

Resources Scarcity and Emerging Conflicts

BABURAO JADHAV

Assistant Professor

School of Social Sciences, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University
University Campus, Nanded (M.S.) India

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INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario, we can find out the multiple emerging contests over the use and abuses of natural resources. The emerging contests, claims and conflicts over the nature and resources are varied across the nation, state and region. The natures of emerging conflicts over the resources are further intensified due to the scarcity of the resources and environmental crisis. The Environmental Crisis, Climate change, droughts, forest fires, floods and suddenly occurring natural calamities are leaving adverse impacts on the society. The impacts of these crises are varied cross the social groups, rich, poor, tribal and gender. Thus, the scarcity of the resources is not only affected to the livelihood sources of the tribal people, but also affected to their mind, bodies, health and culture. Environmental scarcity is not only the biological and ecological loss, but also the loss of culture of the local people who are depended upon the nature. Thus, the loss of local biodiversity, ecology and resources are not only the loss of environment but also the loss of livelihoods and community rights. Despite this, resources scarcity facilitates the social conflicts, competition and contest among the different types of social groups across the cultures. Thus, social conflicts and contests are also the outputs of the scarcity of the resources.

The nature of the conflicts and contests over the resources are Local to Global, South to North, and Rich to Poor and so on. The ideas, human behavior, notions and values behind the harvesting natural resources are varied. The rich, private, capitalistic class harvested more resources for consumption. They used resources not only

to meet their needs alone, but also they used them for profits. They see towards nature as sources of their pleasures and leisure. These sections of the society have adopted different kinds of approach towards the nature. They considered nature as matter or thing to be fulfilled the needs of the human being. But on the contrary, other social groups, such as, the poor, tribal and women see nature as sources of their livelihood system. They have adopted harmonious views about the nature. However, across the cultures, we can find three important general orientations to nature by different types of social groups of different cultures and at different times of history. The first orientation was indicated that People are subjugated to nature and living at the mercy of powerful and uncompromising nature. The second orientation was that People as over nature which are dominating, exploiting and controlling the environment. The third orientation is indicated that People as part of nature and they are living in harmony with the environment. Thus, across the time and space, the relationships between nature and society, culture and nature are identified differently in the context of history, geography, ecology, polity and society. The classical and modern social science perspectives were based on the ideas of Eurocentric's and anthropocentric approaches. The classical and modern theories of social sciences did not consider nature as matter for discussion in early days in the European World, but in the other parts of the world, especially South, Latin America, Asia and Africa, the nature and culture and their interrelationships is taken into account for the discussion by the scholars. Guha and Martinez-Alier (1988)

identified different types of environmentalism/ varieties of the environmentalism in world. They identified the issues of contests, claims and conflicts over the uses and abuses of the nature and resources. Thus, the view of South and views of North have different standpoints on the same. Northern (developed countries) argued that poverty and more populations are the major burden over the earth and this earth has not caring capacity of such load and burden. On the contrary, Southern (developing countries) argued that the industrialization, capitalism and colonialism had destroyed and exploited the resources for their own need. Thus, under the name of development, the resources are extracted and exploited without the side and adverse effects of the same on the local communities. India, for instance, researchers found that the country's development programmes have caused in aggregate displacement of more than 20 million people during four decades, however, 75 percent of these people have not been rehabilitated (Fernandes, 1991). Their livelihoods have not been restored; in fact, the vast majority of development resettlers of India have become impoverished (Mahapatra, 1991). The destruction of forests over the past few decades has deprived tribal of their livelihoods. Despite number of safeguards provided by legislations such as Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Rights), Acts, 2006, Forest Right Acts, and the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) (PESA) Act, 1996, such diversions usually occur without consent of forest-dependent communities. Thus, the overall available literature in the areas of development and its impacts on the displaced communities are indicated that the experience of indigenous people and ethnic minorities with regard to dam projects has been of, cultural alienation, dispossession, both from their land other resources; lack of consultation, lack of compensation or inadequate compensation, human rights abuses, lowering of living standards and on a deeper insight, their physical displacement from the river system and forest ecosystem also alters their cultural ways of life. Against this backdrop, this study is tried to explore the different types of conflicts and contests over the resources in the local tribal communities. In the view of this, this study is tried to explore the various dimensions of the conflicts and contests among the different stakeholders of the communities in the emerging environmental crises and scarcity of the resources.

METHODOLOGY

In the present context, we can identify varieties of conflicts due to the scarcity of the resources. These conflicts have various socio-cultural, geographical, political and economical dimensions. To explore and identify these dimensions, this study made attempt to identify emerging community contests over the resources. The field work was conducted in the five tribal villages, such as; Kazipod, Ghogarwadi, Darsanghavi, Nikhatewadi and Gokulwadi of the Kinwat Block of the Nanded district of Marathwada region. The selection of the villages are based upon the following criteria; the majority of the tribal population, representative of the local all tribal communities such as Kolam, Gond, Bhil, Pardhan and Andh. One village is identified as representative of the one tribal community, Thus, five tribal villages of five tribal communities are selected as representatives of this region. The field work was conducted in the Month of October and November in 2018 and in the month of December of 2019 in all respective tribal villages. The Rapid Rural Appraisal Method was conducted to gather detail information from the all villages. In-depth Interviews are also conducted with the key informants and elderly village people village Sarpanch and Gram secretary. The focus groups were conducted with the tribal youth, women and community leaders of these villages. The major focus was given to explore the personal and group experiences of the tribal people of these villages in the present context of the emerging environmental crisis and scarcity of the resources. The major attempts are made to reveals and unfold the facts and realities which are directly and indirectly associated with the conflicts among the different stakeholders who are contesting forest and natural resources to meet their daily needs.

The Varieties of Conflicts :

It has been identified that scarcity of the resources, developmental activities and climatic conditions are the major issue of conflicts over the resources between state and communities, communities and private contractors, outsiders and insiders of the forest, hills, rivers and other natural resources such as community pool and community property resources. It has been identified that the different types of stakeholders are claiming the rights over the resources. But, still the issues of the ownerships and entitlement of and over the resources are pending. In the view of tribal, they have different visions, views about the world. They have limited needs and they

harvested resources as they want and required. They did not have habit for more collection of raw materials for material gains. They had not any commercial approach about the nature, resources, forest and land. They consumed as their required. But, they had not adopted rules, regulations and recorded private property. They lived and remained in their own setting, systems and governance. As intervention of the state and agencies are brought out changes in their thinking, attitudes, cultural ways and outlook. They had their own customary rules and traditions. The Outside interventions, developmental policies, programs, activities, industrialization and urbanization process etc are directly and indirectly associated with the different types of conflicts in the tribal areas. The scarcities of the resources, displacements, dispossessions and dislocations are the outputs of the implementation of mega dam constructions, canals and irrigations projects.

In the present contest, this study identifies conflicts between the state and communities. The major issue of the conflict is the ownerships of the forest land rights as per the forest land right act, 2006. State and community conflict is the old issues, still are not resolved. It has been identified that the tribal farmers of the all five villages went in the courts for regulating patta of the land. Having long struggles and movements, some issues are legalized, but most of the cases are still pending in the dispute between the boundaries of agricultural and forest departments. There are very few cases from the Kazipod and Ghogarwadi are resolved by the state machineries and issued patta to the Gonds and Kolam Families. However, there are still some cases are pending. The tribal groups Bhil, Pardhan and Andh of Gokulwadi, Darsanghavi and Nikhatewadi are still fighting for the land rights, but their cases are not resolved and issued the patta of the land.

Due to the illegal felling of trees, forest fires and frequently occurring droughts, floods and other natural calamities are also posing major threats on the livelihood patterns of the local tribal communities. It has been observed in the studied village that in the month of November of the 2018, Gond women of the Ghogarwadi village fetching water on their heads from two KM distance away from their location. When they asked about the problems of water scarcity, then they replied that they have to walk more than three to four distances in summer for fetching water. The experiences of Kolam women are not very different from the women of Gond

community in the collection of minor forest products and bamboos for making artisans. The Kolam women have to walk more than five to six KM distance to harvest bamboo and minor forest products for their own consumption and marketing purposes. Thus, the scarcity of the is the directly and indirectly outputs of both natural as well as man –made intervention which have direct impacts across the social groups of the society, but the intensity and burden of the scarcity of the resources are varied across the caste, class, tribes and gender. It was observed and seen in the villages that women irrespective of their social-cultural and economical backgrounds of the caste and tribes, they were collecting fuel wood, grass, foddors and fetching water for entire family. Thus, to collect fuel wood and minor forest products are posing more burdens over the bodies of women. It was told by the women that they have to walk more distance to harvest resources nowadays.

Who is encroaching on whose resources? Outsiders and insiders, who is posing burden over the resources, elite section of the society or poor sections of the society, still, the blames are given to each others. However, the fringes, boundaries, storages and natural resources are depleting day by days are the facts and truths on the one side and on the other side, it is seen and observed that private contractors are extracting resources. But, the poor, powerless have to face problems to exercise their power and rights over the resources. It was told by the tribal youth of the all five tribal villages that each and every step, they have to struggle to use their own traditional rights over the common property resources. Their knowledge, wisdoms, skills about the forest, water and natural resources management are sidelined. Thus, it is identified that tribes have different world views about the nature. They have harmonious relationship with the nature. The tribes don't have only economically depended upon the nature but also they spiritually and culturally attached with them. However, outside intervention, construction of small dams, canals, irrigations projects, construction activities, such as building roads, schools, hospital and transport facilities etc have undertaken in this region under the name of tribal development on the one side, but on the other side, they left the adverse impacts not only on the biodiversity, but also on the socio-cultural life of the forest dwellers.

It has been seen and observed in this region that the harvesting behavior of the local resources are depended upon the socio-cultural, socio-economical and political

characteristics of the communities are determined. It is seen in this region that only Kolam tribal groups are harvesting bamboo more than any other communities of this region. The Kolams are the bamboo artisan' community. They harvest bamboo and prepared varieties of articles and sale them in the local markets for their survivals. Other tribal communities are harvesting minor forest products for consumption, marketing and medicinal plants for medicine. Other than tribal communities of this region harvest minor forest products only for consumption not for sale. It is also identified that the rich and elite section of this region took interest on only encroachment of the forest lands, extraction of timber, illegal felling of wood and other natural resources of this region. Thus, the behaviors of the poor and tribal people are still harmonious with the nature. They harvest resources as they required. But the elite, rich and private contractors harvested resources for more income and for more profit. Thus, the emerging contests over the resources are the outputs of the scarcity of the resources in this region. These scarcities of the resources poses more burden over the local communities.

Thus, the existing literatures in the area of social sciences were not captures nature as subject matter of social sciences up to 1960s for research and in-depth study. But onwards of the initiatives of social movements of the tribes, common people, farmers and women for the protection of safe and sustainable environment, rights over the common property resources and against the

adverse impacts of big dam projects, then, social scientists attracted towards the relationships between nature and society. Onwards 1975s, it is seen that the European scholars have developed certain theories and paradigms to understand the relationship between nature and society in the context of their location. But, still, in the contexts of Asian countries, have lot scope for inquires and search. However, the environment is identified as interdisciplinary subject matter for the study and research. Still, this area has lot of scope for intensive studies and research in the context of local communities, to explore the different and varied human behavior patterns of relationships, uses and abuses of nature, conflicts and contests.

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