

# Access to Land for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Undivided Andhra Pradesh

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## Abstract

An attempt has been made in this paper to study the access to land for the SCs and STs when compare their position with the other communities. The study has carried out based on the secondary data has collected from NSS Report No.491: Household Ownership Holdings in India, 2003 and Report on SC/ST Landholdings, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of AP 2000-01 and 2005-06. The study has found that the SCs continue to be a disadvantaged section with respect to access farm land, but the STs are somewhat better in terms the land owned in Andhra Pradesh. It is observed that there has been no substantial improvement in the SCs' landholding position—it is seen that the landless households are high among the SCs.

**Keywords:** Access farm land, Landholdings, ownership of land, SC/ST communities, Landless, Andhra Pradesh

## I. Introduction

This paper gives the details regarding access to land for the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Andhra Pradesh. Ownership of land is closely associated with social stratification in India and is hence an important factor for reduction of poverty among the deprived castes (Thangaraj, 1997; Diwakar, 1999; Beteille, 2000; Jodha, 2000). This paper also analyses the spatial and temporal aspects of access to land for the SCs and STs in undivided Andhra Pradesh—though there is some distinction between the two categories, inadequacies exist in the entire state. The effort towards reduction of poverty is a major step taken by the Government of Andhra Pradesh to reduce the existing inequalities in economic and social justice. Social inequalities may be stepped up with economic equality, which is a major step towards reducing the poverty through access to land for the deprived communities (Rao, 2001; Sankaran, 1996; Thorat and Deshpande, 2001). The power, prestige, and social status in rural India are completely defined based on ownership of land. Hence, this aspect needs to be understood properly and should be studied in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The study of rural issues would be a beginning, if we consider access to land as an inclusive growth. In order to achieve this, an intensive effort must be made to understand the land status of the SCs and STs, as well as the structure of land ownership and the changes that have taken place due to the implementation of many measures aimed and centered at redistribution of land. The remaining issues relating to land, its role, and the social injustice meted out against the socially exclusive groups as well as among the social groups in a typical Indian society are also discussed.

This paper is divided into five sections. the following section discusses the study's material and methodology. The third section deals with the landless among the SCs and STs in undivided Andhra Pradesh. The fourth section presents the details regarding land ownership access among the SCs and STs. Section five contains the paper's conclusions.

## II. Methodology

The study has carried out based on the secondary data has collected from NSS Report No. 491: Household Ownership Holdings in India, 2003 and Report on SC/ST Landholdings, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of AP 2000-01 and 2005-06. The landless household information for SCs and STs have been collected from Land Wing, SERP, Hyderabad. Land distributed to SCs and STs information has been collected from the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh and the Progress Report of Chief Commissioner Land Administration AP, Hyderabad. Secondary sources include policy documents, scholarly writings, and statistical data from government and semi-government organizations, governmental reports, Government Orders (GO), appraisals and evaluation documents, cabinet sub-committee reports, house committee reports, reports of the commission for the SCs and STs, and various books, periodicals, journals, unpublished theses by several researchers, and daily newspapers, besides, 'community'-maintained records.

## III. Landlessness among SCs and STs

India has the largest number of rural poor as well as landless households. It is observed that landlessness is particularly high among the deprived castes in India, particularly the SCs and STs. In fact, landlessness is the best indicator of rural poverty in India (Tim Hanstad, Haque, and Robin Nielsen, 2008). This clearly indicates that the SCs and STs mostly work as agricultural labourers for their livelihood (Sankaran, 1996; Srinivas, 2002). Table 1 presents the details of the percentage of landless households among the SCs and STs in Andhra Pradesh.

**Table-1: Landless Households in Andhra Pradesh in 2012**

S.No	Distract	% of landless HHs		
		SC	ST	Total
1	Adilabad	39	24	31
2	Anantapur	45	34	43
3	Chittoor	54	63	55
4	East Godavari	72	26	50
5	Guntur	72	54	68
6	Kadapa	60	65	60
7	Karimnagar	44	40	44
8	Khammam	60	33	43
9	Krishna	69	64	68
10	Kurnool	45	46	45
11	Mahabubnagar	40	32	37
12	Medak	36	31	35
13	Nalgonda	56	40	51
14	Nellore	55	72	59

15	Nizamabad	39	31	36
16	Prakasam	71	78	72
17	Ranga Reddy	32	29	31
18	Srikakulam	59	22	46
19	Visakhapatnam	68	26	38
20	Vizianagaram	69	38	54
21	Warangal	42	20	31
22	West Godavari	77	52	73
	Total	53	35	48

*Sources: Land Wing, SERP, Hyderabad.*

Table1 presents the details of landlessness in 22 districts in AP and the distribution of SC/ST landless households. We observe that 53 per cent of the SC households are landless in AP. Similarly, 35 per cent of the ST households are landless in AP. Across the districts, East Godavari, West Godavari, Guntur, Krishna, and Prakasam districts have the highest percentage of SC households, of which nearly 70 per cent are landless. On the other hand, districts such as Adilabad (39 per cent), Medak (36 per cent), and Ranga Reddy (32 per cent) have the lowest percentage of landless SC households in AP. In the case of STs, districts such as Kadapa (65 per cent), Prakasam (78 per cent), Nellore (72 per cent), and Krishna (64 per cent) have the highest percentage of landless ST households in AP. On the other hand, districts such as Warangal (20 per cent), Adilabad (24 per cent), East Godavari (26 per cent), and Srikakulam (22 per cent) have the lowest percentage of landless ST households in AP. The irrigated zones such as West Godavari, Krishna, and Guntur districts have the highest percentage of landless households among the SCs and STs. The table also shows that landless households are more prevalent among the SCs than among the STs.

#### **IV. Access to Ownership of Land for SCs and STs**

A characteristic feature of the agrarian economy in India is the high degree of concentration in the ownership of land. This reflects not only the inequality in the distribution of wealth but also the fact that it is the main form in which wealth is desired to be held in these economies. Land is the primary means of production not only in India but also throughout the globe. Thus, it is a felt need of the society that uniformity, equality and equity should be maintained among the members. The size of income in rural areas continues to be closely related to the amount of land owned or controlled—‘land’ and ‘caste’ are closely related to ownership. Ownership of land should be provided and safeguarded by the governance alone. However, it is observed that, “a small number of big landlords own a large extent of land, while the millions of marginal and small peasants own small extent of land”. Further, it is observed that, “while the large land owners belong to the so-called upper castes (open category), the cultivators belong to the middle castes (backward castes), and the agricultural workers belong mostly to the weaker sections such as the SCs and STs”. Agricultural land is the main productive asset and source of livelihood (. Hence, the ownership of land and control over land in rural areas is most clearly related to the economic and social well-being of the rural people. It also indicates the social and economic status as well as political power in the society. Ownership of land is closely associated with their livelihood (Thangaraj, 1997). Understanding the ownership of land among the SCs and STs, therefore, has great relevance in reducing poverty in the rural areas. Herein, an attempt has been made to define and identify the extent of land owned by the SCs and STs to achieve social and

economic equality. Government modeling should not only be able to act and step up but also to maintain stability among the people and land resources (Rajasekhar, 1988).

*Land Concentration:* Primarily in India, land is a big resource and in areas where land concentration is high it is distribution unequally among the different socio-economic groups and castes. In this section, we try to measure the degree of land concentration in Andhra Pradesh. Most of the land is concentrated in the hands of a few upper caste households, while the bottom-most 80 per cent of the households do not have sufficient land. This inequality of land distribution is the main cause of inequality of unequal and poverty. Most popularly, the Lorenz Curve and the Gini Concentration Ratio are used to assess land inequality.

*Gini Concentration Coefficients:* the Gini Coefficient was developed to measure the degree of concentration of a variable in the distribution of its elements. It compares the Lorenz Curve of a ranked empirical distribution with the line of perfect equality. This line assumes that each element makes the same contribution to the total summation of the value of a variable. The Gini Coefficient ranges between 0—where there is no concentration (perfect equality)—and 1, where there is total concentration (perfect inequality). The area of concentration between the Lorenz Curve and the line of perfect equality expresses a proportion of the area enclosed by the triangle defined by the line of perfect equality and the line of perfect inequality (Figure 3.2). As the coefficient gets closer to 1, the distribution becomes more unequal.

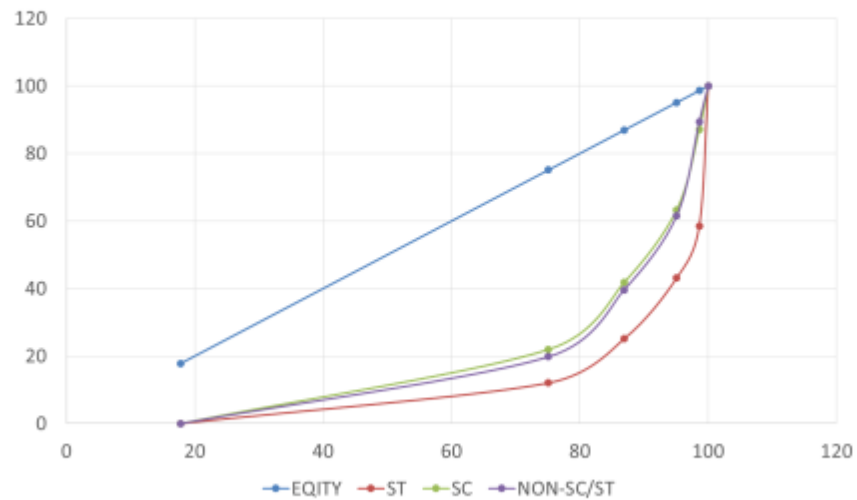
**Table-2: Gini's Concentration Coefficient among Social Categories**

Social Category	Gini's Coefficient Concentration
ST	0.77
SC	0.51
Non-SC/ST	0.66
All	0.69

Source: NSS Report No. 491: Household Ownership Holdings in India, 2003

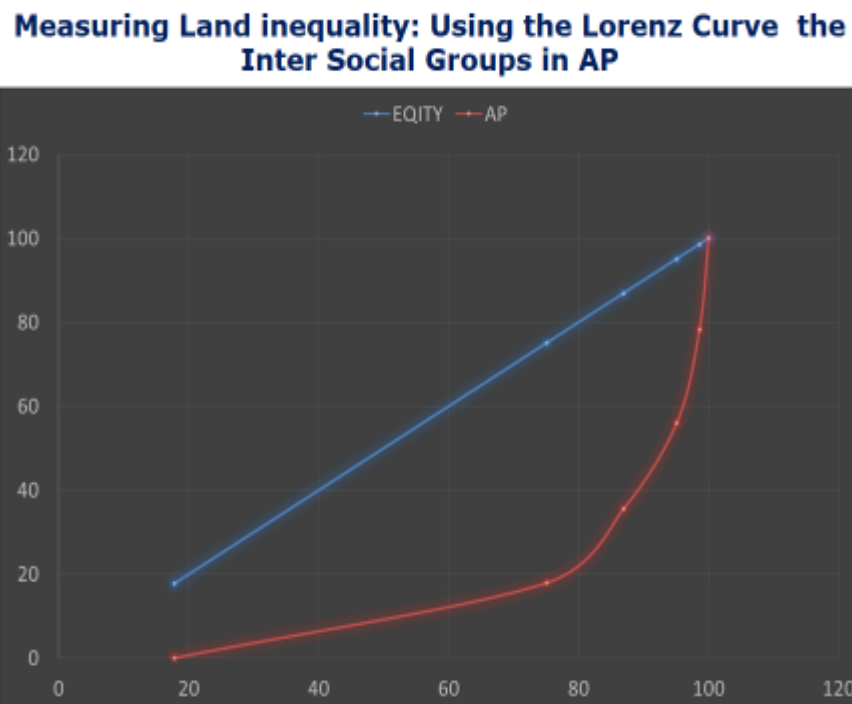
Table 2 shows more land concentration among all social categories. It is observed that Gini's concentration coefficient is highest among the STs (0.77) and lowest among the SCs (0.51).

*Use of Lorenz Curve and Measure of Land Inequality:* The analysis of land distribution among the different caste groups is important because it helps to determine the degree of inequality among them. Moreover, in rural areas, issues of land inequality are very sensitive and potentially lead to conflicts among the social groups. This analysis is widely utilized not only for analyzing land inequality but also for any issue related to the aspects of distribution and inequality. The Lorenz Curve was applied to provide a graphic representation of the degree of inequality of land distribution among the different social groups in AP.

**Figure-1: Lorenz Curve for within the Social Categories****Measuring Land inequality: Using the Lorenz Curve within the Social Group in AP**

The measure of the degree of inequality in land distribution is represented by the concavity of the Lorenz curve relative to the straight line indicating complete equality. Thus, we see that land is unequally distributed among the different caste groups. This can be a reflection of the historical past of some social groups excluded by the ownership of land. As indicated above, ownership of land is unequally distributed among the marginalized sections. Figure shows that low degree of land inequality among the SCs compared to STs and others because all households owned less than two acres of land in SCs. However, there was highest land inequality among the STs in Andhra Pradesh.

Figure-2: Lorenz Curve for All Categories



**Table-3: Distribution per 1000 Households and Percentage Area Owned by each Social Group during 2002-03**

Class	Number				Area			
	ST	SC	Non-ST/SC	All	ST	SC	Non-ST/SC	All
Nil	17.8	12.9	11.55	12.3	0	0	0	0
Less than 1.01 ha	57.3	80.1	66.25	70.4	12.03	50.43	19.77	21.93
1.01-2.00 ha	11.8	5.1	10.7	9.1	13.06	29.02	19.87	19.87
2.01-4.00 ha	8.2	1.7	6.6	5.3	18.03	18.18	21.92	21.51
4.01-10.00 ha	3.5	0.1	4.25	2.6	15.37	1.99	27.76	23.71
Larger than 10.00 ha	1.3	0	0.7	0.5	41.52	0	11.56	14.35
All sizes	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: NSS Report No. 491: Household Ownership Holdings in India, 2003

We observe from the table that landless households are high among STs (17.8 per cent) and SCs (12.9 per cent). Further, we see that about 80.1 per cent of the SC households own less than 1.01 hectares of land—they own about 50.43 per cent of the area, while 57 per cent STs and 66.25 per cent non-SCs/STs own less than 1.01 hectares of land. On the other hand, only 1.3 per cent own more than 10 hectares of land—they own about 41.52 per cent of the area, while 0.7 per cent of the non-SCs/STs own more than 10 hectares of land, possessing about 11.56 per cent of the area; there are no SCs in this category. It is further observed that most of the SCs own less than 1.01 hectares or 1.01-2 hectares (29.02 per cent) of land. In the case of the non SCs/STs, we observe that most of them own either 2.01-4 or 4.01-10 hectares of land.

We observe from Table 3.4 that most of the SC households belong to the less than 1 acre category in majority of the districts including Srikakulam (82 per cent), Vizianagaram (71 per cent), Krishna (67 per cent), and Khammam (62 per cent). It is observed that most of the SC households belong to the less than 1 acre category in irrigated districts. We also observe that the percentage of households owning 2.5 to 5 acres of and more than 5 acres is high among the ST households when compared to SC households—about 15 per cent of the ST households own more than 5 acres of land in Adilabad District, which is the highest in the state.

**Table-4: Average Area Owned by the Households from 1992 to 2002-03 in AP**

Class	1992			2002-03		
	SC	ST	All	ST	SC	All
Nil	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Less than 1 ha	0.28	0.28	0.29	0.23	0.20	0.21
1.01-2.00 ha	1.37	1.36	1.42	1.24	1.25	1.35
2.01-4.00 ha	2.74	2.80	2.87	2.79	2.94	2.82
4.01-10.00 ha	6.18	6.08	6.18	6.03	0.00	6.35
Larger than 10 ha	10.74	15.65	17.05	24.06	0.00	25.32
All sizes	0.32	0.79	0.78	1.12	0.22	0.62

*Source: NSS Report No. 491: Household Ownership Holdings in India, 2003*

We observe from Table 4, that the average area owned by the SCs has declined from 0.32 hectares in 1992 to 0.22 hectares during 2002-03, while the average area owned by the STs has increased from 0.79 hectares in 1992 to 1.12 hectares during 2002-03; for all categories, we observe a slight decline from 0.78 hectares in 1992 to 0.62 hectares during 2002-03. Across the classes, the landholding in the 4.01-10 hectares category is greater than the landholding in the 10 hectares category—the average area owned by the SCs in the two categories is 6.18 hectares and 10.74 hectares respectively in 1992, which declined to zero during 2002-03; in the case of the STs, the average area owned in the larger than 10 hectares category was 15.65 hectares in 1992 which increased to 24.06 hectares during 2002-03. Thus, the average area owned by the STs increased from 0.79 hectares to 1.12 hectares. Overall, not many changes were observed across the classes in all categories from 1992 to 2002-03.

#### *i). Area Operated by Social Groups*

Ownership of land rights would get through sales and purchases, but the poor and downtrodden people cannot get ownership rights on land as they cannot afford the huge amount. They can access land only through informal transactions including lease, mortgage, gifts, etc. An attempt has been made to provide access to operating land for the SCs and STs through informal ways. These details are provided in Table 3.6 during the period from 1976-77 to 2005-06.

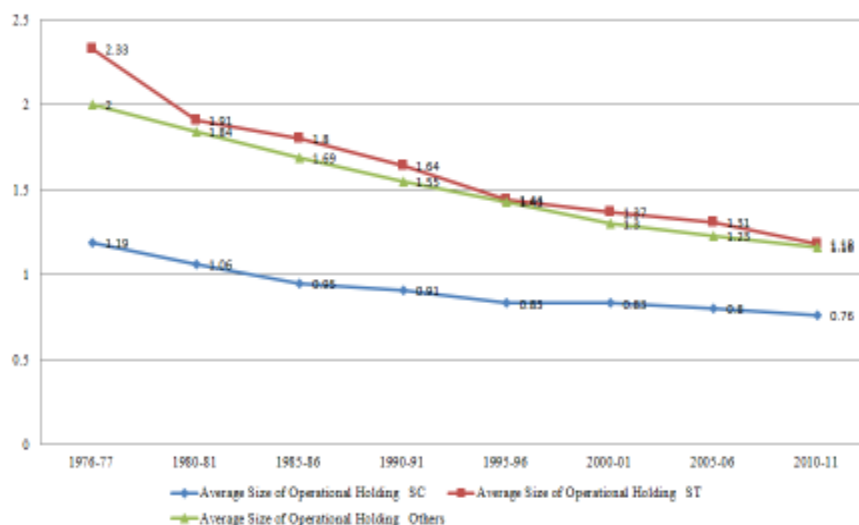
**Table- 5: Percentage Distribution of Operational Holdings and Operated Area among Social Groups in Andhra Pradesh**

Years	Social Group	SC	ST	Others	Total
1976-77	No.	13.4	6.3	80.3	100
	Area	6.9	6.2	86.9	100
1980-81	No.	12.6	6.4	81	100
	Area	6.9	6.3	86.8	100
1986-87	No.	12.2	6.4	81.4	100
	Area	6.8	6.7	86.5	100
1990-91	No.	12.73	6.88	80.39	100
	Area	7.48	7.23	85.29	100
1995-96	No.	12.12	7.11	80.77	100
	Area	7.42	7.56	85.02	100
2000-01	No.	11.85	7.47	80.66	100
	Area	7.86	8.23	83.91	100
2005-06	No.	11.81	7.7	80.49	100
	Area	7.87	8.40	83.73	100

*Source: Report on SC/ST Landholdings 1976-77 to 2005-2006, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.*

Table 5 explains the operational holdings and area operated in AP by different social groups from 1976-77 to 2005-06. We observe from the table that SC households hold about 13.4 per cent of the total holdings, but operated land is only 6.9 per cent in 1976-77. The percentage of SC holdings is observed to have declined to 11.81 per cent, while their operated land share slightly increased to 7.87 per cent in 2005-06. In the case of the STs, we observe that the number of holdings as well as the operated area slightly increased—that is from 6.3 per cent holdings in 1976-77 to 7.7 per cent holdings in 2005-06 and from 6.2 per cent operated area in 1976-77 to 8.40 per cent operated area in 2005-06. The other communities constitute about 80.3 per cent of the total holdings and operate about 87 per cent of the total operated area. However, the percentage of others holdings remains the same (80.3 per cent), while their share of operated area has slightly declined from 86.9 per cent in 1976-77 to 83.73 per cent in 2005-06. The share of the SCs and STs in operated area is observed to have slightly increased from 1976-77 to 2005-06 while in the case of other communities, the share in operated area has slightly declined.



**Figure-4: The Average Size of Operational Holdings by Different Social Category in AP****Figure: The Average Size of Operational Holdings by Different Social Category from 1976-77 to 2010-11 in AP.**

We observe from figure 4 that the average size of holdings operated by the SCs declined from 1.19 hectares in 1976-77 to 0.8 hectares in 2005-06, while the average size of holdings operated by the large group has slightly increased (from 14.65 hectares in 1976-77 to 22 hectares in 2005-06). There was not much change in the average size of holdings operated by the rest of the size groups over the years. Hence, the average size of the holding operated by all groups has declined from 2.33 hectares in 1976-77 to 1.31 hectares in 2005-06. Further, there was a slight decline in the average size of the holdings operated (from 15.62 hectares in 1976-77 to 14.67 hectares in 2005-06).

**Table-6: State-wise Distribution of Number of Operational Holdings for SCs and STs during Agriculture Census 2000-01 and 2005-06 (Number in '00)**

Category	2000-01			2005-06		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SC	11038	2636	13674	11128	3095	14224
	8.08	17.75	9.03	7.77	17.73	8.85
ST	7315	1312	8627	7652	1615	9267
	8.54	15.69	9.17	8.19	16.18	8.96
All	9180	2347	11532	9392	2646	12044
	8.61	18.06	9.62	8.25	17.51	9.32

Source: Report on SC/ST Landholdings, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of AP.2000-01 and 2005-06.

Table 6 shows that the operational holdings among SC males decreased from 8.08 hectares during 2000-01 to 7.77 hectares during 2005-2006. The total operational holdings of SC males as well as females are observed to have

decreased from 9.03 hectares during 2000-01 to 8.85 hectares in 2005-06. Among the STs, the total holding of males and females is observed to have decreased from 9.17 hectares during 2000-01 to 8.96 hectares in 2005-06, which is less than the state figure.

## V. Conclusions

The SCs continue to be a disadvantaged section with respect to land access, but the STs are somewhat better in terms the land owned in Andhra Pradesh. There has been no substantial improvement in the SCs' landholding position—it is seen that, in Ranga Reddy District, the landless households are less than 32 per cent among the SCs and 29 per cent among the STs. It is perhaps due to urbanization that the figures occupy the lowest per cent. Similarly, other districts such as Warangal and Adilabad also fall in this category. On the other hand, irrigated zones like West Godavari, Krishna and Guntur have the highest percentage of landless households among the SCs and STs. It is also observed that landless households are more prevalent among the SCs rather than among the STs. It is observed that 80 per cent of the SCs belong to the less than one hectare category whereas among the STs, 57 per cent belong to the less than one hectare category. Moreover, about 28 per cent of the non-STs/SCs belong to the category of 4 to 10 hectares, while only 1.99 per cent of the SCs own 15 percent of the land. It is further observed that the SCs have less owned land than the STs. It is surprising to note that of every 100 people, only 5 SCs and 15 STs own more than 5 acres of land in Andhra Pradesh. The average land owned is lesser among the SCs (0.22 hectares) and highest among the STs (1.12 hectares). The extent of operated land by the SCs has been declining over the period from 1.19 hectares in 1976-77 to 0.8 hectares in 2005-06. Similarly, among the STs, the decrease was from 2.33 hectares in 1976-77 to 1.31 in 2005-06.

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