

**State, Labour, and Rural-Urban Processes:
A Study of Agrarian Relations in North Telangana**

A Thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial fulfilment of the requirement
for the award of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

Sociology

By

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14SSPH08**



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**State, Labour, and Rural-Urban Processes: A Study of Agrarian Relations in North Telangana**” submitted by Mr. A Chandrashekar Reddy bearing Regd. No. 14SSPH08 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology is a bonafide work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance which is a plagiarism-free thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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The thesis is free from plagiarism and has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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DECLARATION

I, A Chandrashekar Reddy hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**State, Labour, and Rural-Urban Processes: A Study of Agrarian Relations in North Telangana**” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Prof. N Purendra Prasad is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma. I hereby agree that my thesis can be deposited in Shodganga/INFLIBNET.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Agrarian society underwent a drastic changes with the introduction of green revolution. It was introduced as a response to food shortages, severe droughts, and low productivity in the agrarian sector. The core tenets of green revolution were the high yielding varieties of seeds, usage of bio-chemical fertilisers and pesticides, and irrigation to improve the productivity. This was thought of as a crucial part of modernising agriculture which will eventually lead to economic growth. These policy interventions in agriculture were introduced with the notion that development is a structural process where the society would transform from being mostly rural, agrarian, and subsistence economy to being primarily urban, industrial, and capitalist society. These policy frameworks were founded on stylised, historical evidence-based explanations like those of Kuznets (1966), Clark (1940) and or Lewis (1954) who proposed developmental theory. According, to these theories, when economies expand, production systems changes in such a way that the proportion of agriculture decreases and the proportion of industry grows, followed by an increase in the proportion of services. Similarly, workforce structure changes from agriculture to industry to services in a similar manner. Spatially, it was anticipated that there will be shifts from rural areas to urban locations.

However, India's development trajectory did not adhere to these ideals. The share of agricultural and its related activities has decreased in the GDP from 41% in 1972-73 to 18% in 2020-21, a major change in the output. But 46% of the labour force is employed in agriculture (IRDP report 2013). Nearly 70% of its population and 75% of its labour force continue to reside and work in rural areas.

In the post 1990s, Indian state adopted the neo-liberal “structural adjustment programmes”. With it there was reduction in the expenditure spent on agriculture, and Indian markets were opened to the global markets. With the intense commoditisation of land, in the neo-liberal period, there has been an increasing pressure on both farm and non-farm land holdings which resulted in their fragmentation, while drastically reducing the operational size of lands.

Under these circumstances where the self-reproducing households within an agrarian setup is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain, the category of “peasant” household itself becomes problematic. The fragmentation of not just land but also members of a household itself owing to pull (not in the traditional sense modern industries attracting labour but mostly in the precarious informal sectors) and push (unviability of agriculture) factors of migration have brought significant difficulties in holding on to the predefined categories. With male migration to urban areas and increasing female participation in the operational utilities of farm activities, a new reality has emerged in the Indian countryside, in the form of ‘depeasantisation’ in the countryside and ‘deproletarianisation’ in urban spaces.

Yet another paradox of the Indian context is the expansion of the rural non-farm economy. Contrary to majority countries' experiences, where economic progress was followed by an increase in non-farm employment that led to a migration of labour from rural to urban areas to work in the industrial sector, which did not happen in India. Rural non-farm employment (RNFE) is viewed as a distinguishing feature of India's rural transformation. In India, rural non-farm employment (RNFE) has expanded in recent years (Binswanger-Mkhize 2012). Given the great diversity of rural settings in India, it is crucial to comprehend the nature and diversity of the available work, as well as how this varies in terms of the socioeconomic and institutional contexts of the numerous actors involved. With neoliberalism and the emergent contradictions in the agriculture, where it is not able to provide the subsistence income to majority of the households. So people are increasingly migrating to different places in search of work for sustaining the household. This has altered the nature of the village.

On the other hand, a stereotypical image of India since the colonial period is that it is a country of “village republics”, with maximum number of people living off agriculture. The validity of this claim was challenged by the sociologists like M.N. Srinivas and others in the post-independence period by concentrating on village studies by adopting a structural functionalist framework. Though this framework of analysis did not problematise the nature of power relationships, but it did help in demolishing the notion of “village republics”. They argued that villages in India were undergoing fundamental changes while interacting with the colonial system of knowledge production and consumption. In the post-independence period, the enthusiasm of the Nehruvian Five Year Plans brought a hegemonic consensus among the ruling elite by bringing “transition” to the centre of discussions on change in India.

Sociologists and Social Anthropologists studied Indian villages in their diversity. In academic hierarchy of studies, especially in sociology and social anthropology, rural once enjoyed the primacy in the Indian context. Some of the sociologists who studied villages were identified with the villages they studied. It was not just a site of residence, an administrative category; it was also a crucial venue for observing and studying Indian society and culture empirically. Thus, it was also a methodological category, a simple entry point into the reality on the ground of the huge territories that had become organised inside the framework of a nation state. (S Jodhka 2018).

There has always been a binary notion of the term 'rural' whenever it is invoked or studied and it was always posited against the 'urban'. The general understanding of the rural is always based on two aspects. One, it is a space- a location, and the other one is the- social representation of it. It was always against the other- 'urban', that these aspects of the rural were explored. These two are intrinsically interwoven and carry a certain image of the 'rural'. Any understanding of the rural is intrinsically related to urban. In terms of definition there is no consensus, either officially, culturally, or even at a popular level about 'non-urban' space that is being called 'rural' (Roy, 2015).

After the 1970s and 1980s, the field of village studies lost its significance. Since the early 1990s, rural and agricultural issues have been relegated to the margins of regional and national agendas due to India's increasing urbanisation, urban-centric economic development, and the arrival of the "global-and-smart-cities" agenda. In light of the rise of the *mandir-mandal* in politics, the relevance of villages has decreased (Cabalion & Thivet, 2019). From the beginning of neoliberal reforms of 1991, some issues have dominated the village, while others, such as Economic diversification, non-farm employment, development and displacement, have been given priority. Yet village studies are far from being a defunct topic of study and, on the contrary, represent a significant area of research for social scientists in India and abroad.

Despite the dominance of urban studies in academic research, the rural is still visible, unrepresented, or silent about. By focusing on a few key issues, whether in anthropology, sociology, history, political science, economics, rural studies have continued to shed light on the flow of changes across the country.

The problem with both, agrarian studies and rural studies in the past is that, they were equated the village with agriculture. Both were treated as synonymous with each other. Such an understanding is no longer provides meaningful understanding of either of them. Village is no longer a cohesive 'social, economic, and cultural unit' (Jodhka and D'Souza 2009, p-153) that it once was. With the neo-liberal onslaught, the rural increasingly divided and it is far from a cohesive unit. The disintegration as socially cohesive unit is not necessarily a negative phenomenon. This fragmentation makes it difficult of any generalisations of the village/rural space. According to Cabalion & Thivet (2019), understanding the rural necessitates that we examine the social economic, cultural, and political hierarchical structures in various settings, in addition to the complicated recomposition throughout space and time of power interplay between, but also within castes, classes, and genders.

In the 2000s, there was a revival of interest in village life. The existence of 'rural' was viewed as a hindrance to the grander design and ambitions of a globalising India (Vasavi 2012). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the 'agrarian crisis' narrative dominated village communities in India. This was a result of the marginalisation of the agrarian sector in the national policy agenda since the introduction of liberalisation in the 1990s. After the green revolution, neoliberal policies speeded up the reconfiguration of the farming sector by curbing trade restrictions, opening India's agricultural economy to transnational corporate entities and the influence of the global market, and gradually reducing government support for agriculture as a result there spate of suicides in the country by many farmers. Both agrarian and rural studies have been dominated by the narratives of "agrarian crisis" and rural sociology in the post 1990s.

The phenomenon of farmer suicides is still a prevalent phenomenon, but the narrative agrarian crisis might not explain the complexity of the 'rural' lives today. Beyond agriculture, the village life crisis appears to be a combination of three crises affecting rural spaces: economic, social, and environmental, causing a variety of vulnerabilities affecting the most marginalised within it (Cabalion & Thivet, 2019). Today's agrarian crisis is a crisis of capitalist agriculture, not a problem of subsistence agriculture. Agriculture is dependent on the prices of the global market, substantial investments in chemical inputs, and commercial crops. It has a direct effect on small and marginal farmers who are entangled in commercial agricultural practices and the technological cycle that accompanies it in regions

where this sort of agriculture has increased and become more prevalent not suitable for such agrarian practices- ecologically and sociologically.

The social endurance of the Indian farming habitus, especially after widespread displacement and migration, might seem astonishing, despite the fact that the agriculture crisis appears to be not only a problem of social reproduction among the peasantry, but also a problem of vocation (Landy 2011, Cabalion 2013). It begs the question regarding who are still interested in farming? The triple "agrarian crisis (economic, social, and environmental) complexity necessitate considering the diversity of rural resident's experiences in relation to their particular geographically and historically interconnected ecosystems, in addition to the socio-political, cultural, and economic influences that affect how they live.

The Indian rural settings face a completely new set of threats in the neo-liberal context. Academics have paid a great deal of attention to disputes over land, its expropriation, and its use throughout the past few decades. Today, land acquisition is primarily used for non-agricultural development, such as urbanisation, real estate, industrialisation, mining, roads, and other infrastructure projects, etc. This has resulted in a rise in the demand for rural land. With the creation of special economic zones (SEZs), land acquisition during the neoliberal era takes place "under an expansive notion of 'public purpose' that becomes progressively indistinguishable from private capital accumulation".

Rising land prices provided new opportunities for profit and accumulation for a wide range of new villagers, including land owners and land brokers who were pervasive in the land economy, as well as for high-profile actors like SEZ developers, real estate companies, and the government (Levien 2012; Sud 2014) and dispossessed many of the small and marginal cultivators from marginal sections of the society.

Today, the rural has become the underbelly of development. It is a key site of displacement and dispossession. If we broaden the definition of dispossession beyond the experience of land evictions and include the social relations of dominance outside the land-grabbing state, we may gain a deeper understanding of it. The privatisation of health care and education are the two most significant factors affecting rural life. The understanding of dispossession/eviction must go beyond the straightforward experience of property eviction and must take into account social relations of domination that go beyond the confines of the

land-grabbing State. One major socioeconomic issue that appears to be driving and contributing to the worsening state of dispossession among the rural sections is the privatisation of higher education, for instance.. For example, selling one's assets to pursue an unattainable road to academic success is becoming more popular and looks to be having an increasing impact on the livelihoods and dispossession.

It is in this context it is important to understand the effects of green revolution on different sections of people. The effects are not homogeneous across the caste class divide, keeping this in mind the present research has focused on the following questions.

Research Questions:

- 1) How is the neo-liberal capitalist state shaping the agrarian and rural setting?
- 2) What is the importance, and its effects, of 'agrarian capital' beyond the rural? What is the significance of 'rural labour' beyond the farm' and rural?
- 3) Given the complexity of the agrarian change and new rural-urban entanglements, how do we understand the 'new rural', both theoretically as well as empirically?

Objectives:

- To critically examine the changing role of state in shaping the agrarian structure in Telangana.
- To analyse the complexity of non-farm sector and its implications for household reproduction in 'rural' north Telangana.

To understand and investigate these questions the thesis followed the following methodology:

Methods and Methodology:

Two villages were selected, one irrigated village, which is referred to as village A, one dry village which is termed as village B to keep the names of the village anonymous. The wet village is irrigated by Sri Ram Sagar Project canal, it gets canal water for one season- generally in the *rabi* season. This allows the village to cultivate two paddy crops and sometimes three crops, for those who have other irrigation sources like tube wells and traditional wells- and a long duration crop like turmeric. The other village is a dry village, most of the agriculture is rain dependent. There are bore well/tube well irrigated pockets in

the village, but the agriculture is mostly rain dependent. They also coincide with another, criteria. The wet village is nearer to the town and the dry village is located little remotely from the town.

Two villages were chosen to account for the diversity of north and south Telangana, where north Telangana is more irrigated than south Telangana. But as the study progressed the chosen villages offered different variables than the one they were intended for. The geographical proximity to the town- where village A is near to the town whereas village B is remotely located, the demographic characteristics have proved to very insightful.

The villages were selected after the initial two rounds of pilot studies, one in June 2016 and the other in June 2017, each for a period of one week. During this period, key opinion make-journalists, writers, and some social activists were consulted to understand the region.

Data was collected in the field using a combination of methodologies. The thesis employed an ethnographic framework with mixed methods of data collection, including qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys of households. Relying solely on quantitative methods reduces issues to a collective, lacking complexity and socially diverse family contexts of caste, class, or gender. Furthermore, gathering descriptive data or recognising broad patterns at the village level would be impossible if only qualitative data from a small sample of respondents were used.

Ethnography is a qualitative research method that is based on the assumption that knowledge is the product of social interaction (Creswell, 2007). Through long-term fieldwork, ethnography creates a broad range of participant-observed understandings, meanings, and linkages. Thus, it was utilised to comprehend both settlements.

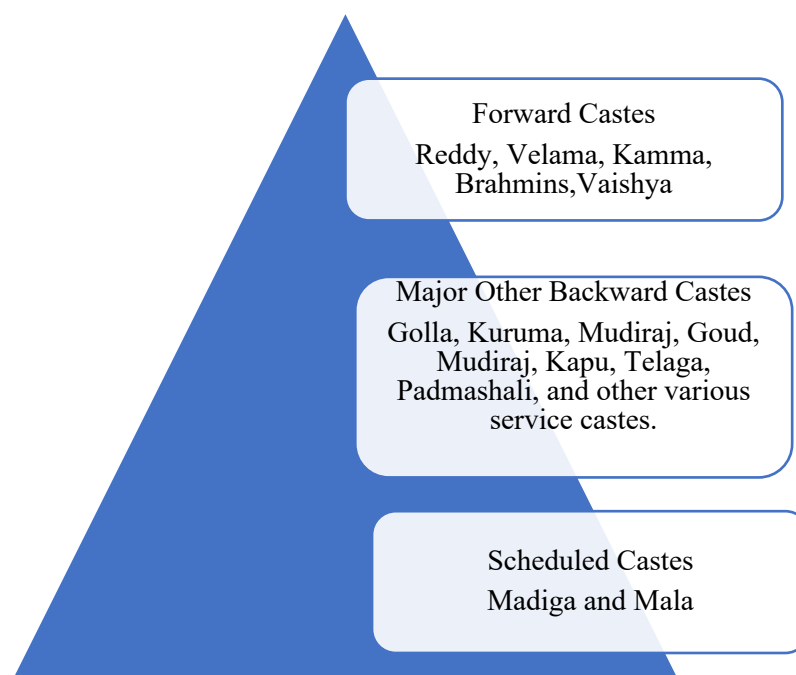
A survey method was used to collect data from households in the field. Data was collected from 165 households in Village A and from 64 households in Village B. Village census was not conducted in both the villages. There are 1200 to 1300 households in Village A. Since it is a large village, it was not feasible to conduct the census of the village. Household data was collected from 10% of the representative sample. Data was not collected initially; I entered the village through the village sarpanch. In the initial few days, I interacted with various groups of people in the village- from different castes. A basic caste demography was

charted out from the field. There are 300 *Reddy* households, around 600 (170 goud, 120 muduraj, 45 kapu, 50 to 60 kuruba and golla among others) households of various castes from OBCs, 500 households of Scheduled Castes. From these data was collected from 10% of each social category. It was also ensured that all the castes in the village are represented in the sample. The sample size from this village came around 165, I used a snowball sampling technique to identify the various classes within the castes and collected household data. The same method was used to collect data from the other village also. I have collected 65 household data from this village. Since it was not a census of the villages, it was important to ensure that the sample was representative. I spent three months in each of the village. In the initial stages of the field work, in both the villages, focus was only on familiarising with the villages and observing various aspects of the village. Once, a rapport was established then, I started the data collection process. Data was also collected with regards to Beedi work and gulf migration.

A semi-structured questionnaire, with both open-ended and closed question on various aspects of the household was used to collect the data. Along with it, in-depth interviews, to understand various aspects of social, economic, and historical aspects changes in the villages. Focused group discussions were also conducted as part of understanding the nature of the present-day agriculture, village, and society at large.

The thesis also focuses on the urban dimension investigating the nearby Jagityal town as well. To understand the larger rural-urban entanglements, the field work was conducted on various aspects of the town- town economy, its historical developments and new developments in the last 10 to 20 years.

Figure 1.1 Social Structure of the Field



Positionality:

The access to the villages were made easier through the village sarpanches enabling familiarity with the villagers. When it comes to conversations between women and unfamiliar, unmarried men, rural India is socially restrictive (Nilotpal, 2011). My position as a male researcher made it difficult to conduct interviews with women respondents. I could only talk to some of them in the presence of the male member of the household, rest of my observations on question of gender and work are limited which are based on the limited observations.

Throughout the field work in both the villages, in my interactions with farmers, I realised that my identity was perceived differently by the respondents, I realised that the majority of them had diverse perceptions of me and the objective of the study. In the initial phase people used to ask about why I was there in the village, what is this research going to do them. Here are some of response of people:

Youth in the village believed that I was a journalist covering their community. They began to describe the issues in the village and requested that I include them in my story. Despite my clarification that I am not a journalist, they were eager to discuss the village's concerns. Agent for a seed firm: given the majority of my talks with villagers focused on agriculture,

most of them believed I was an agent for a seed company. Some of the farmers asked my guidance on seed and fertiliser varieties. Some of the village's educated teenagers identified me as a researcher striving to improve agriculture.

Dilemmas:

Many locals inquired about my caste background, as is customary when establishing the identity of a new person and when referring to caste. I avoided a number of direct or indirect questions to detract attention from their concerns. I realised that once I reveal my caste, the majority of my relationships in the village will be shaped by my identity. It will have an effect on how various caste groups in the village would respond to me. It was quite difficult, but I believe it helped me communicate with all of the village's neighbourhoods.

In my research, dealing with the expectations of the respondents were one of my greatest challenges. They desired my assistance in obtaining financial aid from the government. It was challenging to convey to them my inability to influence any government entity.

As I inquired about agricultural procedures, numerous farmers sought my opinion on various seed varieties/brands. I was required to inform them that I lacked expertise in these topics. In several instances, individuals said, "Why are you asking these questions if you cannot help us?" As the duration of my stay in the village expanded, more and more residents sought my counsel. Some families sought my opinion on their children's schooling, while others wanted my opinion on the job possibilities of various courses and chances in the city. They viewed me as someone who could provide guidance on numerous elements of their lives. It was challenging for me to say no to many of them or to offer guidance. I am also concerned that if I do not respond or provide my perspective, their replies may be affected.

As a researcher, I was aware of my responsibilities and ethical obligations, and I did my best to avoid being portrayed as an authority on these topics. However, during the process, I began to question the use of my study for them and how this would alter my subjectivity.

Structure of the thesis:

Seven chapters, including this introduction, make up the thesis.

Second chapter titled as ‘From peasant studies to Critical Agrarian studies.’ This chapter is a review of literature. This chapter makes an attempt to give a border theoretical background to the thesis. Three broader fields sociological study- CAS and New Urban studies and new villages studies- locates in the section of these three fields.

From theory in the second chapter, the third chapter makes a move into history. This chapter is on the history of political economy of the Telangana state. From 1850s Salarjung reforms to the new state formation in 2014, the chapter traces the major changes in the history of the state. It is divided into four sections. Pre-Independence to 1948, from 1948 to 1990s, from 1990s 2014, and from 2014-2020. Each sections delineates the major socio-economic changes in the that period.

Fourth chapter discusses the both the field villages. It presents the basic demographic data on both villages. It analyses the field data. It presents data on forces of production- like land relations, machinery, and use of fertilisers etc. and relations of production- how the have relations between land holder and labour.

Fifth chapter analyses the two of the major non-farm activities in the village, namely beedi work and gulf migration and non-farm sector. It traces the historical origins of the works in the region since these are the widely present in the region for the last 40 years or so. The chapter is divided into five sections. The weaving community historically been a mobile community. Their response to various social changes-either economic or non-economic was migrating to different places. First section discusses, based on the secondary studies, specially the work of Haynes & Roy (1999) is historically traces migration of *padmashalis* to western India. In the second section the nature of beedi work is discussed. Third section, male gulf migration is discussed. The reasons for migrating to gulf and the how the remittances are spent. The consequences of the gulf migration for different groups of people are presented. The urban centre has become important for the village for socio-economic reason. Fourth sections details about non-farm activities in both villages. There has been an increase in the interactions between the town and village. Town and village are integral part of the development of each other. Fifth section discusses how these relations are the in the field.

Sixth chapter works towards a new conceptualisation of the ‘rural’ in the neoliberal context. The chapter comprises three sections. In the first section, a theoretical excursion of how the rural is understood in the Indian context and how there is a need to go beyond this conceptualisation has been presented. Second section posits the rural as the result of the triangulation of the caste, state, and capital. The thesis uses Vasavi’s framework and presents the role of state, caste, and capital on the new rural. In the third section, the results of such triangulations are presented.

Chapter seven provides broader trends and conclusions of the study.

Chapter 2

From Peasant Studies to Critical Agrarian Studies

Much has been written on how the political, economic, and social realms of modernity affect and are affected by rural life and agrarian livelihoods. Modernity's defining characteristic is that the logical frameworks of its explanations are wrapped in various forms of dualism. The very term 'modernity' itself is part of such a binary-opposed to its pair - 'tradition'. These dualisms are not only just explanatory categories, but they were sought to have practical implications too. The binary thinking implies a classification and hierarchisation, placing one over the other. Urban vs rural, industrial vs agricultural, individual vs collective, developed vs underdeveloped, rich vs poor are some of the many binaries. Even when a transition between the opposite worlds was prescribed, it was done so in terms of binaries. For example, agricultural to industrial, prehistoric to modern, rural to urban, and feudal to capitalist market transition. Many of the ideas in the social sciences were founded on these dualisms. In the last three to four decades there has been an active criticism on these 'binaries'. Moreover, it has been argued that these binaries do not represent the realities of the social world. They may not be mutually exclusive categories in everyday lives as they are depicted in analytical frameworks. In fact, they could coexist and complement each other.

The village/rural is one such concept that has been caught up in such a binary framing. It was equated with tradition as opposed to the urban. Such a framing and its subsequent theorisation had been the core of studies that sought to study the village. Agrarian studies, both in the western as well in the Indian contexts, has been a major field of study that sought to understand village through the study of agrarian structure (Balyan, 2019). It considered village and agriculture as synonymous and reduced the understanding of one as a connotation to understand the other. It was also caught up with the notion of class as the primary explanatory category in understanding the agrarian structure and relegated other categories to the background. In recent past-in the last 10 years- the primacy of the class has been questioned and it has been argued that it should be understood along with other categories like gender, race, ethnicity, and caste. The earlier tradition is popularly known as 'peasant studies' which began in 1960s (Akram-Lodhi et al., 2021). The later tradition is known as 'critical agrarian studies' which has started in the last ten years (ibid). This

transition builds on the scholarship of the peasant studies tradition but goes beyond in terms of posing of the problem and in its analysis. This tracing of the journey of the field of agrarian studies will prove as a theoretical backdrop to the rest of my present study and how I have used my empirical data to analyse and understand the research questions posited in the introductory chapter. The intention of the chapter is not to review the entire spectrum of writings in the field of agrarian studies, which is beyond the scope of this study, but rather a modest attempt to outline the broader theoretical trends in the field¹.

In India, village studies dominated sociology and social anthropology in the initial decades of the independence as the preferred mode of understanding the Indian society. These studies accepted the binary notion of rural- urban uncritically in studying villages. Such engagements with village have led to certain stereotyping of the Indian village. The depiction of the village as an idyllic utopian political community - a society of equals - was a characteristic feature of nationalist discourse (Mohanty, 2017; Thakur, 2014). In nationalist discourses on the village community, the facts of domination and hierarchy inside the village were disregarded or downplayed. Once dominant, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, village studies have lost the primacy in the academic world. But there has been a renewed interest in the field from the early 2000s. These new studies are looking at the dynamics of rural-urban interactions, growth of new economic opportunities, and other emergent issues that bypass the rural-urban binaries. The section on the village studies in the chapter outlines this change in the understanding from colonial, post-colonial, and neo-liberal periods.

On the other hand, since 1990s urban studies across the world have taken a new turn. They started going beyond the concept of city (Patel, 2017, 2018). Before 1990s the rural and urban binary, and linear transition from rural to urban were the epistemic bases for urban studies (Patel 2018, Kundu 2017). Studying the transformation of cities and producing the monographs of different cities was the most common method in urban studies. The new “critical urban studies” are looking at urbanisation as a process not as a liner transition from rural-urban (Brenner 2018) These studies are looking at the village as part of the process of urbanisation. The last section of the chapter will look at the emergence of new urban studies

¹ There are excellent reviews of the works in the field (Bernstein & Byres, 2001, Bernstein, 2010, (Levien et al., 2018).

and its understanding of the village and what these studies provide as a way of understanding the new rural or rurality.

Section- I

Agrarian Studies

This section outlines the historical trajectory of the field of agrarian studies. It mainly discusses the issues and debates in this topic, key scholars, major theoretical positions that emerged and developed over a period. This section draws on the long periods of thinking in the field of agrarian studies, and later uses those debates and theoretical positions in understanding the agrarian relations in the two field work villages. The section starts with ‘Marxian Political Economy’- since it is the dominant framework in this field, it broadly outlines what it means and then moves to the emergence of peasant studies, its historical context.

Marxist Political Economy:

Agrarian Political Economy, and more broadly, political economy of capitalism has been used in the thesis to explore the objectives outlined in introductory chapter. Bernstein describes Agrarian political economy as the study of social relations, production and reproduction processes, property and power in rural social formations, and their historical and contemporary processes of transformation (Bernstein, 2010). This understanding of the political economy can be operationalised, according to Bernstein, through four questions- “who owns what? Who does what? Who gets what? What do they do with it?” (Ibid, 22).

According to Akram-Lodhi (2018), these four questions will provide insight into: changes in agricultural production, especially resource distribution, the commercialisation of technological advances, the processes by which social forces seized their advantages, the accumulation that ultimately followed from changing technical aspects of production, and the political repercussions of shifting production and growth patterns, which took many different forms.

The above framework provides long-running debates in Marxism. In the writings of Marx and Engels', classical Marxist thinkers (such as Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Kautsky and

Gramsci) in the European context, Mao in the non-European context, among others, there has been a century of work on the nature of rural transition and capitalist appropriation of the rural non-capitalist economy and the political implications of such transition.

Terry Byres (1991,1996) and Henry Bernstein (1996) simply summarised the idea that runs across all of these theorists' writings in three questions.

1. How capitalism seizes agricultural production and differentiates agrarian classes? That is development of capitalism in agriculture, leading to an increase in the production and how different classes are benefitting/loosing.
2. The contribution of agriculture to the industrialisation or the overall capitalist development? That is how this is leading to agrarian transition by providing accumulated capital in agriculture for developing industries.
3. And the implication of all this for the political behaviour of the agrarian classes? That is the, the political aspects of such change, how this is leading to class struggle between different classes.

The classical Marxist interpretations of the agrarian question have been central to the concerns of contemporary understanding of agrarian change and rural transformation. The writings on the on the processes of dispossession, class formation, and class fragmentation, the issues facing rural labour, the drivers of rural growth and social change in the country, and the political reactions of rural people to these changes can be found in the classic Marxist literature. Following section gives a brief outline of the arguments of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Kautsky, and Chayanov on the nature of 'agrarian' and how they saw its transformation.

The classical iterations:

The classical iterations start with Marx. How agriculture facilitated or did not facilitate the expansion of capital and, by extension, capitalism in rural areas and beyond was his primary concern in analysing the agrarian question. Bernstein claims that his primary focus was the 'agrarian question of capital'. Marx explored with considerable care the link between small-scale precapitalist agriculture and small-scale peasant production absorbed by capitalism. He focused on the transformation of small-scale agriculture into capitalist agriculture. In his view, both historical and contemporary peasants can be understood as female and male agricultural labourers who rely heavily (though not solely) on access to land that is owned

or rented, who have limited amounts of technology, and who rely heavily (though not solely) on their own labour and the labour of other members of their family. So, peasants were a category, who as 'petty commodity producers' who operate under capitalism as both a petty capitalist of little relevance and a worker with little control over their work terms and conditions. (Akram-Lodhi et al., 2021).

According to Akram-Lodi and Kay (2016), Marx has identified three paths of agrarian transition, one was the classical approach based on primitive accumulation, second one was the class differentiation approach, the third path is based on Russian experience. The first path was the classical model based on the English experience; the analysis of this path is said be full developed in Capital volume 1. This is driven by 'primitive accumulation' that was witnessed in England. According to this model, transition happens through the process of 'primitive accumulation' where peasants are dispossessed (physically expelled) from their means of production, by the feudal landlords, with the support of the state. This process created a class of rural wage labourers who are property less, dependent of tenant capitalist farmers, and landlords. This was thought to be the dominant and only model proposed by Marx. Lodhi says that it was not true.

Akram-Lodi (2021) says that in third volume of Capital, Marx identified a second 'path' of agrarian transition. According to this, transition is driven by 'class-differentiation' of the peasantry. The better off and relatively wealthy peasants will be able to gain profits by exploiting the rural wage labourers and will be able to build up some degree of wealth. Subsequently, transforming themselves into future capitalist farmers. Also, among the landed class who are working on their own land, there will be some who will become capitalist farmers. It is important to note that the process of class differentiation depends on the extent of the development of capitalist production in general in the social formation.

Lodhi says that Marx defined the third path of transition in his later writings on the Russian experience. According to this path peasants as a community will steadily transform into an element of national communal production. For this path to be completed, land must be owned in common so that all community members have access to the land necessary to produce their livelihood. Common lands and individual peasant plots will exist in such a setting. In this path, Marx explores the social relations resulting from the uneven

combination of the progressive characteristics of capitalism with the characteristics obtained from historically adaptable peasant social ties. These social relations would enable the community to benefit from capitalist production without being subject to the capitalist regime. It is subjected to the emergence and adoption of new technologies developed the forces of production in a way that maintained the position of small-scale peasant farming and conditional on the state's support for small-scale peasant farming (Marx 1925(1986)).

Thus, Lodi and Kay say that, according to Marx, the process of capitalist developed in agriculture could create “peasant dispossession by displacement, peasant dispossession by differentiation, and or sustain a ‘hybrid’ form of peasant subsumption to capital that maintains and sustains peasant communities..... where production proceeds without being governed by the general rate of profit” (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2021: 27).

If Marx’s engagement with agrarian transition was about the question of capital, on the other hand, Engels engagement with the question of agrarian transition was solely about the labour. In his *The Peasant Question in France and Germany (1894)*. Engels maintained that the import of grain into Europe during the final two decades of the nineteenth century harmed the agricultural livelihoods of European peasants. This caused an agrarian crisis that led to the gradual collapse of the majority of European peasantries. According to him, the only viable solution to this situation was political. However, he argued that the:

doomed peasant was in the hands of his false protectors, the landowner that assume the role of the champions of the interests of the small peasants. It was therefore necessary for the urban working-class parties to become a power in the countryside and create worker-peasant alliance (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2021: 27).

He was not concerned with the question of agrarian capital. The more structural concerns of the origins of agrarian capital, that is, capital accumulation was later picked up by people like Lenin and Kautsky in the late 1880s. For Engels, the emphasis was on the questions of labour and their expression of agency. Transition from his viewpoint on the labour, is to bring forth the alliance between the labour/worker and the peasant.

The pioneering work of Karl Kautsky and Vladimir Lenin on the role of the peasantry in Western Europe and Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is what most people think of when they think of the agrarian question and agrarian transformation.

In his book *the Agrarian Question*, the Czechoslovak economist Kautsky attempted to uncover the characteristics that favour or delay the emergence of large farms and the predicted demise of small farms in his famous dissertation on the agrarian question (1899). In fact, he was the first to use the term 'agrarian question' to inquire "if and how capital is capturing agriculture" (Patnaik, 1986). Kautsky by combining, Friedrich Engels' account of the devastation wrought on small peasant communities by the globalised grain market in Europe, and Karl Marx's study of the process of primitive accumulation, traced the origins of capitalism in agriculture through an examination of how relationships between cities and rural areas have changed over time. He argued that rural communities are becoming increasingly reliant on low-cost urban produced goods as a result of capitalist production relations. Farmers would be forced to either specialise in agricultural commodities in a competitive market or continue small-scale subsistence agriculture while supplementing their income with hired labour due to the increased demand for money. The majority of subsistence farmers, according to Kautsky, would eventually become heavily indebted and sell their land, whereas capitalist farmers would need to continually generate a surplus for investment, resulting in the emergence of capitalist class. He claims that proletarianization and surplus accumulation together created the conditions for the birth of capitalism in agriculture. (Mohanty, 2016).

The publication of Lenin's influential work *Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899) coincided with Kautsky's examination of agrarian issues. Lenin analysed the Russian condition on the basis of a careful examination of district census data (*zemstvo*). His thesis shares many similarities with that of Kautsky. Both emphasise the significance of surplus accumulation, worker exploitation, and debt in the emergence of progressively differentiated agricultural classes. Lenin believed that, in the context of Russia, capitalist industrialisation shattered the historical bond between rural agriculture and rural cottage industry. He believed that the introduction of cheaper capitalist goods into the rural economy produced a need for money that could only be met by commodifying the subsistence economy. (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2021). As the subsistence economy was commodified, the principles of capitalist economy and competition were introduced. Increasing specialisation, dependence on market, expansion, innovation became the guiding principles of capitalist agriculture. Those households who were not able to compete in the market or unwilling to compete were left behind and they were forced to sell their means of production and were made to depend on their wage labour in an effort to avoid immiseration (Ibid). As the capitalist agriculture

expands, peasants became subordinated to market. The result of such subordination was the emergence of differentiation among the peasantries. For example, while some produced for market and for accumulation, some households produced for subsistence in increasingly arduous and tenuous circumstances. As said, those who were not able to cope with it were eventually forced to liquidate their assets by selling them to more dynamic producers and started working as labourers.

Lenin acknowledged the substantive variability that may be observed in the process of agrarian transformation, noting that a theoretical economic study can, in general, only deal with tendencies and hence cannot find a law for all specific circumstances (ibid).

He himself outlined two paths for the transition from agriculture to agrarian capitalism. First, capitalism from on above. According to this theory, the process of divergence and the formation of rural classes was driven by rural dominant classes, landlords will become capitalists and drove tenants to become wage labourers. He refers to this as the internal transformation of landed property. Prussian case was the example of this transition. The other is capitalism from below, which produced the emergence of rural classes of agrarian capital and waged labour through a process of peasant social differentiation driven by market-mediated differentiation (ibid). Here class differentiation takes place in the absence of landed property. Lenin identified USA as an example of this transformation.

Lenin's pro-Bolshevik programmatic writings are typically compared to those of his contemporary, Alexander Chayanov, when discussing the causes of inequality among Russian peasants. Particularly notable is his work on *The Theory of Peasant Economy* (1966). Lenin believed that rural inequities were the outcome of social divergence; Chayanov disagreed. Chayanov argued that family size and household age-related demographic factors were to blame for rural inequities, with the consequence that households with more adult children and fewer dependents accumulated wealth. Chayanov diverged from Kautsky and Lenin in his insistence on the long-term viability and survival of smaller family farms, as well as his view that peasants were preoccupied primarily with subsistence calculations. In his classification of peasant homes, he introduced the concept of labour–consumer equilibrium, which he defined as the equilibrium between the satisfaction of subsistence demands and the drudgery of labour. The fluctuating ratio of dependants to able-bodied working adults over the generational cycle of a family's reproduction was

vital for preserving this balance. The 1966 publication of the English translation of Chayanov's work had a big impact on the formation of peasant studies as an interdisciplinary area of research in social science. Discussions about whether peasants should be treated as a separate object of study have centred on Chayanov's typology of the subsistence-oriented peasant, which highlights, among other things, the limitations of his relatively transhistorical approach to class and his under-theorisation of social relations.

Both intellectual figures Lenin and Chayanov, are most of the time juxtaposed to each other. On the one hand Lenin argued that eventually peasants will be differentiated into different classes in the development of capitalism. On the other hand, Chayanov considered peasant household as an independent class, and he articulated differentiation through demography.

The classical works on agrarian transition/question exhibit a substantive diversity in the arguments. The theoretical, methodological, and empirical innovations that may be found within it reflect its diversity (ibid). Even to this day, the core tenets of traditional agrarian Marxism regarding the creation and dissolution of rural classes, accumulation, and the political interplay within and between rural and non-rural areas and classes continue to be of the utmost importance.

From above discussions we can say that there is a considerable divergence in terms of arguments. Rural class development and dissolution, the interaction between the urban and the rural, and the political relationship between rural and non-rural classes are, to a certain extent, also important issues of critical agrarian studies in the present day. If it is the case, how are critical agrarian studies different from classical agrarian Marxism ? Akram-Lodi and Kay identify two divisions between the classical understanding and the critical agrarian studies.

One, is that critical agrarian studies tend to view contemporary capital as a national and international phenomenon, subsuming rural dynamics and imposing processes on them. Many scholars and activists within the field of critical agrarian studies now place a strong emphasis on comprehending the agrarian question of rural labour (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2021:31) and how it is being reproduced.

This is not to say that the question of capital has completely left out of the discussions. It has been extended from agriculture to other areas of rural. Specially, capital and land question has become very important in the recent literature.

The second divergence is the intersectionality domain. The concept of intersectionality is fundamental to critical agrarian studies. With both structures and agency understood from the multifaceted perspectives of class, gender, generation, ability, ethnicity, race, and other identifiers. In contrast, many working in the classical agrarian Marxist paradigm have not significantly incorporated any other element of social division other than class into their analysis (ibid).

Many of these theoretical insights were picked up by later generation academics. Particularly the Journal of Peasant Studies was the major space where these contributions were made and since its beginning the journal was in the forefront in guiding the field of agrarian studies. The following sections give the context of its beginnings.

The context of the rise of the peasant studies:

The idea of ‘development’ was central to the many third world countries that were emerging as independent states out of the colonial rule. During 1960s development was thought as or was equated with ‘industry’. In an ideal sense, people were expected to move from agriculture to industry then to service sector. Economy was also expected to grow in the same direction in a linear way. This was naturally extended and equated to agriculture, and it was expected to move from traditional small holder agriculture to large scale industrial agriculture.

In modernist view, agriculture was conceived as land being concentrated with fewer larger farms, and more specialised farms. They would generate more productivity; it would be exported to cities along with the labour. It was assumed that land appropriation and rural exodus would lead to the end of peasants in favour of modern agriculture. However, the experiences of the many third world countries or the nations in the global south were very different from their European counterparts, as the former did not experience such a transition.

On the other hand, classical Marxism (as indicated above by Kautsky and Lenin) also followed the modernist approach. It saw the development of capitalism as the creation of proletariat who were destined to take part in revolution. Lenin's differentiation of peasants into classes of agricultural capitalists and labourers, and Kautsky's exposition of the ways that might lead to capitalism and from there to socialism were based on those notion of development.

It was a movement with a lot of interest in Marxism, and some of the important works of various authors were being translated into English (such as Chayanov's *Theory of Peasant Economy*), but its reflections on agrarian issues are disjointed and not as systematic as its analytical tools for understanding capitalism. There were Maoist uprisings in India, guerrilla movements in Latin America, and national liberation campaigns in other regions of the world. These countries' transition to capitalism had their own set of issues, including substantial peasant populations. Maoism was forced to take a break and embark on a new 'peasant studies' quest. Maoist assertions drew attention to peasantry beyond the 'classic' Marxist tropes (or, at the very least, the primarily European zones they addressed) of their significance in transitions.

Following the Second World War, as new and meaningful evidence on agrarian history, the industrial and commercial revolutions, and demographic changes became available, volumes of research increased and new directions in historical research emerged, ultimately generating new insights and discourses on Marxist analysis. A new generation of academics were similarly motivated by the situation to research the mechanisms of peasant uprising. The global society became aware of the Marxist agricultural question in non-European societies as a result of the spread of the Chinese Revolution and the widespread embrace of Maoist ideology in the Global South.

The publication of certain works like as in 1969, Barrington Moore Jr's study of *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, Lord, and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (1966), and the first English translation of A.V. Chayanov's *The Theory of Peasantry in the Making of the Modern World* (1966), Eric Wolf's '*Peasants*' in 1966 and '*Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century*' provided a second intellectual stimulus for these people.

The important question that started immediately were of the transition from feudalism to capitalism. IT was an important discussion in the academic circles on the agrarian transition.

The Transition Debate:

Transition to capitalism is an important field of research in agrarian studies and Agrarian Marxism. This section provides an overview of the debates on agrarian transition. Though this debate was mostly in the context of European context, it provides insights to understand the Indian and subsequently the Telangana context.

Critical encounters with modernisation theory in the social sciences shaped post-war agricultural theorising, particularly the advent of what Farshad Araghi (2007) calls a 'developmentalist problematic'. This challenge endeavoured to comprehend 'underdevelopment' in the Third World. As alternatives to the modernisation strategy, Marxist-inspired frameworks such as World System Theory, Dependency Theory, and theories of uneven development were formulated during this time period. Against this setting, there was a rekindling of interest in agrarian transition. The theme of the origins of agrarian capitalism offered a fertile ground for theoretical and empirical explorations. It provided an entry point into understanding the relationship between agency and structure in agrarian structures and allowed to see how that relationship led to a variety of profoundly divergent paths of agrarian transition (Lafrance, X, 2021).

The "Dobb–Sweezy discussion" revived the fundamental Marxist question regarding Europe's transition from feudalism to capitalism. Feudalism as a system of production was the subject of a debate between Maurice Dobb and Paul Sweezy, which began in 1950 in the *Journal of Science and Society* and revolved around the contradictions of feudalism that led to the transition to capitalism. This discussion had far-reaching implications for the agrarian question and transition (Akram-Lodhi and Kay). Dobb defined feudalism in *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (1947) in terms of the relational structure between 'the direct producer and his overlord', in which "the producer was in possession of his particular producing unit" (Dobb 1976: 58). "Dobb envisioned the feudal crisis and its ultimate demise as occurring inside the confines of the feudal method of production" (Mohanty 2016: 8).

In his argument, Dobb maintained that the emergence of two different classes - a class of 'free' workers who sell their labour power and a class of individuals (who buy that labour

power) who accumulate wealth – was insufficient to achieve the transition to capitalism. Another requirement for increasing production was the transformation of wealth into productive assets. This required new habits and lifestyles among the accumulating class, as well as their willingness to invest their accumulated wealth in the discovery of new means of production in order to ensure ever-increasing output- that is there was an interest and need for feudal lords to diversify from agriculture to other areas of production to meet their needs/interests. Feudalism, according to Dobb, fell apart due to the strengthening of its own internal contradictions. To put it another way, Dobb discovered that the origins of the transition were in the struggle and clash of interests between lords and peasants that existed inside the feudal economy and that were abolished in order for the market to function properly (ibid). Dobb believed that the end of serfdom and urban guilds marked the end of the extraction of extra economic surplus. Peasants and artisans were able to respond to market signals, specialise in output, innovate, and amass as the “petty mode of production” (rural and urban home production) was freed from feudal ‘super-structures’. Early industrial and agrarian capitalism came into contact with feudal links still present in the countryside and feudal power organised through Absolutist states as it grew. By overthrowing Absolutism, establishing capitalist rule, and eradicating the last vestiges of feudalism, the bourgeois revolutions in England (1640–1660) and France (1789–1799), led by urban and rural capitalists, completed the transition to capitalism. (Xavier Lafrance 2021: 36).

However, Paul Sweezy, an American Marxist economist, disputed Dobb's argument. According to Sweezy, feudalism's demise could only be explained by external reasons. He claimed that it was not the articulation of internal problems that was decisive in putting western European feudalism to an end but, “the expansion of trade (and cities) was the primary factor in the decline of feudalism in western Europe” (1976: 41). Sweezy believed that the increase of trade and towns led to the demise of feudalism by monetising rents, eroding serfdom, and fostering the expansion of markets that destabilised guilds and other limitations on production and trade (Lafrance 2021). While Dobb highlighted the role of ‘relations of production’, Sweezy emphasised the importance of ‘expansion of trade’ as the primary driver of the transition from feudalism to capitalist society.

Sweezy and Dobb continued to assume, albeit in different ways, that “capitalism remains present in the interstices of feudalism, awaiting its release from non-market constraints-such as the state” throughout their discussion. Brenner later posed a serious challenge to this

notion. Robert Brenner's revised analysis of various paths of agrarian transition enlarged the scope of the Dobb–Sweezy discussion and the greater Marxist discourse on transition, even though many others afterwards joined the argument (Mohanty 2016).

His investigation of the numerous paths of agrarian change in Europe revealed the constraints of demographic, market, and technological forces, igniting one of the most serious conversations on the transition from feudalism to capitalism, known as the Brenner debate, which took place between 1976 and 1982 in the pages of the English historical journal *Past and Present*. Though Brenner was clearly influenced by Dobb, he differed from certain aspects of Dobb's argument.

In his seminal article, '*Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*,' in 1976 Brenner made a significant contribution to the transition debate. His essay influenced Marxist discourse for about four decades. He argued that regardless of the variations in their arguments, both models claimed that the early modern agrarian economy responded to internal and external changes in an essentially automatic manner. They also assumed that specifically capitalistic dynamics existed trans-historically. They failed to explain the divergent paths of historical transformation within the European context. He pointed out that the expansion of towns and trade that started in the eleventh century as well as the population reduction that began in the fourteenth century were both pan-European occurrences. A previously free peasantry was reduced to serfdom in Eastern Europe, a free, subsistence-oriented peasantry emerged in the majority of continental Western Europe, and in England alone, a distinctive relationship between capitalist landlords, capitalist tenant farmers, and wage labourers emerged as a result of these relatively uniform processes. (Lafrance 2021: 37).

Brenner explained that the demographic collapse and production problem contributed to the internal crises of European feudalism. The crisis's result was not predetermined. On the other hand, the varied results of the crisis were decided by increasing conflict between lords and peasants in various parts of Europe. Lords and peasants struggled over control of the surpluses from the peasantry, which the lords could access, and the peasants' actual ownership of landed property. The feudal crisis had a variety of outcomes, with the development of capitalist social property relations developing solely in England as an

unforeseen by-product of the struggle between the lords and the peasants to reproduce themselves (ibid).

Brenner highlighted the 'class struggle' as the important factor in determining the path of agrarian traction. His argument led to an intensified debate among the Marxist circles. This debate around the question of transition from feudalism to capitalism has some bearings on the understanding of India case, especially for understanding the nature of the Telangana economy before the independence. We will come back to this question on the next chapter on political economy of Telangana.

Agrarian transition: Byres and Bernstein:

By the end of the 20th century, new meanings were added to Marx's, Kautsky's, and Lenin's nineteenth-century explanation of Agrarian transition, which was restated by Byres (1986) and later was explored extensively by Bernstein (1994). Byres (1986, 1996), using Marx, Lenin, and Kautsky's classic works as a starting point, proposed a great degree of variation in the historical circumstances under which agrarian transition may occur and presented six² distinct comparative approaches to successful agrarian transition. For him, as for Brenner, class conflict was a crucial aspect for comprehending particular agricultural transitional trajectories. For Byres, the 'historical puzzle' was how capitalism came to dominate in a society where the capitalist social relations were not fully developed. In the hands of Byres, the agrarian question has been transformed into 'agrarian transition' (Bernstein 1996: pagination). The term agrarian transition describes those "changes in a poor country's countryside necessary for the overall development of capitalism and its ultimate triumph over a particular national social formation" (Byres 1986). Byres contends that successful 'agrarian transition' is necessary to 'solve' the agrarian question and eliminate agriculture as a barrier to capitalist change. (Kay and Akram-Lodhi 2009: 21)

Bernstein (1996) recognised three major 'problematics' of Byres' agricultural dilemma, namely 'accumulation,' 'production,' and 'politics. The problematic of accumulation refers to the extent to which agriculture can serve as a basis for accumulation, whereas the

² The English path led to the demise of feudalism as well as the emergence of capitalist farming, class struggle, and class formation. The Prussian path involved an impoverished peasantry being subordinated by and acting as the workforce of a landlord class that engaged directly in capitalist farming. The American path and the French path saw serfdom disappear due to capitalist agriculture.

problematic of production is concerned with the extent to which capitalist relations developed in the countryside, the forms they take, and the barriers that may hinder such development. The political problem was about the nature and role of political forces in such a change from the accumulation and production dilemma presented.

By arguing that the agrarian question's three 'problematics' must be resolved through an effective 'agrarian transition', so that agriculture will no longer be a hindrance to an economy's transition to capitalism. According to Byres, it is critical to examine how accumulation, production, and politics support or impede agricultural change in order to fully understand the patterns of capitalist development in a social formation. Byres argues that this form of analysis is consistent with the writings of Marx, Lenin, and Kautsky.

Based on this comparative study, Byres draws the following conclusion: "Agrarian transformations can occur both within the major paths described and also within their interstices". Byres (1991b and Bernstein 1994) investigates numerous context-specific paths of agrarian transition. Class conflict, between both subordinate and dominant classes as well as within the working class experiencing social economic differentiation, and the role played by the state in influencing or giving in to class struggle, according to Brenner (1986) and Byres (2009), are crucial to understanding a particular path of agrarian transition.

On the other hand, Bernstein reformulated the debate in terms of agrarian question of capital and labour. The problematic of agrarian transition was the question of agrarian capital and specifically industrial capital. He contends that with globalisation and neo-liberalisation the agrarian question has lost relevance. Contemporary globalisation and the huge growth of productive forces in (advanced) capitalist agriculture, he argues, have rendered the 'traditional' agricultural question irrelevant to international capital. In this sense, there is no longer a global agrarian question of capital, even while the agrarian question – as a basis for national accumulation and industrialisation – remains unresolved in a great number of nations in the South (Bernstein 2004).

Bernstein made a distinction between agrarian question of capital and agrarian question of labour (1996: 25–26) and forcefully argued that, by now, the agrarian question for capital resolved in most of the world and that the only question now was about labour (2006: 450–51).

There are a variety of frequently divergent and occasionally diametrically opposed viewpoints on the present day nature of the agrarian question that can be distinguished in the effort to understand the impact of neoliberal globalisation on rural transformation. The question was additionally rephrased as follows: At the dawn of the twenty-first century, within the framework of neoliberal globalisation, is agricultural transition even relevant?

These agrarian questions have been reformulated and analysed from different vantage points in the new literature. Akram-Lodhi and Kay (reference) has identified seven variants of the 'classical agrarian' questions in the neo-liberal period. This section briefly outlines these seven questions.

The contemporary approaches in understanding Agrarian Transition/Question:

AQ 1 Class forces of agrarian question suggests that the forces of production and systems of agrarian production are shaped by the nature of classes and relations between them. It argues that the process of agrarian transformation is not homogeneous or linear. It is dependent on various historical contingents. For example, imperialism introduced the capitalist relations in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The introduction of those relations and emergent changes it brought in those societies are very different in each of those countries. This approach suggests that struggles within and between differentiating peasantries and relations out of those struggles are highly contingent, diverse, and rooted in the history and its divergent paths that reflect mechanisms of differential incorporation into capitalism operating within capitalist states and globally (Akram Lodi-Kay 2009: 316).

This approach has been developed by Ellen Meiskins wood, Amiya Bagachi, Terence Byres, Michael Watts, and Akram-Lodi himself, Cristobal Kay and Saturnino Borrás, Jr. For this approach it is important to understand the nature, and extent of social differentiation among the peasantries. How land lord classes and other dominant forces are existing, how the market mechanism shapes the actions of various classes and the larger change in the rural. The importance of the role of the state. These processes must also be contextualised internationally to accommodate changes in the geographical and social relationships of the global food system. (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2010: 266). This approach argues for contextualising all these processes, both spatially and historically to understand them.

This approach suggests the agrarian transition is ultimately the result of the peasant differentiation and balance of class forces which is the result of particular historical contingents.

The path dependent agrarian question (AQ2) contends that the introduction of capitalist relations in developing nations has resulted in the commercialisation of wage labour. This has restructured the accumulation process throughout all developing nations, but in unique ways in each nation; it is a continuous process. According to this theory, wage labour is the driving force behind the development of agrarian capital and rural capitalism (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2009). Continuous development of waged labour suggests that the capitalist mode of production has spread into the rural worlds of the South, resulting in a distinct capitalist agricultural process. This “development of agrarian capitalism and rural capitalism is path dependent and therefore unavoidable” (Akram-Lodi and Kay 2010: 267). This approach has been explored by Bill Warren and Ray Kiely.

Bernstein has argued for a decoupled agrarian question (AQ3), and he asserts that the agrarian question of capital was resolved in the 1970s, leaving just the agrarian question of labour to be addressed today. He claims that labour is battling to reproduce itself in the face of the growth of capital's productive forces. For him, what is pertinent today is how global capital affects the political battles of subordinate labour classes over resources, production, and accumulation. For him, the rural political crisis is more significant than production and accumulation.

Global reserve army of labour question (AQ4) was explored by Farshad Araghi. He positions the agrarian question in the “world historical system of globalised capitalism”. According to his analysis of the agrarian question, liberal imperialism in the 19th century and neoliberal globalisation share similarities. The years between 1834 and 1870 are more comparable to the years from 1973 to the present. It has produced a global reserve army of migrant labour as the value is reconstructed on a global scale. This is leading to processes of dispossession via displacement in agriculture based on the market imperative. According to Araghi, who claims that modern forms of neoliberal policies have created a ‘enclosure food regime’ that produces, transfers, and distributes value on a global scale, affecting the value of labour power and the global production of surplus value (Ibid 2010: 267). He continues by saying

that since the enclosing food system lowers the value of labour power, the agrarian question is now about the conditions and circumstances under which agrarian labour, as well as labour in general, is reproduced. It reaches the same conclusion as AQ 3 but does so using a distinct theoretical framework. (268).

Philip McMichael is linked with the *corporate food regime agrarian question (AQ5)*. McMichael, like Araghi, emphasises the necessity of situating and defining the agrarian question within the global historical evolution of capitalism. In contrast to Araghi, he emphasises the uniqueness of the current historical movement: financialisation, neoliberalism, and the global food regime. According to him, focusing on not only relations of production, but also on relations of circulation will give a complete picture of present day capitalism. McMichael argues that the contemporary global agrarian crisis can be reframed as an agrarian question of food by highlighting the complex interaction between rural politics, production, and accumulation: the corporate food regime subordinates public good to private profit by excluding dispossessed agrarian populations from free markets (McMichael, 2006a, 2006b).

According to McMichael, the agrarian question is currently concerned with the conditions under which rural labour and peasant households are reproduced in light of their growing exclusion from the corporate food regime. Again, it is a conclusion shared by McMichael, Araghi, and Bernstein's AQ3 albeit based on somewhat divergent premises.

Two important issues that are missing in this vast diversity of understanding contemporary agrarian question are the gender question and ecology question. The first missing link is 'gendered agrarian question' (AQ6). As Bridget O'Laughlin (2009) says accumulation, production, and politics are influenced by gender dynamics. Gender, for instance, is a relationship between production and reproduction. If the agrarian question is to provide an account of social development in contemporary rural settings, it must examine the nature of gender relations and the manner in which they influence and refract through the resolution or lack thereof of the agrarian question, as well as class and gender contradictions. (Akram Lodi-Kay 2009) within the contemporary rural setting.

Ecological agrarian question is the second important aspect that missed in the discussions (AQ7). It argues that the three important problematics of production, accumulation and

politics have ecological dimensions and dynamics. Any meaningful understanding of agrarian change in the contemporary world must critically engage with the question of ecology. It assumes that rural production processes, agricultural accumulation, and rural politics have ecological dynamics. To comprehend social change in the modern rural environment, the agrarian question must critically examine the nature of ecological relationships and how they impact and influence the resolutions of the agricultural question, while addressing class and ecological tensions (269).

These seven questions have added sophistication to the examination of rural transformation in the global south and the multifaceted diversity through which contemporary agriculture in global south has experienced neoliberal globalisation. Even though there are seven questions, the central theme or key variable in all of them is the 'nature of contemporary labour and the balance of class forces, between capital and labour, which context specific and conjectural.

However, what has been less stressed in this literature, are the traits of contemporary rural accumulation itself in an era of neoliberal globalisation. "The specific features, attributes and characteristics, and the implications of these traits for our understanding of agrarian question" (Lodi 2009: 317). The changes that have been brought by neoliberal globalisation effect and reflect deeper transformations in the relationships between people and rural production and have thus profoundly altered the terrain on which the agrarian question is played out. This is witnessed particularly on the impact of neoliberal agrarian restructuring on rural accumulation strategies. How the resolved agrarian question does not engage with is, what is happening to rural capital or the agrarian surplus as it is not diverted to industrial sector. Where is it going, how is it reshaping the class structure are important dimensions to engage with. The present research engages with this in some of these dimensions.

These seven questions can be categorised into three themes. One, the structure of the contemporary capitalist rural society and how do we theoretically incorporate it into the 'larger questions' of capital. First two questions deal with this theme. The question of labour, how do we understand it- both theoretically and politically. Question three, four, and five focus on this theme. The thesis focuses more on Bernstein's formulation of the 'classes of labour' question. This thesis accepts his position that the question of capital has been

resolved, then asks what is happening to 'rural surplus'. Where is it going, and how that is reconfigured in the production and accumulation dimension. Is the 'surplus' in the sense of classical Marxist notion of the historical benefit of the unequal distribution of 'assets' in this case land, which has become very important for the 'rural elite'. We try to engage with this question. The classes of labour category becomes an extremely important category to understand the labour in the contemporary capitalist mode of production, especially in the post-colonial formations. It has been used and extended by various scholars in the Indian context. The use and extension of the it in the Indian context by Alpa Shah and Jan Lerche as 'conjugated oppression' will be used to understand the filed.

Critical Agrarian Studies:

But in the 1980s and the 1990s agrarian concerns in social theory went into retreat. To only come back in the 2000s. But the context changed. Agrarian Marxism had to deal with this peculiarity at the end of the twentieth century. The peasant categorisation was called into question. There were no peasant wars left in the world. Agrarian society has also seen significant transformations in many parts of the world. Farmers in third-world nations have been disadvantaged by the globalisation of agrarian markets, and agrarian surpluses are no longer required for national industrialisation. Even when surpluses exist, they are not flowing into traditional industries but into new types of sectors, which cannot absorb the displaced farmers.

The agrarian classes were becoming more complicated, which raised problems about class formation; rural households are becoming more 'pluriactive,' reproducing themselves through a variety of agricultural, wage labour, and self-employment combinations. All of them have raised theoretical challenges to the agrarian Marxian paradigm of 'class analysis' and 'mode of production'.

There is also a growing understanding that the rural world included many other sectors in addition to peasants, such as wealthy landowners, plantation workers, fishermen, pastoral nomads, ethnic groups, service providers, professionals, merchants, and mediators, to name a few (Edelman & Wolford, 2017).

Critical Agrarian Studies emerged as part of this rethinking.

It was in 2009, at International Institute of Social Studies (iss) there was a creation, called the initiative in critical agrarian studies and this was an attempt to create a community of like-minded critical scholars development practitioners and very importantly movement activists who would come together from different parts of the world to work on agrarian issues social change and establishing the path forward. The initiative itself focuses on building linkages between scholars practitioners and activists and promotes the co-production of knowledge. Initiative in critical agrarian studies was not only to promote critical pluralism but also open up peasant studies to those well beyond the academy particularly to global social movements.

Mark Edelman and Wendy Walford have argued that

critical agrarian studies takes as its key point of departure the importance of analysing agrarian social classes and the importance of the social political and economic forces that call these classes into existence or make them disappear and that facilitate or impede the reproduction of these social classes when analysing social change both in the countryside but also beyond the countryside.

They do identify three underlying analytical assumptions within the field:

- ◆ The first underlying assumption is that agrarian societies and urban societies mutually constitute each other.
- ◆ Second, in order to comprehend agrarian societies, one must consider the political and cultural economy of production, accumulation, distribution, consumption, and administration, as well as the extremely complex connections and tensions within and across social groups.
- ◆ Thirdly, understanding rural society in any given place and time requires an in-depth knowledge of the lived experiences and political culture of agrarian classes and agrarian societies of generations of real men and women, as well as the urban institutions and groups that interact with and affect the countryside.

Critical agrarian studies goes beyond these classical concerns of the agrarian question in two very specific ways

- ⇒ The first one is critical agrarian studies stresses the role of intersectionality in understanding rural change or the lack of rural change. Intersectionality in terms of gender, in terms of caste in Indian society, in terms of generation, in terms of ability, in terms of ethnicity in terms of other in terms of other forms and markers of social identity which can be sources of social division or social unity.
- ⇒ The second way in which critical agrarian studies transcends the traditional agrarian question is by situating rural transformation within the framework of greater global dynamics. Which is encapsulated in the concept of the food regime, which is the class-mediated, macro-structural international relations of consumption and production that are directly related to global forms of accumulation.

New study and theoretical re-evaluation have been motivated by agrarian developments brought on by advanced Neo-liberal capitalism, altered political conditions, and the appearance of new players and social forces. Expropriation of land and resources, financialisation of agriculture and food, crisis vulnerability and marginalisation, and the blurring of the rural/urban barrier in hybrid livelihoods have dominated contemporary studies. A brief discussion these themes is discussed in the following section.

New Directions:

1. Land and resource dispossession:

For many years, agrarian transformation scholars have concentrated on the processes of land and resource dispossession, as well as the political reasons and repercussions of this process. In the past decade or two, however, various forms of land expropriation – known as "land grabs" – have been the focus of scholarly research, discussion, and analysis. Current scholarship on land and resource expropriation is a continuation of two previous rounds of intellectual engagements with the questions of capitalism and land.

A first set of scholars who studied dispossession claimed that expropriation was primarily a historical stage in the evolution of capitalism – or so-called “primitive accumulation” – despite the fact that the routes to capitalism differed. During this time period, expropriation was considered less as an ongoing process and more as an aspect of advanced capitalism. In the 1980s and 1990s, this line of reasoning was examined critically. This time period witnessed the formation of political groups that another group of academics and activists

termed as “development-induced displacement” During this time, numerous studies changed their emphasis from “conflict in industry and the field” to “conflict surrounding forests and rivers” (Baviskar 2009, p-40). This lineage of research on displacement may be viewed as the second generation of studies on dispossession- a process that is still going strong today.

Since about the middle of the 2000s, the acceleration of ‘land grabs’ and resistance in many regions of the world have generated another wave of dispossession studies. With the expansion of conflicts around Special Economic Zones, mines, dams, plantations, conservations projects, mines, and industrial-urban growth new issues about the ownership of land and property in Neoliberal capitalism are emerging. This has reignited interest in Marx's theory of primitive accumulation. As reformulated by David Harvey as “accumulation by dispossession” (Harvey, 2018) and Michel Levien as “Regimes of Dispossession” (Levien 2012, 2015).

Our understanding of the dynamic relationships between land, various social formations, and capitalism has significantly enhanced as a result of recent studies on political economies of dispossession.

If agrarian political economy continues to investigate “whether and how capital is seizing control of agriculture,” as Kautsky put it (Fairbairn et al., 2014), it has additionally expanded in recent times to investigate how capital is gaining control of land and natural resources more broadly, reconfiguring and destroying social and socio-natural relations (AkramLodhi, 1998; Guthman, 2004; Hart, 2002; McMichael, 2012; Ploeg). As global capitalism penetrates agricultural forms and commons property resources in unexpected ways. By developing new perspectives on the routes of agricultural transformation and politics, agrarian researchers continue to recreate the theoretical legacy of the traditional “agrarian question”

2. The financialisation of food and agriculture:

The recent rise to power and prominence of the financial sector is one of the most important forces driving the development of the global agri-food system, and consequently agricultural lifestyles. A series of connected events commonly referred to as “financialisation” started to take over the world economy in the early 1970s. These changes have given rise to powerful new accumulation mechanisms that intersect with the most recent wave of land and resource expropriation in various ways (McMichael 2012; Russi, 2013).

On one level, current financialisation processes represent shifting routes of capitalist accumulation (Arrighi 1994; Krippner 2011). On another level, institutional ties between corporations and investors have been reorganised as a result of financialisation. The effects of financialization on the agri-food industry, which affect everything from agricultural inputs to the finished goods found on supermarket shelves, are discussed in the agrarian sector. The growing presence of financial actors in agricultural commodities derivatives markets has been most visible. Financialisation is altering the way food dealers and sellers do business beyond grain markets. Supermarket networks are being acquired and reorganised by real estate investment groups, while the supermarkets themselves are increasingly offering customers financial services like credit cards and check cashing (Burch and Lawrence 2009).

3. Vulnerability and marginalisation in an era of crisis:

Agrarian Studies has relied heavily on analyses of the rural poor's marginalisation and vulnerability in the context of their larger historical, social, and political-economic contexts. This subject highlights two elements that make the rural population vulnerable. The first is that experts are increasingly predicting that climate hazards would have a considerable impact on agricultural livelihoods, especially for subsistence farmers and other small producers. The rising and increasing volatility of food costs is a contemporary stressor. Since 2007, volatile food prices have not only exacerbated the uncertainty faced by agricultural producers, but also hurt the poorest food consumers due to record price surges.

4. Hybrid livelihoods and the blurring of the rural/urban dichotomy:

The traditional distinctions between 'rural' and 'urban', which are used to categorise peasantries and the poor in general, do not hold in the modern setting, as the literature on rural livelihoods has shown. This phenomenon is known as 'new rurality' (Kay 2008; Hecht 2010). Instead, according to Susana Hecht, rural households are 'mainly semi-proletarianised, semi-globalised, and increasingly semi-urban'. With different degrees of success, smallholders' agrarian livelihoods have evolved and hybridised in response to the numerous intrusions of capitalist growth. There is a decoupling between rurality and agricultural earnings in many nations, with various kinds of labour continuing in rural areas but relying on agriculture incomes less and less.

The agrarian scenario has been transformed by advanced capitalism, altered political circumstances, and the rise of new social actors and pressures. In the domains of agrarian

studies, these developments are inspiring new research and theoretical reconstructions of traditional problems, which are being framed in novel ways. Madeleine Fairbairn and others (Fairbairn et al., 2014) identify four issues, identified above, in their development of new directions in agricultural political economy. Despite the fact that many of these issues have been the subject of debate over the past four decades, present processes of agrarian change have provided new theoretical insights and significant new research avenues.

It is the fourth theme that gives us a handle to understand the ‘rural question’ and labour ‘questions. They also happen to be the focus of the study. It is somewhat similar to Bernstein’s formulations but goes beyond the labour question and extends to the question of ‘rural’- both theoretically and empirically. The study is broadly placed in this them.

The Indian Detour

Mode of Production Debate:

If the decades from independence to 1960s dominated by the village studies and Structural Functional Framework in the Indian context, which will be discussed in the next section. The decades of 1960s and 1970s were dominated by the Marxist understanding of the Indian countryside.

From 1960s onwards for three decades there was a debate in the academia popularly known as the mode of production in Indian Agriculture. The argument centered mostly on determining the nature and scope of the expansion of capitalism in Indian agriculture. It was started with the American Economic historian Daniel Thorner’s arguments on the emerging capitalist trends in the Indian agriculture. Based on his extensive tour in 1953, 1958 and 1966-67 in major regions in India he indicated the emergence of a burgeoning wave of capitalist agriculture in Indian countryside (Mohanty 2015: 16). Thorner said “for the first time a class of capitalist farmers has come into being on all-India scale. It is certainly likely to continue in the proximate future” (Thorner 1980: 252-53). But his empirical studies were limited and were not well formulated theoretically. Subsequently, in late 1960s following green revolution, there emerged a prolonged debate in theoretical and empirical terms on the nature of agrarian transition in India, famously known as ‘Mode of Production Debate’. The Indian discussion was ‘based on and is part of a global debate on the nature of capitalism and its transition,’ and it primarily took place in the pages of Economic and Political Weekly

and Social Scientist (Das, 2020, p-66). Several points were brought up during the discussion. The key problems were ‘how to identify the capitalist mode of production, how prevalent it was, and what barriers to the growth of capitalist relations’ (Ibid 67). The discussion has provided critical insights into not only the agrarian transition, but also India's political economy. The terminology of the debate and its framework was essentially Marxist. It had major consequences for a study of the growth of class relations and contradictions in the Indian countryside, as well as for the nature of agricultural struggles in the context of the just initiated green revolution (Bidwai, 2015).

As economists developed mathematical models, sociologists gathered fresh field data and historians analysed the patterns of transitions to capitalism in the debate (Das 2019). Conceptual issues were raised, relating to the issues of land holding, relations of production, and labour hiring processes across the country. There were sharp lines of divisions emerged between the different participants in the debate. They ranged from- semi-feudal, pre-capitalist, capitalist, colonial/post-colonial, and composite or Dual mode of production.

As discussed earlier there were many questions raised during the debate, here we address two important questions, One, how to define the capitalist mode of production? Two, about the class structure in the countryside. With regards to the first question, the existence of the ‘free wage’ labour was considered necessary for capitalism to exist. Utsa Patnaik argued that ‘free hired labour’ was actually not free. She stated that the employer of these labourers does not grab surplus value from free labourers, but rather maximises profits by exploiting the destitute labour bound to agriculture and with no other work prospects out side of it (Patnaik 1972).

Being tied to agriculture because you don’t have anywhere else to go and work is not the actual definition of being free labour. She argued this cannot be neither capitalism nor the feudalism. She went on to argue that even if wage labour was ‘free’, in itself that cannot be the sufficient condition for the capitalism to exist. She continued by stating that a second requirement for recognising capitalism is that labour must produce for the market. She also advised against confusing production for the market with capitalist production. She gave the third criterion, a necessary condition for capitalism to exist specially in the Indian context.

It was accumulation and reinvestment (on modern equipment and expansion) in order to generate more surplus value. For her, the presence of these conditions necessary for capitalism to be present in India. So, for her “India was in a transitional phase moving towards capitalism and therefore capitalist accumulation was not evident in its clear form, as it retained some characteristics of pre-capitalist formations” (Mohanty 2016: 17). She observed that ex-colonial nations such as India are distinguished by a restricted and distorted growth of capitalism that does not revolutionise the method of production (Patnaik 1971). So according to Paresh Chattopadhyay, she gave two definitions of capitalism for two different geographical contexts. One for colonial contexts and one for the European context. According to him there was the existence of capitalist relations in the Indian countryside. He argued that, taking cue from Lenin, when labour power itself becomes the commodity, it was logical corollary that the generation of surplus and its reinvestment would follow.

If capitalism does not exist in the country, why is the case? Two sets of obstacles to the development of capitalism have been identified. According to Amit Bhaduri (1973), who characterised Indian mode of production as ‘Semi-Feudal’, the presence of semi-feudal relations acted as fetters to the development of capitalism. He identified four attributes of semi-feudal relations in the agricultural context: sharecropping, small tenant indebtedness, the existence of two distinct forms of exploitation, namely usury and landownership held by the same class (landowners charge exorbitant interest rates on loans to their tenants), as well as the absence of market access for low-income tenants. (tenants handing up their goods to landlords and creditors) (1973 Bhaduri) Due to their poverty, peasants are compelled to sell their crops as soon as they are harvested, which is why the last criterion characterises forced trade as a type of primitive accumulation, when food grains are less expensive, rather than later, when woodgrains are more expensive. Due to restrictions on peasants' access to the market and their inability to freely buy and sell at market prices, this buying and selling is required (Das, 2020,p-70).

This semi-feudal thesis was supported by Pradhan Prasad, Nirmal Chandra, and others. After the initial rounds debate, the question got shifted to identifying the rural class structure in Indian agriculture. Anjana Chakrabarti says that many theorists realised after the initial round of discussions that simply defining modalities of production was not moving the discussion further. They consequently moved their focus to the issue of class distinction and formation in Indian agriculture. They insisted that class notions must be used in order to

accurately portray Indian social reality. The social ties that make up the relations of production and prevent the growth of the forces of production will be revealed via class relationships. As a result, the evolution of class relations is the key to altering the relations of production and, thus, the key to the process of moving toward capitalism or socialism. The final stage of the discussion centres on determining the "proper" arrangement of class relationships. (1998 :111).

The debate extended to understand the rural class structure. The participants of the debate identified a set of rural classes. Scholars from Ashok Rudra's extreme duality to Nirmal Chandra's sixfold grouping to Joan Mencher (1977) and Utsa Patnaik's even greater number of class categories have advocated a set of rural classes. Large landowners and agricultural labourers were the two agrarian classes that had acrimonious relationships and competing interests, according to Rudra (1978). Patnaik (1976), on the other hand, Patnaik offered a class distinction in terms of the "labour exploitation criterion." She made a distinction between the exploiting classes, which included landlords and wealthy peasants, and the oppressed classes, which included poor peasants and agricultural labourers. She also distinguished between the landlords, rich peasants, and poor peasants into two strata or divisions. (Mohanty 2014: 19)

After one and half to two decades, the debate did not eyelid much in terms of the theoretical advancements. It was ended without the broader consensus on the nature of transformation of the Indian economy. Overall, it was an inconclusive debate, which raised more questions than it answered. "The complexity of agrarian structure and the diversity of its nature across regions seems to defy any given analytical framework, posing a challenge to social scientists, particularly to Marxist scholars" (Nadkarni M V 1991: 103). In Patnaik's own later day assessment of the debate, she says "the date had gone off the rails". She

objects to the use of the term 'mode of production' in the narrow sense of applying to a specific empirical situation of a particular region or a sector like Indian agriculture 'in a given social formation in transition such as is India today'. Instead, she suggests, it is correct to ask what the extent and nature of the development of capitalist tendency is within Indian agriculture (Patnaik, 1986: 37-38).

The major limitations of the debate were, it was theory driven, in the sense that there was a theoretical template, the Marxian theoretical formulation and its associated transition from feudalism to capitalism arguments. According to it there were two stages in the transition, one the 'primitive accumulation' where the immediate producer is dispossessed and

becomes free, two the dispossessed labour is incorporated into capitalist production process. For a successful transition these two stages have to be met. So, the entire debate was about applying that model into the Indian realities, specifically in Indian agrarian realities. Without understanding the specificities of the Indian historical realities and applying it was rather not so successful in terms of providing any new theoretical directions. They tried to understand and fit divergent agrarian realities in empiricist, mathematical models and generate a model that would explain the presence or absence of capitalism.

MSS Pandian has identified four limitations in the mode of production discussion. First, he argues that the majority of the debate's participants did not investigate the physical reality of Indian agriculture, but rather engaged in a discussion about how to read the works of Marx and Lenin in order to determine the necessary and sufficient conditions of capitalism in agriculture. (1990:11).

Thus, in the mode of production debate, there was a one-sided over-emphasis on theory per se to the almost exclusion of the concrete. The consequences of this neglect of the concrete in the debate come out clearly in the light of what Mao termed as the 'sequence in the movement of man's knowledge.

Mao noted that the principles and rules cannot be discovered and demonstrated until one has conducted empirical investigation (1982: 74). From the point of view of the theory of knowledge, the mode of production debate skipped the first stage in the movement of human knowledge- the stage which requires a large number of specific concrete studies- and as a consequence ended up in not understanding what it intended to.

Second, a number of studies in the debate were based on data gathered at a specific point of time /Rudra, 1970; Bhaduri, 1973a, 1973b; Prasad, 1973, 1974) and thus failed to conceive the agrarian reality as an on-going process changing over time. However, the fact that treating the agrarian reality as a process can only give the right answers in understanding the present-day agrarian structure(s) was pointed out by a number of participants in the debate (Patnaik, 1971, 1972a, 1972b; Banaji 1977; Sengupta, 1977). This realisation rightly took these authors to the agrarian history of India during the pre- independence period. However, in understanding any process there are two empirically verifiable and analytically separate elements- the internal conditions and the external conditions. Of these two elements, the

internal conditions are the prime movers of change (Mao, 1975; 312-14). But none of the participants in the debate paid any significant attention to the internal conditions or the structure of the indigenous formation. At best what they did was to present the influence of the external (read colonial) conditions on the indigenous formation(s) without defining the same in any adequate way. Each of the indigenous formations has its own contradictions within, along with certain mechanisms which help its reproduction over time at various degrees. The formations can resist the influence of the external conditions or make them operational in varying ways depending on the internal conditions of the indigenous formation. So, for the same external condition, different indigenous formations can react differently and hence the resultant structures would be dissimilar.

In a nutshell, an analysis of the internal conditions or the indigenous formation(s) will reveal the extent to which the existing structure can reproduce itself in 'normal times' and in times when there is an aggressive bid by external conditions to become operative. Thus, an understanding of the indigenous formation(s) is essential in understanding the course of history in societies.

Third, the concrete studies in the debate did not treat productive forces an important component in the mode of production which in correspondence with production relations defines the mode of production with the necessary importance. Pandian Says that under the guise of aggregative terms such as 'methods of cultivation' and 'basic technical level', productive forces were weakly addressed. 'reinvestment of surplus,' 'labour displacement by mechanisation'. Capital accumulation, positive capital growth, and the value of modern capital equipment per acre of farmland. There was disaggregated evidence regarding the number of power tillers, tractors, tubewells, etc., but there was no indication of their interconnection or influence on production relations. The authors' lack of interest in this aspect of the mode of production is further evidenced by the fact that, despite discussing the imposition of bourgeois private property in India under British rule at length, they rarely mentioned the influence of the British on the country's existing productive forces (1990).

The way in which the productive forces are treated in the mode of production discussion has two methodological repercussions, he continues. First, it is impossible to evaluate the degree of correlation between productive forces and production relations if productive forces are not thoroughly analysed. In actuality, the degree of link between these two was not

demonstrated in any of the debate-related studies. It would be challenging to figure out the system's capacity for reproduction over time without establishing the closest degree of correlation between the two. Second, due to the small separation between the producing forces in some specific settings, it is impossible to adequately explain production relations without doing so. (ibid)

For Pandian (1990) most micro-level studies in the debate concentrate on agriculture alone without exploring its interconnectedness with the rest of the social structure (except Patnaik). Such a fault in the method essentially robs the framework of holism. (Thus, the mode of production debate, apart from lacking in concrete content, suffered from a number of crucial methodological pitfalls, especially as it does not give due importance to the internal conditions (or the indigenous formation) in understanding the agrarian reality as a process. It failed to analyse the productive forces and establish its level of correspondence with production relations and failed to relate the part to the whole in the concrete enquiry.

The delink between nature and agriculture was one of the most destructive repercussions of the green revolution. It shattered the equilibrium between these two. The growing usage of pesticides killed thousands of farmers in the country and contaminates the food chain. Fertilizer use disrupted the organic process in the earth and the natural process of soil fertility. Increased usage of high yielding variety seeds causes genetic deterioration of indigenous seed variations. All of this is important in understanding the meaning of humans and nature relation in the context of agriculture. The mode of production discussion could not address these aspects of the green revolution even when it took place during the time when these processes were in operation.

Once mode of production debate waned away, there was not much discussion in the Indian academia on the nature of Indian agriculture in the 1980s. By the end of 1980s there were farmers' movements across the country. The academic scholarship engaged with those movements and termed them as the new farmers movements. These movements from different states led by various farmer associations and were studied by various scholars under the 'New Farmer's Movements'. There was a special issue in the Journal of Peasant Studies (1994 issue 21 vol 3 and 4) dealing with the New Farmer's movement in the country. They were compared with the old peasant movements.

After the introduction of liberalisation policies there was a marked change in the Indian rural and agrarian realities. It paved the way for the transition of not only agrarian but also industrial and urban capitalism. The creation of special economic zones, diversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural purposes has resulted in massive dispossessions of people from their lands. In the changing context land and agriculture were no longer the sole source of livelihood. Non-agricultural sector has started to grow rapidly. Rural households have started diversifying their ways of earning livelihoods. People have started migrating in multiple directions; from rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and circular and permanent migrations. In this context, two important interventions have directed the nature of the debate that ensued in the recent times, which has become a background to this study.

One, Partha Chatterjee (2008) in his article in *Economic and Political Weekly* title 'Democracy and economic transformation in India'. He argued that there was no possibility of agrarian transition in Indian in near future. Following Kalyan Sanyal (2007), Chatterjee argued that under present conditions of post-colonial capitalist development the narrative of the agrarian /capitalist transition framework is not valid. The obstacles to such a transition, for him, was the state interventions in response to the 'demand politics of electoral democracy. According to him "the continued rapid growth of global capitalism more and more 'primary producers lost their means of production, the government policies and programmes which were launched under the conditions of democratic politics tended to reverse the effects of this primitive accumulation" (Mohanty 2014; 22).

The other article that contributed to this debate was written by Alpa Shah and Barbara Harris-White in 2011, again in *Economic and Political Weekly*. This was a commentary piece that introducing the workshop that was held in Oxford University, on the nature of agrarian question in India and Left politics. The workshop proceedings have later been published as a special issue in the *Journal of Agrarian Change* in 2013. The article asserted that what we are seeing in India is obviously not the conventional agrarian transition. Poor Indians living in rural areas are no longer just simple peasants or rural wage workers, if they ever were. They instead lead extremely complex lifestyles that incorporate both kinds of work, including tilling their small plots of land and relying on migrant wage labour, participating in the rural non-farm sector, and participating in petty commodity production and trading in the capitalist sector to sustain their households (17).

Authors were suggesting to think through new categories, and concepts to understand these present realities. They suggested to think on the lines of Bernstein and Lerche's conception of these new ways of living as 'classes of labour'. They said that these changes are not homogenous across regions and not taking place at the same pace, are constituted by different class constellation.

Section II

Village Studies

The field of village studies was once dominant in the Indian academia, and it was mostly led by the disciplines of sociology and anthropology. It was through the village studies that Indian society was understood in the initial period of colonial rule and later in the initial decades of independence. This section discusses trajectory of village studies from colonial times to the present-day engagements. How those engagements have understood villages and their relevance in today's context will be the major focus of the section.

Colonial:

In the case of India agriculture became a subject of study, a thing that has to be developed for the modernisation of Indian economy and society during the colonial period. How colonial governments have intervened through the mechanism of survey, village boundaries have been the subject of research and analysis in the discipline of history. How colonial government has intervened in those areas has been extensively discussed by scholars like, David Ludden (1999), Sanjay Subramanyam, Neeladri Bhattacharya (2018) and various others. For sociologist and social anthropologists' Indian village was a subject of ethnographic interest, to understand kinship, family, religion, caste etc. Settlement of the land revenue was first major administrative act of the colonial government that had a long-lasting effects on various aspects of the rural. The land settlement determined more than the revenue. It defined land rights and devised multiple revenue assessment and collection mechanisms. It was also an effort in fitting India's social order's various facts into acceptable and understandable British explanations. In doing so, it built a new village idiom and signalled a new level of state involvement in the village. (Thakur 2014, p-15).

The land revenue settlement has brought together the colonial state and native villages. The colonial state's continuous administrative interventions have also given new connotations to

the Indian village. Their involvement with the village meant not only endorsing whatever productive relations existed within the village, but also an active social engineering. Such interactions with the village have resulted in certain stereotypes about the Indian village. The village is portrayed as a beautiful, utopian political community—a society of equals. As a political institution, the village community tended to disregard, or at least reduce effects of, institutions of dominance and hierarchy within the village. The village's stability and decoupling from the greater macropolitical volatility were overstated. Metcalfe referred to it as a 'little republic' because it was thought as totally self-sufficient. Because of the nature of British control, a specific theory of Indian village was required so that Indian reality could be fashioned not only to legitimise the rule but also its moral undertones (ibid :26)

In mapping the village as a well-defined area subject to revenue assessment, it became an unavoidable element of the state's mapping of the agrarian land. "The rural is identified with agrarian, and agrarian with the village, as though speaking of the rural landscape means speaking of the village" (Bhattacharya 2018, p. 64). As the colonial state has always been involved in various facets of agricultural organisation, it has exercised its jurisdiction to govern and supervise agricultural territorial units. "Organizing agriculture in the confined spaces and legitimating governmental power in them have always been important concerns of the state,"(34) writes David Ludden (1999). It became a pivotal point in colonial management of rural territory. By making the village the primary unit of agrarian administration, the original territorial organisation was recreated and traces of earlier territorial organisation were eradicated. The village community became the fundamental economic, political, and social unit under British administration. Ideologically, the village became a symbol of the survival of agrarian tradition and the administrative basis of agrarian modernization... The village and the family farm formed the fundamental elements of the territory referred to as India. From antiquity to the present, all of India's constituent (village) regions have been organised in accordance with a common cultural logic. This is the foundation of the cultural construct known as India (Ludden 1999). It is interesting, according to Manish Thakur, that as the village became the base of a new sort of territorial organisation, it also became a store of 'authentic' tradition and culture. Before colonialism, the traditional village societies were believed to represent areas of an old agrarian civilization that had endured essentially intact for millennia. In a sense, it was a prototypical instance of the 'creation of tradition,' in which modernity created tradition in its own image (Thakur, 2014).

This drive to build a new form of unified agrarian territory around the concept of the village has displaced previous conceptions of the village. “The extraction of agrarian surpluses-land revenue and rent- was foregrounded, while overlooking the significance of other forms of exactions that related to non-agrarian rural spaces.” (Bhattacharya 2018: 8). Excellent exposition of the naturalisation of the village as unit of administration, and the transitions of the village can be found in the *The Great Agrarian Conquest: the colonial reshaping of a rural world* by Neeladri Bhattacharya. His work, while focusing on Punjab, “examines how over a period of colonial rule, diverse practices, and customs of an existing rural world- with its many forms of livelihood were shaped to create a new agrarian regime” (ibid). Another important work that delicate the construction of the village from colonial period to post-colonial times is the work of David Ludden’s *Agrarian History of South Asia* (Ludden, 1999).

Even in the nationalist discourse, the concept of the village as a symbol of authentic native existence was developed from the same type of imagination. Regardless of their ideological inclinations or political agendas, the concept of the village remained a basic category through which they understood ‘traditional’ Indian social life. Unlike the British authorities, however, village was not only a cultural artefact for the leaders of the Indian independence struggle. Instead, it was a site of politics. For them, Village represented the true India; the nation that needed to be reclaimed, emancipated, and transformed. Given their political concerns, they discussed village from several aspects. While Gandhi saw it as a location of authenticity, for Nehru the village was the root and site of India’s ‘backwardness’. For Ambedkar, the village was an oppressive environment where the concept of caste manifested itself in its most harsh and horrific form. After independence from colonial rule, the village has continued to be an important arena of engagement for different kinds of actors. It was in the rural setting that programmes for development were initiated by the Indian state. The Indian village also appears quite prominently in the popular media, cinema, and television. It has also been a favourite site for social scientists to study Indian society, a methodological entry point, for undertaking investigations of different sets of subjects and questions.

After- Independence:

After the independence, the Indian state has adopted the colonial view unquestionably and extend further on those ideological grounds. The initial decades after the independence, The

principal research laboratory for anthropological and sociological studies was thought to be India's villages. Sociologists from the early British anthropological tradition, whose goal was to gather data for colonial administration, the later American sociological tradition, whose goal was to comprehend the cultural obstacles to "modernization," and the later Marxian tradition, whose goal was to research the process of differentiation, tension, mobilisation, and conflict, all viewed the village as a crucial location for empirical research in order to observe social processes. It goes without saying that many of India's pioneering anthropologists and sociologists were entangled with the regions they researched. It is well recognised that the conceptual and theoretical contributions made by these village studies were substantial. In some ways, villages are where Indian sociology began. (Mohanty BB 2017).

After independence, interests of planner and policy makers in improving the community life of rural areas in selected zones led to a demand for sociological and anthropological studies of village communities. This was the beginning of village studies in India. Srinivas edited the book India's Villages, D.N. Majumdar the Rural Profiles and S.C. Dube brought out Indian Village, all in the year 1955, Shortly after S.C. Dube published India's Changing Villages in 1958. The entry of American anthropologists brought into limelight several issues concerning rural transformation.

In the decade of 1950 and 1960e the structural-functional and thematic approaches provided us with conceptual tools for revealing the dynamics of rural society. Srinivas's (1952, 1958, 1996) concepts of 'Sanskritisation', and 'the dominant caste' and 'Westernisation' provide us such framework, Robert Redfield's (1956) paradigm of little community and peasant society and rural-urban continuum received scrutiny (Chauhan 1960, 1998; Oommen 1967); ideas of links between 'universalisation' 'parochialisation' and the communication channels that exist between the little and the great traditions' (Marriott 1955) and their connections with Sanskritisation and the dominant caste became research agenda for nearly two decades. Narmadeshwar Prasad introduced the concept of 'Kulinisation' for emulating the life of Kulins, the gentlemen. D.N. Majumdar through his concept of 'desanskritisation' suggested a reverse process by which Brahmin castes also try to identify in some matters with other castes. These conceptualisations provide us sufficient base to reveal the peculiarities of transitions in rural India.

Neo-Liberal:

In 1990s the Indian state adopted the Neoliberal structural adjustment programme. As part of the neoliberal approach, the Indian government has begun to cut spending, privatise public assets, and liberalise trade policies. This required, among other things, the opening of agricultural commodity markets and the withdrawal of subsidies. The stated rationale for the reforms was that free-market competition will result in increased efficiency and growth. This has altered Indian agriculture from a low input and low output subsistence farming system to a heavy investment (on irrigation, pesticides, fertilisers, energy, and seeds) commodity agriculture with low production. This had significant repercussions for agriculture. During the 1990s, the economic process and the role of small holder agriculture in Neoliberal capital became the subject of several empirical and theoretical discussions in the agrarian political economy.

These changes had significant effect on the nature of the village. The implementation of green revolution and rural development programmes of the state had begun to show a different kind of changes taking place. The green revolution has benefited big landowners in irrigated pockets of the country. They have started to mobilise themselves for subsidies on farm inputs and higher remunerative prices for their produce. They argue that the Indian government was discriminating them and favouring the urban over the rural. As said earlier, these mobilisations were studied under 'new farmers' movement'.

These class of people also who had got benefits from green revolution and were able to generate surplus from agriculture have started to diversifying to non-farm areas and investing in the urban centres. The surpluses went into education, urban trade, and other non-agricultural activities. By the end of 1980s the nature and profiles of these classes has started to change. Balagopal describes the nature of this lesson with clarity. A typical family of this class has land in its native village that is cultivated by hired labour, or farm servants under the constant monitoring of the father or one son; businesses of various types in town that are handled by other brothers; and presumably a young child who could be a doctor, engineer, or professor. (Balagopal, 1987).

At another level this process of economic transformation has brought a social and cultural transformation. The old patron-client kind of relations have disintegrated and were slowly

replaced by new contractual relations. The *jajmani* kind of relations were slowly giving way to the market-based relations. The rural power relations have started to change. The caste ideology did not decline but started showing some change. The Dalit groups, who were once oppressed by the caste ideology, have started to question the hegemony of the dominant castes in the rural settings and started to politically assert. The challenges in some cases and political assertions in some cases have led to increased incidents of violence and atrocities. Since the 1980s there was a loosening of the old structures of caste, village power structure. This change has led to new empirical studies in the academia. The onset of globalisation coupled with the neoliberal shift in the Indian economy has had several implications for the village society. The studies from post-independence to till the 1990s on village, directly or indirectly, were about the implications of development and the developmental state. Implementation of the neoliberal policies has led to the erosion of the developmental state. The changes that were brought by these policies, as said earlier, the shift from agriculture to non-agriculture, migration of people, diversity of rural livelihoods, have changed the nature of the village. The implementation of MNREGA has changed the nature of the rural labour market. All these have prompted new understanding of the village.

In the early 2000s, there was a resurgence of interest in rural life, despite the fact that it was often viewed as a problem and the antithesis of India's greater purpose and desire to "globalise" (Vasavi, 2012). There were various empirical and theoretical studies that have recorded the adverse effects of the neoliberal policies on small holder agriculture. There were studies on farmer suicides ((Suri, 2006, Revathi and Galab 2009, Vasavi 2012, and various others), on the nature of growth (Vakulabharanam, 2005), on agrarian crisis (Reddy and Mishra 2009). All these empirical studies were addressing the ill effects of the late green revolution and neoliberalisation of the Indian agriculture.

The emergency narrative of the "agricultural crisis," which "resulted from the marginalisation of the agrarian agenda in regional and national politics since the early 1990s," appears to have taken over the Indian "village community". The first in the new wave of studies was an edited volume '*The Village in Asia Revisited*' (1997) by Jan Breman, Peter Kloos, and Ashwani Saith. The purpose of the volume was to "re-study" previously examined villages in order to comprehend and analyse rural development, focusing on the social and economic components of those changes in the context of broader social and global economic processes. In 2002 Vandana Madan edited another volume titled *The Village in*

India. The purpose of the book was to acquaint the interested student and general reader with sociologists' and social anthropologists' contributions to the description and interpretation of village life in India. (Mines and Yazgi 2010:9).

The Eastern Anthropologist has brought out a special issue on Rural Profiles: 2005 Scenario, evaluating the changes in the nature of villages. All the works were trying to look at the village through the longitudinal view.

In the same year Dipankar Gupta (2005) wrote, rather a provocative article, titled '*Whither the Indian Village Culture and Agriculture in 'Rural' India*'. He stated that the hamlet in India, where life was traditionally characterised as 'unchanging' and 'idyllic', has seen significant transformations over the past few decades. The twin shackles that historically determined the fate of India's peasant population, caste, and agriculture, no longer exert a powerful hold. While the breakdown of caste rigidities has facilitated increased occupational flexibility, agricultural stagnation has sustained the continuing migration of employable people from rural areas to metropolitan areas. Nonetheless, vote bank politics ensures that parties and politicians continue to pay lip service to the plight of villages, particularly the poor farmer. In light of these developments, it is necessary to comprehend the 'culture' surrounding agriculture and the village. While this culture is not entirely stable, it is in a state of marked flux (2005).

He further elaborated these changes in another important article in 2015, where he argued that the 'we cannot talk of the rural without calling out to the urban world'. He argued for the rural-urban nexus rather 'rural-urban continuum' - which once dominated the studies on rural and urban. There were other conceptions of the 'new rural' in different ways. A R Vasavi conceptualises village beyond the narrow administrative or government definitions which define rural by default. These definitions consider village as a site where agriculture is the primary economic activity, low density of population, and which is diametrically opposed to the urban. Beyond the standard definitions, the concept of "rurality" views a village as a complex web of institutionalised forces, power relations, social norms, and discursive practises that are continually combining and recombining. (Cloke 2005: 24). In doing so, one can recognise multiplicity of factors that account for variations in rural conditions. She says "some of these factors can be the different ecological characteristics, myriad economic activities, governance by different political and administrative apparatus,

variations in linkages to towns and cities, and the manifestations of different cultural configurations” (Vasavi 2012: 42-43). She addresses the manifestations of multiple forms rurality in different geographical locations.

Since then, the media and public discourse have been dominated by a new narrative about the ‘agrarian crisis’ and ‘rural misery’ (Jodhka, 2012). This story is far less eloquent when it comes to illustrating and elucidating the various farmer mobilisation that are widespread in the country.

Other, less apparent aspects of the current ‘crisis’ in India's rural areas are obscured by the media's attention on ‘farmer suicides.’ The latter is essentially a convergence of three crises affecting rural social spaces: economic, social, and environmental, resulting in a variety of difficulties for the most disadvantaged people.

To take the agricultural issue seriously, it is crucial to address the everyday social structures of gender, caste, and religion and long-term processes that contribute to socioeconomic deprivation, disparity in resource access, and ecological degradation. Understanding the complexity of the processes at work in the triple agrarian crisis (economic, social, and environmental) necessitates an examination of the diversity of rural people's experiences in relation to their varied geographically and historically interconnected ecosystems, as well as the socio-political, cultural, and economic factors that govern their existence. These studies demonstrate that we cannot abandon the category of rural, but rather deal with it critically.

New ‘Urban Agrarian’ Entanglements

On the other hand, since 1990s urban studies across the world have taken a new turn. They started going beyond the concept of city. Before 1990s the rural and urban binary, and linear transition from rural to urban were the epistemic bases for urban studies. Studying the transformation of cities and producing the monographs of different cities was the most common method in urban studies. The rural-to-urban transition was regarded as a hallmark of modernity. Sujata Patel (2018) claims that urbanisation and cities were compared to rural areas and their feudal customs and were seen as advances from villages and were as the future of humanity. The process of urbanisation came to be associated with industrialization, emigration, entrepreneurship, the working class, and the creation of a

brand-new modern metropolis built on technological infrastructure, including mass housing and city-level management of sewage and water systems.

Urban studies became city centric and the study of 'urbanisation process' took a back seat. City came to be associated with a utopian vision of new social life that offered new possibilities for reorganising the life, later crating a lifestyle. The scholars also explored the negative aspects of the city life, the poverty, density of population, the process of individualisation and alienation, broken solidarities, and the articulation of the discontent in terms of racial, ethnic, religious violence between and within the groups. City came to be represented a dystopia rather a utopia.

These epistemic pillars served as the global north's foundation for urban studies. Cities came to be gazed and understood through the prism of a pre-defined urban Northern sensibility, cities of the South also duplicated this gaze in the Indian setting (Ibid: 3). Scholars studied and investigated the big metropolitan cities in this light.

In recent years urban studies have taken new turn, dispensing the old epistemic understandings of the city. The new studies have started to investigate the process of urbanisation and cities being part of that process. In this Neil Brenner is in fore front. Drawing on the works of Henry Lefebvre, he conceptualises the urbanisation taking place across the globe, and everyone is part of the process. He says that after the 1970s, urbanisation has become a global phenomenon in which all political-economic and socio-environmental interactions are now intertwined, independent of the terrestrial position (as a village or as part of rural areas) or morphological configuration (ibid). This urbanisation process is known as "planetary urbanisation." The new urban studies have placed the urbanisation process within the logic of capitalist accumulation and explored how this has allowed urbanisation to encompass the entire globe. The urbanisation process started to be viewed as uneven, dependent on certain capital accumulation tactics, and constituted within spatial locations or regions.

In the Indian context, this reconfigured understanding of the urban has led two important conceptualisations of the urbanisation process, from the point of view of the rural-one is the 'rurbanisation' (Kundu 2017), the other is the 'subaltern urbanisation' (Mukhopadhyay, Zerah, and Denis, 2017). For these conceptualisations, village is also important in

understanding the urbanisation process. The 'rurbanisation' highlights three features of the urbanisation process in India. One, it argues that there is an expansion of the urban periphery in the developed metropolitan cities, because these spaces have become exclusionary (Kundu 2009). Two, the small towns are neglected by policy makers, and they have a sluggish growth, stagnation, and fluctuating agricultural economy (Kundu 2011). Third, there is a sharp increase in the number of census towns, because they meet the demographic criteria but are not given statutory status. The idea of subaltern urbanisation refers to the rise of settlement agglomerations that are autonomous in their relations with other settlements, local and global, whether or not they are classified as urban by the Census of India (Mukhopadhyay, Zerah, and Denis 2012: 52).

They used physical proximity and administrative recognition as their two axes for describing subaltern urbanisation. On the axis of spatial proximity, there are two categories: (1) peripheral settlements, which are those that are situated away from the city, and (2) non-peripheral settlements, which include all other settlements. They propose four categories of settlements on the administrative recognition axis: (1) invisible, or not recognised as urban; (2) denied or classified as a census town; (3) recognised or recognised as a statutory town; and (4) contested, where the settlement is contesting its administrative status. (Ibid: 56).

What these perspectives alerts us to is that of the urbanisation processes that are going beyond the big cities and the need to be aware of these processes and also being careful in terms of working with the definitions of rural and urban since there has been a blur of boundaries between urban and rural. Recently number of studies (Gurnani 2019, Balakrishnana 2018, Rathi 2021) have investigated the urban process through these lenses and made critical interventions in the examination of urban process. These studies demonstrate that the 'present trend of urbanisation in India is intertwined with the rural, and its current and historical process of agrarian transformation,' and that they are mutually constitutive in this process.

By focusing on the peripheries of big cities and metropolitan centres, this new literature demonstrates the crucial ways in which agrarian histories of land regimes, caste linkages, and hierarchies are interwoven with the establishment of peripheral urban villages. By accounting for the complex, varied, and informal arrangements between agrarian and urban communities, governmental and private actors, this body of work emphasises the

significance of agrarian concerns of land and peasant differentiation for comprehending the transformation of rural land to realise neoliberal fantasies of fast urbanisation (Rathi 2021).

The newly evolving urbanisation process is conceptualised by Sai Balakrishnan as "recombinant urbanisation." Writing with Maharashtra in mind. To understand how "agrarian landed property and land-based caste/class connections influence the formation of post-liberalization urban real estate markets in India," she introduces the concept (2019: 617).

There are, however, studies that investigate the urban dynamics of smaller towns in India (White 2016;; Chari 2014 Zerah and Denis 2017:6; ; Krishnamurthy and Wistoy 2012;). Despite focusing primarily on the economic and sociopolitical resilience and dynamism of small towns, these studies show the significant ways in which rural histories of labour, in which land and caste support regional processes of capital accumulation and urbanisation. Academics in these subjects have acknowledged, among many other things, the regional embeddedness of the process of urbanization, its agrarian dynamics, and its engagement with caste and community politics using subaltern studies as a theoretical framework (Sircar 2016; ; Gidwani 2008Chari 2014; Krishnamurthy and Witsoe 2012; Basile 2011; White 2016). This sort of urbanisation remains intertwined with rural and agricultural processes. In their study of rural migrants in Delhi and Hyderabad, Gidwani and Ramamurthy (2018) discovered that rural migrants' orientation remained largely rural even after establishing a foothold in the city (ibid). This can be investigated from rural areas as to how the urban migration has shaped the villager's out look.

The new strand of critical urban studies is also engaging with the question of 'rural'. These studies are attempting to trace the 'rural' and agrarian origins of urban processes and more importantly these studies are trying to unearth the entanglements of rural and urban locations. These insights in the questions of land and labour, the role of the state in the neo-liberal process provides deeper insights into the neo-liberal structures. They have also brought into the light of the often neglected 'small towns' into the analytical and empirical apparatus. Mostly these studies have focused on the villages/rural areas that are at the outskirts of the metropolitan areas. What if one wants to understand the or study a village that is not located at the outskirts? We want to use their insights on the rural urban

entanglements and use them and extend them to understand the rural that lies outside of these peripheral areas.

This chapter focused on the important theoretical trajectories in the agrarian studies. It narrated the origin of the peasant studies its new configuration into critical agrarian studies. The chapter also looked at how these influenced the mode of production debates in the Indian setting. The chapter also focused on the village studies tradition and new critical urban studies. In the next chapter we will discuss the political economy of the state of Telangana.

Chapter 3

Political Economy of Telangana

Telangana state is a newly formed state in the country. It got bifurcated as a separate state in the year 2014 carved out from the Andhra Pradesh after a prolonged movement for the separate state. This chapter provides a discussion on the political economy of the state in terms of its land relations, agrarian relations, and political mobilisations over a period of about one hundred years (100 years). It emphasises on the history of land relations: how land relations have changed from the land being concentrated with few big landlords to the state becoming the land broker (to use Michael Levien's phrase) for the benefit of private capitalists. How agrarian relations have changed: from backward agriculture to distress induced capitalist agriculture, and how tenancy relations have changed over time. This chapter also tries to briefly understand the history of political mobilisations in the state: both against oppressive agrarian, socioeconomic conditions as well as for the separate state.

The Telangana region was part of the Nizam rule before independence. As part of the former princely state of Hyderabad, Telangana consisted of eight Telugu-speaking districts. A group of landed gentry, consisting of Hindu *deshmukhs* from Brahmin, *Velama*, and *Reddy* castes, and Muslim *jagirdars* were the main support base of the Nizam's rule (Srinivasulu, 2002a). The people of the state were denied every right and rural people underwent illegal evictions from their lands ((Sundarayya, 1973)), there was an extraction of free services and goods, which was known as *vetti* ((A. Gupta, 1984)), and importantly, they were denied dignity and self-respect (Tirumali 2003). The people of Telangana, especially small and marginal farmers, and agricultural labour, fought against these oppressive conditions under the leadership of Communists from 1946 to 1951 (Sundarayya, 1973). The struggle was popularly known as the Telangana People's Armed Struggle. After the Russian Revolution, it was one of the biggest communist revolutions that took place.

After independence, the region was merged into the Indian Union with a violent Police Action³ in 1948. In 1953, the Telugu speaking areas of Hyderabad state were merged with

³ The name of the police operation in Hyderabad was Operation Polo. Many Hindu villages were terrorised by members of the formidable Razakar militia, the military wing of Hyderabad's Muslim political party. During operation Polo Razakars, no serious civilian casualties were sustained. But shortly thereafter, communal riots ensued in which numerous Muslims were slain. To examine the communal violence, a

the remaining Telugu-speaking coastal Andhra, which was part of the Madras Presidency, forming the state of Andhra Pradesh in 1956. It was the first linguistically reorganised state in post-Independent India. Despite the aftereffects of linguistic nationalism that envisioned Andhra Pradesh as a unified land of the Telugu-speaking population, the Telangana people struggled for a separate state in two different phases - 1969 and from the early 2000s to 2014. In 2014, with the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana was formed as a separate state.

Divided into four sections, this chapter presents a historical overview of Telangana as it went through different phases of transformations. The first section deals with Salar Jung reforms (1853) to 1948. The second section deals from 1956 to 1990, the third section deals from 1990 to 2014, and the final section is from 2014 to the present period. Although the reforms took place in all aspects of administrative aspects, this chapter focuses on the agrarian reforms that were part of the total reforms.

Section 3.1 From Salar Jung Reforms to 1948.

David Ludden (1989) says that in the period between 1870 and 1930, agrarian South Asia underwent tremendous change as it acquired modern⁴ intellectual appearance and a sense of its own history. A national history of pervasive village suffering, catastrophe, and poverty that required immediate action from development agents replaced agrarian localism and diversity (Ludden 1989). As discussed in the last chapter.

Ludden was talking about how colonial regime was trying to govern the Indian villages and how they introduced various modern techniques to understand the Indian agriculture and villages⁵. After 1877, famine stereotypes grew rapidly and extensively. By the year 1900, it had become widely accepted that South Asian villages exist forever on the verge of famine and death, on the precipice of disaster. The lack of understanding of the Indian countryside

delegation led by Pandit Sunderlal arrived. It is estimated that between 27,000 and 40,000 lives were lost. (<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-24159594>)

⁴ Modern, throughout this chapter, and its associate terms like modernity, modernisation, modernise etc. refer only to denote material, technical process of change in the realms of economic and political administration of the state.

⁵ Neeladri Bhattacharya, in his book *The Great Agrarian Conquest* (2018) examines how, during colonial times, a new rural world came to be established by the British, and how various diverse practices and customs of the existing rural worlds were transformed to create a new settled agriculture. While the focus of the book is on Punjab it helps us how agrarian modernity was introduced in south Asia.

had stimulated the colonial state to undertake first round of village studies- agricultural surveys, village census, etc.

Although Ludden's observations were made in the context of emerging agrarian changes in the countryside of British India, historical evidence concurs that similar processes were unfolding in the princely state of Hyderabad during the same period of time. Beverley says that:

when it comes to Hyderabad state, we can say that it was during the mid-nineteenth century that the composition and training of Asaf Jah officials changed significantly. The presence of new groups and types of administrators, along with rising emphasis on globally informed technical knowledge in governance (Beverley, 2015).

These changes show the shift of Hyderabad state towards modern forms of governance. Writing about the inventories of specific projects under way in the state, Messrs Speight and Najaf Ali Khan wrote:

Irrigation, reclamation, and afforestation of the largest advisable scale, by the application of chemicals and electrical processes to agricultural and manufacturers, ameliorative work and hygienic provisions, wise town planning and colonisation, by comprehensive system of vocational training and development of industry...a new Hyderabad is beginning to evolve, in which we are likely to see the fostering of much that is best in East and West (Speight & Ali Khan quoted in (Beverley, 2015, p. 116).

This process of widespread modernisation of the statecraft and institutional reform was launched under the Mir Turab Ali Khan known as Salar Jung I, who was the Hyderabad *diwan* from 1853 to 1883. During his period as the *diwan*, the process of transformation of Hyderabad from a '*Mughlai*' administration to a 'modern' state took place (Pernau, 2000).

Salar Jung took over the premiership at a time when the financial situation⁶ of the Hyderabad state was in strain due to the huge debt incurred to the colonial government and the deteriorating financial situation of the government. Salar Jung had no other option but to introduce a series of reforms in the state. Srinivasulu (1988) points out:

it is these reforms which, for the first time, envisaged and executed the regularisation of the agrarian contribution to the state exchequer and the irregularities in the agrarian structure through the introduction of *bandobust* (land survey settlement); through land survey, the regularisation of ownership rights by enumerating the plots of land and the settlement of tax

⁶ The Nizam state had to pay the tax to British as they came under their subsidiary policy. There were small scale revolts by the Nizam army because they were not paid the monthly salary.

due from the landowner to the state. It also aimed at bringing the peasant into a direct relationship with the state (Srinivasulu, K., 1988).

The reforms were intended to abolish the auctioning off of the tax collection and introduce direct payment of the taxes to government, thus abolishing the intermediaries and establishing the direct relationship between peasants and the state. During the reign of the early rulers, these rights to collect the tax from farmers were auctioned off by the state and were given to revenue farmers called *deshmukhs* or *deshpandays* (Barry Pavier, 1974; Dhanagare, 1974; A. Gupta, 1984). Salar Jung's reforms had displaced the *Deshmukhs* as revenue collectors and replaced them with *talukdars* (district collectors). He also reorganised the state into new districts and *Subhas*. As part of the reforms, the *patta* (ownership) right over land was introduced. Although the *talukdars* had replaced the *Deshmukhs* in the administrative hierarchy, however, the latter continued being landlords. These *Deshmukhs* became *pattadars* by entering into the revenue records as legal landowners losing all other rights. Under the reforms, they were transformed into large landlords with judicial and legal guarantees for their proprietary rights. They were also able to lease in government lands under various tenures to bring not only lands, but also forest lands and *banjara* (waste) lands under cultivation and increase agrarian production. The erstwhile land tax collector class- *deshmukhs* and *deshpandays*- acquired huge amounts of land, sometimes even to the extent of one and half lakh acres ownership per household (Sundarayya & Chattopadhyaya, 1972). It was during the period (late 19th century) that with the influence of the colonial government, the state had introduced the commodity production in the state and encouraged the cultivation of commercial crops like cotton, castor seeds, etc. The reforms introduced a system of paying land revenue in cash rather than in kind, as was the case earlier (Thirumali, 2003). The landlords had the advantage of having enough liquid capital to meet the farm requirements. These landlords were granted "*rusum*" (money) annually after abolishing revenue farming. Thirumali says

the landlord economy worked most suitably and efficiently using vast lands and cheap labour and was responding to the needs of the government. It was during this time that Hyderabad's agrarian produce like- castor seeds, cotton, tobacco- have entered the external market. The landlords had the advantage of possessing enough liquid capital to meet the farm requirements. The state paid annual remuneration for the landlords after abolishing their revenue duties. However, landlords later took up the excise contracts and money lending, through which they acquired additional capital. This proved to be lucrative in a situation of hard currency scarcity in the villages after the state made its revenue payments in cash compulsory (Ibid, p-26).

3.1.1 Land Revenue system and the making of the landlord class:

With the reforms by Salar Jung I, the entire land in the state was divided into three forms to devise an effective tax collection mechanism. One was the *Diwani* or *Khalsa* land. These lands were under direct management of the government, and the government collected the revenue from the cultivators. It went to the Government exchequer. It was like a counterpart of the *rayatwari* system in British India. It constituted 60% of agricultural land. The cultivator was known as the *pattadar*, which means the registered owner of the land. These cultivators had rights over the land as long as they paid the revenue to the state. They had rights to sell it and, as well as hereditary transmission. The second was the *Jagir or Inam* lands that were donated to nobles and religious institutions and people. The *jagirs* constituted 30% of the Nizam state. They were rendered in exchange for services provided to the Nizam. These *jagirs* were granted originally for a definite period (generally for the lifetime of the grantee) but, in practice, they had come to be hereditary and lasted until their abolition in 1948. The remaining 10% of the area consisted of *sarf-e-khas*, or crown lands under the direct supervision of the Nizam administration. The revenue collected on these lands was meant to meet the Nizam's household expenditure.

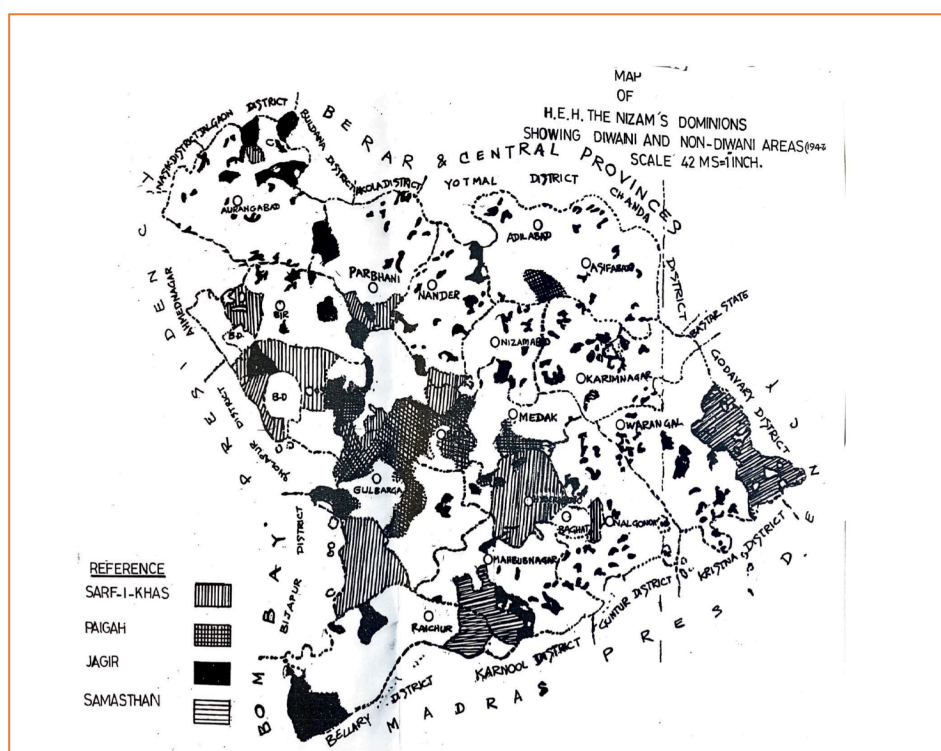
Table 3.1 Area Under Different Land Tenure systems in Telangana

Jurisdiction	No. of Villages	Area in sq. Miles	Percentage of the Area to the State Area
Diwani or State Govt.	13,961	48,969	59.2
Paigahs, Samsthanams, and Jagirs	6,535	25,620	31.0
Sarf-e-Khas or Crown lands	1,961	8,109	9.8
Total	22,457	82,698	100

Source: Source: (Iyengar, 1953)

Land reforms that were introduced by Salar Jung I over a period of time have led to the concentration of land and the creation of a landlord class in Telangana. This process of creating the landlord class has occurred in two important ways. One was through the state mechanisms and manipulation of the state land records, and the other was through the newly introduced commercial agriculture in the state that favoured the big landlords.

Figure 3.1 Diwani and Non-Diwani Areas



3.1.1.1 The State Mechanism and the creation of the Landlord class

The process of the state mechanism in creating a landlord class happened in two stages. First, the *deshmukhs* and *deshpandays* were displaced as the tax collectors by the state as part of the new reforms; they were given a compensation for their loss. The compensation was in the form of land *vatans* and pensions. *Deshmukhs* and *deshpandays* seized this opportunity and occupied the most fertile lands. Second, the *bondobust* process (survey settlement) facilitated the occupation of lands by *deshmukhs* and *deshpandays*. The *bondobust* was introduced to regularise land records and revenue administration. The *bandobust* took place in two stages: the first is known as *bandobust ula* and the second *bandobust alia*.⁷ During these survey settlements, by using their connections in the Nizam bureaucracy and their accessibility to land records the *deshmukhs* and *deshpandays* registered hundreds of acres of land to their names.

⁷ The first survey settlement operations were initiated on an experimental basis in Paithan taluq of the Marathi speaking Aurangabad district in 1288F and later in other areas. The last in this series was Sirpur taluq of Adilabad district in 1346 F. The *bandobust alia* was commenced in Ashti taluq of Bhir district 1307F, and last taluq surveyed was Sirsilla of Karimnagar district in 1359F, while a few taluqs of Karimnagar and Adilabad were left untouched. A systematic survey settlement seems to have been conducted, delay notwithstanding, only in diwani areas. In jagirs, it either was, delayed inordinately or was never conducted. (Srinivasulu 1988).

3.1.1.2 The Working of Landlord Economy

As mentioned above, it was during the Salar Jung reforms that the state's economy turned into a commercial agrarian economy. To increase the state's revenue, the state encouraged to bring into the cultivation of new lands. The landlords using *vetti* labour brought new lands under cultivation. The landlord economy worked best suitably and efficiently using vast land and cheap labour and was responding to the needs of the government. During this time, Hyderabad's agricultural products, such as castor seeds, cotton, tobacco, entered the external market. The landlords had the advantage of possessing enough liquid capital to meet the farm requirements, through which they acquired additional capital. This proved to be lucrative in a situation of hard currency scarcity in villages after the state made it mandatory for revenue payments in cash. Writing about the workings of agrarian economy and landlords in the Rayalaseema region, David Washbrook says:

rise in the grain prices and in the demand for cash crops served greatly to increase the profitability and the scope for the large landholders' 'informal empire'. Having obtained cheap grain from his lands and those of his debtors and in the harvest market, he possessed the capital resources to play the roulette wheel of price fluctuation (Washbrook, 1978).

Due to the superiority of the landlord in the village and his connection to the town, he could still get a good price for his crops than a small cultivator. The small farmer was selling his produce at the village market or in the field because he did not have the resilience to wait until he got a good price despite increasing transport facilities. While the large landowner could wait until they get a good price for their produce. Sometimes he also used to buy from the villagers and sell them in the town. Some of the landlords had grain trading licences along with the credit licences. Srinivasulu (1988) points out:

This regular entry into the town also gave him further benefits. It made him known there, his loads of grain to market demonstrated that his wealth, he could become certified as 'credit worthy' by the urban mercantile groups. This enabled him to tap the relatively cheap resource of urban credit and pump resources back into his local network, thereby deepening his control and increasing his profits. Alternatively, he could diversify his operations out of simple rural commerce and into the more profitable ventures, which he might see from his urban perch. (p-73).

Both these processes of state - land compensation as part of the *vatan* systems along with survey settlements and the commercial agriculture have led to the consolidation and crystallisation of the landlord class. This class mostly belonged to *Velama and Reddy* castes

and sometimes they were also from *Brahmins*. All these processes were happening in the *diwani* areas.

The other two forms of tenure systems resulted in different forms of land relations. The jagir areas consisted of two forms: *samsthanas* and *jagir*. There were sixteen⁸ *Samsthnas* who had a different relation with the Nizam. The *rajas* paid *nazr* or *peshkush* to the Nizam and participated in court proceedings at Hyderabad but were given free hand in the administration of their own territories. These *Samsthanas* had entire lands under their control within their jurisdiction, and they paid a certain amount of rent⁹ to the Nizam state. Both *Jagirs* and *Samsthanas* had opposed the Salar Jung I reforms. The resistance put up by the *jagirdars* and *samsthanam holders* frustrated the efforts of Sir Salar Jung in implementing the reforms. Given the nature of the state and the support base the *jagirdars* and the *rajas* constituted with a formidably entrenched interests, the reforms obviously could not disturb their position (Srinivasulu, K, 1988).

Paigah Estates were Hyderabad State's another private landholding group, following *Samsthanas*. In contrast to the *Samasthans*, the *paigah* estates were of more recent provenance. The Persian term *Paigah* means "foot" or "firm." The phrase eventually evolved to apply to cavalry providers. Occasionally, *paigahs* were also known as *jamiat jagirs* (a landowner who supplied troops) (Rajashekhar, 2014).

In Hyderabad, there were three large *paigah* estates. They were descendants of a single family established by Mulla Jalal-udDin during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar. In the *paigah* territory, which was dispersed throughout the state, their holdings comprised more than 150 islands. They handled twenty-four *taluks* in total. These had a total assessed value of 40 lakhs and covered 4,134 square miles. Like other private landowners, the *paigah* owners were immune from *dewani* oversight and kept their own internal administrations (Rajashekhar, 2014).

⁸ These *Samsthanas* were of two types. Tribute paying kind and non-tribute paying kind. In tribute (*peshkashi*) paying kind there were 8 *Samsthanas*- Amarchinta, Gadwal, Jatprole, Paloncha, Gopalpet, Wanaparthi, Gurugunta, and Anagundi. In the non-tribute paying kind there were eight-Domakonda, Shankaram, Sarnapalli, Narayanapur, Rajpet, Chincholi, Adlowar and Domak. (M. A. Nayeem 2000, p-199).

⁹ Each of the eight *Samsthanas* paid different rent- Amarchinta paid 6,363 rupees which later increased to 65,417 rupees by 1931, Gadwal paid 86,540 rupees, Jatprole paid 73,537, Paloncha paid 45,875, Wanaparthi paid 76,883, Gurunta paid 8,500, Anagundi paid 10,000 rupees. (Ibid).

The third group of private landowners consisted of *ilaqadars* and *jagirdars*. *Ilaqas* were the most influential jagirs. It had an annual income of 8.2 lakhs and was comprised of six *taluks* that spanned a total area of over 1,486 square miles. The *jagirs* ranked lower than the *ilaqas*. A jagir was a land grant given to a subordinate by a ruler in exchange for military aid or as a personal honour. They could be kept in one of three ways: for the lifetime of the recipient, for a specified amount of time, or permanently through inheritance. This was the most prevalent sort of holding. In 1948, around 1500 jagirs comprised the Nizam's dominions. In principle, the Nizam was the owner of all jagirs and might reclaim them at any time. In practise, families were able to maintain their jagirs for generations by donating *nazars*. The Nizam could only regain a jagir if there was no heir, if the succession was contested, or if some other catastrophe occurred (Ibid;30). The *Jagirdars*, *Paigas*, and *Samsthanams* exploited the peasants by collecting excessive taxes and illegitimate demands from them.

3.1.2 The growth of commercial crops:

As mentioned earlier, the imperial rule helped the growth of commercial crops in the region. Higher profit on cash crops and the requirement to pay rent in cash have necessitated the shift to commercial crops in the commodity market. Government policy also favoured the cultivation of commercial crops for export and for industrial purposes. The first important commercial crops that were cultivated in the region were oil seeds, especially castor seeds, and cotton. The agro-climatic conditions of the region were suitable for these crops. The availability of irrigation facilities significantly increased the area under cultivation of both food crops and commercial crops in the region. The average non-food crops sown had exceeded the extent of 31.4% (Srinath & Reddy, 2005).

The agriculture department was established by the Nazim in 1911. As a first step, the department had established certain agricultural research farms at different places in the state: Parbhani, Aler, Kama Reddy, Mahbubnagar, Uppal, Sanga Reddy, in the years 1915, 1916, 1917 respectively. Here cotton and rotational crops, and crop combinations such as Cambodia cotton, castor and tobacco, sugar cane, paddy cultivation, groundnut, potato and tobacco and garden crops such as fruits and vegetables were cultivated. These farms were expected not only to experiment with crops but also to teach farmers how to bring wastelands under cultivation. The agriculture department and the government made farmers aware of the high yield of commercial crops such as sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, and oil seeds such as

groundnut and castor crops. Farmers did not show much interest initially in cultivating these crops, as they required liquid cash to cultivate. Agriculture department also supplied manure. But in practice, farmers did not use artificial fertilizers as they were costly. Improved agricultural implements were also supplied to farmers to practice modern cultivation methods. The iron plough became popular with cultivators. Agriculture stores sold seeds, manure, and implements. The important commercial crops in Telangana in the former Hyderabad state were sugarcane, oilseeds such as groundnut, castor seeds, cotton, and tobacco (Ibid.). An account of the growth of these crops in the Telangana region of the state is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Cropping Pattern in Telangana Between 1925 and 1945

Crops	1926-30 Average % of net sown area	1940-45 Average % of net sown area
Paddy	6.4	10.3
Jowar	23.7	30.8
Bajra	8.9	4.3
Maize	7.0	4.4
Groundnut	0.3	9.8
Castor	6.1	7.7

Source: Ramakrishna Reddy 1987.

Despite the growth of commercial agriculture on the one hand and the extension of credit facilities by merchants, commercial banks, and cooperative institutions on the other, the people, especially the small peasants and agricultural labourers, were subjected to indebtedness. The only class that benefitted from the growth of commercial agriculture was the landlord class. Due to poverty small peasants and tenants' farmers bore a high burden of farm debt and paid high rates of interest to the money lenders who were a dominant class in the feudal agrarian society of Telangana. In Hyderabad state, especially after land reforms of Salar Jung, legal control of the lands flowed into the hands of a few landlords or to former *deshmukhs*, *deshpandays* in the government machinery (Srinivasulu, K, 1988; Thirumali, 2003). Therefore, poor peasants had to depend on them for their cultivation and investment needs. With the development of such an economy and due to vicissitudes of the price behaviour in the markets, the small peasants had to sell their lands to clear off their debts. Thus, the phenomena had a multiplying effect on the pauperisation of the peasantry. Srinath Reddy and Yadav (2005) say that:

with the commercialisation and the fall in real income, coupled with deteriorating conditions of tenancy, indebtedness increased. By the late 1920s the development of an export market in some of the commodities, a hierarchical structure in credit market, acquired control over the agrarian economy at the apex of which were Bombay merchants and joint stock companies who effectively converted from independent dealers of agricultural commodities into their commission agents. Smaller local merchants and in some cases, landlords formed the next layer of the hierarchy. The conditions of peasantry deteriorated not because of this class, but the landlord and moneylenders who grew in importance. *Reddys* and some *velamas* in Telangana played this role. ' (636)

Taking inspiration from the transition debate in the European context on the nature of transition from feudalism to capitalism, there was a debate in the context of Indian on the nature of feudalism in India. The main questions were whether there was feudalism in Indian context, was it similar to the European kind of feudalism or Indian feudalism was different from European model. DD Kosambi and RS Sharma argued that from about 7th century there were clear signs of variant of feudalism in Indian society. Sharma believed that this lasted till about 13th century, while Kosambi argued that these feudal formations lasted till the arrival of British (Vakulabharanam 2004). Harbans Mukhia (1969) suggests that given the nature of Indian agrarian economy the quintessential European kind of feudalism did not exist in Indian society. His main argument was that Indian peasants were never structurally dependent on the state for their production or reproduction in the lines of European serfs who were dependent on the Lord for their reproduction.

This debate also ended on an uncertain note with regard to the definition and characteristics of feudalism in the Indian context. As discussed in the last chapter, the Marxian debates on the Indian mode of production have attempted to define feudalism fairly in abstract terms as a mode of production in which non-economic coercion was used to extract surplus value from the peasants. This kind of definition of feudalism has facilitated the understanding of characterising the society as feudal where there was the existence of relatively independent peasantry.

If one goes by that definition we can characterise the nature of mode of production as feudal or semi-feudal. As there was the exploitation of labour by extra- economic forces. Especially caste system was very important in this regard. But this characterisation needs to be qualified. As shown above, there was the introduction of commercial agriculture which was influenced by the colonial government and it was pushed through the state reforms. This

introduction of commercial agriculture and the extraction of free labour was crucial in the emergence of landlord class. So, only characterising it as semi-feudal might miss certain of these nuances.

3.1.3 Important features of the agrarian structure.

During the first half of the 20th century several surveys were conducted in Hyderabad state. Kesava Iyengar conducted economic investigations in 1929-1930 and 1949-50. In the first survey, only 12 villages in four districts were studied in three regions of the state. In the second survey, the entire state was studied covering 118 villages of three regions of the state covering more than 36,000 families. In 1937, MSM Bharucha conducted a survey of agricultural indebtedness in the Hyderabad state. About 70% of the population depended on agriculture in 1925 and the state derived 40% of its income from land revenue in 1925 (Qureshi 1947; Vamsi 2004). The irrigated area in the state was only 4% of the occupied area.

Land holdings were highly inequitable during the said period. In 1929-30, 1.7% of the occupants held more than 35% of the dry lands and 2.5% of the occupants held more than 50% of the total wetlands. The occupants who had less than average of 7.5 acres made up 55% of the total population. This data does not include the landless tenants and labourers. The Annexure, given at the end of the chapter, gives the details about the number of land holdings, and percentages of those in the total holdings. In 1945, those who held less than 10 acres constituted 36% of the total land holders, occupying only 6% of the land cultivated. Those who held from 25 acres to 150 acres constituted 30% of the total landholders, occupying 54%% of the lands cultivated.

Average size of the landholdings came down from 15 acres of dryland and 1.2 acres of wetland in 1929, came down to 9 acres of dryland and 1 acre of wetland by 1945-46. (Vamsi 2004). Inheritance in the joint family system, sale of the land, transfer of land among occupants, average landholding became smaller over a period of time.

There were 85% of owner cultivators who controlled about 80% of the cultivable land while 14.4 % of the landless tenants controlled about 10% of the cultivable land during 1945-46. The corresponding percentages of these groups were 79.5% and 10.5%, respectively. In

1929-1930. 28.9% of farming households were landless. The percentage of non-farming landowners was approximately 13.7%. In 1949-51, tenants cultivated 25% of dry land, 22% of wetland, and 19.7% of garden lands. 77% of the population were tenants at will. In 1929-1930, the proportion was 76%.

The nature of tenancy was of two types: cash tenancy and kind tendency. 50% of the tenancy holdings were under sharecropping where both the tenant and the producer shared 50-50% of the produce in 1949-51. During 1929 and 30 the cash rents dominated the tenancy arrangements, however by 1949 and 50 the kind rent was in the increase. In 1929- 30, cash rents comprised of 55%, whereas kind rents comprised 29%. Cash rents were decreasing, partly due to the rise in agricultural prices, and partly due to the tenants' desire to provide grain for both subsistence and government levy. Due to the landlords' interests in the urban areas of Karimnagar, Nalgonda, and Adilabad, cash rents predominated. Tenancy in dry lands was mostly of cash kind, whereas tenancy under irrigated lands was under kind tendency. Iyyengar (1930) notes that people prefer to sharecropping than the cash kind of tenancy because in good crop years they tend to gain whereas in bad agricultural year the burden is shared with the landholder. When it comes to cash rents, the average rent per acre was ₹5 for dry lands ₹40 for wetlands and ₹30 for garden lands. These rates were not consistent across the region as they varied from region to region but mostly on this was an average price. These rates were almost similar to other areas in the country. On average cash rent was ₹5 in Assam, ₹3 in Bengal, ₹7 in Madras, ₹5 in Uttar Pradesh, ₹8 in Orissa, ₹2 in Bihar according to agrarian / according to Keshava Iyyengar.

Absentee landlords constitute only 13.7%. Compared to 1929-30, absentee landlordism was on the decline. The tenancy was 18.6% in Telangana during the survey period. Of the cultivating families 28.9% didn't own any land, either as tenants or as occupants. 10% were landless tenants, while 61.1% had their own lands. Out of the lease holdings, proportion of landless were as high as 46.6%. which according to the earlier enquiry was 31.5% in 1929-30 indicating that landless tenants were on the rise.

Land transfers were from cultivating class to 'non-cultivating class or peasants to *sowkars*, moneylenders, *Deshmukhs*, Landlords and village officials. Iyyengar (ibid) says that When the prices of agriculture products fell down the purchasing power of the people decreased substantially. They sold out their land at lower rates, in these conditions some lakhs of acres

of land passed from farmers into the hands of moneylenders and non-cultivating persons who were called absolute landlords (61).

In contrast to the tendencies of the preceding quarter century, land appropriation by non-farming moneylenders reduced between 1949 and 1950. Agricultural families were receiving more and more land through land transfers. 63.8 percent of the transferred land was parted by cultivating classes, while 19.8 percent was acquired by non-cultivating families from cultivating classes. 14.3% of the transferred land changed ownership due to the accumulation of debt. As a result of the inflow of cultivating/enterprising peasants from the Andhra districts of the Madras state in order to develop lands along the Nizamsagar canals, land transfers to cultivating families increased significantly.

Peasants from Coastal Andhra began migrating to Telangana throughout the first two decades of the 20th century. In the 1920s, coastal Andhra peasants began to migrate to Telangana in response to an invitation from the Nizam's government. The government intended to allot cultivable wastelands to immigrant settlers and provide inducements for bringing lands under cultivation. The lands which were given to the settlers included cultivable waste lands in forest areas, cultivable lands in the royal '*shikari*' (hunting) areas, *Porambok* (fallow lands) lands (Satyanarayana 1970).

The settler farmers were granted absolute occupancy rights which were hereditary. Civil court decrees were invalid on these lands. These lands exempted from the customary duties. Governments came forward and provided loans for agricultural purposes. Sometimes these settlers were also provided gun licences and allowed to exercise police powers in their respective regions. Initially the rich and middle peasants from Guntur and Krishna districts mainly purchased black soils and *regadi* (black soil) lands along the Godavari River belt in the districts of Khammam and Warangal. They were primarily located themselves around the regions where irrigation facilities were there.

The migrant population did not mingle with the local population of the villages and had made settlements away from the village. The distinct caste configurations of Kamma settlers were normally away from the main village. Local expressions like 'kotturu', 'Gunturupalle', 'Kammavada' indicate the specific character of their settlements and habitation. (Rukmini, Chandralatha).

3.1.4 Classes and Caste Relations:

There were four classes of people in the state, *Doras*, *Patel/Patwaris*, upper and lower strata of peasantry. *Doras* were the big landlords in the state who owned huge amounts of land amounting to thousands of acres. They were called the *dora*. They generally were from the *Reddy* and *Velama* castes. They built up huge estates called the *gadis*¹⁰ (Satyanarayana et al., 1997). These *deshmukhs* also held the police, administrative, and judicial powers in the villages. They were known as *patel*, *patwari* and *malipatel* (Sundarayya & Chattopadhyaya, 1972). In the village, he served as the state's representative. The power of tradition was in fact more significant than force, whether it was used directly or indirectly (as a threat). As far as everyone could recall, the *deshmukhs* had always been collecting rent, and there was no reason why it shouldn't continue to be that way. Although basic actions are used to spread traditional disparities, belief systems are where they are most profoundly ingrained. Although the landowners' primary sources of control were over the land and the labourers' produce, their influence permeated every aspect of village life. They obtained excise duty from toddy tappers - a state-auctioned right. This was a significant source of money that were later put to use in moneylending. The *deshmukhs* either directly lent money or, more frequently, gave *sahukar* permission to do so. In return, the *sahukar* sold the landlord's agricultural products (Gupta, 1984).

Apart from the landlord class there were two classes of peasantry. The upper stratum of peasantry and the lower stratum. The upper stratum of the peasantry was *Reddy* and *Velamas* who own land but not to the extent of the *deshmukhs* and *deshpandays*, and from 1920s, *Kammas* who migrated from coastal Andhra. With changes in the land administration, they slowly acquired land rights using their social position in the caste hierarchy. They slowly acquired wealth and rural power. Apart from legal ownership rights over land through *patta*, the state land revenue policy helped this section of peasantry for two reasons. One, their agricultural holdings were substantial, two they were not subjected to caste oppression and produced for market and involved in the commercial cultivation. It was relatively easy for them to acquire credit to practice the commercial agriculture. This peasant stratum benefited

¹⁰ The notorious *deshmukh* of Jangaon in Nalgonda district, Visnuru Ramachandra Reddy, held 40,000 acres in forty villages; Kalluru *deshmukh* had 100,000 acres of Madhira in Khammam district; and Janareddy Pratap Reddy, who was arguably the biggest of all, held over 150,000 acres in Suryapet taluka in Nalgonda district...

from the interwar price rise and acquired more lands by combining cultivation with small-time money lending to fellow farmers (Thirumali 2003).

Though they belonged to the same caste of the *doras*, this class of peasantry did suffer from the oppression of the former. The economic interests of these two classes were opposed to each other. The *doras* did not allow them to grow prosperous and created hurdles. Landlords did not permit this section of the peasantry to cultivate paddy beneath natural streams and tanks, nor did they permit their cattle to graze in village common and waste lands. In times of intense agricultural seasons, the *dora*'s lands were cultivated and harvested first then only labour had to work for other peasants. Because of their social position, more often than not this stratum of the peasantry avoided the confrontations with the landlords. Though they resented landlords, they were also against the interests of the labouring class as well. When *vetti* labourers were protesting they did not support them, they also needed free labour to work on their holdings. What they wanted was that *vetti* labour to be freed from the hold of the *doras*, not completely free from bondage or suffering (Thirumali, 2003). Their position was of mix of caste and class characteristics. Their caste position was same as that of *doras*, but their class interests were against that of *doras*. "During the times of confrontation between the labourers and *doras* this class of peasantry hesitated to be associated with the groups organised against the *doras*" (Thirumali 2003, 86) This is the classic case of the 'middle peasant' position. What made it more complex and interesting in the case of Telangana was the importance of the social institution of caste. In theory, the rise of the rich farmer would loosen the social bonds of caste, but it did not work. The very reason that this stratum of peasantry got benefited and were ahead of other caste peasants was their caste position. The cheap and free labour of the lower caste labour and the freedom from caste oppression that made them economically superior to lower caste peasants. They got the best of both worlds: the changing mode of production as well their superior caste position (ibid).

The next was the lower stratum of peasants. They were primarily from OBC communities like *telaga*, *muthusari* communities. They were ordinary peasants. They cultivated their own lands and most of them were the tenants working on the land of big landlords or the *jagirdar*. As mentioned earlier the introduction of commercial agriculture drove these peasants into debt. "Under the new system of land revenue, they had to pay half to two thirds of their produce as land revenue" (ibid: 73). In these circumstances the hold of the money lender over the peasantry increased. Indebtedness became very much a part of the peasant's life.

There was a complete sway of usurious and money lending capital over the peasantry even to the extent that they determined which crop to grow by lending the seeds. “What was significant about the nature of agriculture was the end of ‘self-sufficient’ and consumption-based character of agrarian production” (Bilgrami and Willmott 1884 quoted in Tirumali, 74).

The third section of people were the traditional service caste occupants from different caste like, *Chakali* (Washer men), *Devanga*, (weavers), *Dudekula*, *Goundla* (Toddy Topper), *Golla* (Cattle Herders), *Kammara* (Black Smiths), *Kummari* (Potters), *Kurma* (Sheep Herders), *Mangali* (Barbers) *Telaga*, *Uppara*, *Waddera*. All these groups of people were serving the peasant castes. They were in the ‘*jajmani*’ kind of relation with them.

The last section of the people was the agricultural labourers. They were the most exploited class. They were also from the lower end of the caste hierarchy. According to Akhil Gupta (1984), the last group of individuals were agricultural labourers. They primarily came from the Mala and Madiga dalit communities. A large section of the rural population was made up of agricultural labourers who did not own any land. If we consider poor peasants, who mostly worked as labourers but owned a little plot of land, these two groups made up around 40% of the rural population in 1951. Agriculturists and other agricultural workers made up about 32% of the rural population. Employment was sporadic, with the peak season being harvest and a maximum annual duration of five to six months. Wages were meagre and paid in kind. In Nalgonda area, for instance, earnings for a 9–14 hour workday were equivalent to 1.5 kg of paddy during the lean season and 2.25 kg during the busy one.

The bhagelas were unquestionably the poorest of the landless, as they were compelled to perform vetti labour. Typically, the bhagelas were untouchables indebted to their lords. Due to poor wages, high interest rates, and easily manipulated records, bhagelas were virtually invariably in debt when they died. The next generation would inherit this debt, and the landlord would never have to worry about finding free labour for menial jobs.(Dhanagare 1974).

3.1.5 Labour Market

The labour market consisted of both free wage labour and unfree/forced labour. The seasonal high was harvest time, and the total duration was no more than five to six months per year. Wages were paid in both kind and cash, with the former being the more common. The agricultural labourers were mainly from *Dalits* and OBC communities. The agricultural labourers did not own any land. The daily wage labourers were known as *coolies* in the local language. According to Bobbili (1986), during the agricultural season, temporary agricultural workers were hired for a daily wage. Cash was used to pay them. A certain amount of grain, valued at no more than 6 or 8 annas per male, 3 to 4 annas per female, and 2 annas per child, was paid as payment at harvest time. This type of labourers worked odd tasks during the non-agricultural season as cart drivers, messengers, watchmen, graziers, metal workers, quarriers, and occasionally for road construction. The daily earnings varied from six to ten annas (Bobbili 1986, 659).

Men were employed for ploughing, to dig the water out of wells. Women were employed for sowing, weeding, transplanting, and harvesting. Some of the women were also employed at the houses of *doras* to cleaning, sweeping.

The implementation of the reforms has resulted in the increase of the landless agricultural labourers. As mentioned earlier many of the cultivators were evicted from their lands by the landlords and became landless. It was also a time where the domestic artisanal industry, especially the weaving, has started to decline. Along with severe agricultural depression in the twenties and growing indebtedness, these two processes have resulted in the increase of the landless agricultural labour.

The census of 1911 reported that there was a large increase, of 172% of farm servants and field labourers compared to 1891. There was 36% decline in agricultural labourers reported in the census from 1911 to 1921 because of the famine and the epidemic. From 1921 to 1931 there was 28% increase and from 1931 to 1941 there was 29% increase in agricultural labourers. (Bobbili, 1986, 660).

According to Kesava Iyengar's Economic Investigations in 1929-30, nearly 40 per cent of the resident families were labourers in Warangal district, 55 per cent in Mahaboobnagar and about 62 per cent in Nizamabad. Apart from *coolies* (daily wage labourers) seasonal and periodical labourers, there were *bhagelas* (serfs) maintained by every big landholder. One notable and significant characteristic of Indian types of servitude, according to Dharma

Kumar, is their intimate links to the caste system..(Kumar 1965,348). The *vetti* in Telangana was such a practice of servitude of the low caste members to the upper caste *doras*. In Deccan, there was a practice of labour extraction from skilled or specialised labour by the state authorities for construction of public works, such as tanks, dams, and government building. There were certain castes to do these works for the village community. By the later medieval period this compulsory extraction of labour came to be known as *beggar/veth*, and later it became *vethbegar* or *vettibegar*.'(Fukazawa, 1991). In Telangana, by the late 19th century this practice transformed into two main forms of labour exploitation. Namely *vetii* and *bhagela*. *Bhagela* was a bonded labour system with big landholders. They are known as attached farm servants. This was a form of labour exploitation in which workers agreed to serve their employers indefinitely for a low subsistence wage in exchange for the repayment of a loan provided by the employer. Typically, both *doras* and large landowners utilised these labourers. Among the landless poor, the *bhagelas* were without a doubt the most disadvantaged, as they were required to undertake forced labour known as *vetti*, as stated in the preceding section. His work was fulltime and included every sort of work at the house of the employer. Generally, people from Dalit communities, specially *Madigas*, were employed, sometime people from OBC communities also were employed as *jeetagadu* (Thirumali 2003, 55;Iyengar 1935). According to Bobbili (1986), in addition to receiving one meal a day, a blanket, and a pair of sandals per year, they were paid between Rs. 30 and Rs. 36 each year. Some of them agreed to serve for a predetermined period at a lower rate, with the reduction indicating the amount of interest on the money borrowed and borrowed earnings from their employer for two or three years in advance for wedding expenses or other consumption expenses. This form of forced labour continued till early 2000s in Telangana villages.

Vetti was another form of labour exploitation. *Vetti* was a practise in which landlords used forced labour on their vast landholdings and for household chores. It was primarily based on caste. Tradition mandated Dalit families to send one male member to perform *vetti*. He was kown as *vetti Madiga*. His duties included performing housework, transporting mail or reports, and gathering wood from the forests. It was expected that cobblers and tanners would donate materials to the *dora*. With their ox-carts or horses, washers moved the palanquins in which landlords and their families commuted or were required to run (to clear the way). Five to ten trees are set aside particularly for the purposes of landlords. Similarly, free labour was collected from diverse artisan communities whenever possible, whether it

was for herding the landlord's animals or cultivating the landlord's agricultural lands. (A. Gupta, 1984; Sundarayya, 1973; Thirumali, 2003). Furthermore, *vetti* was frequently demanded anytime. Significantly, the weaker sections of society were frequently called upon. This was one of the important factors for the outbreak of the Telangana Peasant armed struggle from 1946-1951.

The economic depression of 1930s, the adverse effects of second world war, and severe famine in 1920s have led an economic condition that was not favourable to the labouring classes. Over all labourers in Telangana were paid low wages which led them to greater misery. The commercialisation of agriculture did not lead to better living conditions for agricultural worker. In the social structure, majority of them were placed at the bottom, had to face inhuman practices.

3.1.6 Telangana Peasant Armed Struggle 1946-51:

The growing agrarian discontent- landlessness, concentration of land with few landlords, indebtedness, labour exploitation led the Telangana peasantry to fight against the *doras and Jagirdars*. Landless labourers and small peasants in Telangana revolted. Under the leadership of the Andhra Mahasabha, which was under communist leadership, this revolt took place from 1946-51.

Though the movement was at its peaks between 1946-51, it started much earlier. Between 1942-1946 the influence of communists over landless labourers, tenant cultivators, and poor peasants was growing steadily. In sections of the Warangal and Nalgonda districts, the Nizam's authority had effectively ceased to exist by the start of 1946. Officials of the Nizam state and landowners feared venturing into regions of their jurisdictions or estates where communist strongholds had been created. During the post-war [mid-1945] crisis, local sections of the Village-level campaigns were started by Andhra Conference, also called as *Sanghams*, to enhance labourer wages as well as to protest *vetti* labour, illegal exactions, evictions, and the recently enacted grain levy. The landlords dealt with the angry peasants by either leaving for safety, appearing in court, or sending their own enforcers and police. Various academicians have written about the movement against Nizam and *Razakars* on the one hand and against *Deshmukhs* and *Despandays* on the other, and its historical significance (Sundarayya 1972, Akhil Gupta 1984, D N Dhanagare 1983, Debal K SinghaRoy 2004). It

was during this struggle that the question of surplus land redistribution has come up for the first time in the country. The famous slogan of the movement was '*dunnevadide bhoomi*' (Land to the tiller). Not only slogans, but the movement had also put it into practice as part of the programme of the revolutionary movement. When the movement was in high gear, once the movement established its authority in the villages, communist activists seized land in excess of 500 ha. held by one landlord. Communists also set a ceiling limit of 100 acres of dry land 10 acres of irrigated land for a joint family. 'In all the 3000 villages to which movement spread, nearly 10 lakh hectares of surplus land, illegally seized land, leased land, cultivable land, cultivable waste lands were redistributed with full ownership rights to the rural poor and middle peasants.(Sundarayya & Chattopadhyaya, 1972).

While state played important role in the making of landlord class as well as oppressive agrarian structure in Hyderabad state, Telangana peasant armed struggle acted as a countervailing force that tried to rupture economic and political relations between different classes and castes.

The Formation of the United Andhra Pradesh- a note on the Caste-Class dimension:

The state got merged into the Indian union after independence. From August 15, 1947, till 17 September 1948 the Hyderabad state was an independent state. The state was annexed into the Indian union through the 'operation polo' in 1948. Nizam remained a symbolic head of the state till 1952 with limited to no power. After the general elections in 1952 he conceded his role. In 1956 the state was merged into the rest of Telugu speaking area of Madras presidency forming the Andhra Pradesh on 1st November 1956 the first linguistically organised state in the country.

The period from 1948 to 1956 is an interesting period in the state's history. The idea to merge the state into the rest of the Telugu speaking areas was there from a long time.¹¹ The radical peasant mobilisation under the leadership of communists was a threat to domination of landlord class of upper caste *reddys* and *velamas*. The police action has reversed whatever

¹¹ See Rama Sundari Mantena (2014) The Andhra Movement, Hyderabad State, and the Historical Origins of the Telangana Demand: Public Life and Political Aspirations in India, 1900–1956 *India Review*, 13:4, 337-357 for a detailed account of the efforts to merge the state on language basis and the politics associated with it in both regions - Telangana and Coastal Andhra.

changes the peasant mobilisation has brought in and restored the domination of the upper caste landlords. After independence there was a movement in the coastal Andhra for a separate state from the Madras presidency. In 1953 the Telugu speaking areas were separated, and Andhra had become a separate state. The Congress party leaders of the Andhra area lobbied for united Telugu speaking state with the central government. The lobby has resulted in the formation of States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) by the then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The people of Telangana were apprehensive to be merged in the with the Andhra area. Dalel Benbabaali, (2016) pointed out that “less advanced educationally and socio-economically, the people of Telangana feared the harsh competition that would follow the arrival of politically experienced and wealthy migrants from the coastal region after the formation of Andhra Pradesh with Hyderabad as capital.”(185) The fear was that prosperous Andhra, which benefited from the colonial rule in terms of irrigation and English education, might exploit the people of Telangana. Even the SRC did not recommend the merger of the area into Andhra area after three years of the Andhra formation.

What prompted the Congress party for state formation against the wishes of the people of Telangana and the recommendations of SRC was the fear that the communist might capture the power if the two regions were separate. In the 1952 general election CPI front won 37 seats and in 101 members state assembly in the Hyderabad state and Congress got 44 seats. The Congress party, which was dominated by *Reddy* and *Brahmin*, feared that a separate Telangana would quickly become a communist stronghold (Pingle, 2014). It would also imply that a merger with Andhra would strengthen the Reddy element on both sides, as well as the anti-CPI front. Despite popular opposition, the state was merged with the Andhra region in 1956. With bases in Rayalaseema and Telangana, Congress became the *Reddy*-dominated party.¹²

¹² Incorporating the Telangana districts of the dismembered Hyderabad State into the larger Andhra Pradesh has tipped the scales in favour of the Reddy, who are significantly more powerful than the Kammas in those districts. It is notable that a few Kamma groups in Coastal Andhra supported the Telangana movement in 1969, presumably to reduce the Reddys' political dominance in Andhra politics. The Kamma-led Swatantra party of Andhra Pradesh, led by N. G. Range, likewise favours secession. (Duncan B. Forrester 1970. Subregionalism in India: The Case of Telangana. *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 43, No. 1: 5-21)

3.2 From 1956 to 1990s- a period of transition.

Once the region got merged into the Indian Union and with rest of Telugu speaking areas of Madras Presidency a different logic of governance started to emerge in the region as with the rest of the country. A new regime of management and domination replaced the old economic control and explicit administrative regimes of the previous era. It was no longer only tax collection that the state was interested in, it was governed by a 'developmentalist goal', to put the country on the global scale. "Development has been the primary justification for governing systems and the primary justification for the state in independent India." (A. Gupta, 1998). Agriculture became an important aspect, at least in the first two decades after independence, in the forging of a 'modern' nation. International institutions and development discourses started to dictate the evolution of policies at the national level, and which affected the agricultural practices at the local level. How this developmentalist discourse developed and its consequences are part of a separate discussion which is part of a sociology of development which is out of scope for the current study. But it is important to identify the character of the Indian state and how it viewed 'progress' in its discourse of development. David Ludden (1992) identifies four chief features of the 'cognitive terrain' of development. One, ruling powers whose stated objective is progress. Two, a group whose condition must be enhanced. Third, a science-based philosophy that governs the principles and methods used to influence and quantify progress. Four self-proclaimed enlightened leaders who would use state power for development by asserting their capacity to affect progress (251-52).

In the initial decades after independence, political power rested with Congress led by Nehru, it was trying to represent the country as whole. Policy became heavily influenced by the propertied classes. Business groups played an important role in early economic policymaking, while the upper caste land holding groups served as the party's political base at the rural level. So, it had to incorporate the interests of this class. That is the reason that, though there were progressive laws in terms of land redistribution, they were not implemented with whole heartedness hence failed. There was support for Congress from marginal sections of the society and it promised development to all but seldom it delivered to the Indian masses what it had promised. This 'Nehruvian' model of development continued till the 1970s.

From 1970s the previous decades development model has slowly started to change. The hangovers of the legacies of anti-colonial movement started to decline. Indira Gandhi started the 'populist' turn of the Indian state to retain the support base as it had started decline in various parts of the country. Banks were nationalised, Maharajas were stripped of their remaining privileges, anti-monopoly laws were enacted, credit was expanded, and stricter land reform legislations were enforced. All of these can be seen as acts to retain the support base, as well as a reaction to manage the discontent among the people that took a radical turn in the form of various social movements, notable among them being the Naxalbari in 1974.

By 1980s we see a change in the nature of the state slowly shifting in favour of the capital shedding the ideals of socialism. According to Atul Kohli (2007), Rajiv Gandhi and Indira Gandhi shifted the state away from the socialist routes and toward a growth-promoting state that collaborated with the corporate sector in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The changes in policy went beyond the liberalising kinds that restricted the role of the state in markets and instead aggressively promoted private sector profitability. The removal of numerous constraints on the operations of large indigenous firms was one of the liberalising measures. More active measures included curtailing labour's right to strike, giving tax benefits and subsidies to the business sector, maintaining public investments, expanding monetary and fiscal policies, and supporting a variety of preferred industries on the supply side, such as computer and software.

The rhetoric of socialism was increasingly downplayed by state elites. A major casualty of this ideological shift was that land redistribution and tenancy reforms lost their importance as policy options; though they never achieved much in the country, their desirability had become questionable not only among the elites, but also among the peasant movements of the time.

It is within this national context that that the changes were taking place in the region of Telangana. The following sections present the changes in the land holdings and in the agrarian structure.

3.2.1 Changes in the Land Holding Structure.

One of the major successes of the peasant armed struggle was that it forced the state to undertake land reforms. This period has witnessed a progressive legislation in terms of land distribution as well as land ceiling. There was the abolition of the intermediaries namely *Zamindars, Deshmukhs, and Deshpandes* and various others. As mentioned earlier, it was mainly because of the Telangana Peasant Armed struggle that these land reform policies had been enacted. The movement not only made the government to address the land question, but it created such a charged atmosphere that the landlords were themselves reconciled to the inevitability of losing land and conceding some rights to the peasants and tenants. Two important legislations in this period were the Telangana tenancy and agricultural lands in 1950. And the abolition of *Jagirdars* regulation act 1948.

Telangana enacted the Hyderabad (Abolition of Jagirs) Regulation, 1358 Fasli (1948) to take over all Jagirs and integrate them with Diwani lands by the year 1950. The Andhra Pradesh (Telangana Area) Abolition of Inams Act of 1955 abolished all Inams with the exception of those affiliated with religious institutions. All privileges granted to Zamindars, Jagirdars, and Inamdars were gradually revoked, and these territories were converted to Ryotwari tenure (Ramachandraiah & Venkateswarlu 2014, 22).

After middlemen were eliminated, the Hyderabad Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act, 1950, was enacted to safeguard tenants' rights. It sought to (a) set a restriction on the landlord's ability to evict tenants, (b) establish a fair rent, (c) give tenants the right to compensation in the event of eviction, and (d) regulate the period of tenancy. (1969, p. 67; Parthasarathy and Prasada Rao). The creation of protected tenants was permitted under the Act. If a tenant in a notified region held fewer than one family holding and the landowner owned more than two family holdings, they were deemed landowners. The protected tenants were expected to pay a fair price for the land in order to acquire ownership rights. In Telangana, 82,000 hectares of land belonged to 33,000 protected tenants by the middle of the 1970s (Appu, 1975). From 1955 to 1972, and from 1973 to the present, the land ceiling was imposed in two parts. The first act, which failed horribly in 1961, was followed by the AP (Ceiling on Agricultural Holdings) Act in 1973, which adhered to the national criteria. The land ceiling law had minimal effect on land redistribution, but it did restrict the ability of wealthy farmers to acquire additional land.

Radical peasant mobilisation and Green Revolution were the twin processes that determined the land transfers- both acquisition and redistribution, in this period other than the state interventions in land redistribution. There were widespread Naxalite activities in Telangana- specially in north Telangana, during the 1970s against the oppressive agrarian conditions. Though there was state intervention in the agrarian development and land redistribution, it was unsuccessful. Despite state interventions and armed peasant movement, oppressive labour practices such as *vetti* were continued by the landlords in Telangana countryside. The poor implementation of tenancy and land ceiling reforms made sure the continued dominance of landed exploitative social relations. The old forms of labour exploitation of *vetii* continued in some parts of Telangana. Even in the early 1970s, *doras* dominated in most of the villages in the districts of northern Telangana were still (Srinivasulu, 2002a). Against these exploitative landlord class, there was radical peasant mobilisation during 1970s. The violent activities of the Naxalites against the *doras* drove them away from the villages and they went and settled in the urban centres. Some of the landlords left their lands and went away, some of them sold their lands to settle down in the urban centres. Some of the landlords effectively worked through the state, by acquiring contracts, dealerships, etc and enriched themselves in the urban economy. Naxalites encouraged the poor peasants to occupy the lands of the big landlords. This led to the land being transferred to underdeveloped communities. especially to the groups who were always connected to agriculture, such as the gouds (Toddy toppers), yadavs, and muthrasi communities. As a result, the state's OBC populations now partially own the lands that were transferred from the state's traditionally dominating castes.

3.2.2 Main Features of Agrarian Structure and Caste-Class relations:

What we see in this period is the starting of a trend shifting away from agriculture in terms of its constitution in the GDP. The percentage share of agriculture in 1970 was 54.2%, by 1988-89 it got declined to 41.8%. But correspondingly the percentage of people who were dependent on agriculture did not decline. In 1971 this percentage was 73.4% and by 1981 it was 72.02%. This was accompanied by a decline in the net sown area. Between 1960-61 and 1986-87, the net sown area declined from 107.8 lakh ha. to 100.5 ha (Parthasarathy, 1984).

Table 3.3 Number of Operational Holdings in Telangana. (In 000's)

Size Groups	1970-71	1976-77	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91
Marginal	36200	44523	50122	56147	63389
Small	13432	14728	16072	17922	20092
Semi-Medium	10681	11666	12455	13252	13923
Medium	7932	8212	8068	7916	7580
Large	2766	2440	2166	1918	1654
All Sizes	71011	81569	88883	97155	106637

Source: Agricultural Census 2015-16.

In terms of the landholding structure there was a gradual increase in the number of small and marginal farmers in the state from 1970s onwards. The trend continuous even today. Table 3.3 gives the numbers of different class groups who were engaged in agriculture from 1970-71 to 1990-91. Marginal farmers increased from 36,220 to 63,389. In the same way there is decline of the large landholdings. From 2766 holdings in 1970-71 they have declined to 1654 we can see the changes for all classes. Not only macro level agricultural surveys, but even micro studies also indicate the same trend in this period. Micro level study conducted by Anilkumar Vaddiraju (Vaddiraju, 2013) in two Nalgonda villages from 1960s onwards till 1990s shows the same trend of agriculture dominated by small and marginal farmers. The tenancy acts known to have driven the entire leasing operation to informal oral arrangements. There was an increase in the informal tenancy.

In terms of caste class relations

with the cultivation of commercial crops, subsistence agriculture underwent a gradual transformation giving way to a market economy in which Patel-Patwaris from upper castes, controlled land and resources while the middle- and lower caste groups had to depend on these landowning groups in Telangana” (Prasad, 2015).

The green revolution of the 1990s aided large farmers in acquiring land in irrigated areas. Those who settled in towns and cities and entered non-agricultural occupations benefited from education and entrepreneurial activities through caste and kinship networks, which enabled them to acquire more lands. These landlords had access to the state's development resources, in contrast to the preceding generation. Because of this, they were able benefit

from significant state funding from rural banking, agricultural co-operatives, development programmes, and extension services. They also had control over the civil, excise, and forest contracts (Srinivasulu, 2002b). This class mostly belonged to *Reddy and Velama* castes.

During the later phase of green revolution, a second wave of migration of people from the coastal Andhra region specially the lower class *Kammas* who were unable to cope up the highly commercialised agriculture in the Andhra region. The lower class *Kammas* sold their one or two acres of land and bought 20 acres of land in the irrigated pockets of Nagarjuna Sagar, Sriram Sagar in Telangana.

3.2.3. Changes in the Labour Market:

The nature of labour market did not change much during this period. The practice of *vetti* continued even after the revolutionary movement. Especially, in the northern Telangana. The Naxalite movement had a positive impact in this regard. The fear of violence from the Naxalites made the landlords to stop the practice of *vetti* in the late 1980s. Land less Dalits, small and marginal from Dalits and OBCs communities constituted the bulk of the labour market. Small and marginal farmers from the upper caste worked in their own fields, but they were not part of the labour market. According to socio-economic outlook 2016 their share in the total population was 16% in 1951 by 1991 their percentage was increased to 40%.

The labour market was divided into two kinds, as in the previous period. One is a regular labour market and the other one is an irregular one. Regular market is something where labour was employed throughout the year. The irregular market was for daily wage labour and sometimes for some period, most of the time till the task for which labour was hired was completed. Both male and female labour were employed. The important feature of the employment was gender specific. In the sense that male labour was employed for ploughing and for activities which required high manual labour. Female labour was employed for weeding, transplanting, sowing and various other activities. Gender-based division of labour is a crucial aspect of the labour market. The irregular market is divided into two segments: a market for daily wage labour, in which payment is made every day for a predetermined number of hours worked, and a market for contract jobs, in which producers or a state agency (directly or through contractors or labour brokers) assign work, typically on a piece-rate

basis. Even while contract work generally require longer hours and/or more strenuous work, they typically pay more per day than daily rated jobs. Personal networks, which are frequently caste-related but not always, provide access to contract jobs. Male leaders organise groups for harvesting or earthwork, as well as groups of temporary migrants who have occasionally formed somewhat stable groups with other households. Typically, the female recruits for these groups are spouses or other family members. Typically, female leaders are in charge of organising groups for hand weeding and paddy transplanting. The wages were paid both in cash and in kind.

The regular labour market is where the labour was employed for a particular period of time, for three months to one year. The general practice was they were employed for one year. They were called the attached farm labourers, as said earlier, they were known as *jeethagadu* in the local language. This category of labour was particularly attracted the attention of various academicians¹³. It was studied extensively across the country. They were seen both in positive as well as negative light. Some have argued that (Rudra,1987) their conditions were better than the daily wage labourers. According to Sripad Motiram, attached labourers in the area are primarily landless, had little assets, and are deeply indebted. They engaged in attached labour because they required credit and a steady stream of income. Many of them would choose to be unattached if they were not in debt, and a large portion of their desire for credit stems from the debt payment process itself. Their ability to bargain and take collective action is negatively impacted by debt. Attached labour is at the bottom of the agrarian hierarchy since it entails arduous physical labour and dependence on the employer. Accordingly, the two primary qualities of this category of labour are 'servility' or 'dependency' (2007).

Krishnaiah says that

From the employer point it was risk aversion strategy and they were employed to (a) to ensure supply of labour in peak seasons or when cost of labour is high, (b) to put downward pressure on casual wage rates, and (c) to nip in the bud the incipient efforts of labour to organise themselves for purposes of wage bargaining (Krishnaiah, 1998).

¹³ For instance, Rudra (1987) contended that semi-attached workers in West Bengal (India) fared better than daily workers. In his analysis of Indian agriculture, Rudra (1990) made a comparison between employees of government-owned businesses and attached labourers. Attached labourers in India were referred to as a "protected class" by Byres (1972). Garcia (cited in Schaffner 1995), Brass (1999), and Jodhka have all given them unfavourable reviews.

One of the important trends that started in this period was the migration of people. In the initial days people migrated to work in the coal fields of Ramagundam and Singareni. Some people, especially the weaving community, have migrated to Bombay, Surat, Bhiwandi to work in the textile industries and construction sites. In the 1970s, the Naxalite movement influenced youth and educated males to seek employment in the Gulf. People who returned from the Naxalite struggle began fleeing from this region to urban areas, particularly the Gulf states, to avoid police harassment. Later in the thesis, the history and nature of the Gulf migration will be discussed in greater detail. Migration to gulf countries is seen specially in two districts of Karimnagar and Nizamabad.

The non-farm employment avenues in the state were the traditional occupations such as toddy tapping and selling; sheep rearing and *kambali* weaving, and various other traditional occupations.

Separate Telangana Movement 1969:

Roughly after a decade of the formation of the United Andhra Pradesh there was the emergence of the contradictions in the region. The movement for a separate Telangana state was among the major political expressions to shock the state after the state merger with coastal Andhra (Srinivasulu, 2002b). In its early stages, the movement began as an independent, non-party mobilisation led by college-educated young and working-class individuals. Complaints of prejudice and injustice against personnel from the rich coastal region of Andhra Pradesh were detailed. As the campaign gained momentum in terms of diffusion and mobilisation, a portion of the Congress Party's Telangana leadership participated, openly giving it a party-political dimension. The campaign for a separate Telangana reflected the discontent of the popular classes with the merger of a backward region and a developed region. The region's political elite, who felt marginalised by the post-AP political system, viewed this as an opportunity to negotiate a more favourable political arrangement. M. Chenna Reddy's faction of the Congress Party's leadership eventually acquired complete control of the movement. The movement died due to the intolerance and bullying of the Congress Party high command, as well as a compromise negotiated by a Congress Party group within the movement's leadership. The Separate Telangana Movement of 1969 brought unemployment and greater disparities between three regions to the forefront. Emerging dissatisfaction in the agricultural sectors among various socioeconomic

groupings also came to the forefront. These problems will become central to the movement that will arise in the future.

The period from 1956 to 1990 is an interesting period in the history of Telangana. Upper caste landlord classes have consolidated their position by maintaining close ties with the state and diversifying their economic base from agriculture. On the other hand, OBC castes have acquired certain amounts of lands. With the emergence of TDP and the abolition of Patel Patwari systems there was an increase of political representation of OBC castes. In agrarian sector the small and marginal farmers have increased with the fragmentation of land and agriculture was slowly started to integrated with the global economy and a complete shift has happened from a subsistence agriculture to commercialised agriculture. Overall the period from 1956 to 1990 is a period of consolidation of the power of landlord classes and the consolidation of commercial capitalist agriculture which has resulted in the serious negative consequences for the small and marginal farmers specially from marginal sections of the society in the later period. This was also a period of assertion by the lower castes, Adivasis and women. For example, anti-arrack movement by women; Tendu leaves movement by Adivasis and Madiga Dandora.

3.3 From 1990s to 2014 - first Neo-liberal period

The barriers on capital flows were removed and country was adopting a neo-liberal developmental imagery during 1990s. This was the starting of period where, as David Harvey (Harvey, 1989) puts it, ‘the idea of government shifted to that of a managerial or entrepreneurial entity, whose role was reduced to creating new incentive structures for private enterprises.’(Cross, 2014). The state slowly withdrew from the public sector investment in all sectors of the economy. The Indian economy took a turn towards neo-liberal model of development the effects of which have been worse on the marginal sections in the country. According to Atul Kohli (Kohli, 2012), the nature of the Indian state shifted from a ‘reluctant pro-capitalist state that flirted with socialism’ to a ‘vigorous pro-capitalist state with a neo-liberal ideology’. With neo-liberalisation in 1990s the integration of the India economy with the global market picked up. There were number of forces that facilitated this move of the Indian state, two important forces of those were the decline of the USSR and increased international relations with the United States and the pressures of the Indian business communities to open the Indian economy to the world market (ibid).

The economic consequences of ‘liberalisation’ have been widely discussed, debated, and written up.

Unlike the previous era, state in this period not only encouraged private capital, but it withdrew from the public sector investment. It slowly withdrew investment from all public sectors. This has adversely affected the sectors like agriculture, a sector on which most of Indian labour force depended, in worst possible way. What followed was the crisis of agrarian sector and farmer suicides across the country. The class inequalities have widened since the 1990s, along with it the concentration of wealth with few has increased from then on and it continues unabated.

With state’s active support, corporate capital has entrenched deeply into every nook and corner of the country affecting every part of the life of people. Land dispossession, for Special Economic Zones, and fragmentation have increased, and land had been diverted for the non-agricultural purposes more and more. The dispossessed labour has not been absorbed into the formal sector. The increasing informal sector, where the identities of caste, gender, region, and religion played an important role in accessing the dwindling employment opportunities, has grown to a very great extent. The distress migration of, what Jan Breman calls, the ‘footloose’ labour to different places across the country, sometimes even outside the county, these are some of the major characteristics of the development model in this period.

By 2010 all the above trends have been intensified and people have become more vulnerable. What is more important along with these trends, was the change in the ‘value’¹⁴ system of both people and state. Transactory values have become important for the survival of both capital and labour. The state’s role has been to facilitate those transactions between people, between capital and labour in economic terms. When it comes to normative sense, the collectivist values have been replaced by individualist values. There has been individualisation of problems which are otherwise structurally- both social and economic-rooted. For example, farmer’s crisis which is the result of various complex institutions like credit market, input, and output market and other institutions reduced as existential problem,

¹⁴ I am using the term ‘value’ in both senses of its meaning. Both economic value and value in the normative sense.

to be fought at individual level. As Gopal Guru says “struggles are either pushed towards the domain of the individual’s moral will to overcome distress, or they are directed towards tragic acts such as suicides. Thus, collective conscious action gets regressively replaced by the narratives of individual struggle.”(Guru 2016, 22). When it comes to the dispossession of land for the purposes of private capital, like SEZs, what become important is the notion of ‘transactional value of the land’. The price of the land in the market becomes an important yardstick not only for state but also to those whose land being dispossessed. The notion of ‘compensation’ becomes the rational for transactions. Again, according to Guru, the idea of remuneration that governs this ostensibly reasonable transaction effectively removes the foundations required for transforming individual experience into a shared collective experience and the ensuing solidarity. This idea of compensation is ultimately used by the corporate class to avoid the emergence of crises resulting from the predatory process of expropriation. (ibid).

This was the developmental model at the national level that has effectively impacted the state also. During the initial days of the neoliberal period the state was headed by N Chandrababu Naidu. Under his leadership he set out to redefine the interests of the state. ‘He invoked a reformist agenda in which he presented the state as an instrument of technocratic rationality that could achieve for AP what India’s central government had failed.’(Cross, 2014).

As Jamie Cross says that

As international financial organisations and developmental agencies lend their support to regional programs of economic reform and growth in India, they helped reimagine AP as discrete economic entity, a bounded, freestanding unit that could be mapped, measured, known, examined and compared against other units (Cross 2014, 41).

Naidu announced a vision 2020 document which was a blueprint for implementing the Neoliberal policies. He effectively continued the neoliberal agenda for almost ten years till 2004. In 2004 congress came to power under the leadership Y S Rajashekar Reddy. Along with effectively continuing the neoliberal agenda in his rule a new era of ‘populist’ politics has been unveiled.¹⁵ Schemes like free power to the farmers, health insurance ‘*arogyasree*’, fee reimbursement for students were some of his flagship populist schemes. He started a major

¹⁵ Though one can say that the beginning of populism in the state was started by N T Rama Rao with his 2 kg rice program, it was YS who took it to a next level.

irrigation scheme under '*jalayagnam*'. All these schemes instead of benefiting the marginal sections of the society, they effectively redistributed the state's resources to the private capitalist class and strengthened caste structure. We also see a competition between state's two dominant communities *Reddy* and *Kammas* for the control of the state assembly, public contracts, real-estate, and urban space. In all the large-scale infrastructure development projects there was nexus of politics with caste, with the contracts for public purpose projects-ports, roads, power plants, irrigation projects – invariably won by *Kamma* and *Reddy* contractors loyal to either TDP or Congress.

3.3.1 Land question during this period:

In 2002 for the first time a state government has announced a state-level SEZ policy. The special economic Zones have emerged as the sites of these new projections that potentially be realised and offered to the private investors. these SEZs were fashioned 'as places of yet unrealised possibility, conjuring up possibility of growth, profit. With the vision document Naidu went to IMF and various other international forums to project the state as the lucrative site for investment conjuring up an economic performance for audiences of potential investors. This was what Anna Tsing has called the 'economy of appearances.'(Tsing, 2000).

During this time, a substantial portion of agricultural land was shifted to non-agricultural uses. Between 1990 and 2003, the state's net sown area declined by around 1.5 percent, according to the Ministry of Agriculture (united AP). This may seem negligible in percentage terms, yet it represents more than 21 million hectares in absolute terms. In comparison, non-agricultural land rose by 34 million hectares between 1990 and 2004. (Indian Government 2008, 228) In tandem with this, a variety of institutional structures were established to facilitate the implementation of neoliberal policies. In September 1993, the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC) was created. The purpose of this corporation was to locate industrial growth zones. It served as a focal point for coordinating government efforts to provide the necessary infrastructure for industrial growth. It has built industrial estates over the years in and around Hyderabad as well as in other areas of the state. Its importance increased as a result of land distributions from the middle of the 1990s onward, particularly after 2004 when the Congress took control in AP. During the years 1974–2004, APIIC had a land bank of 48579 acres (19659 ha), but between 2004 and 2009, it rose by two-and-a-half times to 121,655 acres (49233 ha). Government

lands make up about 60% of these lands. Thus, the APIIC has changed its role to that of a land dealer (Ramachandraiah & Venkateswarlu 2014, 7-8).

Between 2002 and 2007, approximately 90,000 hectares of agricultural land in and around Hyderabad were diverted for real estate and mega-projects across 25 *mandals*. Over the decade from 2000s to 2010, another 63,000 hectares have been converted to real estate across 20 *mandals* in Ranga Reddy district. (V. R. Reddy & Reddy, 2007). By the middle of the decade, an extraordinary concentration of 31 economic zones (54% of all the zones in the state) had appeared around the periphery of Hyderabad (Cross, 2014). As per erstwhile Andhra Pradesh's experience, the majority of SEZs are established for the purpose of acquiring land for real estate promotion. Some authors attribute SEZs as special real estate zones. (Bidwai, 2006). They have become instruments of real estate speculation operated to the benefit of transnational property developers, as well as India's industrial capitalists and rich farmers (Cross, 2014).

Real estate, private educational institutions (engineering, medical colleges, private schools), infrastructure projects, development of IT parks, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), outer ring road, and other non-agricultural activities were among the reasons agricultural land was diverted. 'Under the neo-liberal framework, the state reversed the clock of land reform acts. For instance, the SEZ act says no Indian law will apply to SEZ area and the land will be treated as foreign land. In the process, several lakh acres of land were acquired and thousands of peasants and other dependent on land were evicted and deprived of their livelihood. As a result, bitter and violent struggles by the lower class/caste groups took place Polepally in Mahbubnagar which resisted the forcible acquisition of land by the state and the corporate entities' (Prasad, 2015).

The capital city development model has resulted in the development of Hyderabad as a software hub. This resulted in the development of real estate in and around Hyderabad which led spiralling growth of the real estate sectors as well an increase in the prices of lands in and around the city. The construction of the outer ring road to has diverted agricultural lands to real estate development. This also was an important aspect of the land question in this period.

3.3.2 Agrarian Structure and agrarian crisis:

The green revolution that was introduced in 1980s and the neo-liberal policies have started to show their adverse impacts on the agrarian sector in this period. Intensification of commercial agriculture led all the agrarian classes towards the high investment and high-risk agriculture leading them deep into the agrarian crisis. Especially agrarian classes from marginal sections like SCs, OBCs, and tenant farmers were severely impacted with the agrarian crisis. Farmers from upper castes were also impacted but they had the state and their social networks to fall back.

In Telangana all the disadvantaged sections like SC, ST, and OBCs constitute a bigger proportion in the state population. In 2010 they constituted 75.4% of the total population. The table 3.4 gives proportions of each social group in the state. most of these disadvantaged groups depended on agriculture for their livelihood the crisis of the agrarian sector very harsh on them.

Table 3.4 Distribution of Social Groups in Telangana

Social Group	Percentage
SC	15.8
ST	8.9
OBC	50.7
Higher Castes	10.7
Muslims	12.4

Source: Sri Krishna Committee Report.

In terms of land holding structure, the data reflect the trend from the previous time period. The number of marginal and small farmers continued to rise in the region. The process persisted and even accelerated significantly. The number of large agricultural holdings have decreased. From 1995-1996 to 2015-2016, Table 3.5 provides the number of operational land holdings in the state. More than 80 percent of the total number of operational land holdings were held by small and marginal farmers. During the neoliberal era, this pattern was found throughout the country. The Koneru Ranga Rao committee, which was established in 2004 to investigate the status of land reforms in the unified AP, found that the number of landless households in the state had increased. In addition, the bulk of

them were found to be Scheduled Castes. Another significant trend was the diminishing average size of operational land holdings.

Several studies (Galab et al., 2009; D. N. Reddy & Mishra, 2010) have found that Indian agricultural growth rate has been declining since the 1990s, particularly since 1994-95. These assertions are made on two axes. The first is that, in comparison to the 1980s, agricultural growth has slowed since the 1990s. Second, small cultivators have seen either a slowdown or a significant decline in their welfare. Scholars are increasingly united in their belief that Indian agriculture is in a state of severe crisis. Though, during the mid 1980s the first spurt of farmer suicides occurred, there were fewer cases, and the governments did not pay attention to the early warnings of immanent crisis of the agrarian sector. The second spurt was from 1997 became a recurring phenomenon in the region which continues even after the new state formation.

Table 3.5 Number of Operational Holdings in Telangana. (in 000s)

Class	1995-96	2000-01*	2005-06*	2010-11	2015-16
Marginal	71179	75408	83694	92826	100251
Small	21643	22695	23930	24779	25809
Semi-Medium	14261	14021	14127	13896	13993
Medium	7092	6577	6375	5875	5561
Large	1404	1230	1096	973	838
All Sizes	115580	119931	129222	138348	146454

Source: Agricultural Census.

Some parts of the region, especially those with access to irrigation infrastructure, embraced the changes brought about by the green revolution during the initial phase. It had minimal effect on the region as a whole. During the second phase of the green revolution (starting in the 1990s), agriculturalists in the region adopted high-value crops and integrated them with market processes to increase yields. Farmers with limited resources have opted for high-investment agriculture, which has shown to be extremely volatile and resulted in debt traps and suicides. Farmers with a small or marginal resource base chose for high-investment agriculture, which was very unstable and ultimately led to their deaths. Approximately 3,000 farmers committed suicide in Telangana alone between 1998 and 2006. It accounted for

around 66.47 percent of all suicides in Andhra Pradesh as a whole. (Galab et al., 2009). Between 14 May 2004 and 10 November 2005, according to a judicial panel created by the state government, there were 1068 farmer suicides and 277 waver deaths due to famine.

Farmer suicides were one of the manifestations of the many folds agrarian crisis. The crisis was a result of a combination of many factors. Growing marginalisation process in agriculture, increasing fragility of land and water resources, unsustainable commercial agricultural practices all of which were aggravated the crisis. The withdrawal of state from supporting the agriculture as part of the neo-liberal logic was the chief contributor to the crisis.

Adoption of a market-driven commercial and monocropping culture, resulting in severe stress on the local resource base. As previously stated, reforms such as declining public investment and declining institutional support for input supply have contributed to rising investment costs. The shift to commercial crops like cotton has exposed the dryland farmers to high risks. The trade liberalisation has resulted in the price volatility and ‘55% of the farmers did not get the minimum support price (MSP) for their produce’(Galab et al., 2009). The worst affected are the marginal, small farmers, and even marginal farmers who do not get MSP because of their dependence on the trades and informal money lenders for credit at exorbitant rates of interest, but they were also tied up with the trader for purchase of inputs at higher costs and selling their output at lower MSP.

Several studies have been undertaken on rural distress and farmer suicides in the region. According to a 1998 AWARE study, the leading cause of farmer suicides was accumulating debt for drilling or expanding tube wells. The cause was repeated crop losses or, in some instances, failure of the bore well. Failure to repay the loans and suicides were the consequences. The excessive reliance on ground water irrigation and non-institutional loans, as a result of institutional failure, has led to suicides. According to the study, thirty years ago there were just six tube wells in one village. By 1998, there were roughly 1800 bore wells in the village, of which approximately half were dry. According to the study, the agrarian situation is exacerbated by dependency on groundwater and the related risks.

In Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, Vidyasagar and Chandra (Vidyasagar & Chandra, 2004) found that yield-increasing technology is applied to agrarian structures without significant

infrastructure development. They continue by saying that the development of market-driven commercial agricultural practices has placed a significant burden on the local resource base. Suri and Rao (P. Narasimha Rao & Suri, 2006) place high prices and low returns last on their list of contributing causes to suicide. They argue that neoliberal policies—which are the outcome of the absence of the farming community, which causes them to be excluded from policymaking—are to blame for the changes in the agrarian condition.

According to Revathi and others, the bulk of agriculturalists who took their life were from Backward Communities (OBCs) and SC, STs. In addition to farming expenses, they report greater pressure to pay for vital social services like as health and education. The following are the findings of a 2007 survey done by Revathi (2007) pertaining to the financial circumstances of farmers who took their life in 2003 and 2004: Suicide is more likely the higher a person's dependence on groundwater as an irrigation supply for non-food crops. Suicide risk among farmers grows proportionally with their reliance on informal loans to invest in non-food crops. Suicide is more prevalent among tenant farmers who cultivate non-food crops and rely on groundwater for irrigation. Although suicide is not a class-based occurrence, the bulk of suicides are committed by small and marginal farmers, she added. They are observed among farmers of all castes, but "other Backward Classes" account for the majority of cases. Suicide is less likely to occur among farmers whose household incomes are more diversified. If farmers are compelled to spend a greater amount of their income on education, health, and social events, they are more likely to commit suicide.

Vakulabharanam (2005) refers to the agrarian situation in the region, particularly in the context of the 1990s, as 'growth induced distress'. Despite the phenomenal rise of the agricultural sector, peasants were becoming more and more poor as a result of the interaction between liberalisation-induced price shocks and local lending institutions.

Along with the socio-economic conditions of small and marginal farmers the process of individualisation of farmers compounded their vulnerability, which eventually led to their loss of agency, thereby making suicide an alternative. In her brilliant study on farmer suicides A R Vasavi (2012) has discussed the adverse impacts of the individualisation of agriculture and entire rural life. According to her, the cultural foundation of Indian agriculture has changed as a result of the increased integration of agriculturalists into the market economy. Despite the fact that the agrarian system was hierarchically organised with

caste-based allocations of rights over land and its resources, regional agricultural practises were carried out according to a pattern of jointly shared knowledge forms and on shared rhythms. Negotiating both traditional and contemporary agricultural knowledge, utilising networks of relatives and co-workers, and relating in ways that had cultural value were all parts of this process. Farmers also carried out agricultural production according to regionally distinct patterns that adapted agriculture to the regional ecological conditions. “Even while agriculture was founded on diverse rights and statuses, it gave a variety of people who played various roles in its functioning a greater collective identity”(Vasavi 2012: 114-115).

With the green revolution, the local ecology based agricultural practices have been replaced with homogeneous agricultural practices. The intensification of commercial agriculture with neo-liberalisation, has introduced the use of external inputs and practices that not locally derived or evolved. The larger landholder with access to capital and market were able to adopt those practices without any problem.

The small farmers compete with one another to increase production or raise new crops that sell for the highest price on the market. This has resulted in the separation of agriculturalists from one another as well as the separation of local agricultural methods. Agriculture has always been embedded in the caste hierarchy. Caste was very important for agricultural production. With the neo-liberalisation it has become aa center of ‘economic modernity’, according to Vasavi, where it is intended to be altered by the introduction of new technology, intensification of its ties to the market, and introduction of new knowledge forms. This economic modernity brings with it the individualisation of players. The technologicalisation of the new agricultural modernity and its games induct and encourage people who are economically and socially marginal in the system into emerging threats. (120)

When it comes to labour force this period saw some changes which are important to notice. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was introduced at the national level in 2005 across the country. This act has some positive impact on the lives of agricultural labourers in general and Dalit agricultural labourers in particular. The guarantee of minimum work for 100 days and a fixed wage have drastically improved the condition of labour force. The real wages have significantly improved and the bargaining capacity of labour in the villages has improved. The Dalit agricultural labourers were able

to escape from the domination of upper castes to some extent. They no longer depend on the landlords or on the farmers for work.

By the end of 2010 and there was a new trend that started to emerge in the country. The structural transformation of agriculture has revealed significant contradictions regarding the decline of agriculture as a source of economic growth, despite the fact that farming remains the backbone of rural economies. The country's dependence on agriculture is as high as 46%. The fragmentation of landholdings is a consequence of intensifying demographic pressures on farmland. The problem is more aggravated as agricultural land is diverted to industrial and urban use. The size of the operational landholdings has reduced. By 2010-11, roughly 67% landholdings were marginal and another 18% of the land holdings are small (IDFC Rural Development Network, 2013). Small and marginal holding constitute 85% of the farmlands. Rural-Urban migration has also increased due to the lack of opportunities and the low profitability of agriculture. An interesting paradox of this increasing rural-urban migration is that it has not been able to alleviate poverty. Most of the migrant's condition in urban areas has further deteriorated. Another important aspect of the agrarian transformation is that increasing presence of women in agriculture than men. We can see this trend not only in India but also in most of the third world countries. Women make up 60 to 80% of the agricultural labour in Asia. Almost 65% of all women workers and 83% of rural female workers are in agriculture in the country. (ibid).

Another important aspect of the agrarian transformation is the increasing importance of the non-farm employment. Rural livelihoods are not only agrarian. The number of households depend on rural non-farm employment as their primary source of income are over 42% (NSSO 2011). That is where the importance of the petty commodity production has become very important in the present context of the rural livelihood. These are the changes recorded at the national level. We see these in Telangana also, but they have not been systematically studied in recent times. The effort of the thesis is to fill that gap in Telangana. The coming chapters will address these changes in Telangana.

3.3.3 Labour Market Relations:

Three important shifts have emerged in terms of the labour market concerned. First, dependency relations are replaced by free labour relations. Two, the mechanisation of agriculture has resulted in a gendered labour market. Three, there has been an increase in the non-farm employment, either in the village or outside of it.

First, with neo-liberalisation and with certain state policies like MNREGA the relations between the laborers and farmers has changed. The laborers are no longer dependent on the farmers to provide work for the labourer. As people are migrating to nearby places and well as far off places, village is no longer the only place the labourer would find the work. So, they are no longer dependent only on the farmers for work. The implementation of rural employment guarantee act in 2005 also made this possible. MNREGA also has given the laborers a certain bargaining power. According to studies, real wages for both men and women rose significantly after 2006/07, almost at the same time that funding levels for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme significantly increased. It has been discovered that the rate of wage growth among female labourers in the state is higher than that of their male counterparts (Bhattarai et al., 2014).

Second, mechanisation of the agriculture has increased in agriculture. This has significant effects on the labour. The nature of mechanisation is such that it only replaced the work of the male labour and did not have any significant alterations in the nature of women labour. 'The extent of mechanisation across different activities in agriculture are: soil working and seed spreading 40%, seeding and planting 29%, irrigation 37%, harvesting and threshing 60-70% across the country for wheat and paddy.' (Kapur et al., 2015). The harvesting in crops like cotton and chilli are 100% manual and predominantly women are employed for these activities. The point is that we are trying to make is that the transformation after liberalisation in terms of labour is a gendered transformation. Smriti Rao argues that in an area where women make up the majority of the agricultural wage workforce, the increased capital costs for growers as a result of liberalisation have increased the urge to control labour expenses. Women are more likely to experience pressure to limit their ability to bargain for higher wages when they work both on their own farms and in other people's fields for pay. Insofar as salaries are a determinant in intra-household bargaining power, a growing gender wage disparity reduces the likelihood that wage work will increase women's negotiation power.

Therefore, the empowering impact of these women entering the workforce may have been diminished in the years after liberalisation (Rao 2011, 295).

Third, the change in the proportion of rural non-farm employment (RNFE) from 1993-1994 is significant. Change is driven by relatively stronger growth in infrastructure and construction sectors, as well as better transportation and communication, differential wage rates, more literacy, and government programmes. The construction industry's 12 percent annual employment growth between 1999-2000 and 2009-10 (D. N. Reddy et al., 2014) significantly boosted rural-to-urban circular migration, particularly among male workers seeking comparably higher-paying jobs.

Changes in the occupations of various social groups are an additional significant aspect of the rural employment structure's development. The traditional artisan communities were the worst hit communities with the globalisation, they were thrown out into the labour market or shifted into new occupations.

Separate Telangana Movement and the formation of new state- 2002-2014:

The movement for separate state has picked up the momentum again from 2002 onwards, which culminated in the formation of a new state of Telangana in June 2014. The issues of inequality and underdevelopment cropped up against the state and propertied classes from the coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. The creation of Telangana is the achievement of a long-pursued goal of the Telangana people. Those who argued for separate Telangana articulated their demands around broader issues of water, resource allocation, and employment opportunities. Later they were arguing for balanced regional development, rights over natural resources and cultural identity. The feeling of injustice continued among the people of Telangana from the 1969 movement. The issues raised in the movement were same even after three decades later. Regional disparities have increased between Telangana and coastal Andhra after the successive regimes. From 1995, after the implementation of a neoliberal agenda, onwards we see another round of migration of enterprising *kammas* from coastal Andhra to Telangana, specially to Hyderabad. They were investing real estate, education, health, cinema, and media. They acquired a dominant position in all sectors of social-economic, political, and cultural life. They could dictate terms in almost everything.

In the rural Telangana farmers resented that Andhra settlers were buying lands under the newly developed irrigation projects and the traditional irrigation systems like village tanks, were neglected by successive governments. This led to an increased dependence on ground water. Poor farmers had to dig wells and tube wells for which they borrowed huge amounts of money. Combined with high investment and high-risk agriculture, this led to the indebtedness among the farmers and Telangana became a hub of farmers suicides.

Against this backdrop there was new movement for separate state from 2002. This was led by K Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) and his new party Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). He was supported by various intellectuals, politicians, lawyers, journalists, and students of Telangana. There were various other groups fighting for a separate state, but the one led by KCR became the dominant one. Though there was a lack of leadership at the top, this movement was supported by all the marginal sections of the people who constituted more than 80% (table 3.4) of the state's population. It is important to recognise that all the people of Telangana fought for a separate state, it was not a homogeneous movement, with regards to the kind of ideals with which they fought for a separate state. The parties who were involved in the movement can be classified as those who were seeking geographical Telangana (Bhugolika Telangana), those who were seeking democratic Telangana (Prajawamika Telangana), and finally those who were seeking social Telangana (Saamajika Telangana). All these internal contradictions were brushed aside with idea that they might weaken the movement. With sacrifices of more than 1000 student self-immolations the separate state was emerged in 2014. The TRS party came to power in the elections immediately after state formation and KCR became the chief minister of the state.

From 1990s to 2014 is the period where the neoliberal shift of economy has completely realised in the state. Both political parties, TDP and Congress, implemented neoliberal policies. While TDP implemented these policies with the belief that they will lead to the growth and prosperity for the people, Congress implemented them along with the populist policies. Upper castes like *kammas* and *reddys* have benefited from the close association with the state. On the other hand lower sections of the society have faced the negative consequences of the neoliberal capitalist development. This has led to a discontent among the marginal sections of the society which led to the separate Telangana movement and which later realised in the emergence of a new state in 2014.

3.4 After the New State Formation: 2014-2020.

The creation of a new state has not challenged the dominant model of capitalist development, which was criticised by the radical sections of the movement supporters (Benbabaali 2020). The new government has not changed or did not depart from the neo-liberal policies which were largely part of the problem for the backwardness and inequalities in the region. It continued with the old policies that evicted thousands of poor farmers to establish special economic zones and the mega infrastructure projects. Under new government, thousands of farmers have been evicted for the Kaleswaram Project- the flagship lift irrigation programme of the TRS government. It is the same case with the building of the pharma city. The new state is implementing those policies very effectively coupling them with populist programmes.

Once it came into power the new government has been implementing the neo-liberal policies very effectively and is in competition with other states in drawing attention towards neoliberal foreign direct investment. The government conducted an Integrated Household Survey (*sakala janula survey*) in 2014, where the government enumerated each and every household and collected data pertaining to everything. The reason behind the survey was to effectively plan to reach out different social groups in providing the government resources under various populist programs.

Land Question:

D'costa and Chakroborty (2017) claim that the land question has progressed from its agrarian origins to being positioned within the trajectory of global capitalist development and how the state mediates this process. In this approach, they consider three dimensions to be crucial. First, in the name of 'development', the state actively interferes in the commercialisation of land by directing it toward non-agricultural purposes. The state uses bureaucratic methods in addition to the market and pricing mechanisms to direct land transfers to the capitalist class. Third, because the state is required by law to defend the rights of landowners and other people, such coercive measures call for confrontations between land losers and the state. (Vijayabhaskar 2020).

These dimensions are in work after the new state formation. First, state has been implementing policies that encourage the land transfer from agriculture to non-agricultural purposes, such as the announcement of new districts, announcing pharma cities, which resulted in the land transfers. Second, state undertook a project of land records purification in the year 2017 and started a new website for land registrations, which is called '*dharani*'. It is a repository of land record details of every landholder in the state. In spite of the fact that a pilot project to computerise Land Records was initiated in the country in 1988-89, the scheme was implemented as a full-fledged programme in 1992-93 (Motiram, 2007), the important reason that the present government took it and taking it forward is to ease the bureaucratic process of land transactions with digitisation of land records. Another reason for government to digitise the land records is to find the government land. With the abolition of *zamindars*, *jagirdars* and with the merger of state in the Indian union all *serf-e-khas* lands have become government lands. As shown in the figure.1 though majority of these lands were in and around Hyderabad they are scattered around the state. The lands around Hyderabad have been effectively transferred to private corporations during the TDP and Congress rule. Now government wants to find its lands and wants to reclaim them for purpose of revenue generation. It needs resources to keep the populist policies going ahead as they have become very important in legitimising the government at the grassroots level.

Immediately after coming to power in 2014 the state government has brought forward new industrial policy. It is famously known as TS-iPASS. The Telangana State industrial project comprises the provision of self-assessment certificate (Act No.3 of 2014) in order to expedite the processing of applications for issue of multiple approvals required for the establishment of industries at a single position on the basis of the self-certificate provided by the entrepreneur and to create an investor-friendly atmosphere in the State of Telangana.

These new laws are not only benefiting private corporates, but they are taking away the rights of tenants and actual cultivators. In the year 2020 the government has passed a new act replacing the Telangana Rights in Land and *Pattadar* Passbooks Act, 1971. The main objectives of the new act are: to enable the goals of ease of doing business and greater transparency and accountability in the department; to protect the lands belonging to the State Governments or Central Government; to provide accountable and responsive revenue administration as part of smart and good governance; finally, to ensure hassle free revenue administration in the layer public interest.

It replaced the previous act where there were provisions in the pass books for entering the not only names of the owners of the land but also the tenants and others. It had a provision in recognising the rights of the tenants. The new act effectively removed those provisions and eliminating the rights of tenant farmers.

The major difference between the previous period and the present period is very significant. The legislation from 1947 to 1990s tried to remove the middlemen between the government and state. It also tried to distribute the excessive land to the land less. However unsuccessful those efforts where they were favouring the landless. The major reason for the failure of those reforms, among many, was the unwillingness of ruling classes. The later phase of reforms, especially after the new state formation, the only intention of the government is to facilitate the capital. The new reforms are intended to remove the cultivator and facilitate the land buyer to deal with the land owners directly. Make the process of land transaction easier. The role of the government is proactive in this process. Within first six month they have brought out a new industrial policy that promises to allocate land within 15 days. They displayed big hoarding around the city saying land will be available on the platter.

In the name of *Haritaharam* the state government has bought out a policy of planting one crore trees every year. In this programme forest officials are going and planting the tree in the Tribal areas. Those land were forest and cleared by the tribals and cultivated by them for some time. Now state government wants to reoccupy those lands.

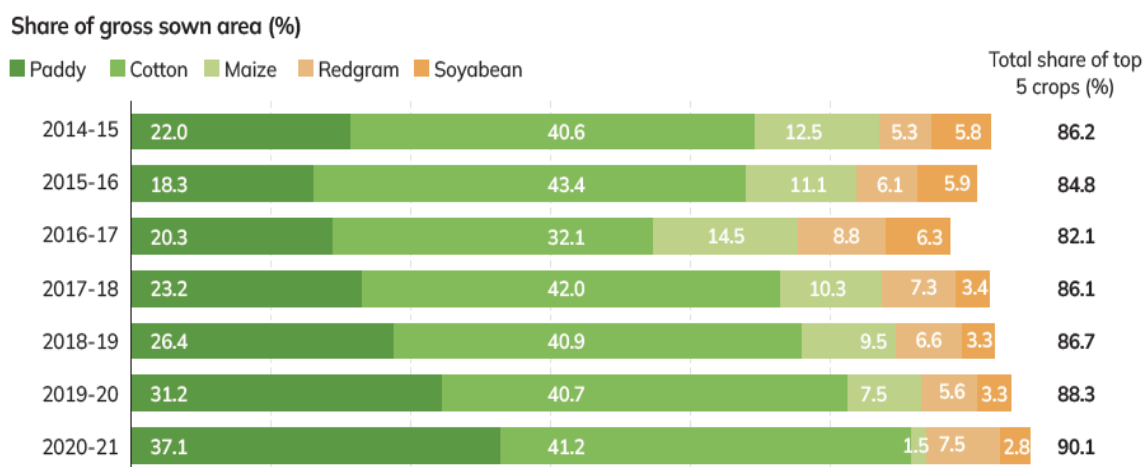
In pursuit of its goal of capital facilitation, an amendment to the government act of 2013 was issued. The Telangana government approved GO 123, dated 30 July 2015, which permits for the "Acquisition of land and other constructions thereon from Willing Landowners by Procuring Agencies for public use." This was declared unconstitutional by the state's highest court; thus, the state government amended the LARA 2013 act of the federal government. The modification significantly weakened the 2013 law in favour of the government. With these amendments to the statute, the government can take land from cultivators for irrigation projects such as Kaleswaram, as well as for private enterprises developing Pharma Cities.

Four factors are impacting the land question in Telangana in the present period. One, the state's active role in the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural investments. Second, increasing speculative land market not only in big cities but also in small towns as well as bigger villages. The state's policy of creating new districts from 10 to 30 has boosted the real estate and speculative land markets in all these newly created district headquarters. All these new district headquarters were small towns, with the creation of new districts there is construction of new government office spaces which were not there earlier. This gives rise to the speculative real estate market. People in and around these small towns are investing in buying plots for housing purposes. Third, the emergence of a salaried class which is investing in these speculative real-estate markets. The salaried class who are working in government offices, schools, and various other branches of the government, private school teachers, college lecturers, owners of private hospitals are investing in these real estate market. Medium and large farmers in the nearby villages have shifted from their villages to the nearby towns, still keeping their land in the village. All these speculative investments are driven by assumption that the land prices are going increase and rent seeking behaviour of this class. Fourth, unprofitability of small and marginal holdings in agriculture.

Main Features of Agrarian structure:

The overall number of operational holdings in the state is 59.48 lakh, spanning 59.72 lakh hectares. The most important production patterns on cultivated land are as follows: (i) food crops are grown on 61.2% of the gross sown area, but this proportion has been declining, (ii) paddy, maize, and cotton were the most widely cultivated crops in 2018-19, and (iii) the proportion of cotton and paddy has increased over the past few years. Figure 3.2 gives the percentages of gross sown area under to 5 crops- paddy, cotton, maize, red gram, and soyabean from 2014-15 to 2020-21. These 5 crops occupy more than 85% of the total cultivated area and crops. Paddy and cotton more than 60% of the area cultivates across the period. From 2017-18 the share of paddy has been increasing, in 2016-17 paddy share was 20.3% by 2020-21 it increased to 37.1%. Part of the reason is that government is encouraging the cultivation of paddy by providing irrigation facilities and procuring it directly from the farmers. One more reason is that it is one of the few crops where minimum support price is guaranteed. In recent times this has also led to the overproduction crisis in the state, became an issue of contention between state and central government.

Figure 3.2 Percentage of Gross Sown Area Under Top 5 Crops in Rainy season between 2014-15 to 2020-21



Source: Telangana Socio Economic Outlook 2022.

In 2015-16, the average land holding size was 2.5 acres. It has declined since 2010 when it was 2.8 acres. 88.3% of the state's total agricultural landholdings consist of marginal and small holdings. These comprise 61.7% of the total agriculturally operated land area. The Scheduled Castes (SC) constitute 11.8% of landowners and 8.9% of the total land area. The population of Scheduled Tribes (ST) hold 12.0% of agricultural land and 12.4% of the overall land area. 76.2% of the landholdings fall under the 'Others' category, which account for 78.60% of the operating area. Figure 3.3 gives the details of the land holdings in the state for the year 2015-16.

Figure 3.3 Land Holding Pattern in Telangana 2015-16

Land Holdings by Size Class

Size Class (Acres)	No. of Holdings ('000)	% of Holdings	Area Operated ('000 Hects.)	Area Operated ('000 Acres)	% of Area Operated
Marginal (Below 2.47)	3,840	64.6	1,706	4,216	28.6
Small (2.48 – 4.94)	1,409	23.7	1,977	4,885	33.1
Semi-Medium (4.95 - 9.88)	564	9.5	1,467	3,625	24.6
Medium (9.89 - 24.77)	126	2.1	688	1,700	11.5
Large (24.78 and Above)	9	0.2	135	334	2.3
Total	5,948	100	5,972	14,757	100

Land Holdings by Social Groups

Scheduled Caste	700	11.8	532	1,315	8.9
Scheduled Tribes	712	12	741	1,830	12.4
Institutional	1	0	5	13	0.1
Others	4,535	76.2	4,694	11,599	78.6
Total	5,948	100	5,972	14,757	100

Source: Socio Economic Outlook 2022.

The spate of farmer suicides that followed the economic liberalisation of the 1990s continued even after the formation of new state. From 2014 till 2020 there were 5,591 farmer committed suicides in the state. Telangana was among the top six states accounting for 83% of such deaths in 2019.

Table 3.6 Year wise Details of Farmer Suicides in Telangana: 2014 to 2020.

Year	Number of Suicides
2014	898
2015	1358
2016	632
2017	846
2018	900
2019	491
2020	466

Source: National Crime Records Bureau

In a survey conducted by the Hyderabad-based Tata Institute of Social Sciences and the nonprofit Rythu Swarajya Vedika, tenant farmers made up 75% of all farmers who died by suicide between 2014 and 2018. 61% of farmers were from Other Backward Class, 17% were from the Scheduled Castes, and 11% being in the Scheduled Tribes.

Since the formation of the new state, it has been implementing number of populist schemes in the state in the name of social welfare, like *rythubandu*. There are many other populist policies that are based on caste identities were introduced in the state. The distribution of sheep to the *golla* and *kuruva* communities, the pension schemes to toddy tappers, *dalita dandu* to SCs have led to the strengthening of caste identities. A detailed analysis of these schemes is provided in chapter six.

For the first one year after the TRS government came to power, public intellectuals and key opinion makers of Telangana were ready to give it more time to fulfil its promises of ‘Golden Telangana’. Over a period, there has been a growing discontent among the people of Telangana against the government’s failure in its delivery of the promises. This discontent is slowly shifting as support to the right-wing BJP.

One, important dimension of the state that the chapter did not discuss is about issue of the tribal question in the state. It did not deal with the tribal question for two reasons. One, there is no presence of the tribal population in the field work villages. Two, discussing the tribal question in the state would require a different approach than the one that the chapter has attempted. It was governed by the forest policy of the colonial government, the question has been affected by various other things, which are not the main focus of the chapter or the thesis.

This chapter gave political economic history of the region from the Nizam period to the new state formation. It discussed the history land relations, administrative changes, and the important features of the agrarian structure.

Appendix to chapter 3:

Number of Landholders and their Holding percentages in 1945

S.No.	Size of the Holding	Number of Pattedars	Their percentage (%) out of the total No. of Pattedars	Extent of the Acreage of land held (maximum size of the holding was taken for computation) *	Percentage (%) of the Acreage of land held out of the total cultivated and uncultivated land of 1934 – 35 i.e., 3,89,35,251 Acres *
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1.	5 acres	2,13,515	22.87	10,67,575	2.74
2.	5 to 10 acres	1,24,481	13.33	12,44,810	3.19
3.	10 to 15 acres	1,07,036	10.14	16,05,540	4.12
4.	15 to 20 acres	96,543	10.03	19,30,860	4.95
5.	20 to 25 acres	84,101	9.00	21,02,525	5.40
6.	25 to 50 acres	1,61,646	17.31	78,52,341 [¥]	20.16
7.	50 to 100 acres	89,029	9.05	89,02,900	22.86
8.	100 to 150 acres	29,113	3.11	43,66,950	11.21
9.	150 to 200 acres	13,100	1.40	26,20,000	6.72
10.	200 to 250 acres	8,011	0.85	20,02,750	5.14
11.	250 to 500 acres	4,974	0.53	24,87,000	6.38
12.	500 to 1000 acres	1,509	0.16	15,09,000	3.87
13.	1000 to 2000 acres	444	0.04	8,88,000	2.28
14.	2000 to 5000 acres	49	0.005	2,45,000	0.62
15.	Above 5000 + acres	11	0.001	1,10,000	0.28

* Own calculations.

+ Maximum size of 10,000 acres is taken.

¥ Out of the maximum computed figure 2,29,959 acres have been deducted to bring the total acreage figure to the level of 1934 – 35 A.D.

Source: Ramakrishna V. p-20.

Chapter 4

Locating the Study: Changing Dynamics of Village Economy and Sociology

In chapter three we have discussed the historical background and the political economy of the state from the Salar Jung reforms to the developments after the new state formation. It provided an historical account of the changes in the land and agrarian relations, the changing nature of the state from pre-independence into the neo-liberal state. This chapter locates the field of study and gives an account of the present day 'rural' in north Telangana. As indicated in the introductory chapter, I have conducted field work in two villages in the Jagityal district. Before entering into the field work villages, a brief note on the differences between north Telangana and south Telangana distinction.

North and South Telangana Distinction:

North Telangana and south Telangana are regions within the state of Telangana that are generally defined by their geographic location within the state. North Telangana includes the districts of Adilabad, Karimnagar, Warangal, Nalgonda, and Khammam, while south Telangana includes the districts of Hyderabad, Medak, Nizamabad, Rangareddy, and Mahbubnagar.

North Telangana is located in the northern part of the state and is characterised by a hilly terrain and forested areas. South Telangana, on the other hand, is located in the southern part of the state and is characterised by a flat terrain and agricultural land. The Godavari river flows through north Telangana irrigating some parts of the region. Whereas The Krishna river forms the southernmost border of the state in southern Telangana.

Another difference between the two regions is their economic development. North Telangana is considered to be more developed compared to south Telangana, with more industries and urban areas. South Telangana is primarily an agricultural region, with rice, sugarcane, and cotton being the main crops grown.

There are also cultural and linguistic differences between north Telangana and south Telangana. North Telangana has a distinct culture and dialect that is different from the rest

of the state. South Telangana, particularly the city of Hyderabad, has a more cosmopolitan culture and is home to people from all over the state and the country.

Historically, north Telangana, specially the districts of Nizamabad, Karimnagar, and Warangal were under the diwani areas. These areas were directly under the control of Nizam, where the dominance of *Deshmukhs* and *Deshpandeys* was predominant. Whereas south Telangana was under the control of *Samsthanas* where the inter administration was with the ruler of the *Samsthan*.

The Jagityal district is located in the Northern Telangana. The district of Jagityal was carved out of the existing Karimnagar district through the state administrative reorganisation of 2016. The district is surrounded by Nizamabad on the west side, Nirmal on the north side, Peddapalli and Mancherial on the east side, Karimnagar and Siricilla districts on the south side. The district of Jagityal consists of two revenue divisions: Jagityal and Metpalli. The district headquarters is located at Jagtial town. The Godavari River passes through the district and Sri Ram Sagar Project's (SRSP) Kakatiya provides irrigation to the farmers in district. The construction of the canal had a significant impact on the agriculture in the district and in the region as well. The region had witnessed the Naxalite movement during the 1970s and 1980s. This movement had a greater impact on social relations in the region, particularly in transforming the relations of domination between the feudal land lords and other sections of the society (Sreenivasulu 2002). Table 4.1 shows that according to the 2011 census, the population of the district is 9,85,417. Of this, while the percentage of rural population is 77.54 %, it stands at 22.46% for its urban counterparts. The literacy rate of the district is 60% (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Basic Demographics of Jagityal

Category	Population	Percentage
Total Population	9,85,417	
Urban Populations	7,64,081	77.54
Rural Population	2,21,336	22.46
Literacy Rate	5,37,636	60.26
Schedule Caste population	1,64,596	16.70
Scheduled Tribe Population	23,351	2.37

Source: 2011 census.

There are 1,11,345 cultivators in the district (60% males and 40% female) and there are 1,77,530 agricultural labourers (50% male and 50% female). A large majority (about 90%) are small and marginal farmers. Major crops cultivated in the district are, paddy, cotton, maize, horticulture, chilli, red gram, turmeric, and ground nut. The research was conducted in two villages of the district.

Table 4.2- Basic Agricultural Profile of the Jagityal District

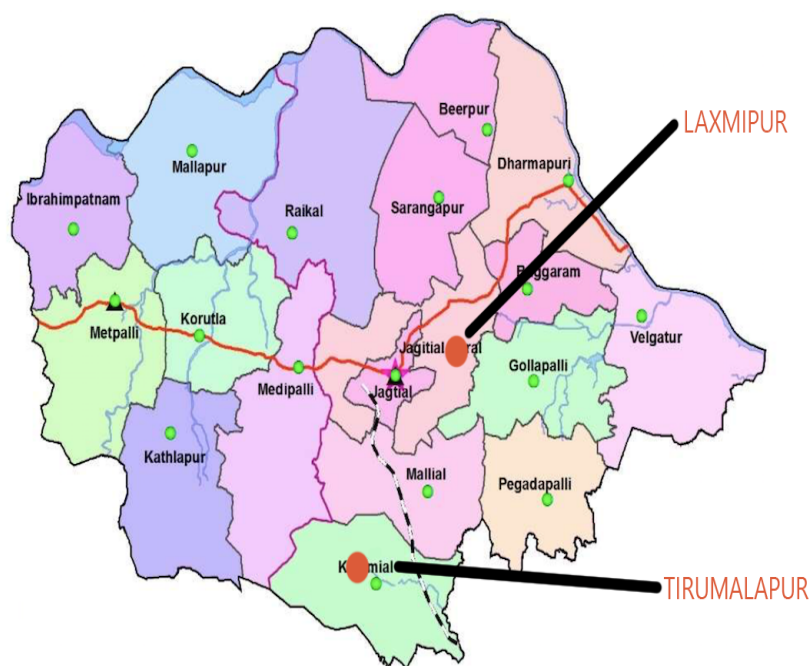
Land Holdings	Number	%
Marginal	1,22,152	70.09
Small	33,610	19.28
Semi-Medium	14,069	8.07
Medium	4,141	2.37
Large	305	0.17
Gross Cropped area	1,22,970 hectares	
Irrigated	77,420 hectares	

Source: 2011 census.

Map 4.1 - Administrative Map of Telangana



Map 4.2 - Jagityal District Map with field work Villages noted



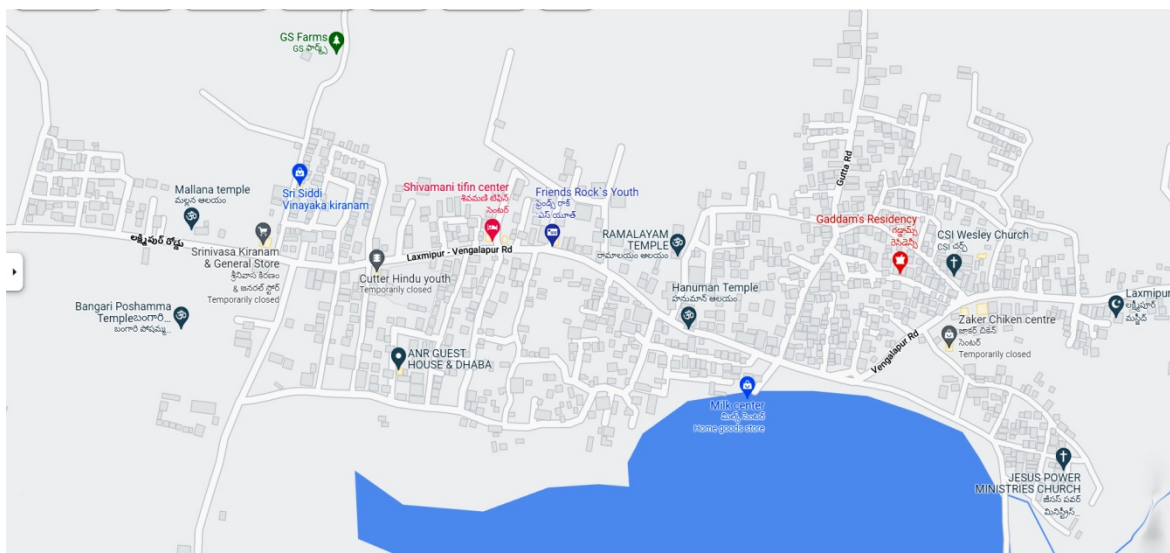
Socio- Economic Profile of the villages

Village A

Of the two study villages, village A is in Jagityal Mandal of Jagityal District. It is 8 km away from both district and Mandal headquarters located on the north-eastern side. It is 4 km away from the main road. The village consists of 980 households with a population of 3776 according to 2011 census (3,535 according to 2011 socio economic census). The nearest town to the village is the Jagityal, 8km from the village. The number of households are 980 according to 2011 census. According to the field survey I conducted in the year 2018, the number of households have increased to 1200. The village has a government school till 10th standard. There are two private schools in the village. One is a primary school and the other one is High School. Private school buses come from Jagityal to pick up students from this village as well as surrounding villages. Students have to go to Jagityal for the college education. There used to be a government Road Transportation Corporation (RTC) bus facility for transportation, it was removed later. Now the major means of transport are, one private bus which is owned by a person from a different village, and autos which ply from this village to the main road as well as to Town. There are three *anganwadi* centres in the village. There are two health centres. One is a primary health centre and the other one is

Ayurveda centre. There is one veterinary clinic. All are located in the same building at the panchayat office which is at the center of the village. There are two private clinics and one private medical store in the village. The village area is around 2,300 acers (928 hectares). There are two public sector banks in the village, one is Andhra Bank while the other one is a Grameen Bank.

Map 4.3- Village A Village on Google Map



Source: Extracted from Google.

Demographic Profile of Village A:

Table 4.3- Population and Number of Households

Year	House holds	Population		Total	% of increase
		M	F		
1961	587	1200	1370	2570	
1971	637	1293	1424	2717	5.71
1981	692	1404	1588	2992	10.12
1991	795	1693	1756	3449	15.27
2001	889	1881	1924	3805	10.32
2011	980	1870	1906	3776	-0.76

Source: census reports from 1961 to 2011.

Table 4.3 The village population has increased from 2570 people in 1961 to 3776 in 2011 a 46% increase over four decades. However, there is a decrease of -0.76% during 2001 to 2011, probably because of migration. There is higher female ratio in the village for all

through the years. There were 1370 females in the village for 1200 males in 1961, this number has increased 1906 females to 1870 males in 2011. It is higher than the state ratio, which is 988 females for 1000 males. There are no significant changes in the growth of population, except from 2001 to 2011. There is a decrease in the population from the previous census. This could be because of various reasons like increase in education and mobility in certain sections of population.

Table 4.4 shows the age wise distribution of population in the village. The working population who are in the age group of 16-65 are 2426 (69%), the population who are in the non- working age group are 1109 (31%).

Table 4.4: Age-wise Distribution of Population in Village A

Age	Population
0-5	167
6-15	599
16-25	644
26-35	533
36-45	517
46-55	441
56-65	291
66-75	243
above 75	100
Total	3535

Source: Socio-Economic Census 2011.

The table 4.5 shows the SC population over a period of six decades in the village. In 1961 the SC population was 571 which is 22% of the total population. By 2011 this number has increased to 29% of the total population which is 1083.

Out of a total 1200 households in the study village A, primary data was collected from 164 households (a sample of 14%). i.e., 164 households. The details of the study respondents are provided below (see table 4.6). While 48% of the study respondents belonged to other backward classes (OBCs), 34% of them Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the remaining 18% were from the upper castes or 'other castes' (OCs). The distribution of the age group of the respondents is provided in table 4.6.

Table 4.5: SC Population in Village A

Year	Male	Female	Total	% of total population
1961	271	300	571	22
1971	309	303	612	23
1981	353	368	721	24
1991	389	396	785	23
2001	513	519	1032	27
2011	551	532	1083	29

Source: Census Reports, Government of India

Table 4.6- Age wise Distribution of head of the households

Age bracket	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
21-25		1		1
26-30	2	9	7	18
31-35	4	15	9	28
36-40	4	14	6	24
41-45	4	13	9	26
46-50	4	8	11	23
51-55		5	4	9
56-60	8	4	9	21
61-65	1	5	1	7
66-70	2	2		4
71-75		3		3
76-80	1			1
Grand Total	30	79	56	165

Source: Field Data.

Literacy rate in the village has increased over a period drastically. It was a mere 8% in the year 1961 which increased to 50% by 2011. But still, it is below the state literacy rate, which is 66.46%. Table 4.7 gives the decade wise growth of literacy in the village. It is very low among the women in the village. In the late 1980s the village got primary school in the village while in 1990s the village got high school. Earlier people used to send their children to Jagityal town for education.

Table 4.7: Literacy rate in Village A

Year	Male	Female	Total	%
1961	191	16	207	8
1971	274	37	311	11
1981	490	91	581	19
1991	696	258	954	28
2001	1065	560	1625	43
2011	1116	770	1886	50

Source: Census reports.

Table 4.7 indicates the educational status of the study respondents in the village. The literacy rate among the respondents is 52%. Among the 165 household heads there are 79 who did not go to any schooling. There are 21 in the sample who studied till 5th class. 47 attended till high school, 10 people till intermediate, 6 people have a graduation, two have post-graduation. As said earlier many of them sent their children to private schools in the village and Jagityal for English medium education; those who cannot send to Jagityal tried sending to school in the village. It was observed that the government school is their last choice for their children education. There are some parents whose children are studying in social welfare school outside the village, most people from OBC and SC communities are willing to send their children to social welfare schools and colleges, they feel that cheaper and better-quality education is being provided in those school.

Table 4.8- Educational status among the respondents in Village A.

Educational Qualification	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
0	6	35	38	79
1-5	2	13	6	21
6-10	15	24	8	47
Degree	2	3	1	6
Intermediate	5	4	1	10
PG			2	2
	30	79	56	165

Source: Filed data.

The Social Profile of the Village:

Caste composition of the study village includes Reddy, Goud, Padmashali, yadavas, Mudiraj, Myadari, Mala, Madiga, Vadrangi, Erukali, Vaishya, Muslim, Kummari, Chakali, Mangali, Munnurukapu, castes in the village. Reddy, Mala and Madiga, Goud and Muduraj together constitute 70 to 80 % of the village population in the village. According to village sarpanch there are around 300 households of Reddys, and 500-550 households of SCs (both Mala and Madiga), 120 households of Gouds, 70 households of Mudiraj are there in the village.

For the purpose of analysis, these castes have been classified into official categories as shown in the table below:

Table 4.9: Caste classification in Village A

S.No.	Name of the castes	Category
1.	Reddy, Vaishya.	OC (upper Castes)
2.	Goud, Yadavs, Mudiraj, Kummari, Chakali, Mangali, Munnurukapu, Padmashalis.	OBC
3.	Mala, Madiga....	S.C
4.	Yerukula	ST

Source: Filed Work.

Reddys are the dominant caste in the village. They hold most of the land in the village. Their average land holding size is higher than the rest of the castes. They own the agricultural machinery and tools- the greatest number of tractors, all the harvesters (8) are owned by them. One family even owns a JCB. The field data indicates that there are four Reddy families who own more than 30 acres of land. One family started six schools in one in the nearby village and five in Jagityal town. Majority of the Reddy families are owner-cultivators. Some of the Reddy families have economic interests in both village and in Jagityal. It was observed that quite a few households have land and house in the village but their family lives in the town for their children's education. A small proportion of the Reddy families have diversified from agriculture into non-agricultural sectors like liquor contracts, and into rentier economy. One Reddy family owns a liquor shop contract in the Jagityal. There are two to four Reddy families who earn their income through rent- from land, from their machinery and from renting houses both in the village and town. One Reddy respondent

was constructing a new house on the roadside for rent purposes during the time of the field work. The local MLA is a Reddy (T. Jeevan Reddy from Indian National Congress) and they have very close political ties with him. Both as a coping mechanism and supplement their incomes, upper caste and lower caste groups have been migrating outside India specially to gulf countries. This trend has started during the 1980s. A detailed discussion about the gulf migration is provided in the next chapter. Earlier even Reddys used to migrate to gulf countries. However, with the improvement in their economic status over a period of time, the next generation of Reddys slowly shifted from migrating to Europe and North America because of the increasing higher technical education among the community. Beedi rolling is one of the important non-farm activities in the region as well as in the village. It is exclusively done by women. Specially women from OBC castes, SCs, Muslims roll beedis. None of the women from Reddy families roll beedi in the village. The women from Reddy community work only on their farms and they don't work as daily wage labour. According to some respondents' lower-class Reddy (those who had only one or two acres of land) women used to work as agricultural wage labourers. But in the last 10 to 15 years, they are also not working as agricultural labourers. Only earlier generation women who are above 40 to 45 years of age are working in agriculture, that too in their own fields not outside. Most of these women are confined to the household activities. As Carol Upadhyaya (1997) points in the Andhra context, once economic status of the upper castes increased in the society, women are confined to the households as symbol of economic status. There are some women (two among the respondents) who are looking after the small economic enterprises that they run. One Photocopy shop and other one is beauty salon in the village. They run it under the supervision of the husband. One more reason that the respondent indicated for the lower participation of women (of younger generation) in agricultural activities in general and Reddy women in particular is educational status among women. (*ee kaalm ammayilu vyavasayam panulem chestaru, vaallanta chadukunnoluu, vaallaku ee panulu raavu*)

Among the OBC community Gouds and Mudiraj are numerically dominant castes. There are around 120 Gouds and 70 Mudiraj households in the village. Among 120 households of Gouds 42 families are involved in the toddy tapping, their traditional occupation, in the village along with agriculture. They also receive Rs 1000 pension from the government. In the season they get around Rs 400-500 per day from toddy tapping. In the non-season they get around 100 to 200 rupees per day. There is high incidence of gulf migration from OBC families. They also work as agricultural labour and participate in MGNREGA work in the

village. Majority of women work as agricultural labour, and they also go for MGNREGA work as well as beedi rolling. They get 200-250 rupees per day as agricultural labour.

There are 500 to 550 SC households (Both Mala and Madiga) in the village. Small proportion of them have lands and they are involved in agriculture. Majority of them work as agricultural labourers in the village, very few people go outside the village for daily labour. There is gulf migration among the SCs. When it comes to SC women, agricultural labour and beedi rolling are the main sources of income for them.

In this village, almost every caste has their own caste association. Field research indicated that these caste associations play a significant role in economic, political, and social activities in the study village. Everyone in the village must pay a joining fee, which varies from 500 to 3000 rupees depending on the caste association and join the association. The association decides on caste matters. They solve disputes among themselves as well as disputes with other caste groups. No family is allowed to be without a membership. If one is not a member of the association that family is not entitled to the benefits of the association. Unlike other caste association in the village the 'reddy' association is affiliated with the district and state level association and also a member from the village also holds a position in the committee of the district caste association. The local MLA has, who also belongs to the reddy community has close association with village and he made the sarpanch of the village (at the time of field work) a member of the district association. Both belong to the congress party. The main reason was the political loyalty of the village to the MLA.

These associations are both ascriptive as well as self-help collective in nature. The people in the village say that the membership is voluntary, but there seems to be a certain amount of coercion to join the caste association, as not being the member of caste association will result in losing in certain benefits of the association, especially the recognition of membership in the caste group. Belongingness to the group. Wherever there are disputes with other caste members the association intervenes resolves the matters. In recent times this practice has slowly reduced as people are relying more on the political connections and police stations. The importance of associations now has become more political as the state government is introducing various social welfare measures based on caste identity. The negotiations at the lower level bureaucracy are done through the caste associations to get the benefits from

government. At the time of elections, these associations play an important role in terms of voting for a particular person or party.

All other castes except Reddy and Munnurkapu which is OBC community have formed a joint association. They call a “Chillar Sangam” (association of all other castes). Discussion with the joint association members indicated that in order to counter the economic, and political dominance of Reddys, they had to start joint associations in 1992-93. Over a period of time the hybrid nature of caste connections as both voluntary and ascriptive allowed caste to continue to affect identity politics as it discovered new and inventive methods to define itself and operate collectively within political arenas.

Another associational form that exists in the village is *Rytu Sangam* (Farmers’ Association). They call it as “ Village A farmer co-operative society”. Only famers who have minimum two acres of land can join this association. There are 220 members in this now. 120 are Reddys, 70 are OBCs and 30 SCs. They have an executive body which is elected through voting. The tenure of elected body is for one year. Through this association they get pesticides and fertilisers directly from the companies and sell it to the famers. As associations could negotiate large quantities with the companies at relatively lower price than that of a retailer, there is lot of significance to *Rytu Sangam*. If government is offering any subsidies for the farmers, it is routed through the co-operative society in order to process it easily without having to go through the bureaucratic mechanisms. In 2016 the association started selling rice directly to customers through the association. The association also buys paddy from the association farmers and process it into rice and sell it to customers at a cheaper price than the market prices. They call it Village A rice, it has become popular in the neighbouring villages. Now they get advance orders for rice. They also started a seed cultivation. They went to nearby agriculture university and they got new variety of paddy seed. As association they chose certain farmers and to cultivate that seed. They also got one seed processing unit with the help of local MLA.

Village B

Village B is the second village. The village is located in the mandal of Kodimal. The village is 7 km away from the mandal headquarters and 30 km away from Jagityal, the district headquarters, which is also the nearest town. The village location is little remote, the main road is 15 km away from the village. The total village land is 2800 acres.

Table 4.10 Basic Demographic Details of Village B

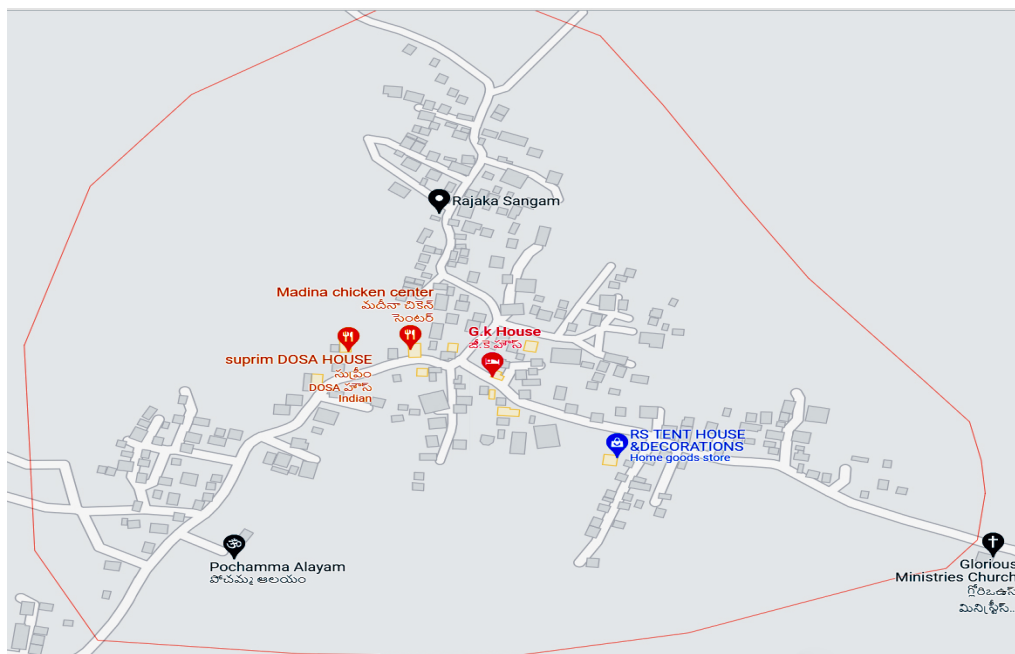
Category	Population
Number households	476
Total Population	1919
Male	955
Female	964
Scheduled Castes	677 (35%)
Literacy Rate	1040 (54%)

Source: 2011 census.

According to the 2011 census, as shown in Table 4.10, there are 476 households in the village, and total population of the village is 1,919, of which 955 are males, 964 female population. The SC population consists 35% of the village population. The literacy rate of the village is 54%. It is more among men (61%) than females (39%). Mudirajs are the politically and numerically dominant community in the village. The major economic activities in the village are – Agriculture, Beedi rolling, MGNREGA work, non-form activities, migration outside the village – to nearby urban centres, like Karimnagar, which is 41 km and Jagityal which is 30 km away from the village, as well as outside the country to Gulf countries, which is the major migratory practice in the region. The major non-form activities in the village are, the construction work, transportation- there are 10 (3 are for transporting the goods) autos in the village, small retail shops (kiranam shop- there are three shops in the village), small hotels and tea shops- there are three of them. There is a government upper primary school in the village, there is no private school in the village. There is one in the nearby village till 5th class. One private school bus comes from Kodimal and picks students and drops them in the evening. There is no government primary health care centre or a private clinic. One mobile health van which is run by the government comes to village one in a week. There are two RMPs (Registered Medical Practitioner) who come

to the village every day from the nearby Mandal head quarter to treat people for minor health issues. One RTC bus goes through the village, three times a day.

Map 4.4- Village B Village on Google Map



Demographic profile of the village:

Table 4.11 indicates that population of the village over last six decades has grown from 1,131 in 1961 to 1,919 in 2011. Households have grown from 231 in 1961 to 476 in 2011. Almost a 70 % increase in the population. The female population is higher than the male population all through the years. Which is not the trend in the region or district. In 1961 the number of females was 589 whereas male population was 542. It has grown to 964 and 955 respectively by 2011.

Table 4.11: Population of the village from 1961 to 2011

Year	Number of Households	Males	Female	Total
1961	231	542	589	1131
1971	284	602	617	1219 (7.7)
1981	279	687	704	1391 (14)
1991	375	762	860	1622 (16)
2001	441	797	882	1679(3.5)
2011	476	955	964	1919 (14)

Source: Census reports.

Table 4.12 Age-wise distribution of population

Age Bracket	Population
0-5	101
6-15	292
16-25	329
26-35	276
36-45	255
46-55	179
56-65	164
66-75	85
Above 75	26

Socio-Economic Census 2011.

The above Table 4.12 shows the age wise distribution of population in the village. The working population who are in the age group of 16-65 are 1203 that is 71% of the population, the population who are in the non- working age group are 504 which is 29% of the population. In this village we have conducted a field work and collected data from 65 households. The basic demographic details of the respondents is given in table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Age of the respondents

Age bracket	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
16-20			1	1
21-25			1	1
26-30		1	4	5
31-35	1	5	2	8
36-40		13	1	14
41-45	1	3	1	5
46-50	2	3	3	8
51-55	3	4	2	9
56-60	2	2	1	5
61-65		1	3	4
66-70	1	1	1	3
71-75		1		1
76-80		1		1
Grand Total	10	35	20	65

Source: Field data.

Table 4.14 SC population from 1961 to 2011

Year	SC population		Total	% of the total population
	M	F		
1961	66	72	138	12
1971	47	39	86	7
1981	135	143	278	19
1991	178	215	393	24
2001	171	180	351	20
2011	452	225	677	35

Source: Census reports.

Table 4.14 deciphers total scheduled caste population of the village is 677 according to 2011 census. There are 452 males and 225 females in this. The female population of the SCs is almost 50% less than men according to 2011 census reports. When enquired in the field it was not the case. There are almost same number of males and females. Historical data also shows the same, which is given in table 4.13. It must have been a mistake in the census data. The share of the scheduled caste population has increased from 12% in 1961 to 35% in 2011. It has been increasing, except in 1971 where it declined to 7% from previous decade.

Table 4.15 Literacy Rate of Village.

Year	Literates		Total	Percentage
	M	F		
1961	85	15	100	9
1971	115	17	122	10
1981	160	40	200	14
1991	276	84	360	22
2001	408	231	639	38
2011	636	404	1040	54

Source: Census reports.

Table 4.15 shows Literacy rate in the village is 54% in 2011. It has been increasing from 9% in 1961 to 54% in 2011, but it is below the state average which is 64%. The literacy among the females is lower than the male population. Based on the field data, I have presented below the educational status of different social categories in the village.

Table 4.16: Educational Qualification of the respondents.

Educational Qualification	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
0	1	18	11	30
1-5	0	3	0	3
6-10	4	11	7	22
Intermediate	5	3	1	9
Degree			1	1
Total	10	35	20	65

Source: Field data.

Above table 4.16 gives the details of the educational qualification of the respondents in the village. Out the 65 respondents there are 30 (46%) respondents who did not have any formal education. Among them, there are 18 OBCs, 11 SC, one OC indicating that a significant proportion of OBCs and SCs did not receive formal education. There are three respondents who studied till 5th class, and 22 till 10th class, and 9 till intermediate, only 1 till graduation.

Social Profile of the village

Reddy, Velama, and Komatis are the upper castes in the village. Velamas are more in number than the rest of the two upper castes. Munnurukapus, Mudiraj, Goud, Padmashali, Rajaka, Kummari, Vadla, are the OBC castes, Mala and Madiga are the SC communities, Dudekula is from the Muslim community. There are 20 households of Velamas and Only 6 Reddy, one komati household is there. There are 150 households of SC both Mala and Madiga households are there. Rest of them are the BC households. Among the BCs Mudirajs are the dominant community in the village. Velamas hold the higher percentage of land when compared to their number in the village. Most of them don't live in the village, they are settled in Karimnagar and Jagityal, those who are staying are mostly the older generation, looking after the agriculture. Among the BCs mudiraj community owns the lands after velamas. There are goud families who are involved in the toddy tapping in the village.

Table 4.17: Caste classification in Village B

S.No.	Name of the castes	Category
1.	Velamas, Komati	OC (upper Castes)
2.	Goud, Yadavs, Mudiraj, Kummari, Chakali, Mangali, Munnurukapu, Vadla, Dudekula (muslim)	OBC
3.	Mala, Madiga	S.C

Source: Filed Work.

There are three forms of migration in the village. One people commuting to Karimnagar (the nearby town) as daily wage labourers. They go in the morning by RTC bus for work and come back in the evening. People who migrate seasonally. There are 20 to 25 tractors in the village, All these tractor owners are migrating to Odisha and Chhattisgarh for work during the months of December and January, and again in July and August. This is agriculturally off season in the village where work in agricultural is less or absent. They go with their tractors there to work in agriculture.

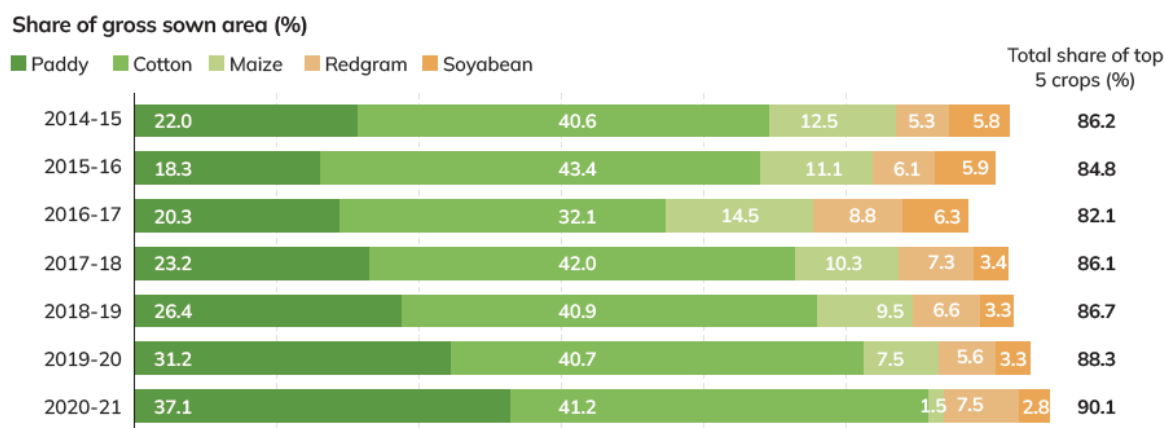
Political Economy of Villages

The village economy can be divided into two. Old economy and new economy. Old economy is where that has been the source of livelihood for people in the village for more than 30 to 40 years. Agriculture and agriculture wage labour can be categorised as the old economy. The new economy is the one, which has developed in the last 10 years in the village and has become the source of livelihood or accumulation. This economy has developed because of the commercialisation and increasing consumer culture among the people in the village. This new economy appears to have integrated the village with global capital flows. All the non-agricultural and some of the agricultural rent seeking and profit seeking activities like the mechanisation and selling agricultural inputs can be classified as part of the new economy.

Agriculture still employs large proportion of the population in the state. 48.4% of the state's workforce is employed in agriculture, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey for 2019–20. According to 2017-18 data agriculture contributes 13.9% to the state's economy in the state of Telangana. Major crops in the state are Paddy, Cotton, Maize, Red gram and

Soybean. Figure 4.3 gives the share of these crops in the total crops in the state from 2014 onwards. Paddy and Cotton are major crops and its share is almost 70% of the total area cultivated.

Figure 4.1-Share of Top 5 crops in the state from 2014 to 2021 in Monsoon Season



Source: Socio-Economic Outlook.

The following section discusses the agrarian structure of the study villages.

Table 4.18: Distribution of Household's Occupation in Village A

Category	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
Agricultural Labour	1	13	15	29
Agriculture	25	29	13	67
Non-agriculture	4	37	28	68
Total	30	79	55	164

Source: Field data.

Village A is a relatively resourceful village among the neighbouring villages. It has good irrigational facilities, both in terms of canal as well as ground water. The village has a sub canal of Sriram Sagar Project (SRSP) project, which was started in 1980s, along with the two village tanks in the village. The village economy is basically four-fold. Agriculture is the primary source of the income for majority of the households. The village also has good number of bore wells and two big tanks. Table 4.18 gives the number of people dependent on the agriculture. 96 households (58%) of households depend either on agriculture or agriculture labour out of the 164 households and rest of the households depend on non-farm activities. But it is important to note that out of these 164 households, only 55 households (33%) are getting their income solely from agriculture or agricultural labour. For these

households' agriculture is the only source of income. Rest of them are depending on other non-farm activities.

Table 4.19- Distribution of Household's Occupation in Village B

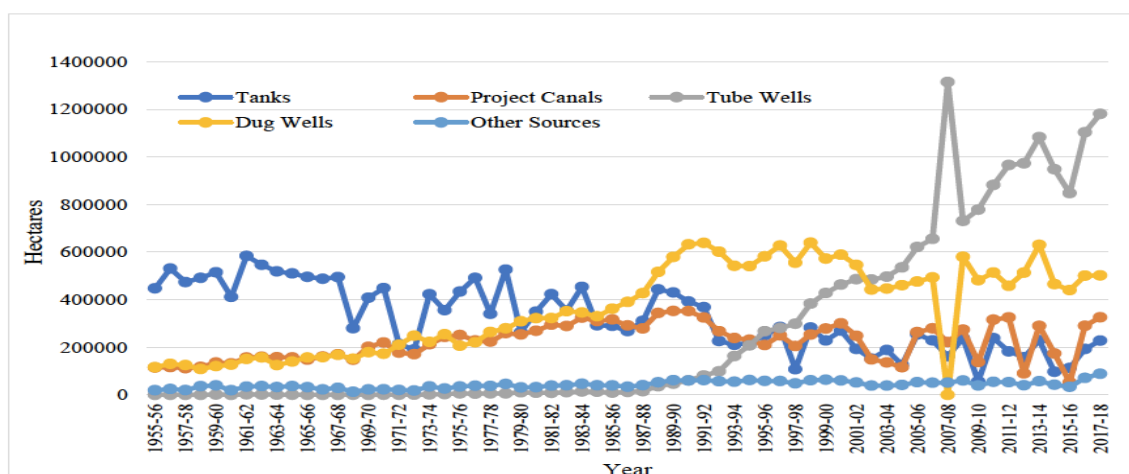
Row Labels	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
Agriculture	10.77	23.08	10.77	44.62
Agriculture Labour	0	10.77	13.85	24.62
Non-Agriculture	4.62	20	6.15	30.77
Grand Total	15.38	53.85	30.77	100

Source: Field data

Village B is a dry village. There is one small village tank (*kunta*). The agriculture is mostly rain fed agriculture. There are some tube wells in the village; People cultivate paddy and few vegetables using the water from tube wells and traditional wells. Those who don't have irrigational facility cultivate rain fed crops like cotton and maize. Even in this village agriculture is the main source of income for 69% of the households. As in the previous village, in this village also. It is important to note that it is not the only source of income for 68% of the households, they depend on multiple sources of income for the sustaining the household. These households the get their income from a mix of both agriculture and non-agricultural petty commodity production. Only 32% of the households depend only on agriculture,

In both the villages there are tube wells. In Village A people cultivate crops in one season using water from tube wells while another season under canal irrigation. In Village B tube wells are the only source of irrigation. In general, there had been exponential increase of tubewells in the state which led to the crisis of agriculture. Though new government, under the leadership of TRS which came to power after the state formation, boosts of increasing canal irrigation in the state. It is also building a mega irrigation project Kaneswaran for increasing the irrigational facilities. till 2018, tubewell irrigation has the highest share in the state. Figure 4.2 shows the historical growth of the various irrigational facilities in the state from 1955 to 2018.

Figure 4.2- Telangana Irrigation by Source 1955-2018



Source: DES Andhra Pradesh (2006); DES Telangana (2016); DES India (2019a, b)

Figure 4.2 shows the area irrigated by each of the source in the state from 1955-56 onwards in the state. We can see that tubewell irrigation has started to increase from 1987-88 onwards and it is still the dominant source of irrigation in the state, irrigating almost 1,20, 000 hectares. According to Vasavi (2020), ground water irrigation has significantly impacted the socio-ecological nature of the country's agriculture since the 1970s. It has completely altered the dynamics of agricultural irrigation, especially in the arid regions of the country and in Telangana. Groundwater irrigation has accelerated privatisation and individualisation along with the crisis in agrarian sector. Telangana region which did not receive much of the investment in the public spending on irrigation and neglect of common irrigated sources like tanks. With harsh climatic conditions, and erratic monsoons, with increasing aspirations- the farmers of Telangana had resorted to tube well irrigation. Telangana's tubewell irrigation expanded twentyfold from 60,000 hectares in 1992 to 1.2 million hectares in 2018 (DES India, 2019). In the state, about 81% of small and marginal farmers are tube well owners (MoWR, 2017). In both the villages people have adopted to tube well irrigation. 96 (58%) households out of 164 in Village A, and 42 (64%) households in Village B have tubewells. Though both the villages have tube well irrigation, in Village B it is the only source of irrigation. With the tube well irrigation the double crop rice cultivation was adopted in both the villages. In Village B, along with rice there is BT cotton. The tubewell irrigation occurred in Village B as well as, across Telangana, in a severely socio-ecologically constrained environment. The increasing variability of monsoons in recent times has exacerbated the problems of small and marginal holders in the village. When enquired about the issue of monsoon and impact of variable environment on the agriculture, farmers in Village B have reported more of their lives affected by it than the farmers in Village A.

Government encouraged the tubewell irrigation, instead of developing the neglected commons like village tanks. In the united Andhra Pradesh there was a larger neglect of the tanks and other common irrigated sources. After the new state formation government is developing the village tanks under Mission Kakatiya across the state. The programme has not met with any success in terms of shifting from tube wells- with electricity subsidies, like the free power for agriculture in the YSR government, 24 hours free power supply for farmers in this government. There is guaranteed MSP for paddy, which has led the small marginal farmers to adopt to the tubewell irrigation further and invest more in it. On the one hand this led to increasing sale of irrigation equipment and profitability for tubewell drilling mission owners and for irrigation equipment sales firms, on the other hand it led to increasing indebtedness among the small and marginal farmers in the state. With increasing input costs and erratic monsoon, agriculture is not able to provide sufficient income to sustain the household. In these harsh conditions farmers forced to rely on the non-farm sector.

Overall, tubewells have failed for most of the households in Village B, but it is relatively better in Village A as there is a provision of canal water; they only depend on tubewell when canal water is not available. Out of 42 households in Village B that invested on the tubewells, most of them do have adequate quantities of water to grow the rice/paddy. Some of the households have drilled multiple tubewells when they could not get the water in the previous tubewell or when it failed eventually leading to more and more input costs. Failure of tubewells has become a common phenomenon, with the increasing erratic monsoon rainfalls, the deepening of the ground water tables in the village. In the early 2000s farmers used to drill around 250 ft to 260ft and they used to get water, now they have to drill around 400 ft to 450 ft to get water. This is the common practice of farmers in the state, especially in the dry regions of the state, especially in the districts of Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda, and Ranga Reddy. Drilling and installing a tubewell is a costly affair and as said earlier it has led many framers into indebtedness. For installing a tubewell and electric pump it costs around 1,00,000 to 1,20,000 rupees in the village and if someone drills an additional borewell it costs another 30,000 to 40,000 rupees depending on the depth of the tubewell drilled. It is not only that it has led to indebtedness, that it has changed the very nature of agricultural practice in the state. Once there were few who were involved in the paddy cultivation under the wells, the well densities were low and monsoons were reliable, even then very few were cultivating the paddy. Once the tubewell phenomena has started, rainfed farmers started to

grow paddy, and it has become a symbolism as a success of the farmer if he grows rice. The private irrigation companies also pushed the desire to use tubewells to cultivate rice or paddy during the dry season in the village and the state. The state does not provide any scientific information and people rely on traditional methods. The non-availability of geologists and the neglecting of common water sources like tanks has led to the encouragement of tubewells. There are no owners of tubewell drilling machines in both the villages. They are either come from Jagityal or Karimnagar.

The deregulated tubewell economy, the absence of the state in terms of providing guidance have led to private irrigation agents-tubewell drilling machine owners, retail tubewell equipment sellers, become the advisers in terms of providing guidance in this political economy. The private owners, who are present in the nearby towns encouraged the farmers to drill more tubewells at any cost. Farmers have accumulated debt because a tubewell, which is an unsustainable technology for smallholder agriculture as it is related to expensive investment and unstable, as a result of the tubewell political economy in the state and in Village B. and environmentally unsustainable in the long run in the semi-arid regions, as high usage of borewells might lead to depletion of groundwater. The tube well has not only produced new biopolitical domains, but it has also caused enormous transformations in agriculture, exacerbated an unbalanced agricultural structure, and precipitated dramatic ecological changes (Vasavi, 2020).

The major crops cultivated in Village A are paddy, turmeric, and vegetables. Paddy is cultivated in two to three crops and turmeric is cultivated in one crop as it is a long duration crop. In seven to nine months crop becomes ready for harvesting depending on the variety. There are twenty-three mango orchards in the village. Twenty owned by Reddys, two by OBCs (one Goud family and one Mudiraj family), one SC family. The total extent of the mango orchards is 70 to 80 acres. Few of the farmers are involved in horticulture; they grow vegetables and sell them in the village and they take them to Jagityal as well. Paddy is sold in the village itself, it is procured through the government procuring centre which is set up every season. Turmeric is sold in the Nizamabad turmeric market which is around 80 to 90 kilometres. Nizamabad turmeric market is one of the biggest turmeric agriculture commodity markets (APMC) in the country. Paddy, which has three months of growth period, is cultivated in three seasons. Turmeric which has, seven to nine months of growth period, is cultivated in one season. Paddy is cultivated mostly through mechanisation, except

transplanting, everything is done through tractors and harvesters. In turmeric there is the use of more physical labour. For transplanting, for harvesting and after harvesting for boiling the turmeric the physical labour is used. There are around 100 tractors in the village, there are 8 harvesters in the village, they are mostly owned by Upper caste Reddys. Around 10 to 15 men come from Punjab every season to drive these harvesters and repair them every season, there are some in the village who have learnt to drive these harvesters over a period of time. The input cost for paddy is 20,000 to 25,000 per acre to cultivate. If everything goes well they get around 30,000 to 40,000 in return. On the other hand, turmeric is a high investment crop. On an average the input cost for turmeric is 1,00,000 to 1,50,000 per acer. Majority of it goes to buy the seed. If everything goes well and market prices are good, the returns are 4,00,000 to 5,00,000, but it is hardly the case.

There are two fertiliser and pesticide shops in Village A, both of them are owned by Reddys and farmers also buy fertilisers from '*rytusangham*' (association of farmers). They also go to Jagityal to buy the chemical inputs. In Village B, there are no such shops, they go to Kodimal to buy them. Representatives of different chemical input companies and seed companies visit both the villages to influence farmers to use their respective companies' products. The increasing use of chemical inputs and the presence of the field agents of chemical input companies shows two important process says Aniket Aga (Aga, 2019). First, he claims that the ability of agribusinesses to persuade farmers to part with their wealth and buy their goods sustains the billions that they spend on research and development and the billions that they dedicate to lobbying governments. The second point is the more abstract one. By filling in the gaps in farmers' knowledge, transactions between farmers and agents allow the appropriation of agrarian surplus by industrial (agrichemicals) capital. (p-1459).

In serving the various needs of the farmers, such as seeds, inputs, credit, input dealer has become a key intermediary in the villages after the commercialisation of agriculture. They are the mid-level agents who link the agriculture with the multinational agri-input companies.

In terms of market, earlier there were interlocked agrarian markets mechanism. Earlier studies notes the existence of semi-feudal kinds of market relations in the region. Landlord and money lender were mostly the same person in the previous decades. It is no longer the case in the present day context. The In the present-day context it has slightly changed, it

varies depending on the place and depending on the crop. But we can say there that 'semi-feudal' kind of market interlockings are absent, it is also important to note that all the transactions are not market determined. Government is also playing an important role in procuring paddy in Telangana as cultivators sell their paddy in the government procurement centres which are set up in and around the village in the state. In both the villages procurement centres were set during the time of the harvesting. For selling other crops people have to go to the market yards and very few are going. In both the villages paddy is sold in the government procurement centres, in Village B cotton is sold to the private trader, who comes from the Jagityal and buys it. There are cases reported from Village B that the trader gives the credit to the farmer, but very few, they are not enough to generalise about the entire market relations. For selling turmeric farmers go to Nizamabad market yard and sell it there.

Farmers, while talking about the general change in the nature of acculture in the village, feel that in the last two- and two and half decades agriculture has changed in major ways. With mechanisation of agriculture, with the increase in the use of high yielding seeds and fertilisers the production has increased in general but, farmers also complain that input costs also have increased at the same time. With these changes, the overwhelming feeling among the farmers, in both the villages, is that agriculture is not profitable. Major complaint against the government is that they do not get the minimum support price for their produce. Specially, those who are cultivating turmeric they feel that when there is a good crop, the prices are lower, when prices are good, they don't have a good crop. Older generation of farmers feel that there is a change in the nature of agriculture. They think that there is no commitment (*Ankita Bhavamledu*) to it among the new generation of farmers. There is an increase in the use of fertilizers and pesticides which are driving the input costs higher and higher. "In the past, we used desi fertiliser. Now they primarily utilise commercial fertiliser. It renders the soil feeble and inadequate. Desi manure was once productive. Now, they demand even greater productivity and speed. Because they are cultivating two to three crops, the fertiliser is weakening the soil. Compared to the past, no elements remain on the land (*Bhoomi lo saramledu*). Previously, land had the opportunity to unwind, but now no one permits it to do so" 60-year-old farmer told in the field. Now some people are now trying to go back to organic manure like the poultry waste and other things. But it costs more than the chemical fertiliser so small and marginal farmers are not able to afford it. Overuse of the land and fertilisers are the characteristic features of agriculture in the village. The problem

with the overuse of fertilisers, people felt that once you start using them on the land, one needs to use them constantly and even in higher and higher doses, unless you use them the land won't give any output. "The practices of the people in the villages is more of a mixed method kind of workings. There is an enthusiastic usage of new irrigation technologies of tube wells and drip irrigation, mechanisation, chemical fertilisers, and scientifically bred hybrid varieties of seeds. On the other hand, there is also an aversion, disappointment among the farmers that these new agrarian practices are destroying the life of land and agriculture." This understanding comes from a local knowledge of older agrarian practices.

In terms of difference of the irrigation made to the agriculture is that Village A with canal water is more dynamics in terms of agriculture and their investment on the irrigational facilities is less compared to Village B. Apart from that, agriculture in both the villages is dominated by extensive small-scale household-based production. In both the villages agriculture is not able to provide a sustainable income for all the families majority of them depend on other non-agricultural sources of income. It is well integrated with the capitalist input markets which is leading to high input costs and low returns to the farmers in both the villages. T. Scarlett Epstein (reference) used the framework of irrigated village and dry land village in her long terms study of two villages in Karnataka. She studied two villages in 1954, 1970, and in 2000. She argued that the irrigated village was more 'introverted' in the sense that people were more dependent on the agriculture within the village for in 1954 and 1973, in 2000s also they were dependent, but it got reduced. The dry land village was 'village extrovert' where people were more dependent on the employment opportunities outside the village. She studies how this impacted the caste relations in the village, where the introverted village the caste was more binding on the village population, in the extraverted village it was not the case. She studied how these changes led to the breakdown of the caste system, which she argued was a cohesive system. The framework might not be an useful to understand the present day rural and agrarian realities. Where the migration is common phenomenon, and agriculture is not alone the source of sustainable income for the farmers across the country as well as in both field work villages.

Nature of Land Holding in both villages

Land is the fundamental source for any kind of agricultural activity. The extent of landlessness and the nature of the land holdings is significant to understand the agrarian

economy of any region. This section gives the details of the nature of the land holding structure in the state as well as in both study villages. The nature of the agrarian structure in the country is the one where the small and marginal farmers are dominate the landholdings. They constitute more than 80%. The below table 4.20 gives the details of the number of holdings and area operated for the year 2015-16 in the county. The number of small and marginal holdings constitutes 86 percent of the total holdings. Marginal farmers who own below on hectare of land constitute 68%. The area operated by this class is meagre 24%. Showing the nature of the agrarian structure where large percentage of the farmers operating small area with small holdings. The average area operated by the majority of the farmers in the country is 0.38 hectares.

Table 4.20- Distribution of Holdings and Operated Area as per Agriculture Census 2015-16 – All Social Groups in India.

Sl. No	Size Group	Agriculture Census 2015-16		Percentage of holdings to total holdings	Percentage of area operated to total area	Average Operated area per Holding (ha.)
		Number of Holdings (in '000)	Area Operated (in '000 ha.)			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Marginal (below 1.00 ha.)	100251	37923	68.45	24.03	0.38
2	Small (1.00 - 2.00 ha.)	25809	36151	17.62	22.91	1.40
3	Semi-medium (2.00 - 4.00 ha.)	13993	37619	9.55	23.84	2.69
4	Medium (4.00 - 10.00 ha.)	5561	31810	3.80	20.16	5.72
5	Large (10.00 ha & above)	838	14314	0.57	9.07	17.07
	Total	146454	157817	100.00	100.00	1.08
Note: Total may not tally due to rounding off.						

Table 4.21 demonstrates that the large farmers constitute a miniscule proportion (0.57%) but the operated area is around 9.07 and the average holding is 17.07 ha. When it comes to the state of Telangana, the national trend holds the same for the state as well. The following figure (4.5) gives the changing nature of the state's agrarian structure. Marginal farmers are 64.6% in the state operating 28.6% of the area. The agrarian structure of the state once was dominated by large *zamindars* and *deshmukhs*, who once owned hundreds of acres of land as indicated in the previous chapter. There has been a consistent change in the agrarian structure of the state. Table 4.16 gives details of the landholding structure of the small and marginal farmers and area operated by them in the state from 1970 onwards.

Table 4.21- Trends in Percentage of Operational Holdings and Area of Small and Marginal Farmers in Telangana

Year	1970-71	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1995-96	2000-01	2005-06	2010-11
Number	57.53	60.01	68.26	69.89	77.88	80.56	81.7	85.84
Area	14.46	17.17	25.95	27.01	39.93	43.52	46.1	55.44

Srinivasulu. S. (2020). P-11.

Above table 4.21 shows the percentage of the small and marginal farmers in the state has been changing. In 1970 they constituted 57.53% and they operated 14.46% of the area. By 2010-11 their number has increased to 85.84% they operated area of 55.44 %. By 2015-16 they constitute 93% of all the holdings in the state, higher than all India number. Their operated area is almost 62%. Class wise the marginal farmers dominate the numbers even more and is indicative of the nature of state's agrarian structure. Marginal farmers constitute 64.56% and their operated area is only 28.57% of the total area operated in the year 2015-16. As discussed in the previous chapter, there are various reasons that governed this change in the state. The peasant movement in 1940s (Telangana Movement), state's redistributive land reforms agenda, even with little success it had achieved, the Naxalite movement in the 1980s, and demographic pressures on the family farms (in accordance with Chayanovian theory of demographic differentiation) have affected the changing nature of the agrarian structure in the state.

Table 4.22 Percentage distribution of number of operational holdings and area operated in Telangana 2010-11 and 2015-16.

Year Class	2010-11		2015-16	
	Operational Holdings	Area operated	Operational Holdings	Area Operated
Marginal	61.96	25.28	64.56	28.57
Small	23.90	30.17	23.69	33.10
Semi-Medium	10.86	25.58	9.47	24.56
Medium	3.00	14.96	2.11	11.52
Large	0.28	4.01	0.16	2.25

Source: Agricultural Census.

On the other hand, there is a significant decline of the large landowners in the state from 1970s onwards. Table 4.23 gives details of their decline from 1970s to 2010. In 1970-71 there were 6.12% of the large land holdings in the state. The operated area of these holdings was 35.34%. from then on there has been a consistent decline of the large land holdings in

the state. By 2010-11 they declined to 0.28% of the total holdings and to 4.01% of the operated area. However, the decade from 1985-86 to 1995-96 the decline in the number of large land holdings is more pronounced than any decade. From 2.31% of the holdings in 1985-86 they have declined to 0.89%; operated area in 1985-86 was 18.95% of the total area and it declined to 9.24%. Both, in terms of number of holdings and in terms of operated area, have declined to half of the previous decade. The major reasons for such a decline was the Naxalite movement in the state, as stated in the previous chapter. Though the number of large landowners has declined, they still hold relatively more amount of land for their share in the number of holdings.

Table 4.23- Trends in Percentage of Operational Holdings and Area of Large Farmers in Telangana.

Year	1970-71	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1995-96	2000-01	2005-06	2010-11
Number	6.12	4.67	2.66	2.31	0.89	0.69	0.57	0.28
Area	35.34	27.97	21.11	18.95	9.24	8.62	7.04	4.01

Source: Srinvasulu (2020), p-13.

What these number do not reveal is the social character of the land ownership in the country. The figures for the whole country and for state of Telangana, it give us only broad trends of the changing agrarian structure. To understand the social nature of land ownership, it is important to understand the land ownership among the social groups/caste groups. At state level the proportion of rural landless households constitute 43.3% of the total households (Telangana Social Development Report 2017). However, the incidence of landlessness¹⁶ varies across social groups and has undergone massive change from 2002-03 to 2012-13. “Landlessness was reported relatively less among STs (25.6%) and SCs (34.4%) compared to OBCs (48.8%) and ‘Others’ (56.9%) during 2012-13. During the preceding decade i.e. 2002-12, landlessness had significantly declined among STs and SCs but increased among OBCs and ‘Others’. However, mere land ownership by the household, though important, is not sufficient condition for livelihood security, nor is the decline in landlessness in itself an indication of social and economic status.” (Ibid, p-51). Another aspect of land that is important in the agrarian structure is the average size of the land holdings. Holding size is

¹⁶Landlessness is based on the ownership of agricultural land excluding homestead land. Therefore, landless households are those households who do not have any owned, possessed and /or leased out agricultural land.

significant as it determines income from farming, among others. Its social distribution among various social groups shows the inequality in terms of landholding. The average landholding size in Telangana stands at 1.12 ha in 2010-11. The average size of land holdings for SCs it is 0.79 ha and for STs it is 1.14 ha and for others it 1.17 ha. In terms of the various sizes of classes of farmers also SCs stand at the bottom of the table.

In terms of gender also there is a huge inequality in landholdings¹⁷ and area operated in the state. The following table shows the number of holdings and area operated by gender.

Table 4.24- Distribution of operational holdings by gender in Telangana 2010-11

Category	Number of Holdings (in Lakhs)	Area Operated (in Lakh Hectares)	Average size of the Holdings
Male	43.60(78.5)	49.74(80.3)	1.14
Female	11.93 (21.5)	12.12(19.6)	1.02
Total	55.53(99.8)	61.86(99.84)	1.11
Institutional	0.01(0.02)	0.10(0.16)	10.0
Grand total	55.54(100)	61.96(100.0)	1.12

Source: Telangana Social Development Report 2017. (Figures in the brackets indicate proportional share in total)

Table 4.24 shows us if one were to compare the data for male and female ownership of the landholdings, the share of women holdings in the total land holdings is mere 21.5%, whereas male share is 78.5%, with the share of 80.3% in the area operated. The average size of holdings for women is also less compared to men. It is 1.02 for women and it is 1.14 for men.

Figure 4.3 gives the present day (2022) nature of the agrarian structure in the state. Marginal farmers constitute 64.6% of the total farmers, operating only 28.6 % of the area. Small farmers constitute 23.7% operating 33.1% of the area. Together, they are 88% of the total landholdings and 61% of the operational area. Semi-medium, medium, and large

¹⁷It is only management of the land, not the ownership of the land. There is no data on the ownership by gender.

landholdings constitute 18%, and the operated area is 39%. In terms of the social groups SCs constitute 11.8% of the total holdings, operating only 8.9% of the area. STs constitute 12% and operating as much area. Others constitute 76.2% of the holdings and 78.6 % of the area.

Figure 4.3- Landholding Pattern in Telangana

Land Holdings by Size Class

Size Class (Acres)	No. of Holdings ('000)	% of Holdings	Area Operated ('000 Hects.)	Area Operated ('000 Acres)	% of Area Operated
Marginal (Below 2.47)	3,840	64.6	1,706	4,216	28.6
Small (2.48 – 4.94)	1,409	23.7	1,977	4,885	33.1
Semi-Medium (4.95 - 9.88)	564	9.5	1,467	3,625	24.6
Medium (9.89 - 24.77)	126	2.1	688	1,700	11.5
Large (24.78 and Above)	9	0.2	135	334	2.3
Total	5,948	100	5,972	14,757	100

Land Holdings by Social Groups

Scheduled Caste	700	11.8	532	1,315	8.9
Scheduled Tribes	712	12	741	1,830	12.4
Institutional	1	0	5	13	0.1
Others	4,535	76.2	4,694	11,599	78.6
Total	5,948	100	5,972	14,757	100

Source: Telangana Socio-Economic Outlook 2022.

Table 4.25 Land Holdings in Village A

Land holdings	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
Marginal	0	22	23	45
Small	1	14	10	25
Semi Medium	4	3		7
Medium	8	4		12
Large	14	6	2	22
Grand Total	27	49	35	111

Source: Field data.

Table 4.25 gives the details of Land Holdings in Village A. According to the field data, out of 165 households, 67% of (111) of the households have land. 40% of are marginal farmers, 22% are small, 6% are semi-medium, 10% medium, 19% large farmers are there in the village. There are about 32% of the household in the survey don't own any land. The small, marginal, semi-medium farmers constitute around 70% of the total farmers in the village. 57% of the marginal farmers are from SC households and there are no marginal farmers from OC households, rest of them are from OBC households. There are 14 OC households which belong to large farmer category, constituting almost 64% of the total large farmer households. Of the total SC households who own land 90% of them are from small and

marginal farmers. There are two SC households who belong to large farmers category. 50% of the OC households are from large farmer category. Overall, there are more small and marginal farmers in the village and majority of them belong to OBC and SC households. OC households who are from Reddy community are large farmers and they own more land than in the village.

Table 4.26- Landless households in Village A

Social Group	Number of Landless Households	%
OC	2	3.7
BC	32	59
SC	20	37
Total	54	100

Source: Field data.

Table 4.26 gives the details of landless households in the village. Out of 165 households 54 (32%) households don not own any land. Out of the 54, 37% households are SC households. 59% are OBC households. Landlessness among OC is only 3.7%. In the survey there is more landlessness among the OBC households than the SC households.

Table 4.27 - Land Holdings in Village B

Land holdings	OC	BC	SC	Grand Total
Marginal	0	9	6	15
Small	2	6	7	15
Semi medium	2	6	2	10
Medium	1	4	0	5
Large	4	2	0	6
Total	9	27	15	51

Source: Field data

Table 4.27 shows that Land holdings in Village B are dominated by small and marginal farmers. Out of total respondents, 78% (51) of the 51 households own land and 22% (14) households don't own any land. Those who own land 29% (15) of the households are marginal, 29% (15) of the households are small, 20% (10) of the households are semi-medium, 10% (5) of the households are medium, and 12% (6) are large land holdings. The total percentage of the small, marginal, semi-medium holdings is 78% in the total holdings. Medium and large holdings constitute 22% of the surveyed households. Out of the 14 households who do not own any land 5 (36%) are SC, one OC (7%) and 8 (57%) are OBC households.

Tenancy:

Table 4.28 indicates Tenancy holdings account for 20.1% of the total land operational holdings in the state. They have increased by 4% from 2002-03 to 2012-13. Leased in area constitutes 14.8% of the total operational area and it increased significantly from 2002-03 to 2012-12, from 4.7%. The following table gives the details of the tenancy among various social groups in the state from 2002-03 to 2012-13.

**Table 4.28-
Extent of Tenancy across social groups in Telangana- 2002-03 and 2012-13**

Social Group	% share of tenant holdings in total operational holdings		% share of area leased-in in total operational holdings		% average leased-in area per operational holding (Ha)	
	2002-03	2012-13	2002-03	2012-13	2002-03	2012-13
ST	NA	23.4	NA	12.1	NA	1.56
SC	3.1	17.7	4.1	14.6	1.81	1.51
OBC	5.7	19.4	4.2	16.3	1.74	2.25
Other	5.7	33.9	3.5	10.7	2.93	1.9
Total	4.7	20.1	3.1	14.8	1.98	1.93

Source: Telangana Development Report 2017. P-55.

In both field work villages, there is presence of tenancy. In Village A there are 15 households among the respondents who are involved in tenancy. The total land that is leased by these 15 households is around 50.7 acers. and out of 15, 13 households have land and two don't own land but are involved in tenancy. Out of the 15, 8 are the marginal farmers, they have leased in 22.5 acers, 4 are small farmers, they have leased in 15 acers, 1 medium and 1 large farmer, they have leased in 12 acers and 1 agricultural labour doing tenancy he has leased 1.2 . In terms of caste, out of 15 there are 2 OCs, 9 OBCs and, 4 SCs, are there. Out of the total household's tenancy comprises of 9%, but if we see among those who cultivate, it is around 20%. There are three to four large farmers in the village, who take land on lease from small farmers, they were not included in the household survey but came to notice during the field work. In Village B, there are 5 households, who are involved in tenancy. All of the five households own land, but still are involved in tenancy. Out of 5, 3 are marginal and 1 small and one medium farmers. Out of 3 are OBC, one SC and one OC. Out of the total cultivators it is around 16%. For credit, seeds, pesticides, and machinery for

the production process, all of the tenants in the two villages have relied on informal intermediaries like moneylenders, commission brokers, local input traders, etc. When compared to two villages, tenancy is little more in Village A (4%). It is because the village is dynamic in terms of the agriculture, also there is the availability of canal water for the village. The assurance of water for irrigation for one season is the main reason that farmers indicate for tenancy.

There is a change in the character of the tenancy. There is a growth of fixed-rent tenancy and there is a decline of the sharecropping. The move shows the changing nature of agriculture. The move shows the commercial nature of the agriculture. One of the elder respondents from OBC community who was involved in tenancy, informed that, earlier there sharecropping in food crops and fixed tenancy in commercial crops. He also said that, with share cropping the landlords or those who were leasing out lands were willing to share the burden if there were losses in the crop, nowadays they don't want to share that burden, they just want money for their land. There is "The move from sharecropping to fixed tenancy agreements is growing and seems to be linked to the emergence of "new landlords" who are moving out of cultivation due to alternative opportunities". (Bhim Reddy and Abhishek 2012. p-127). In sharecropping, the landlord/landowner had shared the burden of investment and the uncertainties associated with agriculture arising out of environment and market conditions. Shift from the sharecropping to fixed rent absolved the landowner from these uncertainties. When inquired about, when this shift has started, respondents in both the villages said that it started roughly from 2000s onwards. In the last five to ten years there was no sharecropping in both the villages, only fixed rent tenancy.

Telangana government is giving 10,000 rs per acre for each year for every land owner under 'rythubandu' scheme. Tenant cultivators are not recognised under this scheme. AS said in the previous chapter, the recently enacted new revenue act the, the provision of recording the tenant in the passbook (the revenue document) has been removed. By doing that they had taken away the provision of a legal right. With the new 'rythubandu' the landholder will automatically get 10,000 per acers every year, weather he is the cultivating his land or not. Tenant farmers expressed the fear during the field that the land holders may increase the tenancy rates, because even if nobody is willing to take the land on lease, they will get money from 'rythubandu'.

There has been a recent phenomenon reported from the state, with regard to the tenancy and agrarian structure. It is the growth of the ‘absentee landlords’ and it has been conceptualised as the growth of ‘non-cultivating’ peasant households i.e. “households who own land but do not cultivate land in the rural areas”(Vijay, 2012, p. 37). Y Sreenivasulu, in his study on the absentee landlords in both states in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh has reported the emergence of this phenomena, especially after 2010 (Sreenivasulu Y 2020).

Land is an important aspect in the lives of people. They attach multiple meanings to it and relate to it at multiple ways. Land is also an important concept in the agrarian studies, in the neo-liberal context it has acquired even more significance. Polanyi considers land a ‘fictitious commodity’; it is socially embedded, and its social embeddedness from which its meaning is both derived and driven(Akram-Lodhi et al., 2021).Landlessness in rural areas is often taken as a sign of vulnerability and poverty (Jayaraman and Lijouw 1999).What does the above data indicate? Although there are high inequalities in terms of land ownership in the villages, majority of the landless is there among the SC, OBC than among the Upper castes. There are historical reasons for this as explained in the previous chapter.

John Harris says that “land is no longer so important as the basis of status and power”(John Harriss, 2011) in the Indian rural setting. The focused group discussions, and interviews with the respondents in both the villages reveal that, land has lost the importance for ‘productive reasons’- in the sense that, previously land was important because of dominance of agriculture and it was the only source of income it was important to own land for survival and it was central to productive relations. Since the nature of agricultural production changed and it has become one of the sources of income rather than being the sole provider of the household income, land has lost importance for agriculture.

Even though majority of the respondents (especially small and marginal farmers) agreed that agriculture alone cannot provide income, all the respondents in both villages wanted to own land. Those who did not have land want to own at least some parcel of land in the village or in the town. Land prices have increased in the last 10 years in both the villages, more in Village A which is near to the road, than in Village B which is remotely located. Respondents feel that it is source of economic power in the village. “They can no longer command our labour, like once they used to. But still they (*reddys*) are dominant in the village because all the lands are with them, and they have money” said one respondent from SC community. There is a decline of the importance of land for the productive purposes, but its importance

is rising for speculative purposes, specially, for the lands located near to roads, urban centers, mandal headquarters. The importance of land as source of income (agriculture income) has decreased, but the importance of land as an asset has increased immensely and all the respondents want to own land for the economic reasons and speculative purposes.

The next major source of income is the international migration remittances specially from gulf migration. As in the region, it is also a feature of the village that people are migrating to gulf countries. The beedi rolling is another major economic activity in the village. It is dominated by the women. Women from OBCs, SCs and Muslims roll the beedis, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Labour

The major features of labour in contemporary India are that, the classes of labour(Bernstein, 2010)) who are becoming more in number; they are more likely to involve in the informal sector and are more likely to work across a variety of locations than they used to work (Pattenden 2017: 40). These are also the features of the labour found in the village. People are highly dependent on the multiple occupations for securing a livelihood ranging from agriculture, agricultural wage labour, self-employment, non-agricultural work in the informal sector. Their work locations are multiple. They vary from within the village to a nearby village, to Jagityal, to Gulf migration.

Other important features of the labour are that, the unfree labour forms have declined in the village. Once, *vetti* was practiced in the village and the region. Later this was transformed to become, a farm servant, *jeetagadu*, who used to get paid for his labour but had no freedom, was subjected extra economic work and coercion, was tied to a particular employer, and was unable to negotiate contractual terms. In both the villages this was the practice till the late 1990s. From early 2000s onwards this practice has slowly given way to more less personalised forms of labour relations.

Ramulu is from the SC (madiga) community. He is 42 years of age. He works as farm servant with a Reddy family. His work as a farm servant is to take care of the cattle (three buffalos and two oxen). He generally comes in the morning around 6am and cleans the cattle shed, helps the owner in milking the buffalos. He goes back to his house and comes back around 10 am, takes the cattle to the field. He comes back in the evening around 5pm. Again, helps in milking and goes back to his house maximum by 7pm. He is paid 1,20,000 rupees as wage per year. He is employed for

one year. He has also taken 60,000 rupees as credit with his employer. At the time of field work he was working for six months. When asked whether he would like to continue to work as farm servant he said he was not planning to.

When asked for the reason for this change, there were two important reason given by them. One, agricultural mechanisation has reduced the male labour required in agriculture. Two, there are less cattle used in agriculture, this also because of mechanisation, so they don't need people to look after the cattle or work with them in agriculture.

The labour bondage system has slowly given way to free wage labour systems. According to Jan Breman, the release from bondage transformed rural labour into a commodity with limited demand under the new laws of the capitalist mode of production. The state of unfreedom in which this class previously resided was ended by the loss of the patronage-related aspects that had helped to mask the earlier bountiful supply of rural labour, but the harsh and precarious conditions that it brought with it persisted (Breman, 2019, 157).

He continues by arguing that the loosening of employment ties was also evident in the rapid development of contract labour (ibid). This is also a phenomenon in both villages, more prominent in Village A, than Village B, Self-selected gangs of women are working in transplanting paddy at a pre-arranged wage for a specific amount of work. The landowner negotiated a collective arrangement with the gang leader (generally a young women). She distributed the earning among the members of her team. These gangs were not permanent but broken up once the work is done for the season. (Ibid, 159).

Regarding the mechanisation of agriculture Sarkar (2020) says that mechanisation in agriculture refers to the use of suitable machinery for efficient application of various crop production inputs and timely field operations. In other words, it refers to the introduction of enhanced tools and implements, as well as the appropriate quantity of tractors, combines, pumps, and other equipment (Ojha, 1988; Pingali, 2004). In contrast to previous years, Indian farmers are currently adopting farm mechanisation at a faster rate, according to the Economic Survey of 2018. (Ministry of Finance, GoI, 2018). Tractor and power tiller yearly sales have increased by more than twice as much in the last ten years. Tractor sales rose from 2.5 lakh in 2004-2005 to 5.8 lakh in 2016-2017 on an annual basis (DoACFW, 2018). Likewise, from fewer than 18 thousand in 2004-2005 to over 45 thousand in 2016-2017, power tiller sales climbed annually (DoACFW, 2018). The utilisation of mechanical and

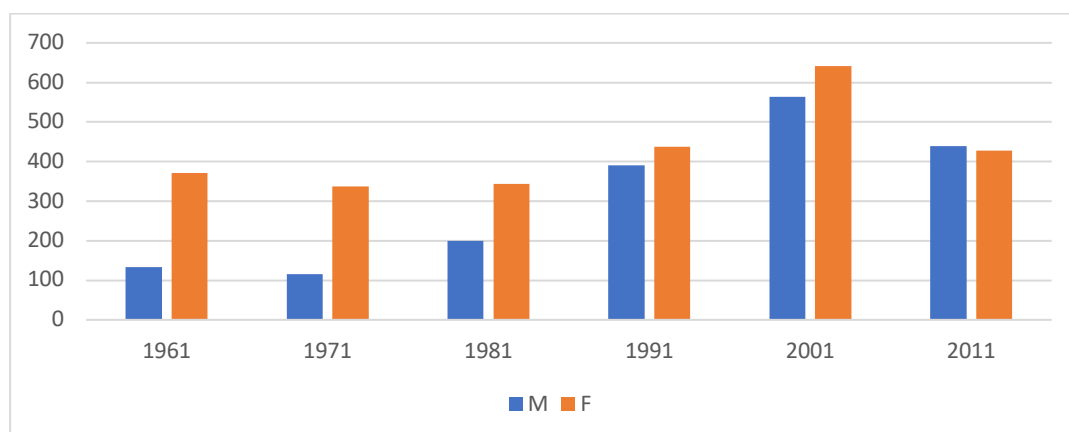
electrical sources of power has increased over time. About 93% of farm power in 1960–1961 came from animate sources; by 2014–2015, that percentage had fallen to about 10%. (p2).

The extent of mechanisation varies across different agricultural activities. “It is 40% in soil working and seed preparation, 29% in seeding and planting, plant protection there is 34%, irrigation 37% and harvesting 60-70% for wheat and rice.” (Varun Gandhi 2018:15) Mechanisation of agriculture has changed the nature of agriculture labour in the village in the last twenty years. This has significant implications for the labour. Production roles of male and female in agriculture are skill segregated. The mechanisation has changed it drastically, it replaced the male segregated work, like ploughing, tilling, harvesting, irrigation with machines. The female agricultural work to a very large extent hasn’t been mechanised. In the field work villages, paddy transplanting is done by manual labour, mostly female labour. In Village A turmeric transplanting and harvesting is done by female manual labour. Cotton in Village B is harvested by manual female labour.

There is a vast disparity in the ownership of all sorts of agricultural machinery" (in the country). The proportion of machinery owners and the average value of machinery per family grow linearly with landholding size (Sarkar, 2020). In the field work villages also there is extreme inequality in terms of the ownership of the machinery. That is more in Village A, where all of the harvesters are owned by the Reddys and majority of the tractors are owned by Reddys. In Village B the ownership of the tractors is more among the OBCs than any other community. For harvesters charge 2000 Rs to 2500 Rs per an hour. For tilling land tractor 1200 for an hour in both villages.

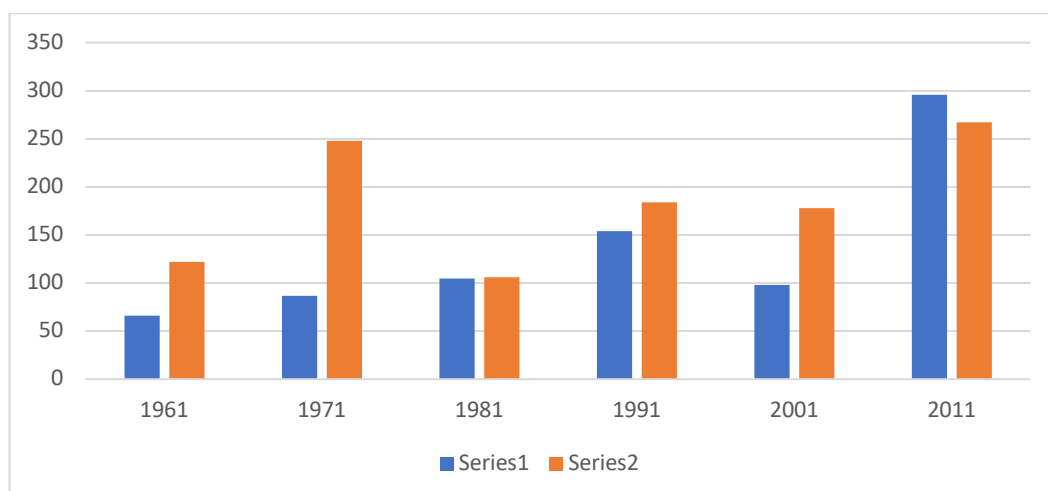
Sarkar (2020) says that a combination of unequal distribution and increased mechanisation of agricultural operations means that small farmers are becoming increasingly dependent on the rental market for hiring machinery, which will have a negative impact on farm income. Due to the inherent nature of time-sensitive agricultural operations, machinery owners can charge small farmers, who rely on rented machines exorbitant rents. Moreover, Those who are hiring the machinery, have access to the machine's services at a less favourable time than machine owners, as machine owners prioritise the timely completion of operations on their own farms over hiring out excess capacity to other cultivators.

Figure 4.4- Male Female Agricultural Labourers from 1961 to 2011 in Village A



Source: Compiled from Census data.

Figure 4.5- Cultivators and Labourers in Village B from 1961 to 2011



Source: Census data

Table 4.29 Male and Female Agricultural Labour in Village A

Social Group	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
OC	3	5	5	9
OBS	27	46	25	43
SC	29	49	28	48
Grand Total	59	100	58	100

Source: Field data.

Table 4.30 Male and Female Agricultural Labour in Village B

Social Group	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
OC	2	7	3	9
BC	13	48	17	52
SC	12	45	13	39
Grand Total	27	100	33	100

Source: Field data.

Figures 4.4 and 4.5 shows the composition of male and female agricultural labour in from 1961 onwards. In both the villages the number of female agricultural labourers are more in number than the male agricultural labour from 1961 to 2001. Only in the last census that we see a small decline in the number of female labourers than the male. The gendered nature of the agricultural work also shows that female labour in agriculture is more physical non-machine labour than male labour.¹⁸ The agricultural mechanisation is not gender neutral in Indian agriculture. Though there is a decline in the female labour participation in agriculture than male labour during the last decade, but the number of female working days in agriculture are more than male labour, because of the mechanisation of the male labour work. There has been an increase in the agricultural wages in the last ten to fifteen years in both the villages. The introduction of MGNREGA has shown a positive impact on this, which is a well reported across the state. All most all the respondents have told that it increased the wage rates in the villages. Previously the wage rates were 50 to 70 rupees per day for women, 100 to 150 rupees for men in the agricultural work, it varied depending on the crop and nature of the work. During the time of the field work the agricultural wage rates were, 250 to 300 rupees for women and 400 to 500 rupees for men in agriculture. Though there is an increase in the agricultural wages, if one observes closely, given that there are more female labour employed than male labour and decreasing number of agricultural working days, the casual impression of rising agricultural wages may be highly exaggerated. As noted earlier the male rural labour force are going and preferring for non-farm employment. The wage rates in agriculture for male workers are showing trends of convergence with wage rates in non-agriculture.

¹⁸In recent times it has been changing, the seeding and transplanting of paddy is being done by the male migrated labour from West Bengal in some of the villages in Medak District of Telangana has been reported in newspapers.

On an average the number of working days in agriculture in Village A are around 100 to 120 days. The peak season during paddy transplanting, which is mostly (almost exclusively) done by women. There will be work per 30 to 45 days per each crop of paddy, in Village A paddy is cultivated in two crops. The average number of 62 days of work is available through MNREGA work in the village. All the caste groups participate in MNREGA work, except Reddys in this village. On an average they get 120-150 rupees of wage. During the focused group discussions with the Dalit respondents, they said that it is a major source of employment for majority of the Dalit families. In Village B MNREGA work is prominent among the OBCs. The average number of working days in this village are 71 in this village. There The average number of working days in Agriculture in this village are 80 to 90 days.

With regards to MNREGA work, the major feature of it is that the none of the respondents in the both the villages did not get the guaranteed 100 days of work. It far less than. One more, issues with it is that the number of working days are decreasing in both the villages. The respondents have informed that once they used to get 3 months of work in the initial days. Now they only get for two months.

A marked feature of both villages appears to be an increase in the incidence of migration. Migration takes place on two levels. One is the international migration and other is internal migration. Though international migration is there in both the villages for the last three to four decades, the incidence of migration has increased in recent years. Households across different castes, classes are migrating to gulf countries. it's history, nature and impacts on the nature of labour will be discussed in the next chapter. What is important to note is that the increase in the internal migration. This phenomenon has started in the last 10 to 15 years (in the early 2002). Households are migrating to nearby villages and to Jagityal from Village A and to Karimnagar from Village B. They mostly go to construction work. Male female labour migrate in both villages. From Village B, they take early RTC bus which goes through their village to Karimnagar and go work and they come back in the evening. Some times they go the labour *adda* in Karimnagar, some times they go work with the *mastry*. If they go to labour *adda* they might or might not get work, but whenever they get work they earn good wages. If they go and work with a *mastry* they are paid less wages than they would get at the *adda* but the upside is that they get work every day. Labour from Village A also go to work in Jagityal, they either go to work by an auto or on their bikes in the morning and come

back in the evening. They also either go to the adda or work with a mastery. What is different from in Village A from Village B is that, in Village A there are households who are involved in the service economy in Jagityal. They work in the hotel as cleaner or server, some of them are working the diagnostic centres, some are working in the retail stores as helpers. This trend has not been reported in the Village B. They go in the morning and come back in the evening to the village. The proximity of the village to the town has been reported as the main reason, it is not only easy to commute but also the more connections they have in the town.

Overall, the nature of the labour is changing in both villages, and that is gravitating towards more casualisation, informalisation of the work force. Fluidity and flexibility in terms of working across different activities, segments, and regions has become the nature of labour force.

The availability of alternative finance sources and an increase in rural non-agricultural work options have decreased labourers' dependency on landowners (da Corta and Venkateshwarlu 1999). Low-caste males have had success evading forced labour, reducing their use of wage labour in agriculture, and improving the circumstances of that labour (da Corta and Venkateshwarlu 1999). However, this disengagement has been made feasible by the increased participation of women on a regular basis. In addition, women earn only 40% of the average male income and 38.5 % of the legal minimum wage (Garikipati 2008). The feminization of agricultural employment and the agricultural workforce is influenced by the availability of cheap female labour.

Pattenden(Pattenden, 2017)lists out the major characteristics of rural based labour India. It is underemployed, which reflects the presence of surplus labour which weakens the bargaining power of the labour. It is informally employed, which is unprotected by the state regulations. It is highly fragmented because of caste, increased spatial diffusion across multiple sites, both rural as well as urban. These characterise the labour in both the villages also.

Caste and labour:

Though caste inequalities exist in both the villages, and caste is critical in terms of accessing the opportunities in the newly developing non-farm sectors. But it is not able to command the labour like it once used to do previously. As said earlier, the bonded labour is almost

non-existent in both the villages. The region is once dominated by the *vetti*-forced labour now it is completely absent. Despite the widening income disparities in villages, caste has changed for better in both the villages. Major director of such a change in the village is the introduction of MGNREGA work and presence of the non-farm work. To, some extent gulf migration also contributed towards this process., but those who left were behind were forced to depend on the land holding communities for the employment. Interactions in the field, focused group discussions, have indicated that after the interdiction of MGNREGA work domination of the, *reddys* and *velamas*, has been reduced. “They no longer treat us the way they used to,because they know that we don’t need them for getting work. We can always go to *upadipani* (MNREGA) or we can go to other work. They need us” was the response of one of the respondents. While studying the interactions between the Dalits and upper castes in Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh India’s Maiorano and others say that (Maiorano et al., 2022) rural landed aristocracy in India are no longer absolute oppressors; neither can the country's impoverished be relegated to the position of the oppressed. Instead, we observe individuals engaging in a variety of negotiation techniques that open the way to positive social change and inclusion. (p-229). They go on to say that advancements in education, the accessibility of non-agricultural employment, social protection policies, and the politicisation of lower classes and castes have reduced the reliance of lower-caste labourers on the local landed elites and, in some cases, have increased the relative power of the poor in comparison to the local elites. Furthermore, the long-term crises that India's agriculture has been mired in as well as the ongoing, generation-long process of land fragmentation are continually undermining the material basis of the upper caste's dominance (Mishra, 2007)

One of the consequences of these changes is that, and also a contributing factor, there has been the erosion of the patron-client kind of relationships (Manor 2012; Kumar, 2021).Relationships between patrons and clients have become marketised (Maiorano et al., 2022). These relationships have become exchange relations from that of traditional relationships. Lower casts are no longer providing service to the upper castes for free or out of respect, they are demanding their payments for their services. One of the wealthy, upper caste *Reddy* says that

“ వీళ్ళుగౌరవిచడంమానేశారు. ఒక్కప్పటిలాఅరేయ్, ఒరేయ్అంటేపనిచెయ్యరు.

చిన్నచిన్నపనులుఒక్కప్పుడుఊరికేనేచేసేటోళ్లు, ఇప్పుడుప్రతిదానికిపైసలే.

పైసలుఇస్తామన్నాకూడాపనిచేసేటోళ్లుదొరుకుతలేరు.”

He says that “these (referring to lower caste labour) people have stopped respecting us. We cannot call them names like once we used to and make them work. For even small works also we have to give payments otherwise they don’t work”.

It is important to note that it is not an end to either of caste relations or the importance of caste. It indicates that there is a certain degree of change in relationship between labour and caste in the rural setting. This may not be true everywhere, these relations are contingent on many things, but this is the case in both field work villages and can be extended to the entire state. Many upper-caste households have successfully diversified their sources of income and assets, according to other scholars, and in many cases have been able to reclaim their authority through a number of means (Gupta and Thakur, 2017; Jeffrey, 2001; Pattenden, 2016). Inequalities (in terms of wages levels and possibilities available) between caste groups also persist and are growing, as shown by Deshpande and Ramachandran (2019), with the exception of those at the very bottom of the economic and social hierarchy, who are increasingly catching up. Several of the following case studies demonstrate this:

Case Studies:

Household one:

This is a small family. There is husband, wife and they have a son in the family. The head of the household has studied till 8th class. Son is studying Degree in the Jagityal town. Both of the family members are engaged in agriculture. The family inherited two acres of land under the canal irrigation. They mostly cultivate paddy in those two acres. They used tractor and harvester for cultivating and harvesting the paddy. They also do agriculture labour and they also go to MGNREGA work in the village. Wife rolls beedis whenever she gets time or she does not have other work to do. Husband also does the traditional toddy tapping work. The major sources of the income are Agriculture, wage labour and traditional occupation. The family has a four-room concrete house. There is a tv in the household and a two-wheeler. There are two smart phones each one for father and son. There is one phone with wife which is not a smart phone.

Household two:

Ramesh is from SC (mala) community. He did his graduation in sciences in Jagityal. He owns two acres of land. They cultivate paddy in those two acres, the source of irrigation is

tube well. He works as a lab technician in two private hospitals in Jagityal. In one hospital he works as regular employee in the other hospital he works as part time. He gets 8000 rupees as monthly wage from the first hospital, where as the second hospital pays 300 rupees per day but work is not regular. His father also lives with him and he works as a tractor driver in the village and he gets 10,000 rupees per month. He is married and his wife looks after the household activities. He has one small infant boy.

Household three:

Laxman is from SC (Madiga) community, he is 51 years old. He works for construction work in and outside the village. He also does agricultural work whenever it is available in the village. Earns 500-750 rupees daily, if he gets work. He went to Dubai for twenty years and worked as a construction worker there. He bought one and half acer of land and he inherited half acre. He repaired his house with the remittances it coasted around 1,50,000 rupees. His wife works as agricultural labour and MNREGA work in the village, she rolls *beedies*.

He has two sons. First son is working as a car driver in a government office. He gets 10,000 rupees as a salary per month. He has two children. His son is studying in the private degree college in the Jagityal, daughter is studying intermediate in a government model school. His wife rolls *beedies*. She earns 150-200 rupees per day and she also get 1000 rupees pension from the government.

Second son is into agriculture and agricultural labour. He cultivates in his shar of one acer and he leased in his brother's one acer. He cultivates paddy in it. He also works as agricultural labour, He goes to MNREGA work in the village. His wife works on their land as well as agricultural labour in the village. She also goes to MNREGA work. She rolls *beedies* and earns around 100-150 rupees per day. She also gets 1000 rupees pension. Father, both sons live separately.

Household four:

Narayan Reddy is from an Upper caste family (reddy), he has fifteen acers of land. He cultivates paddy in 10 acers and he has 5 acers of Mango orchard. He has one big building in Jagityal and he gets 60,000 rupees rent per month from the building. He owns a tractor. He employed one driver to drive his tractor and one more to look after his land and mango

orchard. He pays 10,000 rupees as a salary for each of them, he also lends money to as credit, at the time of field work he had given 2,50,000 rupees for both of them. He worked as a civil contractor for some time and built the house in Jagityal. At the time of interview, he was constructing a new house dismantling the old house for rent purposes. His family lives in Jagityal and he has a daughter who got married, his son is in US working as software engineer. His wife is not engaged in any wage work outside the household.

Household Five:

Srinivas goudis 50 years old, he is from OBC (goud) community. He has one and half acers of land and he cultivates paddy. He went to Dubai for six years. He worked for some time in a glass company and later he worked as a painter. His basic salary was 24,000, if he worked over time he could earn 35,000 to 40,000 per month. He bought land in Jagityal and constructed a house in there. His wife rolls *beedies* and earns 100-150 rupees per month, she does not do any work outside of the house apart from beedi rolling and household reproductive work. He is also involved in toddy tapping, he earns 300 to 400 daily during the season, 100-200 during the off season. He spent 60,000 to 70,000 rupees on his Dubai traveling. HE has son and a daughter. His son finished BTech and now working in Dubai and earning 70,000 to 80,000. His daughter is studying D. Pharmacy.

He has two brothers; one brother has finished his degree and went to Dubai and he is earning 40,000 per month. The second brother is running a private school in the nearby village.

Household six:

Shankarayya is from OBC community, he is 55 years old. He has half acer of land. He cultivates paddy in it. He also engages in toddy tapping, he gets 200 to 300 rupees daily during the season. His wife rolls beedies, she gets 1000 rupees from government as pension. He gets 1000 rupees as pension from the government as part of the support for toddy tappers in the state. Both of them go for MNREGA work in the village as well as agricultural wage labour in the village during the season. They have two children, elder son is studying in the intermediate, younger son is in 6th class, both of them study in the private college and school.

Household Seven:

Shekhar Reddy is from the reddy community. He is 45 years old. During the time of field work, his wife was the village sarpanch. He owned 25 acers of land. He cultivated paddy, turmeric. He also has had 8 acers of mango orchard. He owned one harvester, one JCB, one

Tractor. He employed two drivers to run the harvester and JCB. He employed 'farm assistant' to look after the agriculture, who is from OBC community. Though his wife was the village sarpanch, he was known as the sarpanch of the village. He has investments in real estate market in Jagityal. His brother is in Australia working as a software engineer. His wife does not engage in any wage work outside the household, sometimes she supervises the agriculture. He has a daughter who is studying intermediate in Hyderabad. His major sources of income are agriculture, rent from harvester and JCB, and returns on his real estate investments.

Household eight:

Ramanachari is from OBC (Kammari/ironsmith) community. He is working as an electrician in the village. His family does not own any agricultural land. He works in the village as an electrician. He earns 60,000 to 80,000 rupees per year. Whenever he does not have work in the village he goes to work in the town, to work for his friends or relatives who are also doing electrical work and he is paid 500 to 1000 rupees per day depending upon the work. His wife rolls beedies, and she earns 100-150 rupees per day. He has two children studying in the private school. He bought a small plot of land in the village to build a house, with his savings and taking some money as credit from others.

Chapter 5

Navigating through Non-farm

This chapter discusses how non-farm economy has developed in the village and its various implications for various caste and classes in the village. As indicated in the previous chapter, two of the major non-farm sectors in the region are: one, the women beedi work and second, male gulf migration. This chapter historically outlines the emergence of both beedi work and gulf migration which is supplemented with a discussion on the town's economy. This chapter also discusses the nature of non-farm economy in the villages in the present-day context.

These two major activities - migration to Gulf countries (known popularly as Dubai) and household based beedi rolling. Both have a historical origin in the migratory practice of a particular community and later extended to other communities. Interestingly both are very gendered practices, migration to Gulf countries is exclusively a male practice in the region, where as the beedi rolling is, mostly taken up by women. The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section there is a discussion on the migratory practices of a particular community, which is analysed based on the secondary studies. How beedi industry emerged in India and how it came to Telangana and how it is contributing to household income are discussed in the second section. Gulf migration is discussed in the third section. In fourth section, we discuss the nature of non-farm economy in both villages. Fifth and final section is on the urbanisation processes in Telangana especially with a focus on Jagityal town.

Section I

Weavers Migration:

As out migration or emigration from the region (including the study villages) has a longer history, this section begins with the pre-colonial period.

Pre-colonial:

Douglas E. Haynes and Tirthankar Roy (Haynes & Roy, 1999) argue Weavers have engaged in collective migrations throughout South Asian history as a strategy for survival and growth. During these epochs, artisan cloth manufacturers usually migrated from regions that were becoming economically and politically marginalised to regions where new hubs of civilization and economy were emerging. According to them, migrating has always been a

method that (weavers) have used to ensure their subsistence, survive hunger, enhance their economic well-being, and, in certain cases, fend off attempts to regulate their labour. Such movements altered the areas where the weavers settled, promoting the development of towns, long-distance trade, and industrial activity. (36).

Weavers migration was very much prevalent even before the advent of the colonial rule. However, Haynes and Roy argue that, there was a qualitative difference in the migration before and after the colonial rule in terms of the factors stimulating the movement of the weavers. Weavers' earlier migrations had been tightly tied to South Asia's state-formation processes, but after British rule was established, this link was broken. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, modifications to the way artisanal enterprises were structured as well as the uneven nature of industrialisation and commercial expansion had produced new patterns of regional dynamism and collapse, which were primarily associated with the emigration of skilled artisans. The weaving community in South Asia employed two strategies: a complete disengagement from the industry, employment as farm labourers, and migration to new places. (37)

The majority of well-documented examples of weavers' migration before to the seventeenth century show a flight from disintegrating or unstable polities to the realm of strong and stable regimes. The records typically state or imply that political benefactors made a deliberate decision to locate weavers in their capital cities.(ibid)

They go on to argue that the weaving community was not well integrated into the 'Jajmani' structure of the village community, and when it did exist, their reliance on the land for employment was frequently rather restricted. As a result of their relatively weak links to their local culture and society and their greater dependency on wider networks of commerce and political power, weavers were frequently willing to relocate as political and economic situations shifted(Haynes & Roy, 1999). Before the 18th century, the typical pattern of migration was away from decaying or unstable polities to the stable territories. The display of luxury goods and clothes was an essential characteristic of the nobility, not only in India, but even in medieval England (Dobb, 1975). Hence, there was a strong connection between capital cities, temples, and textiles. According to Haynes and Roy (1999), there is a strong correlation between capital cities or temples and textiles, indicating that weavers played a

crucial role in the processes of state creation. High-quality clothing was crucial to a nobility's rank and loyalty, making it necessary to develop or draw a ruling elite (39).

The expansion of external trade was major factor that influenced the weaving community's migration practices. Weavers were drawn to regions with a high export potential for textiles, whereas they appeared to have abandoned regions where exports were declining. According to Vijaya Ramaswamy (1985), the closeness to ports was crucial in establishing the location of weaving centers in South India.

Even though these were the external pull factors, Haynes and Roy did not provide historical evidence for the push factors that led to the departure of the weaving community prior to the 18th century. Using A.I. Chicherov, they argue that we might understand the exodus as an result of class conflict, in which weavers left those who demanded things of them by running away. Insufficient food supplies might also be a factor in emigration. Furthermore, there is no foundation for generalising the push pressures based on changes in the way production is organised, either at the point of origin or the end destination. According to their claims, weavers may have occasionally moved to join bigger workshops (karkhanas) that occasionally were set up by kings and emperors to promote specialised garment production. We would contend that the majority of migrations, however, reflected the mobility of families, who made few modifications to their organisation culture after they arrived in their new places, as the family based production was the main type of production system during the pre-colonial period (40).

The Devangas, the Salis, the Kaikkolars, and the Sourashtras were the four major weaving communities in mediaeval south India. Each had a history of migration before the Middle Ages. One of the most distinguishing features of Southern weaving groups, according to Vijaya Ramaswamy and Prasannan Parthasarathi, is their mobility.

They argued that weavers could not be seen as a part of the permanent fixture of any kind of self-sufficient, stable rural culture. The capacity of the weavers to be mobile provided them great negotiating strength with the merchants, according to Parthasarathi, who sees these migrations as proof of their economic dominance. Ramaswamy asserts that weavers had a strong economic and social standing in the pre-eighteenth century, but he also points

out that emigration generally happened in response to extreme poverty or rising taxes. (Haynes and Roy 1999).

Ramaswamy credits the growth of Vijayanagara empire with driving the Devangas to migrate from Andhra or Karnataka further south into Tamil land. *Salis*, who have considerable presence in some parts of south Telangana, were for a very long time under the patronage of Chola. Branches of the *Salis*, he claimed, had long been prominent under Cola patronage, but with the ascent of the Kaikkolars during the Vijayanagara kingdom, they appear to have endured a partial eclipse. These branches go by several names in the Andhra-Karnataka regions, including *Salis*, *Saliyars*, and *Saligas* (and possibly related to the *Salagama* of Sri Lanka). However, some *Salis* did relocate to the far south during this time. (63).

These weaving communities, over a period, claimed ritual privileges by different 'sanskritisation' practices. They established temples- a practice they still follow till today- fostered origin myths and followed rituals of the Brahmins like wearing a *jandhyam* (sacred thread). All these practices show the trend of upward mobility. The process of state patronage, migration, and urbanisation (especially capital city and port city) were the important factors in the journey of the weaving community in the pre-colonial south India.

Another important direction the migration of weaving community in the 18th century was into the coastal regions with the spread of the East India Company protection. Company also encouraged the development of artisans, but unlike the Indian rulers they were interested in the development of trade and profit from the sale of textiles in Southeast Asia and the Persian Gulf. Citing many historical studies, Haynes and Roy show that in each of the provinces there was the migration of weavers into the colonial towns and colonial rulers encouraged the migration of weavers through various practices- like providing cheap rice and lower taxes (Haynes & Roy, 1999). Ramaswamy hypothesises that there may have been a net movement from temple towns to European settlements around the turn of the century. (Vijaya Ramaswamy, 1985, p. 121).

By the end of the 18th century, many weavers were starting to migrate to either escape the, or reduce the demands of the East India company's demands. During the late eighteenth century, when the English tightened their grip on many coastal areas, they frequently tried to cut out

existing commercial middlemen and lower the prices that weavers were paid for their cloth. The Company's actions, in the eyes of the cloth makers, constituted "predatory" behaviour that required opposition (Haynes & Roy, 1999, p. 49). To escape these predatory practices, weavers employed migration to outside the company territories as a strategy.

The evolving nature of capitalism during the nineteenth century, and particularly regional disparities in its manifestation, led to the formation of new "cores" in India, locations that were equally appealing to artisans and those seeking jobs in the modern sector. These regional reorganisations resulted in massive migrations of skillful weavers.

The following sections discuss the weaver's migration with a focus on Telangana:

Weavers in Telangana:

Swarnalath says weaving was the most significant activity in rural India, second only to agriculture. The numerous weaving communities dispersed throughout India not only provided clothing for the populace, but they also produced textiles for export, even to far-off nations (Swarnalatha 1991).

There are many castes and sub-sections among Hindu and even among Muslims, who are involved in weaving. The prominent among the Hindus weavers are Shalis- comprising *Padmashalis*, *SukulShalis*, *Sudhshalis* and *AganShalis*: Dewangs with four subcastes *Kosthi*, *Hutker*, *Kurmijhar* or *Jondra* and *Kurmishtty* (Raghubir Sahai, 1933). *Dewangas* seems to be present in Northern part of the Telangana and Martwada region of the erstwhile Nizam state. The Sales were a larger group of southern Indians, while the Padmasalis were a subgroup or 'community' within that bigger group, who were dispersed across vast regions. Prior to the colonial era, *Padmasalis* were mostly found in Telugu-speaking regions, particularly in the arid regions of Telangana. As noted previously, the social and cultural traits of the Padmasalis reveal a substantial *sanskritisation* among them.

Weavers from Padmasali often concentrated their efforts on cotton cloth weaving for their careers. It would appear that they offered their wares to a diverse group of customers, from the nobility of the region to the poor peasants. Before the British took control of India, a small number of people from Padmasali had moved to western India. By the end of the

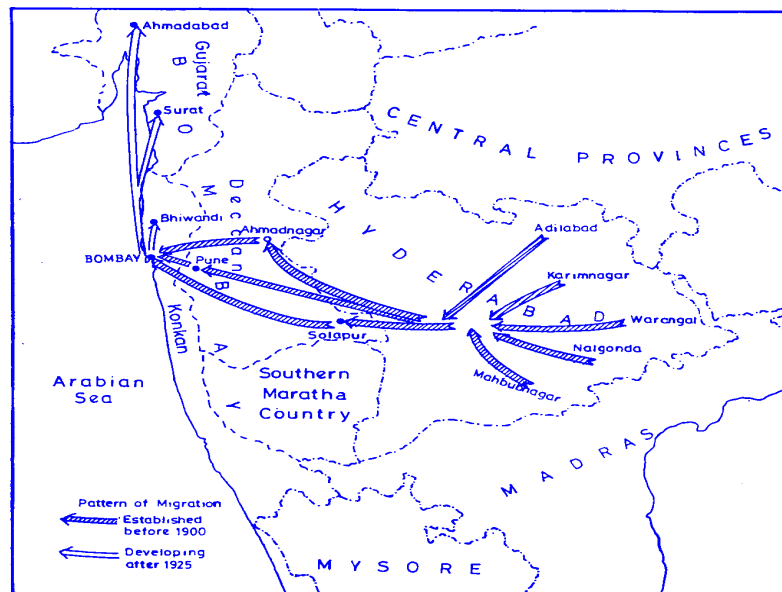
eighteenth century, a few had already established themselves in the cities of Pune and Ahmednagar.

The large-scale migration of weavers from Nizam's Hyderabad State to the Deccan provinces of the Bombay Presidency began in the nineteenth century, particularly after 1840. These migrants appear to have originated from numerous Telangana districts, but predominantly from Karimnagar, Medak, and Nalgonda. (Figure 5.1 depicts the migration direction of weavers)

In the eighteenth century, they travelled toward the west and settled in the prosperous handloom cities of Sholapur, Pune, Yeola, and Ahmednagar. In addition, Bombay and the mills there served as key attractions for weavers from Padmasali. In the 1920s and 1930s, a small number of people from Padmasali community moved to the weaving centres located in the northern region of Maharashtra. According to Haynes and Roy, a report from the 1951 census noted that migration from Hyderabad to the Bombay Presidency had reached enormous proportions, that the majority of the migrants were not agriculturalists, and that both handloom enterprises and cotton-pressing factories were taking in a significant portion of the migrants. The report also noted that the majority of the migrants were not agriculturalists. More than 80,000 individuals had already shifted to the Sholapur district from only the state of Hyderabad alone (Haynes & Roy, 1999).

Observers in Telangana have emphasised the massive rural migration of skilful weavers. Today, Padmasalis can be found wherever weaving is handled by hand or machine in western India. The movement of weavers to the Deccan cities continued for a significant amount of time after the country gained its independence, thereby changing certain areas into "Telugu towns" where Padmasali mayors and parliamentary members were elected.

Figure 5.1- Migration of Weaving community in Telangana from 1850 to 1999



Source: Haynes and Roy, page-56, 1999.

The adverse economic conditions in the state were one of the reasons for the migration of the weavers in the state. Raghubir wrote that “The economic situation of hand loom weavers is far from satisfactory, and the weaver’s hopelessness is plainly visible on their faces (Raghubir Sahai, 1933, p. 10). Sahai said that “the local sowcars and yam dealers who rapaciously take them of their rightful wages and earnings, leaving a meagre margin for their minimal subsistence,” were to blame for the impoverishment. According to another survey, the little income that weavers receive significantly reduce their ability to repay debts. With a market for their goods that is fast contracting, their ability to borrow money and their options for expanding their businesses are constrained. Their individual assets typically consist of nothing more than a small house that is thatched with grass and one or two hand looms that have seen better days. (Annual Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies of H.E.H. Nizam’s Government for the Year 1338-39, p-9, quoted in Haynes and Roy.).

In addition, there was a remarkably high rate of joblessness, particularly during the winter and monsoon seasons, and work was extremely sporadic. It would appear that weavers were most strongly urged to relocate during times when shahukars were unable to supply work opportunities and, as a consequence, ties were at their weakest. In other situations, the migration was necessitated by the maturation of a young male whose cloth orders were insufficient to sustain the family. Not all weavers in the area were subjected to such harsh

conditions. For instance, those who weaved silk and other fine materials frequently discovered a thriving market for their goods. Even during the Great Depression of the 1930s, The town of Narayanpet, which specialised in solid border saris, many of which were heading for markets in Maharashtra, was able to maintain an industry of up to 15,000 looms and a weaving population of up to 50,000 weavers. Many of the saris were going for markets in the state of Maharashtra.(Haynes & Roy, 1999, p. 57).

Those who continued to weave coarse cotton material were placed in the most precarious positions on the whole. However, they were the bulk of weavers in Telangana. In addition, work was exceedingly intermittent, and unemployment was rampant during the winter and monsoon seasons. Indeed, it seems that weavers were most encouraged to move when shahukars were not able to provide employment and ties were therefore at their weakest. In other situations, the migration was necessitated by the maturation of a young male whose cloth orders were insufficient to sustain the family. Not all weavers in the area were subjected to such harsh conditions. Those who worked in silk-weaving and other high-quality fabrics, for example, often find abundant markets for their products.

Moreover, Telangana weavers were frequently unable to access established regional markets for handloom products. The Nizam's dominions purchased considerable quantities of handwoven cloth from different regions of India, particularly centers where Padmasali laborers were the principal source of labor. The local weavers faced a number of disadvantages. During the majority of the colonial era, tariffs were imposed on yam brought into the state from Bombay and abroad, putting local weavers at a severe disadvantage. Telangana weaver-households depending on shahukars lacked direct market access, which hindered the adoption of innovative techniques.

Padmasali weavers went to the kinds of handloom businesses that were outcompeting Hyderabad artisans as they dispersed to western India. Most of the time, they worked in larger workshops with paid labour. They essentially participated in a gradual and incredibly uneven shift in the organisation of production away from the dependent family households connected to their native lands and toward the karkhanas in their new locations, or from a system based on merchant capital to one based on weavers capital. (Haynes & Roy, 1999, p. 59).

Those who emigrated found employment through existing kin networks of and acquaintances at their new location. They initially resided with someone they already knew, typically a relative. Weavers usually select their location based on their well-established relationships; those without such ties seldom attempted migration. Frequently, migrants relied on these relationships to find work in the handloom workshops of their destination. There appears to have been a negligible amount of direct labour recruitment by *karkhanadars* from western India or their intermediaries in Telangana. Employment opportunities in the mills in Sholapur and Bombay typically followed the same pattern. Before they could secure the labour of weavers, *karkhanadars* were typically required to offer an advance to new workers, sometimes in the currency of Hyderabad State. Workshop proprietors among the *Padmasalis* often provided a space to eat and sleep for their employees within the *karkhana*.

Immigrants from the region seldom lost relationships with Telangana. They travelled frequently to their hometown to attend festivals and marriages with their relatives. When economy was slow in the western Indian *karkhanas*, proprietors sometimes withdrew to their native places, in order to wait out the leaner season at a lesser cost than in the western Indian city. Women and children remained in villages frequently. Several employees brought their families to Maharashtra, often to work in the handloom industry, after a period of time. In some cases, though, family members remained in their native area for decades while the men of the family established themselves overseas. The preservation of these ties allowed elderly and unemployed folks to return to their home regions in old age. As power looms have driven the majority of handloom weavers out of business in various regions, some elder *Padmasalis* have migrated back to Telangana to weave 'traditional' Andhra designs, which are in high demand.

The major aim of this section was to give historical account of the nature of weaving community and their migratory nature. There were no *padmasalis* in both villages. But it has been well established in the literature that, their initial migration was the reason that beedi work has come to the region. This initial migration is the link that later that people have migrated to Gulf countries.

Section II

Beedi Work

The most widely used type of smoked tobacco in India is called beedi, an indigenous smoking product made by rolling a dried rectangular piece of tendu leaf with 0.15 to 0.25 grammes of dried, flaked tobacco and tying it with a thread. In India, beedi is consumed by 7.7% of adults and accounts for 85% of all tobacco sales. The health effects of beedi affect not only individuals who use it but also those who are involved in its production. (Arora et al., 2020).

Due to its significant contributions to the agricultural, industrial, and export sectors, tobacco holds a prominent position in the Indian economy. India is the second largest tobacco producer worldwide. China and the United States are, respectively, top and third in terms of tobacco cultivation. (K. Srinath Reddy & Prakash C. Gupta, 2004).

It was the Portuguese who had introduced the tobacco in the country, who discovered it themselves from the Americas. Initially it was introduced in the royal courts where it found favour. Soon it acquired value and was used in the barter trade by the Portuguese to purchase Indian textiles. With the establishment of British colonial rule that it acquired commercial dimension in the country and magnified the production and consumption of tobacco.(K. Srinath Reddy & Prakash C. Gupta, 2004).

British traders initially imported American tobacco into India in order to finance their commodities trading enterprises. In 1776, following the American Declaration of Independence, the British East India Company began planting tobacco in India for economic purposes. The colonial administration made attempts to increase the area devoted to tobacco cultivation and enhance the quality of the produced leaves. The East India Company and, later, the colonial government employed tobacco for both domestic and foreign consumption. Initially, tobacco was exported to Britain and then imported as finished cigarettes to India. As cigarette consumption increased in India, the nation began manufacturing its own cigarettes.

At the close of the nineteenth century, India's beedi business began to flourish. In 1887, the first beedi production company was founded, and by 1930, the beedi industry had grown

across the entire nation. The working classes switched to beedis because it was less expensive than cigarettes, and it quickly overtook cigarettes as the most widely used tobacco product. The Indian government's post-independence tax policies favoured beedi over cigarettes. This contributed to the increase in beedi consumption.

India's beedi industry is labour-intensive. Since beedi rolling is widely regarded as a cottage business, it produces significantly more employment during the production phase. According to data from the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), around 85 percent of tobacco industry workers are employed in the beedi business. With the exception of the beedi industry, the number of employees in all other tobacco industries decreased between 1973-1974 and 1997-1998. (Arora et al., 2020)

Initially, the bidi business was dominated by the organized sector, but this progressively changed to the unorganized sector. Tax liberalisation in the unorganised sector and strict government rules, regulations, and policies in the organised sector led to this shift. Currently, there are two sorts of beedi production units operating in the country: registered enterprises and unregistered companies. The registered companies, which produce more than two million branded bidis per year, are required to pay excise duty on their products and adhere to labour rules, whilst the unregistered enterprises are exempt from tax payments despite manufacturing more than one million bidis annually (ibid).

In terms of employment, the bidi industry represented 7.04 percent of the whole manufacturing sector. In 2000–2001, it was estimated that there were 3.56 million workers involved in the production of bidis; by 2010–2011, this number had decreased to 3.32 million. The number of registered sector (organised sector) employees fluctuated between 0.4 million in 2000–2001 and 2005–2006 and 0.3 million in 2010–2011. The number of unregistered (unorganized sector) workers fluctuated from 3.1 million in 2000–2001 to 4.1 million in 2005–2006 to 2.9 million in 2010–2011. This share (88.6, 91.1, and 90.6% for 2000–2001, 2005–2006, and 2010–2011, respectively) has been very stable throughout time. (Arora et al., 2020). In 2005–2006, the beedi sector accounted for around 0.9% of total employment in India. In the same year, the bidi industry employed 4.16 million people, 3.42 million of them were employed full-time and 0.74 million part-time. 90% of its workforce is comprised of women and children, who are mostly engaged due to their expertise in rolling

beedis. Men are employed in this profession, although primarily in the manufacturing system, whereas 90% of bidi makers are women.(Arora et al., 2020).

In Telangana, the rise of beedi industry as a source of employment is historically linked to the decline of the handloom industry and their migration to the western Indian towns of Surat, Bhiwandi and Solapur (K. Srinivasulu, 1997). As said earlier Early migrants to Western India were frequently accompanied by their families; while the men worked on mills and power looms, the women rolled beedis.. “When faced with heightened political awareness and increasing unionisation of the beedi workers in their native states, the beedi barons of Gujarat and Maharashtra decided to shift their operations to the northern Telangana districts primarily because of their previous contact with Telugu weavers and the geographical proximity of Telangana” (ibid, p-515). The fall of handloom weaving, in which the entire weaver family was formerly engaged, generated a massive labour market comprised mostly of displaced weaver women, for their shift to beedi-making. This transition was fairly smooth as they had the experience of the earlier generation of migrants in beedi-making who, as the women beedi workers would narrate, were instrumental in initiating the younger women into beedi-making. Thus, it is no mere coincidence if more than 60 per cent of the beedi workers in this region were from the displaced weaver community; the other major communities being Dalits and Muslims (ibid). The growth of the beedi industry in Telangana is thus closely related to this specific historical process of handloom decline-weaver displacement-migration-occupational shift.

In the beedi industry there are two systems of production can be identified: a) '*karkhana*' (factory) system; b) out-work or home-based system.

In the *karkhana* production system, the entire process of beedi making - cutting *tendu* leaves as per the specifications, rolling them into beedis and filling them with required quantity of tobacco- takes place at the site itself under the supervision of the staff. Though the wage is paid piece-wise (for a thousand beedis), each worker is required to turn out a fixed minimum quantity of beedis(K. Srinivasulu, 1997).

In the home-based work, the worker's residence is the location of beedi production. In this system, the distribution of raw materials, the collection of beedis, and the disbursement of wages are carried out by the management, either through a'munim' (manager) who is an

employee of the company or through a 'commissiondar' who is not an employee of the company but is compensated on the basis of production. Large beedi enterprises have traditionally opted to operate via commission brokers, as this approach means less accountability and risk, but greater flexibility and profit (ibid). The commission agent goes from home to home to distribute the raw material and collects the rolled beedis. He notes the number of beedis rolled for the given raw material.

Until 1970s the preferred system of production was the factory-based system since it was ensured the quality of the production. After 1970s it changed to home-based system. Along with the proliferation of beedi manufacturers, the enactment of the Beedi and Cigar (Conditions of employment) act of 1966 was the main reason for this shift in the process of production. The act stipulated that any worker should not be made to work more than 9 hours a day or more than 48 hours a week. Along with this, the act also stipulated weekly holidays and paid leave for the worker. It also provided maternity leave for three months.

The shift from factory-based work to home-based work is a classic case of capital working through informalising the work and exploiting the labour. Once the work is shifted to home, the dynamics are completely changed. 90 percent of the beedi workers are female workers. They preferred to work in the home itself since it gives them time to attend household activities and roll beedis. On a larger scale, it separated the worker from each other and also work from the workplaces outside home.

The process of rolling beedis is broken up into various steps and often split among female members of the family or the neighbours who roll beedis together. This process of beedi rolling has been very well documented (Meena Gopal, 1999) which I was able to observe during the field work in the rented house. The house owner and other rented families were rolling beedis so I interacted with them and could observe the meticulous process of beedi rolling. After receiving the tendu leaves, it is necessary to soak them. After the water has drained, the leaves are cut into rectangular pieces using a "ace," a rectangular metal strip, as a measuring tool (each brand's "aces" varied somewhat). The leaves are then folded in a piece of sack cloth or a jute bag to maintain their wetness until they are rolled. Cutting the leaves is a highly skilled task performed by the beedi employee herself. The job of leaf-cutting is only delegated to younger females once they have acquired adequate skill. The beedi worker is primarily responsible for rolling the leaves, placing tobacco dust inside, and

tying them with a thread. The final step involves folding the beedi's top end with a metal stick.

In Telangana, the beedi industry spans sixteen (new) districts. More than 90 percent of the state's seven lakh beedi workers are women, according to news accounts. The beedi worker receives Rs 173 per every 1,000 beedis rolled (one working day), while the number of working days has decreased from 26 in 2014 to 10-12 in 2018(Charan Teja, 2020; Prudhviraj Rupavath, 2018). According to the government data by November 2020, the government gives financial assistance of 2000 Rs per month to the 4,07,957 beedi workers in the state. The government has stipulated certain conditions to receive the benefits under the scheme. As a result of the government's stipulations, only 59% of the state's seven lakh total workforce has benefited from the allowance program thus far. Only one member of a household with four beedi workers is eligible for this. In addition, if a family member receives a pension for old age or widowhood, the worker would not receive the promised allowance. In Jagityal there is no clarity on exactly how many are working in the beedi work. According to the official data by November 2020 there are 89400 members who receive financial assistance in the district. If we go by the trend the number could be estimated around 1,50,000 beedi workers in the district (estimates based on the state figures).

There is the considerable presence of beedi work in both the study villages. Many of the beedi rolling women are from OBCs and SCs. The upper caste *reddy* and *velama* women hardly were involved in beedi rolling.

Table 5.1: Beedi Workers in the two study Villages

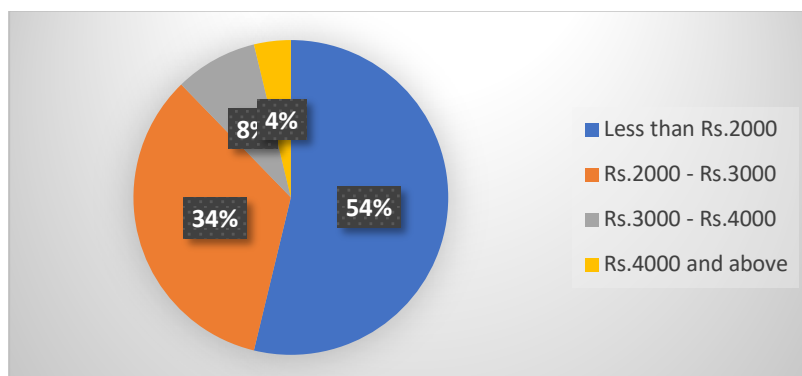
Caste	Village A		Village B	
	Number of Beedi Workers	%	Number of Beedi Workers	%
BC	45	56.96	21	77.78
OC	7	8.86		
SC	27	34.18	6	22.22
Total	79	100	27	100

Source: Field Data.

Table 5.1 gives the details of number of beedi workers in field work villages. In Village A there are 79 beedi workers. Out of the 79 beedi rollers majority of them (57%) are from OBC

community, followed by SC (27%) community. There are only 7 beedi workers from the Reddy community. In Village B there are 27 beedi rollers, and out of them 21 (78%) are OBC community and 6 (22%) are from SC community. For majority of women who roll beedis in both the villages, it is not a primary economic activity for them. All the women beedi rollers are involved in other economic activities, like agriculture labour, MNREGA work, and construction work. Whenever they don't find work, or they find free time they roll beedis. Beedi rollers are paid piece rate. For 1000 beedis rolled they are paid around 165-175 rupees. But they hardly get the exact amount. According to one of the respondents, if a beedi worker sits for the entire day without any break then they can roll 1000 to 1200 beedis. But in reality, it is hardly the case. The respondents said that they don't usually get the entire time of the day as they have to attend the household work and majority of them also do other works and when they don't have other work, they roll beedis. Those who work in MNREGA work, they generally finish their work by afternoon and from afternoon they roll beedis. Since the work is intermittent, their income from it is not very much. Figure 5.2 gives the details of the income from beedi work.

Figure 5.2 Average Monthly income from Beedi Work



Source: Field data

54% of the workers get less than Rs 2000 from beedi rolling. 34% of them get 2000 to 3000 rupees per month. Only 4% of the respondents get more than 4000 rupees per month. In addition to this, as said earlier, some of them get 2000 rupees per month from government as financial assistance. Not all of them get it since other members of the family get some or the form assistance from the government. Out of 106, only 46 of them receive the financial assistance from the government.

Two raw material suppliers come to Village A and one to Village B to distribute the raw materials to the households and collect the rolled beedis. They are the agents from the beedi company and work as middlemen. They are the link between the worker and company. They distribute the raw material like, *tendu* leaves, tobacco, and thread and collect the rolled beedis. They take count of the rolled beedis and tallies with the given raw material. Some of the respondents said that they give less material and ask for more beedis. They are the ones who decide the quality of the rolled beedis. For every thousand beedis rolled there are some deductions in the name of standardisation. Such deduction varies from 20 to 30 beedis. It is not observed in the field but some of the studies (Vepoor, 2015) have reported that, women who earn very less are borrowing from the middlemen and paying him in instalments.

The beedi rolling activity is leading to a number of health issues among the women in the state. According to a study conducted by the state's medical professionals, beedi workers experience a wide range of illnesses, including musculoskeletal disorders, joint pains, respiratory conditions, skin conditions, headaches, nausea, gastric intolerance, hypertension, diabetes, etc., which are either brought on by prolonged tobacco use at work or by poor working posture. (Lakshman Rao et al., 2020).

Section III

Gulf migration

The Gulf countries attracted labourers mostly from South Asian countries. In the early 1970s and 1980s, the Gulf countries provided travel expenses for a huge number of foreign labourers, primarily from South Asian countries, to work in oil businesses or construction-related jobs. (Ajaya Kumar Sahoo & Trilok C. Goud, 2013).

Migration to different places within Telangana and within the country has been happening in Telangana state for a long time. In the initial days people migrated to work in the coal fields of Ramagundam and Singareni in Telangana. Some people, especially the weaving community, have migrated to Bombay (Mumbai), Surat, Bhiwandi to work in the textile industries and construction sites as said earlier. From there they started to migrate to gulf countries.

Telangana has relatively a long history of gulf labour migration which increased multiple fold since the last couple of decades. Migration to the Gulf countries is predominantly by the blue-collar workers who travel in anticipation of regular job/work and better-earning opportunities in the petrol and construction booming sectors of the Middle East (Korra, 2021). Initially, Gulf companies came to Bombay to recruit laborers for the oil industry in the late 1970s, and later for the construction industry. The majority of workers in Bombay were from various regions of the country, including Telangana. Telangana migrants began travelling from Bombay to the Gulf as soon as they learned about the prospects in the Gulf countries. Because there was a high demand for labourers in the region and a labour shortage in the migrants' home countries, Gulf corporations initially recruited migrants at their own expense. As a result, they started importing free foreign labour while paying high rates. These migrants who relocated to the Gulf states then informed their own children, relatives, and neighbours about the prospects offered in the Gulf states.

The political economy of the area was very conducive to migratory movements. Modernisation of agriculture and the consequent agrarian practices, the decline of village artisans, specially the weaving communities, and Naxalite violence are some aspects of the political economy of the area which have to some extent led to the migration, initially to places like Surat, Solapur, Biwandi and Bombay and later from Bombay to gulf countries.

With the introduction of power looms in the Western Indian towns of Bombay, Biwandi, Sholapur and Surat. Handloom products were not in a position to compete with the power loom products. This resulted in less demand for handloom products. Gradually handloom weavers gave up their traditional occupations and migrated to the power loom towns to work as power loom operators and in the allied activities. This resulted in the largescale migration of weavers to the Western India. It was estimated that there were about 0.2 million migrant weavers from this region in Surat town alone (Irfan Engineer: 1994:1358). There are also some artisans who changed their occupation, as there was no demand for their traditional products.

The region also witnessed the Maoist movement and its violence during 1980s and it continued it was prominent till 2004. There was violence as part of the movement against the *doras*, *deskmukhs*, and *deshpandes* by the Maoists this has resulted in fleeing of the landlords to cities and urban centres. This also led some people to migrate to the gulf

countries to escape the violence of Maoist movement. The fear of violence from both sides from Maoists and state has led some people to migrate to these countries. At the time of fieldwork, the respondents said that one of the reasons for their migration was the fear of violence. Police suspected that the idle youth are militants of People's War Group and when they were asked to go to the police station for interrogation, the Peoples War Group (PWG) Naxalites branded them as 'informers'. So, the people in villages, particularly youth preferred to leave the village in the name of employment elsewhere and escape the threat of violence in the village by both police and extremists.

Though in the initial stage, it started like that but over a period of time other factors also have contributed to the continuation of this process. During the 1990s the liberalisation policies of the Indian state have impacted the conditions of the artisan communities, small and marginal farmers adversely. These processes have led to increasing migration of people to the gulf countries. Drastic changes have taken place in the district particularly in agrarian practices and allied economic activity, which augmented the process of migration. Like many other reforms, the mechanisation and modernisation of agriculture cut down the size of the male work force in this industry. This process brought about changes in the economic structure of the district and resulted in the migration of the small farmers, agricultural labourers, and artisans. Agriculture became lucrative for the middle class and rich peasants in the district as it involves a lot of expenditure. Since it is the time of the commercial crops the cost of the seeds, fertilisers and pesticides are so high that the small farmers could not afford to cultivate them or when cultivated it was not profitable. Employment opportunities in the government sector are also very limited and are available to the educated sections of the society. All these trends indicate the underlying factors of migration to the gulf from this district.

There is no historical information available concerning the number of Gulf migrants in the region or in the region. In 2019, there were 9.33 million Indian migrants in Gulf Co-Operation Council (GCC) countries, making them the region's largest migrant population and accounting for 31% of the region's total migrant population (UNDESA 2019). According to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 2018 estimate that roughly 63% of the worldwide migrant population is comprised of workers, there are close to 6 million low- and semi-skilled Indian migrant workers in the GCC region. (Sasikumar, 2021).

Emigration clearances collect statistics on blue collar workers foreign labour migration in India. Over 95% of approvals issued between 2010 and 2019 were for migration to GCC nations. Annual labour outflows indicate that over 0.6 million low- and semi-skilled workers got emigration clearances to migrate to GCC nations for employment purposes on average between 2010 and 2019.

Table 5.2 Country-wise number of workers granted emigration clearance from Telangana 2011-16.

Year	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Kuwait	Oman	Bahrain	Qatar
2011	5289	1403	2180	2167	3953	1254
2012	7857	2018	2244	3395	5610	2627
2013	10,716	1971	3362	3632	4298	1904
2014	11,092	1503	3354	2696	4141	1399
2015	13,276	1071	1658	1770	6577	2009
2016	10,776	4933	1828	768	4004	2343

Source: (Goud & Sahoo, 2019).p-281.

Table 5.2 also provide the year-wise migration of labourers from Telangana to different countries in the Persian Gulf.

Table 5.3 Gulf Migrants in the Study villages

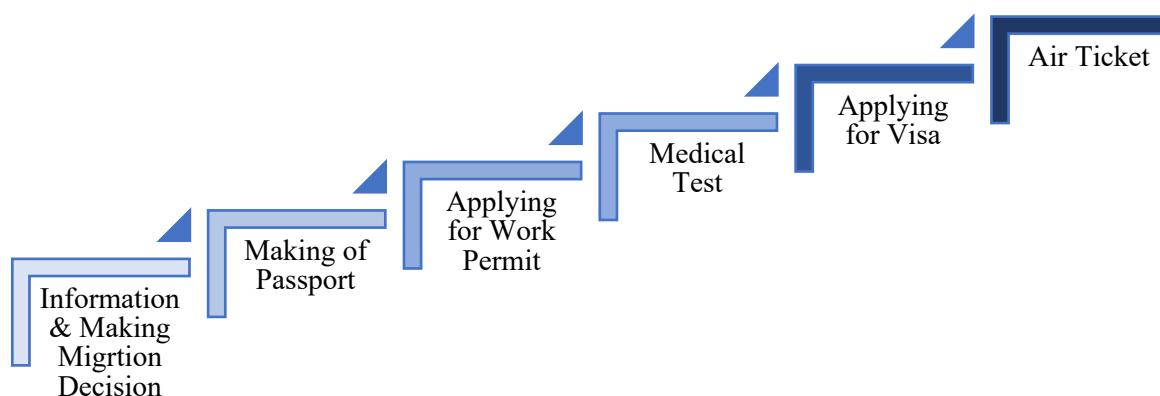
Caste	Number	Percentage
OC	7	12.5%
OBC	29	51.79%
SC	20	35.71%
Total	66	100

Source: Field data.

In two study villages, we don't know exactly how many have migrated to gulf countries, but in both the villages there is migration to gulf. I followed snowball sampling method to identify the return migrants from the gulf and collected information from them. I have collected data from 66 gulf return migrants in both the villages. Table 5.3 give the details of the caste wise migrants to gulf. Out of 66 return migrants 34 (51%) of them were OBCs,

followed by SCs 23(34%) and then OCs 9 (13%). There are no female migrants from the field work villages and from the region also.

Figure 5.3 Migration Process to a Foreign Country



Source: Field work.

Figure 5.3 elaborates different stages in the migration to gulf. Migration to gulf begins with seeking information concerning job opportunities in the (GCC) through their friends, relatives, neighbours and migrant workers from nearby villages as reported in various studies and also in the field, (Goud & Sahoo, 2019; Korra, 2021). In the first stage worker who are intending to go to gulf they will seek information regarding the work if they find it they take a decision to migrate. They get this information from various sources. There are recruiting agencies that are located in Hyderabad, Bombay, which in turn have sub-agencies in different parts of the state. They also get the information from the return migrants, relatives, friends. Most of them depend on agents because, they take care of the entire process of migration, from processing of documents, to getting clearances.

In a recent study conducted by Vijay Korra (Korra, 2021) of 1000 gulf migrants in the state 64% of them got information regarding the employment opportunities from local agents. Followed by friends and relatives 12%, 8% consulted approved recruiting agencies, 5% from unapproved recruiting agencies, 3% from co-villagers and 1% directly from the employers in the gulf(161).In the field work villages majority of the migrants have migrated to gulf through agents, then followed by relatives and then friends. Those who migrated to gulf through friends and kin networks had relatively better experience than those who went through middle agents. Since, the kin members are already working in there they could get

them work and they also know the working conditions there it proved very helpful for those migrating for the first time in terms of securing visa, employment, and a living space.

The cost of migration varies from 50,000 rupees to 1,50,000 rupees. These cover the costs of passport, visa, and air ticket and fee paid to the agent. Many of the migrants spent money to recruiting agents. Some of the migrants paid two three times to same agent as he demanded for more money, some of them paid to two three agents when the previous agents had fled taking the money. The migrants had gathered money from various sources. Some of the migrants have used the money saved from agriculture. Some of them took loan from family members, some of them sold their land and gold ornaments.

Most of the workers from Telangana who migrated to gulf are working in the low-skilled blue colour jobs in the gulf. They are mostly employed in informal sector jobs in the gulf countries. They work in construction-related jobs; for example, labourers are hired to work in the building of housing projects, dry docks, roadways, and airports and industries, as drivers, as electricians, a very few of them worked as supervisors, only two out of 66 worked in formal sectors employment in gulf as engineer and teacher from both the villages.

It is found during the field work that return migrants spent majority of their gulf income on three things. One, first to repay the loans taken for the migration. Second, to improving living standards. Third, investing in further economic activity like buying lands, or small plot of land in the town, or starting small business. Majority of them were able to only repay the loans. There are cases where they were not able to repay the loans and ended up in even more indebted than they were before. There are 15 (22%) respondents in this category. They did not have any land when they migrated to gulf, they were dependent on wage labour. Their family members were also dependent on wage labour. The remittances were spent on consumption of basic needs. The employment they got in gulf was not very high paying, their work was also intermittent. Some of them were cheated by the agents and ended up losing their money and more indebted than they were before they migrated.

Those who were able to earn a decent income they invested in their children education, built new houses or repaired their old houses, got their children married from the gulf income, bought new things to the house like televisions, refrigerators, bikes etc. and investing on agriculture like fertilisers. Studies on international migration, specially gulf migration, have noted a distinct change in the attitudes of return migrants and change in the life style, like

for example the villages being gentrified in the case of Kerala. However, focused group discussions in the study villages indicated that a distinct cultural change has not happened in the case of Telangana, reason could be that majority of the workers from the state are working in the informal sectors where wages are not much high to provide such a changes in the lifestyles.

Ramesh, Goud, was a marginal farmer. He was working along with his father in their land. He felt that the land was not sufficient to work for both. He decide to go migrate. He moved to Dubai, where he worked as an electrician in a huge manufacturing for four years. When his father migrated, he owned two acres of land. Three months of training were required before he began his career. Over the course of four years, his talent drastically improved, and he acquired human capital through expanding on his skills. After paying off his obligations and meeting his family's expenses, he set aside some funds. He returned four years later. Following his return, he replaced his old shack with a new residence with a concrete roof. He also performs electrical work on homes. His daughter and son attend the private English-medium school, where the perceived quality of instruction is superior to that of the public school. His wife resides in the village and is responsible for the education of their children and rolling beedies. Ramesh's case is typical of this category of return migrants. They return not with much money but didn't go bankrupt either.

The successful migrants have invested to further their economic activity like buying agricultural land, housing plots, either in the village or in the town, investing in agriculture like digging a borewell etc. Out of the 66 respondents only 7 (10%) of them could gain from gulf migration. In-depth interviews revealed that, they were able to succeed because of various reasons, like they did not get deceived by the agent, or got good job opportunity, worked at the same place for over 10 to 15 years etc. Respondents said that a lot of things have to coincide (*anni kalisi raveli*). What the successful migrants did was to combine migration with other sources of income either from agriculture or non-agriculture income. Land played a crucial role for these migrants. When they migrated, the household members were involved in agriculture (5 of them), or some other economic activity like a small shop, or two members from the same house have migrated to gulf. These families could save remittances and buy land and other things.

Rajesh is from a *golla* community is now 49 years old. He studied till intermediate and migrated to Bahrain when he was 24 years old, after helping his father in agriculture. They have 4 acers of land. As agriculture was not remunerative for them and land was also insufficient for both for him and his father to work on it. So, he decided to migrate. He went to UAE and was there for five years. He came to villages two three times during this phase got married and left again. This time he also took his younger brother with him, who finished degree in education. Both of them worked in factory for another five years and saved money and bought two acers of land in the village. His younger brother's friend started a school in the nearby village and asked him to invest in it. He invested initially working there from UAE, after two years he came and started working in the same school as a teacher. Older brother now looks after the agriculture since his father is no longer able to do it. When asked why they bought land.

Given the nature of in the informal sector-low paid, highly insecure- the migration, high costs of migration, high interest rates (varied between 24% to 36%) on the loans taken for migration, the respondents could send minimal amounts of remittances. Those who had some social security like land, networks in gulf benefited from it. Others just were able to manage. There are deaths reported almost every day in the newspapers of the migrants in the gulf. Fortunately, no deaths were reported from the field villages.

The social status of migrants also increased after the purchase of agricultural land, house plots etc. Even household articles like television sets and motorcycles also enhanced their social status. The very initial step to migration is the starting point of achieving high social status because the term 'migrant' is treated here in this area as 'earning man'. It is interesting to note that migrants have special respect in the villages as they give gift articles and arrange parties when they return from Gulf countries. It is also found at the time of fieldwork that people prefer their daughters to marry with the returnee.

The gulf migration is high among the OBCs and SCs in both the villages. In the initial days when migration started to gulf countries upper caste velamas and reddyas also used to migrate to gulf. The newer generation of these caste groups are not preferring to go to gulf. These sections of people have benefited from the education and have started to migrate to countries like USA, UK, and Australis. The older generation of return migrants have informed that there was no sufficient work in the village for the entire family members to work on, this

was specially the case in Village B, that they migrated to gulf. The newer generation of aspiring migrant have informed that, it is not that they don't get work here (locally- either in the village or the town), they are not able to save anything if they work here. Even though they get the almost the same amount of wages, when they migrate they are able to save some money and send it back, but if they work here they are not able to save anything whatever they earn here gets spent on various things.

Section IV

Non-Farm Activities:

In India, the typical image of a farm household is frequently one of farms and farmers, with some livestock on the premises. The majority of policy documents and research tend to treat farming income as if it were the same as rural income and presume that any non-farm activities take place in metropolitan regions. However, there has been an upsurge in non-farm activities at the village level in recent years. It is typically a significant source of income and self-employment for rural households. In Telangana, non-farm livelihoods have also grown crucial for rural households. Only 52% of households relied on agriculture as their primary source of income in 2013. (Reddy et al., 2014). Despite the fact that agriculture still employs 55% of all workers, its contribution to GDP has decreased from 16.3% in 2011 to 12.9% in 2020 (DES, 2020), and its commercialised practises have made it unprofitable. In the state, as well as in both the villages the non-farm livelihoods have been pursued from the position of vulnerability and desperation of the household for some of the rural households, for some of them it is a diversification of accumulation opportunities.

Scholars who looked agriculture from the point of 'political economy' (Bernstein 2010) have argued that in market economy subsistence farming becomes increasingly unremunerative relative to the needs and demands of the households, which makes them to seek wage outside the agriculture to meet those needs and demands of the household.

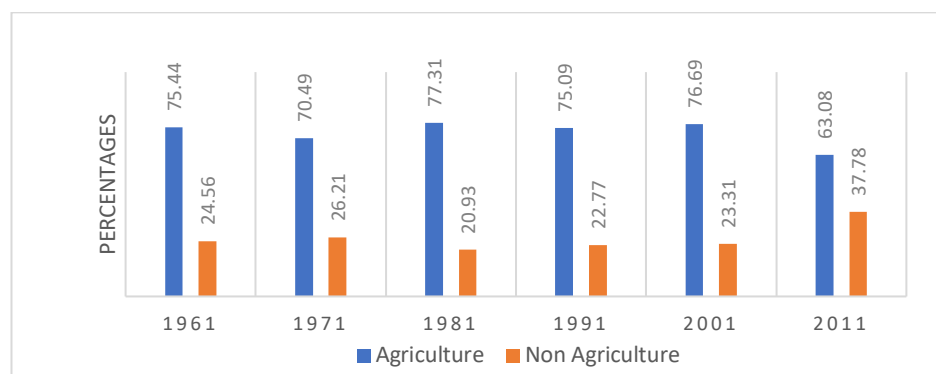
65% of household incomes in rural India come from sources other than agriculture (Chand et al, 2017). Non-farm livelihoods have bought in much needed income for the families of the farmers to be able to withstand the variations in agrarian production. However, the majority of non-farming jobs in India are informal, transient, and precarious, affecting both educated rural youth and farmers (Mehrotra & Parida, 2019). Unskilled wage labour is

frequently the only alternative for the older farming generation to supplement their income (Jakimow, 2014). Since the global financial crisis of 2008, India has been mired in a period of jobless economic growth, which has left the goal for a formal employment unfulfilled for younger, educated generations (Mehra, 2019). This has left rural youth with little options besides undesirable professions such as autorickshaw driving or quitting the workforce altogether (Sanghera, 2019). According to various studies of villages, non-agricultural earnings has become an increasingly important source of income. Individual and household characteristics such as education and land ownership are positively associated with access to non-farm work (Bliss et al. 1998; Drèze, Lanjouw, and Sharma 1998; Walker and Ryan 1990). This shows that the most disadvantaged members of village societies are rarely employed in the non-agricultural economy, particularly in well-paid occupations. Out of the two main processes that can drive participation in the Rural Non-Farm Sector, the first could be distress-driven arising out of inadequacies in the farm sector. The second can emanate out of high returns in agriculture leading to higher investments in agriculture.

The non-farm sector is located both in rural and urban areas, in this region it is also located outside the country as well (West Asia). The rural population employed in urban areas or both rural and urban areas also would fall under the broader definition of rural non-farm work. It is important to note that, the non-farm is not limited to labouring class only. Those who are doing better in agriculture are investing in the non-farm sector both in rural as well as urban- in the field work villages, the investment opportunities are in education, rent seeking etc. “Non-farm sector is defined as all non-agricultural activities located in the rural areas and undertaken by farm as well as non-farm households” (Hariss 1991).

There was always the presence of non-farm activities, but they were all related to the agriculture in some way or the other. The artisan communities were in jajmani relations with the cultivators. Figure 1 shows the increase in the number of people depending on agriculture and non-agriculture from the year 1961 to 2011. In 1961 the number of people depended on agriculture were 75% and on non-agriculture 25%. This has changed drastically by 2011. In 2011, the number of people depending on the agriculture in the village is 63% and the number of depending on non-agriculture is 37%. As indicated in the previous section in both village the number of people depending on the non-farm sector, in Village A the number of people depend on non-farm as their primary occupation are 41.5% and in Village B it is 30.3%.

Figure 5.4
Year wise distribution of Agricultural and Non- Agricultural workers in Village A from 196-2011



Source: Census data.

In Village B there is fluctuation in the composition of agriculture labour and non-agriculture labour. The data is given in figure 5.6. As there is inconsistency in the data for this village because it has been reclassified from one Mandal to another two times in 1981 census and in 2001. In 2011, 28% of the working population depended on non-agriculture.

The important qualitative change dimension in the nature of this shift is that, earlier people depended on either agriculture or non-agriculture. What the field data shows is that now households are depending on both of them for either survival or for accumulation. The non-farm activities in the villages are given in table 5.4.

Figure 5.5- Year wise distribution of Agricultural and Non- Agricultural workers in Village B from 196-2011

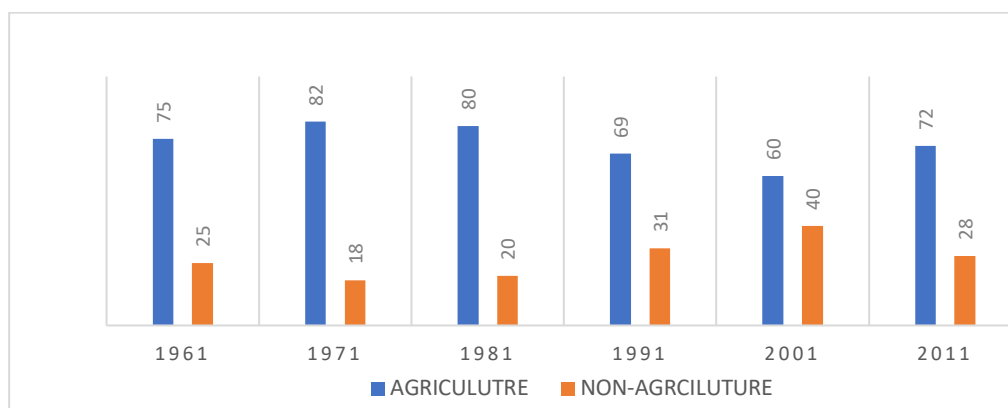


Table 5.4- Non-farm activities in the village

Sl.NO	Non-Farm Activity
1	Construction Work
2	<i>Kiranam</i> (retail) Shops
3	Driving (Auto, Tractor, Car)
4	Cell Phone Repair and Recharge
5	Tea Shops and Small hotel
6	Online Centres
7	Beauty Salon
8	Cloth Stores
9	Sound and Decoration Shop
10	Tent House
11	Welding and Electrical Repair Shop
12	Salaried Employment
13	Xerox Shops
14	Bakery shops
15	MNREGA Work
16	Beedi
17	Medical Shop
18	Repair shops- bike
19	Water

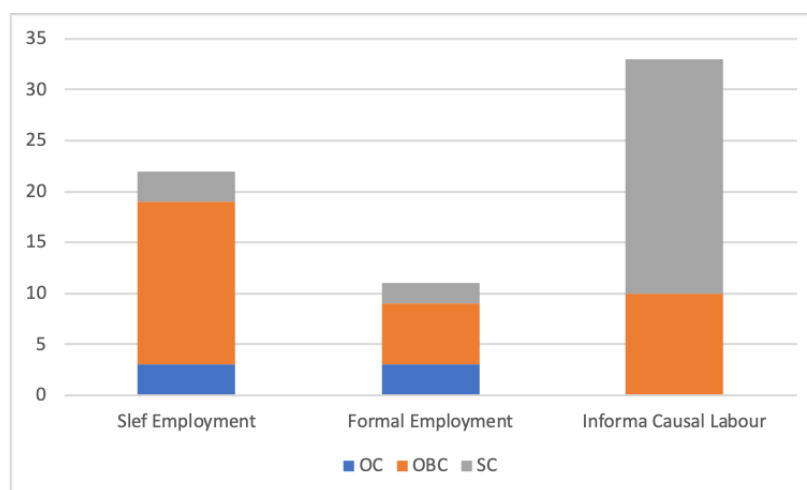
The work profile of the non-farm sector shows that all the works are the off shoots of the agriculture's inability to provide the necessary income for the household to reproduce itself and are the result of the increasingly commercialised nature of the rural life. Out of the 164 households only 96 households' primary occupation is either agriculture or agricultural labour. That is around 57% of the people are considering agriculture as their primary occupation. The rest of the 43% of the people are depending on different non-agriculture related occupations. They are ranging from self-employment to working in construction sector, and in the hotels in the town.

All the non-farm works can be divided into three sections in the field work villages. One, Self-employment, two- formal employment, three, informal casual employment. Self-employment has two characteristics. First, in the farm sector, self-employment loosely indicates cultivators. Self-employment in the farm sector is more of a privileged occupation. In the non-farm sector, however, this is not very clear. Self-employment in the non-farm

sector has a more complex connotation and can commonly include very small economic enterprises that may just contribute towards break even with no profits or a large-scale enterprise which brings profits.

The small-scale economic activities in Village A, as the village is bigger in terms of its population, hence offers more opportunities in the village. In Village B the presence of self-employment is not much when compared to Village A. There 24 households, who's primary income comes from non-farm self-employment in the village. 3 OC, 18 OBC and 3SC household's primary income comes from self-employment. All the OBC and SC households who are self-employed are doing works, which include, driving an auto from villages to town or to other villages, which was bought in loan, driving a car in the transportation, running a small shop like tea stall, retail store in the house, or cell phone repair shop, Xerox centre, *Mee seva* (Online Service Centers) centre. They are small scale economic activities. There are 3 OC self-employment includes investing the agrarian surplus in the non-agrarian sector in the town. Out of the 3 OCs (Reddy) one has invested in the school in the Jagityal, other two has opened fertiliser shops in the village. All of them invested their agrarian surplus in opening these. Along with the agrarian surplus they also had their sons sending the money from software jobs working from Bangalore, and in the US. In Village B, there are 11 people in this category. 3 OCs, 7OBC and 1 SC.

Figure 5.6 Division of Non-farm Work in the Village A

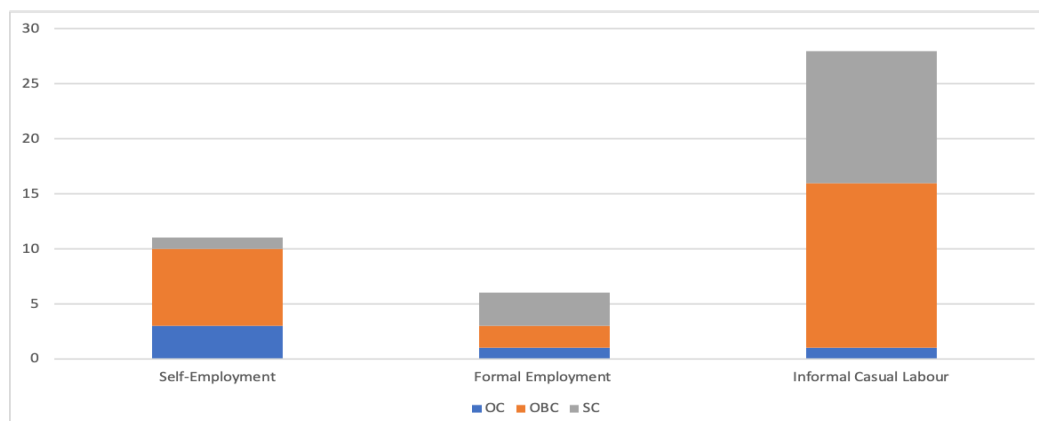


Source: Field data.

Second is the employment in the formal sector. This category includes the secure employment in either government or in the private sectors which pays well. There 11 people in this category in the Village A. 3 OCs, 6 OBC and 2 SCs. Out of 11, 4 are government employees from two from SCs, one from OBCs and one from OCs. Rest of the are working

in the private software companies, and banks, Medical representatives and private teachers. There are 6 who are working in the (1 OC, 2 OBC, 3 SC) in Village B.

Figure 5.7- Division of Non-farm Work in the Village B V



Source: Field work data.

The third is the informal casual labour. Informal casual labour is providing highest non-farm income for both villages. This work is located both in the village as well as in town. There are 33 who get their primary income from the non-farm casual labour. 23 from SC and 10 from OBCs. There are 28 in Village B (1OC, 15 OBC, 12 SC). This work includes the construction, work, other precarious wage employment in the town- both Jagityal and Karimnagar, like working in hotels, in rice mills, etc. There are many labourers who are migrating to gulf who work in the informal sector. If we look age wise distribution of farm and non-farm work, data suggests that agriculture dominates among those who are above 40years of age and non-farm is dominant among those who 26 to 45. In both the villages.

In the field work areas three factors are driving shift to non-farm economy: One, commercialisation of agriculture, (in the case of Village A where agriculture is relatively developed but high investment costs, with low returns but, productivity is increased in these so is the income for this village). Second, distressed agricultural that is pushing the farmers into non-farm employment. And the third aspect is the commercialisation of rural life itself, that is acting as the source of rural non-farm income, it is the *causal* driver of the structural shift to non-farm livelihoods.

The non -farm sectors employment in both the villages mirrors in many ways the process that are underway in rural India. It is noteworthy to note that the non-farm sectors are not

homogeneous. The shift of from farm to non-farm sector, their positions in the farm sectors and their position in the social hierarchy, has consequences in for non-farm sectors as well.

Non- farm sector in the region did generate some employment opportunities, but not necessarily the desirable ones, and the opportunities generated in this sector are not uniform to every class and caste. The upper classes and castes are in a better position to get better deals than the lower classes and castes. The diversification has provided opportunities for lower class and lower caste farmer outside the agriculture but, it has presented them new insecurities and absorbed them more into the fold of capitalist economy. They must work more harder and with grater income insecurity in the informal sector.

The younger generation of the population are the ones who have been affected most with this ‘jobless growth’. They are unable to get secure a job that matches to their skills and educational qualification. Aspirations leading parents to investment in their children’s education of all classes and castes. This on the other hand provided an opportunity to upper castes and classes. Twin investments, one, in agriculture and other in education are leading the household’s expenditure many fold and making it necessary to depend on non-farm income. Aspirations of the parents are like their children- preferably male child should get a government job, then a software job in some multinational company, if they are not able get any of it, at least some job with regular income for the family.

Section V

Jagityal Town

Understanding urbanisation process in India and across the world is taking new directions, as indicated earlier. There has been a new focus away from the larger metropolitan cities to small scale, medium towns. Important conceptualisation in this direction is the Subaltern Urbanisation. The activities, coping strategies, and development manifestations used by people living in small urban settings are conceptualised through this concept. By analysing events and processes that are viewed as being of secondary importance within the context of metro-centric urbanisation, it attempts to create a different narrative..(Denis & Zérah, 2017, p. 5)

Additionally, they contend that it is inappropriate to comprehend the dynamics of urban development in India using binary formulations of rural and urban, big and small cities. The development pattern of the small towns is defying such binary formulations. They argue that instead we should focus on the relationships and processes of interaction of spatial settlements-both hierarchical and non-hierarchical(Denis & Zérah, 2017).

Small and medium-sized cities play a vital role in regional economic development. They garnered little attention in the literature on urbanisation. In the 1950s, the Indian Planning Commission supported a small number of studies analysing the nation's economic foundation and evolving physical manifestation. A collection of geographers, regional planners, sociologists, and economists have since done research on the morphology of a number of such cities, focusing on their specialised economic activity, access to physical facilities, slum conditions, etc. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, the number of towns (statutory and Census) increased by 2,774 compared to 500 during the previous decade. The rise from 1352 to 3894 census towns is unmatched in Indian Census history. The case studies of various small towns included in their research (Denis & Zérah, 2017) reveal that the inter-settlement ties and socioeconomic circumstances observed in and around the metro regions are distinct from those outside the metro regions. (ibid).

Even though they must import their basic supplies, a number of small towns are generating economic activity by catering to middle-class housing demand and a variety of services, including maintenance and repair. Numerous micro-level studies have shown that the sociopolitical climate developed over a long period of time in a number of small and medium-sized towns has a significant impact on luring investments and qualified workers. Despite the fact that underlying power dynamics at the local level can occasionally work against sustainable urbanisation, these findings show that formal and informal institutions, as well as their norms and practises, are incredibly helpful and supportive for the organisation of production, skill acquisition, and industrial development. (ibid).

Urbanisation in Telangana:

The development of urbanisation in Telangana can be understood at three levels. The first level is the Hyderabad metropolitan city development and the growth of the population. The

expansion of other small and medium towns in the Telangana region has lagged behind Hyderabad's urban development over the past few decades, creating “intra-subregional imbalances.” (Shorey, 2014).

The city has been the focus for many studies and other than Hyderabad there are hardly any studies on any other city of state. The second level can be old district headquarters. There were 9 districts in Telangana, other than Hyderabad, in 2016 these were reorganized into 33 new districts. The old district headquarters were second tier cities where the population was concentrated. The third level can be the newly reorganised district headquarters. Most of the newly organised district centers were minor administrative centers in the state, hosting various administrative offices-like Revenue divisional offices, Sub-registrar of land, and court. There are 24 of such district headquarters. They are becoming the new growth centres.

Table 5.5 gives the class wise distribution of the towns in old districts of the state, excluding Hyderabad. There are 13 class one towns in the state with the population above one lakh. These towns are the previous district headquarters and Nalgonda and Karimnagar has two other towns with more than one lakh population other than the district headquarters- Ramagundam and Jagtial. Ramagundam is the coal mine town.

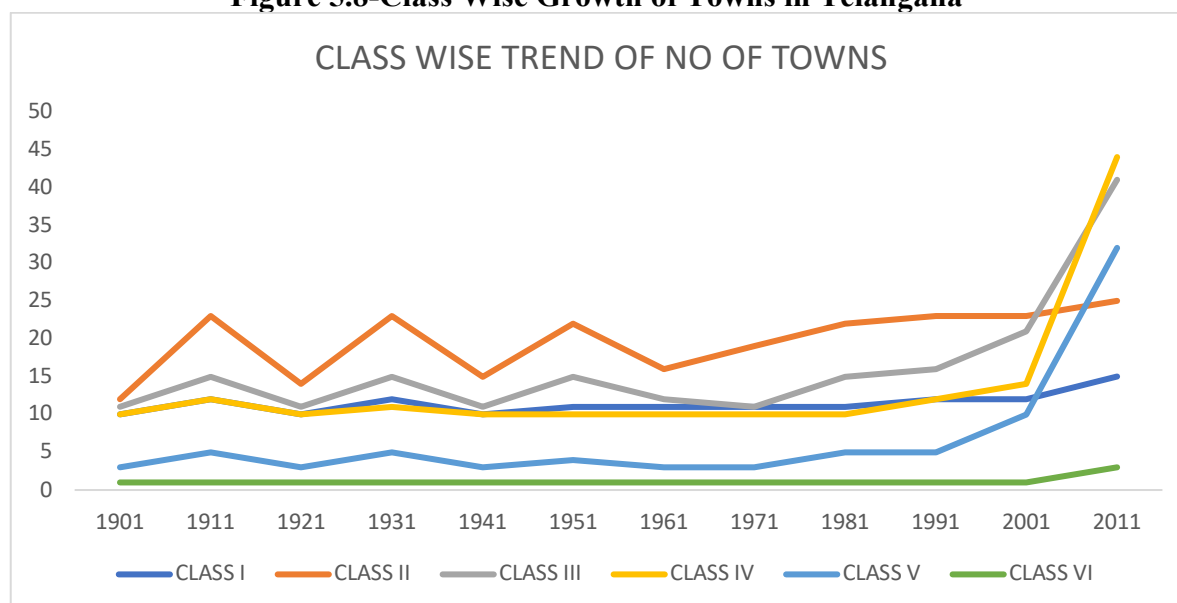
Table 5.5: Class Wise Towns in Telangana (Excluding Hyderabad) in 2011

Class	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total
District							
Adilabad	1	5	7	5	4	0	22
Karimnagar	3	3	2	1	3	1	13
Khammam	1	4	5	3	1	0	14
Mahbubnagar	1	2	6	5	3	1	18
Medak	1	3	6	6	9	0	25
Nalgonda	3	2	2	7	2	1	17
Nizamabad	1	3	1	1	2	0	08
Rangareddy	1	2	9	9	4	0	25
Warangal	1	1	3	7	3	0	15
Total	13	25	41	44	31	03	157

Source: Census data.

In Nalgonda- three are Suryapeta, Miryalguda, and Nalgonda. These are the second tier towns after Hyderabad. They are the administrative centres of the districts- which are increased to 33 districts now.

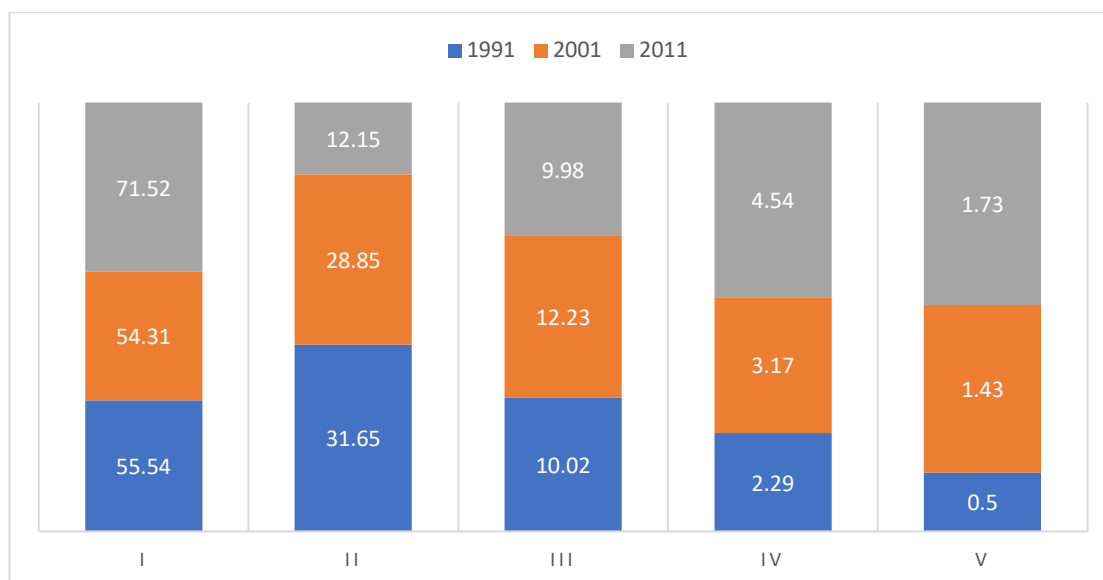
Figure 5.8-Class Wise Growth of Towns in Telangana



Source: Compiled from census data.

Figure 5.8 depicts the growth of the towns in Telangana. The trend of the growth is that in the last three decades there has been a constant growth of the Class I,II, III towns in the state. Which shows the diffused pattern of the urbanisation.

**Figure 5.9 Proportion of Class Wise pollution in the Total Urban Population
Telangana from 1991-2011**



Source: Compiled from Census data.

Figure 5.9 gives share of the class wise population in the total urban population. In 1991 the proportion of class I town is 55.5% in the total urban population. By 2011 it has increased to 71%, mainly because of the development of Hyderabad. Even in 2011 almost 30% of the population lives in the class II,III, IV cities. If we exclude Hyderabad, there are 13 class one towns in the state, which are hosting majority of the population and are becoming crucial interms rural-urban interactions.

Table 5.6 lists 8 towns which were the old district headquarters, they still are but, as said earlier they are reorganised into two or more districts. They are the wholesale and retail market towns. They are in the second level of the urbanisation in the state. Except Nalgonda and Mahbubnagar all the towns have registered a lower growth between 2001 and 2011 when compared to 1991 to 2001. Almost all the towns are showing slower growth when compared to 1991 to 2001 to 2011. This trend seems to be the case for the next layers of towns in the state.

Table 5.6- Population of Old District Headquarters from 1991-2011

District Name	Population 1991	Growth Rate	Population 2001	Growth Rate	Population 2011	Growth Rate
Adilabad	84255	57.5	109529	30	117167	7
Nizamabad	241034	31.7	288722	19.8	311152	7.8
Karimnagar	148583	72.5	218302	46.9	289821	32.76
Medak	35775	25.2	41945	17.2	46880	11.76
Mahbubnagar	116833	33.5	139662	19.5	190400	36.3
Nalgonda	84910	36	111380	31.2	154326	38.6
Warangal	461123	37.59	579216	25.61	704570	21.64
Khammam	149077	51	198620	33.2	196283	-1.2

Source: Census data.

Table 5.7 – Population of New District Headquarters from 1991-2011

District Name	Population 1991	Growth Rate	Population 2001	Growth Rate	Population 2011	Growth Rate
Siddipet	54091	26.5	61809	14.3	66737	7.97
Suryapet	60630	38.9	94585	56	106805	12.9
Kamareddy	48666	47.3	64496	32.5	80315	24.5
Jagtail	67591	27	85521	26.5	103930	21.53
Peddapalli					41171	
Nagarkurnool	18977	27.6	26157	37.8	26801	2.46
Nirmal	57761	39.5	75254	30.3	88433	17.5
Manchiryal	52657	62.1	70381	33.7	89935	27.8
Vikarabad	39215	89.1	42410	8.2	53143	25.3
Mahabubabad					42851	
Jangaon	34305	36.6	43996	28.2	52394	19.08
Bhupalpally					42387	
Gadwal	40742	31.6	53560	31.5	63177	18
Siricilla	50048	46.6	65314	30.5	83186	27.36
Wanaparthy	38862	35.4	50114	29	60949	21.6
Narayanpet	33519	20.3	37563	12.1	41752	11.2
Asifabad	14974	49.4	19330	29.1	23059	19.3
Kothagudem	86951	-8.4	86306	-0.7	79819	-7.5
Bhoingir	40744	33.3	50407	23.7	53339	5.8

Source: Census data.

Table 5.7 shows the growth rate of third layers of towns. These are made as new district headquarters in 2016. They are spread across the state. As said all the towns are displaying a lower growth rate between 2001 and 2011 than the previous decade. Though there is a

decline in the population living in these towns, there is still considerable population living in these towns. As noted in the earlier chapter and it is widely discussed in the literature that there is an increase in the non-farm income in the villages across the country. Chandrasekhar (2017) says that the growth of non-farm economy happens in three stages over the course of the development. In the first stage it is concentrated in the rural areas. In the second phase, rural-urban connections play a larger role as the foundation for non-agricultural employment. In the last phase, the weight of rural-urban ties increased as the significance of more advanced types of economic linkages increased.

So is the case with Telangana. With increasing non-farm income and migration between rural-urban areas, these town have come to play an important role, not only in the urbanisation, but also in the rural areas. These have become a source of non-farm employment for labour and a source of investment opportunities to the diversifying land holding classes. Any understating of the rural without studying the urban is going to give us a partial picture of both, the rural as well as the urban. In the neo-liberal developmental process both the rural as well as urban co-constitute each other and studying one without the other is not possible.

The secondary and third layer of towns can be studied in a number of ways. They can be studied in relation to the metropolitan centre and relationships between them; they can be studied in relation to each other and how their development is either hampered or enhanced with each other. They can be also investigated in their own right, how historically they have evolved and constituted as town and developed. They can be studied from the point of the village, how the development of the town has altered the relations in the village, in terms of providing opportunities- both for labour as well as for capital. This last point of view was taken in understanding the Jagityal town.

Jagityal has many features in common with other small towns in the country: a minor administrative centre; an agricultural market for various agricultural inputs and a godown to store paddy; a cattle market; welding, agricultural machinery (sold, rented, and repaired); general engineering and inputs for construction; artisanal tailoring, gold, metal, and vessel smithing; wooden furniture making; food and cloth provision; and educational- both private and public (mainly pvt). Etc.

Jagityal Town is located in the northern part of the Telangana. It is located on the road which connects two bigger towns- Nizamabad and Karimnagar. Distance between Jagityal and Nizamabad is 99 km and between Karimnagar and Jagityal is around 49km. There are two famous temples are also located near to the town. Famous Dharmapuri temple is located 34km north of the town on the right bank of the Godavari River and famous temple Kondgattu located 15km to the east of the town. The population of the town according to 2011 census 1,03,930. The town is the nodal point for nearby villages and other small towns as the next big town is located nearly 50 km. The town is a destination for education, retail trade wholesale trade, for health services, repairing of vehicles specially agricultural machinery. The town has showrooms of motorcycles, tractors. People come to buy agricultural inputs from the town. The town is also administrative headquarter, there is the sessions court in the town, land registration office is also located.

Table 5.8 gives the decades wise growth rate of the population of the town from 1901 onwards to 2011. In 1901 the population of the town was 11181. In 1920s the town was made as the *taluk*¹⁹ and in 1926 the *Tahasil* office was built. From 1901 onwards it constantly grew, except in two decades.

Table 5.8 Jagityal Growth Rate from 1901 to 2011

Year	Population	Growth Rate
1901	11181	
1911	11688	4.5
1921	9682	-17.2
1931	13882	43.4
1941	16294	17.4
1951	21046	29.2
1961	20941	-0.5
1971	30900	47.6
1981	53213	72.2
1991	67591	27
2001	85521	26.5
2011	103930	21.53

Source: Census data.

¹⁹The taluk was an important administrative division. It was generally a subdivision of the district.

Between 1911 and 1921 the population of the town decreased by 17.2% because of the widespread influenza epidemic had taken a heavy toll of lives in the town. Between 1952 and 1961 it decreased slightly by 0.5 %. Jagityal had shown remarkable growth in the population from 30,900 in 1971 it grew to 53,231 by 1981. An increase of 72%. This growth of the Jagityal can be seen in two ways: One, the coming of SRSP Project canal which provides irrigation water to many of the villages around the town. The Kakatiya canal, which is at the length of 280km, spread across districts of Nizamabad, Karimnagar, and Warangal has boosted the agriculture sector in these districts. This had a major impact on Jagityal and the villages around it. Once agriculture developed the town developed in many folds. With the development of the agriculture the relations between town and villages have increased. It became a place for attraction. One more reason could be the impact of Maoist/Naxalite movement in the region. During the late 1970s and 1980s the region had very active Naxalite movement. The fear of Naxalites had driven many of the landlords from *velama* and *reddy* communities away from villages to towns. This also could have contributed to the development of the Jagityal. The initial development, according to a local historian, were the rice mills, rice trading. Which makes sense in the context of development of agriculture. The other major economic activities, as he informed were, basic consumer goods and other services. The 1961 census says that important economic activities of the town were Handloom weaving- which provided subsidiary income to the during the off seasons, beedi manufacturing was another important activity-in 1961 there were three units which provided employment to about 1200 women. Jagityal was once famous for silk sarees and scarfs woven by the traditional weavers, but the industry has lost its importance by 1960s. Even by 1970s the important goods manufactured in the town were handloom cloths, blankets, and beedis. In 1960s the functional category of the town was Primary activities-cum-Industry cum- Service, in 1970s it changed to Industry-cum-Primary activities.

Town settlements and Expansion:

The town expansion has started once a new bypass road came up from outside the town. Now the entire area both sides of the bypass road has become a real estate hub and new colonies have come up. After the town was made into a new district and new collector office and SP office are being built and the town is expanding in eastern direction.

Figure 5.9 Town Settlements



Source: Drawn from Field work

The initial development of the town happened once there was construction of new bypass road. The road was constructed in the early 2000s. The bypass road led the development town to the east ward direction. This shift was primarily because of the development of schools. There are more than 15 schools located on either side of the road. The initial settlements were the residential schools; subsequently hospitals and diagnostic centres were established, marriage function halls have come up on the road. These have shot up the land prices in this part of the town. The first school was Nalanda High School which was built on the northern side of the bypass road, next was KGR high school which came up on the eastern side of the bypass road. Though northern side of the bypass road, agricultural lands were converted into residential plots the area did not develop much. On the southeast side of the bypass road the development has pickup up. One small village has merged and became part of the town once the bypass road has come up. The old houses in the village were being demolished and new multi-storey buildings were coming up during the time of filed work. An entire new colony has come up in the area- as Krishnanagar. Earlier the village known as Govindpally. On the periphery of India's small and large towns, Raman (Raman, 2017) claims that the conversion of agricultural land to urban use, such as the development of housing layouts or the creation of educational institutions, is a continuing issue.

Since town was made as new district in 2016, the development of the town has slowly moved towards the Karimnagar roadside. On the left side of the road there were government lands which were acquired during the construction of SRSP canal to build houses for engineers and other who were working in that project. It is known as Dharoor camp. New government offices are coming up in this area. New Collector office has come at the entrance of the town. These new developments are directing the growth of the town. When asked about who the people are who have bought these plots and constructing new houses, the real estate agent said the many of them are not from the town and coming from nearby villages and Korutla, and Dharmapuri (small towns). People from Velama, Reddy, Munnurukapus, Goud communities are the mainly coming to the town. Especially, those who have land in the villages, families whose children are working in software, some of the successful gulf migrants, government employees are major actors in the real estate sector.

Town Economy:

Jagityal town's economy transformed from an agrarian based town to the one-off dominated by small scale retail trade from the late 1980s. In 1971 almost 50% of the labour depended on either agriculture or agriculture labour and the rest of them depended on household and non-household manufacturing. These were mainly the beedi work and handlooms. There is no data with regard to the kinds of business activities town had. The key respondent explained the history of the town was a historian of ancient and medieval history of the Karimnagar district who is from the town. According to him, before the 1990s and during 1980s the major economic activities in the town were the maintenance of bullock carts and agricultural machinery- diesel pumps, groundnut processing mills, pottery, the making of leaf plates along with handlooms and beedi making. The growth of the rice mills has started after the SRSP canal.

In reaction to globalisation and the integration of the economy into the urban economy and its culture, however, a large wave of economic diversification began around the end of the 1990s. New communications technologies, such as satellite and cable television, new telephones, the expansion of rental markets, Photocopying machines, and video libraries, developed.

New economy is of two types. One is the old one - where they have been there but expanded to new domains- like the agricultural, textiles, have multiplied, there new tractor showrooms

earlier they had to go to Karimnagar, now Jagityal has become the centre of these. The town has also been reconfigured as space. It has become a space from place. Now it is a melting pot of different institutions and a space of new opportunities for the people in the surrounding villages, it provides new avenues of employment, though dominantly in the informal economy.

It is booming hub for trade in petty commodity productions, The newly developing consumer culture offers different opportunities for people both in the town as well as villages outside of the town. For communities like velamas, reddy, munnurur kapus the town has provided investment opportunities in sectors like -education. The majority of the schools and colleges in the town are owned by these communities. For labour the increasing the real estate and construction sectors have become the major sectors of the employment.

Development of new businesses shows that the town has acquired the qualities of metropolitan cities, and rapid globalisation of the culture and style of living. New telecommunications technologies have appeared, satellite and cable TV and their supplies, rentals, and repairs have deployed rapidly in the last 10 to 15 years. The development of courier services, stationary shops, xerox centres have reached not only the town but also villages. The use of Internet cafes also has increased in the town. All these indicate the reach of international companies into the remote places. The development of all these also helped the renter economy of the town. There is new class of people who are building houses and giving them on rent and earning income. These people are two types, one the native people of the town who are staying in the town, and other class is the one who have moved to the town and bought lands in town and investing, these are specially the upper caste people who have benefited from agriculture and are diversifying into new avenues, the salaried employees of both private and government institutions, especially governmental. Long distance trade also increased in the last decade, especially for mangos, and there is development of market for rice. These new classes of people are mainly from velama reddy communities, some of them are from OBC communities like munnuru kapus. These are traditionally land-owning communities. These are the communities who were able to grab the opportunities in the town as land provided a source of income. The new class of employees both in the government and private sectors are also becoming the rentier class along the land owning communities.

The town has five movie theatres catering to almost 6000 to 7000 people in a day. New finance companies, chit fund companies, insurance companies show the development of and financialisation of life. There are growing typing centres, coaching centres, student hostels, computer centres, tuition centres show the necessity of acquiring new skills and it also shows how that becomes a new accumulating opportunity. These new opportunities in education sectors has started recently in the last five to ten years. Earlier people used to go to either Karimnagar or to Hyderabad. Major section of people who are starting these are unemployed youth who prepared for exams did not clear it are entering into it. They went for coaching for government jobs like-police, teacher, other public service commission exams. They did not clear the exams, they saw an opportunity and have started the coaching centres in the town. At the time of field work there were seven coaching centres in the town- majority of them are run by OBCs.

There is also development and expansion of hotels, bakeries, fast food centres, sweet shops show emergence of a new life styles among the people. All these businesses are owned by locals well as non-local people. People from Rajasthan, the Marwari communities are dominated in the bakery shop ownership. The town has become a destination for the salaried class employees, (who might constitute 5 to 10% of the population). this has become a residential area and also becoming a source of rent. Many of the government office employees, teachers- both private and government, doctors, and to the upper caste and class people in the nearby villages it is a place to stay, and if you can build one house, it becomes a source of income in the form of rent.

Social Composition of the Town:

Since, a detailed research was not conducted on the town, it is difficult to say exactly who dominates the town in different spheres of economy. General interactions in the town, with different respondents- there is considerable presence of OBC- specially *padmashalis* in textile business- specially retail trade in clothes and *MunnurKapus*, in all major small scale retail in the economy. There are some SC entrepreneurs also but they are very few but also limited to certain economic activities like scrap and waste collection. Both *velamas* and *reddys* still own many of the lands in and around the town. There is presence of muslim population also in the town. They are mostly involved in small retail trade, beedi work and gulf migration.

There is the presence of associations of both aspirational activities and ascriptive functions. The presence of caste association of like *padamshalis*, *reddys*, and *vaishyas (komati)* in the town shows the importance of caste and at the same there are associations based on economic activity like hotel owners association, school owners association which shows the aspirational aspect of it.

Education:

Education and Health are the two of the major sectors that drives the growth of the town. They are source of investment if one is looking for the diversification. This aspect of privatisation of education has not been studied very less in the literature. Interviews in the field with school owner and teachers indicated that it a source of good profit. One of the senior private school teacher said that “ if you can invest initially on the school for three to four years and establish your school you can expect high returns for the next 10 years”. There are around 90-100 private schools in the Jagityal town and there are 10 private junior colleges and 10 private degree colleges. The private schools are slowly developing over a period of time. Private junior colleges are developed from 2000s onwards, the development of private degree colleges was picked up after the government has started the fee reimbursement scheme. There is one government engineering college JNTU Jagityal which a branch of JNTU Hyderabad which was started in 2007. There are no private engineering colleges in the town. There are 12 private engineering colleges in Karimnagar. Most of them started after the fee reimbursement scheme started. It was observed during pilot study in 2016 that most of these colleges are located on the outskirts of the town in 5 to six acres of agricultural land. They were one of the important factors diverting agricultural lands into non-agricultural purposes in the second level of urban centres in the state. There are no studies in the state on the nexus between caste-engineering education-politics and the economy of it. Because many of these colleges are owned by ministers and MLAs and MPs as said the earlier chapter I have interviewed 10 school and college owners in Jagityal town.

The owners of the schools and colleges can be categorised into three kinds: first are the old school teachers. Either retired or who worked in other private schools of colleges. They incrementally built their institutions. In the sense they were small partners in the early days in the previous institutes and saw that it was a profitable venture and came out established their own. Second, are local big land holders from *reddy* and *velama* communities, who wanted to diversify and ventured into starting a school. The third group is a diverse range of

entrepreneurs who are into other activities came into starting school or college like rice mills, or real estate or successful gulf migrants also have invested their remittances in schools. There are fourth kind of owners.

Table 5.9 Educational Investment

Class	Number
Worked as previously and started own institute	5 (2 <i>reddy</i> , 2 <i>velama</i> , 1 <i>padmashali</i>)
Wanted to diversify from agriculture and invested in education	3 (1 <i>reddy</i> , <i>velama</i> , and <i>munnurukapu</i>)
Coming from other entrepreneurial activities	2 (<i>Goud</i> and <i>Reddy</i>)

Source: Field work.

Table 5.9 shows there are five in the first class of investors. Four are from OCs (Two *Velama* and Two *Reddy*) the other is from OBC (*Padmashali*). All of the worked previously in schools and colleges for more than 15 years. In the second class of investors there 3 of them -one, *Velama*, one *Reddy* and one *MunnuruKapu*. There are two in the last category, one *goud* and one *reddy*.

Srikanth is from OBC community of *padmashalis*. He is 42 two years old. He finished his under graduation in sciences (BSC) and B.Ed. in Hyderabad. He wanted to prepare for government teacher job, because of various family reasons he could not prepare, he had to come and work. He got a job in one of the private schools, started to work in the school from 5000rs per month onwards. He worked in the same school for 10 years. Slowly he became the principal of the school and became in charge of the school once the owner of the school started another school in town. He came to understand the nitty-gritties of the school running and how profitable it was as a business activity. He also slowly built network in the town with other school owners, teachers, and parents. Then one day he decided to start his own school. He took one building, along with his friend, on rent and his old colleagues have come along with to work in this school. Initially the school was started with as primary English medium school with 200 hundred students. After 5 years the school converted into high school. Now there 600-700 students in the school. The initial capital that is required he took on a loan and his brother, who has a small hotel in the town, gave him some money to start the school. His confidence was that he has worked in the school for long enough and saw

how profitable it was and he knew how to run a school and how to attract students and talk to parents.

The rest of the three in this category, also have similar stories. But they come upper caste landed communities and they come from nearby villages. They were educated in Karimnagar and Hyderabad. Though families were into agriculture, because of their urban education they were expected to do some government job or a private job. They tried to get government job but, they were unsuccessful. They worked in various private schools in Karimnagar and Jagityal and started. Two of them started school, other one started a degree collage.

The fifth one is a retired government teacher. He worked as primary school teacher and retired, before retiring he became a partner with one of his friends who was starting a school and later he left because of various reasons and then he took control of the school.

In the second category there are three. One from each- reddy, velama and munnurkapu-dominant landed communities. All of three of them wanted to diversify from agriculture and saw education sector as opportunity and invested in it. One is from the field work village, Village A.

Narasimha Reddy is from Village A. He is 62 old, from a landed *reddy* community. He studied till graduation and wanted to get a government job, but he could not get. He owns 25 acres of land in the village. Out of 25 acres, in 5 acres there is Mango orchard, which guarantees 3 to 4 lakhs of income every year depending on the crop. In the rest of the 20 acres, in 10 to 15 acres they cultivate paddy and turmeric. Rest of it they either give as lease or leave it fallow. Narasimha Reddy initially invested his income in agriculture, in digging a bore well and buying a tractor. He wanted to invest his returns outside of agriculture. When he was younger, he worked in fertiliser company so with that experience he started a fertiliser shop in town and he ran it for three four years but it was not profitable. Then switched to education. He saw the booming of private education as a business and wanted to invest. He started a primary school with English medium school. At that time, it was one of the first English medium school in the town. It started running well and expanded it to high school. It also started well and attracted many of the students. He invested all of his returns on education and now he owns 5 schools in the town. His son (I assume), who did his M.Tech and who was working as a software engineer, resigned to his job and started to look after the schools. All five of the schools are English medium schools. One school is CBSE mode

and the rest of them are state board. Two high school and three primary school. Four of the five schools are in town and one is one of the near by villages. CBSE board school also has hostel facility. He resides in the village and his wife looks after the agriculture and his son resides in the town. In the third category, there are two. One is reddy, the other one is goud. They were in other business came to education.

Ramesh Goud is 43 years old. He is from the Jagityal town itself. His father migrated to Bombay in late 1980s and there he started the toddy business. Initially it was not very profitable but slowly it became successful, and his father started getting profits. With that money they built a built a big house. Both of them (he and his sister) got educated. With the money and his got married. Though, his father was earning money, they felt they were not respected among in the town because of the town. When one of his friends was starting a school and him to invest in the school. He saw it as an opportunity to invest as well get some respect and so he convinced his father to invest. So, they invested and he along with his friend looks after the school along with his friend.

Labour:

The labour in the town can be understood in three ways- one those who are staying in the town. Those who are commuting to the town from nearby rural areas to the town. Three, those who are migrating to the town from different places. Table 5.10 gives the labour composition of the town according to different census from 1971 to 2011. There is a decline of agricultural activity and slow increase in the Household and Non-household manufacturing in the town.

Table 5.10 Labour According to Different Categories in Jagityal town from 1971-2011

Year	Cultivators		Agricultural Labour		Household Manufacturing		Non-Household Manufacturing	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1971	1134	21.12	1518	28.36	1219	22.78	1482	27.69
1981	1640	9.17	2318	12.95	1829	10.22	12116	67.68
1991	1515	12.2	2916	23.48	3861	31.1	4126	33.22
2001	601	1.8	1762	5.28	7904	23.66	23144	69.28
2011	1728	4.71	3032	8.27	5554	15.13	26379	71.91

Source: Census data.

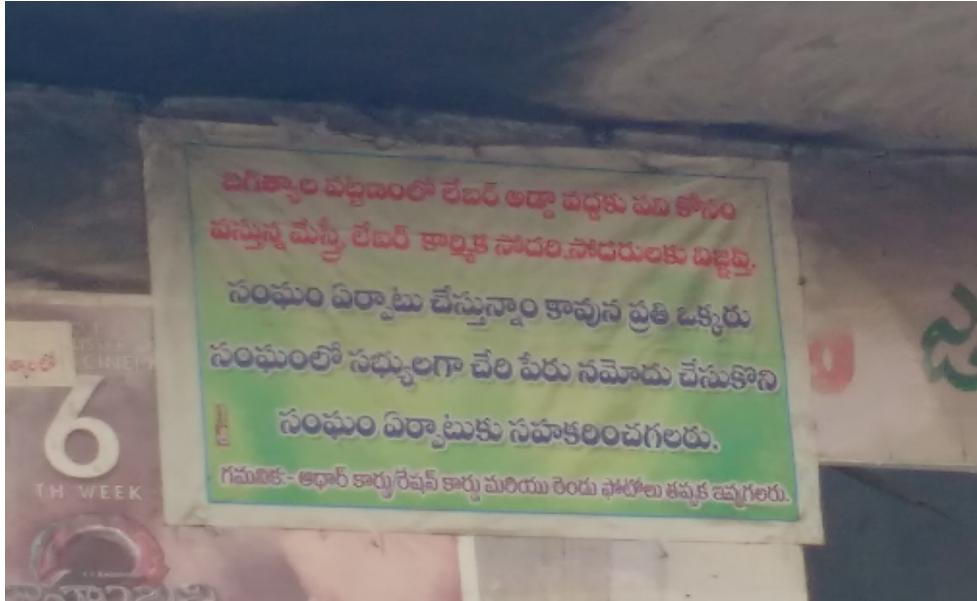
Two of the most important categories of labour mobility are migration and commuting. Small towns have become very important in this both aspects. On migration and its importance and its aftereffects are written very in the literature. But commuting has not been discussed to the extent migration has been discussed. As multiple dependence on multiple sources of income became essential for the households and diversification of employment also became necessary from agriculture to non-agriculture from rural to urban. Sharma (Sharma, 2017) says that better employment opportunities in the non-farm sector of urban agglomerations (*and small urban centres*), Individuals are able to diversify their place of employment, which in turn allows them to diversify their income source and lessen the volatility of employment chances. (579). S Chandrasekhar(2011) estimates that there are around 32millions of workers commute every day from rural to peri-urban centres in the country.

Many of the workers, who I met at the labour *adda* are engaged in the construction work in the town and some of them employed in the retail and wholesale centres. There are at least 700-1000 workers, both male and female who commute to Jagityal from nearby villages at the labour *adda*. Labour from villages as far as 30 km from the town are commuting to the town. They early in the morning by bus or by auto and leave to their village by evening. Interactions with some of the construction labour revealed that there are people who commute to construction site but they are not coming to labour *adda*. Important characteristic of these people who are on the labour *adda* is that they do not have a fixed place to work, and they don't get work every day. It has serious implications for the political mobilisation. At the labour *adda* some people have tried to form a union and mobilise workers for better wages. Figure 5.11 shows the banner which is written in Telugu. The banner asks workers who are coming to *adda* for work to join the association that is going to be formed. The response to the call was not very encouraging. Since not all the workers are not coming regularly to *adda* and their workplace is not fixed, in the sense all might not work in the construction sector every day. Their nature of work as daily wage labour might vary from time to time.

There are people who are working in other sectors who commute to Jagityal. They are mostly in the transport sectors and there are some people who work in the retail and wholesale sector as *hamali* labour. There are 400-500 autos that come to Jagityal from nearby villages transporting people and goods. They are stationed at the three different locations in the town

and operate from there to villages and villages to towns and return to the village in the evening. They have an auto-driver's association. It does not do much in the sense that organising or mobilising them politically. The members of the union collectively operate in 'chitti'- an informal chit fund activity. They save money and rotate the saved money as credit to other members in the association. They repay the credit amount in small instalments.

Figure 5.10 Labour *Adda* Poster



Source: Taken by the researcher at the labour *adda* (27th December 2017).

There is another type of commuting happens- that is from urban to rural. Those working in the formal sectors like- banks, schools, government offices, hospitals- in the villages they commute to villages and return in the evening. In terms of gender aspects of commuting both male and female are commuting to the town to work in the construction sector. The transport sector is dominated by male commuting only. Some of the interactions with retail shop owners indicated that there is a female commuting to work in the cloths stores as assistants. The are some members are commuting from very near villages to work in hotels as sweepers and helpers and cleaners. This only indicates a broader trend I got from shop owners and hotel owners but could not meet anyone.

Migration to the town:

As there is commuting from villages to the town, there is also migration from different places to the town. There is a male migration from Orissa to the town. They are working in hotels

and restaurants. The number of hotels and restaurants are increasing in recent times. Their number is small. They stay at the place where they work. There is small scale male migration from Rajasthan. This section of people come to the town as group and involve micro economic activity like selling ice cream, cooldrinks, in the town as well as in the villages. They stay at the same place, and they make ice cream and cooldrinks themselves collectively and they sell it on push carts, cycles depending on the item and season.

Mango Market:

It has a specialized mango market. Mangoes are grown on 44,150 acres in 18 mandals in the district, according to official sources. The average production of mangoes ranges between 1.3 million and 1.5 million tonnes. Approximately 13,367 farmers cultivate mango in 288 villages throughout the area. About 95% of the production is of the Baneshan kind, while the remaining 5% is comprised of Dasheri and other varieties. The town sends mangos to markets across the country to states like Delhi, Chandigarh, Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan. There is a high labour flow from Maharashtra and some parts of UP to work in the mango market every season every year. It is mostly informal markets dominated by the Muslim trades from the town.

Seasonal migrant labour come to work in this from parts of UP and some parts of Maharashtra. Whole family come for a month or 45 days. They come along with family-women and children and also work here. Men are involved in loading the mangos on to the lorries and women and children are involved in grading the mangos and loading on to the carton boxes. There are others who pluck the mangos.

Some remarks on the non-farm sector:

Non-farm sector has more direct impact in Village A than in Village B. In Village A the village is bigger in terms of the population and also it is near to the town. So, it provides access to town in terms of wage labour and other non-agricultural employment. There are people in the village who go to the town early in the morning by an auto sell their vegetables in the town and come back by 10 am and go to the MNREGA work or the agricultural wage. The distance provides an advantage to these people. The larger population of the village provides a greater number of opportunities to open small tea stalls, tiffin centres, meat selling shops and various others. There are six tea shops and three tiffin fast centers in Village A whereas there is only one tea stall in Village B.

The wealthy agriculturalists are investing education, and non-farm business, and on asset building houses for rent purposes both in the village as well as town. The phenomena is more in the Village A than in Village B. The growing consumer culture also provides opportunities in the non-farm sector.

At household level what is important to notice is that There are only few households, which can be categorised as agricultural households and non-agricultural households. With gulf migration, beedi work, and work outside non-farm wage labour households have footing in both farm as well as farming sectors. It is as much the case with at the individual level households as with wage labourers.

The large landholders are supplementing agriculture with business- the privatisation of education and health are the two primary sectors that drive these investment in the villages. and political activities. Interestingly they did not let go of agriculture as they move to towns. Some of them moved to towns completely (This is more in Village B) and some are staying in the village. Both large and small landowners benefit from their sons' participation in the non-agricultural sector. Many of the smaller landowners supplement their income from farming with wage labour, much of it irregular and informal, and much of it non-agricultural. Others supplement their income with flexible and, in some circumstances, more lucrative self-employment.

Chapter 6

Unfolding the ‘New Rural’

Agrarian society underwent a drastic change with the introduction of Green Revolution. It changed the nature of agrarian production and delinked agriculture in India from its local settings. The second important aspect that changed agriculture is the structural adjustment programmes under neoliberal reforms in the 1990s was that its budgetary allocation for agriculture and allied activities were slashed, while the markets were opened for global players to intervene. It brought forward a set of paradoxes in Indian society. Though the share of agriculture declined in the GDP but still the dependency on agriculture remained as high as 46% in the country (IRDP Report 2013). The intense commoditisation of land and increasing pressure on both farm and non-farmland holdings resulted in their fragmentation, while drastically reducing the operational size of lands. Under these circumstances where the self-reproducing households within an agrarian setup is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain, the category of ‘peasant’ household itself becomes problematic. The fragmentation of not just land but also members of a household itself owing to pull (not in the traditional sense in which modern industries were attracting labour but mostly in the precarious informal sectors) and push (unviability of agriculture) factors of migration has brought significant difficulties in holding on to the predefined categories. With male migration to urban areas and increasing female participation in the operational utilities of farm activities, a new reality has emerged in the Indian countryside, in the form of ‘depeasantisation’ in the countryside and ‘deproletarianisation’ in urban spaces.

In critical engagements with contemporary rural²⁰ India, it is critical to move beyond equating the rural with agriculture or focusing only on ‘agrarian question’. AR Vasavi (2019) in her formulation of this critical engagement with the new rural, posits the rural as being constituted by the triangulated structures of: neo-liberal capital, state, and reproduced caste. The results of such triangulation are: the changing agrarian structure from agrarian to non-agrarian, increasing petty commodity production, and the gendered process of development. This chapter brings out the complexities of ‘households’ that are ‘pluriactive’

²⁰ The terms rural, village, countryside are used synonymously in the chapter, unless otherwise stated and same with urban, town, city.

and highly differentiated to the extent that they defy any categorisation of ‘class’ or any other

categorisation of peasant and for that matter even the distinction between rural and urban. The chapter addresses how the international and circular migration is leading to forms of separation of the sites of production and reproduction and integration of the labour into global circuits, in the rural Telangana.

As indicated in the literature review chapter, the ‘rural/village’ has been the subject of sociological, anthropological investigations from the beginning of the colonial rule²¹. Rural was equated with the agriculture and not defined specifically but was considered whatever is non-urban as the rural. The changes that were brought with the introduction of Green Revolution and the neoliberal projects have made changes to the level where it is very difficult to define rural and equate it with agriculture. According to Vasavi, any understanding of the rural world in the modern context must take into account not just the situation of agriculture but also other concerns such as caste-class dynamics, sustainability, gender, labour, rights, citizenship, governmentality, etc.(Vasavi, 2019, p. 33)

There is considerable volume of literature that has tried to understand and represent rural India through the lense of the agrarian crisis and farmer suicides (P. Narasimha Rao & Suri, 2006; D. N. Reddy & Mishra, 2010; Revathi, 2007), which are still going on the rural worlds of the Telangana state and in the country at large. It is insufficient to comprehend the complexities and paradoxes that characterize the rural as a region and a phenomenon. Literature on the agrarian crisis focuses solely on agriculture and places it in isolation from other aspects of rural farmers' lives. The processes and trajectories of rural India must also persuade us to think of rural India as a constantly developing, changing, disorderly process and an infinite complex order of evanescent, often perplexing relations rather than concentrating on the numerous structuring variables. (Mertz, 2002 cited by Vasavi, 2019).

This Chapter is divided into three sections, In the first section, we try to argue that ‘rural’ as a concept or ‘site’ of residence has not been understood seriously or theoretically engaged seriously by Indian sociology. Certain indications towards this have been discussed in chapter 2, here we try to extend this argument a little further and posit a need towards that

²¹ David Ludden’s (1999) work on the agrarian history of south Asia and recent work of Neeladri Bhattacharya’(2019) on Colonial Punjab are two such works.

direction. In the second and third section, we use AR Vasavi's positing of a new 'rural' as a result of the triangulated structure and its effects on the rural are discussed.

Section I

Have we ever seriously understood the rural or studied it in its own image or in its own reality? In academic hierarchy of studies, especially in sociology and social anthropology, rural once enjoyed the primacy in the Indian context but after 1970s and 1980s, it lost its primacy and not only that it has also acquired a certain negative connotation in terms of offering anything new to the advancement of the knowledge of the discipline.

There has always been a binary notion of the term 'rural' whenever it is invoked, and it is always posited against the 'urban'. The understanding of the rural is always based on two aspects: as location, and the social representation of it. It was always against the other- 'urban', that these aspects of the rural were explored. These two are intrinsically interwoven and carry a certain image of the 'rural'. Any understanding of the rural is intrinsically related to urban. As discussed earlier, there is no consensus on the definition, either officially, culturally, or even at a popular level about 'non-urban' space that is being called 'rural' (Roy, 2015).

The term rural/village can be used for many spatial settlements that can vary from one another quite drastically. It is an umbrella term for many of the different geographical manifestations of the human habitation. Village, hamlet, periphery to the town, countryside. In the Telugu parlance, there are terms for -*Palle, Ooru, Tanda, Gudem* all have different social spatial manifestations, but once they are officially categorised as 'rural' lose all the meanings and become one. Officially, the rural spaces are designated as - revenue village, panchayat village, hamlet, and deserted village. In the Census of India official definition, 'rural' is defined in terms of population- if below 5000 population, it becomes a village. The rest of spatial imageries have lost their meanings.

In the initial understanding or interpretation of modernity, urbanisation is commonly linked with modernity, and the countryside with the premodern. Implicit in such a design is a narrative of individuals and society's progression from rural to urban, or progressive modernisation. But if we look little closely, rural is as modern as the urban, in the sense that the distinction between rural and urban is created and acquired significance once it was

brought into the social division of labour in the initial capitalist productivity. The division between the urban and rural is not a pre-given, rather it is made. It may be claimed that the distinction between urban and rural life as opposites is what gives both of them their purpose and power. This notion may also be found in Marx and Engels' *German Ideology*, where the urban and rural are connected dialectically rather than as distinct spheres (Arthur, 1970. p. 69). In explicating Marx's theory of differentiation, Neil Smith (2008) states that on the overall "scale of division of labour," capitalism is based on the separation of industry and agriculture and this distinction is logically and historically extended to the division between town and country. Implicit in this kind of positing the divide is the notion that the rural must be progressively developed and should acquire the characteristics of urban, like industrialisation of agriculture production and development of the industries into the peripheries.

The tradition of village studies, dominated by structural functionalism framework, had dominated the sociology of the early decades of independent India. With it came two assumptions about the rural. First, that traditional social institutions were threatened by the encroaching forces of modernity. Second, that rural communities constituted a space outside of modernity's influence. This is evident in the concepts, like Tonnies's 'gemeinschaft' and 'gesellschaft'- equated with community and society, McKim Marriott's 'little tradition' and 'great tradition' and Robert Redfield's 'little community'.

How far could the gemeinschaft/gesellschaft dichotomy be maintained in the present context? Within metropolitan villages - settlements in close proximity to metropolitan cities - a variety of 'urban' values and lifestyles were prevalent. Similarly, it might be found in "urban villages" in the city; hence, "the gemeinschaft existed within the gesellschafts and the gesellschafts within the gemeinschaft." The divisions are blurring, and we may simply state that, in modern times, there are no rural people, only people who live in rural places for various reasons. This is not to claim, however, that rural-urban inequalities do not exist; low population densities may limit access to services and employment options. However, this did not constitute a required association between such lifestyles and rural-the 'rural' is not explanatory category, rather it has become an empirical category. This convergence of rural and urban is important for many reasons- it will allow us to look at the dynamics of

capital functioning and how it links the rural into its production dynamics, consumptive practices, and its global value chains, yet keeping the distinctions intact.

On the other hand, Marxist inspired studies, (the mode of production debate) mostly equated agriculture with the rural. With it came the analysis of class structure- property -land ownership and labour - became the significant analytical tools in this tradition. To arrive at logical conclusions, a collection of pre-existing categories were applied to the 'lived experiences' of social groups and employed as analytic instruments. These studies have clearly positioned agriculture within the national 'class structure' and highlighted property as the distinguishing feature of agricultural class relations. Analytically, the modernist distinction of the 'rural' has collapsed and can only be resurrected through the articulation of two other modern categories: class and labour.

From the standpoint of political economy, agriculture was conceptualized as a unique field of production, one characterized by specific (pre-modern) "peculiarities" - impediments - to full-fledged capitalist growth. In summarising this viewpoint, it can be said that the political economy approach's theoretical and empirical concerns mainly centred on four key themes: first, the process of capitalist development in agriculture and the reasons for its success or failure; second, the distinctive features of agrarian class structures; third, the transformation and resistance of the small farm and its role in advanced capitalist agriculture; and fourth, a focus on the role of the state. In each of these formulations, the boundary between rural and urban is preserved.

As indicated in the earlier chapter, there have been efforts in recent times to reconceptualise the rural and take into considerations of the changes that have been brought by the neo-liberal capital. These recent studies are no longer equating the rural with agriculture and have studied the importance of non-farm income to rural households and changes brought by migration, technology (specially mobiles and televisions (Tenhunen, 2018)) in the attitudes of rural population. Gupta's (2015) conceptualisation of the changes that are taking place in the rural- the increasing non-farm income, migration, the importance of town- as 'rurban' is one of the first in this direction.

On the other hand, the 'new urban' studies have brought the rural into the making of the urban processes. The studies of Gidwani and Ramamurthy (2018), Gururani (2020) in? and

others have brought the rural land question and agrarian question into understanding the urban processes and in turn its impact on the rural in terms of rural livelihoods and land. But they are only limited to understand the villages that are located on the peripheries of big cities. It is difficult to extend these studies beyond the urban peripheries. It is not to say that their arguments are not relevant to the rural that it is outside the periphery, but it is necessary to clarify that if we want to understand the rural processes on their own, we need to have concept of rural which is independent of the urban and yet can capture the impact of urban on the rural.

On the other hand, there has been another trend in the critical urban studies, to understand urbanisation as a process that is happening on 'planetary level'. In the Brennerian formulation of the planetary urbanisation, urbanisation is understood as The geographical effects of neoliberal restructuring can best be viewed as "planetary phenomena," where regulations, policies, and "rule regimes" are reconfigured both upward at transnational scales and downward at national and subnational scales (Swarnabh Ghosh, 2017).

This theory of urbanisation attempts to go beyond and fundamentally redefine the spatial-political contexts of the urbanisation's influence, transcending any standard city-centric conception of urbanisation. Urbanisation on a global scale dismantles the traditional dichotomy between the urban and the rural by "subsuming and enveloping vastly differentiated and highly uneven landscapes" (ibid).

In their definition of urbanisation, Brenner and Schmid (2011) characterise rural integration with neoliberal capitalism as 'disintegration of the hinterland' and 'disappearance of nature'. The former term implies that 'rural' has become part of the 'back end' or 'back house' of international trade networks and organisational infrastructure. Second one refers to the ecological effects of rapid urbanisation on natural systems and resources, such as lakes, forests, and the atmosphere, as well as their interaction with rapid urbanisation. They urge for the concept of urban to become a theoretical category that can contain "everything that was previously called exurban or nonurban, while simultaneously renouncing the epistemological coin of the urban-rural, where 'the urban' (the city) and the 'nonurban' (everything that is not the city) are a mutually reinforcing, dialectical pair" (Swarnabh Ghosh, 2017, p. 2).

What they are arguing is for, in a way to get away with the concept of rural, since it has become a part of the larger process of urbanisation that is happening at the planetary level. In her intervention to this question, Ananya Roy (2015) argues that the urban and the rural are government categories that serve as the analytical foundations for comprehending the process by which the urban is made, lived, and contested. She notes that these processes are necessarily partial and inconsistent. In Roy's interpretation, rural is not merely non-urban; rather, it is a constitutive outside of urban processes that is in ongoing negotiation with them. She contends that the presence of 'non-urban' should not be viewed as a return to the rural-urban dichotomy, but rather as a term to consider the 'urban' as an unfinished and always evolving process. While embracing Brenner and Schmid's planetary urbanisation as a helpful global metatheory, Roy disputes their demand to abandon the epistemic category of the rural or the nonurban (Swarnabh Ghosh, 2017, p. 2) and emphasises the significance of the term 'non-urban' in empirical realities.

If we establish that there is a need to understand the rural, given its presence outside of the 'urban', how do we understand these processes of inflows (goods and values) to the rural and outflows (specially labour) from the rural. This understanding should reveal the new dimensions that 'rural' had acquired over a period. Such awareness ought to 'bring together the fragmented parts of what we already know about rural space rather than to expose some hidden or 'lost' characteristic of this space (Keith Halfacree, 2006) and at the same time should not fall into the binary notion of the rural-urban dichotomy.

Taking cues from geography, social theorist K. Halfacree (ibid.) argues that space – and everything that we can label 'rural space' – is not 'a practico-inert container of action' but rather a socially produced set of manifolds. Anyone conceptualising rurality should have a closer engagement with what Deleuze calls 'minor theory', that is, doing theory in a rather different register that disrupts the binary relations between the theoretical and the empirical and is significantly less totalising, less judgmental, less certain, and more fluid (Ramesh, 2020). Any understanding of the countryside should, on the one hand, attempt to uncover the causal mechanisms that led to distinct spatial impacts, while, on the other hand, attempting to preserve the originality and uniqueness of locations and social ties. This would entail retaining the core tenets of capitalist production and accumulation while introducing other (non-economic) social interactions.

Keith Halfacree (2006) constructs a threefold understanding of the rural: rural localities, everyday lives of the people, representation of the 'rural space'. That is, the location, not only geographically, (in his formulation only geographical location is considered), its location in the capitalist production also becomes important, and the economics of everyday reproduction and its intersections with various social categories of caste, gender, and class. The cultural shifts in the lives of the rural- changes brought through migration to different places, and the general shifts in the 'value' system.

Rural localities:

Rural localities: However, because of the emphasis on capitalist production relations and the market, these local regions are integrated into larger patterns of change. The term 'locale' refers to the physical location of institutions that contains particular social practises. A 'locality' is a place with a particular institutional composition that gives rise to a distinct local economy and culture. Agricultural can no longer be the primary determinant in defining the borders of rural space. Significant processes that are perceived to inscribe rural locales are no longer solely agricultural in nature, but are also inscribed through relatively unique spatial practises. These practises may be associated with either production or consumption. Location in the capitalist production process also becomes important. With capitalist production becoming more and more differentiated and diffused across spaces, it becomes important to see how rural space is incorporated into the production process and where it is located. Such an integration or non-integration has effects on the rural at multiple levels.

Representations of the rural: formal rural representations, such as those expressed by corporate interests, bureaucrats, and politicians. Specifically, how the countryside is commodified in terms of exchange value. Signification and legitimation procedures are crucial here. In *Everyday lives of the rural*: Halfacree (Keith Halfacree, 2006) says that we must keep in mind that the ideational space of rural social representations only exists via the practises of discursive interaction, just as the physical space of a rural locality only exists through the practises of structural processes. Therefore, to enable us to unravel the entanglements at work, research into rural space(-time) calls for a strongly contextual approach. Rural people live chaotic, fragmented lives on a daily basis. These take into account personal and collective factors (referred to as "culture") in their cognitive

interpretation and negotiation. As they will rural communities, formal representations of the countryside seek to dominate these experiences. (p-48).

To these three, it is also important to add a fourth dimension, that is the working of the neo-liberal state. The withdrawal of the neo-liberal state from certain aspects of economy and its active role in prompting the interests of private capital are also important to understand the present day rural. The workings of social democracy have compelled the neoliberal states to take recourse to certain populist measures across the world and in India too. The introduction these populist measures and the effects of these changes on different categories of people in the rural have to be understood.

In the India context, AR Vasavi in her article “*The Displaced Threshing Yard: Involution of the Rural*” tries to understand the rural along those dimensions mentioned above. In this article she posits the rural “as being constituted by the triangulated structures of reproduced caste, an economics of neglect, and a politics of rescue” (31). She discusses the implications of the results of such triangulation. The next section tries to attempt to build on her work and try to understand both villages in the present day Telangana.

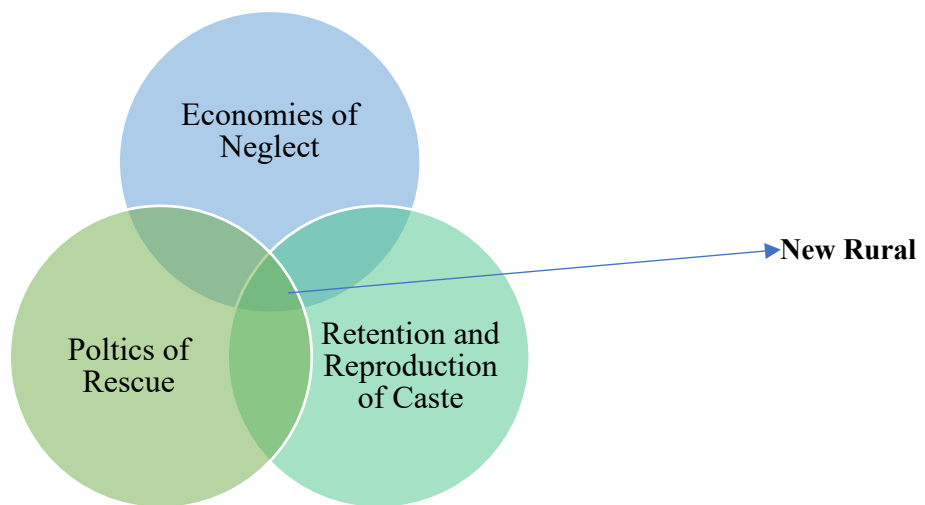
Section II

Drawing on the relational framework, Vasavi considers the rural as a collection of interconnected worlds, each marked by historical social formations that have left their mark on particular physio-geographical traits. These wider political-economic dynamics, which have an effect on “rural production, reproduction, accumulation, appropriation, expropriation, identity formation, and belonging”, are now incorporated into past social formations. Significant issues include those relating to means of subsistence, labour relations and mobility, political movements, relations between castes and classes, decentralised governance, the adoption of a set of rights, environmental and ecological concerns, gender relations, patterns of development, and maldevelopment. (ibid. p.33)

Any understanding of the rural today has to factor in many of, if not all, the above-mentioned process into consideration. As indicated in the preceding chapters, it is important to recognise the rural as comprising of and representing not only agrarian worlds of caste-based villages, but also worlds with an increase in non-farm income households, new rural-urban

entanglements, and a mosaic of agricultural practises ranging from subsistence cultivation to those integrated into the international capital and labour circuits. In this context, AR Vasavi locates rural space as constituted by triangulated forces and highlights the impact of these forces on the household/family, the village, and the rural as a region. She identifies three triangulated forces- Caste, State and Market economy that have a deep impact on the rural. I also use this framework to understand and analyse my field and present it here. These triangulations are shown in the figure 6.1. The following sections will discuss each of these aspects with regard to Telangana state and provide some evidence and link it with the field.

Figure 6.1 Triangulation of New Rural



Section 6.2.1

Economies of Neglect

Since the neoliberal period, there has been a neglect of the government intervention in the development of the agriculture. A recent report by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies (R. Ramakumar, 2022) which looked at the spending of the central government in the last decade (from 2010-2020) says that

public spending in agriculture in India is low, particularly when compared with the size of the sector in the overall economy. Further, public expenditure in agriculture as a share of overall public expenditure is also falling. The study also highlights a shift in the burden of public expenditure on agriculture, from the central government to the federal units that are the state governments (p- iv-v).

Even in the United Andhra Pradesh, agriculture was not given enough importance. Vamsi (Vakulabharanam, 2005) says that The state government has led the way among other governments in putting the changes into practise (such as reducing the subsidies on fertilisers, seeds, etc). Some of the state's newly implemented policies have resulted in rising farmers' input costs. Significant reductions in power subsidies have been made [Murthy, 2001]. From nearly 7% in 1991 to roughly 3% in 1998, the yearly state government expenditures for subsidies to agriculture have decreased. This decline significantly harmed farmers with small landholdings relative to other farmers in terms of impact per hectare. [Chowdhury and Reddy, 2000] (975).

The traditional paradigm centred on the state and emphasising land reforms and subsidies has been abandoned. The new emphasis was placed on agricultural expansion, export-oriented agriculture, the creation of value-added in agriculture, the consolidation of land holdings through the restructuring of lease structures, and the infusion of corporate capital in agriculture. As said the chapter 3, the state was in the fore front in implementing the neoliberal agenda and it took pride in implementing these reforms. Vamsi further goes on the say that declining welfare (had) manifested itself in the unprecedented wave of suicides among small and marginal framers in the state in 1990s. The growth in real agricultural output and the attendant reductions in welfare (growing distress) for most groups of farmers are conceptualised by him as "growth-inducing distress" and "distress-inducing growth." As showed in chapter 4, agriculture in both the villages, is highly capitalist in nature- where high investment cost are the norm. One of the respondents from the village Village A said that 'the government used to give us subsidies on fertilisers and seeds earlier. Now they don't give any. The costs of fertilisers and pesticides are increasing every year'.

In the next section two other important sections of rural life that have been neglected by successive governments are discussed. The two are education and health. It is not only the neglect by the government that is interesting but, its encouragement of the private players in these sectors is resulting in a negative consequence for the rural population.

Section 6.2.1.1 Education

Even a laissez-faire economist such as Adam Smith (1999) says that state should take the responsibility of education of common people, especially of the poor. He says that poor have

scarce resources to spend on their children's education and as soon as they are able to work, they are engaged in the work by the parents. So, the state has to take the responsibility of providing education for the poor. In the present-day context, education has acquired even more significance, as it is important to access the opportunities created by the market. Also important for securing a job, either private or public, as the market is creating a volatile job market.

Privatisation of education is an important factor in the state as well as in the country. The education system in the state has increasingly been privatised from the 2000s onwards. This has been happening at all levels of school education and higher education. As indicated by District Information on School Education (DISE) School Report Cards (2019), more than half of Telangana's students are enrolled in private schools. Even in rural regions, the rate is high. According to the 2018 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), over 41% of children aged 6 to 14 in Telangana attend private schools in rural areas.

Table 6.1 Private - Higher Education in Telangana

Year	Private	Total	% Private
Colleges			
2018-19	1700	1976	86.03
2015-16	1814	2032	89.27
Enrolments			
2018-19	928998	1095563	84.80
2015-16	1022049	1166653	87.61

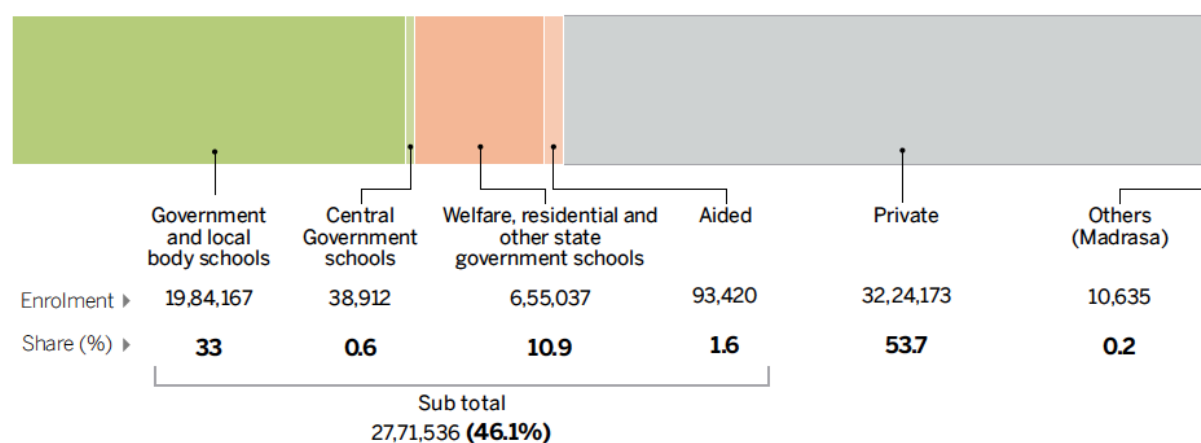
Source: ASER (2019)

Table 6.1 shows the extent of private colleges and the enrolment in the private educational institutions in the state of Telangana. In the year 2015-16, 89% of the colleges recorded 87% of the enrolments. By 2018-19 it has slightly reduced to 86% of colleges and 84% of the enrolments. The reason for this could be, opening of social welfare colleges in the state, which have garnered a good name for providing quality education in recent times.

If we look at the distribution of the school in the state according to management of the ownership, we can see steady rise of the private school from early 2000s onwards. In 2015-16 the number of schools in the state are 40821 among these 10769 are the private school in the state. The total enrolments for the same year was 61,91,871 students out of these, private enrolments were 31,40,746.50.7% of the enrolments were in private schools according to the District Information System for Education (DISE) data 2015-16.

Figure 6.2- Student Enrolment by Management for 2019-20

Grand total : 60,06,344

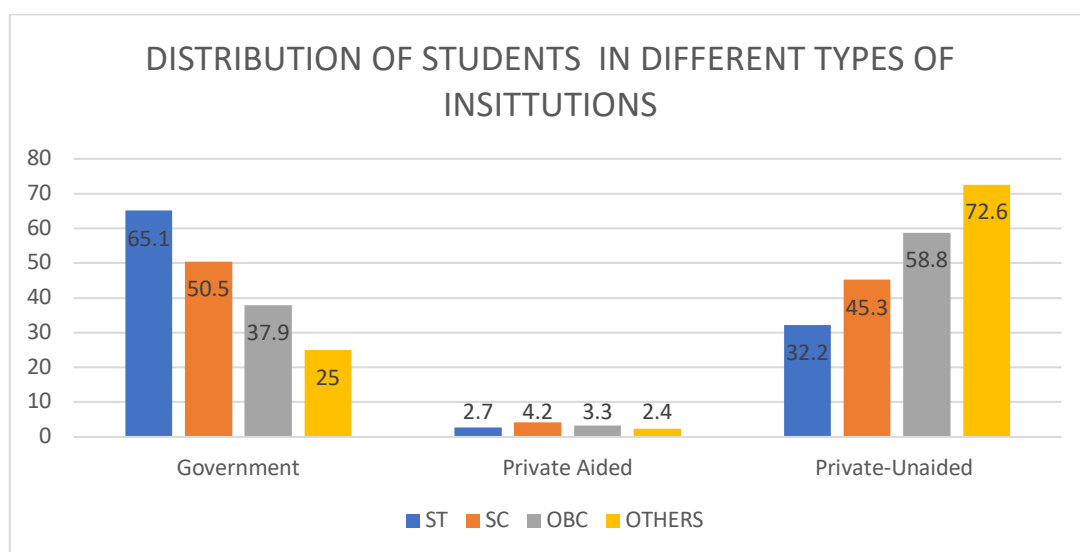


Source: Telangana Socio Economic Outlook 2021.

If we look at the same enrolment for the year 2019-20, 53.7% of the enrolment were in the private schools and 46.1% were in the government schools. If we look at the distribution of the students by social category and kinds of school, it is evident that students from SC, STs are dominated in the government school and students belonging to the upper castes are dominated in private schools. The following graph shows the distribution of students in different type of institutions.

The data shown in figure 6.2 and the field work, and various other studies show that there is preference among the parents to send their children to private schools. Aspiration of providing better education to their children dominates as the reason for sending their child to private schools. Also, there is a widespread opinion among the respondents that government schools are not good enough, and they cannot provide quality English medium education for their children. According to the same report, on an average, each family spends 12,213/- rupees on education in that state. If there are more children who are going to school in the family the expenditure tends to increase more.

Figure- 6.3



Source: Telangana Social Development Report (Council for Social Development, 2017)

Table 6.2 Average Expenditure on Education (in Rs) by Social Category in Telangana

S No	Social Category	Expenditure
1	ST	6843
2	SC	8564
3	OBC	12156
4	Others ²²	17775

Source: Telangana Social Development Report

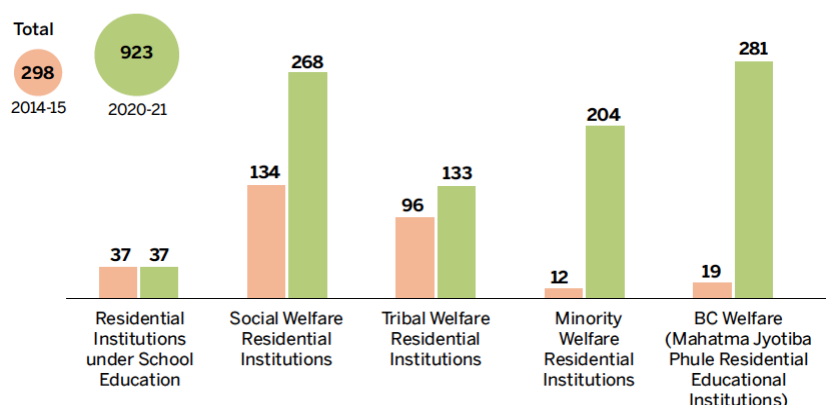
Private coaching is another pervasive phenomenon in Telangana, though it is highly concentrated in Hyderabad and some major towns like Khammam, and Karimnagar. But in recent times it has become a phenomenon in all the towns. As said in the earlier chapter ? we can see coaching centres are coming up in the town nearby to the villages. There are new coaching centres coming up for government job exams in Jagityal. Increasing unemployment, aspiration to get a government job and low-quality education are driving the growth of coaching centres.

Privatisation of education has two major sociological implications. One, high privatisation is increasingly becoming a burden on the households, if one is able to spend high amount to

* Others are Upper castes -like reddy, velama, Kamma, Vaishya, Brahmin castes in the state.

get good education. The more you can spend the better your child's education, which keeps those who are not able to spend get low quality education and, losing opportunities created in job market. The economic inequality impinges on education and reproducing it further. Two, as a welfare measure the government has introduced the fee reimbursement scheme in the state from 2004 onwards. Since then, there has been a mushrooming of private technical educational colleges, which are owned mostly by upper class and *caste reddy, velama and kamma* ministers, MLAs, and MPs. Many of these colleges don't provide good quality education. As said in the previous chapter they have become the avenues for the upper classes and castes to diversify their income portfolio. In small towns and erstwhile district headquarters and around Hyderabad they are once main actors in converting the agricultural land into non-agricultural purposes. These institutions are not only reproducing the inequality, but importantly they have become a means to redistribute the state's resources to these upper classes and castes in the name of social welfare.

Figure 6.4- Increase in residential institutions from 2014 to 2020



On the other hand, these private educational institutions have become source of accumulation for the upper castes. Low quality education creates labour that is under trained and hence prone to more exploitation. This is beneficial to capital as well.

From the formation of the new state in 2014, there has been an increase in the social welfare schools and colleges in the state. Figure 6.4 shows the growth of the social welfare educational institutions in the state. In 2014, there were only 298 social welfare school and colleges, by 2020-21 they have increased 923. In both the field work villages there is a very positive view about these schools and colleges and many of them want to join their children

in these institutions. This reinforces the importance of quality government education. There are 6,50,000 enrolments in these institutions which accounts to around 11% of the total enrolments. (Figure-6.2).

In both the villages, 90% of the respondents are sending their children to the private English medium schools and colleges. As said in the previous chapters private school buses come to the village and pick up children in both the villages. There are families who spent to send their children to colleges in Hyderabad. They are spending 1lakh rupees per annum on education. One marginal farmer from Goud community, who has 2 acers of land has spent 50% (78,000 rupees) of his income on his sons engineering education. One small farmer from SC community has spent 30% of his income (around 25,000) on his two children school education, who are going to the private school in Jagityal. On an average people are spending 10-15% of their income on education.

Table 6.3 Fee Structure of Various Private School in Jagityal

Class	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 3 (With Hostel)	School 4	School 4 (With Hostel)
Nursery	8000	10000	9500	--	20000	--
LKG	9000	11000	10000	--	20000	---
UKG	9500	12500	10500	--	20000	--
I	10000	14000	13500	43500	23000	58000
II	10500	15000	14000	44000	25000	60000
III	11000	16000	15000	45000	27000	62000
IV	12000	17000	15500	45500	29000	64000
V	14000	18000	16000	46000	31000	66000
VI	17000	21000	20000	50000	33000	68000
VII	18500	22500	21500	51500	35000	70000
VIII	--	23500	22500	52500	37000	72000
IX	--	26000	24000	54000	39000	74000
X	--	35000	34000	64000	41000	76000

Source: Field Work Data.

Table 6.3 gives the details of the fee structure of various private school in the town. The minimum private school fee for nursery student is 8000 per annum and it goes as high as 20,000 rupees. For class X student it is 35,000 rupees and it goes as high as 64,000 rupees. Many of these school did not have proper facilities and did not provide a quality education. Parents are viewing education a route to better positions and they are willing to spend on their children education.

Section 6.2.1.2- Health

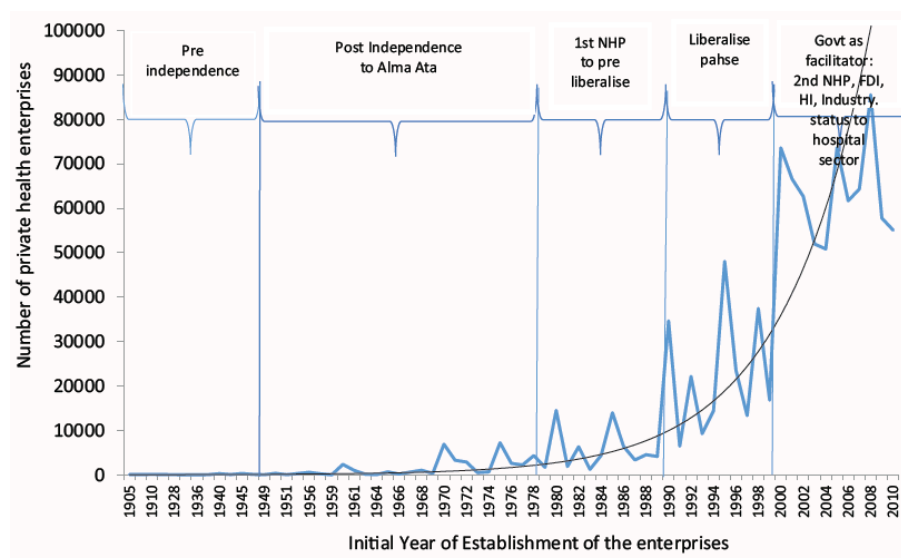
Health, which is defined as a condition of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not only the absence of disease or infirmity, is a basic human right, and the state should assume primary responsibility for achieving this objective (Hooda, 2020). The recommendations of the Bhore committee (1946) enunciated the notion that "no one should be refused access to health care because of his inability to pay," and that "the state should bear the primary responsibility for providing health care. Several committees after that also emphasised the point that state should take the primary responsibility in providing the health care. The ideas and dynamics of health care have changed drastically from 1990s onwards. The neoliberal policies pursued by successive governments have argued for privatisation of health. Since 1990s there has been an exponential growth of the private hospitals in the country.

Estimates from Economic Survey 2016 reveal that around four-fifths of the total number (983,018) of health enterprises are private. According to a Services Sector Enterprises Survey by the NSS (The National Sample Survey), the private sector consisted of 10.67 lakhs private providers, ranging from informal to large formal and corporate entities, as opposed to a low 1.96 lakhs public hospitals/centres. Figure 6.5 shows the year wise growth of the private healthcare providers.

Health is one main area that has been neglected both by the central and state governments. The encouragement of the privatisation of the health by the state governments has adverse impact on the 'rural'. There has been a steady decline of the government health facilities from 1990 onwards. According to Sri Krishna committee report, the government primary health care centres are underutilised and secondary and tertiary sectors are over-utilised in the state of Telangana. The NSSO data shows that the share of PHCs in outpatient (6%) and

in-patient care (4.8%) was very low in 2004. Since the PHCs serve the rural population only their presence or absence has serious socio-economic impact in the rural.

Figure 6.5 Growth of Private Healthcare Providers in India



Source: Taken from (Hooda, 2020), p-521.

According to NSSO 2018 (75th round) data, 55% of the population (52.0% in rural areas and 61.0% in urban areas) received care in private hospitals, excluding childbirth. On average, rural India spends approximately Rs. 16,676 and urban India approximately Rs. 26,446 per hospitalisation. Approximately Rs. 15,937 and Rs. 22,031 were paid in rural and urban India, respectively, as out-of-pocket hospitalisation costs. On a countrywide scale, on government/public hospitals approximately Rs. 4,072 in rural areas and Rs. 4,408 in urban areas were spent, whereas in private hospitals spent approximately Rs. 26,157 in rural areas and Rs. 32,047 in urban areas were spent. Rural households financed hospitalisation expenses mostly through their 'household income/savings' (80%) and 'borrowings' (13%). The reliance of urban households on their 'income/savings' to finance hospitalisation expenses was is way higher (84%) than their reliance on 'borrowings' (about 9%). According to the Health and Family Welfare Report 2019-20 most the of the births and abortions are taking in the private hospitals in the state. Around 79 to 80% of births and abortions are taking place in the private hospitals. 61% of the births during the last 5years were delivered by caesarean section and most of them in the private hospital.

The percentage of the state (united AP) budget allocated to the health sector decreased from 6.5% in the 5th Five Year Plan (1974-78) to 5.4% in the 9th plan (1997-2002) to 4.5% by 2005-06. In constant (1999-00) prices, per capita public spending on health care declined from Rs 141 in the 7th Plan (1985-1990) to Rs 124 in the 8th Plan (1992-97). Public expenditure on health care as a percentage of SDP (State Domestic Product) decreased from 1.29 percent in the seventh fiscal plan to 0.96 percent in the eighth fiscal plan and to 0.76 percent by 2005-06. From the formation new state also the health sector budget is not more than five percent. In the year 2014-15 it was 2.4% , in the year 2015-16 3.6%, in the year 2016-17 it was 3.9%. Even in the year of corona 21-22 it was only 4.37%. After the state formation it is slowly increasing but it is still very low.

There is an increasing trend toward corporatization in hospitals. In 1988, the first corporate hospital was founded in Hyderabad, and by 2004 the number had climbed to 16, accounting for 57% of beds (Sri Krishna Committee Report). The rise of the private sector, notably corporate hospitals, was supported by direct subsidies from the federal and state governments in the form of exemptions from customs taxes on medical equipment and land grants, among other things. The lack of government or other oversight over the fundamental requirements for personnel, amenities, and service pricing in private hospitals has increased the potential for profit and accelerated the growth of private healthcare. Corporate hospitals grossly misused the reimbursement benefits provided by various government programmes.

Table 6.4 Source of Finance per Hospitalisation in India and Telangana

	Household income/ savings	Borrowings	Sale of physical asset	Contribution from friends & relatives	Other sources
All India					
Rural	79.5	13.4	0.4	3.4	3.2
Urban	83.7	8.5	0.4	3.8	3.4
Telangana					
Rural	75.5	16.3	0.6	1.6	6.0
Urban	79.9	14.4	0.3	1.0	4.4

Source: National Health Profile 2021(Central Bureau of Health Intelligence, 2021).

Table 6.4 gives country wide and Telangana state's sources of finances for the hospitalisation. The table also gives those details by rural urban break up. 75% of the health expenditures have come from household savings in the rural Telangana, whereas the it 80% of in the urban areas. It is 80% and 84% respectively for rural and urban in the whole country. 16.3% of sources are borrowed in rural Telangana.

Table 6.5 Average out-of-pocket medical expenditure (Rs.) per hospitalization case (excluding childbirth) in India and Telangana in rural areas.

	India	Telangana
Govt./ public hospital	4,072	1,276
Private hospital	26,157	24,891
Charitable/ Trust/NGO run	20,658	5,704

Source: National Health Profile 2021.

Table 6.5 gives out of pocket expenditure per hospitalisation at country level and state level and for government, private hospital. The expenditure for private hospital per hospitalisation is almost 25,000 in Telangana. At the country level it 26,100.

When it comes to the field villages, only few of the respondents could give the details of their expenditure on health as majority of them only spent on non-hospitalisation. Only those who had major issues of health and required hospitalisation gave details of health care expenditure. There is one government primary health centre in Village A and there is no such facility at Village B. There is one private clinic in Village A. It has been found, from focused group discussions, that health expenditure has generally increased in both the villages. People go to private hospital for child births to Jagityal and Karimnagar. It can be said about other villages also, as there is a mushrooming of private hospitals, diagnostic centres in Jagityal in the last 10 to 15 years. There are two diagnostic centres that can provide services ranging from simple blood test to advanced tests like CT scan. Which are always crowded with people when I visited during the field work. They are charging 500 rupees for a simple blood test and goes as high 10,000 for a CT scan. There is one government area hospital in Jagityal.

There are three families in both the villages who have spent more than one lakh rupees on hospitalisations. All of them spent that in private hospitals in Jagityal and Karimnagar. One family spent on sons bike accident, other two families had joined in the hospital for different health issues which required surgeries. There is one family from Village A where they have spent four lakh rupees for their son-in-law's cancer treatment. They sold land to meet the expenses.

Section 6.2.2 Retention and Reproduction of Caste

We find in both the villages, although decoupled from caste-based employment to a considerable extent, the caste system remains the central structure that defines social relations and determines life opportunities. The structure continues to determine access to resources, institutions, political power, and social position. Caste is still, what Vasavi calls using Wimstatt, the 'generative entrenchment'. 'It is still the grid on which foundational inequalities are reproduced over generations'. This was evident in the ownership of land, where upper castes still own majority of the land as shown in the chapter 4 and the kinds of non-farm activities are accessed by different caste groups. Majority of SCs are involved in the precarious labour whereas the upper castes are involved in better paid private sector jobs.

Various studies (Harriss-White, 2002; Mosse, 2020) have recognised the effects of caste in the social and economic life of people. Barbara Harriss-White's (Harriss-White, 2002) studies on the informal economy both in the village and small towns show the centrality of caste in providing economic opportunities and activities. It is still defining the networks that enable occupational and spatial mobility. There is a wide absence of 'capital' in the Bourdieusian sense for most of the lower castes and tribes. Outside of the agriculture, the caste networks still shape the recruitments in the non-farm urban areas. That we have seen in the case of Gulf migration. As, shown in the previous chapter, those who had networks in the gulf had access to better opportunities and were able to do better than those who did not have.

Though the old feudal ties to a large extent have loosened and the upper castes no longer control the labour of the lower castes to the extent they used to do earlier. But we can still see the prevalence of certain social and cultural practices that reinforce the caste structures. This is very much evident in the housing settlements. We see still the village settlements organised based on caste identities. That's what we find in the two study villages, in Village A the village is expanding from its old settlements which are located on the eastern side of the village to newer settlements towards the west side of the village, from interior position

to near to the road. In this expansion, SC households have moved from old colony, which was located at the end of the village, to new colony, which is located at the starting of the village- at the entry of the village from west side, but still it is located separately from the rest of the households. There is been a relaxation for OBC castes to stay and build houses along with the OCs but this is not possible for SCs. In Village B the old structure of the village remains where each caste group is staying in a separate colony and SC households are segregated at the end of the village. There have been increasing caste associations and affiliation of local associations with higher level association. The hostility between different castes is most often expressed in the killings of couples (one or both) of inter-caste marriages. Though I did not observe this phenomenon in the village, but we see the increase of the killings recently in the state in various places. It has increased after the new state formation. The incident of Manthni Madhukar in Manthani in the old Karimnagar district and the Killing of Praveen in Nalgonda are publicised well in the media but they are not the only isolated incidents. The killings show the upholding of the *Jati* endogamy, the bedrock of caste's mode of production and patriarchy where attaching the family and caste honour to the women of the *jati*. The increasing awareness of Dalit consciousness among the Dalit youth in the village and its expression through the Ambedkar Youth association in the village has led to increasing social anxiety and a resentment among the upper castes in the village.

The new state's policies of promoting the old occupational structures by giving them subsidies to those engaged in the traditional occupation, have led to the consolidation of the caste groups. The government is distributing sheeps and goats to the *golla* and *kuruma* communities at subsidised rates. They are traditionally sheep herders in Telangana. The government is saying that it is doing to keep the community out of poverty they are distributing them. The government recently introduced the *Dalitabandu* scheme where it is going to give 10 lakhs rupees per household. Immediately after the scheme announced people from other caste groups demanded the same kind of scheme for their caste groups- like BC *bandu*, *girijanabandu* (Times of India)²³. It also has led to certain hostility among the other caste groups that they did not get it. It has also led to a situation of emergence of

²³<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/telangana-following-dalit-bandhu-bcs-demand-similar-scheme/articleshow/85651333.cms>

middlemen from each caste groups to avail the benefits of the populist schemes of the government.

Castes are also becoming dynamic interest groups in recent times, in the sense that they know their strength when united as particular caste and know how to negotiate with the government. Caste ideology also affects whether women work at all, what work they can do, how far from home they may move.

There has been an increase in the non-farm economy in the villages of field work as shown in the earlier chapters and this has been the trend across the nation that has been reported. Writing about this trend, David Mosse (2020) says that there is

an overall decline in poverty is, nonetheless, accompanied by an increase in inequality as the poorest depend upon uncertain casual work in railways, cloth mills, bakeries, bottling liquor, or brick kilns or migrating as construction workers (p.1247).

The effects of such change in interactions are complex and multifaceted. Complex intersections of caste, class, and gender have consequences for the diversifying village economy. When asked about what they prefer agricultural work, which is fairly regular in at least one village (Village A) or non-agricultural work, majority of them reported that they prefer non-agricultural work, especially the younger generation. They also reported that, the wages that they are getting from non-farm work are also not sufficient to meet the consumption needs, educational fees, health expenditures, and other social expenditures such as dowry etc.

There are different factors that account for the different impact on labour market and different market's effect on caste and caste on rural markets are as varied as they can get. Histories of land reforms and land control, which has become an important commodity in the neo-liberal context, proximity to an urban center, caste demography, and political mobilisation among the caste groups all have contingent effects on each empirical reality, which makes it difficult to generalise about the relations between market, caste, and village/rural. Mosse (2020) says that caste is important in structuring opportunity in the world beyond rural. It is intertwined with and concealed by the mobilisation of capital and labour. It is necessary to establish institutional networks (both private and government). Caste was ingrained in familial ties, friendships with students, and brokers who mediated work in the city and overseas. Marriage facilitates admission into higher education, urban

jobs, and business. The historical privileges of caste, such as inherited wealth (land) and productive networks, are reproduced.

The upper castes were in the forefront, *Reddys* in Village A and *Velamas* in Village B in making use of the opportunities opened in the Jagityal town, in terms of education, other non-farm economic opportunities. When education was becoming privatised and there was market for English medium private schools, and they saw it as an opportunity to open the private school. They invested the agricultural surplus in opening the school. One Reddy family from Village A opened five schools in Jagityal. They were the first in migrating to US and UK to work in the software sector. There are four Reddy families who have their children in those countries. However, in case of migration to Gulf to work in the precarious informal sector, it mostly OBCs and SCs migrate from both the villages. It was because Reddy families invested in their children's education by sending them to study engineering in the private colleges in Hyderabad. Raised qualifications for urban formal-sector employment, not just formal degrees, but in terms of skills, cultural capital and connections gave the upper castes an advantage but lack of those thing among the SCs became hurdles to those seeking exit from the village and agriculture and they are working in the low-skilled and low paid informal sectors both in the country and outside of it. Caste gets renewed importance in generating and accessing the opportunities.

Using Bourdieu, Mosse says that the economy is not a socially detached system of homo economicus. According to Bourdieu, the market economy is a socially created "system of embodied beliefs" that includes values, inclinations, tastes, skills and abilities, as well as group membership and network connections. It is, in India, not separate from caste. Mosse argues, citing Bourdieu and Basu, that the development of "rational economic agents" creates systematic discrimination against lower-caste economic agents who are "lacking the dispositions tacitly expected by the economic order," to which the upper-caste middle class is selectively adapted. In a rational market, it makes no difference whether discrimination behaviors are intentional, statistical, or even endogenous, as caste randomly becomes a "focal point" of productivity and coordination. (Mosse, 2020:p.1262)

Section 6.2.3 Politics of Rescue

There are insufficient policies and implementations that can substantially address the 'economic neglect' of rural areas on numerous levels, two of which were described in the preceding section. As a result, the political system has implemented plans and initiatives to handle the resulting crisis. In actuality, these programmes do not address structural disparities. Instead, the spectrum of programmes implemented solely as part of political commitments or to mitigate the crisis of hegemony and dissent has caused or exacerbated rural India's structural difficulties. This has been theorised as the 'reversal of primitive accumulation' by Kalyan Sanyal, which ensures the continued reproduction of the dispossessed as an aggregate category. This is put forward as an explanation of the persistence of self-employed producers following primitive accumulation.

In the context of Neoliberal capital states are forced to adopt the 'social welfare' measures in order to contain the dissent among the people and they have become the main attractive point to win elections in the country and states. Different governments in different states are coming up with schemes in the name of delivering the welfare to people. Election manifestos are filled with welfare schemes with attractive names to garner the votes. Political parties are competing in announcing these schemes. Across the world these measures have taken different forms. One underlying uniformity in all these measures is the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI). Political parties, policy makers of the left, right, and centre are offering it as a solution to the contradictions of contemporary capitalism, and they think that these can be smoothed over and the continuity of life, consumption and commodification guaranteed. The idea of UBI is to put money directly in the hands of people. Proposals for UBI

range from relatively limited financial support to effectively top up wages and replace or simplify certain benefits, to a full-blown liveable income capable of replacing the wage entirely (Lombardozzi & Pitts, 2020,p-574).

All the schemes in the Telangana government- *rytubandu*, in recent times *dalitabanadu*, are variations of the UBI.

The UBI or its variations are a result of a double crisis in the social. The first crisis is the crisis of 'social reproduction and work', the second crisis is the crisis is 'crisis of social democracy.' Zechner and Hansen (2015) define social reproduction as 'a broad term for the domain where lives are sustained and reproduced.' Social reproduction is how workers survive and are able earn a decent wage to reproduce themselves and their family. The

neoliberal capitalism has cut the links between wage and subsistence. People are not able to earn a sustainable income from a single source of income, which was the case with both villages as presented in the previous chapters. They must depend on multiple sources of income, and they have to migrate to different places to earn that income. It is increasingly the male member of the family that migrate, and women are at home. They have to take care of the household work as well as have to work to run the family to meet the needs which are extremely commercialised and privatised. In this context the reproduction of labour power, consequently, the reproduction of households as healthy, productive human beings --is inadequately guaranteed in the context of an economy that is unable to provide jobs for everyone with wages that are commensurate with their abilities and adequate to meet the needs.

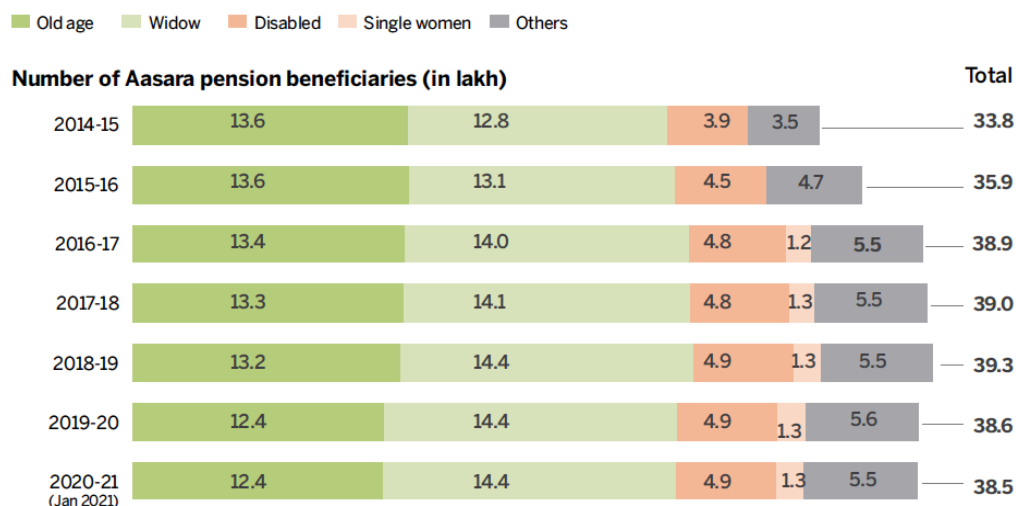
The second is the crisis of democracy. The struggle for autonomy in the name of separate statehood was achieved eight years ago after a sustained and unrelenting struggle amidst this many people have sacrificed their lives. The separate statehood agitation caught the attention of millions of people, agglomeration of people with slogans like our water, our funds, and our jobs. Government's commitment to realise the goal of '*Bangaru Telangana*' (golden Telangana) remains treacherous.

With the formation of Telangana, there were great expectations from the common people for their social, economic improvement and for opportunities to participate in determining their fates. Since the state formation the government has introduced various schemes to address the concerns and aspirations of the people.

There are more than a dozen actively implemented schemes that involve in-kind and cash transfers in Telangana. Some of them had been there for a very long time, like the Public Distribution System (PDS). Some of them were introduced during the time of the Congress rule like Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA or NREGA), old-age pensions, financial help for housing, student scholarships, state medical insurance (*Arogyashree*), midday meal, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), National Insurance and Family Benefit Scheme, 3 percent interest farm loans, and agricultural loan waivers. After the state formation the new state government initiated several developmental, welfare programmes to realise the goal of '*Bangaru Telangana*' and to improve the conditions of the people and to put the Telangana economy on a higher growth trajectory. They have become, over a period important for electoral mobilisations. The study found that

almost all the poor (even well-off) households in both the villages are covered under major schemes. The PDS and NREGA programs are implemented relatively better.

Figure 6.6-Asara Pension Beneficiaries from 2014-15.



Along with these two widely publicised and got the attention of the many, there are number of schemes that the government is providing. Under *Asara* scheme it provides 2000 per month for elderly aged above 60, to widows, and to the disabled and to beedi workers, and to toddy tappers. Government provides KCR kits to pregnant women. Figure 6.6 gives the number of people receiving *asara* pension from 2014 on wards. It has increased from 33.8 lakhs in 2014 to 38.5 lakhs of people by 2020-21. Government spends 8000 cores on *asara* pensions for year 2020-21.

RytuBandu:

To provide a food security as well as income security to the farmers the government of Telangana has started the “Agricultural Investment Support Scheme”. Popularly known as “*RytuBandu*” scheme. The government felt that the farmers income has been under stress in view of the ever-growing input costs, unpredictable prices, and rising family expenses, especially on health and education. In order to provide a sense of income security to the farmers and not letting them fall into the debt trap again the *rytu bandu* has been started to help the farmers in buying seeds, fertilisers and pesticides, and other agricultural inputs. As part of the scheme the government has started giving 8000 per acer per annum, in two instalments 4000 in Rabi and 4000 in *Kharif* per acer to cultivate the crops of farmer’s choice. Later it was increased to 5000 per acer and making it 10,000 per annum.

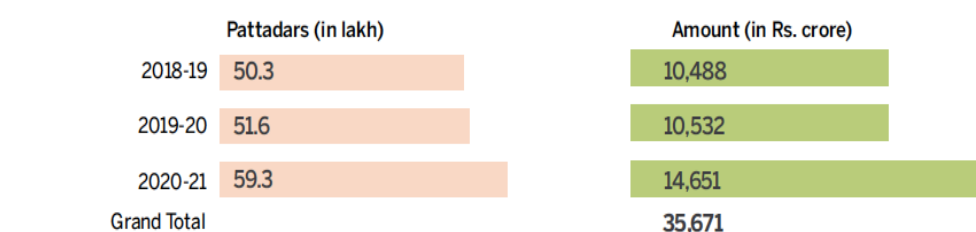
To implement the schemes smoothly before launching the programme they have updated the land records of all the famers in the state under the ‘Land Records Updating Program’. Despite this, many farmers had to bribe the local revenue officers to get their lands registered on their names.

There are no reasons why the 5000 per acre is decide as the input investment. According to which criteria the government is giving the 5000 per acer/season is randomly deicide by the chief minister. Other than that, there are no reasons given anywhere as to why 5000 is justified as the investment support. Irrespective small or marginal farmers, who are the most affected category, the government is giving to everyone. And it is excluding the most vulnerable section of the farming community- tenant farmer.

The Telangana *Rytu Bandu* scheme reached up to 79% (Padmini Ramesh, 2020) of farmers; however, in a study undertaken by Padmini Ramesh (2020), it was shown that 76% of farmers did not use the funds for agricultural activities, undercutting the scheme's goals. It is suggested that the majority of payments go to farmers with vast landholdings, whereas marginal and small farmers use the payments as a safety net in the absence of access to institutional agricultural supplies, rather than as a liquidity boost.

Figure 6.7

Rythu Bandhu Scheme disbursements



Source: Department of Agriculture

Under the scheme government has distributed 35,671 cores rupees for 59.3 lakhs of *pattadar* (Landholders) in the state. Padmini Ramesh(Ramesh, 2020) estimated the income contribution of the scheme for different classes of farmers based on NSSO data 2012-13. According to her calculations, the contributions of *rytu bandu* for large farmers is 176% of their income, whereas for small and marginal farmers it is mere 16%. Table 6.6 gives the details of the contribution of the scheme for various classes.

Table 6.6

Contribution of *RytuBandu* to the Income of Household for different Classes

Type(Household Level)	Monthly Income as of 2013 (In Rs)	Annual Income Adjusted for Inflation (In Rs)	Average land-holding size (In acres)	Estimated cash transfer (In Rs)*	Share of Cash Transfer in Annual Income (In %)
Marginal	4753	63,710	1.25	10000	16%
Small	6290	84,311	3.75	30000	36%
Semi-Medium	7600	1,01,870	7.5	60000	59%
Medium	13040	1,74,788	17.5	140000	80%
Large	8593	1,15,181	25	200000	174%

Padimini Ramesh 2020. * Based on cash transfer of 8000 per acre.

When asked whether the farmers, in both the villages, welcomed the scheme, the overwhelming majority of the farmers said that, they welcome the scheme but more than the income support for farming inputs, they want the prices of their produce to be increased and MSP guaranteed. A small farmer from the OBC community responded by saying that,

“We need the rytu bandu, it is helpful, but what we really want to is the increase in the prices for our output (memu pandinchina pantaku dharalu peragali). If there is an increase of 500 rupees per quintal for paddy, if there is a good crop, one acre will yield 25-30 quintal, which will bring us an additional income of 12000 to 15000 rupees per season per acer. But they don’t increase prices for our produce, with this scheme we will atleast get some amount (kaneesam evo konni paisaluvastunnayi, manchide. Guddi kanna mellamelukada)”.

The government has also decided that the scheme does not apply to the tenant farmers and shifting cultivators. Tenancy is still widely prevalent in Telangana and tenancy holdings account for 20.1 per cent of total operations land holdings. The average leased-in area per operational holding stands at 1.93 ha. Incidence of tenancy is high among ‘Other’ (34%) and STs (23.4%). However, in terms of area, tenancy is more among OBCs (16.3%) and SCs (14.6%). According to the Telangana Social Development report more than 90% of the tenancy in the state is unregistered tenancy. These tenants are not eligible for taking loan from the banks or any other institutional credit facilities. By not extending the programme

to tenant farmers, the government is not only ignoring the precarity of tenant farmers, but it is pushing the tenant farmers into the hands of landholders.

DalitaBandu

Dalita Bandu is the Telangana government's most recent flagship programme. It is envisioned as a welfare scheme with the objective of empowering Dalit households and facilitating their entrepreneurial endeavours through a direct benefit transfer of Rs 10 lakh per family. When fully implemented, this will be the country's largest cash transfer scheme.

This year's state budget included the first announcement of a Dalit empowerment programme along these lines. On June 25, the Chief Minister that a monetary support of Rs 10 lakh rupees to Dalit households to establish their enterprises. A Rs 1,200 crore first outlay has been approved (Indian Express, 2021; 3rd August).

Ramana Murthy (2017) estimates that state transfers to the peasantry and the landless constitute significant sources of income support in a context of growing vulnerability of their productive livelihoods for the many rural households.

Regional governments are primarily responsible for the delivery of education, health care, and rural development, and they frequently appeal to the electorate through populist social welfare programmes. Given the limited opportunities for autonomous resource mobilisation, regional administrations rely primarily on real estate transaction for to gain revenue. Additionally, regional political parties rely largely on rents from land speculation to fund their rising election expenses (Devesh Kapur and Milan Vaishnav, 2011). To gain the revenue the government is aiding and sometimes forced dispossession in the name of the developmental projects, in the case of Telangana *Kaleswaram* and market-based dispossession. This has implications beyond the rural and has implications to the land question in the neoliberal project.

Majority of the social welfare measures are directly transferred to the beneficiary's bank account creating through 'neo-liberal governmentality' of bio-politics. Most of the welfare measures are not only providing social security among the poor, but also developed a sort of rent-seeking behaviour, among resulting in commissions, kickbacks, and misallocation, resulting in the benefits hardly reaching the most deserving. The interactions in the field reveal that, to avail the benefits one needs to be close to a political party and those who are in support of the ruling party tend to get most of the benefits. To avail these benefits, one

needs to pay ‘commissions’ to the middlemen. These middlemen -the ‘*pyraveekars*’ to use Haragopal and Ram Reddy’s term- used to come from high caste and class background, but in recent times they are coming from every caste background and sometimes there are two three of them from every caste affiliated to different political parties. They tend to have modest educational background. Anirudh Krishna has termed them as the ‘political entrepreneurs’. As said in the previous chapter, the importance of landlord’s and caste leader’s influence over the village has declined. He says that “ the new political entrepreneurs have gained considerable influence within the past twenty years. More villagers by far consult the *naye neta* (New Leaders) or *naye karyakarta* (new social workers/ New Party worker), for diverse tasks involving party politics, market brokerage, and interaction with government officials than any other type of leader” (Krishna, 2003,p-1175). This phenomena has been reported by other scholars (Haragopal and James Manor), the difference now it that once the pyraveekaar’s were generally from the upper castes, now they come from every caste group.

A vast expansion of rural education has helped produce a supply of younger villagers, especially men, who can liaise effectively with government officials and party organisers. They take care of the application process from applying till they receive the benefits of the schemes. If the applicant receives the benefits, they have to give some commission to these middlemen. They have the working knowledge of the process and contacts with the government officials and local MLA. Their attire is white and white *kaddhar*. They have multiple sources of income, they don’t rely on this alone but have other alternate income sources, ranging from agriculture and non-agriculture. Their children go to private school in the towns. The important mediations that these *naya netas* actively mediate are- dealing with the police and state with regards to land related concerns of the people. With the rise of populist policies and rising state expenditure, both people and government officers are searching for these middlemen. Krishna gives three factors as important to account for the rise of this new village leadership- spread of education in rural areas, a vast expansion in government program expenditures, (the researcher was told that Village A gets around 10 to 15lakhs rupees every month, and Village B gets 4 to 5 lakhs every month from the government, and intensified political competition.

A number of acedemics have raised concerns about direct economic transfers. Gosh (2011) believes that they facilitate the acquisition of private sector services as an alternative to increasing public spending on vital commodities and services. Pattenden (2017) contends

that cash transfers leave working conditions issues unaddressed, at least in direct terms. He argues further that cash transfers circumvent a political process and provide a more technological answer, which may enhance the earnings of the working class more rapidly while having fewer repercussions on its relationships with other segments of society. Its logic is more “residual” than “relations.” (59).

Section- III

Vasavi says that these triangulated structures and processes are leading to the emergence of a complex and contradictory rural setting. The impact of these is different at macro/regional level, at the village/hamlet level and at the level of social reproduction and reproduction of the household. People have to navigate through these institutional settings, and they have diverse ways and strategies to mediate their immediate lives and larger worlds (Vasavi, 2019).

She says that the triangulations mentioned in the last section are leading to three process- of separation and integration, differentiation, and erosion. This section will only address two of the three process- those of differentiation and separation and integration. Field work and the data collected did not lend to address the third process- erosion.

Section 6.3.1 Differentiation

A significant impact of these triangulated structures on the rural is the growing differentiation that is evident at multiple levels. Vasavi divides these differentiations into three types. One, the location of the village, remote *Adivasi* villages, and mainstream villages that are well integrated into the capitalist economy.

The field work suggests that differentiation can be extended even to mainstream villages. The villages that are located on the ‘road’ and that are located remotely. The village that is located on the main road is economically more dynamic in terms of availing more non-farm economic opportunities. The other village, which is located remotely is not so dynamic in terms of non-farm economic activity. As showed, the village that is close to the road provides

opportunities for self-employment activities whereas the village that is remotely located the major non-farm opportunities are those of casual labour in the informal sector.

Localities are the most significant research units since the majority of people live, work, and create their immediate social relationships inside a limited geographical area (ibid.). However, because of the emphasis on capitalist production relations and the market, these local regions are tied to larger patterns of transformation. The term 'locale' refers to the physical location of institutions that contains particular social practises. A locale is an area where a unique combination of institutions gives rise to a recognisable local economy and culture. Agricultural criteria can no longer be the primary determinant in defining the borders of rural space. Significant mechanisms believed to characterize rural communities are no longer exclusively agricultural in nature. Rural settlements are characterised by substantially diverse spatial practices. These practices may be associated with either production or consumption. So, the geographical location of the village in relation to the road, in relation to the town become very important for the various economic and social practices.

Although there is no data to argue for, but field work observations point towards various factors- the size of the village (population), the administrative designation of the village, location of the village in relation to the town, all have important implication for the non-farm sector and the opportunities it provides for the rural population. The kinds of non-farm opportunities that a village with more population provide is significantly different from that of village that is relatively smaller.

The administrative designations of the village, such as *mandal* headquarter have different economic dynamism to them. There is the presence of the government offices such as the MRO office, MDO, a Police station, MEO office, horticulture, there are document writes at the government offices, and various others are present here. These offices deal with the important aspects of rural land, and they are the nodal agencies in distributing the social welfare schemes. There are 18 *mandals* in the Jagityal district and there 593 mandals in the state. They are above the village and below the small town. So, people belonging to different villages have to come to *mandal* office for any work-related to land and other social welfare issues. They provide non-farm economic opportunities, like photocopy centres, small eateries, online centres, mobile shops, recharge shops, bike repair shops, cloth stores, retail shops, and various other opportunities for people. Recently some of these *mandals* also are

becoming the real estate hubs. Conceptually, this category may not provide much of the room, since the local government structure is different in each state and economic dynamism is contingent on the population size, but as descriptive category it provides a lot of room to understand the differentiation of the 'rural' in Telangana. Overall, these not only act as the nodal agencies of government but also they are located at the end of the capitalist circuit of commodity turning into money.

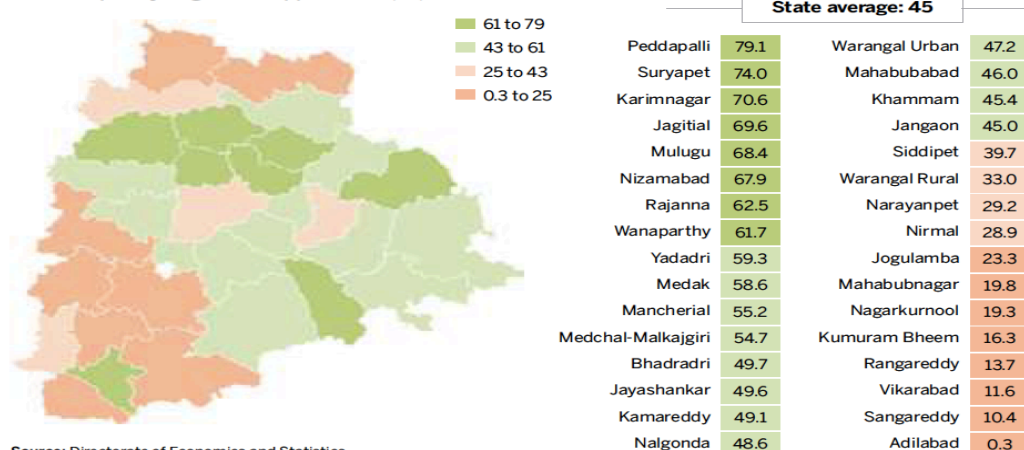
Conditions such as extreme of pockets of subsistence agriculture and increasingly commercialised agricultural belts - whose agricultural operations are characterised by high technology, capitalised, and commercialised agriculture - best highlight the huge differences at the agricultural level. The following figure shows the extent of the cultivation of the paddy. Northern part of the state is where there is high incidence of the cultivation of the paddy. It can also be extended to other crops as well. There are historical reasons for the kind of differentiation of the state. The northern Telangana (erstwhile Karimnagar, Warangal, Nizamabad) got canal irrigation facilities in the 1980s, there was the migration of *Kammas* to this part of the state which also helped in the diffusion of the green revolution kind of agricultural practices. The rest of Telangana was less commercialised, where there was domination of rain fed crops, which after the 2000s slowly shifted commercial crops, but still not the extent of the north Telangana.

Even in both field work villages, we can see this kind of differentiation. Village A represents the commercialised agriculture- intensive mechanisation, highly capitalised and more commercialised. On the other hand, in Village B the nature of agriculture is more of subsistence in nature. This is not to argue that, this village is outside of the capitalist fold, but rather the level of intensity of integration into its fold.

Figure 6.8

Share of paddy in gross cropped area for each district in 2019-20

Share of paddy in gross cropped area (%)



Class differentiation:

Class differentiation is an important analytic concept in agrarian studies. TJ Byres argues that “differentiation of the peasants is crucial to (agrarian) transformation: it is not a result but a determining variable (in the transition from feudalism to capitalism), a *causa causans* as opposed to a *causa causata*” (Byres, 2006, 2009). He contends that differentiation of the peasants contributes to and interacts with the landlord class and class struggle, which are crucial to the ultimate outcome... Differentiation is not merely a consequence (Terence J. Byres, 2009)

Sociologically significant differentiation is between households, classes, and castes, indicating variations in economic and social mobility. There are three blocks of theories that explain the agrarian change and rural development, all have argued that there will be ‘differentiation’ among the rural peasantries. Each one has specific epistemic background and an economic programme of its own. They see the trajectory of agrarian change in a very different way from each other.

First Block is the *modernisation theory*: This set of scholars argues that the differentiation happens thorough the logic of market, and it is driven by market. Agricultural development is driven by the market and technological development. The cultivators are supposed to follow the market logic and apply the latest technological developments in the farms. When this does not happen, the institutional barriers play the role of the blockers of the change. Once all institutional barriers are crossed and agrarian growth is triggered it follows through

the process of differentiation. The cultivators are expected to be in a fierce competition among themselves in applying the modern technologies and reap the relative benefits from it. So those farmers who are unwilling to use these modern methods of cultivation will eventually be left behind and are forced to leave the agriculture since they no longer are able to compete with the modern entrepreneurial farmers. They are expelled from the village and thrown on the urban labor market. Small, medium, and big farms are distinguished in this classification method. This classification is also the basis for defining commercially viable and economically unviable farmers.

Class Differentiation is the second block. It is widely referred in the Marxist political economy tradition, especially in its Leninist versions. While in the modernisation theory the differentiation is 'central' to its framework, in the Marxist framework it is derivative of the capitalistic exploitative relations. It results from the different process of capitalist development. The processes of commoditisation, commercialisation, and capital accumulation in the countryside will lead to the process of 'differentiation' among the rural peasants. According to this, the contradictions will lead to a polarisation largely into two agrarian classes, one of capitalists, who control large and growing slices of land, and proletarianised workers, who have lost the land they previously used to farm. The concentration of the land leads to the accumulation and centralisation which will eventually lead to the development of the productive forces. The relation between farmers is not a competitive relation but of an exploitative one. According to this, the class differentiation is a historically inevitable and unavoidable process. The concrete manifestation of it, in terms of length, rhythm, and direction, may vary based on the spatial and temporal dimensions. A very detailed discussion of the different process of 'class differentiation' in different countries can be seen in Byres (1982, 2009). It is important to add that as for any Marxist analysis, the process of differentiation also has political significance. It is thought as the catalyst to the transition from capitalism to socialism, so the question of differentiation is always tied with the class potential for turning into a 'class for itself' from 'class in itself'.

The third category discussed, is frequently referred to as "demographic differentiation." This block views differentiation as cyclical rather than linear or irreversible. It is a process that has resulted from internal factors of farm rather than external forces. Here, differentiation is cyclical (in a gradual progression from small to large and then back to small) and driven by the logics of demographic relations that operate inside the family. Hence, this is

demographic differentiation. This perspective views development as a multidirectional process shaped and negotiated by both internal and external forces, i.e., both micro and macro interactions. Historically, this approach is strongly associated with, if not rooted in, Chayanov's ground breaking work. (van der Ploeg, 2018).

The question of 'class differentiation' and 'rural class structure' was a very important question for the scholars engaged on 'the mode of production debate' as said earlier in chapter 2. For the people involved in the mode of production debate 'rural class structure' was

“to try to find an explanation of why peasant organisation have developed in certain regions of India, but not elsewhere, "why people in one area are involved in continual revolt, while those in another area are relatively quiescent". (Mencher, 1974).

Important people who were involved in the question of rural class structure were, Joan P Mencher, Nirmal Chandra, Utsa Panaiik, Ashok Rudra, Pranad Bardan, Pradhan Prasad, and Johan Harriss. Mencher divides the rural population into six classes. They are landless, poor peasants, middle peasants, rich peasants, capitalist farmers and traditional landlords, and finally indeterminate landlord class (Mencher, 1974). Nirmal Chandra from his Bengal studios gives us six classes again. He divides people into landlords, *jotedars* (Rentier class), rich peasants, middle peasants, poor peasants, and agricultural labour (Chandra 1975). Patnaik based on the “concentration of the means of production” she divided class. She says there is high concentration of land, she reasons,

“implies a correspondingly high degree of economic differentiation within the cultivating population”. Thus, there is a no single 'representative' type of holding, but rather a series of qualitatively distinct types, "which differ in the way their production activity is organised" (Patnaik 1976).

Her division of classes is as follows. She divides classes, with in classes with nature of production and reinvestment. So, landlord class can be feudal and capitalist based on the his hiring pattern and accumulation pattern, so is true for other classes-rich peasant- into proto-bourgeois and proto-feudal. Poor peasant- into agricultural labour and petty tenant and finally full-time labour.

Ashok Rudra makes a similar point. Classes, he says, are 'defined by class contradictions. He further says that class relations between different classes are relation of productions. But

not all relations of productions define class. They define various 'social groups'. He makes a subtle point which allows him to present a rural class structure but not having to adjust the whole rural population into his schema of things. Rudra continues by arguing that "there are just two classes in Indian agriculture ". "large landowners and agricultural laborers." The latter group consists of landless labourers, landed labourers, and poor renters who do not hire any labourers. (Thorner, 1982: 1994). One of the important point Rudra makes in reference to the class of big landowners, in Rudra's view, it is "a single class" and also "a hybrid class: part feudal, part capitalist". He refers to it as the "ruling class in Indian agriculture". It is an interesting characterisation of the big landlord class as 'hybrid class'. I think it will offer us a hint towards an understanding of the present 'complexity of class differentiation' to which I will come a little later. Pranab Bradan joins the debate, and he adds three categories of his own. According to him the three categories are- top peasantry, middle and poor-middle peasantry, and agricultural labourers. He also tries to fit the caste categories into his three classes of peasants. The rich peasantry consists of upper castes, the middle peasantry consists of middle Hindu backward castes and some scheduled tribes, and finally the agricultural labourers consists mostly of scheduled castes and tribes and some backward castes. John Harriss joins in and he presents his class analysis from dry regions of Tamilnadu. He defines his classes according to two criteria - size of production resources (including land) in relation to household livelihood requirements, and labour relations. This gives four categories as follows: capitalist farmer, rich peasant, independent middle peasant, and poor peasants.

What has become important in the present-day context of rural India is that such a flexible demarcation of rural population into three-fold partition (or any fourfold partition) and fit them neatly is no longer possible. Instead, the common phenomenon in the present day 'rural' is the presence of wide spectrum of households. In its place, today's "rural" is distinguished by the existence of a variety of houses. Those including landless labourers and farmers who cultivate their own land and sell their labour. Small farmers and big landowners with feudal roots. Large landowners who cultivate with hired labour; small landowners who combine agricultural and business activities (shops, hotels, service work). Government staff, employees in the private sector, and a considerable number of youth are now employed in urban areas. in the town or self employed by driving an auto from village to nearby town, driving a car which has been bought by taking a loan from a bank. There is also the presence of international migration to gulf as said in the earlier chapter, which contributes to the

household income. There is the presence of beedi work and some households are involved in traditional occupations. What is significant about these, households are not able to reproduce from the income from single source of income, they are forced to depend on the multiple sources of income. On the other, hand those who are at the higher end of the spectrum, they are involved in multiple sources for accumulation, ranging from accumulation from agriculture to rent seeking either in the village or in the town, or involving in the entrepreneurial activity or real estate. The result is the presence of 'hybrid' classes who combine both farm as well non-farm income either for survival or to accumulate, depending on their social location. As said in the previous chapter, at the household level as well individual level there are more number of people who have a foot in different sectors of work-both farm as well as non-farm.

This hybridization of households demonstrates "the expanding presence of both the state and capital in the lives of rural populations and their incorporation into broader labour and capital markets. Vasavi divides them into three sections: "a small class of rural elite; a growing and highly differentiated body of new 'rural middle classes'; and a marginalised majority composed primarily of low-status caste and tribal groups."

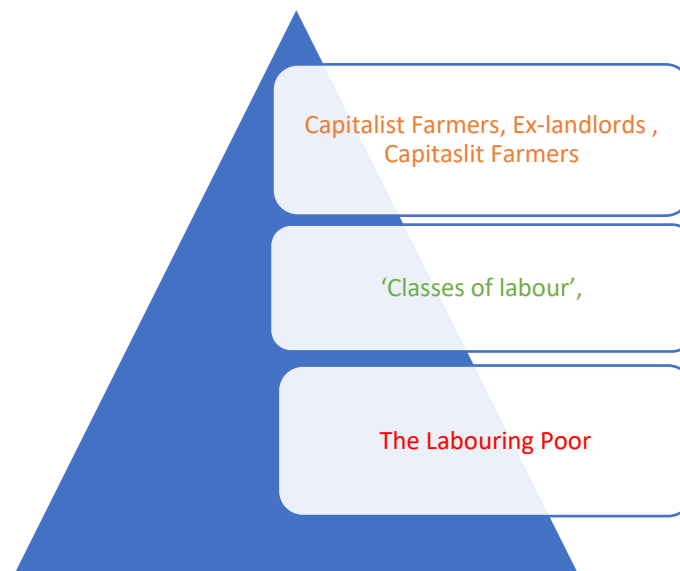
Lerche, based on Bernstein's formulations, posits a threefold class structure. First is the land lord class. Depending on whether or not capital accumulation happens, The class of large capitalist farmers and landlords stands at the top of the pyramid; while they amass wealth through the exploitation of labour, they do not directly engage in agriculture; at most, they manage their farms. Both groups control village politics and economics; they both strive for access to state power and the corruption money that flows from it; and they both frequently engage in economic activities outside than agriculture, such as lending money and trading agricultural goods. (Lerche, 2013, p-394).

The second group are the "classes of labour," which encompass both traditional wage workers and those who derive some of their income from the selling of their labour force. He includes everyone who "must pursue their reproduction through insecure and oppressive - and typically increasingly scarce - wage employment and/or a range of similarly precarious small-scale and insecure, "informal sector" ("survival") activity, including farming; in effect, various and complex combinations of employment and self-employment." Bernstein (2008). As a result, there are various classes of labour, including those who have some means of

production but still share with wage labourers the general situation of exploitation and oppression. In fact, these individuals may alternate between being wage workers and small-scale petty commodity producers over the course of a season or their entire lives. (ibid)

Clearly, the bulk of cultivators were not benefited by the continuous capitalist development in agriculture. These "laboring classes" endured continuous marginalization inside agriculture and were compelled to seek jobs as agricultural labor and outside of agriculture, where the caste/ethnicity hierarchy also regulates the types of work available and remuneration.

Figure 6.9 Lerche's Classification of Labour.



It is difficult to classify households into neatly classified categories of classes. So, they can better be understood as three classifications- One, those of agricultural households- either forming or those of agricultural labourers. They depend on only agriculture for their survival or accumulation. There are 33% of the households in Village A and 42% of the households in Village B who depend on only agriculture. Second category is that of the Non-agricultural households. These are 20% depend only on non-farm income in Village A and 21% of them in Village B. The dominant number of households in Village A are those who involve in both agriculture and non-agriculture. These are hybrid households. There are 46% of them in Village A in this category and 37% in Village B.

This classification does not capture the reality. Within agricultural households there are extreme inequalities. There are agricultural families who are able to accumulate. One Reddy family in the village A has 5 acres of land and they cultivate paddy in it. The family owns two harvesting machines and they earn rent from it. Such families are mostly upper caste land owning families. There are people who only depend on agricultural labour and combination of tenant farming or cultivating their marginal holdings. Majority of them are from the OBCs and SC communities.

Even within the non-agricultural categories also there are stark differences. There are families who have secure government employment, there are people who work in the precarious construction work. There are people who are running a successful enterprise and there just making a living out of the small enterprise that they own. As showed in the last chapter it can vary depending on the nature of the village. There are households who have diversified their income base and there are individuals who are involving in the multiple occupations. These realities make it difficult to any simple classification of these households into simple classes.

The reality is more complex, when we consider at individual level. Not only households, but even individuals are involving in multiple sources of income. It also can vary from earning merely wage that is just sufficient for the subsistence to accumulating. It can vary from a job in a government sector to circular migration to the town to work in the construction sector to precarious international migration to gulf. So, the concept of 'hybridity' might be useful as an explanatory category. At the same time, it is not argue that the 'class' categorisation- of small, marginal, semi-medium, medium, large- is no longer useful. It is just to point out that the present day complexity of rural work structure is not simply amenable to any simplistic classification of people into different classes. Rather it will be useful to use descriptive categories to present the complexity till we come up with conceptual and analytical categories that can adequately bring forth the complexities of the present.

Table 6.7 Households Classified into 3 classes of Agriculture, Non-Agriculture and Mixed

Occupation	Village A		Village B	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Agriculture	55	33	27	42
Non-Agriculture	34	21	14	21
Agriculture and Non-Agriculture	76	46	24	37
Total	165	100	65	100

Source: Field work.

Section 6.3.2 Separation-Integration

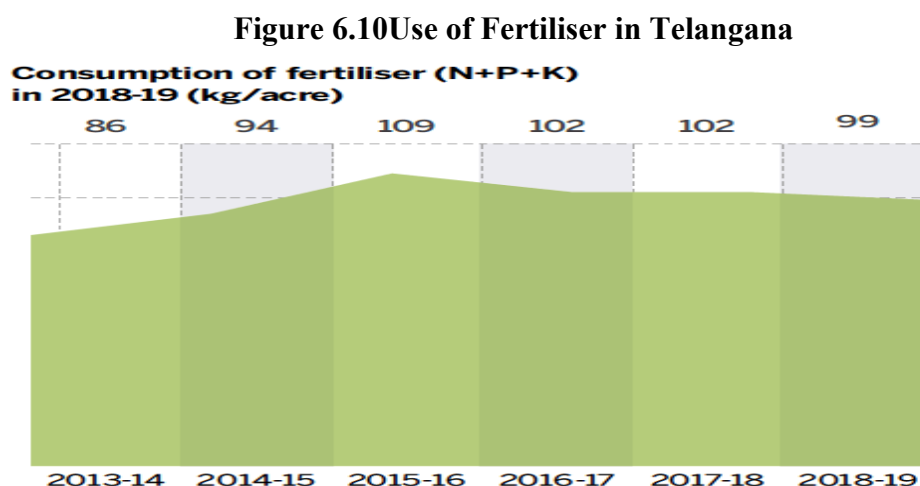
Vasavi posits four kinds of separation: One separation of agriculture from ecology, separation of individual cultivators from collective patterns of farming, separation of production from provisioning, and finally a separation of production from social reproduction. This posting of separation reminds us of the Marx's positing of the 'alienation' in the capitalist society. From and within the rural contexts these separations are leading to integration into capital and market networks, the state regime, and into the urban/industrial or non-farm economy and these are shaping the rural.

Separation of agriculture from ecology:

The green revolution model of agriculture which has been in currency from 1960s has served as the blueprint model for Indian state in developing the agriculture. Improving yields and productivity per acre through the use of biochemical fertilisers, pesticides, high-yielding crops, and irrigation, supported by credit, were the core ideas of the green revolution (Patel 2013). This is a crucial aspect of agricultural modernization, as greater production contributes to economic growth. It has led in the promotion of dominant (external input and capital-based) kinds of agriculture that are antithetical to India's established agroecological patterns.

Telangana's agrarian sector has shifted from traditional agriculture, which was subsistence agriculture, to new commercial agriculture. During the green revolution, there was a significant transition from food crops to non-food crops, particularly cotton, in the region. The inconsistency of these commercial crops has precipitated an agrarian crisis in the region, prompting farmers to commit suicide. During the 1990s, the introduction of new economic policies pushed farmers to engage in intensive commercial agriculture, which exacerbated the situation. Another wave of farmer suicides has stemmed from the state's growing retreat from the agricultural sector.

In the case of Telangana green revolution has affected the agricultural production from 1980s. This reflects in the uses of high yielding variety (HYV) seeds, fertilisers, irrigation. Mostly these green practices were diffused from the coastal Andhra region to Telangana. First, there was a rapid increase in the use of HYV seeds, synthetic fertilisers and pesticide usage from late 1980s onwards. (Vamsi 2004). There was a practice of collecting seeds from the previous crop for next crop cultivation. This practice has been replaced by buying of the seeds from the market. The use of fertilisers and pesticides which was virtually absent previously in the villages of Telangana has increased by 10 to 15% by 1985(ibid). Figure 6.10 gives the usage of the fertilisers in the state from 2013-2014 to 2017-18. The usage of fertiliser is one of the highest in the country for the year 2018-19. The farmers in the state use 99.3 kg of fertiliser per acre in the state.



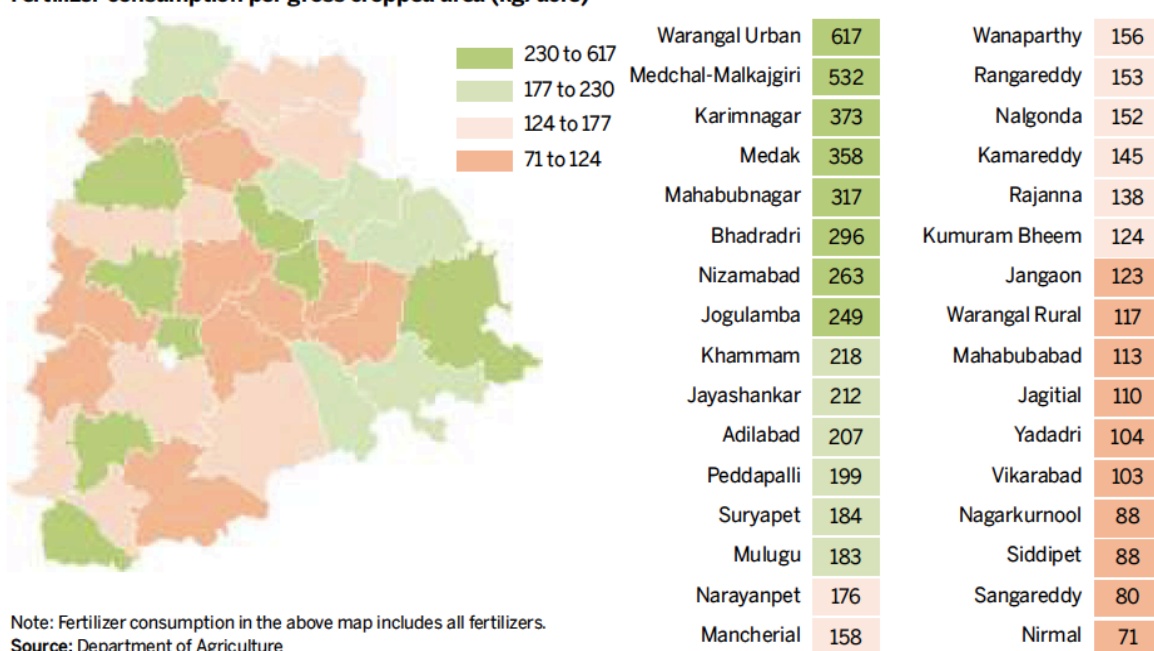
Source: Telangana Socio-Economic Outlook 2020.

If we look at usage of fertilisers by district wise usage, it ranges from 617 kg/acer to 71 kg/acer. With 617 kgs. Warangal dominates the state and with lowest 71 kgs. Nirmal stands at the bottom. Figure 6.11 gives the details of the usage of fertilisers district wise. In Jagityal district it is 110 kg per acers of fertilisers are sued.

The production of commercial crops like as rice, cotton, and groundnuts has been encouraged (with a variety of external inputs), resulting in the separation of ecological and agriculture.If we take the changes in the irrigation, we can see a considerable growth in terms of increase in the usage of tube wells in the state. This disconnection of agriculture from environment and its impact (both economically and ecologically) has been exacerbated over the past several decades by the reliance on tube-well irrigation as a primary supply of water.

Figure 6.11 District wise Fertiliser consumption in the state

Figure 4.6c: District-wise fertilizer consumption in the state
Fertilizer consumption per gross cropped area (kg/acre)



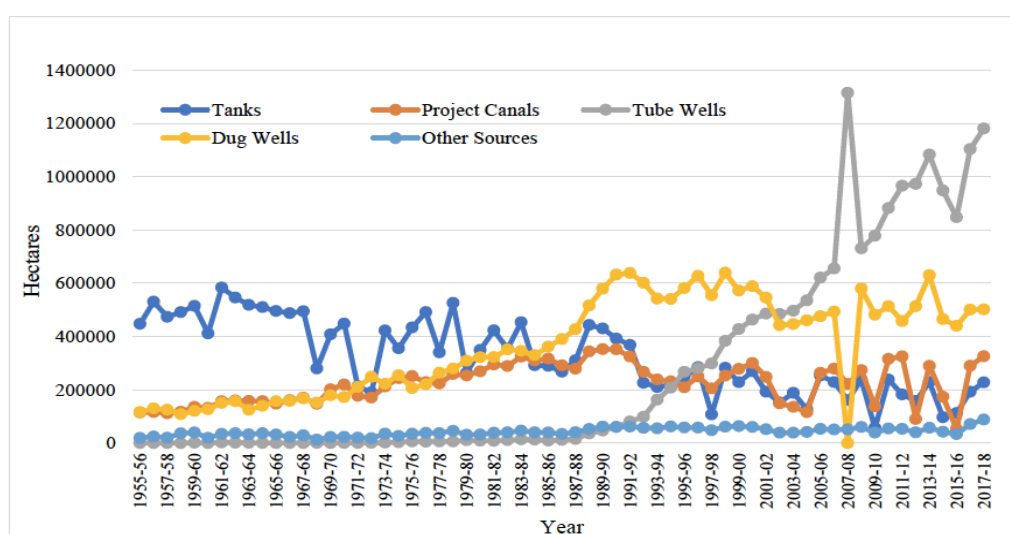
Source: Telangana Socio-Economic Outlook 2021.

Figure 6.12 shows the exponential increase of the tube well irrigation in the state from 1955 to 2018. We can particularly see the increase in tube well irrigation from 1990 onwards. The adverse impacts of borewells led the number of suicides in the state during 1990s, as indicated in chapter 3 and in chapter 4.

If we look at the changes in the cropping pattern, there is a shift from dry land crops, which required low investment and which withstood the harsh agroecological conditions were replaced by commercial crops like cotton and paddy.

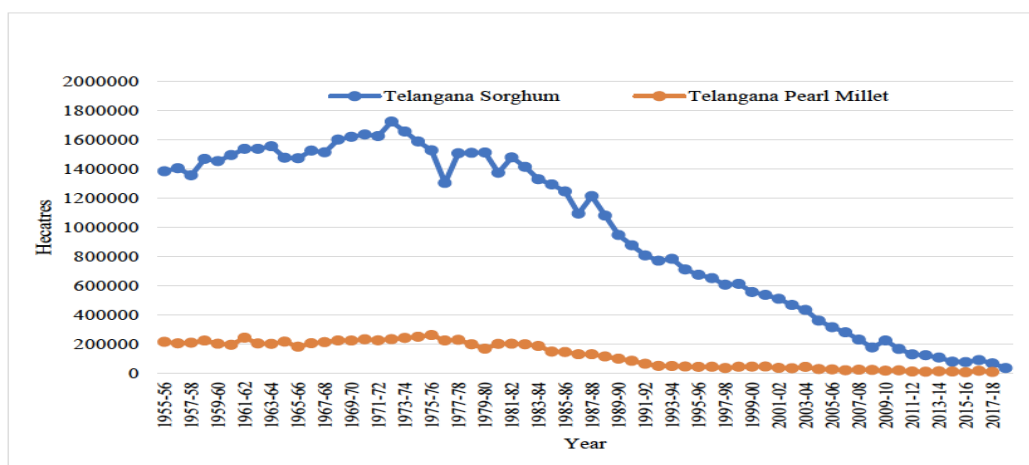
Figure 6.13 shows the drastic decline of sorghum (jowar) from 1955-56 to 2018. In 1955 the crop was cultivated in around 14,00,000 hectares, it declined to 1,20,000 hectares. The decline acquires more significance, because it was not just any other crop, it was also part of the staple diet of the of the state. It provided fodder to the cattle. It was *rabi* crop which required very less water and it was cultivated completely based on monsoon rains.

Figure 6.12 -Telangana Irrigation by Source 1955-2018



Source: DES Andhra Pradesh (2006); DES Telangana (2016); DES India (2019a, b)

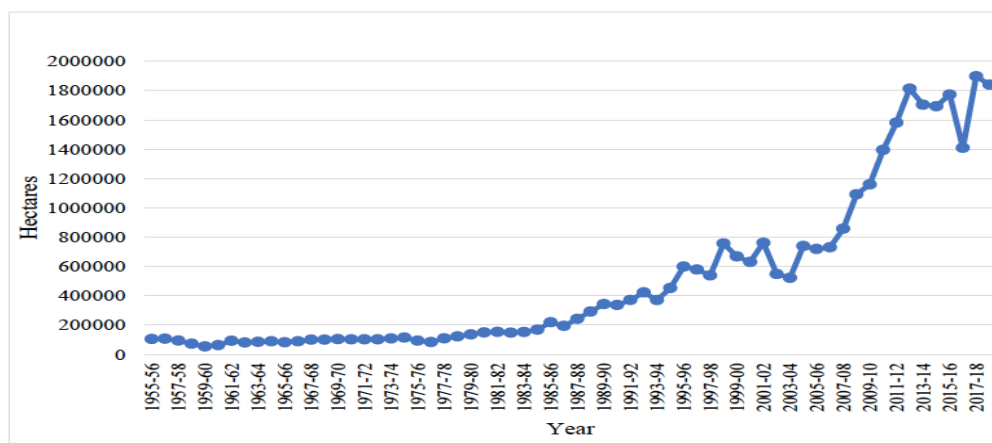
Figure 6.13– Telangana Sorghum and Pearl Millet Net Area 1955-2018



Source: Kundu (2021), p-116.

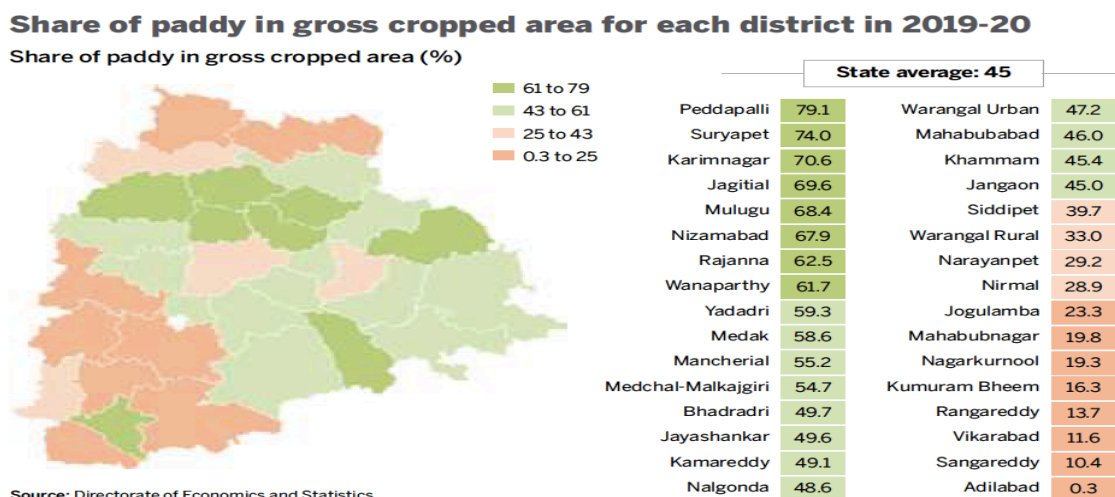
On the other hand, the cotton cultivation in the state has increased many folds as shown in figure 6.14 the cultivation of BT cotton was one of the main reasons along with the tubewell irrigation for the number of farmer suicides in the state.

Figure 6.14 Telangana Cotton Area 1955-2018



Another important commercial crop in the state is paddy. The state government is highly encouraging the cultivation of paddy. For the year 2019-20 45% of the area cultivated is paddy in the state. The crop requires high amounts of investment and usage of water for the cultivation. After the state formation, there has been an increase in the irrigation and government also providing free 24 hour electricity to the farmers, the assured minimum support price has encouraged farmers in the state to cultivate paddy. Figure 6.15 shows the extent of cultivation of paddy for each district when compared to other crops. In some districts the extent of cultivation is more than 70%.

Figure 6.15 Gross Cropped Area of Paddy



Separation of individual cultivators from collective patterns of farming:

According to Vasavi, Linked to the promotion of commercial intensive farming is the separation of individual agriculturalists from local shared/similar agricultural practises, locking them into the broader circuits of capital, input dependence, and hazards of market instability (Vasavi, 2019,p-41).

Numerous farmer suicides, mostly by small and marginal farmers, are caused by their unfavourable integration into commercial agriculture. Technology and input-based agriculture, which traps farmers in a web of hazards (of capital, technology, know-how, market, and climate) and deprives them of the social and psychological support that previously came with using similar or shared farming techniques. Farmer suicide is a tragedy that highlights both the shortcomings of the prevalent agricultural paradigm and the divisions and conflicts brought on by the economic segregation and individualisation of farmers in an agrarian society.

As capitalism penetrated agrarian society (by extension rural society), more and commodities are produced, circulated, and consumed from different places, the natural cycle of localised nutrient use and re-use is broken. According to Vasavi, this leads to “the loss of local knowledge systems, not just in agriculture but also in the fields of medicine, architecture, and ecological protection, which culminates in deskilling and the loss of autonomy of these groups.” (Vasavi, 2019, p. 46).

The social institutions such as collective practices of agriculture are dissolved and it has increasingly been privatised, individualised, and commercialised. There is the divorce of agriculture from local ecology through the promotion of water intensive crops in the dry regions, ecologically unsuitable crops. This has resulted in the proliferation of tubewells which led to privatisation of risk and natural resources. Agriculture that was practiced collectively, cared for has transformed into a specialised, high tech and its know-how have initiated an enhanced separation of natural resource from society. (ibid).

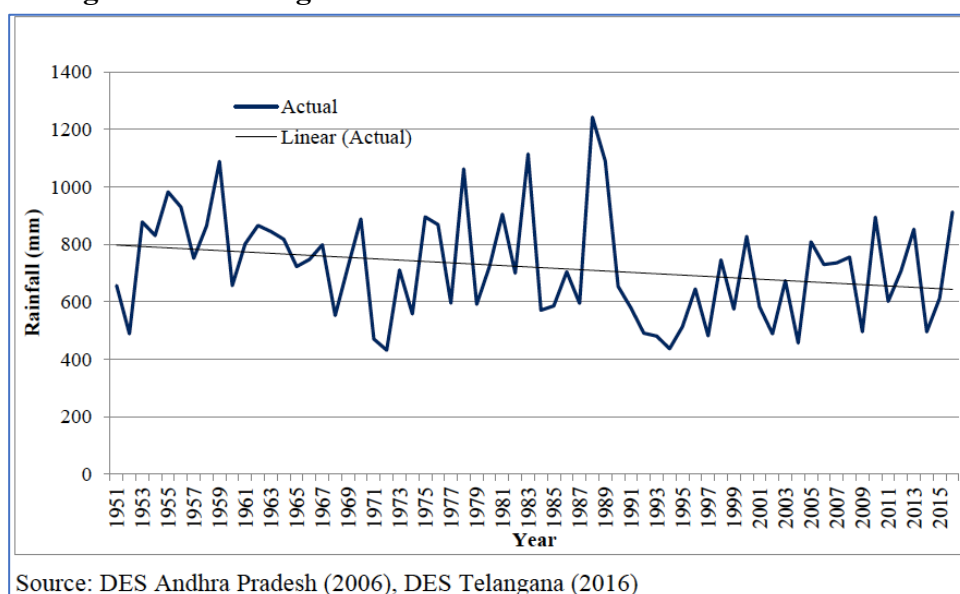
One of the important and overwhelming feeling among the farmers, in both the village, more so in the dry village of Village B, is that in the last ten years, more in the last five years there are unseasonal rains (*akalavarhsalu*) which have damaged their crops when they were about harvest their crops. One respondent, who is 52 years old, small farmer, said that

“kalam бага marindi. Vaste gattivvanalu lekapote uruvelavu. Avi kuda eppudupadtayo telvadu. Okkappudu konchammanna dani tarika telisedi. Ippudu karackutga pantalukose tayyani, leda vari pantapottakoche sari vanalu padi chetiki rakunda chestunnay”

(Times have changed, either there are too many rains or there are no rains. That too we don't when it will rain, or it will not rain. Earlier we used to have at least some idea about it. These days it rains at the time of harvesting or when the crops are about to mature, and they are damaging the crops.)

Figure 6.16 gives a longitudinal picture of the monsoon rainfall in the state and its erratic nature. The linear trajectory of the rainfall has been consistently declining from 800 mm to 600mm in the state from 1951 to 2015. This may not be directly linked to neo-liberalisation of agriculture, but is linked to the changing climatic conditions, which has resulted in the disturbances in the agricultural cycle which were linked to the local conditions and farmer knew about and understood them worked with accordingly. This change in the climatic conditions has displaced farmers knowledge about weather and has serious consequences for agricultural productivity and farmers are not able to cope with these severe changes in the climate.

Figure 6.16 Telangana Monsoon Rainfall 1951-2015.



A final form of separation relates to the separation of economic production from social and familial reproduction.

Feminist scholarship on social reproduction (T. Bhattacharya & Vogel, 2017) argues the production and reproduction are deeply intertwined in the capitalist system. Their inter relation has consequences for the social reproduction of the labour in particular and society in general. According to the definition of feminist political economy, the process of social reproduction involves at least four different types of labour: first, the work of biological reproduction or the production of children; second, the care of children, the elderly, and others; third, the associated production of goods and services necessary for the maintenance of human life; and fourth, the labour required to reproduce the "cultural forms and practises" that maintain a labour force that is differentiated by race, gender, and other factors. (Rao, 2021, p-39-40).

Writing about the importance of understanding the social reproduction Susan Ferguson asserts that our understanding of capitalism will be incomplete if we treat it as merely an economic system involving workers and owners and fail to consider how wider social reproduction of the system—that is, the daily and generational reproductive labour that happens in homes, schools, hospitals, prisons, and other settings—sustains the desire for accumulation. (T. Bhattacharya & Vogel, 2017).

It is understood in the social reproduction is the separation of production of value (points of production) and the reproduction of labour power. Family may form the site of production, immediate site of individual labour power, but that alone does not explain “the conditions under which, and . . . the habits and degree of comfort in which” (T. Bhattacharya & Vogel, 2017, p. 9) the working class of any particular society has been produced. One understanding of social reproduction is that it is about two separate spaces and two separate processes of production: the economic and the social—often understood as the workplace and home.

As rural out-migration becomes a key channel through which life opportunities are defined and strategized in rural India, it has serious implications in terms of social reproduction. These migratory practices, which have become essential for the survival of the household, are leading to a separation of production from reproduction. Though it has been well established and theorised in Marxist literature that the capitalism invents the separation of

the productive dimension (home) and re-productive dimension(factory). This separation is distinct in today's rural India on two levels. One, there was no full-fledged industrialisation of the 'rural' which did not lead to such separation. Two, even if one argues that, there is a separation of the production and reproduction even with the agriculture, which happens outside of the home, migration has bought separation of the location site of production and reproduction and it has two different effects both labouring classes as well as the landlord classes.

A smaller fraction of people who generate a surplus (the elite or landed class) desire to have the urban/nearby town as their basis of social reproduction, in the sense that their places of residence have relocated to the city or town, but they continue to produce in the countryside- they still hold lands in the village and they still have their place of residence. However, a greater proportion of rural residents—mostly small and marginal farmers, landless individuals, and those facing economic hardship—resort to international and urban migration, maintaining the rural as their base of reproduction and turning to the urban/peri-urban as their source of production (Vasavi 2019).

The informal and formal economies of urban and peri-urban areas incorporate the working poor. They move back and forth between their rural homes to be with their families and urban or small towns to work, leading a life of seasonal and circular migration. This is in contrast to the middle class and the wealthy, who move their families to urban areas as a result of economic advancement.

In both the study villages, some of the upper caste *velamas*, *reddys*, some of the OBC families who have jobs in the formals sector, like banks, school teachers, are residing in Jagityal, Karimnagar, and (two *reddy* families) in Hyderabad. They still hold lands, they are looked after by their brothers or father. Those who are residing in the Jagityal are coming from town (in Village A which is nearer) daily and look after agriculture and leave in the evening. Sometimes, with the diversification of the income from farm-to non-farm the town also provides opportunity for the accumulation for these classes, the spaces of production and reproduction are not only separated, location wise, they have also multiplied for these classes from agriculture to non-agricultural activities.

The gulf migration from both villages, and the circular migration to the town (Jagityal and Karimnagar) of the small and marginal farmers, land less labourers from OBC and SC communities means that for them their production site might be a foreign country or town or other village but their place of residence is the village. For these classes' village is an important place, not only for the purposes of residence but also as a place that allows access to various governmental social welfare programmes. This separation was more evident during the pandemic, once entire country was locked down, all migrants have returned to their native places, this shows the importance of village also as rescuing location. "These forms of separation-integration have significance for the sense of belonging or \distanciation that families and individuals have for/from their village/rural and for their political engagement or disengagement " (ibid). Since, according to Bhattacharya, the physical division between production (public) and reproduction (private) is a historical form of appearance, it is necessary to include the labour that is performed in both spheres into the theory.

This separation has hampered the aspiration of the *dalit* youth and their political ambitions were curtailed by this absence in the village (Picherit, 2018). These separations have a serious sociological impact on the family as, many of the gulf migrants are absent from the home for most part of the year. They come for a month or two and again they leave, this absence of the father has serious implication for the socialisation of the child. Such separations are producing 'gendered households' where women from the upper classes/castes, who earlier used to work in the agriculture, are confined to household work, which is not recognised as 'productive' by the male members of the family. Writing about confining women to the households, Lenin writes that this

"petty housework crushes, strangles, stultifies, and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-wracking, stultifying and crushing drudgery." (quoted in (T. Bhattacharya & Vogel, 2017).

On the hand, this separation puts extra burden on the women from working class. In the absence of their husband, the social burden of taking care of the children increases along with her economic work and social duty. Since there is the absence of the 'man' from the house she is constantly under the supervision of their in-laws.

Douglass conceptualises this phenomenon as 'global householding'. It speaks about "ways in which the processes of building and maintaining households through time" (Douglass,

2012, 13) and how those processes change in response to neo-liberalism, population ageing, and mobility. According to Douglass, all of the major facets of household life—marriage/partnership, having children, raising them, and educating them—as well as managing daily affairs, earning a living, and taking care of elders and non-working family members—must be viewed as projects sustained over time and through a variety of social formations. (ibid)

Households have become fluid in nature. This fluidity has also brought with it a certain kind change in the nature of households. Discussions with the key respondents from the study villages indicated that, the conjugal bonds have become more fragile because of the absence of the male members for a very long time because of the migration. But migration has become very important to sustenance of the household.

The moment of neo-liberalism is marked by a ‘crisis of social provisioning and there is crisis of care. Nancy Fraser says that “there is a crisis of the capacities available for birthing and raising children, caring for friends and family members, maintaining households and border communities, and sustaining connections more generally” (ibid, p-12). This crisis is enhanced when it is understood in the context of the separation of productive and reproductive dimensions in the lives of the working. The crises evidenced in care work, then, is “not accidental but have deep systemic roots in the structure of neoliberal social order ” (ibid).

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Recent scholarship in social sciences has been focusing a lot on the importance of understanding the relationship between the rural and urban entanglements. The new rural urban entanglements have complicated the notion of rural as an isolated special entity. It was formerly regarded as a closed settlement, mostly engaged in agricultural and allied occupations; less diverse; more cohesive; and dominated by traditional caste structures. The neo-liberal capitalist development made it difficult to hold such a notion of a “pure” or “authentic” rural space in today's rural India. The thesis focused to understand the results of such an entanglements for various categories of people both at the bottom and top of the hierarchy.

Thesis started with the question of how neoliberal capital is shaping the agriculture in rural settings and what are its effects on agrarian capital and on agrarian labour both in and out of rural.

The thesis structured into seven chapters, including introduction and conclusion. The first chapter mainly lays out the research questions, objectives, and methodology followed in the selection of the village and the data collection.

Second chapter discussed about the major debates in Agrarian studies. The journey of the field of agrarian studies from peasant studies to its reformulation as critical agrarian studies and how the complexities created by the neo liberal capital in the last two decades has necessitated the reconfiguration of peasant studies to include various categories of caste, gender, ethnicity, and age into the analysis of aggregated structures along with the notion of class. The chapter has focused and gave a detailed account of how village as a conceptual category has been understood and came to be established as a distinctive spatial settlement in the colonial times for the purposes of revenue generation and collection. Also, how it was conceptualised in the academic space and in the nationalist movement as an authentic category to understand the Indian society. After the neo liberal reforms the narrative of agrarian crisis and farmer suicides have taken the centre stage in understanding the village.

This is complemented with a discussion on the new emergent trends in the urban studies and how the rural urban relations are reconceptualised as well.

Third chapter presents the political economy of Telangana. The focus of this chapter was to analyse, understand, and elucidate the changing nature of the state and its relationship with various social classes and castes over a period of 100 years. It divided the region's political economy into four periods for the purposes of analysis and discussed major changes in the agrarian class structure, nature of the state, labour relations and the impacts of social movements in each of the period. The first period is from Salarjung reforms to 1948. The chapter started with important landmarks in the modern history of Telangana starting with Salarjung reforms in the 1850s, as these reforms were critical point in the establishment of the property regime in the region. The chapter discussed how those regimes of property have helped certain caste groups of higher castes in acquiring land and in eliminating certain social groups from holding on to land. This chapter also discussed how the princely state under the influence of the colonial government introduced certain policy reforms which were beneficial to the landlord class. The landlord class consolidated its position by taking benefits of the property regime, modernising agriculture along with exploitation of bonded labour. The state also witnessed peasant uprising against the exploitation of the landlords popularly known as *deshmukhs* and *deshpandes* in the region.

The second period was from 1956 to 1990s. This was a period of transition in the history of the region. In this period upper castes and classes have consolidated their position by maintaining close ties with the state and diversified their economic base from agriculture. OBC castes in the state have gained political presence in the state and acquired some lands. The state witnessed two important movements. One, the demand for separate state was started in 1969. Two, the Maoist movement from the late 1970s early 1990s. These two were significant in the history of the state. In terms of agriculture green revolution was adapted in certain part of the state.

Third period was the first neo-liberal period from 1991 to 2014. In this period the neo-liberal shift was completed in the state. State was implementing these policies with a combination of social welfare measures, which over a period of time have

become a legitimate means of diverting the state's resources to upper classes. Land was diverted to non-agricultural purposes. The adaption of green revolution practices in agriculture across the state has adversely effected the small and marginal farmers in the region. This has resulted in the suicides of thousands of farmers in the state. Movement for separate statehood was picked up again and has resulted in the formation of new state in 2014.

Fourth period was from 2014 to 2020. In this period the new government is implementing neo-liberal policies along with social welfare measures. The chapter discussed how the new government's policies of land administration are encouraging the land transfers from small marginal farmers to large capitalists. The chapter also has discussed how there is not structural transformation that altered the conditions of the marginal sections of the society who were in forefront for the separate statehood.

Chapter 4 provided a discussion on the agrarian relations in terms of land relations and labour relations based on the two study villages. Major findings from this chapter include:

In both the villages agriculture is not able to provide sustainable income for the majority of the families and it is well integrated with the capitalist input markets. Commercialisation of agriculture has different effects on different classes of people; for those who are able to gain profits from agriculture are investing in new avenues in the village or in the town and for small and marginal farmers it is not sustainable to solely depend on agriculture. In terms of land holding, there is a huge inequality between the upper castes and the lower castes. Upper Caste Reddys and Velamas still own the large proportion of the cultivable land. When it comes to landowner - labour relations, upper caste Reddys and Velama's are no longer able to control the agricultural labourers the way they used to do previously. In both the villages more than 90% of the agricultural labourers are from OBCs and Scheduled Castes. Agricultural labourers are able to reproduce themselves by combining agricultural wage work with non-agricultural wage labour in both the villages as well as outside the village.

Chapter 5 highlighted various dimensions of the non-farm sector in both the study villages. The two important sectors of the non-farm that provide employment include Beedi work and Gulf migration in north Telangana. In fact, Gulf migration can be traced historically to the weavers migration to western Indian textile towns from the middle of the 20th century. The chapter started with an historical account of the weavers migration in south India from secondary sources. How weavers as a community were always on the move for various reasons. Then it was followed up with a discussion on how these migration patterns in Telangana context led to the arrival of beedi work from western Indian state of Gujarat to north Telangana. The chapter analysed the newly emerging non-farm sector in the field work villages as well as the town.

In terms of beedi work: it is a home based work in both the villages which is undertaken exclusively done by women. The upper caste Reddy and Velama women hardly engaged in beedi work. For majority of the woman it is a subsidiary income rather than the primary source of work / livelihood.

In terms of gulf migration: It is a male centered migratory practice which is largely confined to OBCs and Scheduled Castes in the region. Those who are migrating to the gulf are working in the low skilled informal sectors. Gulf remittances play an important role in terms of securing livelihood and improving the living conditions and providing education for the children of migrant families. Those migrants who had additional sources of income either from agriculture or those who had family members who could earn additional income for the family have seen positive impact because of gulf migration. Those who didn't have those things were just able to manage securing a liveable income, sometimes were even more indebted than they were before.

Non-farm sector in both the villages. The non-farm sector provides an important source of income as well as a source of accumulation in both villages. Village A has more population than village B and also it has a more dynamic non-farm work than village B. Work profiles of the non-farm sector shows that it is an offshoot of increasingly commercialised nature of rural life. For 43% of the households in village A and 32% of the households in village B, non-farm sector provides the primary

income. However, each of these caste groups have differential access to non-farm sector. For those who are higher in the hierarchy, like Reddys and Velamas it opened up channels for accumulation like starting up of schools, fertiliser shops in the village or in the town or in the nearby villages and other more profitable avenues. For those who are in the bottom end of the hierarchy it opened up precarious informal low skilled jobs both in the village as well as in the town.

Chapter 6 tried to bring together all the previous chapters especially chapter 4 and 5. Chapter used Vasavi's framework of understanding the rural as the result of a triangulation of Reproduced Caste, Economies of Neglect, and Politics of Rescue. The results of these triangulations are manifested in various forms. The chapter focused on specially two aspects. One, differentiation of classes and households, of spaces. Two, separation and integration of agriculture from the local ecological conditions to its integration into the larger capitalist world market and how this also is leading to a separation of the space of production and space reproduction for different classes of people.

Although delinked from hereditary occupations, caste still is the key structure that marks the social relations, determines life opportunities, access to resources, assets, and political power. Neglect of state in case of certain sectors like education and health have provided ample opportunity for upper castes to accumulate. However, this has become a burden for small, marginal farmers and labourers belonging to lower castes. Introduction of various social welfare measures increasingly assumed importance for the lower castes and classes to reproduce themselves while it also meant for the state to effectively redistributing the resources to upper caste and upper classes.

It also discussed how these three processes of triangulation has resulted in various processes of differentiations. Differentiation of rural spaces-from mainstream rural villages to remote tribal villages, from villages where agriculture is well integrated with the capitalist mode of production to villages that continue subsistence agriculture. The chapter argued that given the importance and diversity of non-farm incomes in the rural settings, the differentiation can be extended to villages that are located on the road and remotely located villages, to demographically more

populated villages to less populated villages. Also to villages based on the administrative designation. Chapter argued that each of the last three differentiations can have a different impact on the possibility of non-farm incomes for various social groups.

Another important dimension is the differentiation of the rural population into different categories of classes. The chapter argued that, as agriculture is not able to provide sustainable income for majority of the small and marginal farmers, they are depending on other sources of income from precarious wage labour to self-employing enterprises. On the other hand, a small proportion of big landholders are diversifying from agriculture to non- agricultural enterprises like investing in schools, liquor contracts, building houses for the rent purposes in the village or in the town. Thus classifying rural households into any simple classes has become difficult. Some of those who contributed to the ‘mode of production’ debate of the 1970s thought that the differentiation of peasant classes – towards the establishment of an agrarian capitalist class and a substantial rural proletariat – was proceeding apace or rather inevitable. But what is happening in present day rural India is rather, to use Byres’s term ‘partial proletarianisation’, with small and marginal producers continuing to reproduce themselves, partly by virtue of labouring outside agriculture. (John Harriss, 2011). In this light the conceptual terminology used in explaining agrarian relations needs to be critically scrutinised. The categories of landlord landless, agricultural labour as pure categories cannot explain the recent developments in the rural. The category of hybridity might provide an explanatory advantage.

Another result of the triangulation process is the separation of production from reproduction. Household reproduction now very often takes place as a result of migration (both rural–urban and rural–rural, and short term and long term), of the remittances associated with it, and of increasing employment outside agriculture and both in and outside of the village. This has resulted in the separation of site of production from reproduction. This is quite varied for different classes of people. For those who are on the high end of spectrum, village is not a site of reproduction, as they are staying in the town or big city for various reasons. For those who are at the bottom of the spectrum, village is the site of the reproduction but not necessarily a

site of production. As the sites of production are multiplied and are mostly located outside the village, for them the town, in the case of the field work villages, as well as other countries.

The conceptual terminology used in explaining agrarian relations need to be critically engaged with the traditional notions of landlord caste, agrarian labour, tenant farmer are no longer pure categories as they have become more complex in nature

There has been a twin movement away from agriculture, the upper castes/classes are diversifying and entering into sectors like education and rent seeking behaviour both in the rural as well as in the urban. Lower classes and caste groups on the other hand are entering into low paying non-farm activities both in the urban as well as in the rural.

The process of migration which has become a key aspect of rural India also has two dimensions. On the one hand upper classes and castes are migrating to secure employment either in towns or in the countries like UK, USA, and Australia. On the other hand lower caste and classes like OBCs and SCs are migrating to informal insecure precarious jobs both in town as well as in the gulf countries. This process of migration has serious repercussion for gendered dimensions of households.

There is a common misperception that neoliberalism includes leaving everything to the market and a retreat of the State from its previous role of intervention in the economy. This is incorrect. In contrast to the previous regime, neoliberalism includes a shift in the type of state action. By selectively disinvestment or neglecting sectors like education and health it created an opportunity for the upper classes upper castes. The same way, by selectively improving certain infrastructural conditions like providing irrigation, state is actively diverting its resources to the private capital by way of contracts. Along with this selective neglect or selective improvement, state is also involved in certain social welfare measures which have become essential for the subsistence of marginal sections but in the other way they have also strengthened the institution of caste.

Rural urban relations have been changing over the last two decades of neoliberal capitalist development. Profit and rent from agriculture have become the sources of investment, with the help of state, for the upper classes. Commodity flows have expanded and integrated the rural into the larger circuits of capital. The rural has become an important source of labour supplier for the town as well as in the longer destinations. The rural economy has become a major source of demand for the commodities and services of the town which are increasingly expanding. The new developments of services in the town specially health, transportation, together with private English medium school and college education have become important. In terms of the rural not only diversification but also differentiation have expanded rural asset distributions for upper classes, increasing rural inequality and influencing the livelihoods. Employment structures of households are moving in the direction of multi sided, multi sector, and multi occupations in which agricultural is a part component.

In social sciences, as Barbara Harris white says “what we know is the product of how we come to know” (2018). Theories drive methods, which drive evidence and results, which enables reflections upon theory. In this thesis we have tried to engage with the question of village/rural, and the questions of class. Insights provided by the thesis are that methodologically it is important to go beyond the rural in order to arrive at comprehensive understanding of it. If one were to focus only on the rural, it will not give us a complete picture of the complexity of the rural. It is also important methodologically to use multiple methods of research like combining the village census with ethnographic data both in the village as well as outside the village which gives us a clear picture of the complexity of the rural.

Another important dimension that the thesis brings to light is that an understanding of capitalism needs to be central in understanding the dynamics of village economy, its institutional changes. It is also important to theorise capitalism as embodying and reworking along with various non class institutions such caste and gender in addition to class. Persistence of caste needs to be viewed not only as the possible results of the status quo or lack of change. It should be theorised as a result of the outcome of a balance of forces between state and capital.

Critical agrarian studies is a dynamic field of investigation since its theoretical and empirical issues are intrinsically linked to the evolution of the global capitalist system. Nonetheless, among practitioners of critical agrarian studies, there may be near consensus that the agrarian question and its numerous dimensions are at the centre of current debates and discourses. What this research suggests is that while being alert to the questions that ‘agrarian’ throws up, it is pertinent to go beyond the agriculture in the rural in order to account for “the complexities and paradoxes that characterise rural India”.

With the world increasingly becoming urbanised and the processes of neo-liberal capitalism are linking every corner of the world with circuits of capital, there are questions about the ‘rural’ and its existence. The question of whether the shift to a normal urban/industrial base will occur or whether the rural will endure over the long term is an irrelevant question. As Vasavi (2019) rightly points out:

in the immediate future, the rural as a social space, a political entity, and an economic site will persist, and far from the death of ‘village India’, we will see the continuity of the rural as an involutioned space in which its citizens will strategies in innumerable ways to make their life liveable and which will continue to be the defining character of India as a civilisation (49).

The intersection of critical agrarian studies, critical urban studies, and village studies is crucial for conceptualising the rural in the neoliberal Indian context. Each of these fields provides a unique perspective on the ways in which economic and political policies have impacted rural communities in India, and how these policies have shaped the way we understand and conceptualise the rural.

Critical agrarian studies, by focusing on the relationships between people, land, and agriculture in rural areas, examines the ways in which policies such as land acquisition, privatisation and neo-liberal green revolution which have integrated the agriculture with larger forces of capital have impacted small farmers and their access to land and resources. These policies have often led to the dispossession of small farmers and the concentration of land in the hands of large corporations, high input costs and delinking agriculture from the local agro-ecological settings. This

perspective helps us understand the complex and often exploitative relationships between small farmers and larger economic forces in the rural context.

Critical urban studies, on the other hand, focuses on the relationships between people, space, and the city in urban areas. This perspective helps us understand the ways in which the rural and urban are interconnected and how policies that shape the urban context can also have an impact on rural communities. How both are constituting each other.

Village studies, meanwhile, focus on the relationships between people, community, and the environment in village areas. This perspective helps us understand the ways in which traditional village systems and cultures are being disrupted or strengthened by modern economic and political policies. Specially long-term village studies provide us the insights into the changes that villages have undergone.

Overall, the intersection of these three fields helps us understand the complexity of the rural in the neoliberal Indian context and how economic and political policies have shaped the way we conceptualise the rural. By considering these intersecting perspectives, we can gain a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the rural and the ways in which it is being impacted by larger economic and political forces. This can help us to conceptualise the rural as more than just a physical location, but as a complex and dynamic space shaped by the intersecting forces of capitalism, globalisation, and state power. It can also help us to appreciate the diverse experiences and perspectives of those living in rural areas.

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Research Scholars' Epistemological Predicament

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What is the position of research scholars in the knowledge food chain? Are they merely consumers of knowledge or can they also produce it? The University Grants Commission Regulations, 2009 and 2016 enforced two important rules: mandatory coursework on research methods and theory for MPhil and PhD programmes, and publication of at least one research paper in a peer-reviewed journal to be eligible to submit a doctoral thesis. An analysis of these regulations through the lens of research scholars offers an insight into the complexity of relationships between academic institutions, journals, and research scholars in the process of knowledge production.

In the introduction to her book, *Southern Theory: The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science*, Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell (2008) notes that “social science is, at best, ambiguously democratic. Its dominant genres picture the world as it is seen by men, by capitalists, by the educated and affluent.” Notwithstanding the provocative stance of the work, Connell fails to mention that this dominant knowledge is produced by institutional academicians, with a little help from international governmental and non-governmental organisations (Zapp 2018).

The purpose of this article is not to critique Connell, either for presuming a homogeneous “south” (Muller 2009; Collins 1997) or for being ignorant of the segment of research scholars. As we will discuss a little later, research scholars, throughout the world, have predominantly been relegated to the position of consumers of knowledge that is produced by agents who decry their own helplessness in getting recognition as producers of knowledge. Our aim is to analyse the reasons, particularly in the case of India, that have caused research scholars to stay away from the production of knowledge debate and remain mere consumers of knowledge.

We take as the backdrop the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of MPhil/PhD Degrees) Regulations of 2009 and 2016, which made courses on research methods and theories mandatory in MPhil and PhD, and required PhD scholars to publish at least one research paper in a peer-reviewed journal to be eligible to submit their thesis. Thus, we¹ attempt to discuss, through empirical data, the problematic aspects of the relationships between academic institutions, journals, and research scholars in knowledge production. The article is divided into four sections. In the first, we discuss the debate around the politics of knowledge production in India and, while doing so, we try to demonstrate how it has bypassed the domain of research scholars. The next section discusses, in brief, the methods we used to collect empirical data to justify our claim. In the third section, we present data on five academic journals in India and show how research scholars view their relationship with these journals. Finally, we offer suggestions for the way forward.

The Debate So Far

By focusing on the training of research scholars in the theory and methods of social enquiry, on the one hand, and the dissemination of their work to the academic peer group in the form of published research papers, on the other, the UGC 2009 and 2016 regulations necessitated a greater engagement on the part of academic institutions and journals to create “competent”

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The position of the authors' names is in alphabetical order and does not represent any difference in their contribution to the study.

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research scholars in India. The issue of competency is of seminal importance here. Veena Das (1993) claimed that research scholars (she uses the term research students) in India were not competent enough to take the discipline of sociology forward. Apart from the students themselves, Das blames academic institutions, the UGC, and professional bodies like the Indian Sociological Society for the situation.

Following Das, the “crisis” debate in Indian sociology, some of which took place in the pages of *Economic & Political Weekly* (EPW) and elsewhere, took a new lease of life, with contributions putting the blame on the nature of sociology itself (Deshpande 1994), the international politics of knowledge production in the style of Connell (Patel 1997), the decreasing importance attached to funding institutions like the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), the increasing regionality in knowledge production (Chatterjee 2002), and on identity politics (Harshe and Patel 2003). These lines of reasoning, which in a subtle way decried the decreasing “merit” and “competency” in both students and researchers alike, culminated in the publication of the book, *Doing Sociology in India* (Patel 2011).

These “meritocratic” views of social science research in India can be seen as on par with self-help books on publishing journal articles (Sword 2012; Belcher 2009) and other works which put the blame on individuals for a so-called lack of rigour. In other words, what restricts the growth of social sciences in India, according to these scholars, is the diminishing rate of “originality” in research. To give further sustenance to the “meritocratic” thesis, a study by Guetzkow et al (2004: 198) dissected meritocracy, specifically in the humanities and social sciences, into various segments by equating them with “originality.” The study held benchmarks such as “original approach, understudied area, original topic, original theory, original method, original data, and original results” to be crucial to understanding “originality” in research. However, what concerns us here is the language used to describe the researchers whose proposals and academic papers do not get accepted by the concerned committees for funding. As the authors argue,

Applicants’ whose proposals were deemed original were often described with such adjectives as adventurous, ambitious, bold, courageous, curious, independent, intellectually honest, and risk-taking. They were also viewed as “going out of the way,” “challenging the status quo,” “thinking for themselves” and “having a passion for ideas.” Likewise ... scholars whose proposals lack originality ... were deemed to be unmotivated or incapable of independent thought and were described with terms that include: conformist, complacent, derivative, facile, gap-filling, hackneyed, lazy, parochial, pedestrian, rehashing, tried, traditional, uncritical, “spinning their wheels;” or alternatively, fashionable, trendy, “shambolic,” slavish, “riding on the band wagon” or “throwing around buzzwords.” (2004: 203)

So, for Guetzkow et al, and for the participants in their study, it is always desirable to be part of the group which produces original works and not the ones which refrain from doing so. In order to attain “merit” and “originality,” scholars need to follow the formulae presented in the study; otherwise they will forever remain among the class of underachievers, roaming in the wastelands of the academic world. It is highly possible that similar judgments are made of other scholars who can/cannot get their works published in credible journals.²

Looking at the above debates, two lines of thought emerge. First, for established institutional academics (both in India and elsewhere), research scholars do not even constitute a footnote in the field of academic knowledge production. Second, despite the self-help nature of the recommendations, no real change has happened in the publication scenario. To give an example, between 2007 and 2016, the journal *Contributions to Indian Sociology* has published only four papers which were written by research scholars based in India (out of a total of 65). This is not more than 2% of the published work. Going by the discussion previously outlined, one might conclude that this status quo is a result of research scholars being a “lazy” lot, who are “incapable” and “incompetent” producers of knowledge. Teaching standards, pedagogy, and inclusiveness in the disciplinary practices did not figure as prominently in these debates as the hypothetical notion of a crisis in the discipline.

We suggest that the debates on the “crisis in Indian sociology,” as they have been conducted so far, need to be seen merely as a friendly, internal critique of the established paternal figures (who are also the gatekeepers) of the discipline. In the following pages, we try to reopen this debate. Weaving it around the UGC 2009 and 2016 regulations, we attempt to problematise the so-called meritocratic notions of the privileged sections of the Indian academia about research scholars through empirical data and bring the latter’s voices to the forefront.

Data and Methods

The study has at its backdrop two Young Researchers’ Workshops³ and one academic writing workshop organised by research scholars of the Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad in 2015, 2016, and 2017, respectively. The participants (from Departments of Sociology) of these workshops came from institutes of repute⁴ from across India: from the north, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Delhi University; from the west, Gujarat Central University, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Mumbai; from the south, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala, IIT Madras, Madras Institute of Development Studies, University of Hyderabad and TISS Hyderabad; from the east, Utkal University, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, and North East Hill University. The purpose of this sampling was not to draw a boundary between good and bad institutions or research scholars, but to decipher the position of research scholars coming from these institutes in the knowledge production hierarchy.

To broaden the data pool for this article, we also included PhD students from other disciplines within the social sciences. In total, we interviewed (via email) 40 participants (20 male and 20 female) belonging to various disciplines of the social sciences. The aim of the survey was (i) to look at the interaction between research scholars and the journals that they would like to publish in; (ii) the challenges in pursuing academic writing and academic research with respect to the language(s) of the social sciences; (iii) other constraints that research scholars have to confront during their research; and (iv) their views on research scholars as consumers and/or producers of knowledge.

As we wanted to show the correlation between institutions of repute and academic publication on the one hand, and researchers as knowledge producers, on the other, we selected journals accordingly. Through discussions with our respondents, we came across a number of journals in which these research scholars wanted their works to be published. These are: *EPW*, *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, *Sociological Bulletin*, *Social Change*, *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *Journal of Indian Anthropological Society*, *Social Scientist*, *Labour and Development*, *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, *Man-and-Development*, *Sage Journals*, *Journal of Religion*, *Indian Political Science Association Journal*, *Journal of Northeast India Studies*, *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, and *History and Sociology of South Asia*.

However, almost all our participants wished to see their authored articles in the following five journals:⁵ *EPW*, *Sociological Bulletin*, *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, and *Social Change*. All these journals have their editorship based in India and are considered by both publishers and contributors as the gatekeepers of academic knowledge production. Therefore, we decided to focus on these five journals for a more detailed analysis.

To collect data from the above-mentioned journals, a total of 1,450 articles were reviewed. This includes all the research papers published between 2007 and 2016 in *Sociological Bulletin* (154), *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (129), *Indian Economic and Social History Review* (166), and *Social Change* (252) respectively. Owing to the large number of articles published in *EPW*, only 50% (749) of research papers published in the Special Articles section were considered. The papers were further sub-divided into categories based on institutional affiliation, regional location (both within and outside the country), gender, research scholar, and single or joint authorship. The results were tabulated and codified using Microsoft Office. In the following sections, we will discuss the results of this exercise in detail.

Discussion

We have divided this section into three subsections in which we analyse (i) the disaggregated data from the five journals in terms of regional location of authors, their gender division, and representation of research scholars in the published works as authors or co-authors; (ii) the research scholars' opinions regarding their interactions with the journals, the predicaments that resulted from the UGC notifications, challenges in pursuing academic writing and academic research in the social sciences, other constraints that the research scholars face while they are engaged in research, and finally, their views on themselves in the consumer/producer debate; and (iii) a way forward.

Representation in Journals

Disaggregated data on the regional location of authors (Table 1) shows that East and North East India contribute very little to these journals. Central India's contribution is also close to marginal, except in the case of *Social Change*, wherein 11% of authors are from academic institutions located in Central India. As both Chatterjee (2002) and Guru (2002) have noted previously,

academicians located in institutes in North India are overwhelmingly represented in all these five journals. Even within this group, institutions like Jawaharlal Nehru University and Delhi University post a larger share than others. Given the data we have at hand, we cannot help but agree with Guru's (2002: 5004) assertion that the "apex court of social sciences (is) in Delhi" and this has created an ecosystem in which academicians located in Delhi have positioned themselves as the guiding light in the production and distribution of knowledge about themselves as well as others. It has created a form of cultural hegemony of these academicians over the Indian social sciences. Incidentally, these academicians also happen to be the same ones who periodically amuse themselves by writing obituaries of the disciplines they are part of; in this case, that of sociology.

Table 1: Institutional Affiliations of Authors, 2007–16 (%)

Journal	East	West	Central	North	South	North East
<i>Sociological Bulletin</i>	9.7	22.7	0	31.8	14.2	7.1
<i>EPW</i>	5.8	12.6	0.4	39.6	13.7	2.2
<i>IESHR</i>	6.6	1.2	0	12.6	7.2	1.2
<i>Contributions to Indian Sociology</i>	0.8	7.8	0.8	21.7	6.2	0
<i>Social Change</i>	8	5.6	11.2	46.1	11.6	2.8

The distribution of regional institutional affiliations points at the creation of a centre with knowledge disseminating from that place, through publications, to the rest of the country. It shows a practice of social sciences that is involved in the othering of institutions that are not located in this created centre (Oommen 2013). This centre systemically puts those researchers who do not belong to it at a disadvantage, thereby producing marginalisation in the group of researchers in India. The global distribution of institutional affiliations tells a similar story. While the knowledge produced is about India, the high proportion of contributions from institutions located in the United States and the United Kingdom shows who can be authentic producers of knowledge. It will be interesting to see data from institutions affiliated to India that are actively engaged in producing knowledge about countries of the global North.⁶ The geographical locations of institutions that the authors are affiliated to, therefore, prove to be vital. So, to use Connell's (2008) argument, the global South further creates a north and a south within itself, which is indicative of the privileged status that this north has in terms of publications and, hence, control over what gets to be produced and distributed for consumption.

In order to check the contentions made by Connell (2008) and others that the social sciences have a preponderance of male researchers over their female counterparts, we also looked at gender as a parameter. Historically, women have been subjects about whom knowledge is created. In a context where institutional and familial set-ups are still largely patriarchal, it is not surprising that almost all the journals (*Contributions to Indian Sociology* turned out to be an exception) have a higher proportion of male authorship (Table 2). However, it can be seen that amongst research scholars, female authorship is

Table 2: Gender Distribution in Authorship (%)

Journal	Female	Male
<i>Sociological Bulletin</i>	37.9	62.1
<i>EPW</i>	28.2	71.7
<i>IESHR</i>	34.4	65.6
<i>Contributions to Indian Sociology</i>	51.4	48.6
<i>Social Change</i>	26	74

higher than male authorship. Among publications authored by research scholars, *Sociological Bulletin* had 77.7% female authorship, while *Social Change* had 35.4% female authors. However, when it comes to institutional academicians as authors, both these journals, follow the same trajectory as elsewhere, with male authors outnumbering their female counterparts by a large margin. It is contrary to the actual situation in India's social sciences departments, which more often than not see women research scholars outnumber their male counterparts.⁷ The data, we believe, is indicative of the fact that despite being more productive than their male counterparts in terms of journal papers at the stage of being research scholars, the careers of these young women researchers do not automatically translate to the same trajectory in knowledge production.

After looking at the data on the hegemony of New Delhi and males over knowledge production in India, we looked at the proportion of articles published in these journals that are authored by research scholars. The data from 2007 to 2016 shows an abysmal picture. It is difficult to make sense of the fact that out of 1,447 papers published over a span of 10 years, only 12.88% of articles, on average, came from research scholars. *Sociological Bulletin*, with 17.5%, had the highest proportion of contributions from research scholars, while *Contributions to Indian Sociology* had the lowest, with 6.2% (Table 3). However, it needs to be taken into consideration that these articles by research scholars came in two categories, namely, single authors (this includes research scholars based in India and abroad), and joint authorship with a senior academician. To give an example, *EPW* published 69 research papers in which research scholars were credited. Of these, while 36 papers belonged to research scholars (Indian, foreign, and Indians working in foreign universities), 33 papers were co-authored with an established academician. In this scenario, the adjectives like "lazy lot" and "incompetence," as suggested by Guetzkow et al (2004), appear insufficient to account for the huge gap in the number of publications by research scholars vis-à-vis senior researchers. Nor can they help us answer our question: How can research scholars be producers of knowledge, as demanded by both academicians of repute and institutions like the UGC?

To investigate further on this question of knowledge hierarchy we moved to our counterparts located in the social science departments of different universities in India. The following section shows how research scholars viewed their relationship with the journals, the challenges they confronted, and their position in the knowledge food chain.

Producers of Knowledge

As we discussed at the beginning of this article, the purpose of this study is not merely to critique academicians who have been writing obituaries of sociology or journals for not giving enough space to the work of research scholars. It is important not to externalise the issues of research scholars to gain sympathy from

our readers. Rather, the agenda for the study is to showcase, by following an empirical method, the reality of the ecosystem that involves academic institutions, journals, and research scholars and how it has the ability to create both "lazy lots" and "fearless producers of knowledge" among research scholars in India. On this path, let us continue further on our discussion about research scholars and their interaction with academic journals.

Interaction between research scholars and journals: Of the 40 respondents that we interviewed, only half have publications in peer-reviewed journals. Further, among those who have publications, only 20% were the sole authors of their work while 80% were credited as co-authors along with their supervisors. One of our participants shared his experience with *EPW*: According to him, when he sent his manuscript on a political movement in North East India as the sole author, *EPW* rejected it stating that the journal had already published enough on that topic. However, when he resented the same paper to the journal with a few minor changes, this time co-authored with his research supervisor, *EPW* had no issues in accepting the same (after revising it as per the reviewer's suggestions). Although the research scholar got his paper published in *EPW*, his experience with the journal remained sour with respect to the status of research scholars in academic knowledge production.

Other reasons mentioned for rejection by journals were that the papers did not comply with the requirements of the respective journals, that they lacked "rich" empirical work, or that the papers did not have strong theoretical justifications, among others. One of the researchers said, "rejection of the papers also depends on the ideology of the journals. Left-oriented reviewers have labelled my article as pro-industry and right-oriented ones had problems with my critical analysis of genetically modified technology that the corporates like Monsanto tried to bring in Indian markets." Echoing the concern of our above respondent, all the 40 research scholars we interviewed expressed that the "right networks" and "social capital" are important to get papers published, particularly in India's top journals.

So, does it mean that in order to comply with the UGC guidelines for submission of PhD theses, the research scholars should look at "alternative" journals, some of them also known in colloquial language as "paid journals"? Among our respondents, 10% accepted paid journals as an option to meet the requirements of the UGC. One of them said,

As per new UGC guideline for submission, at least one research paper should be published related to the PhD topic. I know many of my seniors who had opted for paid journals as there was no other way to submit the thesis on time. One of my seniors was waiting for his work to be published as a part of an edited book for almost one year, but it came very late and hence he had to opt for the paid one. There are many similar cases which I know [of]. In my case, I am in my last stage of submission and have sent two different articles to two different peer-reviewed journals, but they have not responded till date. So, I may have to opt for paid journals. If UGC keeps making life miserable and unbearable, we will have no other option but to rely on these paid journals to get published, which in turn can mean finishing PhD, which in turn makes [the] unequal space of academia more unequal.

However, 90% of our respondents opined that they do not want to get their work published in paid journals. They felt that

Table 3: Papers Authored by Research Scholars (%)

Journal	Research Scholars (%)
<i>Sociological Bulletin</i>	17.5
<i>EPW</i>	9.2
<i>IESHR</i>	14.5
<i>Contributions to Indian Sociology</i>	6.2
<i>Social Change</i>	17

paid journals have poor quality papers. The practice of paying in order to get one's work published, our participants argued, needs to be seriously discouraged as it is also unethical. They felt that there should be no business in academics, further explaining the point made by our last respondent that paid journals accentuate inequality among research scholars based on their ability to spend money to buy publications. One of the respondents said,

The obsession to publish, which is also many a times structurally/institutionally created, leads the researchers to opt for such journals. In the world of asymmetric information, publications work as market signaling about the quality of an academician. This is exactly where the paid journals are counterproductive. Simply put, since one can "buy" the publication(s), it is hardly reflective of the true ability of the researcher. In most cases, those are substandard because anyone can buy a publication for himself/herself. It actually reinforces inequality. The more I can pay, the more publications get added to my cv, and in turn, [the] more market value I derive. It basically creates a downward spiral in terms of both academic quality and material distribution in the society at large.

Apart from the journals, the research scholars we interviewed also questioned the bureaucratisation of UGC guidelines regarding the number of publications needed for submission of PhD theses and for faculty promotions. As one respondent noted with irony,

Academic journals in India are not compatible with social sciences in India. UGC compares natural sciences with social sciences. We cannot conduct research in a short span of time, nor is that kind of research fruitful for knowledge production. Writing two papers, three papers should not be the goal. There are fake publishing houses which publish underdeveloped papers, then are they really contributing to the social science knowledge?

As research scholars struggle to get their work published, so as to meet the minimum criteria to submit their theses, the plea to both the UGC and journals is not that research scholars be treated as a special group. Rather, the concern here is that the bureaucratisation of academic processes, which gives a lot of power to the management, overshadows the constraints faced by research scholars working in the social sciences in general, and sociology and social anthropology in particular, since the latter have to spend considerable amount of time doing fieldwork and then writing their descriptive analysis of the incidents and processes in the field. With journals of repute not giving enough space to research scholars, the UGC is effectively forcing these students to adopt means that are not always ethical to get their work published.

Certain private deemed-to-be-universities demand two published papers from PhD students (enrolled in the university and in research centres that award degrees from that university), but with the added provision that these have to be in journals indexed in Scopus. This is an absurd requirement as it is not applicable to the social sciences and humanities. To add to the problem, they do not accept peer-reviewed papers in edited books, which, unlike in the natural sciences, is a standard practice in these fields. The bureaucratic structures in the university are applying this rule without thought and arbitrarily, affecting the research culture of PhD students. In this situation, research scholars are becoming producers of knowledge for sure, but the launching pad they are able to get is too fragile to give them a firm ground to grow as serious researchers. This brings us to another crucial aspect which has concerned

the research scholars we interviewed, namely how to strengthen academic writing and research.

Challenges in Pursuing Academic Writing

Notwithstanding the seven parameters proposed by Guetzkow et al (2004) to judge originality in humanities and the social sciences, a common problem that was raised by our respondents was that there is little to no training in academic writing in the coursework offered by universities and research institutes. An argument that was highlighted in our interviews with research scholars, and universally suggested during the academic writing workshop in 2017, was that without adequate training in academic research and academic writing, research scholars and junior researchers find it difficult to even decipher the notion of originality in their work. A scholar explained this with a suggestion:

Often, PhD Students find themselves in a lonely world where there are few others doing the same thing. So, if there is coursework that integrates the PhD process it may help. Let me illustrate with an example. The PhD duration is on average five-six years. Less for humanities and perhaps more in the social sciences. But let us take an average of five years as the duration to start work, register or qualify for candidacy, pursue field work and write the thesis. The first year is when most students have the bulk of the coursework and then [they] are off to field stations and sites by the second year. Assuming that the field occupies the student for two years, the rigour of an academic space is no longer present and the students often return with a changed perspective and different questions. At this stage, it would be of great help to do another round of rigorous coursework that helps students assimilate and understand their data/material. So, a suggestion here would be to run through some basic coursework in the specialised field or have the batch of students work on their data together. For interdisciplinary subjects like art practice and visual anthropology, this would be helpful as the data that is brought in from the field is varied and often unstructured. This year-long exposure to [a] higher level of coursework will help the articulation and therefore, the writing process. It is also important to run writing programs of different levels of specialisation or advancement as the thesis is meant to be a work of academic merit and not a set of articles. So, to make the point again, coursework outside of regular or mandated coursework is necessary and not an option as it is a very difficult task to get from data sets and material from the field to a fully developed thesis.

An overwhelming majority (70%) of the research scholars interviewed were of the opinion that there is a need for training in converting data from the field into paper or chapters. Only 30% of the scholars interviewed believed that the research methodology coursework that is currently offered helped them in their research. A scholar said,

Of course, we have coursework, then we have group projects during MA, MPhil to get training on methodology. But what happens is that on the field, one finds it difficult because the supervisor is not involved; you are on your own. You keep on writing field notes, do interviews, but you hardly know if that is the way. Then you submit group reports. Does that experience then really help? I am not sure. There is no engagement. You have to apply your common sense based on contingencies. It greatly depends on how sociable you are. I really think there should be a proper training so that when we have data we should not be confused. There should be more engagement from the supervisor's side. Our university conducts workshops and academic writing courses, but not much difference is seen. There should be a regular class for academic writing and academic research just like other classes, with a proper course. Workshops help, but regular mandatory training should be there.

The lack of structured training in research impacts the quality of research output and prevents the creative potential

of research scholars in Indian universities from coming to the fore. In this scenario, language, particularly the so-called academic language, becomes a chimera for most students, including those in India's elite universities. According to 80% of our respondents, academia is often inaccessible due to language barriers. They believe that academia is exclusionary because it relies heavily on comprehensive English language skills that are often limited to a few social groups. One respondent coming from a top university located in New Delhi stated that,

language is a crucial factor here. I have mostly studied in Bengali medium and therefore suffer from vocabulary poverty as compared to my friends who have studied in English all throughout. In one of the seminars of sociology, where I heard one of my friends presenting a paper, I was wondering whether she was speaking English. Later I realised that it is a mixed effect of subject-specific terminology and vocabulary opulence. Obviously, I didn't feel included. Terminology too develops from social context. Some fixed body of language terminology and vocabulary poverty and elite-dominance structurally bar the flow of knowledge from alternative (native/local/subaltern) sources and traditions of knowledge.

Although 20% of our respondents indicated that the discipline of sociology is not completely exclusionary, they also insisted that it was not open about itself. The way it is practised marginalises female academicians and restricts the ability of researchers to bring forth data and ethnographies from diverse journals at the subnational level. Similarly, scholars who are not fluent in English are seen to be working on "less important themes" even if their ideas are absolutely original. They also face suspicion from established figureheads in their disciplines as to whether their work is "really sociological." As some of our respondents noted, this kind of branding decreases the job prospects of these practitioners.

Another issue, which was reported by about 90% of our respondents, is financial exclusion. Our respondents pointed out three ways in which financial exclusion works to keep a large mass of underprivileged students from getting fully integrated in the disciplines they had the opportunity to be a part of.

First, they speak of the uncertainty that exists in institutions that do not have a fellowship system, which leaves many research scholars coming from rural and semi-urban areas in distress. They make it to such prestigious institutions only after facing intense competition. Confronting the lack of financial assistance at that point is really heartbreaking. It creates a psychological insecurity among students and increases the pressure to qualify for a Junior Research Fellowship, the process for which is arbitrary. Second, financial assistance can be sustained in a dignified manner if the governing bodies of institutions have autonomy. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. This has hampered both student intake and faculty recruitment, leading towards mediocrity. Third, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has been asked to grade the performance of scientists and research scholars in the scientific fields. This approach—of objectively quantifying performance based on which governing body will approve aids, grants, and fellowships—will create a precarious situation for research scholars in the social sciences and humanities. Our participants feared that given the UGC's and other quasi-state institutions' inclinations towards natural science, the matrix suggested by CSIR

(which funds natural science research only) might be implemented for the social sciences and humanities as well.

Support of the Educational System

After analysing a number of issues that affect relationships between academic institutions, journals, and research scholars, now let us address the question which constitutes the title of this article: Can research scholars be producers of knowledge? Our respondents did not provide us with any easy-to-preach, ready-made answers. Research scholars claimed that they are both consumers and producers of knowledge at the same time, although the former outweighs the latter by a considerable margin. The reasons range from worries about being perceived as inadequate by the scholarly community to the challenges of writing in ways required by academic journals. Nevertheless, they strongly felt that creating valuable producers of knowledge out of research scholars needs support from the whole education system, primarily to sustain the passion to be part of the knowledge production process. A few of our respondents felt that research scholars are not a uniform category and are divided by institutional and social locations. One of them elaborated on it in the following manner:

It depends on who, when, with whom, where is he/she doing the research, irrespective of the topic. The motivation for research is very critical here. It also depends significantly on the supervisor. One may be motivated to engage seriously with her/his topic, but if the supervisor's objective is to maximise the number of PhD-holders under her/his supervision, then it is totally research for research's sake. In many cases, it has been observed that the supervisor is too big to be of any help. The role of supervisor in this regard of knowledge consumption vis-à-vis knowledge production is of utmost importance for two main reasons: (a) the supervisor has more knowledge and experience so she/he would be in a better position to guide the research scholar in either direction; (b) PhD is done in most cases under a feudal setup. The power enjoyed by the supervisor and [the] vulnerability of the scholar could be detrimental to the main purpose of research. A frustrated scholar might shift from [having] enthusiasm to produce knowledge to being a mere consumer.

Apart from the research scholar-supervisor relationship, our respondents raised other pertinent concerns regarding them being considered producers of knowledge. The accounts of three respondents presented below lay out these arguments.

Respondent 1: "For good quality field study-based work, you need good funding. We don't have [it]. The government decisions are regulated by corporate companies. [Due to the] lack of adequate funds, the quality of our research is comparatively bad with [respect to] EU academia. To be a good producer of the knowledge, we need to invest greatly in the area, otherwise we are consumers of them from the western world."

Respondent 2: "Depends on the particular policymaking of the government with respect to higher education. Right now, I am a bit sceptical and I hope that the research in India does not turn itself into a passive entity rather than an area of inclusion as it should be. The less stifling the information flow, the better. Otherwise, the research scholars are both receptors as well as innovators."

Respondent 3: "The role of institution is another important factor. A liberal environment is the basic need for knowledge. If the state and administration put hands together to kill the free-thinking ability of the scholars for their own political agenda, then certainly it is a clear case of state-sponsored production of mere consumers of knowledge. The larger political scenario in a society plays a fundamental role. Knowledge is what liberates us, but it cannot be produced without a liberal environment. The state policies too decide it. If the UGC, for

example, promotes maximisation of publications, then that would certainly increase the number of publications through paid journals which as argued above is detrimental to knowledge production.”

Conclusions

The neo-liberal construct of the academic world (Connell 2013), with rules regarding publication in UGC-approved journals, and “points” for attending national and academic conferences systemically manufactures underachievers amongst research scholars. Connell (2008) has written about the international politics of knowledge production with the creation of the global North and the global South. The global South is an object of study for the global North. It refuses to become a homogeneous entity. Within the global South itself, there are hierarchies constructed along various axes, which affect research scholars in myriad ways. Within this paradigm, while studies on originality in the social sciences and humanities might remain a goal for many, the structural constraints posed by the practitioners of the discipline on the one hand and the exclusionary nature of quality journals on the other, serve to keep research scholars out of the purview of knowledge production. Even if they are becoming producers, a vast majority of research scholars’ work is published in journals that are not considered to be trailblazers in their fields. Thus, despite the attempts of the UGC to make research scholars

producers of knowledge, the latter are not getting much help from journals. This is as true about the research scholars in India, as it is about their counterparts located in the elite academic institutions in the global North. A cursory look at journals like *Current Sociology*, *Current Anthropology*, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, and *Journal of Agrarian Change*, to name a few, would not show much difference from what our study has highlighted regarding the position of research scholars.

Therefore, we suggest that the wasteful “sociology in crisis” debate be relegated to the dustbin of history. In its place, a more inclusive approach, as suggested by our respondents, needs to be considered. The relationship between research scholars and institutional researchers should be a non-hierarchical structure. Established academic journals can open their gates to more papers solely authored by research scholars without compromising on the quality of work. This will reduce the patron–client relationship that has emerged in academic publishing in which research scholars need the name of their supervisors or some other senior researchers to get their work published. Journals can commit to publishing at least one paper by a research scholar per issue. Thus, research scholars can become worthwhile producers of knowledge, with or without the UGC’s publication requirements.

NOTES

- 1 Institutions like Mysore University require PhD students to get at least two research papers published.
- 2 In another line of argument, Guru (2002) and Kumar’s (2016) have deconstructed the bubble of meritocracy, objectivity and originality theses of the studies published on India. By bringing the question of “egalitarianism” in social sciences in general and sociology in particular, both Guru and Kumar, with their articles spread over a gap of 14 years, have argued that knowledge production in the Indian social sciences is deeply “inegalitarian” with “upper caste, male academicians” making and breaking the rules of the game. It is the deeply subjective biases of these gatekeepers of knowledge that has curtailed the growth of new concepts, theories and ideas emerging from the Dalit-bahujan hinterland. Although, there has been considerable volume of work that has emerged in India endorsing Guru and Kumar’s line of argument, neither our study nor our respondents see this as the only way we can look at the issues of research scholars and their special relationship with academic institutions—academic journals dynamics. To the extent that a majority of our respondents refused to share their caste affiliation with us. Of the 40 respondents, only one said that caste can be considered as a special marker in the hierarchy. According to our other respondents, while it might be true of the established academicians in which researchers who belong to marginalised castes and tribes and also work on them might not get adequate representation in the academic publications, however, research scholars as a group itself are severely underrepresented in the field of academic publications. It was also not possible for us to locate the caste and tribe of all the authors, whose papers got published in the five journals under our scanner. A more detailed aspect of caste discrimination and research scholars was out of scope of this study.
- 3 The 2015 YRW was sponsored by University Grants Commission-Special Assistance Programme

(UGC-SAP) of the Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad. The 2016 YRW was jointly sponsored by University Grants Commission-Special Assistance Programme (UGC-SAP) and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). The 2017 academic writing workshop was again sponsored by the UGC-SAP.

- 4 The notion of “repute” comes with the consciousness that both the participants as well as the Indian state (through its National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) scoring) considers these institutes to be representative of quality education, pedagogy and research. As we will show in a while, faculty from these institutes also contribute the most in terms of academic journal publication.
- 5 Except the journal *Economic & Political Weekly* which is published by the Sameeksha Trust, all other journals are published by Sage Publications.
- 6 It is beyond the scope of this study but can provide fertile ground for further research.
- 7 One just has to check the websites of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University in New Delhi and University of Hyderabad in Hyderabad, to give just a few examples, to get a sense of the gender composition of both research scholars and faculty members alike.

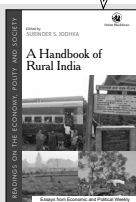
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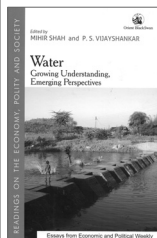
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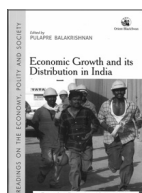
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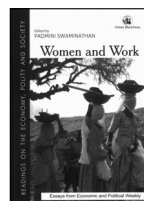


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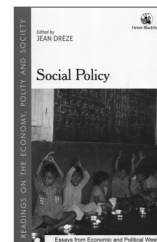
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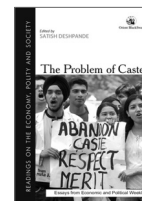


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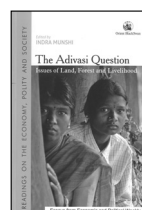


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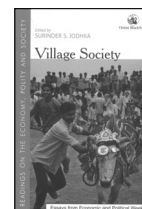


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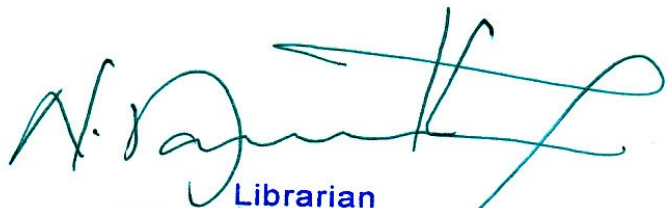
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