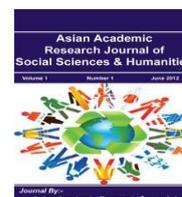




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“DIGGING BORE WELL IS DIGGING YOUR GRAVE”

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Abstract

Chittoor district is one of the chronically drought affected Rayalaseema Districts of Andhra Pradesh. It covers a geographical area of 15,152 sq. km. Administratively the district is divided into 3 Revenue divisions, namely Chittoor, Madanapalli, and Tirupati, Which are further sub-divided into 66 Revenue mandals. Farmers are mostly dependent on ground water for their irrigation purposes. The district receives moderate rainfall. Failure of monsoons during the last few years lead to failure of bore wells and failure of crops That has created a distress situation in the farming community. Further, absence of credit facilities at lower interest rates, lack of remunerative prices for their produce, negligible/absence of a supplementary income to farmers, indiscrete drilling of additional bore wells and their failure have turned the farmers into debt trap. Prevailing high interest rates by moneylenders have jeopardized their interests leading to suicides. At present 1, 76,983 Bore wells were dug in chittoor District Groundwater has failed in chittoor district. Between 1997 and 2006, about 4,500 farmers committed suicide, as they were unable to repay loans they had taken to drill bore wells. The April 2010 report also says that the groundwater level on an average in Andhra Pradesh has fallen 12meters below ground level in the past year, the lowest since March 2007. Between May 1998 and March 2010 the water level has fallen two meters below average in the state. The study is based on a stratified sample drawn at random from different points of the chittoor district, and including all age groups. For the sample in this study, almost all socio- economic and health status indicators-including income, poverty, landholdings, debt position, rate of interest, loan providers are taken into account. The present study concludes that bore drillers provide no permanent route to escaping poverty, debt and suicides. Slowly the farmers are changing to daily laborers and petty business as part of occupational mobility.

Key words: Community. Bore Well, Poverty, Rayalaseema, Suicide