

Chapter 9

A Comparative Analysis of Land, Caste, and Gender in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh With Reference to India

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ABSTRACT

Land is a gift of nature and its supply is perfectly inelastic. The quality of land differs very much from one place to another. Land is an important productive asset in rural India. Land is the backbone of agriculture. It serves as the base for all living beings. Nearly two-thirds of the workforce directly or indirectly depends on agriculture for their livelihood. About one-fifth of national income is derived from agricultural sector. Agriculture is a risky and most uncertain economic activity, as it heavily depends upon the vagaries of monsoon. Land market is a significant economic activity and may be classified into land sale market and land lease market both in rural and urban areas. Land reform is one of the regulating mechanisms of the agrarian activity which may be classified into 1) reforms aimed at changing ownership pattern (re-distributive reform) or 2) reforms dealing with leasing of land (tenancy/tenure reform).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Major objective of the study is to provide a comprehensive and systematic analysis relating to land, caste and gender. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine access to land by social groups.
2. To analyze the access to land by women.
3. To study the access to irrigation by social groups.
4. To investigate the land use pattern by social groups.

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Data

Data relating to access to land operated by social groups for Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh were collected from All India Report on Agricultural Census for the year 2010-11 and the information on population were collected from the Census of India, 2011.

Tools of Analysis

A simple access index has been used for the data analysis for this study.

Characteristics of land

- Land is power i.e., it provides social and economic power to the land owners.
- There is a nexus between landlords and politics.
- Land is considered as status symbol in India.
- Right to landed property from predecessor and right to inherit the property by the successor.
- Access to land is limited. Women and SCs do not have adequate access to land.
- Caste and class coincides in India.
- Skewed distribution of land among the cultivators.
- The word land is associated with exploitation. Landlords often exploit agricultural workers.
- Landlords do not have the will to implement the minimum wage for agricultural workers. For instance, a violent clash that took place in 1968 in Kilvenmani village, erstwhile Thanjavur District, where 42 agricultural workers from SCs were burnt alive by landlords belonging to upper castes for the simple reason that agricultural workers demanded an addition of half a measure of paddy during the paddy harvest.
- Debate on inverse relationship between land size and productivity is still going on and it remains inconclusive.
- Institutional (Mutt, Temples and Public Trusts) control over land still continues

INSTITUTIONAL HOLDINGS

The governments of Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh permit the Institutions viz. Educational Institutions, Institutions under the control of Governments of Tamil Nadu and India, Temples, Mutts and Public Trusts to own/control of the land. Institutions are permitted to hold land in excess of ceiling limit. The data presented in Table 1 clearly indicate that nearly 2.00 per cent of

the total land is operated (owned) in Tamil Nadu and 0.14 per cent in Madhya Pradesh by Institutions. Kings and individuals gifted land to these institutions for the upkeep of the temples and charitable institutions.

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