

Approaches For Sustainable Forest Management Through Effective People Participation

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ABSTRACT

For successful performance of Forest administration, a significant communication approach is prime requirement. Paper present a comparative study of three villages, which shows diverse response of participatory management practices due to varied extent of communication effectiveness.

Introduction:

The green balance is being disturb due to the speedy rise of human population and their greater than ever demands for utilization of natural wealth. This worrisome situation necessitate for making comprehensive paradigm change in our forest management policies that will sustain both forest and further economic growth. The change in forest management strategy to focus more on people's need in forest provides a valuable opportunity to reorient the forest management with peoples participation.(Gupta,1997) For achieving the objectives of the national forest policy and for ensuring the long term sustainable management of forest resource peoples participation policy is implemented by government. Which is a massive peoples movement, therefore proper implementation of forest management practices needs three essential steps these are –communication, education, and institutional development (Rastogi 1995).

Communication is most essential issue in interactive programme like joint forest management where people discuss, resolve, decide, communicate plan pilot and execute the developmental issues cooperatively. Forest department communicate with the villagers through forest personals. Senior officers deals with the forest personals and NGOs. In our work we have surveyed three villages where participatory management scheme is running. In these villages we have noticed that lack of communication affect the implementation of participatory management practices

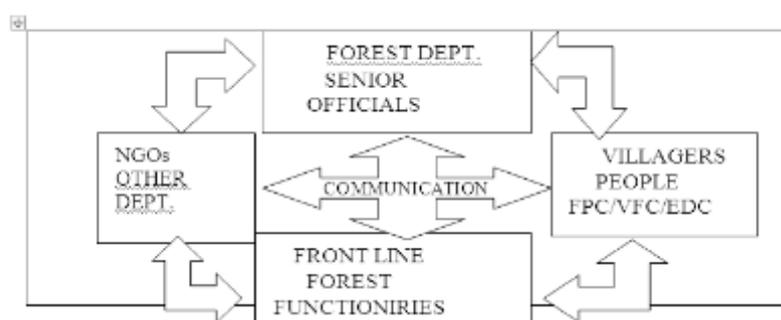


Diagram –1

Area of Study

For the purpose of study we had chosen three villages of Raigh forest division. Raigarh district occupies the eastern part of Chhatisgarh state. It lies between 21°20' and 23°15' north latitude, 82°56' and 84°24' east longitude. According to Champion and Seth Classification of forest of India important forest type of Raigarh are 5B C1C, Dry peninsular Sal and 5A C3 Southern dry mixed deciduous forest. For the purpose we selected three villages of Raigarh forest division these are *Lakha*, *Krishanpur* and *Pali*.

Lakaha is about 15 Km from Raigh forest division office, situated on side of state high way so this village has direct accessibility from the division. On the other hand *Krisnapur* is comparatively interior village situated at 12 Km distance from *Lakaha* on that same route and 27 Km from Raigh forest division office. *Pali* is situated at most distant side and quit remote about 32km from state highway which runs between Raigarh and Gharghoda forest division of Chhattisgarh.

Methodology:

For judging the effectiveness of peoples participation an intensive survey of the area has been done. Interviews of forest committee members and president along with concerned forest personal has been taken. Record of forest committee and gram panchayat has been taken as evidence of development in the village.

Result and Discussion:

The analysis of study clearly indicate that in *Lakha* due to its easy accessibility and its situation people are more aware about the forest management practices

We interviewed 20% member of forest committee, they all knowing about the motto of sustainable forest management very well and participating actively in forest protection activities. After implementation of participatory forest management practice in the village, villagers have been showing better attentiveness about forest and environment, they are knowing about environmental problems which arises due felling of trees. Economic and social conditions of village also get improving. Concerned foresters visit village almost regularly. Village has school, about 6 hand pumps for drinking water and villagers are more educated than other two study sites. As they have better transportation facility, they frequently visit district head quarter.

They have better communication environment in village as meetings held on regular basis and concerned forest personal visits almost daily to this village, so villagers are more familiar with him they interact more appropriately which affect functioning of forest committee positively and in true sense fulfill object of participatory management practice.

SLN	Villages	Distance from state highway	No. Of Houses	No. Of interviewee	No. Of Meetings held by forest dept in a year	No. Of Meetings attended by villagers	Status of Forest management	Communication Efficiency of foresters
1	<i>Lakha</i>	12KM	120	24	6	90%	Good	Good
2	<i>Krishanpur</i>	27KM	80	16	3	65%	Moderate	Average
3	<i>Pali</i>	32KM	97	20	8	100%	Very Good	Very Good

Table- 1

On the other hand in case of *Krishanpur* which is quit distant from main route of Communication strength is not up to the mark that creates poor management of forest.

Socio economic conditions of village is miserable. Only one primary school is running in the village. Forest personal do not frequently visits the village, people are poor they generally work as agricultural labor, most of the villagers replied that they wish to take active participation in forest protection but also needs immediate grant. They wish to protect these forest but their poverty force them to earn the bread first. Here we observed that villagers do not actively participate in the meetings with forest personals. Although most of them(65%) attended meetings and are knowing about the objects of participatory forest management (Table 1).

Village Plai is most distantly situated but records of participatory management practice shows better result then previous village. Villagers are quite interested in forest conservation and regularly attend the meetings. Forest personal uses local language for communication and actively involved for solving villagers local issues also. Forest personal employed at the site enthusiastically share the ideas of sustainable management. Village is far distant from the developing aspects of the world but villagers replied us that they are very clear about objectives of forest protection. In spite of that villagers try to check forest offences, they have problem while handing over these offenders to forest department. No proper education facility is running in the village. Villagers are very dependent over forest for their need.

So Pali's interior situation is not the problem but studies find the fact that difficult accessibility is not the problematic concern but actual hindrance for taking the peoples participation is better communication strategy adopted by forest personals.

Conclusion:

Effective Communication is most important part of participatory forest management process good communication between villagers and foresters, among committee members is must for participatory management practices. More communication with the villagers make them more aware about forest and forest related issues. Education is must for creating better communication atmosphere.

Better accessibility and road facility is also important factor if infrastructure is good it will be a advantage for both villagers and foresters. Villager easily inform to the nearest forest office about forest offences and forest fire so it would strengthen the forest conservation. Healthy communication, good infrastructure and education facility are important steps for obtaining the goal of sustainable forest management. If people are more educated they have better awareness and they participate more actively and so the management of forest would also get improved. Through better communication villagers would be more aware, they get better education, health facility and other practices of developing society. They can use better alternatives for fuel, learn to do better cultivation and participate more actively in forest conservation.. Effective communication is not a 'Once only matter' but a goal oriented and continuing process, which affect the participatory management practices positively. And villages are more concerned about protecting forest, which indirectly reinforce their economic conditions, and make the village better developed.

Acknowledgement

Author is very thankful to the villagers of *Lakha, Krishnapur* and *Pali*.

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