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NATURE AND EXTENT OF AGRICULTURAL TENANCY IN ANDHRA PRADESH - A CASE STUDY IN TWO VILLAGES

DR. S. RADHA KRISHNA
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
KAKATIYA UNIVERSITY P. G. COLLEGE
KHAMMAM

ABSTRACT

Land distribution and tenancy are the crucial aspects of the agrarian structure of the Indian Economy. The issue of tenant farmers is a serious but neglected problem in Indian agriculture. Their agreements with land owners have no legal sanction. The Government has not maintaining revenue records of tenancy farming in majority states including Andhra Pradesh. As a result, they are exposed to several problems. Recently, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been identifying the Agricultural tenants and issuing Loan Eligibility Cards to them to get all the benefits on par with other farmers. Let us hope that the problems of tenants will be addressed in coming days. This study attempts to examine the "Nature, terms and conditions of agricultural tenancy both in tribal and plains area in the backward district of Andhra Pradesh.

KEYWORDS

Absentee Landlords, Agency area, Tenancy relations.

INTRODUCTION

Land and distribution and tenancy are the crucial aspects of the agrarian structure of the Indian Economy. The agricultural tenancy has evolved out of different modes of production. In feudalism and pre-capitalism, tenancy is linked with the labour service, through the operation of extra - economic coercion. In capitalist mode of production, the tenancy depends on the market i.e. demand for leasing-in and supply for leasing-out. In labour surplus and land scarce development economies, the demand for leasing in arises mainly from the lack of employment opportunities outside agriculture.

In 1953-54, when the land ceiling measure was not yet on the agenda of land reform, the total tenant holdings have the share of 32.61 percent in the total operational holdings; and the leased - in area share assumes 18.60 percent in the total operated area. Just after the impending ceiling measure was indicated (in 1959 Nagpur AICC), lot of evictions of tenants took place and as a result, 1960-61 data shows a sharp decline in shares of both the total tenant holdings and leased - in area, as they assume 18.52 percent and 9.15 percent respectively. Both the shares decrease upto 1981-82 and by 1991-92 they rise and assume 14.11 percent and 9.57 percent respectively.

The shares of total tenant holdings and total leased in area of A.P. in India show an increasing trend. The share of tenant holdings rises from 5.77 percent in 1953-54 to 9.78 percent in 1991-92 and the share of leased in area goes up from 7.20 percent in 1953-54 to 8.51 percent in 1991-92.

The issue of tenant farmers is a serious but neglected problem in Indian agriculture. Their agreements with land owners have no legal sanction. The Government has not maintaining revenue records of tenancy farming in majority states including Andhra Pradesh. As a result, they are exposed to several problems. In Andhra Pradesh nearly half of the 1.20 crore farmers are tenant farmers. About 60 – 80 percent of farming in the rice grown areas of East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Karimnagar districts is being done by tenant farmers. This phenomenon holds good for all agriculturally developed states. As per NSSO, 2003 (quoted in the Hindu Business Line, 2011). The area under informal tenancy in the country varies between 15 – 35 percent of the total farm area. About 36 per cent of the total rural households leasing land are landless labourers and 47.5 per cent have land below 0.5 hectares.

AP LICENSED CULTIVATORS ACT – 2011

During 2011 the Government of Andhra Pradesh enacted AP Licensed Cultivators Act – 2011 to safe guard the interests of the Agricultural tenants. The Government identified the tenants at the village level and issued 'Loan Eligibility Cards' to them. This card enables the tenant, farmer to get loan from the Nationalised Banks / Cooperative Societies and seeds on subsidy if the lease-out land owner does not claim loan or subsidized seeds for himself on particular land. Apart from these benefits, the tenant farmer is eligible to claim crop insurance at the time of crop failure. However, tenant farmer name will not be included in the 'Pass Book' (contains details of land owner) issued by the Revenue Department. In reality, it is found that the land owners are now changing the tenants every year and also enhanced land rents. With the frequent changes, now the tenants are not able to get loans or seeds in consecutive basis. Further, it is also found that the land owners are not leasing their land to a tenant farmer who has a Loan Eligibility Card, instead, they prefer a tenant farmer who has no eligibility card. In the interview with land owners, it is noticed that they entertain a doubt that this process may endanger their basic title on their land itself in the long run.

Now, the agriculture in A.P is in strange situation. The original land owners don't do the cultivation. These land owners are seeking other lucrative professions in the towns. At the same time they are reluctant to lease-out their lands to the tenant farmers. The fear is that in the course of time because of electoral polity compulsions, a situation may arise when their vary basis right on their lands may be in danger. As a result of this peculiar situation there is a possibility of vast tracts of land falling vacant unproductively, with many problems in its train.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of studies based on sample surveys have been conducted in India. The studies have examined various aspects of tenancy relations, such as, magnitude, type relative efficiency of different land tenure systems and so on. The studies in eastern Indian states during the seventies concluded that tenancy, in particular share tenancy, in conjunction with the exploitative inter linkages in credit and labour markets acts as a formidable barrier in the introduction of new agriculture technology (Bhadhuri, 1973; Prasad, 1973, 1974). Recent studies for these states have, however, reported qualitative changes in tenancy relations (Chadha and Bhaumik, 1992; Swain, 1999). Likewise, studies in agriculturally developed states / regions like Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh, have brought out increasing incidence of self-cultivation, emergence of fixed rent tenancy, participation of medium and large households in the lease market as lessees, etc (Singh, 1989; Bhall, 1983; Srivastava, 1989; Siddiqui, 1999). A few studies pertaining to other aspects of tenancy, such as; Tenancy Reforms (Appu, P.S. 1975), Variations in forms and extent of tenancy over period of time (Bardhan, Pranab, 1970), Tenancy and mode of production (Chakravarthy, Aparanjita, 1981), Economic effects o tenancy (Dwivedi and Ahowk Rudra, 1973), Mgnitude of Agricultural Tenancy (Narain, Dharam and Joshi, 1969) trends in Agricultural tenancy (Sanyal, SK, 1972), Structural and Tenurial Aspects (Sharma, PS, 1965) pattern of land distribution and Tenancy in A.P (Venkateswarlu A, 2004) and Trends and causes of Tenancy in A.P (Vijaya Kumar and Prasada Rao 1979) were conducted. Against this background, the present study made an attempt to examine the nature and the extent of Agricultural tenancy in two villages of Khammam District, where, more than half of the mandals are under scheduled agency area and it is highly tribal concentrated district of Andhra Pradesh.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant in the sense that apart from the continuous changes in the land holding pattern, there is also the problem of absentee land lords in rural India. This problem is compounded by the natural calamities and Government apathy and the seamy market economy. The tenancy in agriculture is a serious problem which is known to all. But enough attention on concerted efforts has not been made by the authorities concerned. Despite several measures have been initiated to provide security to tenant's redistribution of land and fixation of fair rents, informal tenancy has continued to exist even to day. The overall magnitude of the problem demands serious attention.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The planning commission estimated that the area under informal tenancy in the country varies between 15 percent and 35 percent of the total farm area. And nearly 80 percent of the total rural households leasing land are landless agricultural labourers and marginal farmers. This study attempts to examine the "Nature, terms and conditions of agricultural tenancy both in tribal and plains area in the backward district of Andhra Pradesh.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the nature, terms and conditions of tenant farmers in select study area.
2. Compare the terms and conditions of tenancy prevailed in the Tribal and Non-tribal areas of the study area.
3. To suggest measures for improving conditions of Tenant farmers

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of the study is to make a comparison of land rents and terms and conditions of Agricultural tenancy in two villages. Multi stage sampling technique has been followed in selecting the sample. In first stage two mandals i.e. Mudigonda from the plains area and Kamepally from the agency area have been chosen. From each mandal, one village has been selected at random. The villages selected are, 'A' of Mudigonda Mandal and 'N' of Kamepally mandal. In this study, a cross section of data from a sample of 22 tenants has been collected and the findings are based on the primary data. Out of 45 tenant farmers in these two villages nearly 50 percent of i.e. 22 tenant respondents have been chosen. The respondents were administered a structured questionnaire to collect the data. The data was collected during February - March, 2011.

BRIEF PROFILE OF KHAMMAM DISTRICT

As per Census, 2001 the total population of the district is 25,78,927. The scheduled tribe population is 6,82,617, which accounts for 26.47 percent of the district. It is highly tribal concentrated district in the state and stood first rank in Scheduled Tribe Population. About 43 percent of the total Geographical area of the district is under forest cover. The district divided into 46 mandals, out of these, 29 mandal (63 percent) are fully in ST Sub-plan area and out of 1242 Revenue villages, 894 (72 percent) are scheduled villages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL TENANCY IN SAMPLE VILLAGES

i) Village 'A' Gramapanchayat (Plains area):

Village A of Mudigonda mandal is 20 KM away from the District head quarters of Khammam. This village has nearly 400 house holds with 2000 population of different caste categories such as Kamma (FC), Chakali (BC), and Madiga (SC). Kammass are the major conventional farming community. The category - wise land holdings reveal that 8 house holds have more than 20 acres of land, 15 have land of 10-15 acres each and 20 families 5-10 acres each. The rest are in the range of 0-5 acres. The number of tenants in different caste categories is 25.

The major source of irrigation is open wells apart from the NSP canal and a small tank. Major crops grown in this village are chilli, cotton, redgram and paddy since it is an irrigated dry area. Earlier, jowar, redgram, ground nut, green gram were grown, apart from chilli in a very few acres.

During 80's most of the cultivable dry land was converted into paddy fields (wet land) with the assured irrigation from the Nagarjuna Sagar Project. As the lands in this village are at the tailend of NSP, the paddy fields gradually turned again into dry lands due to inadequate irrigation by the end of the eighties. Consequently, the farmers were forced to cultivate dry crops like groundnut, sunflower, red gram and maize.

In the mid 90s, most of the farmers showed interest in growing commercial crops like chilli and cotton, because of encouraging yields and lucrative prices especially for chilli which touched Rs.5-6 thousand per quintal. The farmers especially in the range of 0-5 acres have been growing cotton as a major crop, since it assured a certain amount of income during the peak season of investment (Sept, Dec). These incomes are invested on other commercial crops like chilli.

NATURE AND CAUSES OF TENANCY

In mid 90's, commercial crops were introduced on a large scale resulting in requirement of more and more labourers both permanent and casual. The non-availability of adequate number of labourers compelled the big farmers to lease out a chunk of their lands. At the same time, small and marginal farmers who meet their labour requirements from their own family came forward to cultivate more land on lease. The investment on permanent labour comes to Rs.20-25 thousand per year. This equals nearly 40 percent of the total agricultural income of the family. Moreover, the dearth of the local daily wage labour is forcing the farmers to engage the labour from distant areas and also provide them food and shelter in the peak seasons. Added to this more and more money is spent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides to sustain the yields and to curb the pests, which effect the commercial crops. The aforesaid factors accelerated the expenditures to unpredictable levels. Thus, own farming has become non-viable and the farmers prefer to lease out their lands.

Besides leasing out, the farmers also prefer alternatives like mango orchards and other fruit bearing gardens which assure certain regular income with little labour requirement.

For the last 7 or 8 years there has been an increase in the number of farmers offering to lease out their land. The major reason for this is the first priority of big, and marginal farmers to bear their children's education. They prefer to live in towns for that. The younger generation of big farmer families have no emotional attachment to the land and they evince little interest in farming. On the other hand, the traditional occupations are failing to cater to the needs of the family and they are also being looked down upon. These therefore looking forward to agriculture with an intention to improve their social prestige and income. The marginal farmers and landless labourers have also started coming forward to leasing - in. Their readiness prompted a hike in the rent offered by them. This inturn resulted in more number of farmers offering to lease - out.

ii) Village 'N' (Agency area):

The village N, chosen for study is 25 KM far from the district head quarters is populated with Lambada tribes. The category-wise land holdings show that there are 4 farmers owning more than 20 acres each, one in the category of 10-20 acres, 20 of 5-10 acres each, 25 holding 2.5 - 5.0 acres each and 100 families of 0-2.5 acres each. Out of 600 acres only 140 acres of land is irrigated by small kuntas, wells and streams and the rest are unirrigated. Cotton, Chilli, paddy, redgram, black gram and green gram are grown. The practice of leasing in and leasing out has been in vogue for the last 7 years.

The tenants of this Thanda lease in the lands owned by the Reddys (The earstwhile Jagirdhars) of near by village which is at a distance of 2 KM. These land owners have leased - out a considerable portion of their land holdings because they are unable to manage them due to migration of their younger generation to cities. They go to cities for education, which is a pathway for a bright future. It is found that a few small farmers of SC community and one ST Farmer have also opted to lease - out their lands.

FINDINGS OF THE FIELD STUDY

The caste-wise distribution of sample respondents in village A (table-1) shows that nearly 60 percent (7) belong to B.C. Community (Chakali, Gowda), followed by O.C.(Kamma, 17 per cent) and SC (madiga, 17 per cent) and only one respondent belongs to ST. (Lambadi) community. In another sample village N all the 10 tenant respondents are ST's (Lambadas).

The age-wise educational status of sample respondents (table-2) of A village are in the age group of 25-45, a majority of the sample respondents (84 per cent) in this village are illiterates and only 2 have primary education. In village N all the tribal tenant respondents are illiterates. It is noticed that most of the respondents children are school going, though their parents do not have any formal education in both plain and tribal villages.

TABLE-1: CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE TENANTS

Village	OC	BC	SC	ST	Total
A	2 (16.66)	7 (58.33)	2 (16.66)	1 (8.35)	12 (100)
N	-	-	-	10 (100)	10 (100)
	2	7	2	11	22

Source: Village Records

TABLE-2: AGE-WISE EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF SAMPLE TENANT RESPONDENTS

Age	Village N				Village A			
	I	P	S	Total	I	P	S	Total
Below 25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-35	-	-	-	-	6	2	-	8 (66.66)
35-45	5	-	-	5	3	-	-	3 (25.00)
> 45	5	-	-	5	1	-	-	1 (8.34)
	10	-	-	10	10	2	-	12 (100)

Source: field Study

I-Illiterate; P-Primary; S-Secondary

The size of the family of respondents (table-3) in village A shows that 50 percent of them have 4 members each and 35 percent have 7 members, including the dependants. There is no difference in the family size irrespective of different caste categories. In village N, 40 percent of respondents have 5 members as their family size followed by 30 percent of families with 4 members and only one respondent family has eight members. The average size of the family is calculated at 4 in both the villages. The average family labour involved in agricultural operations is 3 per tenant family.

TABLE-3: SIZE OF THE FAMILY

Family size	Village A					Village N
	OC	BC	SC	ST	Total	ST
Three				1 (8.33)	1 (8.33)	2 (16.66)
Four	2 (16.66)	2 (16.66)	2 (16.66)	-	6 (50.00)	3 (25.00)
Five		1 (8.33)		-	1 (8.33)	4 (33.33)
Above Six		3 (25.00)	1 (8.33)	-	4 (33.33)	1 (8.33)
Total	2 (16.66)	6 (50.00)	3 (25.00)	1 (8.33)	12 (100.00)	10 (100.00)

Source: Field Study

TABLE-4: LAND PARTICULARS (OWN LAND)

In acres	Village A					Village N	
	OC	BC	SC	ST	Total	ST	Total
0-0.5	-	4	1	1	6 (50.00)	3	3 (30.00)
0.5-1.00	-	1	1	-	2 (16.66)	1	1 (10.00)
1.00-2.00	-	2	-	-	2 (16.66)	4	4 (40.00)
2.00-3.00	1	-	-	-	1 (8.33)	2	2 (20.00)
3.00-4.00	1	-	-	-	1 (8.33)	-	-
4.00-5.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Above 5.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2 (16.66)	7 (58.33)	2 (16.66)	1 (8.33)	12 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

Source: Field Study

The land owned by the sample tenants (table-4) revealed that around 50 percent of respondents of village A have 0.5 acre of land of their own. Another 34 percent have 0.5 to 2.00 acres and the remaining 16 percent have 2-4 acres each. In village N 40 percent have 1-2 acres followed by 30 percent with 0.5 acres and only two respondents have 3-4 acres each of their own. On the whole, it can be said that, most of the tenants are marginal farmers.

TABLE-5: LEASED IN LAND PARTICULARS

In acres	Village A					Village N	
	OC	BC	SC	ST	Total	ST	Total
1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.00	-	1	-	1	2 (16.66)	3	3 (30.00)
3.00	1	2	-	-	3 (25.00)	4	4 (40.00)
4.00	1	1	1	-	3 (25.00)	1	1 (10.00)
5.00	-	1	1	-	2 (16.66)	2	2 (20.00)
6.00	-	1	-	-	1 (8.33)	-	-
7.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.00	-	1	-	-	1 (8.33)	-	-
Above 8.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2 (16.66)	7 (58.33)	2 (16.66)	1 (8.33)	12 (100)	10 (100)	10 (100)

Source: Field Study

The distribution of land leased (table-5) in village A in reveals that 50 percent of respondents (6) have leased in 3-4 acres, 2 respondents have leased-in 2 acres and 2 another five acres each. In remaining two respondents are cultivating more than 8 acres on lease and another respondent with 6 acres. In Village N, 70 percent (7) of the respondent families have a leased holding of 2-3 acres each followed by 2 families with 5 acres and one with 4 acres.

The annual income of the tenants from leased land (table 6a & 6b) shows that 4 respondents have generated an income of more than Rs.30,000 from a holding of 5-8 acres. Three respondents have earned between Rs.20,000 to 30,000 each from a holding of 2-3 acres each whereas two respondents earn the same income from a holding of 3-5 acres each. The rest of the respondents have earned an income in the range of Rs.5000 to 20000 each on a holding of 1-2 acres each.

TABLE-6 (a): ANNUAL INCOME OF TENANTS FROM LEASED IN LANDS (VILLAGE-A)

Income Range (Rs.)	No. of Tenants & Leased land in acres					
	1	1-2	2-3	3-5	5-8	Total
Less than 5000	-	-	-	-	-	-
5000 - 10000	-	1	-	-	-	1
10000 – 20000	-	1	-	-	-	1
20000 – 30000	-	-	3	2	-	5
Above 30,000	-	-	-	1	4	5
Total	-	2	3	3	4	12

Source: Field Study

TABLE-6 (b): ANNUAL INCOME OF TENANTS FROM LEASED IN LANDS (VILLAGE-N)

Income Range (Rs.)	No. of Tenants & Leased land in acres					
	1	1-2	2-3	4-5	5-8	Total
Less than 5000	-	-	-	-	-	-
5000 - 10000	-	3	-	-	-	3
10000 – 20000	-	-	3	-	-	3
20000 – 30000	-	-	1	-	-	1
Above 30,000	-	-	-	3	-	3
Total	-	3	4	3	-	10

Source: Field Study

In Village N, 3 respondents have generated more than Rs.30,000 each from a holding of 4-5 acres 3 respondents in the category of 1-2 acres have generated Rs.5-10 thousand another 3 who had 2-3 acres generated Rs.10-20 thousand income. Only one respondent who has generated Rs.20-30 thousand on 2-3 acres. It is found that the average income per acre generated by the tenants on their leased in lands is not uniform for all crops.

The income generation more from chilli crop than for cotton. The average income of a tenant who grows chilli crop is around Rs.16000/- per acre. But in the case of cotton it is Rs.10,000/-. The income generation from these crops in the tribal village is less than that in a plain village (Rs.13,000 and Rs.7000/- for chilli and cotton respectively)

TABLE-7: YIELD PER ACRE (RANGE) IN QUINTALS

	Yield in Village A	Yield in Village N
Chilli	8-00	6-15
Cotton	3-10	3-8
Paddy	10-15	10-20
Redgram	1-3	1-2

Source: Field Study

The data of **crop-wise yield per acre** (table-7) indicates that the yield of chilli is in the range of 8-20 quintals in village A and 6-12 quintals in village N. Cotton is the range of 3-10 quintals in village A and 3-7 quintals in village N. In the case of paddy it is 10-15 and 10-20 quintals in village A and village N respectively. The last and the least crop redgram is between 1-3 quintals in village A and 1-2 quintals in Village N respectively. It can be concluded from the above analysis that all the crops except paddy, have yielded more in village A than in village N and this may be due to fertile lands, private sources of irrigation and relatively better access to the credit facilities.

The information pertaining to rent payments (table 8(a) & 8(b)) revealed the 75 percent of the payments are in cash in Village A, where as, all the rent payments are in cash in Village N. In village A 3 respondents have adopted the crop sharing mode. Fixed crop system like in Paddy crop is not seen in either of the villages. Out of 12 respondents in village A, only 3 have written agreements with regard to the terms and conditions of leasing-in, the rest have only oral arrangements. In another sample village, 80 percent of the respondents have written agreements. In village N a strong and interesting **mode of rent payment** is being followed. Instead of collecting the rents, the owner borrows a certain amount of money from the tenants in advance. Here, the lending of money by the tenants is an indirect condition for leasing-in. Once the payment is done neither the owner pays the interest nor the tenant the rent. The rent is waived off

against the interest (which is normally understood to be 3 percent per month) on the amount borrowed by the owner. There are instances where the lease has been continued in this manner for the last seven years. The common agreement is that the tenants' claim on the land is terminated as and when the amount borrowed by the owner is paid off.

TABLE-8 (a): TYPES OF RENT PARTICULARS

	No. of Tenants	
	Village A	Village N
Cash	9 (75.00)	10 (100)
Sharing Crop	3 (25.00)	-
Fixed crop	-	-
Total	12 (100)	10 (100)

Source: Field Study

TABLE 8 (b): RENT AGREEMENTS

	No. of Tenants	
	Village A	Village N
Written	3	8
Oral	9	2
Total	12	10

Source: Field Study

All the lease agreements are executed on the paper, and they pay a lumpsum amount in advance. As per the possessing of written agreements, the study has revealed that there is a variation between the two villages. In plain areas, generally, the land owners keep the documents with them. But in the agency area, it is the tenants who keep the documents.

In the plain areas, in case of share cropping leases, the tenants are under the obligation to share the burden of investments on agricultural operations on par with the owners. For this, the tenants generally borrow from the owners at the rate of 2 percent interest per month. When the owner is unable to lend the tenants' share, the tenants struggle to pool up their finances from different sources.

The farmers and tenants cultivating commercial crops have to spend nearly one third of their total investment on pesticides alone. This makes them purchase the pesticides on credit basis. This credit purchases curtails the purchasers' choice regarding the brands and the prices. They ultimately depend on the sellers' mercy. The sellers usually charge an interest of 18-24 percent per annum on the credit bills. Further, the farmers have to rely on this single shop (nearest to the village) for credit and the inability of the seller to provide the required pesticides in time leads to disastrous effect on the crop.

CHANGE OF LAND OWNER

For various reasons, the tenants often change the owners in plain area. In this village, out of 12 respondents, 6 (50 percent) changed their land owners once in five years and only one respondent changed the owner twice in six years. Hike in rents and competition for the land among the tenants are the reasons for changing the owners. No cases of eviction of tenants on pretext were found in the present study.

In some instances, when the owner improves the infrastructure like wells and electric motor, the rents are hiked as the post improvement effect. The existing tenants who can't afford the enhanced rents go for the other lands on lesser rents. The change of owner becomes inevitable. Sometime the tenants may find more promising lands with better amenities like fertility, road connectivity and irrigation. In some cases, it is also found that a decline in the quality of human relations between the owner and the tenant also prompts a change in the tenancy. The default rental payments also force a change. In general, tenants prefer to make regular payments of rentals, inspite of low yielding, and unremunerative prices. They do so to continue undisturbed relations with the owners. They often borrow loans at the rate of 24 percent interest exclusively for the payment of rent.

CONCLUSION

On the whole, the study reveals a gradual increase in the number of tenants in both plains and agency areas. In plain areas middle and small farmers apart from big farmers offer to lease out part of their lands due to scarcity of permanent and daily wage labourers. The demand for lease in and the supply of lease out are high. A note worthy phenomenon is increase in the number of under reported and off the record tenants even in the areas dominated by the leftist parties and organisations. In plain areas rent payments are mostly in cash along with the share cropping. In the wet land areas the rent of the single crop (Kharif) land holdings is paid in the fixed produce mode ranging from 4.5 to 7.5 quintals for acre. For the land that is suitable for two crops the fixed produce rental is between 7.5 to 9.0 quintals per acre. Among the commercial crops chilli is being cultivated to some extent under 50 percent share cropping system. In agency area almost all the land rents are paid in cash. The significant feature is the owners facilitate their tenants, especially the Lambada Tribes to cultivate their lands without paying rents every year by borrowing lumpsum amounts in advance. The borrowers (owners) treat the interest payable on their loans as rent due from the tenants. The level of awareness of tenancy act is higher in the agency area (where 1/70 act is in force) than in plain area. The moral ethics of the tenants prevent them from the legal possession of the land and deprivation of the virtual owners. Hence, they are against, making any claim on the ownership of the land by recording their names in revenue records as tenants. The main reason behind acceleration of rents in both plain and agency area is the growing demand of the tenants especially from the lower strata of the population. The system of unrecorded tenancy being an age-old and a prevalent and growing practice to date. Recently, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been identifying the Agricultural tenants and issuing Loan Eligibility Cards to them to get all the benefits on par with other farmers. Let us hope that the problems of tenants will be addressed in coming days.

LIMITATIONS

1. The study was confined to two select villages and the results may be generalized for the whole of Andhra Pradesh
2. Though the respondents were ready to provide all the necessary information required for the study, they were some times reluctant to reveal their relationships with their land owners because of fear.

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