

A Step towards the Social Well-Being in Alwar and Sikar Districts of Rajasthan through Revival and Revitalization of Johads/Checkdams

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Abstract: This paper is an exploratory type effort to explain the connection between the sense of community and social well-being through a case study of revival of johads due to the efforts made by Mr. Rajendra Singh, his team members and people of Alwar and Sikar districts of Rajasthan which resulted into the improved levels of social well-being.

Keywords: Social Well-being, Johads, revitalization, environment

Abbreviation –

TBS – Tarun Bharat Sangh

Nef – The New Economic Foundations

According to United States Institute of Peace, “Social Well Being is an end state in which basic human needs are met and people are able to coexist peacefully in communities with opportunities and advancement.”

Objectives

- 1) To understand the connection between collectiveness and social development.
- 2) To encourage communities to understand the meaning of progress in the 21st century.
- 3) To highlight the area of Social Well-Being which is still untouched in India.

Social well-being refers to our ability to interact within a community and surrounding cultural variety while showing respect for ourselves and others. It is the feeling of satisfaction people experience when they see themselves as part of a compassionate community they have helped to create.

Social Well Being is very much influenced by our surrounding physical, built and socio-economic and cultural environment. Positive surroundings enhance social well-being while negative surroundings slow down the phenomena of social well-being.

According to Nef - Social Well-Being is made up of two main components; supportive relationships, trust and belongingness.

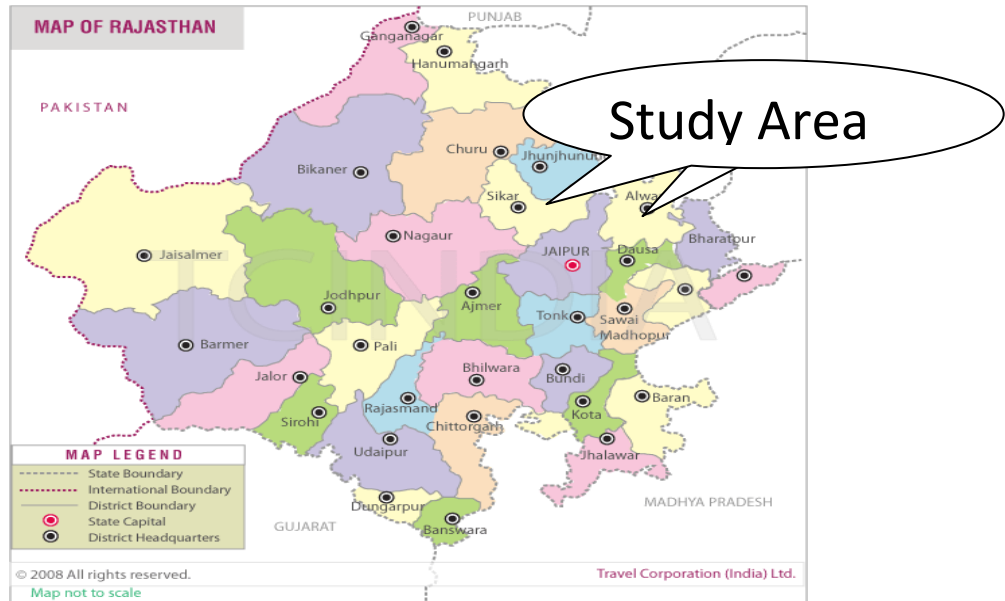
Natural and man-made hindrances or obstacles can be overcome by people's willingness, mutual understanding, co-operation and belongingness, the opportunity to participate in civic life has been identified as a core human need and essential to the psychological health of individuals and communities. Meaningful public participation in decision making on urban/rural issues is important –

- 1) To uphold the democratic notions.
- 2) For the effectiveness of the planning processes.

Which can be easily noticed in Alwar and Sikar districts of Rajasthan .

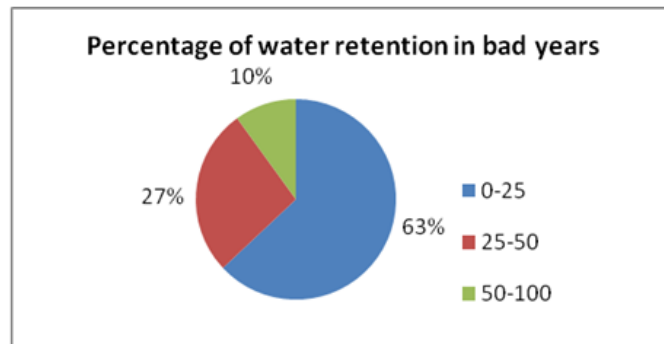
Alwar and Sikar both the districts located in the North East of Rajasthan receive 500mm of average rainfall. These districts suffered from drought during 1985-86. The water table had receded below critical levels, rivers and wells dried up. Enough food, fodder and fuel wood was not available. Agricultural, economical, and social conditions of the districts went down badly. In order to deal with such issues Mr. Rajendra Singh (popularly known as Waterman of India) and his team members (TBS) came up with an idea of rain water harvesting with the help of ancient method of constructing Johads. This led to eradication of the scarcity of water in these regions. He educated the people and made them understand the importance of water conservation and encouraged them to come together for the rejuvenation of johads. Revival and construction of check dams resulted into upliftment of the region.

Rain water harvesting is the technique of collection of rain water in surface and sub-surface aquifers, before it is lost as surface runoff. Johads are small earthen check dams that capture and conserve rain water. It is helpful to improve and increase ground water level.



I. Water Storage In Reservoirs During Good And Bad Years

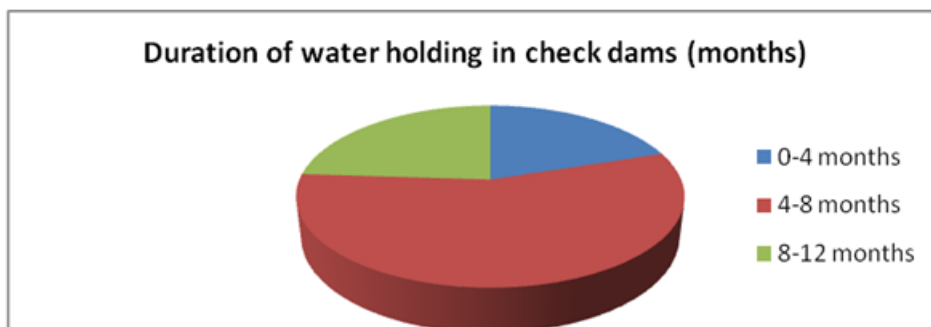
The check dams fill up during the years of good rainfall. The survey revealed that 63% of the check dams, the water stored was up to 25% of the total volume during bad years, while in case of 27% of the check dams, water stored was up to 50% of the total volume. Around 10% of the check dams were filled up to 100% of the volume even in years of deficient rains.



Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

II. Water Storage In Reservoirs

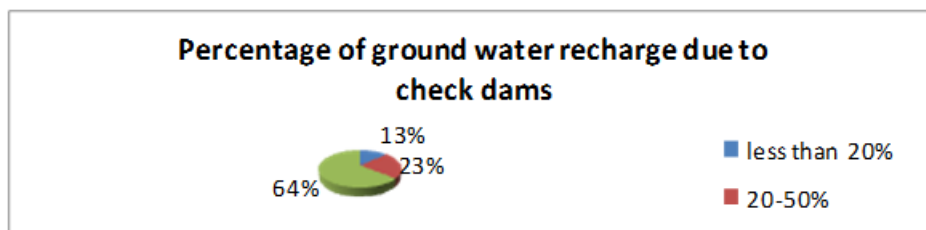
According to the villagers, the water lasted in different durations for periods ranging from less than 4 months to full 12 months. While in 20% of the check dams enough water collected for 0-4 months, water in 56% of the check dams lasted for 4-8 months and in 24% of the cases, water lasted for 12 months.



Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

III. Recharge Of Ground Water

Out of the total check dams, 64% have contributed to ground water recharge of more than 50%, followed by 23%, with recharge of 20-50% and only 13% with less than 20% of ground water recharge. Thus, the check dams significantly increased ground water recharge in most locations

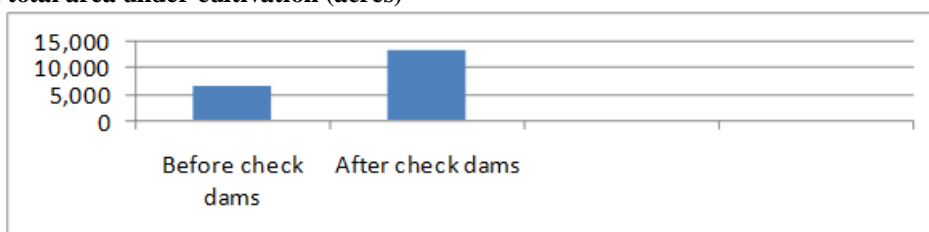


Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

IV. Area Under Cultivation

The check dams have facilitated agriculture in the districts, which is evident from the increase in area under cultivation. The total area under cultivation has increased from 6,682 acres to 13,529 acres, shown an increase of 102.5%.

Increase in total area under cultivation (acres)

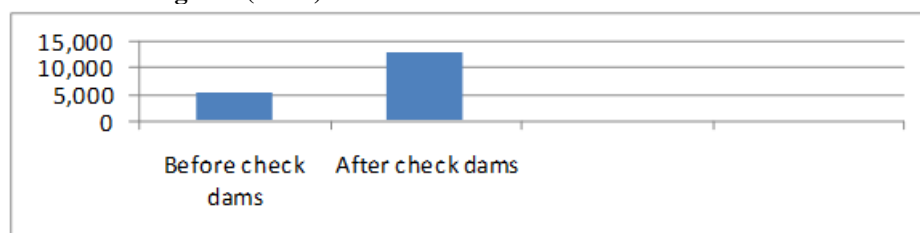


Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

V. Area Under Irrigation

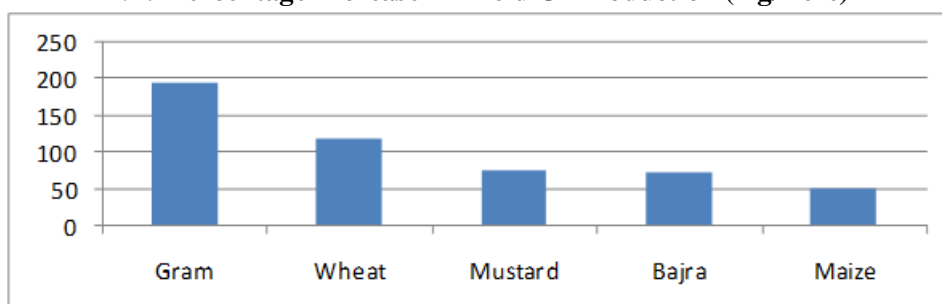
The check dams have also contributed to an increase in the area under irrigation, which is like boon for a dry state like Rajasthan. The total area under irrigation has increased from 5,216 acres to 13,258 acres shows an increase of 102.5%. Thus, almost all the area under cultivation is under irrigation as a result of the check dams.

Increase in area under irrigation(acres)



Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

VI. Percentage Increase In Yield Of Production (Kg/Acre)



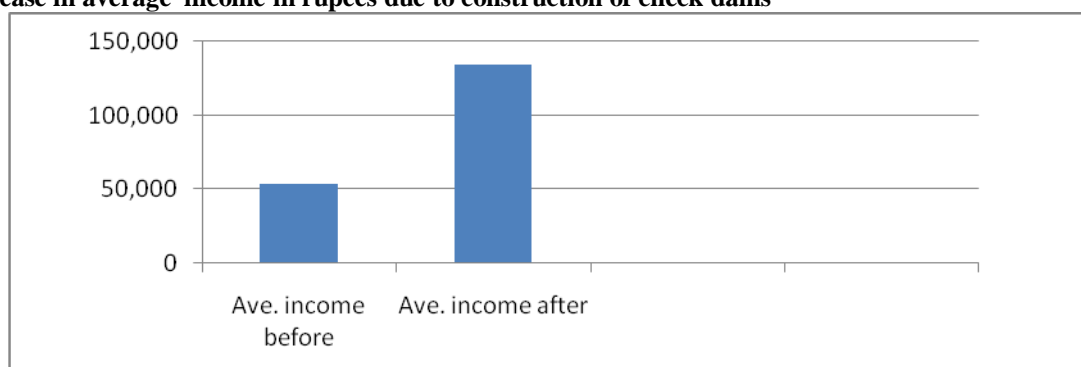
Crops	Production(Before Check Dams)	Production(After Check Dams)	Percentage increase (approx.)
Gram	143	425	197
Wheat	632	1390	120
Mustard	328	582	77.4
Bajra	268	465	74
Maize	356	538	51

Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

VII. Increase In Average Income Due To Construction Of Check Dams

The average income of the villagers was Rs.53,370 before the construction of the check dams and increased to Rs.134,615, multiplying about 2.5 times.

Increase in average income in rupees due to construction of check dams



Source: Survey of check dams in Alwar & Sikar districts of Rajasthan, April 2011

VIII. Conclusion

The concept of social well-being eventually related to human happiness or the capacity of individuals to realize their perception of the good life. People of Alwar and Sikar realised this and construction of Johads by them along with the help of TBS have changed the geographical and economical scenario of the region. Johads/check dams have helped in increasing the productivity of land ultimately increased the income of the villagers. New economic activities such as construction of houses, purchase of agricultural tools and machinery etc are some positive outcomes of the check dams. The villagers are satisfied with the adequacy of check dam water and thus in the state of well-being.

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