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Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's Perspective on Agrarian Growth and Development: A Study of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana-South Indian States

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ABSTRACT

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a multifaceted personality, an intellectual revolutionary and statesman of the 20th century. He was the 'beacon of light' for the millions of depressed, oppressed and exploited people of India. The contributions of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar pervade the entire gamut of social sciences. Therefore, his legacy to knowledge makes him a socialist, historian, economist, political thinker strategist, constitutional law maker and cultural revolutionary. Dr. Ambedkar observed that economic and social development could be achieved through the development of agriculture in rural areas. His views on Indian agriculture can be classified in to various themes like land revenue, small land holdings, land tenure system, agricultural labour, collective farming and agricultural organization. The land distribution pattern in Indian agriculture continues to be skewed. Skewed distribution of land especially in India is important because of its association with the caste system. Large landowners belong to the so-called upper castes, the cultivators belong to the middle castes and the agricultural workers mostly belong to the weaker sections such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In this connection, this paper focuses on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's views for the development of agricultural sector special reference to Andhra Pradesh land holding pattern and occupational distributions of Dalits.

KEY WORDS: Dalits, land distribution, skewed, agriculture, social and economic development

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I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is one of the important sectors for Indian economy. This important agriculture sector development essentially depends on the land tenure system, irrigation and other parameters like fertility of land and technology. Land being a factor of production in all the stages of the economy and it also plays a diabolical role in the life of rural people. Land is not only 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 areas continues to be closely related to the amount of land owned or controlled. The trend of social inequalities in the countryside and demonstrate the overlap between the system of land distribution and the distribution of power among the people. Land plays a key role in the achievement of power and dominance in the rural India¹. But the land distribution pattern in agriculture continues to be skewed in India. Skewed distribution of land, especially in India, is important because of its association with the caste system. Large landowners belongs to the upper castes, the cultivators belongs to the middle castes and whereas the agricultural workers mostly belongs to the weaker sections such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes². Various land reform measures have been initiated by every state after independence in line with the national economy policy, objectives of removing exploitative intermediary land tenure system, fashioned by British Government through the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793, and to confer ownership rights on tenants and thereby to raise the productivity and promote equity in Indian agriculture.

Indian agriculture had also been exposed to new technology from mid sixties known as Green Revolution. There was a tremendous increase in the agricultural production particularly, in the food production due to the green revolution. However, the rate of poverty continues to be high at national level as well as Andhra Pradesh State level in spite of growth rate of the food production. One important reason for this is that it only benefited the better off farmers and the remaining small, marginal and agricultural labour could not gain much due to their low or no land base. The important questions that would be addressed are: who are the marginal and landless labour? The answer is the Dalits who, even today, consist nearly 89% of the landless and agricultural labourers. Then which type of model is suitable to the Indian agricultural development and the reduction of inequalities in land distribution? Whose economic theory would help the upliftment of the landless and exploited Dalits? To answer these questions in this paper an attempt has been made (i) to study the access to land for Dalits at Andhra Pradesh state level during post independence period. (ii) to assess the impact of land reforms on the Dalits economic condition with special reference to Andhra Pradesh (iii) It also examines the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar views on agricultural growth particularly on land

reforms and the relevance of his theory to Andhra Pradesh agricultural development. Data was collected from Population Census of Andhra Pradesh 2011 and Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh 2013. Data on landholdings for the years of 1976-77, 1980-81, 1986-87, 1990-91, 1995-96, 2000-01, 2005-06 and 2010-11 were collected from A Report on Census of Land Holdings (published by Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of. Andhra Pradesh) and for SC/ST land holdings data was collected from A Report on Census of Land Holdings of SC/STs published by Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of. Andhra Pradesh.

This paper is divided into three parts first part explains the views of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on agricultural development, land reforms and industrial development. Second part explains the status of SC&STs with reference to land holdings, occupational distribution and other economic parameters. Final part presents the summary and conclusions.

ii. Ambedkar views on agricultural development and land reforms

The problems of Indian agriculture analyzed by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and suggested remedies in his paper on “Small holdings in India and their remedies”, which had been published in the journal of the Indian Economic Society in September 1918. It has been reproduced in Dr. B. R. Ambedkar writings and speeches. He was the first Indian economist to examine the problems of sub-division and fragmentation of agricultural land holdings. According to Ambedkar the laws of property inheritance prevalent and the population pressure on land in India are the main factors responsible for the sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings. He believed that the evils of small holdings would have been mitigated to some extent, if the small holdings were compact holdings. Ambedkar critically examined the feasibility and desirability of the methods like consolidation and enlargement as remedies for the problem of Indian agriculture.

“Consolidation of holdings is a practical problem while the enlargement of them is a theoretical one, demanding a discussion of the principle which can be said to govern their size. Postponing the consideration of the theoretical question of enlargement, we find that the problem of consolidation raises the following two issues : (1) how to unite such small and scatted holdings as the existing ones and (2) once consolidated how too perpetuate them at that size, let us consider them each in turn. Sub-division of land need not invite what is called the fragmentation of land. But unfortunately it does, for every heir desires to secure a share from each of the survey numbers composing the entire land of the decreased instead of so arranging the distribution that each may get as many whole numbers as possible i.e., the heirs instead of sharing the land by survey numbers claim to share in each survey number, thus causing fragmentation. Though fragmentation does subserve the ends of distributive justice, it renders farming in India considerably inefficient as it once

did in Europe. It involves waste of labour and cattle power, waste on hedges and boundary marks and waste of manure. It renders impracticable the watching of crops, sinking of wells and the use of labour, saving implements. It makes difficult changes in cultivation, the making of roads, water channels etc. and it increases the cost of production. These disadvantages of fragmentation are to be recounted only to land their support to the process of restriping or consolidation. The method of “restriping” is many, though all are not equal efficacious. Voluntary exchanges can hardly be relied upon for much. But a restricted sale of the right of occupancy may be expected to go a good deal. For, under it, when survey numbers are put to auction on account of their being relinquished by the holders or taken in attachment for arrears of assessments, only those may be allowed to bid in the question for the sale of the right of occupancy whose lands are contiguous to the land hammered out. Again as further helping the process of fragmentation. The right of pre-emption may be given to farmers whose neighbor wishes to sell his land. These methods, it must be admitted, can achieve the desired result in a very small manner. The evils of fragmentation are very great and must be met by a comprehensive scheme of consolidation. It is therefore advocated that if two-thirds of the Khatedars, dealing more than half of the village lands, apply, government should undertake compulsorily to restrict the scattered fields of the village”³.

This can be understood from the above paragraph that the fragmentation of landholdings encourage farm inefficiency by causing wastage of labour, animal power and other inputs. Here, Ambedkar examines the proposals made by Baroda Economic Enquiry Committee, (R. B. C) Prof. Jevons and Keating. He critically examines the norm of ‘economic unit’ and ‘original ownership’ suggested by the Baroda committee regarding compulsory restriping of land. According to the first principle the land which are for the public purposes are set a part. The remaining land is divided into plots, which can be used according to the local conditions of soil, tillage, to form economic field, that is, a parcel of land necessary to keep fully engaged and support one family. These new plots may be sold by auction among the old occupants, restriction being placed on purchase so as to prevent a large number of cultivators being ousted. The purchase money may then be divided in certain proportion among the original owners of plots, a portion being reserved for expenses in which government would also contribute a share⁴. According to the second method the land is redistributed to the Khatedars in proportion to his original holdings as far as possible to the same value. The difference will be adjusted if any, by payment of cash. In this method no Khatedar is deprived of his land. Each is accommodated and in the place of his original small and scattered fields gets one plot of almost their aggregate size. It is only a few farmers whose holdings may be very small and whom it would not be expedient to keep on as farmers that they may have to lose their small piece of land.

But they also get benefit as they would get full values of land in money. And on this ground R.B.C preferred the second method of consolidation⁵.

The RBC proposed to preserve the consolidated holdings, that the fragmentation of holding is done up to a certain limit. It is also an uneconomic so long as each part becoming less than the fixed limit, which may be required for good agriculture. Instead of going beyond the limit of, subdivision of land, it can be given to one of the members of the family and he has to pay compensation to the remaining according to the market value of their share⁶

Prof. Jeevans agreed with the principles of consolidation that were suggested by R.B.C. He specially emphasized on one point, that the consolidate holding must be large. He did not deal with the issue of perpetuation of consolidated holding⁷. Prof. Keatings proposed that land under an occupant should be registered in his name only. The registered owner may sell or mortgage or dispose of it as an entire unit but no in parts. On the death of the holder, if he has not disposed of the land by will it will devolve upon a single heir⁸.

In the case of consolidation of holdings and perpetuation of them, Ambedkar said that the problem has not been viewed as a whole all by its advocates. R.B.C alone endeavors to consolidate as well as to preserve the consolidated holding. Prof. Jevons makes no provision to conserve the results of consolidation. Prof. Keating does not deal with consolidation at all. He is concerned only with the prevention of further fragmentation. The principles of consolidation advocated by R.B.C and Prof. Jevons are almost the same and so are their producers for carrying it out. The R.B.C would adopt this rule only when the division of land would result in uneconomic holdings, where as Keating's would let the disposed heirs of without compensation, which was opposed by the R.B.C.

It is said that Indian agriculture suffered from small and scattered holdings we must not only consolidate, but also enlarge them. It must be borne in mind that consolidation may obviate the evils of scattered holdings, but it will not obviate the evils of small holdings unless the consolidated holding is an economic and enlarged holding. The committee as well as Mr. Keating's has entirely lost sight of this aspect of the question. Prof. Jevons, alone of the advocates, keeps it constantly before his mind that consolidation must bring about in its train the enlargement of holdings. In the words of Jevons economic holding is one which produces enough for a farmer to sustain a higher standard of living. According to R.B. C economic holding must be of such a size as having regard to the local condition of soil, villages etc., and necessary to keep fully engaged and support one family. According to Keating's on economic holding is a holding which allows a man chance of producing sufficient to support himself and his family in reasonable comfort, after paying his necessary expenses⁹.

Dr. Ambedkar critically examined the definition of economic holding and argued that these definitions view economic holding from stand point of consumption rather than of production and consumption is not the correct standard to judge the economic character of holding. In obedience to social custom a farmer has to support all the labour crops at his disposal last though some portion of his labour crops is superfluous. Many of the farm enterprises may be declared as failure when farm could not support all his family members, even though some could not be productively used as per the criterion of consumption standards. True economic relation can subsist only between the total out-turn and the investment and as long as total out-turn pays for investments, no farm enterprise would be closed even it could not support all family members. It follows that economic holding to be viewed in terms of production rather than consumption¹⁰.

He further argues that the chief object of an efficient production requires every factor in the concern contributes its highest and it can do that only when it can cooperate with its fellow of the enquired capacity. Thus there is an ideal proportion that to subsist among the various factors combined, though the ideal will vary with the changes in the proportions. The factor proportions would change depending on elasticity of substitution. Thus, Ambedkar was of the opinion that if agriculture has to be treated as economic enterprise, then by itself, there would be no such thing as small or large. To a farmer a holding may be small or large depending upon to other factors at his disposal, mere size of land is empty of all economic connotations and hence it could not be said that a large holding as economic holding, while a small holding uneconomic. It is the right or wrong proportion of other factors of production to a unit of land that renders the latter economic or uneconomic. Thus, small farm may be economic as well as large farm, for economic does not depend upon the size of land but upon the due proportions among all the factors including land¹¹. The size of the holding should be allowed to change in response to changes in the equipment, a farmer has to make economic holding ensuring efficient cultivation and hence size of a holding. It can be made a large holding but not an economic holding. Therefore Ambedkar argues that the proposal of enlarging the existing holding area remedy to the ills of our agriculture can be entertained only if it is shown that farms have diminished in size while the agricultural stock has increased in amount¹².

Ambedkar argues that the existing holdings are uneconomic, moreover they are too small but the area too large and there is a need for increasing agricultural stock and implements which in turn necessitates enlarged holdings which will be an economic holding as well. Consequently the remedy for the ills of agriculture in India does not lay primarily in the matter of enlarging holdings but in the matter of increasing capital and capital goods. He strongly believes that the evil of small holdings in India is not fundamental but it is derived from the parent evil of the mal-adjustment in her social economy¹³.

iii. Ambedkar views on collective farming

Ambedkar has advocated collective farming from the viewpoint of social justice and economic equity. Ambedkar, in his “States and Minorities” published in 1947, felt that state socialism was an essential for rapid industrialization. He proposed that state should have an obligation to plan the economic life people on the lines which would lead to highest point of productivity without closing every avenue to private enterprise and to provide for equitable distribution of wealth¹⁴. He proposed the state ownership of agriculture with a collectivized method of cultivation and modified form of state socialism in the field of industry. It should be the obligation of state to supply capital necessary for agriculture as well as for industry. He also opines that consolidation of holdings and tenancy legislation are worse than useless. They cannot bring about prosperity in agriculture. Neither consolidation nor tenancy legislation can be of any help to the landless agricultural labours. Only collective farms can help them. The following principles that Ambedkar enunciates around which collective farming shall be organized in India are:

- 1) Agriculture shall be the state Industry.
- 2) Agriculture industry shall be organized on the following basis.
 - (i) The state shall divide the land acquired into farms of standard size and let out the farms for cultivation to residents of the villages as tenants (made up of groups of families) to cultivate on the following conditions:
 - (a) The farm shall be cultivated on a collective farm;
 - (b) The farm shall be cultivated in accordance with rules and directions issued by government;
 - (c) The tenants shall share among themselves in the manner prescribed the produce of the farm left after the payment of charges properly liveable on the farm;
 - (ii) The land shall be let out to villagers without distinction of caste or creed and in such manner that there will be no landlords or tenant and no landless labourers;
 - (iii) It shall be the obligation of the state to finance the cultivation of the collective farms by the supply or water, draft animals, implements, manure, seeds etc;
 - (iv) The state shall be entitled to;
 - a) to levy the following charges on the produce of the farm;
 - (i) a portion for land revenue;

(ii) a portion to pay the debenture holders; and (iii) a portion to pay for the use of capital goods supplied.

b) to prescribe penalties against tenants who break the condition of neglect to make the base use of the means of cultivation offered by the state or otherwise act prejudiciously to the scheme of collective farming;

3) The scheme shall be brought into operation as early as possible but in no case shall the period extend beyond the tenth year from the date of the constitution coming in to operation”¹⁵

The idea of collective farming of Ambedkar was very revolutionary. If it is accepted, would require the nationalization of agriculture. The Government of India has opted for a more soft measure of land reforms instead of collective farming. It is true that to solve the problems of small and scattered holdings and agricultural labour problem, collective farms under the state control had been adopted in USSR and in China¹⁶. This gave security of employment and minimum income to agricultural labour besides solving the problem of inequality in the distribution of wealth and income. Through this system, the basic problem of rural poverty was solved.

iv. Ambedkar views on industrialization as remedy for agricultural problems

Dr. Ambedkar had evidently argued in the support of India's industrialization as a solution to the problems of Indian agricultural problems. The significant aspect of Dr. Ambedkar argument is that he considered industrialization as a necessary but not a sufficient form for consolidation of agricultural land holdings in India. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar writes on this theme more eloquently in exact terms that,

“It can be laid down without fear of challenge that industrialisation will foster the enlargement of holdings and that it will be the most effective barrier against sub-division and fragmentation. Aggressing in this, it may be observed that industrialization will not be a sufficient remedy for consolidation. That it will require direct remedies may be true. But it is also true that industrialization, though it may not bring about consolidation, will facilitate consolidation. It is an inconvertible truth that so long as there is the premium on land consolidation will not be easy, no matter on how equitable principle it is proposed to be carried out. Is it a small service if industrialization lessens the premium as it inevitably just? Certainly not consideration of another aspect of consolidation as well points to the same conclusion; that industrialization must precede consolidation. It should never be forgotten that unless we have constructed an effective barrier against the future sub-division and fragmentation of a consolidated holding it is idle to layout plans for consolidation. Such a barrier can only be found in industrialization, for it alone can reduce the extreme pressure which, as we have shown, causes sub-division of land. Thus, if small and scattered

holdings are the ills from which our agriculture is suffering to cure it of them is undeniably to industrialize”¹⁷.

The scheme of his study of small holdings, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar treats the capacity of industry to absorb labour and thus reduce the population pressure on agricultural land as the fundamental social gain or dividend. Therefore, Ambedkar evidently states that industrialization shall precede the measures for land consolidation.

To sum up the Ambedkar views on land reforms and agricultural growth, sub-division and fragmentation of landholdings are the main evils of Indian agriculture. He said that the existing holdings are uneconomic not in the sense that they are too small but they are too large in relation to the existing availability of agricultural inputs. According to him, solution to these ills of agriculture in India does lie in the matter of increasing capital goods that is agricultural implements in right proportion of farm production. He suggested rapid industrialization for reducing heavy dependence on agriculture, as final solution for problem of Indian agriculture. He suggested the collective farming to reduce inequalities in the land distribution pattern.

The second part of this paper tries to examine the agricultural scenario of Andhra Pradesh, land distribution pattern, occupational distribution, poverty and other economic parameters with special reference to SC and STs, in the post- independence period. The united Andhra Pradesh data was used for analysis, however, in few areas separate Andhra Pradesh and Telangana data was used accordingly. It further analyses the implementation of land reforms and distribution of surplus land to the landless poor and agricultural labour.

V. Land distribution pattern in Andhra Pradesh

Changes in the land distribution pattern of Andhra Pradesh during 1970-71 to 2010-11 with respect to operational holdings have been presented in the table 1. It could be seen from the data presented in the table 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 the other hand, medium and large holdings together constitute about 15% of total operational holdings but control more than 56% of total operated area during the same period. This indicates that the distribution of land was skewed in 1976-77. By 2010-11 there was a tremendous increase in the number of marginal holdings. Their percentage share in total holdings increased to about 64% but area operated under their control increased to only 26% of total operated area. On the other hand, the number of medium and large holdings declined to 3.2% of total operational holdings but control nearly 19% of total area. If we

take large holdings alone their share is only 0.27% of total holdings but control nearly 3.87% of total operated area in 2010-11. This clearly indicates that although the number of medium and large holdings declined, area under their control has not been declined proportionately. On the other hand number of marginal holdings increased from 46.6% to 64% but the operated area under their control was only 26% of total operated area in 2010-11. This implies that in the post-independence period inequalities in the distribution of land has increased despite land reform.

Table 1: Operational holdings and operated area by different size groups in Andhra Pradesh State level, 1976-77 to 2010-11(Nos in lakhs, Area in lakh Hect)

Size group	1976-77		1980-81		1990-91		2000-01		2005-06		2010-11	
	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)	52.11 (56.1)	23.69 (16.4)	70.2 (60.9)	31.0 (21.6)	74.18 (61.5)	32.87 (22.6)	84.25 (63.9)	37.27 (26.0)
Small	12.52 (20.3)	18.36 (12.8)	15.91 (21.6)	24.12 (16.8)	19.72 (21.2)	28.26 (19.5)	25.2 (21.8)	35.6 (24.7)	26.39 (21.9)	37.30 (25.7)	29.18 (22.1)	41.19 (28.8)
Semi-medium	10.72 (17.4)	29.93 (20.8)	11.74 (16.0)	32.61 (22.7)	13.45 (14.5)	36.4 (25.2)	14.2 (12.3)	37.9 (26.4)	14.44 (11.9)	38.35 (26.4)	14.01 (10.6)	36.85 (25.7)
Medium	7.53 (12.2)	46.47 (32.3)	6.46 (8.8)	39.79 (27.8)	6.44 (6.93)	37.77 (26.1)	5.0 (4.4)	28.5 (19.9)	4.87 (4.04)	27.59 (19.0)	3.97 (3.02)	22.09 (15.45)
Large	2.09 (3.4)	35.68 (24.8)	1.55 (2.10)	27.95 (19.5)	1.18 (1.27)	18.48 (12.8)	0.7 (0.6)	10.8 (7.5)	0.56 (0.5)	8.78 (6.05)	0.35 (0.27)	5.52 (3.87)
All	61.55 (100)	143.8 (100)	73.7 (100)	143.3 (100)	92.9 (100)	144.6 (100)	115.3 (100)	143.9 (100)	120.4 (100)	144.8 (100)	131.7 (100)	142.93 (100)

Source: Report on Agricultural Census of Andhra Pradesh, 2013, Note: figures in parenthesis indicates the percentage

The gini-coefficient ratios of operational holdings and ownership holdings presented in the table2 also corroborated the same as the land distribution pattern in the Andhra Pradesh is skewed. The increase in the marginal holdings may be attributed to population explosion and also to redistribution of small pieces of surplus land and waste land to the weaker sections. But medium and large farmers could retain large size of holdings as land reforms 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.

Table 2: Gini- coefficient of operational and ownership holdings

Year	Operational holdings*	Year	Operational holdings**	Ownership holdings**
1976-77	0.572	1970-71	0.603	0.73
1980-81	0.552	1981-82	0.599	0.74
1986-87	0.545	1991-92	0.576	0.72
1990-91	0.528			
1995-96	0.498			
2000-01	0.486			
2005-06	0.479			
2010-11	0.451			

Source: table 1 & NSSO report 1992, Note: * As per Agricultural census data, ** As per NSSO data

Table 3: Population, agriculture and employment growths in Andhra Pradesh since 1961

year	population		year	Agricultural growth		year	Employment growth	
	A.P	IND		A.P	IND		A.P	IND
1961	15.65	21.64	1960-61 to 1970-71	0.62	1.66	1983-84 to 1993-94	2.4	2.1
1971	20.90	24.80	1970-71 to 1979-80	0.7	1.9	1993-94 to 2004-05	0.95	1.89
1981	23.10	24.66	1980-81 to 1989-90	2.1	3.1	Share of employment across sectors		
1991	24.20	23.87	1990-91 to 1999-00	2.1	2.8	Sector	2004-05	2009-10
2001	14.59	21.54	2000-01 to 2004-05	0.9	1.9	Agriculture	52.80	51.2
2011	11.12	17.64	1984-85 to 1993-94	3.69	3.65	Manufacturing	11.97	11.0
			1994-95 to 2004-05	2.76	1.94	Non-Manufacturing	7.0	13.5
			2005-06 to 2013-14	5.11	3.97	Service	28.1	24.3

Source: Man power profile, AP-2003, p. 2, Published by Directorate of Economics Statistics, Govt. of A.P www.planningcommission.ni.in

http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/Final_PPT_2011_chapter3.pdf

Vi. Dalits and agriculture

Dalits comprise Scheduled 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 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 percent of general population that is more than 83% of SC population and about 92.5% of ST population lives in rural areas as against 72 percent of general population. 25.89% of SC population and 13.66% of ST population are literates as against 44% of general population that is more than 74% of SC population and about 86.4% of ST population are illiterates as against 56% of general population. The work participation rate of SCs, defined as the percentage of SC population participating in the work of total scheduled caste population is 51.08% and that of STs is 54.03% as against 45 percent among general population in 2001. This may happen due to the high participation rate among SC (46.7%) and ST (50.65%) women. It is also to be noted that as per 2001 census 85% of SC main workers and 83% of ST main workers depend on primary sector only 68 percent of general workers depend upon primary sector. More than 72% of SC main workers and about 44% of ST main workers were reported as agricultural labour as against only 41 percent among general workers. After the independence of 59 years also most of the Dalits are retained as landless and agricultural labourers and they totally depend upon their labour work. In the view of heavy dependency of SCs and STs on agriculture, now let us examine the land holding pattern and occupational distribution of different social groups in Andhra Pradesh state level.

Vii. Land distribution pattern among dalits

Table 4 explains the operational holdings and area operated by different social groups from 1976-77 to 2010-11 at Andhra Pradesh state level. In 1976-77 SC households constituted about 13.4% of total holdings but control only 6.9% of the area, while others constitute about 80.3% of total holdings but control 87% of total operated area. By 2010-11 the percentage of SC holdings declined to about 11.05% and their controlling area share slightly increased to 7.69%. While the percentage of others' holdings retains the same i.e. 80.91% and their operated area share slightly declined to 83.95% of total operated area. In 1976-77, ST operational holdings constitute 6.3% of total holdings and control 6.2% of total operated area. By 2010-11 their holdings increased 8.04% while their share in area also increased to 8.36%. The position of ST households in terms of operational holdings is better than SC households at Andhra Pradesh state level.

It could be seen from the table 5 that, most of the SC holdings are marginal and small. In 1976-77 marginal and smallholdings of SCs constituted 83%(control nearly 46% of total operated area of SCs) of total holdings and their percentage tremendously increased to about 93%(control nearly 72.5% of total operated area of SCs) in 2010-11. On the other hand medium and large holdings declined from 4.7% (control nearly 29% of total operated area of SC) to 1%(control nearly 8.3% of total operated area of SC) during the same period. Their average size of holdings also significantly decreased from 1.19 hectares to 0.76 hectares during the same period. In 1976-77, marginal and smallholdings of STs constituted 59% of total ST holdings and their percentage also significantly increased to about 83% in 2010-11. On the other hand medium and large holdings declined from 16.6% to 3.5% during the same period. Their average size of holdings also significantly declined from 2.32 hectares to 1.18 hectares during the same period.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of operational holdings and operated area of different social groups in AP

Category	1976-77		1980-81		1990-91		1995-96		2000-01		2005-06		2010-11	
	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
S.C	13.4	6.9	12.6	6.9	12.73	7.48	12.12	7.42	11.85	7.86	11.80	7.84	11.05	7.69
S.T	6.3	6.2	6.4	6.3	6.88	7.23	7.11	7.56	7.47	8.23	7.69	8.36	8.04	8.36
Others	80.3	86.9	81.0	86.8	80.39	85.29	80.77	85.02	80.66	83.91	80.49	83.80	80.91	83.95
Total	100	100	100	100	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Various issues of Report on SC/ST Land Holdings

Table 5: Percentage distribution of operational holdings and area operated by scheduled castes in AP

Size group	1976-77		1980-81		1990-91		1995-96		2000-01		2005-06		2010-11	
	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
Marginal	64.8	22.3	67.7	27.6	70.6	31.9	73.4	37.1	73.8	36.4	74.5	38.3	76.2	41.4
Small	19.0	23.1	18.9	26.2	18.4	28.2	17.7	29.7	17.6	29.5	17.4	30.2	17.0	31.1
Semi-medium	11.5	26.0	10.2	25.2	8.7	24.4	7.39	22.5	6.9	21.3	6.6	20.9	5.74	19.0
Medium	4.1	21.5	2.9	15.2	2.0	12.3	1.32	8.82	1.42	9.3	1.27	8.64	0.99	7.04
Large	0.6	7.1	0.3	5.5	0.1	2.96	0.08	1.78	0.12	3.3	0.09	1.93	0.06	1.38
All groups	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Various issues of Report on SC/ST Land Holdings

Table 6: Average size of the holdings operated by scheduled castes (in hectares)

Size groups	1976-77	1980-81	1986-87	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2005-06	2010-11
Marginal	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.41	0.42	0.41	0.41	0.41
Small	1.45	1.46	1.40	1.40	1.39	1.39	1.38	1.38
Semi-medium	2.69	2.62	2.56	2.56	2.53	2.54	2.52	2.51
Medium	6.21	5.66	5.59	5.58	5.53	5.47	5.44	5.36
Large	14.65	16.48	14.41	16.00	19.00	21.88	16.49	16.50
All groups	1.19	1.06	0.95	0.91	0.83	0.83	0.80	0.76

Source: Various issues of Report on SC/ST Land Holdings

The analysis clearly indicates that most of the SC and STs are marginal and small farmers and their share in total holdings and area has declined significantly during the study period. However, in absolute numbers along with other social groups, the SC/ST holdings as well as operated area under these categories increased slightly during the study period (in 1995-96 SC holdings were 12.85 lakhs and it increased to 14.57 lakhs in 2010-11, where as it was 7.54 and 1.59 lakhs for STs during the same period; operated area under SC was 7.4 lakh hect in 1995-96 and increased to 7.7 lakh hect in 2010-11, where as it was 7.6 lakh hect and 8.7 lakh hect for STs during the same period). But this increase in the number of holdings and area operated for the ST and SC were probably not only due to land distribution as a part of land reforms. It would be land transfers from dominant cultivating castes as they were moving out of rural areas and agricultural activities to the urban areas and the non-agricultural activities. The ST and SC therefore might have acquired land through purchase. Further it would be the fragmentation of land as the land divided among the heirs of particular family. However, one can be understood from the data that the position of Dalits has improved slightly regarding the operational holdings but the gap between SC/ST and others is still persist.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of operational holdings and area operated by scheduled Tribes in AP

Size group	1976-77		1980-81		1990-91		1995-96		2000-01		2005-06		2010-11	
	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
Marginal	38.2	8.5	43.8	11.7	47.83	14.36	51.59	17.94	53.71	18.86	55.29	20.45	58.99	24.31
Small	21.0	13.3	23.1	17.2	24.80	21.65	25.33	24.84	25.07	25.75	25.01	26.94	24.87	29.54
Semi-medium	24.2	27.2	21.6	30.0	18.90	30.70	16.98	31.0	15.68	30.05	14.79	29.69	12.60	27.79
Medium	14.3	35.5	10.2	31.0	7.67	26.49	5.70	21.90	5.11	20.66	4.58	19.28	3.29	15.27
Large	2.3	15.5	1.30	10.1	0.80	6.80	0.40	4.32	0.43	4.68	0.33	3.63	0.25	3.09
All groups	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Various issues of Report on SC/ST Land holdings

Table 8: Average size of the holdings operated by scheduled tribes (in hectares)

Size groups	1976-77	1980-81	1986-87	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2005-06	2010-11
Marginal	0.52	0.51	0.49	0.49	0.50	0.48	0.48	0.49
Small	1.47	1.42	1.44	1.43	1.41	1.41	1.41	1.40
Semi-medium	2.62	2.65	2.62	2.66	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.60
Medium	5.82	5.77	5.70	5.65	5.53	5.55	5.51	5.47
Large	15.62	14.49	14.47	13.72	15.67	15.07	14.33	14.53
All groups	2.33	1.91	1.80	1.64	1.44	1.37	1.31	1.18

Source: Various issues of Report on SC/ST land Holdings

The share of these marginalized communities, especially SC, in the total number of holdings or operated area was well below their share in total population. SCs percentage in total population increased from 15.93 percent in 1991 to 16.7 percent in 2001, but their share in total holdings declined from 12.73 percent to 11.80 per cent and their share in total area also retain same during 1991 to 2010-11. In case of STs their share in total holdings and area has significantly increased. Although STs are relatively better placed in terms of access to land, factors such as traditional cultivation techniques, lack of access to modern technology and inputs including credit, undermines their economic progress. In case of non-SC/STs population share in total population slightly declined from 77.76 per cent in 1991 to 76.59 percent in 20011, but still they are holding 80.49 percent of share in total holdings and 83.95 percent share in total area during 2010-11. It indicates that the Dalits share in total holdings and area has not increased proportionately to their population despite AP government's distribution of both government and surplus land for the several years.

Viii. Implementation of landreforms and surplus land distribution in andhra pradesh and telangana states

The Andhra Pradesh state government has distributed surplus land among landless people in different phases. As on September 30, 2007 an area of about 5.97 lakh acres at Andhra Pradesh State level was distributed. Of this about 2.29 lakh acres of land was distributed to SC's 1.20 lakh acres to ST's and 2.46 lakh acres to non-SC/STs. A total of 5.05 lakh beneficiaries have been covered so far of whom 2.13 lakh are SCs, 0.85 lakh are STs and 2.06 lakh are non-SC/STs. The land distributed per beneficiary in the SC category households works out to 1.07 acres which is less than what non-SC households obtained (1.2 acres).

The then Congress government embarked on a land distribution programme in the recent past. During 2005-2006 about 4.3 lakh acres were distributed to 3.2 lakh landless poor. Private studies have however observed that most of the lands shown as distributed were already in the possession of the beneficiaries. For instance, the AP government distributed nearly 1, 11,330.86 acres on 19-10-2006 in its third land distribution programme. But out of this total land 82 per cent of land was already under the possession of the beneficiaries. Only 18 percent of the land had been new assignments. As a matter of fact this land distribution programme is nothing but the official confirmation of existing possession. The data presented in the table 22 & 23 clearly corroborate the above statement as about 55% of SCs and 35% of STs in Andhra Pradesh and 31% of SCs and 19% of STs in Telangana are landless, even after implementing several land reforms since the formation of state.

Table 9: District wise landless SC/ST households in Andhra Pradesh

S.No	District	SC HH	ST HH	SC LLHH	%	ST LLHH	%
1	Anantapur	112608	28059	45428	40.3	8144	29.0
2	Chittoor	152051	28008	69596	45.8	16256	58.0
3	East Godavari	49898	48163	34678	69.5	10033	20.8
4	Guntur	81205	26644	56559	69.6	13115	49.2
5	Kadapa	89078	12094	50082	56.2	7238	59.8
6	Krishna	112991	17075	75179	66.5	10687	62.6
7	Nellore	118450	42027	49564	41.8	26631	63.4
8	Kurnool	177042	18080	71197	40.2	7508	41.5
9	Prakasam	154079	25510	99261	64.4	18843	73.9
10	Srikakulam	60674	32439	30550	50.4	5619	17.3
11	Visakhapatnam	44554	119423	29264	65.7	16692	14.0
12	Vizianagaram	53126	45532	34900	65.7	14647	32.2
13	West Godavari	116854	19412	85948	73.6	8890	45.8
AP		1322610	462466	732206	55.4	164303	35.5

<http://www.serp.ap.gov.in>

Table 10: District wise landless SC/ST households in Telangana

S.No	District	SC HH	ST HH	SC LLHH	%	ST LLHH	%
1	Adilabad	82174	91018	25046	30.5	15751	17.3
2	Karimnagar	148982	20668	51445	34.5	5570	26.9
3	Khammam	78560	126099	39849	50.7	27684	22.0
4	Mahabubnagar	136696	50989	39350	28.8	10544	20.7
5	Medak	110106	32209	16182	14.7	3860	12.0
6	Nalgonda	128728	57351	45708	35.5	11340	19.8
7	Nizamabad	85773	42299	22876	26.7	8510	20.1
8	Ranga Reddy	54057	16992	10248	19.0	2903	17.1
9	Warangal	112866	114250	40257	35.7	17620	15.4
	Telangana	937942	551875	290961	31.0	103782	18.8

<http://www.serp.ap.gov.in>

The success of land reform has been driven by the political will of specific state administrations. In India, one can say, the land reforms were implemented by the government only half-heartedly as the land distributed through land reforms is less compare to other countries that implemented land reforms. The extent of land redistributed was 43 percent of agricultural land in China, 37 percent in Taiwan, 32 percent in South Korea, and 33 percent in Japan. In India, the efforts of the central and state governments over 60 years implement land reforms resulted only in 2 percent of agricultural land being distributed. In Andhra Pradesh, It is estimated that all efforts taken together including Bhoodan and distribution of government wasteland accounted for less than 10 percent of the cultivated land in Andhra Pradesh.

The land reforms attempted by India were more a political stunt than a genuine attempt to evolve a more egalitarian society. The small magnitude of the declared surplus was due mainly to the poor legislation with large number of loopholes. Thus, the opportunity for a more equitable distribution of land was missed. However, Land reforms in India abolished all forms of intermediaries in terms of landholdings viz, Zamindari, Inamdari and landlord system. Those tilling the lands at the time of the abolition of intermediars were conferred ownership rights and tenants were given protection. The protection and enlargement of control and command over land are crucial issue for the poor. It may not be possible that all rural poor can be accommodated but there is scope for utilizing the wasteland for providing access to the poor and also eliminating the biases against the poor in land relations. As per 2013 agricultural census report 72% of SCs recorded as agricultural labour. Due to loopholes of land reforms, still most of the land is concentrated among some castes and classes. It is interesting to note that despite government's distribution of land to the dalits, the average size of land holdings of dalits, number of landholders and the area under SC ownership has not increased as per Directorate of Economics and Statistics Report 2013 of Andhra Pradesh.

Table 11: Ceiling Land Distribution at India and AP state Level as on September, 2007

State	Area Declared as Surplus	Area taken Possession	Area Distributed	Total Beneficiaries (in lakhs)	Beneficiaries(in lakhs)/ Area(in lakh acres)					
					SC		ST		Others	
					Nos	Area	Nos	Area	Nos	Area
AP	843026	652188 (77.36)	597461 (70.87)	5.31	2.13	2.29	0.85	1.20	2.06	2.47
India	6853624	5989867 (87.39)	4964995 (72.44)	54.57	21.11	18.28	8.48	7.83	24.67	22.59

Source: Annual Report 2007-08, Ministry of Rural Development, GoI; note figures in the peranthesis indicate the percentage of total area declared as surplus

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

ix. Occupational distribution among different social groups

The changes in the occupational distribution during 1971-2011 at Andhra Pradesh state level for different social groups could be seen from the table 11. It is evident from the table that during 1971to 1981 there was an increase in the percentage of SC workers as cultivators from 14.66% to 17.41% while percentage of SC agricultural labour declined from 73.04% to 68.24%. In case of general workers the percentage of cultivators declined from 34.43% to 32.73% percentage of agricultural labour also declined from 38.24% to 36.78% during the same period. Regarding the non-farming workers it increased from 12.3% to 14.35% incase of SC workers while it increased from 27.3% to 30.49% in case of general workers. Thus there is some marginal improvement in the SC workers as cultivators and also non-farming workers. This indicates some upward mobility of SC workers also. This may be attributed to redistribution of wasteland and surplus land under 20-point program me in 1970s.

It is important to note that during 1981-2011 the percentage of cultivators in all the categories has declined and percentage of non-farm works increased significantly. Land owned by the dominant cultivating castes had declined because they were moving out of rural areas and agricultural activities to the urban areas and the non-agricultural activities. Percentage of non-farming workers increased from 30.49% to 31.69% indicating occupational shift. This shows that at Andhra Pradesh state level agricultural workers slowly shifting to non-farming activities. Further, the data explains that despite

land redistribution in several phases most of the dalits retained as landless agricultural labour. Thus, here is a need to examine the implementation of landreforms and ascertain the reasons for its poor implementation in detail.

It is also observed that there are considerable variations across social groups in work participation rates wherein. It is the highest among the ST community and the lowest is among the ‘other’ community. The high work participation is not necessarily due to demand, it could be that out of economic necessity as many family members including the children had to participate in work for their effort to meet their family subsistence. The incidence of child labour (among 5 to 14 years age group) has been highest among the STs followed by SCs. There was a sharp decline in incidence of children during the last three decades. However, the incidence of child labour among ST children increased between 1983 and 1993-94 and thereafter it began to decline and reached its lowest to 5.5% in 2009-10. The effort of state and community level interventions in reducing the incidence of child labour and increasing the enrolment of children in schools are noteworthy. Yet, considerable proportions (5.5%) of children of ST community are working.

Table 11: Occupational distributions at united Andhra Pradesh State level

Category	Percentage in total main workers of SCs				Percentage in total main workers of STs				Percentage in total main workers general population			
	1971	1981	2001	2011	1971	1981	2001	2011	1971	1981	2001	2011
Cultivators	14.66	17.41	11.59	7.94	37.05	43.21	41.01	29.70	32.45	32.73	25.47	18.42
Ag.Labourers	73.04	68.24	64.21	64.35	50.40	43.72	41.86	52.75	38.24	36.78	33.83	39.96
Non-farming workers	12.3	14.35	24.20	27.71	12.55	13.07	17.13	17.55	29.31	30.49	40.30	41.62

Source: Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, 2011

The work participation rate of SCs, defined as the percentage of SC population participating in the work of total scheduled caste population is 51% and that of STs is 54% as against 46percent among general population in 2011. This may happen due to the high participation rate among SC (46.7%) and ST (50.65%) women. It is also to be noted that as per 2011 census 82.18% of SC main workers and 79.98% of ST main workers depend on primary sector only 58 percent of general workers depend upon primary sector. More than 64% of SC main workers and about 53 % of ST main workers were reported as agricultural labour as against only 39.96 percent among general workers.

Income poverty is only one of the multiple deprivations that the SC and ST have suffered continuously, even after nearly six decades of development planning. Across social groups, the percentage of population living below the poverty line is significant and it is the highest among the ST and SC communities when compared to the rest. The estimates of mean consumption expenditure using NSS Consumption Expenditure Survey data clearly indicate differences in the level of

consumption expenditure across social groups, and how far SC/STs lagging behind when compared to the ‘others’ category social group. Moreover the gap in terms of mean consumption expenditure between these SC and ST communities and the ‘others’ are increasing over a period of time, which indicates increasing economic inequalities across social groups.

Table 12: Work participation rate across social groups at all India level

Social Category	Rural				Urban				Total			
	SC	ST	Others	all	SC	ST	Others	all	SC	ST	Others	all
1983	58.3	59.9	52.2	53.9	34.9	39.9	34.7	34.9	55.0	57.6	47.6	49.4
1993-94	59.6	65.9	56.0	57.5	39.0	44.7	37.2	37.6	56.9	63.8	50.3	52.3
2004-05	55.7	55.0	54.0	54.4	37.6	32.8	39.7	39.2	52.3	52	49.9	50.5
2009-10	54.1	57.9	47.1	52.1	39.2	41.8	33.1	36.4	51.1	56.5	41.2	47.6
2011-12	54.2	62.0	44.9	52.2	40.4	43.4	32.6	36.4	51.2	59.9	38.7	47.0

Source: Various rounds of NSSO report

X. Income poverty among different social groups

The head count ratio of poverty measured using NSS Consumption Expenditure Survey data also shows that the percentage of poor was much higher among the SC/ST community and lower among the ‘others’, indicating wide disparities across social groups in the state. Moreover, the disparity in terms of level of poverty has increased especially between ST and ‘others’ category. Although, the overall poverty ratio and the ratio among SC and the other social groups had declined, the head count ratio of poverty (HCR) among STs in both the rural and urban areas had increased between 1993-94 and 2004-05 whereas the recent estimate show a sharp decline between 2004-05 and 2009-10 in poverty ratio among the STs. Most of the increase/decrease in the poverty ratio among STs was due to the increase/decrease of poverty ratio among agricultural laborers belonging to ST community. It indicates the failure of state policy in targeting initiatives and programmes to marginalized sections like ST and SC. Otherwise it would have been seen a further decline in poverty

Table 13: Poverty levels among different social groups in united Andhra Pradesh

Social Category	Rural				Urban			
	SC	ST	Others	All	SC	ST	Others	All
1993-94	64.4	58.4	42.4	48.1	45.5	43.9	34	35.2
2004-05	41.8	60.3	16.1	32.3	35.0	50.1	16.5	23.4
2009-10	25.7	40.2	10.3	22.7	19.8	21.2	14.7	17.7

Source: Various NSSO Reports

Table 14: Average monthly per capita consumption expenditure across social groups

Social Category	Rural				Urban			
	SC	ST	Others	All	SC	ST	Others	All
1983	131	129	159	156	131	129	159	156
1993-94	230	263	308	289	347	358	416	409

2004-05	495	431	722	586	829	698	1245	1019
2009-10	962	753	1313	1020	1647	1776	2322	1982

Source: Various NSSO Reports

Table 15: Relative Share of Different Sectors in total Employment of Andhra Pradesh

Year	Agriculture	Industry	Services
1971	73.40	11.16	15.44
1981	72.02	11.94	16.04
1991	70.37	11.35	18.26
2004-05	58.50	13.76	29.24

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh,

Table 16: Distribution of Employment by Sectors according to the usual status

Year	Rural persons				Urban persons			
	Ag	Indu	Mfg	Ser	Ag	Indu	Mfg	Ser
1983	79.9	9.8	7.7	10.5	14.3	29.6	22.42	56.1
1993-94	79.3	9.3	6.9	11.3	16.4	30.0	19.1	53.7
1999-00	78.8	8.7	5.6	12.5	9.5	32.2	19.4	58.2
	Rural female				Urban female			
1983	83.2	8.9	7.6	7.9	27.5	29.9	24.56	42.6
1993-94	83.7	8.5	7.4	7.7	30.8	29.7	22.7	39.6
1999-00	84.3	7.5	6.0	8.2	16.8	33.5	22.2	49.6

Source: Report on employment and unemployment, 1993-94, 50th Round of NSSO

The estimates of the unemployment based on three approaches usual status, current weekly and current daily status from 1983 to 1994 indicates that the usual status approach provides the long term picture of the activity pattern. The current weekly status approach based on a week's situation reflects the overall effects caused by intermittent changes in the activity pattern during the years. It observes that the unemployment rates are higher for females than males. It could be observed from the table 1.6 in Andhra Pradesh the employment scenario has remained rather stable over the year by all the sectors.

XI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Government of India and Andhra Pradesh has been implementing the various land reforms since independence to provide security to tenants and to reduce the inequalities in the land distribution pattern and to promote the agricultural production. Land reform was successful to the extent of removing of intermediaries like *Zamindars*, *Jagirdars* and *Inamdars* and reducing incidence of tenancy significantly. However, land concentration persists in the post-independence period. Because land passed hands, that is, from renter class to owner cultivator class but land did not benefit the marginal farmers and agricultural labour that mostly come from social disadvantage groups such as Dalits. As per 2010-11 Agricultural Census Report of Andhra Pradesh 65% of SCs

were recorded as agricultural labour as against nearly 40% of general population. As per 2013 Agricultural Census of Andhra Pradesh, holdings 10 acres and above constitute 16.52 per cent of total number of holdings but control 51.55 per cent of total operated area while the bottom marginal and small holdings of less than five acres constitute 82.49 percent of total holdings but control only 48.42 percent of total operated area.

The success of land reform has been driven by the political will of specific state administrations. In India, one can say, the land reforms were implemented by the government only half-heartedly as the land distributed through land reforms is less compare to other countries that implemented land reforms. The extent of land redistributed was 43 percent of agricultural land in China, 37 percent in Taiwan, 32 percent in South Korea, and 33 percent in Japan. In India, the efforts of the central and state governments over 60 years implement land reforms resulted only in 2 percent of agricultural land being distributed. In Andhra Pradesh, It is estimated that all efforts taken together including Bhoodan and distribution of government wasteland accounted for less than 10 percent of the cultivated land in Andhra Pradesh.

It is also interesting to note that the association of caste with land distribution. Land is mostly concentrated in upper castes to the exclusion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, due to the implementation of land reforms the marginalized communities like SC and STs are gained some peace of land but their share in total holdings and operated area has not increased proportionate to their population growth. Major proportion of SC and ST are marginal and small holders and the gap between SC/ST and others in landholdings and operated area is still persisting. The land reform has to be more than the mere redistribution of land to the landless. It is equally important to ensure the availability of other inputs for cultivation to improve the productivity of land. But the extent of SC/ST access to agricultural inputs is too low and inadequate. For instance, the percentage of population in households with irrigated land was the lowest among SC (13.5%) followed by ST (21.7%) when compared to the 'other' community (30.6%) and the state average (22.9%). Availability of other necessary inputs would also be inadequate for these marginalized communities. It can be concluded that on whole the access to land is still denied to major proportion of SCs despite implementation of landreforms in different phases. As a result majority of them continue to be landless agricultural labour. This is further pointed that most of the SC families, who own land, are marginal and small and their capacity to invest in agriculture is inadequate and credit accessibility is also negligible.

The Central and state governments should implement the radical land reforms to bring the equity. In the context of Andhra Pradesh, if sufficient land is to be generated for the landless poor then the existing land ceiling which is 54 acres of dry land and 10-18 acres for irrigated land with two

crops, 27 acres for irrigated land with one crop must be reduced. The Revenue Ministers conference of 1985 also recommended downward revision of the ceiling but revision has not been made in the ceiling limits (12 acres for irrigated land with two crops, 18 acres for irrigated land with one crop and 30 acres for dry land). The state should fix new limits of 15 acres of dry land and 6 acres for irrigated land with two crop and 10 acres for irrigated land with one crop, in order to bring about more significant distribution of land to the landless poor in the state. The quality of land is also important, most of the studies observed that nearly 60% of land which has been distributed by the government through land reforms is uncultivable, hill land and unfertile land. In this context the government should take the quality of land and credit as an important issue while distributing the surplus land to the landless people.

The Indian agriculture had also been exposed to new technology from mid sixties known as Green Revolution. There was a tremendous increase in the agricultural production, particularly, in the food production due to it. However, it could benefit the better off farmers based caste and the remaining small, marginal and agricultural labour could not gain much due to their low or no land base. It also shows that the rate of poverty continues to be high at national level as well as Andhra Pradesh state level in spite of growth rate of the food production. It is also an interesting fact to know that the poverty ratio of agricultural labour is higher than the rural poverty. As per Rural Development Statistics 1998, Sarvekshana Report, 1998 in 1993-94, the poverty among the agricultural labour was about 23.6 percent at the Andhra Pradesh State level but the general poverty was the only 15.92 per cent in the same period.

It is clear that the peasant farming adopted by India could not bring out required changes in agrarian structure which is an essential for agricultural development as land concentration continued. Land reforms have also failed in solving basic problems to land inequalities, poverty and unemployment. At the same time, demographic pressure on land has been increasing due to non-availability of other alternative opportunities for their livelihood. Therefore, there is a need for reducing the heavy dependence of work force on agricultural sector to non-farming sector by shifting it from agricultural sector along with strict implementation of land reforms. This remedy was already suggested by Ambedkar long ago. The experience of other countries like Japan, China, South Korea, etc., proved that the shifting of workforce from agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector along with the strict implementation of land reforms would bring out an improvement in the socio-economic conditions of people by reducing in the inequalities in the income distribution and the incidence of poverty significantly.

At this juncture of crisis in the implementation of the land reforms by the state in the agricultural sector, Ambedkar thought on agricultural development is relevant that his strategy,

which emphasized on the collective farming that would aim at shifting the work force from the agrarian sector to the non-agricultural sector that could foster the agricultural development with justice.

The perception of Ambedkar on land reforms and agricultural development that would aim at the total restructuring the Indian economy based on the socialist pattern that benefits all the sections of the India, in particular the depressed classes, is still relevant today. The state still has to perceive the ideology of Ambedkar regarding the Indian agriculture in the world of globalization liberalization and privatization to provide equal opportunities to all the segments of society and increase the productivity

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