

Asset Distribution in Rural Jammu and Kashmir : An Inter-temporal Analysis

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Jammu and Kashmir is one of the few states where land reforms were introduced in the fifties. These reforms have been considered as one of key factors which have engineered basic changes in the rural economy of the State. Distribution of assets, particularly land distribution, thus, assumes a special significance in the context of Jammu and Kashmir. Against this backdrop this paper attempts to present time trends in the asset distribution in rural Jammu and Kashmir with special reference to land distribution.

From the analysis of the land distribution data it is obvious that compared to rest of the country land distribution is less skewed in Jammu and Kashmir. This could be safely attributed to the agrarian reforms undertaken in the State right from early fifties. Though the land concentration has marginally increased in the recent years yet the absolute values of inequality indices continue to be reasonably low.

The State's experience in land distribution highlights the significance of land reforms in reducing asset inequalities in the rural areas where land occupies a key position in the asset structure.

The analysis also shows a high degree of proliferation of marginal and tiny holdings. This is a disturbing phenomenon of far reaching consequences. Changes in the techniques of production and cropping pattern can go a long way in making these holdings viable.

I Perspectives and Objectives

Income and asset distributions are linked up through a strong interactive association. This, in turn, affects the levels of living and intensity/magnitude of poverty. Studies have shown that a major source of income inequality in India is the skewed