CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Common property resources can be classified into many types depending upon their use for human beings and of nature itself, of which that renewable resources are the pastures, trees, fish, etc, and non-renewable resources are the minerals, coal etc. Some have the direct potential for income generation for eg., common lands, water tanks, ponds, and others like roads, lights, groves, some flora and fauna, are the indirect sources of sustainability for the human populace.

The situation of commons in India, gives the impression that wherever strong community hold persisted, the commons continued to serve the purpose of meeting everybody’s requirement. According to the Definition by customary management practices, one can list a larger number of CPRs, like, lands under different community uses (such as thrashing grounds, grazing pastures), wastelands (barren lands, shrub lands, etc.,) forest lands, water resources (both ground and surface), and water bodies (tanks, ponds), fishery resources, biodiversity resources (such as sacred groves) common dumping grounds and many more. Unfortunately, there are no official estimates on the magnitudes, types and variation in CPRs in India. If any, they are shown in revenue, irrigation, or forest records under different types of holdings (pasture lands, barren lands, reserved, and protected forests) and managements (shamlat, van panchayat, sacred grove), canals, tanks, and wells.

CPRs are critical to sustainable livelihood strategies of the poor in India ranging from direct visible contributions in terms of supplying physical items like food, fibre, fodder, fuel, timber etc. to less valuable gains implied by sustainability of farming systems, renewable resource supply, drought period maintenance etc. in arid and semi-arid regions in India. CPRs contribute between 12-25 per cent of the poor household’ income. It is a fact that the
poorer the households, the more important is the contribution of CPRs. Moreover, CPRs contribute to rural equity because they are accessed more by the poor than by the rich.

Despite the contribution made by CPRs to the livelihood of rural poor, these resources have remained one of the most neglected areas in development planning in India. Common Property resources currently add some US$5 billion a year to the incomes of the poor rural households in India, or about 12 per cent to household’s income of poor rural households. This is about two and half times total World Bank lending to India in fiscal 1996, about twice foreign direct investment in India in 1996, and more than twice the amount of official development assistance in the same year.

In the Indian context, it is especially important as still 78 per cent of the rural people and 30 per cent of the urban population is dependent on fuelwood and chips as their main fuel. In certain pockets of the country, CPRs are providing the basis of income generation for households with multiple options, quite distinct from role as providers of subsistence incomes. This points towards the possibility of a new role for CPRs in the context of market oriented development, a role that has significant implications for the paradigm development with (and through) conservation. It can be argued that if people view the commons increasingly as a potential source for enhanced well-being, their role needs to be reconceptualised. Changes in the importance of different CPR functions, could lead to different kinds of shifts in the control, governance and conflicts over these resources. The heavy dependence of the rural poor links these resources to the dynamics of poverty and to development interventions centred on the poor. Therefore, any change in the status and productivity of common property resources directly influences the economy of the rural poor.
A number of welfare and development interventions have had severe negative side affects on CPRs. During the five years period of 1992-97 itself, around 833,000 ha (around 2 per cent) of the CPR land has been lost (NSSO, 1997). Such declines in CPRs have also been noted that the poor households are losing access to CPRs. The extent and decline between the mid-1950s and 1980s was between 26 per cent and 52 per cent are mainly due to the primary factors behind the degradation of CPRs as undeclared regressive state policies, encouraging privatisation and neglect of CPRs.

The globalization brought changes in administration pattern through centralized control over the general management. The Impact of globalization on the common showed various patterns of ownership, control, use and misuse. The commons are subjected to degradation as well as conservation in process of centralized management. After independence, the administration of natural resources came into the hands of respective specialized department for example forest department and Revenue department. All the land apart from private land was regarded state property and controlled by the state. Globalisation creates an impact on the local cultural domain and this interaction is an ongoing process. Different cultural unit feels the effect of globalization differently. The larger cultural units imbibe it, while the small scale cultural unit confronts it, though gradually most of the times scum to pressures. In case of management of natural common, globalization affects local cultural units managing it into many ways. This is because of the process of management of commons in small scale societies vary in degree and kind. It has variety in management practice. For example, commons for livelihood issues are managed differently and commons for religious purposes (which has psychological attachment, and belief system) are managed differently. The religious commons play a vital role in local culture and are conserved and managed for psychological strength it give to the village social system. Most of the common resources in the small-scale societies have multifunctional.
It has a manifest function as well as latent function in common management. Moreover, it is quite common that the CPRs are mostly used by the dominant sections of the society and the poor people are rarely allowed to enjoy the benefits form the CPRs. At this backdrop, the present study was carried out to understand the village level evidence in the study area regarding the dependence of poor households on common property resources the extent of which has been declining during the process of globalization; and to identify whether or not the CPRs have any relevance in providing livelihood security for the rural poor in the study area.

The Study has been carried out with the following objectives

**Objectives**

i) To identify the common property resources in the study area;

ii) To examine the poor people’s use of and access to common property resources in the study area;

iii) To identify the contributory factors for incapacitating the poor people in using the common property resources in the study area; and

iv) To suggest suitable measures of just utilization of the common property resources by the society.

The present study highlights the importance of CPRs in the Villages. The Government built as well as restructured the CPRs in the Villages through Various development programmes. In this context, the present study made an attempt to probe in to the following questions, a) Are there any deficiencies in the access to CPRs? b) Why the resources have been under utilized or over utilized? c) Who are exploiting the common resources and their quality.

In this connection the present study was carried out by taking 12 villages from six blocks in Dindigul district as sample villages and by eliciting information from randomly selected respondents from each village on CPRs use pattern in their villages.
The information thus collected was processed tabulated and statistically tested. Based on which the following findings were arrived at:

Findings

7.1. Socio-economic profile of the sample respondents

- It was found that a majority (64.7 per cent) of the respondents belong to the middle age group (36-60 years) and 25.0 per cent of the respondents fall under the young age group (15-35 years).

- It could be revealed that the male households dominated and represent 76.3 per cent. The female households represent only 23.7 per cent that too emerged due to the unforeseen family circumstances.

- Of the total sample, majority of the households belonged to Backward community (44.7 per cent) followed by the SCs/STs (28.7 per cent) and MBCs (21.7 per cent).

- Out of the total sample of 300 surveyed household, 90 per cent are Hindus followed by Christians (8.7 per cent) and Muslims (1.3 per cent).

- Of the total 300 respondents, 136 (45 per cent) belonged to the category of illiterate. The percentage of middle school educated respondents registered 24 per cent. The percentage of the respondents was 16.7 per cent followed by high School education and Graduation (6.7 per cent). The percentage of post graduates (1.3 per cent) and professionals (0.3 per cent) are negligible.

- Of the total 300 sample households, 41.7 per cent of the head of the household’s main occupation was agricultural labourers and 19.4 per cent are cultivators, while the necessary 38.6 per cent of the respondents engaged in different occupations. Out of the 38.6 per cent of the respondents who are involved in the non-farm sector 20 per cent are engaged in private service followed by 7.3 per cent who are running
their business. The per capita of the respondents employed in Government service was 5.3 per cent.

- Of the total sample surveyed, 89 per cent of the households were living in their own houses and remaining 11.0 per cent were living in the Rental houses.

- It can be observed from the table that a majority of the households (72.7 per cent) have tiled houses and 11.7 per cent have pucca houses while 15.7 per cent have only huts. A similar trend can be seen in each block.

- It can be observed from the table that in the study area 80.7 per cent of the houses are electrified while, 19.3 per cent are not electrified.

- Of these three groups, 49 per cent belonged to the medium size (4-6) families followed by large families (35 per cent) with the family size 7 and above while; the rest of them belonged to small families (16 per cent).

- On an average, the male/female composition was more or less equal. The male and female population was 52 per cent and 48 per cent respectively.

- Of these four age groups, majority of them were in the economically active groups of young (44.65 per cent) and middle aged (28.46 per cent) followed by children (23.11 per cent). It reveals that the cycle of the population was moving in a balanced way, except in the case of old aged. The old age constituted only 3.77 per cent.

- On an whole, pamer dependant ratio among the sample household was 0.84 depicting the fact that for every one earner, there is one dependant in each family.

- It is found that the average household income was Rs.56054. out of which the contribution of agriculture was 33 per cent.
• It is also found that the average household consumption expenditure was worked out to be Rs. 19200. Of this, 71.35 per cent (Rs. 13700/-) was food expenditure and the remaining 28.65 per cent (Rs.5500/-) was non-food expenditure.

• The study also revealed that the average value of the total asset of the sample households stood at Rs. 1,43,466, but it varied in between Rs.94,662 and Rs.2,44,341 among 6 blocks, implying that inequality does prevail among the households as well as among the region.

• Of the total livestock population owned by the sample households 36 per cent are goats, by cows which constituted 17 per cent.

7.2. Availability of Common Property Resources

• The non-forest common property land resources in Dindigul District were 179660.78 hectares, which is 28.67 per cent of the total land area, a figure which is remarkably greater than the national average of 14.81 per cent.

• The study found that the total CPR land in the selected six blocks recorded 138733.30 hectares. Out of which 75957.30 hectares (26.29 per cent) is non-forest land. Further, CPR area varies from 23.90 per cent to 66.43 per cent of geographical area in these blocks.

• The per capita availability of CPR-area in the rural areas of Dindigul District is 0.14 ha.

• It is also observed that about one third of the respondents (30.33 per cent) are excluded from having access to the temple resources in the study area. The computed chi-square value 27.14 is greater than its tabule value (22.5) at 1 per cent level of significance, it could be concluded that there is difference between caste groups by access.
7.3 Use of Common property Resource in the Study area

- It is found that the average quantity of fuelwood collected by the sample household per annum was 2399 kgs in the study area and its value was Rs. 3838.

- It is found that about on an average employment provided by these CPRs per annum was 76 days which ranges in between 42 days (Thoppampatti) to 139 days (Palani block).

- It is found that only 67 per cent of the households have the free access to the CPRs for fuelwood collection.

- Average quantity of crop residues collection by the sample household per annum was 182 kgs with the worth of Rs. 214 in the study area which ranges between 155 kg (Thoppampatti) to 221 kg (Reddiyarchattram).

- Average the quantity of fodder collected by the sample household per annum was 180 kgs with the worth of Rs. 216 in the study area. It varies between 101 kgs (Reddiyarchattram) to 366 kgs (Vadamadurai)

- It is found that though the average quantity of crop residues was collected from the CPRs by the sample households was si82 kgs, variations were found among different caste groups like SC/ST (225 kg), FC (192 kg) and BC (179 kg).

- It is generally understood that CPRs are completely accessible to the people. It is found that on an average 8 per cent of the households are felt that CPRs was open for T hatching grass collection.

- Average quantity of leaf litter collected by the sample household per annum in the study area was 1354 kgs. Which varies from 1027 kgs. (Palani) to 2220 kgs. (Vadamadurai)
7.4. Access to CPRs in the study area

- It is also observed that 33.66 per cent of the respondents were excluded from having access to Bus shelters. The computed chi-square value which is 23.60 is greater than its table value (22.5) at 1 per cent level of significance confirmed the exclusiveness in access to bus shelter. It is statistically proved significant. It can be concluded that there is difference between caste groups by access.

- As far as the accesses to Street lights in the study area are concerned, the study revealed that about 31 per cent of the respondents were excluded. The computed chi-square value which is 24.10 is greater than its table value (22.5) at 1 per cent level of significance proved that the exclusiveness in access to streetlights is statistically significant. It can be concluded that there is denial of access to street lights also in the study area.

- As many as 37.66 per cent of the respondents were excluded from having access to Waste dumping places in the study area. Since the computed chi-square value (30.60) is greater than its table value (22.5) at 1 per cent level of significance, it is proved that there is difference between caste groups by access to waste dumping places.

- Similarly 33.33 per cent of the respondents were excluded from having access to drainage facility in the study area. The computed chi-square value which (32.07) is greater than its table value (22.5) at 1 per cent level of significance established the exclusiveness in access to drainage as statistically significant. It can be conclude that there is difference between caste groups by access to drainage facilities.

- It is also found that even the higher education or high income or decent occupation do not have nay relevance to have access to the CPRs because ultimately it is the caste hierarchy that dictates terms in the feudal set up.
Conclusion

Common property systems deserve respect for their management, equity and insurance functions. Policymakers should refrain from undermining common property systems, and should consider providing them with legal recognition and other forms of support. A major outstanding issue is whether common property institutions can be purposively created or induced by policymakers and donors to undertake resource conservation in circumstances where sustainable management techniques have failed to emerge spontaneously.

In poor countries common property resources make a valuable contribution to the sustainable livelihoods of rural populations. An inadequate rural employment opportunity, especially in the slack season, implies that the local commons can make substantial contributions to household incomes. Another important function of local common property resources is that they act as insurance against uncertainty in the absence of complete contingent markets. Access to such resources serves to prevent risks associated with natural disasters and crop failure. Furthermore, for landless populations, access to local common property resources may be the only available non-human asset. At this backdrop, the findings of this study will become an eye opener to the administrator and policy makers to make suitable laws for removing the contributory factors like caste of incapacitating the poor people in using the common property resources. This study on the CPRs use pattern in selected villages in Dinidigul district clearly exposes how the higher caste people are exploiting the CPRs on which each and every caste group has equal stake. This is done deliberately by preventing access to the lower caste people. In case of I Schedule castes, due to the practice of untouchability. Even the Higher education or high income or decent occupation do not have any relevance to have access to the CPRs because ultimately it is the caste hierarchy that dictates terms in the feudal se
Suggestions

• The details regarding the types and magnitude of CPRs available in each village should be notified in the notice board of the panchayat officer so that nobody can exploit them.

• People should be made aware of their use rights regarding the CPRs.

• The people who are keeping the CPRs under their control by using their political powers or influence or caste dominance and preventing the access to the poor people should be broked under POTA like Act.

• The government should strictly enforce concerned laws to eradicate untouchability, which is the root cause fro animosity in the villages, so that CPRs can be shared among each and every body accordingly to their need and entitlement but not according to their greed.

Areas for further research

Though there are several studies on CPRs and their use and abuse, the studies on the contributory factors which incapacitate the rural people in using the CPRs are very few. Hence studies on identifying these factors and the causative factors for continuance of these factors will be highly useful for provision of equitable access to all the Stake holders.
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- It is also found that even the higher education or high income or decent occupation do not have nay relevance to have access to the CPRs because ultimately it is the caste hierarchy that dictates terms in the feudal set up.
Conclusion

Common property systems deserve respect for their management, equity and insurance functions. Policymakers should refrain from undermining common property systems, and should consider providing them with legal recognition and other forms of support. A major outstanding issue is whether common property institutions can be purposively created or induced by policymakers and donors to undertake resource conservation in circumstances where sustainable management techniques have failed to emerge spontaneously.

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Suggestions

• The details regarding the types and magnitude of CPRs available in each village should be notified in the notice board of the panchayat officer so that nobody can exploit them.

• People should be made aware of their use rights regarding the CPRs.

• The people who are keeping the CPRs under their control by using their political powers or influence or caste dominance and preventing the access to the poor people should be broked under POTA like Act.

• The government should strictly enforce concerned laws to eradicate untouchability, which is the root cause fro animosity in the villages, so that CPRs can be shared among each and every body accordingly to their need and entitlement but not according to their greed.

Areas for further research

Though there are several studies on CPRs and their use and abuse, the studies on the contributory factors which incapacitate the rural people in using the CPRs are very few. Hence studies on identifying these factors and the causative factors for continuance of these factors will be highly useful for provision of equitable access to all the Stake holders.