



Gender issues in household fuel wood and energy consumption :

A case of Bundelkhand Central India



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Background

The importance of gender issues in agroforestry has been broadly recognized and demonstrated. Still there remain a number of issues that require special attention. Particularly collection of fuel wood from agroforestry lands for household consumption.

Gender plays an important role in cow & buffalo dung cake making for household fuel consumption. Proportion of cow & buffalo dung cake replaced by fuel wood collected from agroforestry lands is also very important aspect in intra-household decision making and power dynamics as they relate to agroforestry.

One of the basic objectives of National Agroforestry Policy-India (2014) is to encourage and expand the tree plantation in complementarily and integrated manner with crops.

Socio-economic component of society from agroforestry view point is considered in present interdisciplinary approach of research work.

Objectives

1. To examine the impact on income, employment, environment, capital formation and livelihood pattern of households.
2. To study the fuel wood collection and consumption, quantity per day/ season, source and place of collection.
3. To study constraints in adoption of agroforestry.

Methodology

The present investigation was carried out in Bundelkhand region (23° 8' - 26° 31' N, 78° 11' - 81° 30' E) spread over 7.16 million ha in Central India between seven districts of U.P. (Jhansi, Jalaun, Lalitpur, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Banda and Chitrakoot) and six districts of M.P. (Sagar, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Panna, Damoh and Datia).

The landscape is undulating with characteristic hillocks and experiences semi-arid climate. Average annual rainfall of different districts ranges 750-1100 mm.

The present investigation was carried out during 2016-18 at Garh Kunder-Dabar watershed area of Tikamgarh district of Bundelkhand region in M.P.

The respondents of this study comprised 120 farmers in which 30 farmers from each category i.e. marginal, small, medium & large farmers.

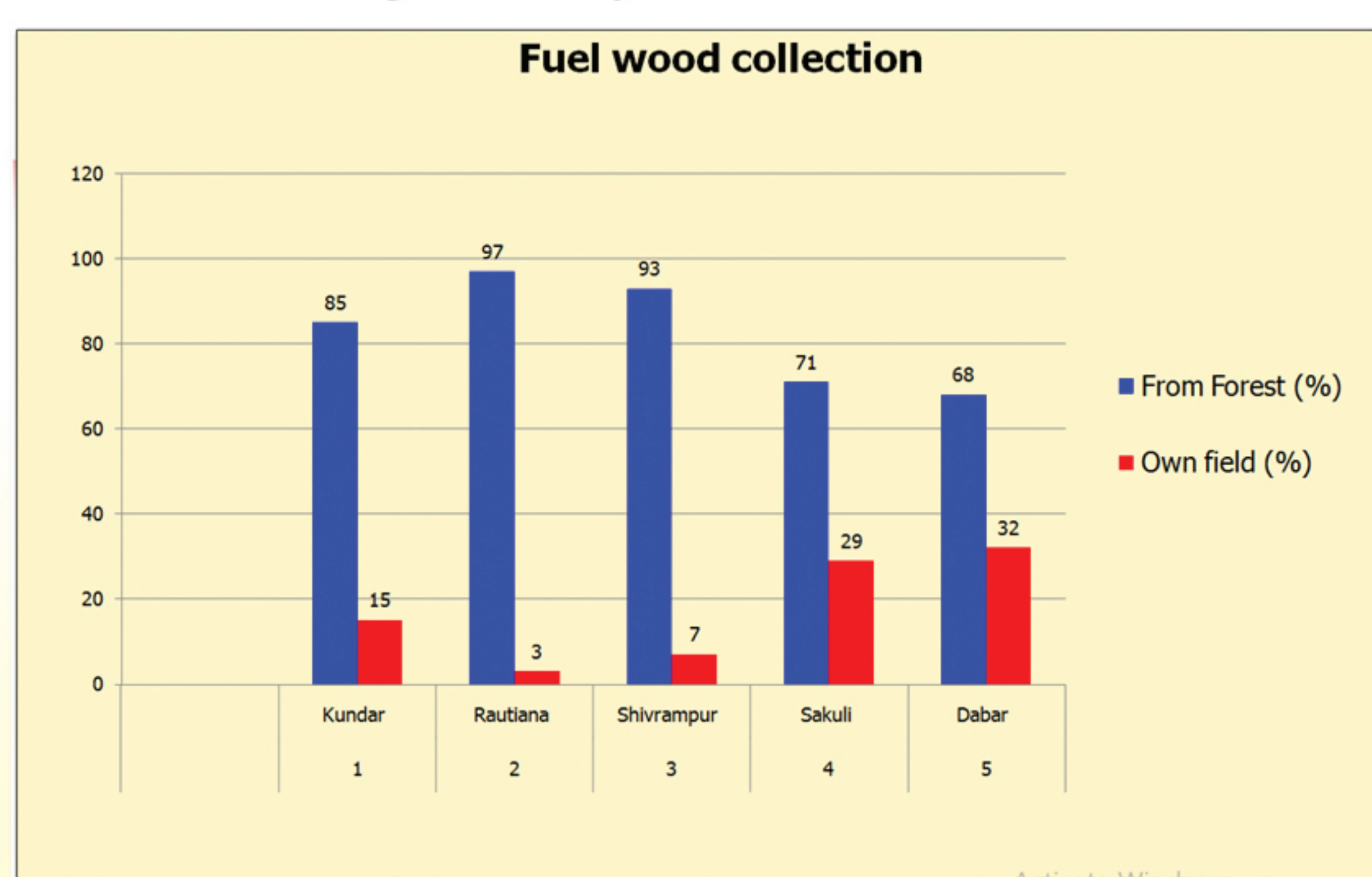
The data were collected by using structured interview schedule and Focused Group Discussion (FGD).

Results and Discussion

The available tree species are Butea (*Butea monosperma*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Subabul (*Leucaena leucocephala*) and Dhaunkara (*Delonix regia*).

Fuel wood collection

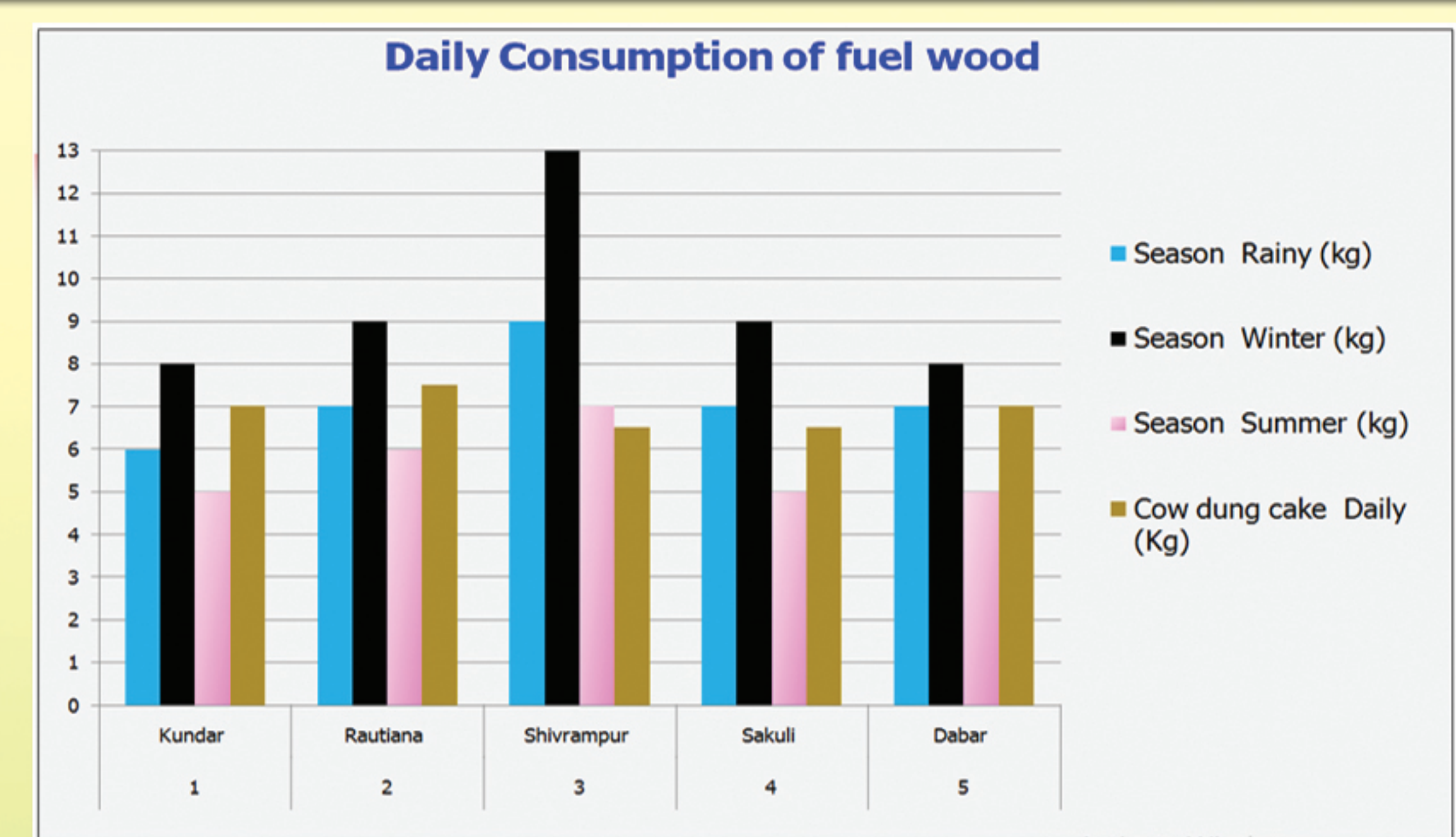
In watershed villages 70-95% of required fuel wood is collected from adjacent forest areas and 5-30% from own agroforestry field.



Daily consumption of fuel wood

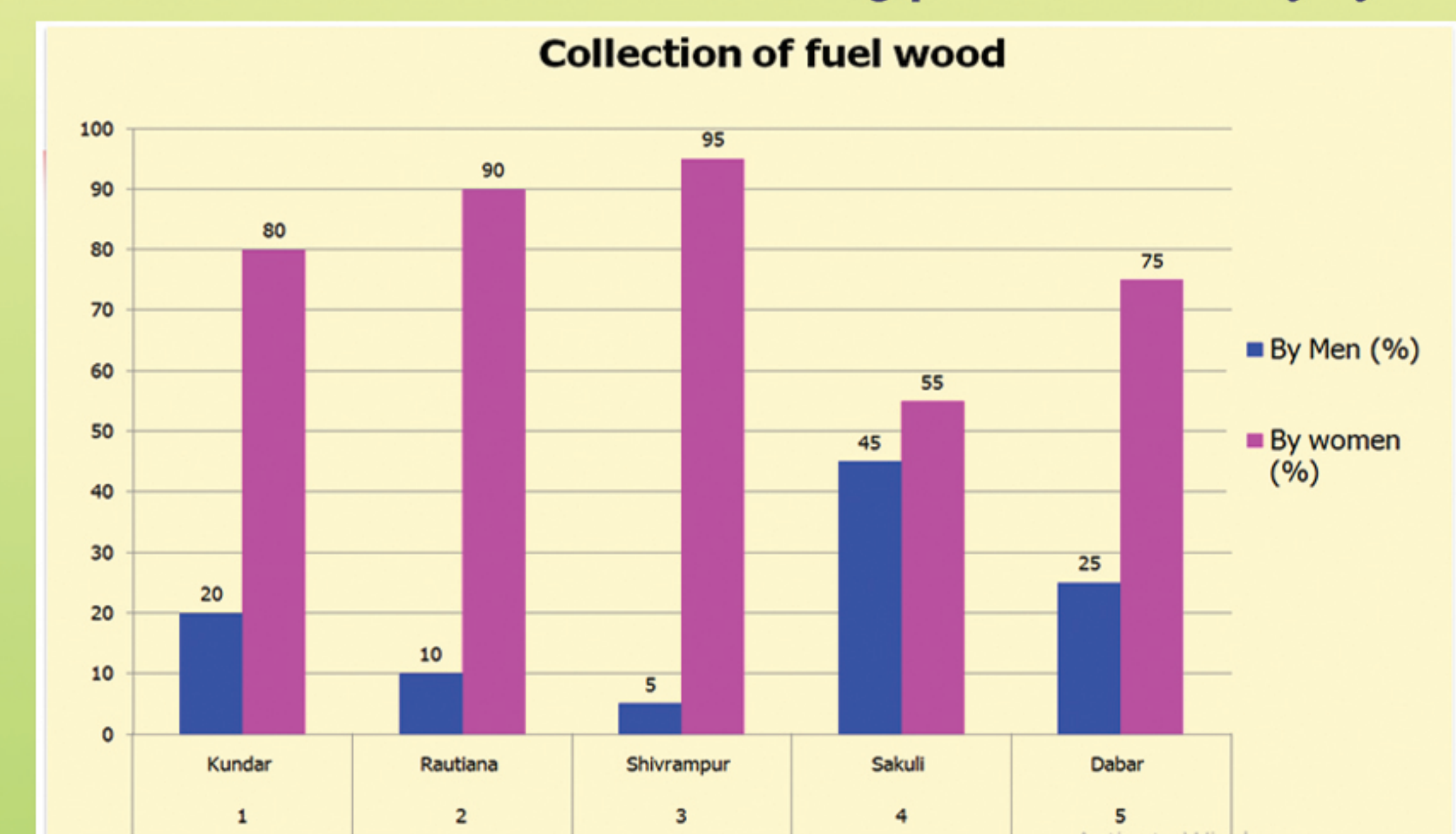
The consumption of fuel wood is 4.5-5.5 Kg/day during Rainy, 6.5-7.5 Kg/day during Winter and 4-5 Kg/day during Summer season.

Cow & Buffalo dung cake is another important fuel being used for cooking. The amount is 4 to 7 kg/day as per requirement.



Collection of fuel wood

It is found that the collection of fuel wood is being performed mostly by women (50-85%).



Impact on Socio-economic parameters

Extension media contact (95%) and increased annual income (200%).

The migration of women farmers' practicing agroforestry is reduced in the watershed area due to agroforestry interventions.

Obstacles in adoption of agroforestry

Obstacles in adoption of agroforestry are: Lack of profit potential, additional expenses and lack of financial assistance.

Other major issues have to do with social-Anna Pratha (stray animals), reduction in crop yield, ploughing problem, shade problem, bird damage, lack of outreach, training and demonstrations of agroforestry in action.

Agroforestry loan at cheaper rate of interest should be sanctioned to purchase these inputs at the subsidised rates to the farmers.

Conclusion

There is relevance of gender issues in agroforestry adoption in general and in fuel and energy consumption in particular.

In such situation, agroforestry management through watershed interventions with due emphasis on gender concern appear an effective tool to make the gender dynamics in agroforestry systems.

Keywords: Gender issue, Fuel wood, Cow dung cake, socio-economic



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