



"Socio Economic Conditions of Agricultural Labour in India"

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KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Labour is the most important input in increasing production in traditional agriculture. At the early stage of development of human civilization, since land was available in plenty, increase in labour supply led to the clearing of more land for bringing under cultivation. At this stage of development the increase in labour supply was a boon to the society. It made positive contribution and helped in increasing agricultural production. Modernizing agricultural involved introduction of new technology. New technology innovations required increased use of capital in agriculture. Even with the use of more capital and new technology, a number of farm operations require intensification of labour use such as seed bed preparation, weeding, irrigation and harvesting. Thus labour is of critical in modern agricultural development also.

Agricultural labourers constitute the most neglected class in the economy oppressed but their employment is also irregular and seasonal. Since they possess no skill or training they have no alternative employment opportunities either majority of agricultural labourers belong to economically and socially backward sections. They are not organized and cannot fight for their rights. Therefore, their economic condition has not improved even after five and a half decades of planning.

Agricultural employed about 193 million about 67.53 percent of total workforce of 286 million in India in 2001 (Census Atlas, 199, P 57). But it contributed only about 2405 percent of GDP. It indicates low levels of the average per-capita productivity of the agricultural workers.

MEANING OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

The term agricultural labour in India is used to denote that section of labour force which works in agricultural, but primarily, in the land owned by other, in the words, all those persons who derive a major part of income as payment for work performed on the farms of others can be designed as agricultural labourers.

The second agricultural labour enquiry committee of 1956-57 told who were engaged in agricultural and allied activities like animal husbandry, dairy piggy, and poultry farming. National commission on labour

"Agricultural labourer is one who is basically unskilled and unorganized and has nothing except his labour to earn livelihood. As such, the major part of the income of such worker is derived from wages for work on land.

TYPE OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

The first agricultural labour Enquiry committee had classified agricultural works in to two categories.

1. Attached Labourers
2. Casual Labourers

1. ATTACHED LABOURERS

Attached labourers are those workers who are attached to some cultivator household on the basis of a written or rural agreement. These workers are not allowed to move on to an employer of his choice. Attached labourers perform very long hours of work, and

their nature of work, and their nature of work is regular. The attached labourers are further classified in to.

- Bonded labourers
- Long term farm servant
- Tied labourers

a) Bonded Labourers

A bonded labourer is one who pledges himself or something a number of his family against alone. The bonded labourer binds himself to work for the creditor for a certain number of years or till the loan is finally repaid

b) Long Term Farm Servant

Long term farm servants are those who serve in the field of land Lords for considerably long period of time.

c) Tied Labourers

Tied labourers are the permanent labourers who are attached Labourers who are attached to agricultural households.

2) Casual Labourers

Workers not falling in the category of attached labourers are known as casual labourers. They are at their liberty to work on the farm of any farmer and they are at their liberty to work on the farm of any farmer and they usually receive wages on a daily basis casual labourers are further classified into

- a). Small farmer
- b). Tents
- c). Share croppers

a). SMALL FARMER

Small farmers are those who have very small holdings and are thus forced to work on the farms of others.

B). TENTS

Tents are those who worked on leased land out this are not their main source of income. The main source of their income is work, performed on the land of others.

c). SHARE CROPPERS

Share croppers are those who besides sharing the produce of land cultivated by them, also work as labourers.

Distinction between agricultural labour and cultivator.

Who work on their own or leased land for themselves. In other word cultivators are those small farmers who work themselves on their own or mortgaged land without hiring other laborers, they have very small land holding and are thus forced to work on the farms of others to make both ends meet. Thus, cultivators work, both as farmers and workers.

On the other hand, agricultural labourer refers to a person who derives a major part of his income as payment for work performed on the farms of others. In other words, agricultural labourer is a person who works on other hand for wages. He is hired by land lords to per wages. He is hired by land lords to perform the

agricultural operation on wage basis. The agricultural labourer has no land of his own or work on leased land by himself. **Therefore, the agricultural.** Therefore, the agricultural labourers has nothing except his labour to earn livelihood.

Size of agricultural labourers:

The number of agricultural labourers has continuously increased since 1921. today, every fourth person of the labour force is an agricultural labourers. The causes for this enormous rises in India are increase in population, slow growth of small and cottage Industries, eviction of small farmer's existence of uneconomic holding, large indebtedness, and capitalist agriculture. The rapid growth of agriculture labour force during the last ten decades.

Growth of agricultural labourer in India (in lakhs)

Year	Number	Year	Number
1881	75	1961	320
1891	187	1971	480
1911	216	1981	555
1921	210	1991	747
1951	280	2001	1,074

Source: - Population Census India.

It is clear from the Table that the number of agricultural labourers was Just 75 Laksh in 1881 and in 1921 their number increased to 210 lakh which constituted nearly 17.4% total labour force. The number has again increase to 280 lakh in 1951 and it has continuously increased since them. As per the census 2001, the numbers of agricultural workers were 1,074 lakh (10.07 million), which is 26.691% of the total labour force. The proportion of agricultural labourer to total number of workers in different census year.

Year	1901	1921	1951	1971	1981	1991	2001
Percentage of agrilabour	16.9	17.4	19.7	26.33	26.15	26.20	26.69

Source: - population Census Reports

CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

The main characteristics of agricultural labour are as:

1. The agricultural labour is highly migratory in character.
2. The agricultural workers basically unskilled consequently, their bargaining power is limited. Thus the supply is perfectly elastic.
3. Agricultural labour is unorganized and they are unable to make strong union.
4. The agricultural labour is hardly ever covered by any rules and regulations adopted by the Government.
5. The employer of agricultural labour himself may not be a person of high means.
6. Most of the labourers belong to backward classes like harijans tribal people etc.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and sample size

As per my research design I am planning to take total number of 500 respondents 100 from each village will be selected using random sampling procedure. This study is based on simple and rapid comparison of frequency percentage is suggested as an alternative to scoring and scaling methods.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Data will be collected with the help of specific research tools (1) observation (2) interview (3) interview schedule (4) records (5) secondary information would be collected from the district head quarter from government records, interviews, and interview schedule would mainly focus upon the aspects of social change among the agriculture labour.

Conclusion

It is one the primary objects of the five year plan to ensure fuller opportunities for work and better living to all the sections of the rural community and in particular, to assist agricultural labourers backward classes to come to the level of the rest. One of the most distinguishing features of the rural economy of India has been the

growth in the number of agricultural workers, cultivators and agricultural laborers engaged in crop production. The phenomena of underemployment, under-development and surplus population are simultaneously manifested in the daily lives and living of the agricultural labourers are likely to be the worst hit, through adverse impacts on wages and employment opportunities directly in agriculture, and through multiplier effects, indirectly in nonagricultural as well. This paper deals with economic of agriculture labourers in India.

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