

Differential Land Use: Inclusion or Exclusion of Tribal People



Sociology

KEYWORDS : exclusion, inclusion, land, risk, vulnerable.

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ABSTRACT

The geographic coverage of the survey is limited to the POWERGRID project site, i.e. Garhgaon and Tengaria villages of Ranchi district where the project affected tribal people are living. The current manuscript has been prepared on account of analysing survey data. The study also identifies the grounds for the adverse contact of the project on the tribal people who are particularly vulnerable in many ways: losing productive land and livelihood. The research involves both primary and secondary data collection, which are both qualitative and quantitative in nature.

Introduction

POWERGRID for the construction of 765/400 KV Ranchi Sub-station has acquired a total of 36.59 hectares (ha) of land from two villages of Garhgaon and Tengaria. The acquired land is categorised into private (36.23 ha) and government land (0.36 ha). The physical possession and demarcation of land is completed by the district administration on the 29th April, 2011 (Ray, 2012).

In tribal society, the land is considered as 'use value' because production gained from land is instantaneously consumed by the community itself. Hence, tribal people value land with great interest and enthusiasm for their living and livelihood. However, in industrial production system the same land produces a large amount of commodities for which the green land is converted into firm house that is convenient for easy 'exchange of commodities'. With the more value addition capacity of industry against agriculture, it is decided by the planners and administrators to award land in favour of industry (Saha with Sen, 2007). Hence, tribal people are excluded and alienated from their regular workings in their respective fields for the perceived public purpose (Penz, Drydyk and Bose, 2011). Hence, they are facing exclusion (isolation) rather than inclusion (integration) for so-called public benefit and rhetorically they are assured better rehabilitation assistance¹ (RA), which is only proved as adverse inclusion or contact that is in between integration and isolation (Nathan and Xaxa, 2012).

Methodology

The area of study covers two affected villages, Garhgaon and Tengaria of Ranchi district, Jharkhand. The information is collected at the family level through the method of household survey from all the affected tribal people. The objectives and scope of study were discussed with the affected tribal people of the study area. The list of affected persons was obtained from the POWERGRID Office located at Ashok Nager in Ranchi.

Results

Land Acquired and Number of Household Affected by POWERGRID Project, Ranchi 765/400kv Substation

Table I: Land vs. Caste

Category	ST	SC	GEN	OBC	Government	Total
Land Acquired in Hectare	32.80 (89.64)	0.60 (1.63)	0.40 (1.09)	2.43 (6.64)	0.36 (1)	36.59 (100)
No of Households (HH)	344	19	22	31	NA	416

Source: Rita Ray, Utkal University, 2012

In parenthesis read the percentage

Note: NA stands for not applicable.

Table I portraits about land loss of different castes as well as the number of households affected because of POWER-

GRID project. Out of 36.59 hectares (ha) land acquired, only ST category has lost 32.80 ha land (89.64%). ST category is followed by OBC who has lost 2.43 ha land (6.64%). SC category has lost 0.60 ha that is 1.63 per cent. General category has lost only 0.40 ha land (1.09%). The project has acquired a meagre of 0.36 ha (1%) government land. Similarly, out of total 416 households affected by land acquisition 344 (82.69%) households belong to ST category. Next to ST category, 31 (7.45%) households belong to OBC. The household numbers 22 (5.29%) belong to general category who has lost land to the project. A total of 19 (4.57%) SC households have lost land due to land acquisition.

Table II: Land Holding Status of Castes before and after Land Acquisition

Category	Before Land Acquisition				After Land Acquisition			
	ST	SC	OBC	GC	ST	SC	OBC	GC
Land holding in hectare	297 (344)	4.48 (19)	30.84 (31)	13.02 (22)	264.49 (344)	3.88 (19)	28.41 (31)	12.62 (22)
Average landholding per HH	0.89	0.24	0.99	0.59	0.79	0.20	0.92	0.57

Source: Rita Ray, Utkal University, 2012

Note: HH stands for household and figures in parenthesis stands for number of household.

Before land acquisition, 344 households belonging to ST have owned 297 ha of land with an average land holding of 0.89 ha. Each ST household has lost an average of 0.10 ha in the process of land acquisition. In comparison, each OBC household has lost an average of 0.07 ha. It is followed by SC and general category household with an average loss of 0.04 ha and 0.02 ha respectively. However, the average land holding size is highest among OBC category though it is tribal dominated area, i.e. each OBC household has owned 0.99 ha before land acquisition and it is decreased to 0.92 ha in post land acquisition period.

Table III: Caste vs. Compensation Utilisation

Planning/Category	Land purchase		Business		House building		Investment		Marriage		Household expenses	
	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%
ST	07	1.68	22	5.29	42	10.10	36	8.65	94	22.6	143	34.37
SC	00	0.0	00	0.0	00	0.0	00	0.0	04	0.96	15	3.61
OBC	05	1.20	07	1.68	09	2.16	08	1.92	02	0.48	00	0.0
General	04	0.96	12	2.88	02	0.48	04	0.96	00	0.0	00	0.0
Total	16	3.84	41	9.85	53	12.74	48	11.53	100	24.04	148	37.98

Source: Field Work, 2012

Land purchase, business and investment through saving in different banking institutions as well as purchasing of tractor and auto rickshaw are termed as productive utilisation. Alternatively, house building, marriage and household expenses

including expenses on festivals and alcohol are considered as unproductive utilisation of cash compensation in lieu of land. Out of 344 ST households, 279 (67.07% out of 416 households) or 81.1% out of 344 tribal households have planned to utilise their cash compensation in unproductive way and the rest 65 ST households have planned to utilise their cash compensation in productive way. All the 19 SC households, 11 out of 31 OBC households and only 02 out of 22 GC households have planned to expense their cash compensation in unproductive way.

Discussion

In Uraon's (a tribe) lexicon, 'land' is Sat-pati-raji (Fr Lakra, 2007:2)² or seven strip of land: both outer and inner part of earth involving water, forest and minerals. It is livelihood. They grow mixed crops, collect fruits and roots, rear fowl and goat for food as well as gather wood, sand and stone for domestic use. Hence, land is used as a token of satisfying basic needs rather than maintaining luxurious life style as modern society determines (Ekka, 2012). According to the tribal people of study area, a tribal person can own land by clearing surface or a person as long as contact an area of land with its eye. Land is not only meant in terms of physical utility or socio-economic relation but also it is sacred for them. This is because spirits which guide them for up keeping life-cycle move around earth. Similarly, after owning land they form political organization to maintain equilibrium in society.

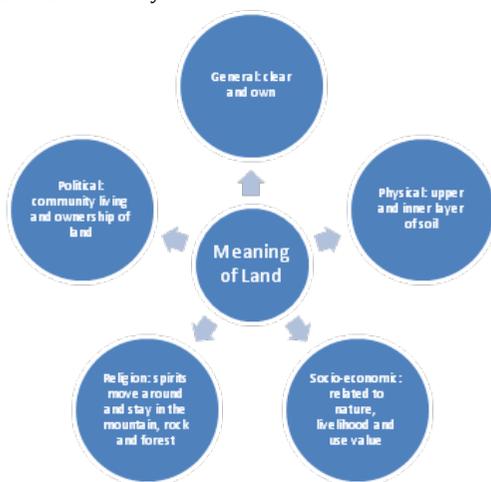


Figure I: Meaning of Land by tribal people

POWERGRID has acquired cultivable paddy land for constructing a power substation at Garhgaon- Tengaria that affects 416 households of which 344 households (82.69%) belong to tribal community (Table I). From the focus group discussion with affected tribal community, it is revealed that the firm house has offered temporary labour work for few households only. It symbolises that most of the households have lost a part of their agricultural land which assures a secured sustainable livelihood. Hence, many members from the affected households face the risk of landless, jobless, food insecurity and marginalisation (Cernea, 1996). Ekka and Asif (2000) estimate that about 7.96% of the total landmass in Jharkhand has been acquired during 1951- 1995 for different development projects. In all the cases it is claimed that development projects relegate socio-economic status of thousands of tribal households. This is because it is seen from Table II that all the affected tribal households have lost average 0.10 acres of land as against 0.02 acres of land by general caste people. Again land acquisition affects only 22 households of general caste as against 344 tribal households. Similarly, more than three-fourth households out of 344 tribal households have intended to utilise their cash compensation that they receive in lieu of land unproductively (Table III). It holds that tribal people are disoriented how to utilise cash compensation that they receive in large amount instantly. Hence, after a short span of time they face the risk of cashless and become vulnerable forever with accepting trouble till death. In other words, they have no access to realise development or regain their past life-style due to land acquisition. This is because land is considered as an important input to grasp development.

Conclusion

In this work it is intended to understand how land acquisition has changed tribal life and livelihood. Hence, the perceptions of land losers have been investigated in two affected villages, namely Garhgaon and Tengaria. It is viewed from the gathered data and discussion that there is absence of accessing development provisions in rural tribal area in terms of opportunity, planner's enthusiasm and functional promotional activities. Inclusion of affected tribal people, therefore, needs some imperative conditions for expanding capabilities among the land losers: creating new social network system through banking and self-help groups (SHGs), orientation programme on proper utilization of cash compensation, provision of training and timely required services for tribal farmers and regular guidance from the planners unless they will remain excluded from the mainstream society.

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