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DALIT HOUSEHOLDS IN VILLAGE ECONOMIES

edited by

V. K. Ramachandran and Madhura Swaminathan



Caste is an institution of oppression and social discrimination specific to South Asia, more so to India. Although there have been, in recent years, new scholarship and new attempts to understand the socio-economic conditions of life of Dalit people and households in India, it is still true, as a leading scholar in the field has written, that "very few empirical studies have tried to study the phenomenon of economic discrimination." This book is an attempt to contribute to the study and understanding of economic deprivation and exclusion among Dalits in rural India. The first section of the book deals with poverty and group discrimination. The second section has case studies – from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal – on historical aspects of land, caste, and social exclusion. The third section deals with contemporary fieldwork-

based economic analyses from Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. The last section has studies of Dalit households in village economies; the empirical base for these studies comes from the village-level data archive of the Project on Agrarian Relations (PARI) being conducted by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies.

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