

A study of beneficiaries of BAIF of rural Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

The study revealed that a majority of the respondent beneficiaries (50.67 per cent) belonged to middle age group of 36 to 55 years, educated up to primary level (54.66 per cent), had medium family size of 4 to 5 members (53.34 per cent) and land holding is between 0.81 to 1.20 ha. (62.67%), dairy as a subsidiary occupation with annual income between Rs. 16001 to 39000 (63.11 per cent), belonged to medium level of socio-economic status (67.11 per cent) and medium social participation (76.00 per cent), low use of information sources (65.33 per cent), low level of information seeking behaviour (66.22 per cent), low cosmopolitaness (44.89 per cent) and low risk orientation level (71.56 per cent). They had medium aspiration level (50.22 per cent), medium to high attitude towards the programmes of BAIF (68.00 per cent), medium change proneness (57.33 per cent) and medium to high recipient of incentives (60.89 per cent). Their level of participation in the BAIF programmes is medium to high; they derived benefits between Rs. 16801 to 19900 (68.44 per cent) and medium to high level of impact of BAIF programmes (54.67 per cent) on their livelihood activities.

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In the 19th and early 20th centuries, several voluntary efforts were started in the fields of health, education etc. The NGOs became prominent after independence, especially after 1970s. This was partly because of the limited success of past development policies pursued by the government. Even after half a century of development efforts initiated by the state, the problems of poverty, hunger, malnutrition, unemployment, gender inequality, illiteracy etc., continue to Indian society. One of the important contributing factors for the limited success of rural development programmes was the non-participation of the peoples for whom the programmes were meant. The need for micro-level institutions to involve the people in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the programmes is, therefore, stressed in several quarters.

Mahatma Gandhi was probably the first among our leaders to promote rural development in India. In 1946, Mahatma Gandhi visited Urulikanchan, a small village near Pune. He established the Nature Cure Ashram and entrusted the responsibility of the ashram and rural upliftment to his trusted disciple Manibhai Desai. During his long association with the rural people, Manibhai studied their problems and designed suitable programmes to tackle the complex problems of unemployment, underemployment, community health, hygiene, sanitation and other social evils. BAIF believes that the focus of the programme should be on the rural family rather than on a village, because the village as a whole has a

heterogeneous character in respect of socio-economic status. If this important fact overlooked, a few well-do families of the villages invariably grab the benefit of development. As a result, the development agency becomes instrumental in widening the gap between the rich and the poor with following specific objectives.

- To study the Personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of the beneficiaries of BAIF.
- To study the Participation of the respondent beneficiaries in BAIF programmes.

METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in Ahmednagar, Nashik and Pune Districts of Maharashtra, where various development and welfare programmes are implemented by the BAIF for their beneficiaries. Five villages from each Tahsil were purposively selected where; more number of beneficiaries and the different development and welfare programmes of the BAIF were undertaken in these selected villages.

The respondent beneficiaries who were the beneficiaries of BAIF's development and welfare programmes and engaged in agricultural and allied occupations were selected for the study. List of the beneficiaries from these villages was obtained from the village level worker of the BAIF. However, for the present study all the beneficiaries were arranged alphabetically. As per Nth number method of sampling, every second beneficiary was selected as a respondent. Accordingly, from each village, fifteen beneficiaries were selected and