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An Economic Analysis Of Agricultural Labours In India – An Over View

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Abstract:

The study on agricultural labour problems of India as well as Karnataka is very important. Agriculture plays a significant role in the economic development of India. It is the backbone of rural India and it is the largest sector of the country"s economic activities, growth and development. It provides livelihood for 60 percent total population of India which is engaged in agricultural activities and it provides employment to 51 percent of the country"s workforce. An agricultural labour in India faces various problems. By agricultural labours mean those who work on the land of others on wages. The present study also found that the main Objective: To know the socio-economic status of the agricultural labourers in India. Methodology of the study- the study includes primary method and secondary methods of data collection and empirical study only. The paper includes problems of agricultural labours, government policy measures, findings and suggestion for improvement of the agricultural labour conclusion. The present study also focused on the condition of the farmers and agricultural labourers depend on the intensity of monsoon. If monsoon is good then crop is good and vice-versa. Agriculture labour is counted in the category of unorganized sector, so their income is not fixed. The study concludes that agricultural labourers condition is not good in India and government should take some proper action to improve the conditions of agricultural labour in India.

Key words: Indian Agricultural Labour Problems, Growth of Agricultural Labourers, Agricultural Labour Measures, Agriculture Labour Prospects, Suggestions and Findings.

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INTRODUCTION:

Agricultural plays a significant role in the economic development of India. It is a backbone of rural India and it is the largest sector of the country"s economic activities. It provides livelihood for 60 percent total population of India is engaged in agricultural activities and it provides employment to 51 percent of the country"s workforce. It is the single largest enterprise. Agricultural laboure constitutes numerically, the most important single elements among the gainfully employed population in India. Today labour has become most important production components in Indian agriculture. But agriculture in India is still depending on mercy of monsoon. Condition of farmer and laborer"s is depends on the monsoon. If monsoon is good then crop is good and vice versa. Agriculture labour is counted in category of unorganized sector so their income is not fixed. Hence they are living in insecure and underprivileged life and earning just Rs.150/day along with full uncertainty. The increase the number of agricultural labour has causes as increasing size of unorganized sector population; evictions of small farmers, uneconomic holdings, growing in debited ness, deforestation are the main causes of agricultural labour problems of India. The first agricultural labour enquiry committee was conducted by the ministry of labour in 1950-51 to probe the economic conditions of agricultural labourers. The second agricultural labour enquiry committee was conducted in august 1956-57 by the ministry of labour, through the agency of the national sample survey in the 9th and 12th rounds.

Meaning and Definitions of Agricultural Labourers:

Agricultural laboures can be defined as the involvement of any person in connection with cultivating the soil, or in connection with raising or harvesting any agricultural or horticultural commodity, management of livestock, bees, poultry etc.

According to the First Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee defined agricultural labour as a person who for more than half of the total number of days, worked as an agricultural labourer. An agricultural labourer may be the small or marginal farmer or an artisan but when a person derives his main earning by doing some agricultural work on others farm so called agricultural labourer.

According to the National Commission on Labour defined an agricultural labourers is one who is basically unskilled and unorganized and has little for his livelihood other than personal labour. Thus, agricultural workers whose main source of income is in the form of wages obtained as a result of working on land fall in this group. These workers have nothing expect their labour to earn livelihood, they are unskilled and unorganized.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

There are good number of studies focused on the problems and prospects of agricultural labourers in India. A review of past research helps in identifying the conceptual and methodological issues relevant to the study. This papers attempt to bring a brief review of the relevant research literature related to the present study.

A research article on "The World's Agricultural Labour Force 1800-1970, by D. B. Grigg (1975), explained that the 19th century agriculture employed at least three-quarter of the world"s work force. The study also found that the in 1970 agriculture employed 51 percent of the world"s economically active population. The current trends agriculture will employ only 48 percent of the working population in 1975, and 41 percent by 1985. The researchers also argued that agricultural sector has been due to a greater rate of increase in employment in mining, manufacturing and in the services industries. The study also conclude that the proportion engaged in agriculture has fallen from 72 percent on 1800 to 51 percent on 1970, the absolute numbers have risen from 541 million to 761 million over in the same period. But there has been a marked regional contract in the trends in the numbers in the agricultural labour workforce.

Aderanti Adepoju (1988), in his work on "An Overview or Rural Migration and Agricultural Labour Force Structure in Africa'. Further study explained that the economy of African countries is both predominantly agricultural and the majority of its population lives and work in the rural areas would lend strong support to the a priori reasoning that the dominant form of migration in Africa is rural to rural movement. The following sections the author presented a brief sketch of the traditional migratory movements in Africa. Such as (1) Traditional migratory movements. (2) Effects of migration on labour force structure. (3) Rural migration and the impact of agricultural policies. The study conclude that the formulation and implementation of relevant agriculture programs to more effectively utilize the energies of the rural population and rural migrants, to enhance the living conditions of the rural population, to reduce the burden of agricultural production on the aged, the woman and children should engage the prime attention of planners and agricultural specialists, bearing in mind the intended and an anticipated effects of these programs on migration.

Fung kwan (2009), in his article On 'Agricultural Labour and The Incidence Of Surplus Labour: Experience From China During Reform, describes that the contributes to the pool of studies of rural underemployment and revisits a number of estimates of surplus agricultural labour in china. The study also focused on devoted to the conceptualization, identification and measurement of surplus at regional, provincial and national levels by a stochastic frontier functional specification. Further, the study also argued that analysis indicates that the existing size of agricultural surplus labour is still significantly large with the continued practice of the household registration system and china's world trade organization (WTO) membership.

In his article on the "Agricultural labour and migration policy, by Edward Taylor (2010), point out that the farmers in high-income countries invest in the political process to gain access to foreign workers, with potentially far-reaching social welfare ramifications both at home and abroad. The researchers also examined that the unique features of the farm labour market that result in an intimate relationship between some types of agricultural production and migration policy. The study also found that the theoretical model and Monte Carlo simulations are used to illustrate the farm labour history of the United States and comparisons of

experiences across countries reveal a diversity of policies to secure workers for farms through immigration. The study also concludes that reasons the sustainability of a labor-intensive agricultural system's dependence upon low-cost imported labour.

Harjwant Singh (2017), in his research article "The Socio-Economic Conditions of Agriculture Labour: A Case Study of Tehsil Ellenabad (USA), described that the India is basically an agriculture nation, as nearly 70% of the population live in villages. The majority of the Indian rural workers are dependent on agriculture, and among the workers the number of agricultural labourers is quite high. Agriculture labourers contribute extremely towards the rural economy and also to the country"s economy. This study is a survey based. For the purpose of the study ten villages are selected from the tehsil. The considering various aspects of the study, we have decided to survey of 600 agricultural labourers from each sample village. The present study focused that the analysis the levels of socio-economic conditions of the agricultural labourers. The aim is to study the age, qualification, size of family, size of house, etc. of the agricultural labourers. In addition, an attempt has been made to study the assets and liabilities of agricultural labourers.

SCOPE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY AREA:

The study on agricultural labour problem of India is very important. The total population of the India is 121cr in 2011. Where 53% population is depend on agricultural activities. Increasing population creates land problems. Where 61 percent labour is landless agricultural labour, landless. Government employment policy has no better work in the India, labour of India are unorganized, no wage policy, most farmer holding in less than one hectares so agricultural labourproblems arises in the India

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The main objectives of the proposed study shall be An Economic Analysis of AgriculturalLabourers in India – An Over view. The study shall have the following specific objectives.

- 1. To analyses the Growth in agricultural labourers in India 1901-1920 to 2001-2010.
- 2. To study the Problems and Remedial Measures
- 3. To draw the findings and suggestions.

METHODOLOGY:

The preset study will also aim to assess the problems being faced by agricultural labourers and measures taken by the government for them. The following research methodology will be adopted for the present study area.

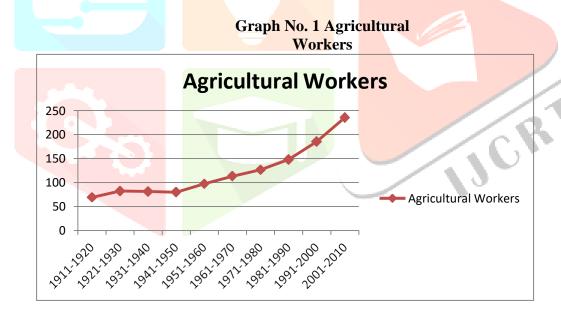
METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION:

The secondary data have been collected for the present study area. The secondary data have been collected through magazines, journals and articles and books.

Table No. 1 Agricultural Workers

Year	Agricultural	% to Agricultural	Growth per	AGR
	Workers	Workers	Annum	
1911-1920	69.21	5.68		
1921-1930	82.53	6.78	13.32	1.09
1931-1940	81.25	6.67	-1.28	-0.11
1941-1950	79.78	6.55	-1.47	-0.12
1951-1960	97.24	7.98	17.46	1.43
1961-1970	113.14	9.29	15.9	1.31
1971-1980	126.67	10.40	13.53	1.11
1981-1990	148.02	12.15	21.35	1.75
1991-2000	185.24	15.21	37.22	3.06
2001-2010	235.07	19.30	49.83	4.09
Total	1218.15	100.00	165.86	
Mean	121.82		18.43	
St Dev.	5 <mark>3.71</mark>		16.54	
CV	44.09		89.77	
CAGR	13.01		15.79	

Source: Agricultural Statistics at a Glance - 2011, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.



Interpretation:

It can be seen from the above table 1 that details Agricultural Workers during the period 1911- 1920 to 2001-2010. 1218.15 million Total number of agricultural workers in 1911-1920 to 2001- 2010 and average were 121.82 million and growth per annum was 18.43 million.

Agricultural Workers during the period 1911-1920 to 2001-2010 was 69.21 million (5.68%) in 1911-1920, 82.53 million (6.78%) in 1921-1930, 81.25 million (6.67%) in 1931-1940, 79.78 million (6.55%) in 1941-1950, 97.24 million (7.98%) in 1951-1960, 113.14 million (9.29%) in

1961-1970, 126.67 million (10.40%) in 1971-1980, 148.02 million (12.15%) in 1981-1990,

185.24 million (15.21%) in 1991-2000 and 235.07 million (19.30%) in 2001-2010.

The Growth Per Annum of Agricultural Workers was 13.32 million in 1921-1930, -1.28 millionin 1931-

1940, -1.47 million in 1941-1950, 17.46 million in 1951-1960, 15.9 million in 1961-

1970, 13.53 million in 1971-1980, 21.35 million in 1981-1990, 37.22 million in 1991-2000 and 49.83 million in 2001-2010.

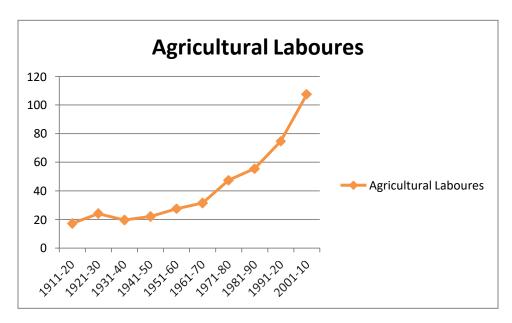
The standard deviation was 53.71 and growth per annum was 16.54, Co efficient of variation 44.09 and Growth Per Annum 89.77 and CAGR were 13.01 and CAGR of Growth Per Annumwas 15.79.

Table No. 2 Agricultural Labourers

Year	Agricultural	% to Agricultural	Growth per	AGR
_	Laboures	Labourers	Annum	
1911-1920	17. <mark>26</mark>	4.04		
1921-1930	24. <mark>06</mark>	5.63	6.8	1.59
1931-1940	19. <mark>65</mark>	4.60	-4.41	-1.03
1941-1950	22.11	5.18	2.46	0.58
1951-1960	27 <mark>.5</mark>	6.44	5.39	1.26
1961-1970	31.52	7.38	4.02	0.94
1971-1980	47. <mark>49</mark>	11.12	15.97	3.74
1981-1990	55 <mark>.5</mark>	12.99	8.01	1.88
1991-2000	74.65	17.48	19.15	4.48
2001-2010	107.44	25.15	32.79	7.68
Total	427.18	100.00	90.18	
Mean	42.72		10.02	
St Dev.	29.26		11.04	
CV	68.49		110.15	
CAGR	20.06		19.10	

Source: Agricultural Statistics at a Glance - 2011, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Graph No. 2 Agricultural Labourers



Interpretation:

It can be seen from the above table 2 that details Agricultural Labourers during the period 1911- 1920 to 2001-2010. 427.18 million Total number of agricultural Labourers in 1911-1920 to 2001-2010 and average were 42.72 million and growth per annum was 10.02 million.

Agricultural Labourers during the period 1911-1920 to 2001-2010 was 17.26 million (4.04%) in 1911-1920, 24.06 million (5.63%) in 1921-1930, 19.65 million (4.60%) in 1931-1940, 22.11 million (5.18%) in 1941-1950, 27.5 million (6.44%) in 1951-1960, 31.52 million (7.38%) in 1961-1970, 47.49 million (11.12%) in 1971-1980, 55.5 million (12.99%) in 1981-1990, 74.65 million (17.48%) in 1991-2000 and 107.44 million (25.15%) in 2001-2010.

The Growth Per Annum of Agricultural Workers was 6.8 million in 1921-1930, -4.41 million in 1931-1940, 2.46 million in 1941-1950, 5.39 million in 1951-1960, 4.02 million in 1961-1970,

15.97 million in 1971-1980, 8.01 million in 1981-1990, 19.15 million in 1991-2000 and 32.79 million in 2001-2010.

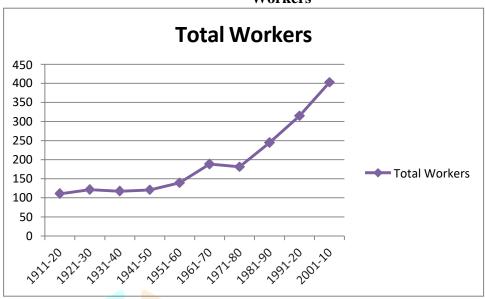
The standard deviation was 29.26 and growth per annum was 11.04, Co efficient of variation 68.49 and Growth Per Annum 110.15 and CAGR were 20.06 and CAGR of Growth Per Annumwas 19.10.

Table No. 3 Total Workers

_		VV OTROLD		
Year	Total	% to total	Growth per	AGR
	Workers	Workers	Annum	
1911-1920	110.71	5.70		
1921-1930	121.3	6.25	10.59	0.55
1931-1940	117.35	6.04	-3.95	-0.20
1941-1950	120.67	6.22	3.32	0.17
1951-1960	139.42	7.18	18.75	0.97
1961-1970	188.68	9.72	49.26	2.54
1971-1980	181.39	9.34	-7.29	-0.38
1981-1990	244.61	12.60	63.22	3.26
1991-2000	314.9	16.22	70.29	3.62
2001-2010	402.51	20.73	87.61	4.51
Total	1941.54	100.00	291.8	
Mean	194.15		32.42	
St Dev.	98.49		35.57	
CV	50.73		109.71	
CAGR	13.78		26.46	

Source: Agricultural Statistics at a Glance - 2011, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Graph No. 3 Total Workers



Interpretation:

It can be seen from the above table 3 that details total workers during the period 1911-1920 to 2001-2010. 1941.54 million Total number of total workers in 1911-1920 to 2001-2010 and average were 194.15 million and growth per annum was 32.42 million.

Total workers during the period 1911-1920 to 2001-2010 was 110.71 million (5.70%) in 1911-1920, 121.3 million (6.25%) in 1921-1930, 117.35 million (6.04%) in 1931-1940, 120.67 million (6.22%) in 1941-1950, 139.42 million (7.18%) in 1951-1960, 188.68 million (9.72%) in 1961-1970, 181.39 million (9.34%) in 1971-1980, 244.61 million (12.60%) in 1981-1990, 314.9 million (16.22%) in 1991-2000 and 402.51 million (20.73%) in 2001-2010.

The Growth Per Annum of Total workers was 10.59 million in 1921-1930, -3.95 million in 1931-1940, 3.32 million in 1941-1950, 18.75 million in 1951-1960, 49.26 million in 1961-1970, -7.29 million in 1971-1980, 63.22 million in 1981-1990, 70.29 million in 1991-2000 and 87.61 million in 2001-2010.

The standard deviation was 98.49 and growth per annum was 35.57, Co efficient of variation 50.73 and Growth Per Annum 109.71 and CAGR were 13.78 and CAGR of Growth Per Annumwas 26.46.

PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURES IN INDIA:

There are many problems faced by the agricultural labourers in India. Such as

1. Marginalization of Agricultural Workers:

The workforce in agriculture (cultivators plus agricultural labourers) was 97.2 million in 1951 and this rose to 185.2 million in 1991. As against this, the number of agricultural labourers rose from 27.3 million in 1951 to 74.6 million in 1991. This implies that (i) the number of agricultural labourers increased by almost three times over the period from 1951 to 1991; Agricultural labourers increased from 28 per cent in 1951 to 40 per cent in 1991. These facts indicate the fast pace of casualisation of workforce in agriculture in India. Moreover, the share of agriculture and allied activities in GDP at factor cost has consistently declined over the years - from 55.3 per cent in 1950-51 to 37.9 per cent in 1980-81 (at 1999-2000 prices) and further to 14.0 per cent in 2011-12 (at 2004-05 prices).

2. Wages and Income:

Agricultural wages and family incomes of agricultural workers are very low in India. With the advent of the Green Revolution, money wage rates started increasing. However, as prices also increased considerably, the real wage rates did not increase accordingly. Currently labours are getting around Rs. 150/day under the MGNREGA in rural areas.

3. Employment and Working Conditions:

The agricultural labourers have to face the problems of unemployment and underemployment. For a substantial part of the year, they have to remain unemployed because there is no work on the farms and alternative sources of employment do not exist.

4. Indebtedness:

In the absence of banking system in the rural areas and trial process of sanction by the commercial banks, farmers prefers to take loans from un institutional sources like Sahukars (moneylenders), landlords at the very high rate (in some cases at 40% to 50%). This exorbitant rate traps in the vicious circle of debt.

5. Low Wages for women in Agricultural Labour:

Female agricultural workers are generally forced to work harder and paid less than their male counterparts.

6. High Incidence of Child Labour:

Incidence of child labour is high in India and the estimated number varies from 17.5 million to 44 million. It is estimated that one-third of the child workers in Asia are in India.

7. Increase in Migrant Labour:

Green Revolution significantly increased remunerative wage employment opportunities in pockets of assured irrigation areas while employment opportunities nearly stagnated in the vast rain fed semi-arid areas.

Remedial Measures for improving the agricultural labourers in India:

The Government has shown awareness of the problems of agricultural workers and all plan documents have suggested ways and means to ameliorate the lot of these people. Measures adopted by the Government for ameliorating the economic conditions of Agricultural labourers are as follows:

1. Minimum Wages Act:

The Minimum Wages Act was passed as long back as in 1948 and since then the necessity of applying it to agriculture has been constantly felt. Means the Act is not applicable to agricultural sector.

2. Abolition of Bonded Labour:

Since Independence, attempts have been made to abolish the evil of bonded labour because it is exploitative, inhuman and volatile of all norms of social justice. In the chapter on Fundamental Rights in the Constitution of India, it has been stated that trading in humans and forcing them to do beggar is prohibited and can invite punishment under the law.

3. Provision of housing sites and houseless:

Laws have been passed in several States for providing house sites in villages to agricultural workers.

4. Distribution of Landless Laborers:

After passing legislation for fixing ceiling on land holdings, state Government acquired surplus lands and distributed it among the landless labourers. About 74 lakh acres of land were acquired as surplus land and out of which 45 lakh acres were distributed among 41.5 lakh landless labourers. But most of these lands distributed are found unsuitable for cultivation.

5. Special schemes for providing employment:

Rural Employment (CSRE), National Rural Employment Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY), and National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP), Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE), Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Project (PIREP), Food for works programme (FWP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Programme (RLEP), Drought Prone Area Programme (It was known as Rural Works Programme).

6. Special agencies for development:

Special agencies - Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency (MFAL) - were created in 1970-71 to solve the problems of Agriculture labour of the country. Providing land to landless labourers, Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (which come in with the merger of NREP and RLEGP), Desert Development Programme, National Scheme of Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Abolition of Bonded Labourer Act, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).

7. 20-Point Programme:

The Government introduced the 20-point economic programme in July 1975 in which steps were taken to improve the economic condition of landless workers and other weaker sections of the society in the rural areas. These steps include speedy implementation of ceiling laws and then distribute the surplus land among the landless, making provision for housing sites for landless labourers, abolition of bonded labour, liquidation of rural indebtedness and moratorium on recovery of loans from landless workers and reviewing of the minimum wage legislation etc.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY AREA:

Under such a situation, following findings and recommendations can be offered for improving conditions of agricultural labourers in India:

- 1. Finding is that the India increasing agricultural labour problem due to high birth rate and decreasing agricultural land, on account of river erosion and sends cover of char areas.
- 2. Increasing landless labour and uneconomic holding in the India.
- 3. The India has no implemented wage policy at all.
- 4. Government policy does not work better in the area.
- 5. The land concentrated few big farmers and landless agricultural labours are unorganized, bounded and low social status and having their ineptness, illiteracy poverty absence of alternative occupation and seasonal unemployment are found in the India.
- 6. It is creates agricultural labour problems in the India.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN INDIA:

In spite of introducing various measures undertaken by the Government, the condition of agricultural labourers still remained precarious. Under such a situation, following suggestions can be offered for improving conditions of agricultural labourers:

- 1. To implement the Minimum Wage Act seriously and to revise the minimum wagesperiodically considering the changing price level.
- 2. To improve their bargaining power, the agricultural workers should be organised through theformation of unions of farm labourers under the protection and support of the government.
- 3. To abolish serfdom among the landless agricultural labourers totally.
- 4. To rehabilitate the agricultural labourers on the acquired land declared surplus under ceilinglaws and also on the newly reclaimed land.
- 5. To create alternative sources of employment by developing small scale and cottage industries in the rural areas.
- 6. To improve- the conditions of agriculture by adopting improved intensive methods and multiple cropping

for raising the productivity of agricultural labourers.

- 7. To improve the working conditions of agricultural labourers by enforcing fixed hours ofwork, banning child labour etc.
- 8. To promote co-operative farming in the rural areas.
- 9. To improve the standard of living of agricultural labourers by organising special programmeslike Minimum Needs Programme.
- 10. To introduce social security measures for the agricultural workers and also to introduce compulsory insurance on marginal contribution and also to institute old age pension schemes for the agricultural workers by the government.

CONCLUSION:

The study concludes that the condition of agricultural workers is not so good in, their living standard and income is very low. To improve the labour working condition, to improve the rural development like better irrigation faculties, water housing etc. For the improve the conditions government should take proper steps for various aspect for agricultural labors, like wage reforms, new methods for agriculture, hours of works, improve the living conditions and overcoming the natural factors like flood, draughts and erosion etc. This paper presents that the increase in the number of agricultural labour has resulted from increase in the size of population, decline of cottage and village industries, eviction of small farmers, uneconomic holdings, growing indebtedness and growth of capitalist farming. This study also includes that near about 53% population of India is engaged in agricultural activities. But agriculture in India is still at mercy of monsoon. Here, the condition of the farmers and agricultural labourers depend on the intensity of monsoon. If monsoon is good then crop is good and vice-versa. Agriculture labour is counted in the category of unorganized sector, so their income is not fixed.

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