

## **Scheduled Castes Households in Rural Maharashtra: Findings of an Empirical Study in Early 1980s**

**Anand S Nadkarni\***

*Over the years number of agricultural developmental programmes have been introduced by the Government for the development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population in Maharashtra. However, not many studies have assessed the impact of these programmes on these deprived sections of population using the survey data collected from rural households. This study evaluates the impact of agricultural developmental programmes introduced by the Government of Maharashtra on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, using the data collected from 54,833 households covering 219 villages from 25 districts in Maharashtra.*

### **I Introduction**

The Government of Maharashtra decided in July 1978 to undertake an evaluation study for assessing the impact of its agricultural development programmes on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) population in the state. As desired by the Government the study was undertaken jointly by the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE) and seven Universities in the state which showed willingness to participate in the project. The seven universities were: Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani; Marathwada University, Aurangabad; Panjabrao Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola; Nagpur University, Nagpur; Shivaji University, Kolhapur; University of Bombay and University of Poona. At the initial meeting of the representatives of GIPE, Universities, the Planning Department of the Government of Maharashtra (GOM) and the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Maharashtra (DESM), it was decided to invite the GIPE to co-ordinate the (survey) work by the participating Universities and also to prepare the final report. The representatives of the GIPE (Professor N. Rath, Director, GIPE and Professor A.S. Nadkarni, who was placed in overall charge of the project), the representatives, one each of seven universities and Director, Additional Director, DESM constituted the Research Team.

The starting point of the study was to be a survey of rural households, covering all the districts of Maharashtra except Greater Bombay. The survey was undertaken in May 1981 to May 1982. At the time of the survey the number of districts in Maharashtra leaving out Greater Bombay was 25. (This number increased later to 29 through sub-division of some districts). For the conduct of the survey the 25 districts were distributed among the seven universities. It was decided that a University Representative (UR) would nominate two teachers from colleges located in a district assigned to his University as Teachers - Supervisors (TS) and that the actual work of the survey of rural households would be carried out under the supervision of TS and the overall direction of the concerned UR by college students to be selected on the basis of their background, ability, willingness to work, honesty, degree of involvement in rural society and so on. It was to be ensured that a Student-Investigator (SI) for the survey of households in a selected village should be resident of that village or a nearby village. There would be two SIs for survey work in a village, one of whom would belong to SC/ST population.

\* Indian School of Political Economy, Senapati Bapat Marg, Pune 411 016.