

# A Study on Common Property Resources in Vellodu Village Panchayat, Dindigal District

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**Abstract**—Common property resources are inevitable part of rural life. It holds cultural and psychological importance reinforcing village social system. There are different types of properties, common property, public property, private property. Common property was encroached by government as well as private. Common property access denied by government officials those who were living nearby areas. The study based on primary data and secondary data. The collected data classified into frequency tables and use simple percentage to analyse the data. The main objective of study was to know socio economic demographic factor of respondents. To assess the value of common property resources in daily life. Majority of the respondents engaged in agriculture-based work. over the years common property resources were degraded. Majority of the respondents completed their primary education. Majority of the respondents used common property resources occasionally. Majority of the respondent spent less than one hour time spend to access common property resources. Majority of the respondents agreed that common property played very significant role during pandemic period. More than half of the respondents revealed that common property resources less in terms of expenditure reduction in the family. All the above common property resources degraded over the decades.

**Index Terms**—Common property resources, agricultural labours, rural poor, animal rears, economic contribution.

## I. INTRODUCTION

All living beings requires certain natural resources such as forests, grazing lands, tanks, and ponds are central to rural livelihoods, providing fuel, fodder, food, building materials, and medicinal herbs. Common property resources accumulated over the years. CPRs also hold cultural and psychological

importance, reinforcing village social systems and traditions.

According to Aggarwal (2022) Common property resources have provided fodder, small timber and various non-timber products. Firewood is still the single most important source of rural domestic energy in South Asia, and is still largely gathered, and not bought.

Maxim define common property is ‘everybody’s property is nobody’s property’

The term common property refers distribution of property rights in resources in which a number of owners are co-equal in the rights to use the resources in tribe.

Types of common property resources

1. Village sites and threshing floor – The land that the villagers use collectively for various economic operations, such as threshing, drying, grinding etc.
2. Village forest and woodlot- this is also including the. village’s forest area which is under the control of village panchayat or village community.
3. Common water resources, - common village pond or well.
4. Grazing land – common property under control of the community.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Common Property Resources (CPRs) have undergone continuous degradation over the years due to multiple factors such as population pressure, overexploitation, weak institutional arrangements, and lack of effective community management. Despite their crucial role in sustaining rural livelihoods, CPRs have received

relatively scant attention from social scientists and policymakers. These resources—such as grazing lands, water bodies, forests, and village commons—provide essential livelihood support to rural households, particularly the poor, by supplying fuel, fodder, food, water, and supplementary income.

One of the major challenges facing CPRs is the widespread phenomenon of encroachment. Encroachment of common property resources has become increasingly common in rural areas and has largely benefited socially and economically dominant groups. These groups often possess greater political influence, legal awareness, and economic power, enabling them to convert common lands into private property for agricultural expansion, commercial use, or real estate purposes. As a result, marginalized and resource-dependent households are gradually excluded from access to CPRs, thereby increasing their vulnerability and livelihood insecurity.

The degradation and shrinking availability of CPRs have severe implications for rural poor households, especially landless labourers, small farmers, and livestock rearers who depend heavily on these resources for daily survival.

### III. OBJECTIVES

- To study the socio economic and demographic status of respondents.
- To study common property resources availability in the village.
- To identify common property resources usage of respondents.
- To analyse the degradation of common property resources.

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the availability, accessibility, and utilization of common property resources (CPRs) among rural households. This design is considered appropriate as the study seeks to describe existing conditions and analyze the extent to which CPR degradation affects the livelihoods of the rural poor.

#### Selection of Study Area

The study is conducted in A. Velloodu village of Dindigul Block, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu. The village has been purposively selected as it represents a dry region where rural households largely depend on common property resources.

#### Sampling Design

The study adopts a simple random sampling method to select respondents. A total of 100 households were selected from the village to ensure adequate representation of different socio-economic groups. This method minimizes sampling bias and allows for generalization of findings within the study area.

#### Sources of Data

The study is based on primary and secondary data sources.

- **Primary Data:**

Primary data were collected directly from the selected households using a well-structured interview schedule. The schedule included questions related to socio-economic characteristics, types of CPRs accessed, frequency of use, distance travelled, time spent, income contribution, and perceptions regarding CPR degradation and encroachment.

- **Secondary Data:**

Secondary data were collected from government reports, district survey reports, published research articles, journals, books, and National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) reports. These sources provided background information and helped in contextualizing the findings.

#### Methods of Data Collection

Primary data were collected through personal interviews, which allowed the researcher to gather detailed and reliable information, especially from illiterate respondents. Observation was also used to understand the physical condition of common property resources and their usage patterns.

#### Tools for Analysis

The collected data were systematically classified, tabulated, and analyzed using the simple percentage method. This method helps in presenting the data in a clear and understandable manner and facilitates

comparison across different variables. Tables were used to interpret patterns of CPR usage, availability, and socio-economic dependency.

## V. FINDINGS

Majority of the respondents (32 per cent) belongs to the 44–55 years age group, indicating that middle-aged individuals constitute the dominant segment of the sample. This age group is generally more engaged in livelihood activities such as agriculture and animal rearing and, therefore, shows greater dependence on common property resources. About 36 per cent of the respondents have completed only primary education, large majority of the respondents are married, accounting for 78 per cent of the total sample.

Agricultural labour is the main occupation of the respondents, with 63 per cent engaged in this activity. This indicates that the majority of households depend on wage labour in agriculture for their livelihood, which is often seasonal and uncertain.

Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) were the most commonly utilized resources, accounting for 22 per cent of the respondents. This highlights the importance of forest-based products in supporting subsistence needs and providing supplementary income. A considerable proportion of respondents, 44 per cent, reported seasonal usage of common property resources. This indicates that many resources such as grazing lands, forest produce, fruits, and water bodies are accessed mainly during specific seasons, reflecting the close relationship between resource availability and natural cycles.

Cow ownership was reported by 38 respondents, indicating that cattle rearing also plays an important role in supporting household livelihoods. In addition, 8 respondents reported owning both cows and sheep.

A majority of respondents, 41 per cent, spend less than one hour on this activity, indicating that for many households the resources are relatively accessible or used in limited quantities.

55 per cent of the respondents collect these resources a distance of less than one kilometre. This indicates that common property resources are relatively accessible for more than half of the households in the study area.

Nearly half of the respondents, 49 per cent, reported a moderate contribution from common property resources to their household income.

35 per cent agreed that common property resources played a significant role during the pandemic.

Majority of respondents, 52 per cent, reported that there has been no noticeable change in the availability of common property resources. This suggests that while degradation is evident to some households, others continue to access CPRs at similar levels as in the past. 52 per cent reported Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment scheme has no change in the availability of common property resources.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Perceptions regarding the availability of CPRs indicate stagnation and gradual decline rather than improvement. While some respondents reported moderate to increased availability due to development interventions, the majority observed no significant change. This suggests that existing programmes have had limited impact on strengthening common property resources and that benefits are not uniformly distributed.

Overall, the study highlights that common property resources remain vital for the livelihood security of rural households, especially the poor and resource-dependent groups. However, issues such as degradation, unequal access, and weak management persist. Strengthening community participation, improving institutional support, and ensuring equitable access are essential for the sustainable management of CPRs. Effective policy measures and localized planning are required to protect and enhance these resources so that they continue to support rural livelihoods in the long run.

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