New Wine in Old Bottle:
An Analysis of Community Forest Management in South India (Andhra Pradesh), Colonial and Post-colonial Period

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Abstract: *Participatory approach in forest management emerged as most preferred policy option in most of the developing countries. Participation of communities in forest management has been perceived as panacea for reduction of poverty in forest based economies. In this backdrop, robust reform process by making community a centre for forest management programmes was initiated in India. After two decades of inception, community based forest management could not achieve envisaged results. This situation necessitated for serious revamp of existing policy formulations. In this context, a comparative analysis of community forest management (CFM) in colonial and post-colonial India is useful to trace the micro and macro level dynamics of the policy process. By examining CFM in colonial and post colonial Andhra Pradesh (AP), this paper proposes that community cantered forest management in India had strong colonial legacy consequent upon which the policy initiatives could not delivered expected results.*

Keywords: *India, Development, Natural Resource Management, Forestry*

Introduction

Participatory approach in forest management emerged as most preferred policy option in most of the developing countries. Participation of communities in forest management has been perceived as panacea for reduction of poverty in forest based economies. In this backdrop, robust reform process by making community a centre for forest management programmes was initiated in India. After two decades of inception, community based forest management could not achieve envisaged results. This situation

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necessitated for serious revamp of existing policy formulations. In this context, a comparative analysis of community forest management (CFM) in colonial and post-colonial India is useful to trace the micro and macro level dynamics of the policy process. By examining CFM in colonial and post colonial Andhra Pradesh (AP), this paper proposes that community cantered forest management in India had strong colonial legacy consequent upon which the policy initiatives could not delivered expected results.

This paper is organised into four sections. First section narrates the approach, methodology, and a brief review of literature. A second section traces the historical roots of CFM in South India in general and AP region in particular. Third section deals with forest policy in independent India with particular reference to community cantered forest management in AP. And final section proposes conclusion and summery of the article.

Context of the Study

The issue of poverty emerged as critical factor which posed serious threat to the legitimacy of nation states in the developing countries of Africa and Asia. India has been recognised as one of the fast growing economies of the globe along with China. The criticism on India's development pattern is its concentration in urban areas. Rural poverty had become a critical imperative which forced nation states to initiate strategies to tackle poverty. In the hierarchy of rural poverty, forest dependent people stand at the bottom. Greatest poverty is experienced among the people in forest-based economies. It is estimated that 84% tribal population live in forested areas ((Sunderlin, e al, 2005). After 1990, robust reform process was initiated in forestry sector to evolve efficient governance by making people as partners. These schemes were known as joint forest or community forest management programmes. At present 27% of the national forest areas across 27 states are managed by 85,000 village committees (World Bank 2006). CFM initiatives were perceived by officials and civil society as

panacea for eradication of rural poverty in frost regions. After twenty years of implementation process of the schemes, envisaged results remained to be unachieved. This article proposes that the concept of CFM in the contemporary India had originated in British colonial rule in a particular context which is similar to that of neo-liberal policy paradigm which India had adopted. A comparative study of CMF in colonial and post colonial periods useful to understand not only the underlying policy dynamics of community forest policies in India but also changes in rural India broadly.

Methodology

For analysis of CFM in AP, comparative analysis of historical and contemporary periods employed in this article. This helps tracing the socio-economic and political dynamics of CFM in India. This also useful to have a long term trajectory of CFM which enable predict the direction of policy and incorporate necessary changes to make to more efficient. For documentation of CFM policy process in British colonial period, sources are mainly drawn from state archives of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. These sources mainly provide details on correspondence of state bureaucracy, working plans and annual administrative reports of forest department. For study of CFM in the contemporary period, empirical observations are drawn from nine village forest protection committees scattered in different bio-physical regions of AP. The information from the field studies is collected in the form of focussed group discussions with different stake holders, records of village forest protection committees etc., (Table-I).

Table: No.1: Details of the Sample Villages

District	VSS Villages
	Pandhirlodhhi

	Sainagar Thanda
	Heerapur
Kadapa	Ramachandrapuram
	S.R.Palem
	Mudireddypalle
Visakhapatnam	Sobhakota
	Gudlamveedi
	Nandivalasa

Source: Filed Survey

Community Forest Management an Academic Discourse

Ascendancy of neoliberal economic policies initiated pervasive discourse of development wherein local communities are perceived as potential agencies to execute developmental projects. This discourse of developmentalism according to some studies a renovated version of colonial modernity articulated in the name of economic development (Prakesh 2000). The process of scaling down of state responsibility and enabling active citizen participation in development process is referred to as inclusive, participatory, sustainable development and decentralised development. Forestry sector was brought under a massive participatory policy package after 1990. This process is referred to as joint, community and participatory forest management. Initially Indian government claimed the community forestry as a shift in forest policy from state centric to peoples' centric (Government of AP, 2002). Several academic and activists studies hailed this as most appropriate policy option for striking a judicious balance between livelihood requirement and conservation of forests (Mayers and Morison 2000).

After two decades of implementation process, community forestry could not achieve envisaged results. Several critical studies on different regions of Indian sub-content highlighted the lukewarm performance of community forestry (Samata 2005, Kumar 2005, Reddy et al,

2006, & Bagaski & Blaki 2007). These studies mainly highlighted two points: inability of CFM to generate tangible economic gains and failure to evolve efficient institutional structure for inclusive participation of all stake holders of community. These studies perceive policy dynamics and socio-economic and political context as categories free from the burden of the past. It never means to say that historical dynamics of community forestry unaddressed in India. Some studies did attempt to analyse historical dynamics of CFM (Sunder, 1999, Sunder, et al 2001, Reddy et al, 2006). But these studies present a reductionist version on historical roots of CFM. The main argument proposed in these studies is that half-hearted policy initiatives on communal forests were initiated by colonial state in response to the peoples' struggle during national movement and the reform process in forest sector in independent India is an attempt to rectify the lacuna of colonial policy. However, an attempt has been done on comparative analysis of socio-political context of colonial and post colonial periods in Uttrakhand region (Agrwal 2006). But South India, wherein robust policy intervention was initiated in colonial and post-colonial periods has not yet been explored. This article addresses this gap.

The main hypothesis this study is that CFM in South India initiated by colonial state mainly due to two reasons: firstly maintenance costs of village commons exceeded the revenue derived from them after 1910: secondly, colonial state attempted introduce self governance in rural areas by the way of drawing village elite communities into local governance process which expected to provide legitimacy to the imperial government which was consistently troubled by emerging urban bourgeois and rural landed gentry. Cooperative society movement, water users associations, local educational bodies are some of the manifestations of this process. Similarly, communities popularly known as forest panchyats were created for management of forests. Forest communities in colonial period were products of colonial state's attempt to strike a compromise between state revenue considerations and political demands of rural communities. The concept of deregulation in forestry was a global phenomenon in 1920s wherein community cantered

forest management was introduced in several countries of South Asia and Africa. In this process state power in the countryside was expected to be carried by local elite who were bestowed immense control over local resources. In means colonial modernity rediscovered and consolidated the rural inequalities by the way of drawing village elite into colonial political and economic process. It means that pattern and client relation in India not rooted in the pre-colonial past rather products of colonial rule.

In independent India if not the same but similar trend continued. Agrarian peasantry was drawn into political process and in fact most of the states in Indian union are ruled by chief ministers who project the image of country side as helm of their governance. Colonial modernity which consolidated the inequalities on caste, class line in rural India are further crystallised in independent India in general and adoption of neo-liberal policies in particular. This article attempts to construct long term trajectory of community forest management spanning from pre-colonial, colonial and independent India.

Community Forest Management in Colonial South India

Some studies argue that pre-colonial period experienced a perfect balance between needs of people and regeneration capacity of forests (Guha, 1992, Murali 1995). These studies tried to create an image of merry India with happy village communities. These studies did not recognise class/caste dynamics and operation of power relations for accessing forests. In fact, studies on ecological history of India propose that caste system facilitated for adoption of sustainable resource utilisation patterns (Gadgil and 1992, Guha, 1994). Recent studies demonstrate that dominant class/caste control the forests and village commons in pre-colonial Andhra region (Talbot, 2005, Babu, 2005). Colonial state did not initiate any significant departure from pre-colonial practices and in fact, strengthen the control of dominant village communities control over forests and commons. Scientific forestry initiated by colonial state mainly aimed at timber supply for various infrastructural

projects but also generation of revenue. This led to unprecedented intervention of state apparatus in the customary dependency of forest dependent communities. However, to avoid confrontation with communities, colonial policy makers proposed for involvement of local communities in forest management. Dr. Brandis, father of Indian forestry commented on the need for involvement of local communities in the following quote:

> Village forests are for the benefit of village communities or groups of villages, and to arrange for their protection and management by the community under the control of the State. Not only will these forests yield a permanent supply of wood and fodder to the people without any material expense to the State, but, if well managed, they will contribute much towards the healthy development of municipal institutions and of local self government (Brandis, 1994: 80)

Brnadis reflection shows that involvement of communities in forest management is imperative for forest policy. But colonial policy makers did not properly understood the complexities of Indian social fabric which determines the access to resources. Consequently colonial imagination of community consists of village elite or dominant peasant communities who control entire village affairs. It was this elite community which was brought under colonial governance process as agents of its rule. The nexus between dominant agrarian communities and colonial rule has been brought by some studies (Stain, 1989, Ludden, 2005). But this investigation confined to agriculture and forestry yet to be explored. This article demonstrates the way forests and village commons went into the control of dominant peasant communities by the way of excluding the customary access of rural artisans, untouchables, and pastoralists.

The Madras Forest Act of 1882 was the first systematic forest legislation in South India. This act proposed provisions for formation of communal forests known as

village forests. The CMF was experimented under two names i.e., village forests and panchayat forests. While the former was experimented from 1915-1950 and later was implemented from 1885-1890. Systematic policy on village forests was pronounced in 1884 and implemented in the next year. Nilgiri was the first district to implemented village forests. Village forest is defined as 'the free supply to the indigenous villagers (Badagas, Kothas, Todas, Irulars and Kurumbers) of wood for building or agricultural purpose, fuel, grass, fruits and similar produce, as well as grazing for domestic cattle wherever possible. The uses of village forests will, as a rule, be enjoyed solely by the indigenous inhabitants of the village within such forests are situated'. The following restrictions were imposed on the peoples' access in village forests.

1) Full- grown trees may be cut with the permission of the *Monigar*, after he had inspected and marked the trees.

2) No person shall graze or permit to be grazed in any village forests.

3) No person shall be allowed to cut more wood, or gather more fuel, grass, fruit, &c., than permitted for his domestic use;

4) Selling of any wood, fuel and grass, &., gathered in a village is forbidden, except to persons entitled to cut or gather such wood, fuel, grass, &., under these rules.

5) All disputes amongst villagers regarding the produce of village forests settled by the village punchayet consisting of the Monigar, Currnam and three of the principal ryots of the village not concerned in the dispute or the matter in appeal.

The form of governance instituted for management of village forests shows the nature of communal forests created

by colonial state. The controlling authority was vested to local village chiefs, and three principle ryots, who invariably belong to dominant class/caste. Apart from Nelighiri, village forests experiment was also introduced in Cudapah and Kurnool districts. Village forests here were created under the rule 10 of the section 26 the Madras forest act. The village forests here consist of all unreserved lands of the village. The following regulations were proposed for management of village forests:

Access to Forests without Permit

- Grazing of cattle except goats
- Collecting and removing dead-wood, in head-loads only, as fuel
- Collecting and removing for manure leaves of 4th-class trees
- Collecting and removing thrones for fencing
- Taking the bark of creepers for fibre
- Collecting minor fruits.

Village forests experiment was continued only for five years. The reason claimed by the Madras government was that village forests became an obstacle for creation of reserved forests for scientific management of forests and grazing grounds. This measure was justified with the argument that 'The idea of village forests must be altogether abandoned, that it is desirable to have the sources of fuel and fodder supply under the Government control and to have the reserves in fairly large locks'. The intention for appropriation of village commons was driven by handsome revenue derived on grazing. The following statistics on grazing revenue shows the reason why village forests were incorporated into reserved forests.

Table: 2. Revenue on grazing fees from Reserve Forests in Madras Presidency

Year	Revenue from Grazing (In rupees)	Total forest revenue	% of grazing share in total forest revenue
1886-87	81,203	12,46,738	6.5
1887-88	1,05811	13,74,920	7.6
1888-89	1,29,855	15,15,006	8.6
1889-90	1,43,845	15,57,627	9.2
1890-91	92,621	17,95,408	5.00
1891-92	1,15,794	16,94,215	6.80
1892-93	1,75,589	15,77,212	11.13
1893-94	2,66,891	19,43,75	13.70
1894-95	3,28,293	N A	N A
1895-96	3,40,496	21,67,630	15.70
1896-97	3,76,354	21,88,917	17.19
1897-98	3,63,905	21,51,144	16.91
1898-99	3,76,354	20,75,254	18.13
1899-00	4,89,765	23,13,507	21.16
1900-01	5,10,451	24,43,773	20.88
1901-02	5,40,068	24,96,494	21.63
1902-03	5,78,500	25,92,779	22.31
1903-04	6,07,400	26,90,571	22.57
1904-05	6,27,474	28,30,542	22.61
1905-06	6,62,837	30,36,892	21.82
1906-07	6,78,537	34,50,733	19.66
1907-08	7,27,343	38,58,026	18.85
1908-09	7,82,510	38,86,296	20.13
1909-00	7,69,770	41,84,633	18.39
1910-11	6,31,643	N A	N A

Source: Compiled from Annual Administrative reports of Forest department for relevant years.

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Extraction of revenue from grazing by the way of converting village commons into reserve forests became difficult after 1910 as people violated forest rules at will. In the context of national movement, violation of forest laws was perceived as expression of patriotism. However, the forms of resistance are differing from among different social groups. While dominant sections of peasants put forwarded an organized defence, small peasants, pastoralists, communities depends upon of forests as a main source of occupation and agricultural labour resorted to violation of forest rules. The following table shows the crime reported due to trespass into reserved forests.

Forests: 3. Forest crime reported in Madras Presidency

Year	Number of cases	Year	Number of cases
1885-86	2,269	1903-04	21,883
1886-87	2,443	1904-05	21,930
1887-88	3,358	1905-06	23,021
1888-89	3,377	1906-07	23,141
1889-90	3,088	1907-08	24,453
1890-91	5.577	1908-09	25,470
1891-92	8,124	1909-10	25,277
1892-93	10,905	1910-11	26,489
1893-94	10,007	1911-12	28,995
1894-95	9,883	1912-13	29,892
1895-96	9,610	1913-14	31,177
1896-97	11,638	1914-15	32,541
1877-98	14,993	1915-16	30,885
1898-99	18,295	1916-17	28,087
1899-00	20,450	1917-18	27,091
1900-01	22,130	1918-19	26,160
1901-02	23,750	1919-20	27,537
1902-03	23,125	--	--

Sources: Compiled from the annual administrative reports of forest department of relevant years.

Demand for Communal Forests

Though there was no violence fight against forest policies, one could see a hectic resistance by all sections of the people in the countryside. While tribes, rural artisans and labour resorted to sporadic violation of forest rules dominant peasant communities put forwarded a systematic critique of forest policy and demanded for creation of communal forests. This alignment of dominant peasant community with the Indian National Congress and other political association provided a platform for them to negotiate with colonial state for communal forests.

The narratives of the dominant communities attempted to ascribe great antiquity to their customary rights over forests. Patttabhi Ramireddi complained that: 'From the time of Adam and Eve we have been using the forests. I do not know why the Forest Department should come in and fix a fee'. Constant attempt was made to historicize their claims so as to force colonial state recognise their claims over village commons and grazing grounds. Naveen Reddy, who owns 200 acres of land, asserted that: 'before reserves were constituted all lands were common lands'. Thus, dominant caste/class evolved the notion of communes around forests resources and advocated for creation of communal forests as remedy to grievances of people due to forest policies.

The native press emerged as an important agency and documented grievances due to forest policies. The editor of the *Swedeshimitran*, a Tamil newspaper, reported that prior to the implementation of forest policies plenty of forest and wastelands were attached to villages and the people enjoyed the access without restrictions. He suggested a viable remedy for problems due to forest policies in the following quote 'the waste lands adjoining villages should be planted with trees and given to villagers who should be made

responsible for the cost of planting and maintaining trees on those lands, in return for their labour, the villagers should enjoy free of tax or on payment of an easy tax on the produce of these forests. They should be allowed to take timber from the forest and other products as well, in such quantity as they require but a penalty should be imposed on those who wontedly destroy the forests'.

The strong anti-colonial feelings in the countryside due forest policies forced the political association take a note of them. In 1885, the congress working committee appointed a commission to enquire into the grievances of agricultural population due to forest policies in Bombay. The Madras Mahajansabha and the Karala Mahajanasabha collaboratively conducted an enquiry into the operation of forests policies and demanded for relaxation of forest rules. Entry of political organizations into the struggle against forest policies resulted in emergence of new political discourse. This discourse articulated a systematic critique of forest policies and proposed for revival of native communal forest management. The district level associations also took up the issue of forest policies. In 1894 the Guntur District Association, adopted a resolution on protest against reservation of *porombobokes* in villages.

Venkatappaiah, leader of the Congress in Guntur district suggested two models of communal forests. Firstly forests/grazing grounds for each village and secondly allotment of forests/garaging for a group of village. Krishan Rao, joint secretary of the Nellore district congress proposed for revival of the *Kancha* system in which highest bidder acquires control over grazing grounds. For him, communal forests should be supervised by the intelligent ryots of villages as custodians. The reason he explains that 'the poorer ryots did not actually take part in the Conference. Generally the intelligent part of the community and persons who have been in a position to understand these matters attended. There were poorer persons whose demands were not properly represented'. This shows the nature of political discourse on communal forests for mainly concerned the requirements of dominant sections of agrarian communities.

In the three agricultural conferences held from 1909-1911 resolutions were passed on forceful demand for communal forests under the supervision of village pahcyhayats.

The lobby of dominant agricultural class persuaded colonial state to appoint a committee consists of two native officers to suggest remedy for grievances related to forests. This committee after extensive enquiry recommended for communal forests under the management of village panchayats. In the name of accepting the demands of the people colonial state undertook the process of creation of communal forests to trim down the administrative burden at one level and minimising the financial costs of managing degraded forests. This situation was coupled with the attempt of forest department to focus on commercial exploitation of timber. It was in this context that Madras government the policy of creating communal forests. Some of the important proposals of the committee on forest panchyats as follow:

Duties of and powers of Panchayats

1) To regulate the number of cattle to be grazed, prohibition of goats and management of grazing rotation.
2) To prevent the denudation of the grazing grounds and specially for collecting the grazing revenue.
3 To admit or exclude any cattle of their own village from the grazing grounds, or where limitations ordered, to decide what cattle are to be admitted. This will include the powers to exclude the cattle of any person who is found cutting or doing other harm to the forest without permission, or who fails to pay his share of the revenue or who refuses to obey the legitimate orders of the panchayats.
4) To impound cattle which graze without permission.

The recommendations of the Madras forest committee were implemented in some districts in 1914. But the

momentum of this policy picked up after the Retrenchment Committee dealing with the reorganization of forest department suggested for creation of 'ryots forests' in 1923. It was proposed that the forests required for every-day needs of agricultural population may be managed as communal forests. For management of ryots forests, the committee recommended for creation of panchayats (Boag, 1933: 61). Forest panchayats are defined as small committees consisting of 5-9 members elected by the general body of cattle owners in the village. These committees are entrusted with the responsibility of managing neighbouring forests and authorized to issue grazing permits, collection of tax and protection of forests. Forest panchyats were created after 1918 in districts such as Bellary, Guntur, Western Cuddapah, Chelglput, Anantapur and Chittore. Special staff was created for general administration of forest panchayats in 1922. The forests brought under the management of forest panchayats were transferred to the land revenue department in 1st July 1924. By 1930s 3,303.78 square miles of forests were transferred to forest panchayats.

Election Process of Forest Panchayats

In 1931, the Madras government promulgated an order, which resembles the joint forest management adopted by the government of India. The election process of panchayats was conducted by a divisional officer personally or with the help of deputy thasildar. For selection of forest panchayats, a general body consisting of all villagers was crated. The members of general body should possess a permit in reserved forests. All general body members elect management committee consist of 5-9 members. The following members are not allegeable to become forest panchayat:

1). Is not a British subject; 2). Is a female; 3). Having been a legal practitioner has been dismissed or is under suspension from practicing as such by order of nay competent court; 4). Is of unsound mind; 5). Is under 25 years of age; 6). Is an insolvent; 7). Is a deaf-mute; 8). Is a leper; 9). Has been sentenced by a criminal court to transportation or to

imprisonment for a period of more than six months. The membership criteria of forest panachayat show the nature of forest panchyats. These are mainly created to meet the trim down the administrative burden of non-economical units and at the same incorporating the demands of dominant peasant sections who involved in national movement. Important stake holders of forests and grazing grounds such as women are excluded.

The everyday functional aspects of forest panchayats are difficult to tract, but we do have a general picture on the routine affairs. Mostly chronic degraded forests are allotted forest panchayats. The regeneration potential of these forests was less and at the same time forest officials did not take interest in their management. Forest panchyats were mainly controlled by dominant class/caste of village by excluding customary access of stake holders such as women, untouchables, pastoralists and artisans. This is the reason why the crime rate related to breach of forest rule continued to exist even after introduction forest panchayats.

Table: 4. Forest Crimes during the National Movement in the Madras Presidency

Year	Cases Reported during the year
1920-21	23,947
1921-22	29,040
1922-23	32,874
1923-24	31,706
1924-25	32,164
1925-26	30,224
1926-27	25,321
1927-28	25,976
1928-29	*
1929-30	23,345

1930-31	24,798
1931-32	23,876
1932-33	29,471
1933-34	18,699
1934-35	28,242
1935-36	28,936

Source: Compiled from the Annual Administrative reports of Forest Department in the Madres Presidency and the Proceedings of Chief Conservator of Forests of relevant years. * Details are not available.

The main reason for the ill-functioning of forest panchayats according to Janardhana Rao, a forest officer was 'The revenue officials neither had sufficient time to properly supervise the work of these panchayats nor could they enforce the adoption of the technical principle of forestry of these panchayats. Consequently, the forests suffered particularly from enormous illicit grazing especially by goats, over grazing by cattle and indiscriminate lopping of trees for manure leaf etc. Some of these panchayats exercised no control whatsoever either due to their inefficiency or due to factions among themselves.' This deplorable state of forests allotted for panchayats forced the government to initiate a policy shift. The independent government transformed the control of panchayats forests to the forest department on 26th April 1948. Again village commons became part of forest department. Post colonial state attempted to justify the takeover of village commons with the programmes such as social forestry and waste land development wherein afforestation schemes are implemented. However, globalisation and adoption of new liberal policies brought back the policy debate on community forest management.

Community Forest Management in Independent Period

Serious confrontation between state forestry and people in independent India surfaced in mid1980s. The Chipko movement is an organised reflection of peoples struggle for restoration of customary access to forests (Weber 1988, Rangan, 2000). The Apiko movement in Karnataka is a manifestation of local peoples' attempt to resist the intervention of outsiders. Besides this the following factors necessitated a policy shift toward community cantered forest management: gradual fall in income from forest sector: introduction of neo-liberal policies which scale down the role of the state in developmental projects: and emergence of regional political parties and aggressive populism which seek to create loyal local cadre in forest areas. PFM was introduced in AP as JFM in 1992 and converted the same as CFM in 2002. Under CFM, 5000 villages, spread over 14 districts and covering 13, 79,862 hectares of forests were covered. It is funded by the World Bank with total outlay of Rs. 652 crores for the period of five years. The CFM targeted to benefit 55,000 families living in below poverty line (Andhra Pradesh Government 2002).

Table: 5: Major Policy dynamics of community forest management

JFM	CFM
Management Committee 1) Total members 10 2) Women membership 30% 3) No specific number on presence of women in management committee. 4) Tenure two years 5) Surpanch and forest officials were members of MC committee. **Financial transactions**	Management Committee 1) Total members 15 2) Women membership more than 50% 3) 50% women should be represented in management committee. 4) Tenure three years 5) Only elected members consist of MC committee. **Financial tractions**

1). One account called joint account was provided.	1). Dual account system i.e. joint account and VSS account were created.
Micro Plan Preparation	**Micro Plain Preparation**
Micro plans in JFM are prepared by MC and Range Officer.	In CFM micro plains are prepared by MC and in consultation with VSS members and NOG. No official interference was sought.
Role of FD	**Role of FD**
FD played crucial role as a partner in guiding VSS in forest management	FD is a facilitator and technical adviser
Forest advisory committee existed in village level	Forest advisory committee from village to state level, elaborative advisory committee, were mentioned
Usufruct Rights	**Usufruct Rights**
NTFPs were divided into reserved and unreserved, and communities have rights only on selected items. Initially share was 50% to FD and 50% to VSS, on forest products excluding the NRFP items for GCC (Girijan Cooperative Corporation) monopoly.	All NTFPs, (100%) and 100% incremental volume of timber.

Sources: Government of Andhra Pradesh Orders issued from 1992 to 2004.

Implementation Process of PFM

Conceptually joint or community forest management is similar to that of forest panchyats introduced by the British in 1930s. However, at the policy level several innovative aspects were introduced to ensure the inclusive participation of all stake holders of village. The implementation process of in CFM in AP demonstrates the explicit continuation of colonial legacy in CFM which is dominated by village dominant class/caste by excluding majority of stake holders in village.

Election or Nomination

The essential component of CFM is that open membership to all villagers in forest protection committee known as Vana Samrakshina Samiti. This is called general body (GB) which elects management committee (MC). But the process of electing executive body mostly not in democratic nature as envisaged by the policy. Rather it was nomination of village elites by forest officials. In all sample villages chairpersons/vice-chairpersons are from dominant families of village. The election of MC is mainly influenced by FD officials. This trend led to perpetual fight between village elite families, consequent upon which the functioning of FPC got effected.

PFM envisages ideal notion of community wherein all stakeholders are expected to involve in management of forests. But at ground level, FPCs became battle ground among dominant caste/class families in village (table-5).

Table: 6. Conflicts for Management posts

Name of the VSS	Name of the District	Is there any conflict	Nature of Conflicts
Pandhirlodhhi	Adilabad	Yes	Fight between two rival

			groups
Heerapur	,,	Yes	Caste conflicts between ST and BC for chairperson post
Sainagar Thanda	,	Yes	Elite capture of MC posts.
Ramachandrapuram	Kadapa	Yes	Conflict within STs
Sri Rangaraju Palem	,,	Yes	Caste Conflicts between STs and BCs
Mudireddy Palle	,,	Yes	Sub-caste conflicts between Madigas and Malas
Sobhakota	Visakhapatnam	Yes	Conflicts within tribal groups for MC posts
Gudlamveedi	,,	No	No conflicts
Nandivalasa	,,	Yes	Affiliation of tribal families to different political parties led to conflicts to control MC.

Eight out of nine sample VSS have experienced conflicts for leadership in CFM (table 5). The reasons for these conflicts are financial gains, provision of wage employment and bringing infrastructure to village are not only perceived as a prestige symbol, but also became a means to patronize group members to enhance political status.

Decision Making Process in VSS Management

Decision-making process by GB/MC is an important aspect in institutionalization of PFM process. In the operational process of CFM, FD acquired immense power as it control the funding process of VSS. At the same time, PFM have different meaning to different people. While village elite

wanted to maximise their financial benefits, majority members of GB want wage employment. Majority members of GB members did not involve in constructive activity in GB/MC decision making process. This led to prioritisation of FD and dominant class/caste families' choices in decision-making process in VSS management.

MC is executive body, elected for management of VSS. In all sample village chairpersons and FD dominated in decision-making process. MC meetings were often a close door affair for GB/MC members. In Visakhapatnam district, women members were sidelined from MC meetings. In Adilabad and Kadapa villages MC members unaware of MC meeting took place. One of the women members of MC in Kadapa district informed that she was not invited for MC meetings. In SR Palem of Kadapa, and Heerapur of Adilabad district, BC community members were not called for MC meetings.

Table: 7. Decision making pattern in Management Committee meetings

ASPECTS/ISSUES	CP/VCP	OTHER MC MEMBERS	WOMEN	FD	NGOS
1Species selection	√	√	√	√	
2 Identification of Works	√			√	
3 Nature of allocation of funds to works	√			√	
4. Harvesting sharing	√			√	
5 Sharing forest products within VSS	√	√	√		

members					
6 Selection of NFFP, value addition.	√			√	
7 Marketing of harvesting products	√			√	
8 Wage rates in VSS works	√	√	√	√	
9 Imposition of fines	√	√	√	√	
10 Estimating costs	√			√	

*CP=Chairperson, VCP= Vice-chairperson.

The decision-making process in MC is dominated by chairperson and FD (table 8). In important decisions like species selection, identification of works, allocation of funds for works was dominated by FD in MC meetings. Important stake holders such as women were not allowed to participate in decision-making process. Marketing of VSS harvesting products is dominated by FD and VSS chairperson. In most occasions, GB members are not informed of the revenue from forest products sold by MC. In Adilabad, MC members were not consulted at the time selling teak timber removed from VSS areas. Thus, the democratic space for wider participation of people in forest management was undermined.

Conflicts within Communities

Conflicts within the communities were mainly aroused due to competition for MC posts. But these conflicts are not of the nature of vertical patron-client link, but 'conflict within an oligarchy' (Sunder, et. al., 2000). In other words, conflicts took place mainly between dominant class/caste families within village. These communities are less dependent on forests so take little interests in forest management, but they compete to control MC due to money

involved in the scheme. In CFP implementation process medium and large farmers have been major beneficiaries (Khhare, et. al., 2000; 36). This led to conflicts between MC and other stake holders of GB (Table-9). However, in all sample villages, different forms of conflicts emerged.

Table. 8. Nature of Conflicts within village

Name of the VSS	Name of the District	Is there any conflict	Nature of Conflicts	Consequence of it
Pandhirlodhhi	Adilabad	No	----	---
Heerapur	,,	Yes	Between BC and ST regarding positions in MC committee	STs don't abide MC rules and send cattle and get forest predicts
Sainagar Thanda	,	Yes	Case booked against some MC members for killing wild animals	For one year VSS works are halted
Ramachandrapuram	Kadapa	No	Chaperon post is dominated by single family	Some families did not participate in VSS management process
Sri Rangaraju Palem	,,	Yes	Caste conflicts between BCs and STs over MC positions	BC send goats and cut longs and fuel wood from VSS area
Mudireddy Palley	,,	Yes	Sub-caste conflicts within	One section of sub-caste remove trees

			SCs	illegally, and collector
Sobhakota	Visakhapatnam	Yes	Conflicts with in STs on Management positions	Rival members send goats and cattle to VSS and cut trees for housing and fuel without permission

Inter-village Conflicts

Implementation of FPM created rigid forest boundaries to be managed by FPC. Before PFM, the boundaries of forests were not defined and generally accessed by members of several villages. Creation of usufruct rights to villagers over neighbouring forests led to continuous conflicts among villages.

Table. 9. Nature of Inter Village Conflicts

Nam E of the VSS	Name of the District	Is there any conflict	Nature of Conflicts	Consequence of it
Pandhirlodhhi	Adilabad	No	----	
Heerapur	,,	Yes	Neighbouring villagers send goats and cattle	In spite of vigilance, goats of neighbouring village enter into VSS area and destroy young plants and other trees.
Sainagar Thanda	,	Yes	Neighbouring villagers forcefully	Neighbouring villagers enter for collection of

			enter in VSS areas for collection of tendu leaves and other forest products	tendu and indiscriminately destroy other young teak trees.
Ramachandrapuram	Kadapa	No	Neighbouring villagers collect dead and green wood	Qural
Sri Rangaraju Palem	,,	No		
Mudireddy Palley	,,	Yes	Upper caste neighbors send cattle to VSS areas	Upper caste send cattle to VSS area, resulted in destruction of young plantation of Usiri and destruction of trees for leaves for goats
Sobhakota	Visakhapatnam	Yes	Neighbouring villagers enter into VSS area and collect NTFPs	At the time of collection of plate leaves and broom grass villagers frequently enter in conflicts with neighbouring villagers, resulted in loss of valuable NTFPs.
Gudlamveedi	,,	No	-----	
Nandivalasa	,,	Yes	Neighbouring villagers often taken NTFPs	Due to constant entry of neighbouring villagers, NTFPs availability became scare.

Out of nine VSSs, five VSSs had frequent problems with

neighbouring villagers (table 10). Though CFM demarcated forest landscape for each village, particularly during agricultural lean season, MCs found it difficult to control neighbouring villagers' entry into forest areas allotted for VSS management. At the same time, FD does not take any concrete step to mitigate this problem due to fear of conflicts. Consequently, CFM remained as wage employment scheme wherein villagers involved in forest management when fund arrives and rest of time they do not take interests as forests could not yield any tangible financial returns.

Decision Making Process in Shedule Caste Village

Social stratification plays an important role in determining outcomes of developmental scheme. Stratification within communities in terms of caste, class, and majority and minority had perceptible impact on decision making process in management of forests. Murriddey Pelly SC colony in Kadapa district represents conflicts among sub-castes of Scheduled Caste (SC) community at one level and conflicts between SC and upper castes of neighbour village. Sub caste within SCs consists of Madigas and Malas fought for chairperson post. The demand for categorisation within SC community on the one hand and the upper caste domination in VSS management affairs on the other undermined the performance of PFM. Madiga community is numerically larger and economically and socially backward and Mala community is numerically smaller but economically advanced and socially vibrant. The Malas occupied chairperson posts with the help of FD and local politicians. Important decision related to VSS management such as selection of species, conservation works to be undertaken in VSS are taken by chairperson a women belong to Mala caste. In fact Madiga caste people were not only prevented from VSS wage works but also prohibited from raring goats and collection of forest products which are important sources of livelihoods. With regard to upper caste domination, even after formation of VSS Reddy caste send cattle, collect wood and other forest products. Due to these conflicts, VSS conservation works derailed and poorest among SC community, women, and old people who

live by selling minor forest products became victims of the scheme (Fig. 3).

Fig.1. Decision making process and social exclusion in SC village
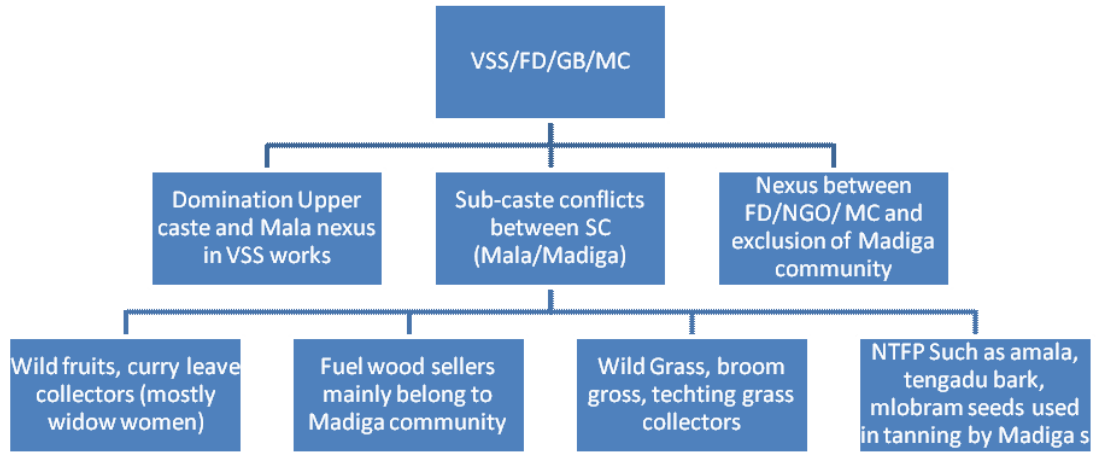

Exclusion in Multi Caste Village

Heeraur village in Adilabad district represent caste conflicts within community. Social groups belong to backward caste and schedule tribe involved in continuous fight to control VSS management. In this village BC population constitutes 68% population and rest of the population belongs to ST community. As a result most of the membership and important positions in MC like chairperson and vice chairperson are captured by BC social groups by virtue of majority. BCs are economically advanced and possessed land as assets and do not depend upon forest for survival. They wanted to convert the forest land allocated for management of VSS into mono plantation mainly of teak as it gives handsome income in the long run. STs opposed this measure as their dependency on forests would be restricted if forest were converted into mono plantations. However in spite of this opposition, VSS MC dominated by BCs opted for teak plantation. Hence, tribes' dependency on forests for broom stick, dry wood, tendu leave, *muhva* flower and wild fruits severely affected by restrictions. In fact many old

women deepened upon minor forest products lot lost livelihoods potions. In the absence of possession agriculture land tribes were severely affected excluded from livelihood dependency and governance.

Figure. No:2   Process of conflict multi caste village
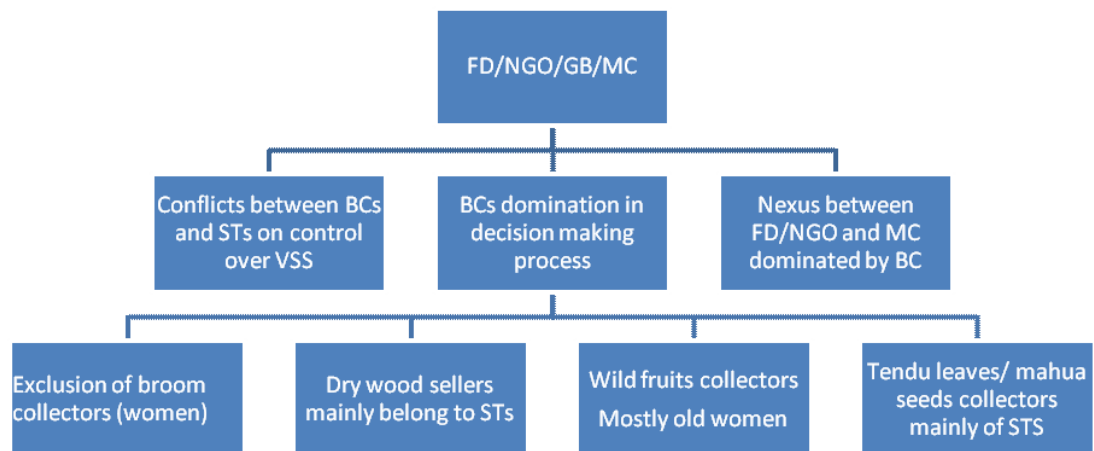
Exclusion of Women

Discourse on eco-femininism proposes for the involvement of women in PFM because of their everyday proximity to forests (Shiva, 1988). Community forest management in colonial India did not provide nay provision of involvement of women. Community forest management in independent India envisages active participation of women. CFM policy proposed 50 % membership for women in GB/MC. Besides either VSS chairperson or vice-chairperson post is reserved for women. In spite of this mechanism for women empowerment in CFM, women, and mostly poor vulnerable women are excluded from the process of PFM scheme.

Though the CFM rules ensure the membership for women in GB/MC, women participation in VSS activities was undermined by three factors: first FD staff exclusively

consist of men dominate women chairpersons and on the other, women members could not interact with FD staff due to social inhibitions; second is lack of information on GB/MC meetings and VSS works. Most of the times women do not participate in meetings of VSS, if they participate remain to be passive participants. For instance, a women member from Mudireddy Pally SC colony felt that "we hardly know when the management committee meetings take place. In fact, many members of the management committee do not know what decisions were taken in meetings. Forest officials and NGO members come to village and talk to Chairperson and launch the works. We are informed about VSS works only after the decision was taken".

In tribal village of Visakapatnam district, it is evident that women in MC do not participate and unaware of any decision being taken by MC. The egalitarian ethics of tribes are fading due to development interventions such as CFM. The customary dependency of women on forests was restricted by VSS conservation works. At the same time, the wage employment that was promised of was not fulfilled by the government. Consequently women always attempted to breach the rules of VSS and resorted to everyday form of resistance against VSS management.

Conclusion

Comparative analysis of CFM in colonial and post colonial periods show the context in which CFM is introduced. CFM in India is a product of circumstance wherein state delegated the economically non-viable forests for the management of local communities. This process is articulated as state benevolence in colonial period and empowerment of forest dependent communities in post colonial India. No better substitute for involvement of communities in forest management exists, but both colonial and post-colonial state regimes could not create congenial circumstances for inclusive participation of all stake holders in forest management. CFM is primarily a temporary policy adjustment invoked by the state as factor of legitimacy in

response to the crisis in socio-economic and political fabric of society. The essential factors for success of CFM such as tenure security, training and capacity building for community, identification of customary stake holders and entrusting tenure security to them are not being paid adequate attentions. Consequently, CFM remained to be an unsuccessful development intervention in the series of interventions in forest sector in colonial and post colonial periods. This mainly due to the fact that benefits of CFM are enjoyed by dominant class/caste groups by excluding majority stake holders' claims. The article with comparative analysis of CFM in colonial and post-colonial situation demonstrates this trend. The task before state and civil society at present is to initiate a systematic long terms policy framework instead of temporary policy adjustment.

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