

Utilization pattern of lac host trees under different socio-economic environments: A case study in Jharkhand

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ABSTRACT : A study was carried out with a view to examine the utilization pattern of lac host trees across different categories of households and its relationship with various socio-economic characteristics of lac farmers in the Jharkhand. The study was based on primary data for the agriculture year 2012-13 and collected from 100 farmers from Ranchi, Khunti, Jamtara and Saraikela Kharsawan districts. The data were analyzed categories wise, based on land holding size by using tabular analysis and percentage. Average number of lac host trees per households across various categories varied from 43 to 82, while the number of lac host trees utilized ranged from 33 to 55 among categories of households. It was observed that 51 per cent households owned *Palas (Butea monosperma)* trees, 78 per cent *Ber (Zizyphus mauritiana)* and only 33 per cent owned *Kusum tree (Schleichera oleosa)* and involved in lac cultivation. Based on the land holding size; about 44 per cent lac farmers belonged to the marginal category (<2.5 acre), 43 per cent from small and semi medium category (2.5-<10 acre) and rest 13 per cent belonged to medium and large category. The proportion of the trees utilized by the farmers of small category (95 %) was highest, followed by medium and large category (84.6%), marginal farmers (79.6%) and semi medium category (62.2%). Thus, low land holding households are more inclined towards Lac cultivation (Jaiswal *et al*, 2006). The average family size of the households was found to be 6.34 and only 16 per cent of them were illiterate. Illiteracy was highest in case of the semi-medium category (30.4%), followed by medium and large category (23.07%) of households and also showed less number of trees utilized by them for lac cultivation. About 90 per cent of the marginal and small category households were literate. Thus, proportion of host plant utilized for lac cultivation influenced by various socio-economic factors but, magnitude of the number of host plants utilized by lac farmers was not influenced much by the different socio-economic factors.

Key Words: Lac host tree, literacy, land holding size, lac cultivation.