Land Ownership Security and Social Sustainability in Rural Pakistan

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**Abstract**

In the process of development, social sustainability mainly focuses on the need of people while promoting social inclusion of the poor people through empowerment, building resilient societies, and accessibility to strong institutions. While keeping in view the social sustainability of rural areas, this article evaluates the impact of secured property rights on per head expenditures, crop productivity, and poverty status of rural households by using cross-sectional data of 341 rural households in Punjab, Pakistan. Land has a strategic position in rural areas because of its multidimensional roles but its distribution is unequal. The study proceeds in two steps. The first-stage estimates the determinants of tenancy arrangements by employing linear probability model. Owner-cultivators are more likely to be males, educated, having physical assets while fixed-rent tenants are more likely to be females, less educated and having fewer assets. The results of the instrumental variable analysis show that secured property rights tend to enhance per head expenditures and farm productivity and reduce the household poverty. The results also show that physical assets like land, farm equipment and human capital like education have positive and significant impact on per head expenditure, farm productivity and have negative and significant impact on poverty level. Policy makers should focus to improve the access to land which is critical to improve welfare and reduce poverty. There is need of revisiting the issue of land tenure security and access to credit by formulating and implementing land reforms in Pakistan.

**Key Words:** social sustainability**,** crop productivity, land tenancy, household welfare