

## ADOPTION OF SOLAR COOKER BY RURAL WOMEN

MANASHI MOHANTY AND SUSMITA MOHANTY

See end of the article for  
authors' affiliations  
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Correspondence to :  
**MANASHI MOHANTY**  
Dept. of Family Resource  
Management, Orissa  
University of Ag. & Tech.,  
BHUBANESWAR  
(ORISSA) INDIA

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Appropriate technology is not a utopian concept as it deals with practical utility. Appropriateness does not only apply to the users alone, it is also related to the environmental impact when the earth is being ruined with pollution and degradation of environment, appropriate technology is the dire need of the hour with its emphasis on sustainability. A technology compatible with local, cultural and economic condition is appropriate for the rural people. Solar cooker is one such non-polluting technology that are required for rural India.

In India about 40 per cent of total energy is utilized for household activities. Cooking consumes about 19.2 per cent of total energy inputs in the villages (Sekhar *et al.*, 1996). A recent global study conducted by Shell Company indicated that the proven and economically recoverable all reserves will last only for 42 years at today's rate of extraction assuming the consumption level remaining unchanged.

Realizing pressure on energy sources various non-conventional energy technologies have been developed by the scientists. We are fortunate enough to have abundant sunlight during most part of the year. This untapped renewable energy could be the best substitute to save non-commercial fuels used on kitchen and keep the environment pollution free. Despite little bit high initial

### ABSTRACT

Sustainable development requires an organized effort to develop and defuse new technology appropriate for agricultural production system, renewable energy system and pollution controls. Energy is one of the vital resources for development and survival of mankind. We are fortunate enough to have abundant sunlight during most part of the year. This untapped renewable energy could be the best substitute to save non-commercial fuels used in kitchen and keep the environment pollution free. In contrast, the traditional chullha used in villages are not considered efficient and environment friendly. Therefore, to save rural women from their drudgeries, solar cooker could be an easy and alternate answer. The study was designed to find out the attributes of solar cooker for acceptability among rural women and to know their attitudes to apply this innovation in future. Training cum demonstration was conducted in two districts namely Puri and Khurda district with 415 respondents. The limitations of solar cooker cited by the respondents were its inability to work in cloudy weather, long time taken to cook food, high cost and lesser utility in a large family which influenced its whole hearted acceptance by rural women. About 57.10 % respondent expressed favorable attitude towards the future acceptability of solar cooker.

cost, in such a time the best alternative is to try and make best use of sources of energy that will last only with life on earth *i.e.* Solar cooker. Various doubts about its use are set even in the mind of the educated people. There is no exception in case of the rural mass. Hence it is necessary to create consciousness and to motivate them to use abundant natural resources for benefit of our nation.

Therefore, the present study was designed (1) to find out the attributes of solar cooker for acceptability among rural women and (2) to know their attitudes to apply this innovation in future

### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Puri and Khurda district of Orissa. Purposive and multistage random sampling procedure was followed to select the districts, blocks, villages and respondents for the study. A total of 16 villages were selected from two districts keeping operational feasibility in view. The sample consisted of 415 farm housewives (207 from Khurda district and 208 from Puri district).

Twelve recipes adjudged appropriate by the panel of judges for its taste and appearance were selected for the demonstration purpose. These recipes were tried out in solar cooker before the respondents. Four days training cum demonstration was organized in each selected village separately. All the respondents included in the base line study were motivated to attend the demonstration.