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DALITS AND DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Indian society is highly stratified with many glaring inequalities among the different social groups. The caste system is one such example which segregated the Dalits and other weaker sections from the rest to an extent that they were denied even the basic human needs and necessities. Interestingly, the absence of freedom of occupation and the stigma of implicit restriction destroyed the economy of the Dalits. As a result, Dalits remained socially outcastes, economically dependent, politically powerless and culturally backward. In order to have a clear understanding on the Dalits cause, this paper bestows a critical view on the access to land for Dalits with special reference to Andhra Pradesh during post independence period. And this paper gives the brief information about Dr. B. R. Ambedkar views on distribution of land. And also it explains about Dalits Dependency on Agriculture and Occupational Distribution & Size of land holdings among Different Social Groups, finally this paper summarizes with the overall findings with help of these situations can be viewed in different field based studies in Andhra Pradesh.

KEYWORDS

Dalits, Land Distribution, Agriculture, Economy, Occupational distribution.

INTRODUCTION

At Independence, Indian society was characterized by a number of socio-economic disparities. Since, various development programs of central and state governments have succeeded to some extent in minimizing the disparities in country. Much, however, remains to be achieved. Effective implementation of radical land reform is said to be the surest way of eliminating hunger and destitution, and in creating a society. The socio-economic transformation of Indian society through radical implementation of land reform is believed to be the real solution to the fundamental problems and tensions in the country, such as the Naxalite problem and the massacre of members of the Scheduled Castes in various parts of the country.

Daniel Thorner, a noted economic historian, once remarked that the Indian agrarian structure is unique in its ownership patterns and land use, blending some features of the pre-British economic order and the modern Western concept of private property. There was large-scale alienation of land during the between 1910 and 1940, resulting in a large number of cultivators became tenants-at-will, share-croppers, and landless labourers. The agrarian structure in AP is also marked by imbalances. This is reflected in excess ownership, on the one hand, and very limited ownership, of operational holdings, on the other.

Agriculture is playing a vital role in the process of economic development of a country particularly in the initial stages of development. Development of agriculture sector essentially in the initial stages of depends on the land tenure system irrigation and other inputs like fertility of land and technology. Land being a critical factor of production in all the stages of the economy, it also plays a diabolical role in the life of rural people. Land is not a prime source of income but also a symbol of social status in rural India. Around 85% of the rural population of India, directly or indirectly, depends on the land and its produce. By and large, the size of income in rural are continues to be closely related to the amount of land system of land distribution and that of power. Land plays a key role in the achievement of power and dominance in the rural India,¹ but the land distribution pattern in agriculture continues to be skewed. Skewed distribution of land, especially in India, is an important element because of its association with the caste system. Large landowners belong to the upper castes; the cultivators belong to the middle castes whereas the agricultural workers mostly belong to the weaker sections such as Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes.² The agricultural land distribution pattern, till date, has been skewed at all India level as well as the state of Andhra Pradesh.

AMBEDKAR VIEWS ON DISTRIBUTION OF LAND

Dr. Ambedkar did not agree to a widely prevalent view that the law of inheritance was the chief cause of subdivision of land. He attributed it mainly to an enormous pressure of population on land. He held that "when farming (was) the only occupation, to get a small piece of land (was) better than to have none." Dr. Ambedkar thus went to the root of the problem. He argued: "(Thus) the grievance (of small holdings) lies in the circumstances which put a premium on these small pieces of land. The premium is no doubt, due to large population depending solely on agriculture to eke out its living.It is not therefore the law of inheritance that is evil, but it is the high pressure (of population) on land which brings it into operation. People cultivate the small piece not because their standard of living is low... but because it is the only profitable thing for them to do at present. If they had something more profitable to do they would never prefer the small piece."

This does not however mean that Dr. Ambedkar was opposed to enlargement and consolidation of holdings. He was only striving to show that due to lack of alternative means of subsistence, agriculture was overcrowded which made sustenance of enlarged and consolidated holdings at a particular size impossible³ As Ambedkar argued redistribution of land would "eliminate the possibility of more powerful having the power to impose arbitrary restricts on the less powerful by the withdrawing from the control he has over the economic life of the people". Political democracy can't survive with out achieving economic equality through land reforms.⁴

LAND DISTRIBUTION PATTERN IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Land is treated as life for peasants and, he is ready to leave the life and he won't accept to leave the land. Land is not only a prime source of income but also a symbol of social status in rural Andhra Pradesh. There is hunger for land in rural areas. Let us examine the changes in the land distribution pattern in the post-Independence period. The Table 1.1 represents the changing land distribution pattern during 1970-71 to 2000-01 with respect to operational holdings and operated area at Andhra Pradesh state level. It could be seen from Table 1.1 that the marginal holdings constitute 46.6% of total operational holdings but control only 9.3% of total operated area in 1976-77. Small holdings constitute 20.3% of total holdings but control 12.8% of total operated area. Marginal and small together constitute nearly 67% of total holdings but control only 22% of operated area in 1976-77, on other hand, medium and large holding together constitute about 15% of total operational holdings but control more than 56% percent of total operated area during the same period. This indicates that the distribution of land was skewed in 1976-77. By 2000-01 there was tremendous increase in the number of marginal holdings their percentage share in total holdings increased to about 61% but are operated under their control, increased to only 21.6% of total operated area. On the other hand the number of medium and large holdings declined to 5.7% of total operational holdings but controlled nearly 28% of total area. If we take large holdings along their share is only 0.6% of total land holdings but control nearly 8% of total operated area in 2000-01. This clearly indicates that although the number of medium and holdings declined the area under their control has not declined proportionately. On the other hand number of marginal holdings increased from 46.6 % to 60.9% but the operated area under their control was only 21% of total operated area in 2000-01. This implies that in the post independence period inequalities in the distribution of land has increased despite land reform. The increase in the marginal holdings may be attributed to population explosion and also to redistribution of small pieces of

surplus land and west land to the weaker sections. But medium and large farmers could retain large size of holdings as lands were not properly implemented. More than this during the post independence period land has passed from renter class to owner cultivated classes, but not to the landless poor. Some of the villages also identified the same changes in rural Andhra Pradesh⁵. Landless also increased significantly after the independence. It has increased from 7% in 1971-72 to 11.9% in 1982 and concentration ratio increased from 0.73 to 0.74 during the same period. However proportion of landless households remained same at 11.9% during 1982 to 1992 and concentration rate declined from 0.74 to 0.72 proportion of semi-land less households increased from 38.7% in 1971-72 to 45.8 in 1992⁶.

Land reforms in India as well as in Andhra Pradesh abolished all forms of intermediaries in terms of land holdings viz, *jamindari*, *inamdari*, *jagirdari* and land lord system. But it could not help the Dalits to access land to their proportion in population. As on September 30, 1996 and area of about 5.90 lakh acres was distributed among 5.21 lakh beneficiaries. Out of which 41.51% of SCs, 17.7% of STs, 32.9% of BCs and OCs are 8.01 percent. Around 32 thousand tenants with 2.02 lakh were protected in *Telangana* Region of Andhra Pradesh alone. About 1.9 lakh acres acquired under the *Bhoodan* movement, out of which 1.0 lakhs acres were distributed to the landless poor. Total 4,42,750 declarations were filed, out of which surplus land was detected in only 64,911 cases, covering an area of 16.63 lakh acres. Based on appeals, revisions, major sons, share etc., the net surplus land was reduced to about 8.21 lakh acres. Out of this surplus land, position of only 5.91 lakh acres was taken over by the government, leaving a balance of 2.29 lakh acres yet to be taken over.⁷ It is estimated that all affords taken together including *Bhoodan* and distribution of Government waste land accounted for less than 10% of the cultivated land⁸. It may not be possible that all rural poor can be accommodated but there is scope for utilizing the waste land for providing the access to the poor and also eliminating the biases against the poor in land relations. The desire to possess land is strong among the poor as ownership of land denotes once social status. The small magnitude of the declared surplus was due mainly to the poor legislation with large number of loopholes. Thus, the opportunity for more equitable distribution of land was missed. However, abolition of intermediaries and imposition of land ceiling on land holding had over time, contributed to the growth of capitalist farming and arrested concentration of land ownership⁹. Although intermediate land tenure system could effectively remove through *Jamindari* abolition, equity in the agrarian structure could not be brought. Therefore above mentioned information of land distribution was stated so early during the ex prim minister late *Indhira Gandhi*. But since 1976 onwards it was implemented in Andhra Pradesh. The following table reveals that the year wise information of assigned land in Andhra Pradesh.

TABLE 1.1: OPERATIONAL HOLDINGS AND OPERATED AREA BY DIFFERENT SIZE GROUPS IN ANDHRA PRADESH STATE LEVEL, 1976-77 TO 1995-96
(Nos in Lakhs, Area in Lakh Hect)

Size group	1976-77		1980-81		1986-87		1990-91		1995-96		2000-2001	
	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
Marginal	28.69 (46.6)	13.36 (9.3)	38.04 (51.6)	18.86 (13.1)	44.6 (54.1)	20.54 (14.5)	52.11 (56.1)	23.69 (16.4)	63.0 (59.4)	29.04 (20.2)	70.2 (60.9)	31.0 (21.6)
Small	12.52 (20.3)	1836 (12.8)	15.91 (21.6)	24.12 (16.8)	17.14 (20.8)	24.54 (17.3)	19.72 (21.2)	28.26 (19.5)	22.62 (21.3)	32.29 (22.5)	25.2 (21.8)	35.6 (24.7)
Semi-medium	10.72 (17.4)	29.93 (20.8)	11.74 (16.0)	32.61 (22.7)	12.54 (15.2)	33.91 (23.9)	13.45 (14.5)	36.4 (25.2)	13.95 (13.1)	37.36 (26.01)	14.2 (12.3)	37.9 (26.4)
Medium	7.53 (12.2)	46.47 (32.3)	6.46 (8.8)	39.79 (27.8)	6.57 (7.98)	38.65 (27.2)	6.44 (6.93)	13.77 (26.1)	5.63 (5.3)	32.31 (22.5)	5.0 (4.4)	28.5 (19.9)
Large	2.09 (3.4)	35.68 (24.8)	1.55 (2.10)	27.95 (19.5)	1.46 (1.77)	23.94 (16.9)	1.18 (1.27)	18.48 (12.8)	0.83 (0.8)	12.73 (8.85)	0.7 (0.6)	10.8 (7.5)
All	61.55 (100)	143.8 (100)	73.7 (100)	143.33 (100)	82.3 (100)	141.5 (100)	92.9 (100)	44.6 (100)	106.3 (100)	143.7 (100)	115.3 (100)	143.9 (100)

Source: Report on agricultural census of Andhra Pradesh 2001, Directorate Economics and Statistics and Government of Andhra Pradesh.

According to the Acts of government there are classifications mentioned above that marginal farmers is from "0" acres to 2.5 acres, small farmers is from 2.5 acres to 5 acres, semi-marginal is from 5 acres to 10 acres, medium farmers is from 10 acres to 20 acres and large farmers is from 20 acres and above.

DALITS DEPENDENCY ON AGRICULTURE

Dalits comprise Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes' population. AS per 2001 census Scheduled Castes constitute 16.2% of the total population and Scheduled Tribes constitute 6.6% of the total population at Andhra Pradesh state level. 17.18 % of SC population and 7.51% of ST population live in urban areas as against 27.3% of General population that is more than 83% of SC population and about 92.5 % of ST population live in Rural areas as against 72 % of General population. 25.89% SC population and 13.66% of ST population are literate as against 44% of General population that is more than 74% of SC population and about 86.4% ST population are illiterate as against 56% of General population. The work participation rate of SCs, defined as the percentage of SC population participating work of total SC population is 51.08% and that of ST is 54.03% as against 45% among general population in 2001. This may happen due to the high participation rate among SC (46.7%) and ST (50.6%) women. It is also to be noted that as for 2001 census 85% of SC main workers and 83% of ST main workers depend on primary sector only, 68% of General workers depend upon primary sector. More than 72% SC main worker and 44% of ST main workers were reported as agricultural laborer as against only 41% among General workers. After the independence of 61 years also most of the Dalits remained land less and agricultural labourers and they totally depend upon their labour work. In view of heavy dependency of SC and STs on agricultural, now let us examine the land holding patterns and occupational distribution among different social groups in Andhra Pradesh State level.

TABLE 1.2: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATIONAL HOLDING AND OPERATED AREA OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Category	1976-77		1980-81		1986-87		1990-91		1995-96		2000-01	
	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
SC	13.4	6.9	12.6	6.9	12.2	6.8	12.73	7.48	12.12	7.42	11.85	7.86
ST	6.3	6.2	6.4	6.3	6.4	6.7	6.88	7.23	7.11	7.56	7.47	8.23
Others	80.0	86.9	81.0	86.8	81.4	86.5	80.38	85.29	80.77	85.02	80.66	83.91
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Report on SC/ST land holdings 1980-81 to 2000-2001. Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Table 1.2 represents the operational holdings and area operated by different social groups since 1976-77 to 2000-01 at Andhra Pradesh state level. It could be seen from the Table 1.2 that in 1976-77 SC house holds constituted about 13.4% of total holdings but control only 6.9% of the area, while others constitute about 80.3% of total holding but controlled 87% of total operated area. By 2000-01 the percent of SC holdings declined to about 11.85% and their controlling area share slightly increased to 7.87%. Why the percentage of others holdings retain same i.e. 80.7% and their operated area share slightly declined to 84% percent of total operated area. In 1976-77 ST operational holdings constitute 6.3% of total holdings and controlled 6.2% of total operated area. By 2000-01 their holdings increased to more than 7% and their share in area also increased to 8.23% scheduled tribes average holdings which are more than the Scheduled Castes average land holdings (Table:1.5). The position of ST households in terms of operational holdings is better than SC households at Andhra Pradesh state level as well as all India level.

It could be seen from the Table 1.3 that most of the SC farmers are marginal and small. In 1976-77 marginal and small holdings of SC constituted 83% (controlled nearly 46% of total operated area of SCs) of total holdings and their percentage tremendously increased to about 91.5% (controlled nearly 66% of total operated

area of SCs) in 2000-01 on the other hand medium and large holding declined from 4.7% (controlled nearly 29% of total operated area of SCs) to 14% (controlled nearly 12 percent of total operated area of SCs) during the same period their average size of holding also significantly decreased from 1.19 hectares to 0.83 hectares during the same period (Table.1.4). Due to lack of irrigation facilities high cost of cultivation high cost of mechanization, this vulnerable section were losing control on their lands. Most of the SCs and STs are selling their land to other caste people and becoming agricultural labourers for their livelihood¹⁰.

TABLE 1.3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATIONAL HOLDINGS AND AREA OPERATED BY SCHEDULED CASTES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Size group	1976-77		1980-81		1986-87		1990-91		1995-96		2000-2001	
	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
Marginal	64.8	22.3	67.7	27.6	70.1	30.4	70.67	31.98	73.46	37.15	75.88	36.4
Small	19.0	23.1	18.9	26.2	18.0	56.4	18.43	28.28	17.75	29.74	17.63	29.56
Semi- medium	11.5	26.0	10.2	25.2	9.1	24.5	8.70	24.40	7.39	22.51	6.95	21.27
Medium	4.1	21.5	2.9	15.2	2.5	14.6	2.03	12.38	1.32	8.82	1.39	9.36
Large	0.6	7.1	0.3	5.5	0.3	4.1	0.17	2.96	0.08	1.78	0.15	3.36
All	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Report on SC/ST land holdings, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of AP.

TABLE 1.4: AVERAGE SIZE OF THE HOLDINGS OPERATED BY SCHEDULED CASTES (In Hectares)

Size group	1976-77	1980-81	1986-87	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01
Marginal	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.41	0.42	0.41
Small	1.45	1.46	1.40	1.40	1.39	1.39
Semi- medium	2.69	2.62	2.56	2.56	2.53	2.54
Medium	6.21	5.66	5.59	5.58	5.53	5.58
Large	14.65	16.48	14.41	16.00	19.00	19.00
All	1.19	1.06	0.95	0.91	0.83	0.83

Source: Report on SC/ST land holdings, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of AP.

TABLE 1.5: AVERAGE SIZE OF THE HOLDINGS OPERATED BY SCHEDULED TRIBES (In Hectares)

Size group	1976-77	1980-81	1986-87	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01
Marginal	0.52	0.51	0.49	0.49	0.50	0.48
Small	1.47	1.42	1.44	1.43	1.41	1.41
Semi- medium	2.62	2.65	2.62	2.66	2.63	2.64
Medium	5.82	5.77	5.70	5.65	5.53	5.57
Large	15.62	14.49	14.47	13.72	15.67	11.0
All	2.33	1.91	1.80	1.64	1.44	1.37

Source: Report on SC/ST land holdings, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of AP.

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AMONG DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS

The changes in the occupational distribution during 1971-91 in Andhra Pradesh different social groups could be seen from the Table 1.6. It is evident from the table that during 1971-81 there was an increase in the percentage of SC workers as cultivators from 14.66% to 17.41% while percentage of SC agricultural labourers declined from 73.04% to 68.24%. In case of general workers the percentage of cultivators declined from 34.43% to 32.72%. The percentage of agricultural labourers also declined from 38.24% to 36.78% during the same period. Regarding the non-farming workers it increased from 12.2% to 14.35% in case of SC workers while it increased from 27.3% to 30.49% in case of general workers. Thus there is same marginal imprudent in the SC workers as cultivators and also non-farming workers this indicates some upward mobility SC workers also. This may be attributed to distribution of wasteland surplus land under 20 points program in 1970s¹¹. But during 1981-91 the percentage of SC cultivators declined from 17.4% to 12.77%, while there was an inclination in the percentage of SC agricultural labourers from 68.24% to 72.05%. In the case of workers of general population also the percentage of cultivators declined from 32.73% to 27.44% while the percentage of agricultural labour increased 36.78 to 40.78%. Percentage of non-forming workers increased from 30.49% to 31.69% indicating occupational shift. In case of STs, there was significance increase of cultivators from 37.05% to 43.21% while the percentage of agricultural labourer declined from 50.40% to 43.72% during 1971-1981. By 1981-91 the percentage of cultivators slightly declined from 43.21% to 41.19% while the percentage of agricultural labourer increased from 43.72 % to 46.52%. Anyhow during 1971 to 81 their share in non-farming workers increased from 12.55% to 13.07% and again it declined to 12.29% in 1991. This shows that in Andhra Pradesh agricultural workers are slowly shifting to non-forming activities.

TABLE 1.6: OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTIONS AT ANDHRA PRADESH STATE LEVEL

Category	Percentages in total main workers of SCs			Percentage in total main workers of STs			Percentage in total main workers general population		
	1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991
Cultivators	14.66	17.41	12.77	37.05	43.21	41.19	32.45	32.73	27.44
Agricultural Labourers	73.06	68.24	72.05	50.40	43.72	46.52	38.24	36.78	40.87
Non-farming workers	12.3	14.35	15.81	12.55	13.07	12.29	29.31	30.49	31.69

Source: Statistical abstract of Andhra Pradesh, 1971, 1981, 1991.

LAND DISTRIBUTION IN DALITS FROM 1969 TO 2008

Even as Andhra Pradesh, along West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir, is one of the few states to have substantially redistributed the government held land and despite giving the stipulated percentages for SC/ST. The above information reveals that most of the land continues to be in the hands of upper caste neither the constitutional provisions nor the resultant land reform measures endured any appreciable percentage of Dalits getting land.

TABLE 1.7: DISTRICT WISE PERCENTAGE SHARE OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS IN POPULATION, LAND HOLDING AND AREA IN 1991

District	1991								
	SC			ST			OTHERS		
	% in population	% in land holdings	% in area	% in population	% in land holding	% in area	% in population	% in land holdings	% in area
Srikakulam	9.34	5.69	3.02	5.78	5.87	5.70	84.88	88.48	91.29
Vijayanagaram	10.44	5.66	3.17	9.01	8.69	10.15	80.55	85.65	86.68
Vishaka patnam	7.82	2.32	1.38	14.27	20.40	37.74	77.91	77.28	60.88
East Godavari	18.19	9.85	4.77	3.88	5.06	11.92	77.93	85.09	83.31
West Godavari	17.89	8.91	5.64	2.41	2.97	4.15	79.7	88.12	90.21
Krishna	16.58	10.68	5.24	2.48	1.33	1.02	80.94	87.99	93.75
Guntur	13.96	7.66	4.10	4.42	2.20	2.01	81.62	90.14	93.89
Prakasham	20.03	12.84	7.51	3.58	1.82	1.03	76.39	85.34	91.46
Nellore	21.85	19.86	10.71	8.96	4.94	2.27	69.20	75.19	87.02
Chitturu	18.38	13.90	8.46	3.22	2.39	1.83	78.40	83.71	89.71
Kadapa	14.90	19.82	5.77	2.09	1.65	1.55	83.01	88.53	92.68
Ananthapur	14.19	11.30	6.28	3.49	3.65	2.62	82.32	85.05	91.10
Kurnool	17.43	13.12	7.27	1.90	1.27	0.93	80.67	85.60	91.80
Mahabhubnagar	17.63	16.19	9.88	7.39	7.97	6.69	74.98	75.85	83.42
Rangareddy	17.22	18.18	11.31	4.29	6.84	5.88	78.49	78.16	83.50
Hyderabad	8.86	5.59	4.24	0.92	0.28	0.00	90.22	94.13	95.76
Medak	17.87	17.96	11.66	4.19	4.44	4.57	77.94	77.60	83.77
Nizamabad	15.12	15.31	10.61	5.92	6.54	5.89	78.96	78.16	83.50
Adilabad	18.53	16.69	13.00	17.04	21.25	24.26	64.43	62.06	62.74
Karimnagar	18.57	16.64	9.30	2.73	2.47	2.16	78.70	80.90	88.54
Warangal	17.19	12.58	6.65	13.67	15.20	14.17	69.14	72.22	79.19
Kammam	16.25	9.45	5.06	25.23	32.27	31.35	58.52	58.18	63.59
Nalgonda	17.68	12.89	6.83	9.66	9.85	7.80	72.66	77.26	85.37
AP	15.93	12.12	7.42	6.31	7.11	7.56	77.76	80.77	85.02

Source: various issues of report on agricultural census of Andhra Pradesh and various issues of SC/ST land holdings.

TABLE 1.8: DISTRICT WISE PERCENTAGE SHARE OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS IN POPULATION, LAND HOLDING AND AREA IN 2001

District	2001								
	SC			ST			OTHERS		
	% in population	% in land holdings	% in area	% in population	% in land holding	% in area	% in population	% in land holdings	% in area
Srikakulam	9.05	5.77	3.88	5.96	5.70	6.08	84.99	88.52	90.04
Vijayanagaram	10.58	5.44	3.55	5.66	8.43	10.32	79.87	76.12	86.12
Vishakapatnam	7.60	2.72	1.99	14.55	19.96	39.59	77.85	77.32	58.42
East Godavari	17.99	9.85	4.77	3.91	5.63	14.34	78.10	84.52	80.89
West Godavari	19.17	9.20	6.11	2.54	3.57	5.34	78.29	87.23	88.55
Krishna	17.83	10.69	6.11	2.57	2.86	2.27	79.60	86.46	91.62
Guntur	18.32	7.63	4.68	4.66	2.71	2.65	77.02	89.66	92.67
Prakasham	21.29	11.65	7.52	3.86	2.03	1.51	74.84	86.32	90.98
Nellore	22.00	20.14	11.39	9.08	4.96	2.51	68.92	74.89	86.10
Chitturu	18.75	13.65	8.58	3.42	2.88	2.30	77.83	83.44	89.12
Kadapa	15.74	9.45	6.02	2.36	2.30	1.69	81.90	88.25	92.29
Ananthapur	14.14	10.89	7.05	3.49	4.23	3.38	82.36	84.80	89.57
Kurnool	17.81	12.72	8.00	1.97	1.86	1.50	80.22	85.42	90.50
Mahabhubnagar	17.10	14.64	9.67	7.93	8.53	7.34	74.97	76.83	82.99
Rangareddy	14.83	17.27	11.70	4.09	7.90	6.97	81.09	74.83	81.33
Hyderabad	8.02	-	-	0.90	-	-	91.07	-	-
Medak	17.58	17.30	11.33	5.04	4.94	4.98	77.38	77.76	83.69
Nizamabad	14.84	15.13	10.75	7.07	7.53	6.99	78.09	77.34	82.25
Adilabad	18.54	15.85	12.58	16.74	20.60	24.66	64.72	63.55	62.76
Karimnagar	18.62	16.15	9.94	2.60	2.88	2.58	78.78	80.97	87.48
Warangal	16.99	12.54	8.30	14.10	14.77	13.74	68.91	72.69	77.96
Kammam	16.66	10.38	6.11	26.47	32.04	31.93	56.99	57.58	61.97
Nalgonda	17.73	12.93	7.64	10.55	10.28	8.34	71.72	76.80	84.02
AP	16.19	11.86	7.87	6.59	7.48	8.24	77.22	80.66	83.89

Source: various issues of report on agricultural census of Andhra Pradesh and various issues of SC/ST land holdings.

An analysis of Tables 1.7 and 1.8 proves this fact. On one hand the population share of Dalits in total population has been increasing, whereas their share in land ownership has been deteriorating over the years. It can be seen from the Tables 1.7 and 1.8 that SCs percentage in total populations increased from 15.93% in 1991 to 16.7% in 2001, but they share in total holdings declined from 12.2% to 11.86% and their share in total area also retain same during the same period. In case of STs their share in total holdings and area has significantly increased. But the Most of the ST land is rocky and unfertile. In case of non-SC/STs population share in total population slightly declined from 77.76% in 1991 to 77.22% in 2001, but still they are holding 80.66% share in total holdings and 83.89% share in total area. It indicates that the share in total holdings and area has not increased proportionately to their population despite AP Government distribution of Government and surplus land.

TABLE 1.9: LAND DISTRIBUTED BY GOVT. ANDHRA PRADESH TO LANDLESS POOR FROM 01-11-1969 TO 25-01-2005

District	SC		ST		Other		BCs		Total	
	Nos	Extent	Nos	Extent	Nos	extent	Nos	extent	Nos	extent
Srikakulam	19325	15689.47	25124	21159.34	25297	20791.95	19158	15279.06	89104	72919.82
Vijayanagaram	19412	22978.45	24757	30515.67	24601	30178.68	19083	22076.29	87853	105698.1
Vishaka patnam	24323	34653.76	34838	55183.01	33253	47561.08	24319	33958.21	116733	171356.1
East Godavari	15450	12431.01	20686	20301.43	20379	16608.17	13805	11235.02	70320	60575.63
West Godavari	15662	19886.79	18764	24857.27	19944	26738.82	13357	17241.58	67727	88724.46
Krishna	19489	19912.87	23720	24439.97	25728	27276.8	18206	19189.13	87143	90818.77
Guntur	21228	21236.68	26405	20400.2	28572	22292.9	19011	14877.45	95216	78807.23
Prakasham	17460	25857.59	21247	31498	22856	33859.97	16461	24966.44	78024	116182
Nellore	64745	100337.7	74291	117921.8	78907	126735.1	57595	89756.18	275538	434750.7
Chitturu	29322	53215.5	34355	63017.83	39298	72575.26	26778	49131.8	129753	23794.4
Kadapa	46055	71292.81	55930	87136.31	60967	40730.52	41321	64778.45	204273	263938.1
Ananthapur	63244	86642.64	79014	109261.1	84796	117026.7	57128	78670.91	284128	391601.3
Kurnool	53870	137311.6	67187	171846.9	72703	185741.5	50826	129325.1	24456	624225.1
Mahabhubnagar	19763	48877.4	27147	69515.06	25671	65115.43	18201	452237.8	90782	228731.7
Rangareddy	35036	25681.07	40989	30264.85	43651	32280.19	30919	22973.79	150595	111199.9
Hyderabad	33195	37488.65	41671	49006.16	44000	49575.14	30854	35196.95	149720	171266.9
Medak	28791	59223.28	41794	79377.57	38124	67749.72	25379	53585.7	134088	172136.3
Nizamabad	39155	39212.27	49275	49368.25	25173	52296.69	35998	35935.51	176601	176812.7
Adilabad	29529	48206.07	35889	59630.66	28124	63361.07	27611	45120.01	131153	216317.8
Karimnagar	16530	15747.46	20701	19758.12	22122	21052.7	15205	14727.78	74558	71486.06
Warangal	38962	37896.33	44291	44484.18	45539	45397.14	34497	34010.37	163289	161788
Kammam	36472	54494.53	44697	67895.47	48584	73564.51	34023	50460.81	163776	2464153
Nalgonda					-					
AP	687018 (22.41)	988474 (22.50)	852972 (27.83)	1246839 (28.38)	895289 (29.71)	1250659 (28.46)	629735 (20.55)	907720.3 (20.66)	3065014 (100.0)	4393692 (100)

Source: Srinivasulu and Others, Land Reforms in Andhra Pradesh (Telugu), Telugu Academy, Hyderabad, 2001, p: 99.

TABLE 1.10: DISTRICT WISE AND CATEGORY WISE ASSIGNMENT OF GOVERNMENT LAND TO DALITS DURING 2005-08 (Area In Acres)

District	Total allotted land	Total beneficiaries	Social group wise			
			SC	ST	BC	Others
Srikakulam	31161.04	313754563	13286	10488	9	3029
Vijayanagaram	19786.75	17005	3367	4800	8364	0
Vishaka patnam	73884.24	41727	2015	30631	6361	11
East Godavari	13243.08	8154	1672	4197	1546	4
West Godavari	20292.19	18900	6040	1103	8493	0
Krishna	20983.09	21231	7772	863	8842	179
Guntur	17821.25	15328	6253	2346	3728	338
Prakasham	32258.34	20211	8841	1142	5423	216
Nellore	45236.6	35416	13669	5418	10581	995
Chitturu	31252.62	23499	8542	1877	7325	629
Kadapa	13653	18609	6714	1324	5139	535
Ananthapur	42766.92	16726	3670	2001	7442	403
Kurnool	20988.94	11016	3802	821	4956	465
Khammam	18955.01	12322	2228	7648	1611	132
Warangal	14515.6	14546	5347	4302	4576	28
Karimnagar	15885.76	17124	8035	1816	6483	93
Adilabad	38740.48	15924	3159	8110	4090	97
Medak	40957.55	37577	13445	3029	17656	1424
Mahabubnagar	21982.51	14789	4994	1854	6962	105
Nizamabad	19533.13	15352	7929	3175	7133	335
Nalgonda	24830.43	22456	9750	4971	8579	132
Rangareddy	7080.66	4436	1501	983	1590	83
Total	603809.19	433723	126719	109906	147902	6213

Source: News paper report on distribution of Land 2005 -2008

From Table 1.9 and 1.10 the following can be observed from 1969 to 2005 Andhra Pradesh Government distributed 9,88,474 (22.50) acres (all types of land) to about 6,87,018 (22.41) land less Dalits in the 2005-08 Andhra Pradesh Government distributed 6,03,809.19 acres to about 4,33,723 beneficiaries of all social groups. In that proportion 1,26,719 beneficiaries belongs to Scheduled Caste. Despite government's distribution of land to Dalits, the average size of land holding of Dalits, number of land holders and the area under SC ownership as not increased as for Directorate of Economics and Statistics report.

TABLE 1.11: SURPLUS LAND COVERED BY COURT LITIGATION

Name of the court	No. of cases pending	Extent involved
L.R.T (RDO's)	654	Ac.55,318.0 Cts.
L.R.A.T	552	Ac.34,389.2 Cts.
High Court	1163	Ac.43,629.5 Cts.
Supreme Court of India	389	Ac.14,113.5 Cts.
Total	2758	Ac.1,47,450.3 Cts.

Source: Commissioner of Land Administration, Andhra Pradesh.

Above Table 1.11 Shows that even today 4.47 lakh acres of surplus land is pending in the court litigation with 2758 pending cases in various Courts. This shows that even in the redistribution there is a continuing bias against the SC/ST Sections of society. From the above data, more number of cases were pending at High

Court Level and less at the level of Supreme Court. Large extent of land i.e., 55,318 acres is under L.R.T(RDO) court litigation with 654 pending cases. In Supreme Court the land under area under litigation is 14,113 acres with 389 pending cases.

These situations can be viewed in different field based studies in Andhra Pradesh. Uma Ramaswamy¹² study of Andhra Pradesh, The total agricultural workers among the scheduled castes registered a slight dip between 1961 (72.3%) to 1991(69.0%). To support the micro level studies based on Andhra Pradesh are used here, because the percentages of agricultural labourers are highest at 68.24% next Bihar. In this state, agricultural labourers have doubled in almost all the districts among scheduled castes during 1981 to 1991 except Hyderabad (41.13%) in 1981 to (0.46%) in 1991, the percentage of cultivators increase in almost all districts since 1981 except East Godavari, West Godavari, Hyderabad and Nellore.

The traditional status of the Scheduled Castes as agricultural labourers remains by and large unchanged. For example in the state of Andhra Pradesh particularly noteworthy in this regard are the two institutions of palerulu and vatana which tie the labourers to the landlord in complex ways reflected in terms of much large numbers of scheduled caste as agricultural labourers employed as cowboys permanent farm servants and attached labourers. This situation existed till early 80s. They are changing their position as palerulu and vatana and becoming daily wage agricultural labourers. This is reflected in one of the study "scheduled caste as agricultural labourers" made by Nancharaiiah. G¹³. He selected a single delta village "Kancha koderu" which is in the Krishna district of the state Andhra Pradesh.

The various village surveys conducted in post independence years all over Andhra indicate that a significant section of land lords from the *Kamma*, *Reddies* and *Kapu* castes emerged as the dominant peasantry in Andhra. A village study conducted in Adilabad District observed land transfers during 1960-61 to 1990-91¹⁴. It revealed that *Kapus* were the land owning community with high average land holdings, compared to other castes peasants. During the study period the *Kapus* made huge land gains their average land holding increased from 12.22 acres to 22.22 acres. It was also found that relative share of scheduled castes in total land was very meager and it further declined. They lost their control over their land completely and joined the pool of the land less agricultural labour. Another village study made in Guntur district conducted that during 1960-61 to 1966-67, 65% of land has been transferred from dominant non-cultivating communities (*Brahmans* and *Vaishya*) to dominant cultivating communities (*Kamma*). On the other hand the Dalit could not make any significant gains. It also observed that in 1997, 32.2% of Dalit population were operating 27% of total land and 65.5% of non-Dalits were operating 71.3% total land. And 75.4% of Dalits were recorded as agricultural labourers and landless¹⁵. Another village study made in Prakasam district, during 1989-90 to 1998-99 concluded that during the study period the land has been transferred from non-cultivating communities (*Komati* caste) to cultivating communities (*Kamma*, *Yadava* and *Chakali* castes). It also observed in 1998-99 that 17% of BC households controlling 14.29% of total land and the remaining 85.70% of land by 56.57% OC households. Whereas 26.31% of SC households were not controlling even a single cent of land all these were land less labourers¹⁶. An *Agraharam* village study conducted in *Krishna* district found that schedule caste which constitutes about 30% of total population held around 12% of the land. The percent of landless among them was 76%¹⁷. Village survey in *Chittoor* district has been observed that the *Harijans* who constitute around 23% of the population, did not own any land¹⁸.

The reasons for this anomaly are not difficult to ascertain. Quite often assignments were only given on paper and physical possession has been a distant dream. Even when physical possession was obtained the lands distributed were mostly degraded lands. As government did have any comprehensive plan for development of lands distributed to the poor, supporting them with subsidies and incentives the beneficiaries often they had to alienate the land to pay of the debts incurred in attempting to develop the lands assigned to them.

Other instrument of land reforms policies too failed to entitle Dalits with any significant share of land. The enactment of Hyderabad tendency and agricultural lands acts brought in its wake protection to nearly six lakh tenets that held over 75 lakh acres of land, constituting 33% of the total cultivated area. This no doubt, was a progressive act of legislation by the state. The AP tenancy Act of 1956 produced a mixed result, in the sense that while it protected those tenants against illegal eviction, it drove most of the tendency underground. Besides it did not prove any way advantageous to Dalits, as very few Dalits were tenants. Insisted the exploitation of the Dalits agricultural labourers can be said to have increased a hundred fold as the new tenants proved to be as exploitative as the earlier Jagirdars and Zamindars.

The AP land reforms (Ceiling on Agricultural Holdings) Act was passed in 1973, but provisions of the act has been observed more in breach, subverting the same by way of filling wrongful and fraudulent declarations, suppressing the land holdings and by way of benami transactions etc. Earlier we analyzed the implementation of the Act while official records shows that 46.25% assignees were Dalits ground realities are otherwise. Even a casual perusal of the relevant records reveals that a very high percent of assignments are benami assignments.

Lack of political will, apathetic attitude of bureaucracy and absence of up-to-land records are some of the major factors mentioned by the planning commission task force for the poor implementation of land reforms. The following categories of lands are still available for assignments: 1. Government land 2. Bhoodan lands 3. Ceiling surplus lands 4. Endowment lands 5. Wakf land 6. Inam land 7. Canal embankments 8. Joint farming society lands 9. Sada Bainama lands etc. There is unanimity of opinion regarding how dismal has been the implementation of each every provision of the land reform policy. Even the flawed implementation has gone in favor of the dominant classes. Thus when it comes to Dalits community the failure of land reform policy is even more glaring.

In the distant past the Dalits were forbidden to possess land on account of religiously sanctioned and socially enforced caste prescriptions. In the feudal times Dalits did not and could not have a place in the scheme of things set up by the rural for a smoother and more profitable collection of taxes. In the struggles waged by the communist against exploiting Zamindars too Dalits could not gain access to land to the extent equity called for the land reforms policies to fulfill the promise the state had made to the Dalit land less agricultural labourers. The nexus between feudal economy, caste hegemony and a bureaucracy stepped in vested interest continue to deny Dalits their rightful share of land. 89% of Dalits still remain land less or own small holdings of less than an acre.

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