



AGRICULTURE, AGRICULTURIST AND THE STATE OF THE VULNERABLE GROUP-SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES IN CONTEMPORARY AGRARIAN SCENARIO IN INDIA

Dr. Rashi Krishna Sinha

Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Dr Shakuntala Misra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow.

Abstract

The taste of the pudding is in eating, so is the case of any policy prerogative that is initiated in the name of well being of millions of tillers, who leave no stone unturned to produce the produce-food grains, of land, which only suffice for their subsistence and fill the belly of millions more who never care about how was that produced. In the 21st century much fanfare is made about the tertiary sector but when it comes to access the growth outcomes of policies, policy makers are in a want of an appropriate explanation, which is most like the same as it was previously but framed in a new way. That is why at one point of time in the recent past the then Finance Minister was compelled to say that everything is doing well but I do not know what to do with agriculture. The significance of the primary sector in the national output in the course of development, plight of the tiller with respect to number, area operated and size of holdings, the composition of agricultural workers, contribution of agriculture in the State Gross Domestic Product of few selected states vis-à-vis national level average, the sources of income generation of the people in rural India from different economic activities and the state of indebtedness in rural India is analytically examined. The economic state of the vulnerable section of our social strata–Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes, vis-à-vis the state of poverty and the average size of holdings is analyzed. An effort has been made to analytically examine five tehsils of Faizabad district of eastern Uttar Pradesh regarding their employment in different setups-government, public and the private, their monthly income of highest earning household members and their income source with respect to the SC & the ST households in particular and the national and the State level at large is also depicted.

The paper is based on secondary data taken from the budget speeches, economic survey of the government of India, research papers, journal etc.

Keywords: *Agriculture, Agriculturist, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.*

I

The significance of agriculture in the economic growth and development of a nation cannot be over emphasized. It is the intrinsic value of this primitive occupation itself that it can neither be exaggerated nor down played as well. The pertinent question of interest in comprehending the significance of agriculture vis-à-vis the other sectors of the economy is how without compromising the needs of agriculture and facilitating its growth and development the other sectors can also flourish and expand. It has been experienced by the economies across the globe that as the economies grow the share of agriculture in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declines. What matter is the involvement and engagement of people in agriculture for their livelihood and income generation for their survival? In case the declining share of agriculture in the State and the National Gross Domestic Product is accompanied by improved land-man ratio in agriculture and reduction in dependence on agriculture for their subsistence, it is acknowledged as a positive or welcome indication.

Established men of eminence¹ and many others have emphasized on a relative declining share of agriculture in value added. It was W A Lewis who in his paper² emphasized that many economies across the globe in the early stage of economic development opted for a two-sector growth approach in which industry was the prime motivating factor and the labour, which was in abundance in the subsistence sector, and other resources that were to be transferred from the subsistence sector to the capitalist sector, i.e., industry with a backing from the government.

Kuznets's analysis (1966), tried to establish that a rise in productivity in agriculture is a precondition for economic growth and structural change since only then agriculture generates surplus and is in position to fulfill its developmental requirements. Schultz (1964) stated, "Many countries are industrializing. Most of them are doing without taking comparable measures to increase agricultural production. Some are industrializing at the expense of agriculture. Only a few countries are obtaining substantial economic growth from both industry and agriculture sector, so it is a real source of economic growth."³

¹ Fisher (1940), Lewis (1954), Kuznets (1955), Chenery and Syrquin (1975)

² Lewis (1954)

³ Chapter I(The Problem and Its Settings) page 4.



One is reminded of what Nehru said in 1947, “Anything can wait but not agriculture”. In the contemporary economic scenario in India the farmer is waiting and so is the state of agriculture. India’s experience of development path has been different from the rest of the economies. Even though the contribution of agriculture and the allied activities in the GDP has gone substantially low the dependence on it of the majority of the farm households for the survival is quite considerable. The pathetic situation of the tiller remains where it was at the time of the initiation of developmental planning in India. In a labour surplus economy, like India, with low level of literacy, inadequate infrastructure and inadequate subsidiary employment-income opportunities, agriculture was the main source of livelihood at the time of the First Five Year Plan and still in the year 2017 it is the only source of livelihood for substantial per cent of the population in India. The increase in the number and the percentage of the tiller at the verge of being hand to mouth is well depicted from the empirical evidence furnished by the Agricultural Census 2010-11, which reveal that about 83.6 percentage of the total operational land holding fall in the category of marginal and the small category. The marginal category comprises of 63.6 percent and the small category has 20.0 percent respectively in the 83.6 percent. For the period 2001-2011 there has been an increase of 23 % of marginal operational holdings, i.e., from 75.41 million to 92.83 million in numbers. As far as the small operational holdings are concerned, for the respective period, the increase was of 9 %, i.e., they increased from 22.70 million to 24.78 millions in numbers. At the same time for the medium and the large operational holdings there was a drop in 3 % and 11 % respectively for the respective period.

Coupled with the fact is an alarming situation surfaced in the survey undertaken by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO)⁴ that 40 percent of the farming community finds farming unprofitable as entity and wants to quit. This needs to be viewed vis-à-vis a fact that a substantial fraction of the tillers across the nation are not protected through crop insurance, more significantly they have no idea of crop insurance.

The state of peasantry in India is confronted with the complex problem of contradiction. The average size of land holdings in India in the marginal category has reached to 0.39, the area under cultivation is reducing coupled with the increasing urbanization and erection of the jungle of concrete on arable lands is underway on large scale pose a challenge before technology, productivity and sustainability issues. The marginal and the small category of size holding are more significant as they constitute a substantial percentage in the total of all the size groups, especially the marginal size group, i.e., <1 hectare. One may find a substantial increase in the number and area operated in the marginal category size group over a period since 1970-71. This is quite critical as the average size considerable low than that of the maximum limit up to less than one hectare. It may not be inappropriate to infer from the empirical figures in the respective category that the income derived from this size group will hardly suffice to meet the basic minimum requirements for survival.

Table 1 reveals that the highest increase in the number of holdings in the marginal category was noticed during 2005-06 and 2010-11 and if the whole timeframe is divided into pre and post reforms (pre1991 and post 1991) then in that case one finds an increase in the number in the post reform period been more than the pre-reform period, i.e., if a comparison is drawn with respect to 1970/71-1990/91 and 1990/91 and 2010/11, the increase in the latter period is more. This fact couple with the same trend in the area operate in the marginal category of size holdings, with is also the same not identical, for the respective timeframes makes the gravity of the situation more prominent. As far as the average size of the holdings are concerned their size has remained more or less constant and about 0.61 hectare below the limit of the respective category, i.e., <1 hectare.

Table 1: Number of Holdings, Operated Area and Average Size of Holdings-All Social Groups

Social Groups		1970-71	1976-77	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01*	2005-06*	2010-11
Marginal	A	36200	44523	50122	56147	63389	71179	75408	83694	92826
	B	14599	17509	19735	22042	24894	28121	29814	32026	35908
	C	0.40	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.40	0.38	0.39
Small	A	13432	14728	16072	17922	20092	21643	22695	23930	24779
	B	19282	20905	23169	25708	28827	30722	32139	33101	35244
	C	1.44	1.42	1.44	1.43	1.43	1.42	1.42	1.38	1.42
Semi-Mediun	A	10681	11666	12455	13252	13932	14261	14021	14127	13896
	B	29999	32428	34645	36666	38375	38953	38193	37898	37705

⁴ NSS 59th Round 2003



	C	2.81	2.78	2.78	2.77	2.76	2.73	2.72	2.68	2.71
Medium	A	7932	8212	8068	7916	7580	7092	6577	6375	5875
	B	48234	49628	48543	47144	44725	41398	38217	36583	33828
	C	6.08	6.04	6.02	5.96	5.90	5.84	5.81	5.74	5.76
Large	A	2766	2440	2166	1918	1654	1404	1230	1096	973
	B	50064	42873	37705	33002	28659	24160	21072	18715	16907
	C	18.10	17.57	17.41	17.21	17.33	17.20	17.12	17.08	17.38

Source: All India Report on Agriculture Census 2010-11, based on table 4.1 page 27 **Note:** 1. * Excluding Jharkhand. 2. One row pertaining to all sizes is not taken from the original. 3. **A** stands for Number of Holdings (in'000), **B** stands for Operated Area (in'000 ha.) and **C** stands for Average Size (in ha.)

If one look at the column number 2 & 3 of table number 2 one finds that the trend is reverse between the cultivators and the agricultural labourers. As one move forward from 1951 to 2011 the percentage of cultivators in the category of agricultural workers goes down by 26.8 percent between the years 1951 to 2011 where as there is a rising trend in agricultural labourers in the category of agricultural workers of the same magnitude, i.e., 26.8 % respectively. If the analytical examination is done by dividing the given period into pre-1991 (1951 to 1991) and post-1991(1991-2011) one can see that in the pre-1991 period the rise in the number of agricultural labourers, in percentage terms, equaled the decline in the cultivators, in percentage terms, i.e., 12.2% and for the post1991 the decline in the number of cultivators, in percentage terms equaled the increase in the number of agricultural labourers, in percentage terms, i.e., 14.6%.

Table 2: Population and Agricultural Workers (in millions)

Year	Total Population	AAEGR** (%)	Rural Population	Total Workers	Agricultural Workers		
					Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1951	361.1	1.25	298.6 (82.7)	139.5	69.9 (71.9)	27.3 (28.1)	97.2
1961	439.2	1.96	360.3 (82.0)	188.7	99.6 (76.0)	31.5 (24.0)	131.1
1971	548.2	2.20	439.0 (80.1)	180.4	78.2 (62.2)	47.5 (37.8)	125.7
1981	683.3	2.22	523.9 (76.7)	244.6	92.5 (62.5)	55.5 (37.5)	148.0
1991	846.4	2.16	628.9 (74.3)	314.1	110.7 (59.7)	74.6 (40.3)	185.3
2001	1028.7	1.97	742.6 (72.2)	402.2	127.3 (54.4)	106.8 (45.6)	234.1
2011	1210.2	1.64	833.1 (68.8)	481.7	118.8(45.1)	144.3(54.9)	263.1(54.6)

Note: **AAEGR-Average Annual Exponential Growth Rate. 1.For 2001, figures includes estimate figures for those of three subdivisions viz. Mao Maram, Paomata and Purul of Senapati district of Manipur as census results of 2001 Census in these three subdivisions were cancelled due to technical and administrative reasons. 2.The 1991 Census could not be held owing to disturbed conditions prevailing in Jammu & Kashmir. Hence the population figures for 1991 of Jammu & Kashmir have been worked out by interpretation'. The data on workers in Col.5-7 exclude J & K. 3 The 1981 Census could not be held in Assam. The figures for 1981 for Assam have been worked out by interpolation. The data on the workers in Col 5-7 exclude Assam. 4. Figures in parenthesis in Col. 4 are percentage to the Total Population.5 Figures within parentheses in Col. 6and col.7 are percentage to Col 8. Figures within parentheses in Col. 8 is percentage share of Agriculture Workers in Total Workers
Source: Pocket Book of Agriculture Statistics 2015 Table 3.1, page 24

Furthermore, the different level of wages that can be earned from economic activities in agriculture is depicted in the table number 3. One can notice the wage differences in various agricultural operations. None in itself is sufficient enough to suffice their subsistence needs as is evident from column 12 &13.



Table 3: All India Annual Average Daily Wage Rate for Various Agricultural Operations (in rupees)

Crop Year	Ploughing		Sowing		Weeding		Transplanting		Harvesting		Agricultural Wages	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2006-07	81.79	42.37	73.29	41.41	64.97	52.82	69.17	56.44	68.45	55.69	71.53	49.75
2007-08	91.38	49.96	79.28	57.18	70.07	58.27	73.79	61.93	75.24	62.31	77.95	57.93
2008-09	102.90	55.43	90.00	65.00	80.15	68.02	83.28	71.43	87.05	71.58	88.68	66.29
2009-10	120.85	70.43	104.52	79.47	92.78	78.94	98.29	86.71	102.82	84.95	103.85	80.10
2010-11	145.51	87.23	125.75	98.17	111.22	95.79	120.19	104.17	122.53	102.36	125.04	97.54
2011-12	170.47	99.09	152.07	120.14	134.01	117.67	140.14	124.79	148.49	123.29	149.04	117.00
2012-13	204.11	121.25	177.36	141.17	158.87	139.31	165.17	146.84	176.17	144.83	176.34	138.68
2013-14	259.03	185.39	219.51	179.66	---	---	---	---	217.97	182.36	232.17	182.47

Source: Labour Bureau. Courtesy: Pocket Book of Agricultural Statistics 2015, table number 8.16 page 78-79. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, GoI.

Note: 1. Sowing includes Planting/Transplanting/Weeding for the Crop year 2013-14. 2. All India annual average is calculated from 20 major States. 3. Agricultural Wages is average of five operations.

Volatility in agriculture is quite a natural phenomenon. It was found to be higher than other economic activities in agriculture and allied activities. As per the official estimates between 2005-06 and 2013-14, the coefficient of variation was only 0.27 in case of overall GDP⁵ growth but 0.69 for agricultural GDP. Significantly, vagaries of monsoon are the dominant reason. The intensity of this can be better gauged from the fact that notwithstanding the continuous efforts the substantial segments of the farming community-the marginal and the small farmers, is at the receiving end.

Table 4: Share of Agriculture and Allied activities in State GSDP at constant 2004-05 prices

Share of agriculture and allied sector in GSDP	States
30 % and above	Arunachal Pradesh
20-29%	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, J&K, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh
15-19%	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Telangana, West Bengal
Less than 15 %	Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu

Source: CSO. Courtesy: State of Indian Agriculture 2015-16. Chapter 1, table 1.1 page 5.

From the table 4 the share of agriculture in the economy of respective states is quite evident. Furthermore, the inter-state and temporal difference in agricultural growth needs to be taken into account vis-à-vis states. It has been observed and stated in the official documentation that Madhya Pradesh has the highest agricultural growth of 9.3 % with low coefficient of variation of 0.9 per cent whereas Bihar has the attained the average growth of 4.7 per cent but the coefficient of variation was 3.1% for the same period-between 2005-06 and 2013-14 respectively.

⁵ State of Indian Agriculture 2015-16, page 2.



II

Notwithstanding the efforts to generate off farm employment the percentage of agricultural workers in the total workers has come down from 58.2 percent to 54.6 percent during 2001-2011, as per census 2011. It is important to note that the NSSO 68th Round points out that the share of primary sector in total employment has gone below 50 percent for the first time in 2011-12.

In absolute terms the agricultural workforce in the total workforce has been 238(398) million, 269(459) million, 245(460) million and 232(474) million for the years 1999-2000, 2004-05, 2009-10 and 2011-12 respectively. It is worth mentioning here that the tardy pace of structural transformation in agriculture is attributed to the unavailability of opportunities of nonfarm employment in rural areas. Since the employment opportunities are not available or do not suffice to the needs-productive as well as unproductive, of the farming community at large so they take loan from different sources. Gradually these amount increase and they fall prey to the trap of indebtedness.

In continuation of the above statement one may interpret the impact of the fact that out of 89.35 million farmer households, 43.42 million (48.6%) were reported to be indebted, on the socio-economic harmony of the rural society. Estimated prevalence of indebtedness among farmer households was highest in Andhra Pradesh (82.0%), followed by Tamil Nadu (74.5%) and Punjab (65.4%). Estimated number of indebted farmer households was highest in Uttar Pradesh (6.9 million), followed by Andhra Pradesh (4.9 million) and Maharashtra (3.6 million). Going by principal source of income, 57% farmer households were cultivators. Among them 48% were indebted. More than 50% of indebted farmer households had taken loan for the purpose of capital or current expenditure in farm business. Such loans accounted for 584 rupees out of every 1000 rupees of outstanding loan. Marriages and ceremonies accounted for 111 rupees per 1000 rupees of outstanding loans of farmer households. Among the states the proportion was highest in Bihar (229 rupees per 1000 rupees), followed by Rajasthan (176 rupees per 1000 rupees).

Table No 5: Indebtedness of Agricultural Households (all-India) in Different Size Classes of Land Possessed

Land Possessed (Hectares)	Estimated Number of Agricultural Households (Lakh)	% of Total in each Class	Estimated Number of Indebted Agricultural Households (Lakh)	% of Total in each Class	% of Indebted Agricultural Households to Total	Average Outstanding Loan Amount (in rupees)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Upto-0.01	23.89	2.65	10.02	2.1	41.9	31100
0.01-0.40	287.66	31.89	135.97	29.0	47.3	23900
0.41-1.00	314.81	34.90	152.16	32.5	48.3	35400
1.01-2.00	154.58	17.14	86.11	18.4	55.7	54800
2.01-4.00	84.35	9.35	56.10	12.0	66.5	94900
4.01-10.00	33.02	3.66	25.21	5.4	76.3	182700
10 & above	3.71	0.41	2.92	0.6	78.7	290300
All India	902.01	100.00	468.48	100.0	51.9	47000

Source: NSSO. Courtesy: Pocket Book of Agricultural Statistics 2015, table number 11.2 page 96. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare GoI. **Note: 1.** Reference period for land possession and indebtedness is "as on the date of survey". **2.** Indebtedness relates to all kind of outstanding loans for which taken.

Table 6: Incidence of Indebtedness (IoI) and Average Amount of Debt (AoD)

Occupational Category	I o C %	A o D per Household (Rs)	A o D per Indebted Household
1	2	3	4
Rural			
Cultivator	45.94	70580	153640
Non-Cultivator	28.85	25741	89221
All	31.44	32522	103457
Urban			
Self Employed	35.85	108714	303221
Others	20.96	82094	391724
All	22.37	84625	378238

Source: NSS KI (70/18.2): Key Indicators of Debt and Investment in India. Statement 3.4, page 15. Status as on 30-06-2012.



The percentage of indebted households, representing incidence of indebtedness (IOI) and average amount of debt (AOD) per household as on 30.06.12 for rural and urban areas of India can be seen from the table 6. The respective table reveals that the IOI was about 31.4 % among the rural households and 22.4% among the urban households. In 2002, these were 26.5% and 17.8% respectively. The AOD per household is seen to be less in the rural sector than in the urban, the values being Rs. 32522 and Rs. 84625, respectively. One must take note of the important fact the incidence of indebtedness among the cultivator is the highest when compared to the non-cultivators (28.85%), all in rural category (31.44%), the self-employed (urban category) (35.85%), other (20.96 %) (urban category) and all (urban category) (22.37%) respectively. Compared to this, the AOD per indebted household was Rs. 103457 and Rs. 378238 in the rural and urban sectors, respectively. In rural India, indebtedness is found to be more widespread among the cultivator households than among their non-cultivator counterparts. At the all-India level, 46% and 29% of the cultivator and non-cultivator households, respectively, were indebted. Also, compared to the cultivator households, the AOD is observed to be much less (little more than one third) among the non-cultivators. The AOD for cultivator households was found to be Rs. 70580.

Table 7: Incidence of indebtedness (IOI) and average debt per household (AOD) by asset holding class (all India)

Decile class of hh asset holding	Rural			Urban		
	IoI (%)	AOD per hh (Rs.)	AOD per Indebted hh(Rs.)	IoI (%)	AOD per hh (Rs.)	AOD per Indebted hh(Rs.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	19.62	9705	49478	9.34	5587	59808
2	22.30	8819	39554	14.63	11934	81587
3	27.05	13811	51053	20.16	20075	99572
4	27.46	15673	57077	24.16	28430	117662
5	30.95	18800	60746	21.67	29915	138076
6	32.99	23441	71047	23.44	36751	156807
7	32.69	28770	88006	23.77	55519	233609
8	37.33	37662	100877	25.42	91069	358212
9	42.64	56658	132867	29.41	168470	572822
10	41.32	111884	270747	31.74	398457	1255405
All	31.44	32522	103457	22.37	84625	378238

Source: NSS KI (70/18.2): Key Indicators of Debt and Investment in India .Statement 3.5, page 15.

It is evident from the table 7 that as one moves from the lower to the higher decile the incidence of indebtedness increases, it stands true for rural and the urban areas. While in of the rural areas the incidence of indebtedness range within 20 percent to 43 percent over the deciles in case of urban areas it is from 9 percent to 32 percent. As far as the average outstanding debt per household is concerned, one can find a steady increase as one move from lower to the higher decile. This trend is similar for both the rural and the urban areas. It is quite pertinent to take cognizance of the fact that the average outstanding debt of the highest decile is about 12 times higher than that of the lowest decile class for rural India. This ratio is even higher for the urban areas. However, the AOD per indebted household of the top decile class is 5.5 times of bottom decile class in rural India and 21 times in urban India.

Table 8: Percentage Share of Debt by Broad Purpose of Loan for each Asset Holding Class-All India

Decile Class of hh Asset Holdings	Rural				Urban			
	% share of debt in business			% share of debt in non business	% share of debt in business			% share of debt in non business
	Farm	Non-Farm	All		Farm	Non-Farm	All	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1	9.4	6.0	15.4	84.6	0.1	1.1	1.2	98.8
2	7.7	3.7	11.4	88.6	1.2	6.8	8.0	92.0
3	8.1	5.5	13.6	86.4	0.4	18.8	19.2	80.8
4	13.2	4.6	17.8	82.2	2.9	10.7	13.6	86.4
5	16.7	6.1	22.8	77.2	2.6	18.4	21.0	79.0
6	20.2	7.4	27.6	72.4	2.8	13.6	16.4	83.6
7	32.6	5.8	38.4	61.6	3.4	11.5	14.9	85.1



8	31.1	5.6	36.7	63.3	3.0	12.8	15.8	84.2
9	37.2	7.4	44.6	55.4	1.6	7.4	9.0	91.0
10	34.3	21.2	55.5	44.5	2.1	21.9	24.0	76.0
All	28.6	11.4	40.0	60.6	2.2	16.1	18.3	81.7

Source: NSS Report no. 577: Household Indebtedness in India. Statement 3.19 page 42.

The purpose for which one seek loan cannot and shall not be overlooked. This is because the loans taken and utilised for productive purposes such as capital or current expenditure in household enterprises (agriculture or non-agricultural) can be expected to accelerate the economic activity of the households and ultimately promote their economic welfare. Hence if a large number of a household have taken loans for productive purposes it is a sign of flourishing economic activity in the society. On the other hand, purpose like meeting household expenditure may be considered as ‘unproductive purposes’ as the money spent on them neither results in production of goods and services nor brings any economic prosperity to the households. Such loans, if large or frequent, may lead to perpetual debt and misery. Any study of indebtedness, therefore, would be incomplete without knowledge of the distribution of debt according to different purposes. The distribution, as revealed by the NSS Report⁶, is presented in the table 8. From it one can find that the households of the bottom decile class incurred a relatively small part of their debt for productive purposes. In the rural sector, the percentage share of debt for productive purposes is seen to vary from 15.4 percent to 55.5 percent among the decile classes. The corresponding increase in urban area was from 1.2 percent in the lowest class to 24 % in the top class. Further, the percentage share of debt against ‘non-business’ is seen to decrease from about 84.6 percent in the bottom class to about 44.5 % in the top class in the rural and from 98.8 % in the bottom to 76 % in the top class. It is important here to note that as one moves down from the lowest decile to the top decile in the rural segment one finds that the percent of debt in non-business category descends with an exception of decile 3 where the value of percent of share in non-business category, refer column 5, is 86.4%-which is more than its preceding value. While in case of percent of share of debt in none—business category, refer column 9, for the urban sector shows an erratic (non-uniform down ward movement) trend. Although fewer loans may be taken for a particular purpose, the average amount of loans may be large enough to affect the importance of that purpose, especially in the allocation of loan funds by the financial institutions.

III

The social, political and economic state of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) is a matter of concern. They suffered discrimination at all levels - social, political and economic. They were compelled follow the profession of their ancestors. Consequently, this group remained at the lowest end of the economic hierarchy as well. Notwithstanding the criticism levelled against different ruling governments that they have ignored the well being of this vulnerable social group of our social fabric much has been achieved, yet far more can be done. It is nice that over the period of time there has been a decline in the level of poverty in the respective social group-the SC & the ST.

The SC have seen a larger percentage points decline in poverty than the general population between 1993-94 and 2004-05 as well as 2004-05 and 2011-12, column 7 & 8, in the table 9. The result has been a substantial narrowing down of poverty rates between the SC and the general population. The ST have also seen a significantly larger percentage points reduction in poverty than the general population during the second of these periods though not the first. Both SC and ST have, of course, seen a far more rapid decline in poverty during the second period than the first. It is also significant to note that the decline in the poverty among the SC for the period 2004-05 to 2011-12 has been more than being observed in any of the social groups mentioned in the respective table, i.e., table 9 (column 8), in rural, urban and the rural and urban combined values.

Table 9: Poverty by Social Groups 1993-94 to 2011-12

Social Groups	Share in Population	Percent Population below the Tendulkar Line				Percentage Point Poverty Reduction	
		1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	1993-94 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2011-12
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rural							
ST	11.1	65.9	62.3	47.4	45.3	3.7	16.9
SC	20.8	62.4	53.5	42.3	31.5	8.9	22.0
OBC	45.0	44.0	39.8	31.9	22.7	9.0*	17.1

⁶ NSS report 577, page 42 & 43.



FC	23.0		27.1	21.0	15.5		11.6
All	100.0	50.3	41.8	33.3	25.4	8.5	16.4
Urban							
ST	3.5	41.1	35.5	30.4	24.1	5.6	11.4
SC	14.6	51.7	40.6	34.1	21.7	11.1	18.8
OBC	41.6	28.2	30.6	24.3	15.4	5.8*	15.2
FC	40.3		16.1	12.4	8.1		8.0
All	100.0	31.9	25.7	20.9	13.7	6.2	12.0
Rural + Urban							
ST	8.9	63.7	60.0	45.6	43.0	3.7	17.0
SC	19.0	60.5	50.9	40.6	29.4	9.6	21.5
OBC	44.1	39.5	37.8	30.0	20.7	8.1	17.1
FC	28.0		23.0	17.6	12.5		10.5
All	100.0	45.7	37.7	29.9	22.0	8.0	15.7

Source: Panagaria & More-Working Paper Number 2013-02. SIPA & ISERP. Table No 1 page 6-7. Note: 1. ST-Scheduled Tribes, SC-Scheduled Castes, OBC-Other Backward Castes, FC- Forward Castes. 2. Column numbers are not given in the working paper referred. *Estimated using comparable estimates of poverty among the OBC and FC combined in 2004-05, which came down to 35 % (Rural), 22.5 % (Urban) and 31.4% (Rural + Urban) in 2004-05 by the author (Panagaria & More).

Given the fact that majority of India still resides in the rural areas and a substantial number of people have agriculture as their main or major contributing source of income for their livelihood. One may refer to table number 10 below which depict the average size of operational holdings in different size of groups-marginal, small, semi-medium, medium & large, in SC & ST category, as per agricultural census report 2010-11.

Table 10: Average Size of Holding –Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes

S. No	Size group		Average (in ha.)						
			1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01*	2005-06*	2010-11
1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Marginal	SC	0.36	0.37	0.35	0.35	0.36	0.37	0.37
		ST	0.48	0.48	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.49
2	Small	SC	1.41	1.41	1.41	1.40	1.40	1.38	1.40
		ST	1.43	1.43	1.44	1.43	1.42	1.39	1.43
3	Semi-Medium	SC	2.71	2.70	2.70	2.67	2.67	2.66	2.66
		ST	2.74	2.73	2.74	2.70	2.69	2.67	2.70
4	Medium	SC	5.84	5.78	5.77	5.73	5.72	5.72	5.70
		ST	5.98	5.95	5.89	5.79	5.80	5.76	5.74
5	Large	SC	16.44	16.24	16.70	16.48	16.27	15.91	15.99
		ST	15.88	15.87	15.78	15.24	15.26	16.32	15.95
	All	SC	1.15	1.05	0.98	0.91	0.86	0.83	0.80
		ST	2.44	2.25	2.07	1.84	1.76	1.64	1.52

Source: Table is compiled by the author from the Agricultural Census 2010-11 table number 1 (b) page number 14 and table number 1 (c) page number 15. **Note:** * Excluding Jharkhand.

The average size of holdings in the marginal category for the SC reveals a substantial difference [0.63 hectare] between the stipulated the respective category, i.e., <1 hectare and the factual figure of 0.37 for the year 2010-11, column 9. This will no doubt affect the earning of the respective social class. When compared to ST, the ST seems relatively better but yet considerably difference is evident in that too. So if in the light these facts one can well imagine state of destitute not poverty in the respective social group from 1980-81 to 2010-11. It is important to initiate measures in direction to increase the production and productive of this size groups and these social classes. Before one further examine the engagement of the vulnerable social group-the SC & the ST, it would be better to have a glance over table 11 & 12 respectively. Table 11 reveals that the SC & the ST households engagement in different institutional set up-the government, the public and private from where they draw their salary at the all India, the State level (U P) and the five tehsils of Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh.



Table 11: SC & ST Households with Salaried Jobs

Code with Tehsil Name		Total Households	Total Households in respective Category	% of Households in respective Category	No. of Households in jobs in respective Categories			% of Households in jobs in respective Categories		
					In Govt. jobs	In Public Sector	In Private Sector	In Govt. jobs	In Public Sector	In Private Sector
All India	SC	179787454	33164085	18.45	1310256	308619	801780	0.73	0.17	0.45
	ST		19737399	10.98	861283	115319	291788	0.48	0.06	0.16
State	SC	26015592	6191757	23.80	181685	70398	118996	0.70	0.27	0.46
	ST		176604	0.68	6258	2871	5217	0.02	0.01	0.02
District Total	SC	377144	105086	27.86	3914	1508	814	1.04	0.40	0.22
	ST		947	0.25	50	51	17	0.01	0.01	0.00
001 - Rudauli	SC	75067	22729	30.28	420	122	27	0.56	0.16	0.04
	ST		34	0.05	4	0	1	0.01	0.00	0.00
002 - Milkipur	SC	85537	26016	30.41	770	247	108	0.90	0.29	0.13
	ST		168	0.20	9	0	3	0.01	0.00	0.00
003 - Sohawal	SC	62621	17752	28.35	974	298	172	1.56	0.48	0.27
	ST		122	0.19	4	3	3	0.01	0.00	0.00
004 - Faizabad	SC	76540	20704	27.05	1307	278	169	1.71	0.36	0.22
	ST		415	0.54	26	10	5	0.03	0.00	0.01
005 - Bikapur	SC	77379	17885	23.11	443	563	338	0.57	0.73	0.44
	ST		208	0.27	7	38	5	0.01	0.05	0.01

Source: Compiled by the author from socio-economic caste census 2011.

Table 12 analytically examined the state of the vulnerable social group-the SC & the ST with respect to the monthly income of the highest earning household members in SC & ST category households and the income sources of the respective category. From table 11, column 8 & 10 respectively, it is evident that there are quite considerable percent households with monthly income less than rupees five thousand in the SC category. At the same time the percentage of household in more than rupees ten thousand income bracket, column 10, is less than one percent in three tehsils and in two of them, namely, Rudauli and Milkipur.

If one refers to table 13 column 12 & 13, one finds that the percentage of households engaged in different economic activity-as revealed by the income source head of the respective columns, manual casual labour, column 13, has the highest percentage of those households who are relying on income from this source for their survival. When it comes to the tehsil level it is only in case of Rudauli and Milkipur tehsils that the percentage of households engaged in cultivation, column 12, comes to double digit. To gauge the magnitude and the intensity of people affect on can refer to the columns 3, 5 and 6 which furnish the figures in absolute numbers.

If one look at the respective tables 11, 12 and 13 one can well imagine the state of well being of the vulnerable social group-the Sc & the ST with respect to the level of income they have at their disposal and what could be standard of living they may be affording. This poses a great challenge for the objective of inclusive development to become truly inclusive for all irrespective of class, colour, creed, caste, region and economic status.



Table 12: Monthly Income of Highest Earning Household Members in S C & ST Category Households

Code with Tehsil Name	Total Households		Total Households in the respective category	% of Households in the respective category	No. of Households with monthly Income of highest earning household member			% of Households with monthly Income of highest earning household member w.r.t Total HH		
					5000 <	5000 - 10000	> 10000	5000 <	5000 - 10000	> 10000
1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
All India	SC	179787454	33164085	18.45	27709894	3892780	1548994	15.41	2.17	0.86
	ST		19737399	10.98	17079464	1765828	883487	9.50	0.98	0.49
State Total	SC	26015592	6191757	23.80	5102280	820534	265676	19.61	3.15	1.02
	ST		176604	0.68	143667	24403	8486	0.55	0.09	0.03
District Total	SC	377144	105086	27.86	87729	13034	4323	23.26	3.46	1.15
	ST		947	0.25	664	213	70	0.18	0.06	0.02
001 - Rudauli	SC	75067	22729	30.28	20570	1737	422	27.40	2.31	0.56
	ST		34	0.05	19	12	3	0.03	0.02	0.00
002 - Milkipur	SC	85537	26016	30.41	21800	3404	812	25.49	3.98	0.95
	ST		168	0.20	108	46	14	0.13	0.05	0.02
003 - Sohawal	SC	62621	17752	28.35	14309	2460	983	22.85	3.93	1.57
	ST		122	0.19	106	13	3	0.17	0.02	0.00
004 - Faizabad	SC	76540	20704	27.05	16837	2496	1371	22.00	3.26	1.79
	ST		415	0.54	317	65	33	0.41	0.08	0.04
005 - Bikapur	SC	77379	17885	23.11	14213	2937	735	18.37	3.80	0.95
	ST		208	0.27	114	77	17	0.15	0.10	0.02

Source: Table is compiled by the author based Socio-Economic and Caste Census 2011.

Table 13: Income Source of SC & ST Households

Code with Tehsil Name/Social Group SC & ST	Total Households		% of Households in the respective category	No. of Households with Income Source in the respective category								% of Households with Income Source in the respective category							
				Cultivation	Manual Casual Labour	Part time or Full time Domestic Service	Foraging/Bag Picking	non-Agricultural Own Account Enterprise	Begging/Charity/Alms collections	Others	Cultivation	Manual Casual Labour	Part time or Full time Domestic Service	Foraging/Bag Picking	non-Agricultural Own Account Enterprise	Begging/Charity/Alms collections	Others		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
All India	SC	33164085	18.45	5089826	23308739	725073	90501	319132	153198	3451789	339	12.11	0.10	0.05	0.19	0.07	2.92		
	ST	19737399	10.98	7492508	10150150	382683	43155	124785	43808	1499790	417	3.63	0.22	0.02	0.07	0.03	0.83		
State Total	SC	6191757	23.80	1822805	3733663	121104	5424	30042	13157	448116	701	14.44	0.43	0.03	0.10	0.03	1.71		
	ST	176604	0.68	80918	84436	3789	416	874	1754	15340	623	0.36	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06		
District Total	SC	105086	27.86	30081	67382	1415	20	252	231	3543	798	17.87	0.38	0.01	0.07	0.06	1.90		
	ST	947	0.25	208	381	23	1	0	8	123	606	0.15	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03		
001 - Rudauli	SC	75067	30.28	9209	12799	257	1	36	19	575	1227	17.05	0.32	0.01	0.07	0.07	2.50		
	ST	34	0.05	8	21	0	0	0	1	7	601	0.03	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06		
002 - Milkipur	SC	85537	30.41	9915	14681	347	9	47	62	955	1159	17.16	0.41	0.01	0.05	0.07	1.12		
	ST	168	0.20	85	77	1	0	0	1	20	606	0.09	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02		
003 - Sohawal	SC	62621	28.35	2985	13236	213	2	37	28	1259	177	21.33	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.01	2.06		
	ST	122	0.19	15	95	1	0	0	1	16	602	0.15	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02		
004 - Faizabad	SC	76540	27.05	3218	13471	238	1	36	42	1877	120	20.21	0.31	0.01	0.07	0.03	2.16		
	ST	415	0.54	63	287	21	1	0	2	41	606	0.37	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05		
005 - Bikapur	SC	17885	23.11	4755	11195	440	1	36	50	1585	615	14.47	0.37	0.00	0.07	0.06	1.78		
	ST	208	0.27	53	101	0	0	0	1	30	607	0.13	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06		

Source: The table is compiled by the author based on Socio-Economic and Caste Census 2011.



On the basis of the analytical examination of the informations it may not be incorrect to draw a inference that even though efforts have been made at large scale to meet the challenges confronting the farming community, especially the marginal and the small farmers, the vulnerable social group, i.e., the SC & the ST. With the fragmentation of the operational holdings the numbers and the area operated in the marginal size group has increased considerable, the need of the hour is to undertake measures to increase production and productivity in the respective size groups for all social groups. Application of science and technology conducive to sustainability and environment must be available, accessible and affordable for all falling in the marginal size group and the small size group. Even though government has initiated steps at massive scale for the financial inclusion of those outside the ambit of financial services in the remotest of the remote areas but the issues of indebtedness cannot be resolved through loan wavier schemes, there is an urgent need to look at this aspect as the institutional sources are becoming vocal on the prudence of populist measures rather than pragmatic steps. Given the stark reality of their economic status coupled with indebtedness the effective role of crop insurance schemes [which has not been taken up in this paper] initiated by the Central government can be looked at as a cover for the farmers against uncertainty and risk. Here the role of the State governments is quite vital. The States should take lead in this regard. A wide all encompassing awareness programme needs to be initiated in this regard. Experts from the agricultural universities shall identify the gray areas with respect to production and productivity among size groups and social groups and make a effective road map to reach the targeted group. The benefits of crop diversification shall reach the vulnerable social group discussed in this piece of work and subsidiary employment opportunities shall be effectively executed.

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