

**Adoption of Rubber Harvesting Technologies by Self-Latex Harvesters: A Case Study in Moneragala District of Sri Lanka**

**Gunarathne P. K. K. S.<sup>1</sup> ✉, Tennakoon T. M. S. P. K.<sup>2</sup>, Edirisinghe J. C.<sup>3</sup>, Jayasundara K. K. I.<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract**

Self-latex harvesters (SLHs) are the people who extract (harvesting/tapping) latex from rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis*) trees in their own smallholdings. This study was carried out to evaluate the level of adoption and find out reasons for partial or non-adoption of harvesting technologies (HTs) generated by Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka. The study covering 297 rubber smallholdings with SLHs was conducted in 2019 through a questionnaire survey and field level observations in Moneragala district. The level of adoption was measured for nine HTs, employing three levels as not-adopted, partially-adopted and fully-adopted. Reasons for the deviations from the HTs were also recorded and prioritized. The majority have fully-adopted to the correct timing of tapping (R-1) (70%). The rest of HTs; viz. tapping system (R-2), girth (R-3) and height (R-4) at opening for tapping, cleanliness of tapping area (R-5) and tapping utensils (R-6), placement of spout (R-7) and cup (R-8) and tapping panel marking (R-9) of which the recorded fully-adopted levels were, 21%, 23%, 21%, 21%, 23%, 15%, 8%, and 37%, respectively. Except for R-1, the main reason for partial and non-adoption for the rest of the HTs was poor awareness of SLHs. The reasons except poor awareness for partial and non-adoption of HTs by SLHs were highlighted as follows; two main reasons for partial/non-adoption of R-1 were bad weather conditions and threat of bites by snakes/animals in early morning. For R-2, high rainfall on tapping days was found to have a considerable impact. In order to achieve a high tapping task, SLHs ignored practicing of R-3. One of the reasons for partial/non adoption of R-4 was the height of the harvester, who finds it difficult to operate at the opening height of 120 cm. Reason for partial/non adoption level in R-5 and R-6, was reluctance to allocate extra time for cleaning, and that of R-7 and R-8 was, not giving the due recognition by the SLHs, whilst for R-9, it was non-availability of marking stencils. The study indicated that adoption levels of HTs in Moneragala were poor. Lack of awareness was the prominent reason for low/non-adoption of HTs. Therefore, it is a vital necessity for an appropriate strategy for enhancing the adoption level of HTs among SLHs to exploit the advantages of HTs.

**Keywords:** *Adoption, rubber harvesting practices, self-latex harvester*

---

<sup>1</sup> Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup> University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Sri Lanka

<sup>3</sup> Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

✉ Corresponding Author: kapila.s.gunarathne@gmail.com