudes in favor of sustained participation, the model to be estimated is:

$$\ln \left[\frac{Pr(T_i=1)}{1 - Pr(T_i=1)} \right] = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + \beta_9 X_9 + \beta_{10} X_{10} + \beta_{11} X_{11} + \beta_{12} X_{12} + \beta_{13} X_{13} + \beta_{14} X_{14} + \beta_{15} X_{15} + \beta_{16} X_{16} + \beta_{17} X_{17} + \beta_{18} X_{18} + \beta_{19} X_{19} + \beta_{20} X_{20} + \beta_{21} X_{21} + \beta_{22} X_{22} + \beta_{23} X_{23} + \dots + \beta_n X_n$$

Where

- X_1 = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondents are being paid in time for their work in VSS or not,
- X_2 = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondents are satisfied with no. of working days provided by the VSS in the previous year or not;
- X_3 = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondents are satisfied with the present position of the works undertaken by the VSS for forest development or not;
- X_4 = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondents are attending the General Body meetings of VSS or not;
- X_5 = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondents are participating in the book keeping activities of their respective VSS or not;
- X_6 = a dummy variable indicating whether the forest department officials treating the VSS members with respect or not;
- X_7 = a dummy variable indicating whether the forest department officials taking the opinions of the VSS members into consideration in preparation of micro plans or not;
- X_8 = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent is satisfied with the participation in VSS activities or not;
- X_9 = a dummy variable indicating whether the forest department officials taking the advice/opinion from VSS members in deciding the species to be planted or not;
- X_{10} = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent is satisfied with the varieties of species planted or not;
- X_{11} = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent is satisfied with the present position of the species planted or not;
- X_{12} = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent is satisfied with present benefit sharing system or not;
- X_{13} = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent think that aspired benefits would be received after harvesting the trees or not;
- X_{14} = a dummy variable indicating whether the VSS activities disrupted the interests of the local people or not;
- X_{15} = a dummy variable indicating whether the local people accepted the participatory forestry gladly or not;
- X_{16} = a dummy variable indicating whether the VSS members had any conflicts with the forest department officials or not;
- X_{17} = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent is receiving any financial benefit from the forest or not;
- X_{18} = a dummy variable indicating whether the forest department provided any training to the respondents (VSS members) or not;
- X_{19} = a dummy variable indicating whether the respondents are receiving any advice from forest department officials or not;
- X_{20} = Age of the respondent
- X_{21} = Education of the respondent
- X_{22} = Income per annum of the respondent
- X_{23} = Family Size of the respondent

Because of the large sample size, the test that a coefficient is 0 can be based on the Wald statistic, which has a χ^2 distribution. When the variable has single degrees of freedom, the Wald statistics is just the square of the ratio of the coefficient to its standard error.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of step-wise estimated logistic regression models for interested in JFM system – and not interested in JFM system households in the total study area viz., Visakhapatnam District and selected Forest Divisions viz., Narsipatnam Forest Division, Paderu Forest Division and Visakhapatnam Forest Division are presented in the table – 1 to 4 respectively. This analysis has been carried out for the entire sample of 300 observations collected from 30 villages in different Forest Division of Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh.

As said earlier, this study is limited to 300 observations. Independent variables selected are 23 in number, to carryout the analysis. Among these 23 independent variables –X₁, X₃, X₄, X₆, X₁₁, X₁₃, X₁₄, X₁₇, X₁₈ and X₂₃ are turned out to be statistically significant variables in differentiating respondents with interest in favour of JFM from the respondents with no interest in favour of JFM in Visakhapatnam District i.e., the total study area (Table – 1).

TABLE – 1: RESULTS OF THE STEP-WISE LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT (TOTAL STUDY AREA) MODEL

Independent Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-1.484***	1.007		0.141
X ₁	-0.628***	0.330	0.534	0.057
X ₃	0.910*	0.305	2.484	0.003
X ₄	-0.887*	0.316	0.412	0.005
X ₆	1.597***	0.890	4.940	0.073
X ₁₁	-0.685**	0.342	0.504	0.046
X ₁₃	-1.412*	0.373	0.244	0.000
X ₁₄	1.412*	0.479	4.106	0.003
X ₁₇	1.364*	0.392	3.913	0.000
X ₁₈	1.397*	0.399	4.044	0.000
X ₂₃	-0.242***	0.130	0.785	0.062
No. of Observations = 300				
Nagelkerke R Square = .318				
Wald chi-square = 29.618*				
-2 Log likelihood = 384.621				

Note:

* indicates significant at 1 percent level

** indicates significant at 5 percent level

*** indicates significant at 10 percent level

The results of the logistic regression analysis which were presented in table – 1, suggest that respondents who reported that they have been paid in time for the VSS work (X₁) is significantly different from zero at 10 per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who reported that they have been paid in time for VSS work are 0.53 times more likely to show their interests in Joint Forest Management system than those who were reported that they not been paid in time for VSS work. Satisfaction of participants with the present position of the works undertaken by the VSS(X₃) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were satisfied with present position of the works undertaken by the VSS are 2.5 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not satisfied with the present position of the works undertaken by the VSS. Attendance of the respondents to the General Body meetings regularly (X₄) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were attending the General Body meetings regularly are 0.41 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not attending the General Body meetings regularly. Respectful treatment of the VSS members by forest department officials (X₆) is significantly different from zero at ten per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who have been treated respectfully by the forest department officials are 5 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who have not been treated respectfully by the forest department officials. Satisfaction of participants with the present position of species planted by the VSS(X₁₁) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were satisfied with present position of the species planted are 0.5 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not satisfied with the present position of planted species. Respondents' confidence on getting aspired benefits from the plantation after final harvesting of species planted by the VSS(X₁₃) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were confident on getting aspired benefits from the species planted are 0.24 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not confident of aspired benefits. Disruption of the local people' interest with the implementation of Joint Forest Management system(X₁₄) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were reported that the interests of local people does not disrupted are 4 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not reported that the interests of local people does not disrupted by the VSS activities. Financial benefits accrued to the respondents from the forests developed by the VSS (X₁₇), is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were benefited financially by the VSS plantations are 4 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who did not benefit financially from the VSS plantations. Training to VSS members on VSS activities (X₁₈) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who received training on various activities of VSS are 4 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who have not received any training. Family size of the respondents (X₂₃) is significantly different from zero at ten per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that if the family size increases by one member then the odds that the respondents' interest Joint Forest Management system decreases by 0.8 times.

In Narsipatnam Forest Division, there were only 100 observations and estimation was possible after excluding 21 independent variables from the model. Thus, among the 23 selected independent variables only two independent variables i.e., X₁₃ and X₁₈ are turned out to be statistically significant variables in differentiating respondents with interest in favour of JFM from the respondents with no interest in favour of JFM in Narsipatnam Division of the study area i.e., Visakhapatnam District.

Table – 2 furnishes the results of the step-wise logistic regression analysis for Narsipatnam Division. It is evident from the table that the respondents' confidence on getting aspired benefits from the plantation after final harvesting of species planted by the VSS(X₁₃) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were confident on getting aspired benefits from the species planted are 0.24 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not confident of aspired benefits. Training to VSS members on VSS activities (X₁₈) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who received training on various activities of VSS are 5 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who have not received any training.

TABLE – 2: RESULTS OF THE STEP-WISE LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR NARSIPATNAM DIVISION

Independent Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-.847	.488		0.083
X ₁₃	-1.439*	.479	.237	.003
X ₁₈	1.638*	.572	5.145	.004
No. of Observations = 100 Nagelkerke R Square = .200 Wald chi-square = 4.760** -2 Log likelihood = 117.771				

Note:

* indicates significant at 1 percent level

** indicates significant at 5 percent level

*** indicates significant at 10 percent level

In Paderu Forest Division, there were only 100 observations and estimation was possible after excluding 13 independent variables from the model. Thus, among the 23 selected independent variables –X₁, X₂, X₄, X₈, X₉, X₁₀, X₁₃, X₁₄, X₁₆ and X₂₀ are turned out to be statistically significant variables in differentiating respondents with interest in favour of JFM from the respondents with no interest in favour of JFM in Paderu Division of the study area i.e., Visakhapatnam District.

TABLE – 3: RESULTS OF THE STEP-WISE LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR PADERU DIVISION

Independent Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-5.446*	1.889		0.004
X ₁	-4.434*	1.341	.012	.001
X ₂	-7.646*	2.733	.000	.005
X ₄	-5.744*	1.760	.003	.001
X ₈	5.397*	1.763	220.702	.002
X ₉	2.419**	1.194	11.237	.043
X ₁₀	1.792***	.949	6.004	.059
X ₁₃	1.902**	.897	6.698	.034
X ₁₄	2.047**	1.021	7.743	.045
X ₁₆	-1.494***	.873	.224	.087
X ₂₀	.096*	.032	1.101	.002
No. of Observations = 100 Nagelkerke R Square = .560 Wald chi-square = 21.050* -2 Log likelihood = 114.611				

Note:

* indicates significant at 1 percent level

** indicates significant at 5 percent level

*** indicates significant at 10 percent level

Table – 3 furnishes the results of the step-wise logistic regression analysis for Paderu Forest Division. It is evident from the table that respondents who reported that they have been paid in time for the VSS work (X₁) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who reported that they have been paid in time for VSS work are 0.12 times more likely to show their interests in Joint Forest Management system than those who were reported that they not been paid in time for VSS work. Number of working days provided by the VSS (X₂) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. Attendance of the respondents to the General Body meetings regularly (X₄) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were attending the General Body meetings regularly are 0.003 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not attending the General Body meetings regularly. Satisfaction of participants with participation in VSS activities (X₈) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were satisfied with present position of the species planted are 220 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not satisfied with the present position of planted species. Consideration of VSS members advice/opinion in deciding the species to be planted (X₉) is significantly different from zero at five per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who reported that the forest department official are considering the advices/opinions of the VSS members in deciding the species to be planted are 11 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not reported the same. Satisfaction of participants with the varieties of species planted by the VSS (X₁₀) is significantly different from zero at ten per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were satisfied with the varieties of the species planted are 6 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not satisfied with the varieties of species planted. Respondents' confidence on getting aspired benefits from the plantation after final harvesting of species planted by the VSS (X₁₃) is significantly different from zero at five per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were confident on getting aspired benefits from the species planted are seven times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not confident of aspired benefits. Disruption of the local people' interest with the implementation of Joint Forest Management system (X₁₄) is significantly different from zero at five per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were reported that the interests of local people does not disrupted are 8 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not reported that the interests of local people does not disrupted by the VSS activities. Conflicts with the forest department officials (X₁₆) is significantly different from zero at 10 per cent of χ^2 value with expected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were reported that they have conflicts with the forest department officials are 8 times more not likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who doesn't have any conflicts with the forest department officials. Age of the respondents (X₂₀) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that if the age of the respondent increases by one year then the odds that the respondents interest in Joint Forest Management system also increases by 1.10 times.

In Visakhapatnam Forest Division, there were only 100 observations and estimation was possible after excluding 19 independent variables from the model. Thus, among the 23 selected independent variables only four independent variables i.e., X₃, X₁₃, X₁₄ and X₁₇ are turned out to be statistically significant variables in differentiating respondents with interest in favour of JFM from the respondents with no interest in favour of JFM in Visakhapatnam Division of the study area i.e., Visakhapatnam District.

TABLE – 4: RESULTS OF THE STEP-WISE LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR VISAKHAPATNAM DIVISION

Independent Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-1.143*	0.405		0.005
X ₃	1.300*	.497	3.670	.009
X ₁₃	-1.526*	.622	.217	.014
X ₁₄	2.194*	.863	8.973	.011
X ₁₇	1.440**	.601	4.219	.017
No. of Observations = 100				
Nagelkerke R Square = .273				
Wald chi-square = 6.603*				
-2 Log likelihood = 131.791				

Note:

* indicates significant at 1 percent level

** indicates significant at 5 percent level

*** indicates significant at 10 percent level

Table – 4 furnishes the results of the step-wise logistic regression analysis for Visakhapatnam Forest Division. Satisfaction of participants with the present position of the works undertaken by the VSS(X₃) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were satisfied with present position of the works undertaken by the VSS are 3.6 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not satisfied with the present position of the works undertaken by the VSS. Respondents' confidence on getting aspired benefits from the plantation after final harvesting of species planted by the VSS(X₁₃) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with unexpected negative sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were confident on getting aspired benefits from the species planted are 0.22 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not confident of aspired benefits. Disruption of the local people' interest with the implementation of Joint Forest Management system(X₁₄) is significantly different from zero at one per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were reported that the interests of local people does not disrupted are 9 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not reported that the interests of local people does not disrupted by the VSS activities. Financial benefits accrued to the respondents from the forests developed by the VSS (X₁₇), is significantly different from zero at five per cent of χ^2 value with expected positive sign. The odds-ratio indicates that respondents who were benefited financially by the VSS plantations are 4 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who did not benefit financially from the VSS plantations.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the results of the step-wise binary logistic regression analysis for the total study area i.e., Visakhapatnam District, the odds-ratios for different variables indicate that respondents who were satisfied with present position of the works undertaken by the VSS, respondents who have been treated respectfully by the forest department officials, respondents who were benefited financially by the VSS plantations and respondents who received training on various activities of VSS are 2.5 times, 5 times, 4 times and 4 times respectively, more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than their counterparts. Hence, it can be suggested that the forest department must concentrate on the sustainable works, provide frequent trainings to the members of VSSs and visits to successful VSSs for enhancing the participants' interest towards Joint Forest Management and VSS activities. It is also suggested that the forest department officials need to maintain cordial and respectful relations with the VSS members to enhance their interest towards the success of the programme.

According to the results of the step-wise binary logistic regression analysis for the Narsipatnam Forest Division area, the odds-ratio in for training to VSS members indicate that the respondents who received the training on various issues relating to the VSS's activities are 5 times more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than those who have not received any training. Hence, frequent trainings to the members of VSS, plays a vital role in enhancing the people's participation rate in Joint Forest Management.

According to the results of the step-wise binary logistic regression analysis for the Paderu Forest Division area, the odds-ratio for different variables indicate that respondents who reported that the forest department official are considering the advices/opinions of the VSS members in deciding the species to be planted, respondents who were satisfied with the varieties of the species planted, and respondents who were confident on getting aspired benefits from the species planted are 11 times, 6 times and 7 times respectively more likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who were not reported the same. And the respondents who were reported that they have conflicts with the forest department officials are 8 times more not likely to show interest in Joint Forest Management system than the respondents who doesn't have any conflicts with the forest department officials. Hence, it can be suggested that the forest department officials must consider the advices/opinions in deciding the varieties of species to be planted and must try to build-up the confidence with regard to the aspired benefits from the final harvesting of the species planted. More importantly, the top level forest department officials should concentrate on the conflict resolving system for the VSS members and the forest department officials.

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