

**“SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF FARMERS IN MALAVALLY
TALUK, MANDYA DISTRICT, KARNATAKA STATE.”**

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I. INTRODUCTION :-

The concepts work and labour in the production of wealth are as old as human civilization itself. Labours contribution to progress of human civilization is immense. The historical monuments that we see throughout the world the labour of an age in piled stones in the form of pyramids, palaces, forts, temples, churches, mosques etc., are some of the living examples to show how labour has and had been used in course of human history. In case of India one can notice Manu’s classification of castes as social institutions which gave emphasis on creation of specialized labour force. In fact in all walks of life we notice the role of labour. But the truth is that the significance of labour was hardly appreciated in every sense of the term till the advent of industrial revolution.

In India also various research institutes and universities are busy in finding solutions to the riddles of agriculture labour problems. But the most of those efforts concentrated on labour in organized sectors and ignored its counter part- labour in unorganized sectors.

In most of the developing economics there exists abundance of unskilled labour force which cannot find gainful employment in the formal sectors. Consequently, a major change of labour force is compelled to work in the unorganized section. Not only more number of men and women but even children can be found more frequently in the unorganized enterprises which are spread over a wide location and even easily ignore legal restrictions.

The Indian village, in the past, had a peculiar type of social relations. Usually, most of the labourers were from lower castes and the landowners from upper castes. So, the relationship between the farmer and the labourer was of a domination and subordination type based on caste hierarchy. In case a labourer hailed from the same caste as that of the

landowner, the treatment was lenient, respectable and dependable but it was not so if a labourers belonged to a lower caste. The relation between the upper caste labourer and lower caste labourer was also based on caste superiority or inferiority though they belonged to the same labour class. Here, caste used to play an important role. In these circumstances, though the social distance between the farmer and the labourer was maintained, the labourer would not take it as discrimination against him in life and implicitly accepted it.

II. Statement of the problem

Agriculture forms the backbone of the Indian economy and despite concerted industrialization in the last five decades : agriculture occupies a place of pride. Being the largest industry in the country, agriculture provides employment to around 65 per cent of the total work force in the country. The significance of agriculture in the national economy can be best explained by considering the role of agriculture under different heads.

But then, in recent years, the significance of agriculture to industries is going down as many more industries have come up which are not dependent on agriculture. Under the five-year plans, iron and steel industry, chemicals, machine tools and other engineering industries, aircraft, etc., have been started. However, in recent years, the importance of food processing industries is being increasingly recognized both for generating of income and for generating of employment.

The main focus of the present study is to examine the socio-economic conditions of the farmers in Malavally Taluk, Mandya District. Malavally is a well known taluk and oldest marketing center which demands labourers. These labourers are drawn from the different socio-economic backgrounds. The present study intends to focus attention on three major aspects, such as :

1. The socio-economic and demographic background of marginal farmers and agriculture labourers in Malavally taluk.
2. To understand the working conditions under which they work.
3. To know the extent of standard of living.

III. Review of Literature

Survey of related literature is the foundation stone of research. Hence, it is advantageous to survey the work which has already been done in a particular field.

Dipak Mazumdar (1995) points out that the workers from the unorganized sector find it difficult to cross the barriers of entry to the organized sector. These factors make the distinction between the two sectors rather sharp so far as the labour market behaviour.

Sethuraman S.V. (1996) has said that informal sector as its name suggests is not formal in its character". Primarily manifest in its lack of access to the resource of all kinds capital, finance, modern technology and skills.

According to T.S. Papola (2005) in the distinction of formal and informal sector employment, at least in the manufacturing sector can be made on the basis of whether or not the employing enterprise is registered under the factories Act of 1948 for once the enterprise is a registered factor. The conditions of work get regulated. The registration is obligatory as size of employment reaches 10 workers with use of power and 20 workers without use of power. The recruitment, working conditions, hours of work, leave, payment of wages, etc., are not formalized in the case of non-factory organizations.

IV. Methodology

About the methods employed for the study Malavally taluk is popularly known as the silk of mandya. Due to its strategic position in history, polity and economy of Mandya dist, Malavally taluk could prosper in silk worm rearing and sericulture. In this chapter a brief over all picture of the taluk is presented.

The nature of the research problem, the objectives of the study and the universe of the study demand the methodology of historical approach and an empirical enquiry. Investigation has been done, mainly through the use of survey research and observation techniques.

V. Material Sources :-

The present study depends upon various tools of data collection such as :

1. Interview schedule to collect socio-economic and demographic data, working conditions satisfaction of the farmers.
2. Interviews formal and informal with the farmers agriculture labourers and official bearers of their union.
3. Observation participant and non-participant, to substantiate qualitative data generated from the above mentioned tools.

It was observed that majority of respondents were illiterates. To collect data, it was found that schedule as a tool of collection of data was most suitable. A detailed schedule containing about 75 questions to solicit information relating to socio-economic and demographic features of farmers agriculture labourer and work satisfaction, working conditions, their union activities etc., was prepared. To ascertain validity of the schedule a pre-test was conducted. After a minor modification a schedule was finalized, before the commencement of field work the research scholar contacted leaders of unions of farmers agriculture laborers of selected areas. After establishing contacts with their leaders, other resource persons, a list of all agriculture labourers was prepared. Research scholar met and interviewed selected farmers and agriculture labourers at their place of work. Before collection of data through interview the research scholar visited them and succeeded in establishing rapport with them which led the spontaneous co-operation and support to the present study. A pretest of the interview schedule was made to ward off any mistakes and confusions regarding the study.

A detailed list containing all names of farmers and agricultural labourers was prepared by survey. This was achieved by visiting places like, halagur hobli, Kiragavalu hobli, B.G. pura hobli, Kasaba hobli, 20% of universe i.e 2500 yielded a sample of 500 (male and female) farmers was proposed to select only for the study as majority of farmers were concentrated there it was decided to cover other areas in the city to have a comparative picture of agricultural labourers and their working conditions and work satisfaction.

The Setting

Malavally taluk is situated in the southern part of the Deccan peninsula and it forms the southern most taluk Mandya District, Malavally is the name by which mandya district known prior to 1980 malavally is now the headquarters of the taluk and the revenue division.

Location

The taluk lies between 12° 11' and 12° 29' north latitude and 76° 53' and 77° 07' east longitude. It is bounded on the north by Maddur Mandya and Bangalore districts, on the south by Mysore district and Bangalore rural on west by Chamarajanagar District. The region in which the taluk is situated may be classified as partly maidan and partly semi-manad, Malavally taluk is described as an undulating table land fertile and well watered by perennial rivers whose waters dammed by anicuts enrich their banks by means of canals.

Area and population 2001

Malavally taluk has an area of Sq 810.11 Km in forming percent of the total area of the state with a population of this lived in rural parts of the district. Out of the total population of 2,84,345 males constituted 1,43,124 and the 1,38,221 were females. The taluk stands 459 and 459 in respect of area and population respectively in the district. The density of population of the taluk is 347 persons per sq.km and the taluk 274 in density in the district. (Mandya Zilla Gesetter)

<u>Taluk</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Sq.Km</u>	<u>Density Population</u>
1. Mandya	4,05,898	715.90	567
2. Maddur	2,89,704	618.43	468
3. Malavally	2,81,345	810.11	347
4. K.R.Patta	2,47,757	904.42	274
5. Nagamangala	1,90,814	1044.70	182
6. Pandavapura	1,75,008	530.43	324
7. Sriranghapattan	1,62,682	353.81	499

Demographic Profile

The following table indicates population of Malavally taluk agglomeration pertaining to the year 1991. (i) Male -50. 3% (ii) Female 48.6% there is increase of 1.54 percent over a period of a decade. The sex ratio relating to taluk is Per thousand 943.

Rivers

The major river of the district is the Cauvery. It is also known as Dakshin Ganga or the Ganges of south The river Cauvery forms a natural boundary between Mandya and Mysore districts for about 36km in the north-west of Mandya district before entering arkalgud taluk of Hassan district. The important tributaries of the Cauvery are kabini, the Lakshmanthirtha, and the Suvarnavathi.

Malavally taluk is one of the interesting and low developed taluk in Karnataka state and also it is a well known agriculture trade and commercial center, having number of educational institutions. Besides, this taluk is not forgettable for so many reasons like. It is one of the silkari taluk of Karnataka, which is known throughout the Karnataka for the pomp and gaiety of the traditional activities Festivals and had Places. , towers, temples, and Muthathi are very beautiful places and attract tourists. When is gaganchukki water fall and Bharachakki.

VI. Socio – Economic and Demographic Background

We discussed the socio-economic problems of marginal farmers and demographic background. Occupational pattern of the people the functional importance of the taluk is first agricultural activity, second, trade and commerce third household industries. Fourth Governmental Services, fifth employment in transport and communications.

During the last seventy years there have been many changes in the occupational pattern of the people in Mandya. Form 1951 to 2001 there has been a steady decline in the percentage of people employed in agricultural activities. The bulk of the reduction is in the percentage of cultivators. As the degree of urbanization increases, there will naturally be a reduction in agricultural activities.

In quarrying and mining, though there is reduction in the percentage of people employed when compared with the number of people engaged, there is no reduction of persons. Further with the use of modern machinery it is possible to turn out more work in quarrying and mining with proportionately loss number of workers, thus accounting for the reductions in the percentage of people employed, though the productions is more. There is not much variation in the percentage of people working in industries (household and manufacturing) . in the year 1981 only 26 percent of people were employed in industries. While in other censes years was more that 40 percent. It can e attributed to the world wide great decline in economic activities.

Coming to constructions, there is not much variation from decade to decade. In the case of trade and commerce it was 17.5 percent in 1951. 15.9 percent in 1971, 14.9 percent to 1991 and just 10.9 percent during the depression period. It has increased to 21 percent in the next two decades. It may be because of the general increase in economic activities and the improvements in transport and communications facilities that more and more commercial activities are being carried out in Mandya.

Even in the case of transport and communications there was sudden increase from just 4 per cent to about 6 and 8 percent in 1991 and 2001. This increase in employment can be attributed to the following factors: (1) The expansion of agricultural fields. (2) The increasing of agricultural equipments (3) The expansion of sericulture, animal husbandry poultry farms and other allied agricultural occupations.

VI. Conclusions

The review of literature on socio-economic condition and work satisfaction among agriculture labourers revealed that most of these studies revolve around only formal and organised sectors. It was noticed that only few studies concentrated on general problems of workers in informal or unorganised sectors such as : agricultral and casual labours. Studies on work satisfaction and working conditions related to workers in informal sectors belonging to Rual Agriculture field is insignificant in number : hence the present study was undertaken.

Low level of literacy rate and education tradition bound attitudes lack of skill and training, seasonal nature of employment heavy physical work, long and unfixed hours of work, discrimination in wage structures of male and female workers, lack of legislations to cover the agriculture labourers who are working in unorganised sectors, lack of minimum facilities at the place of hardly offer any attraction to an outsider and require a great extent of physical ordeal. A large number of persons continue to stick to these works for their livelihood.

The study utilized mainly the primary data collected from respondents belonging to 4 major circles in Malavally taluk namely : Halagur, Kiragavalu, B.G. Pura and Kasaba. It was found that there were 2500 Agricultural labourers and small farmers 20% of Universe yielded a sample of 500. The data required for the study was collected with the help of interview schedule. Frequent formal and informal interviews with agriculture labour, Association officer bearers, generated the required information. In addition to the primary data review of relevant literature came in handy to the scholar to identify research gaps in the field. Previous studies in the field were very lopsided in the sense, most of them concentrated only on organized sectors. It was felt that workers in unorganised sectors were neglected even by scholars. There were no studies on work satisfaction and working conditions among workers in unorganised sectors with few honourable exceptions. Hence the present study was undertaken.

The information were collected on socio-economic and demographic backgrounds such as sex, religion, caste, mother tongue, age, marital and educational status, migratory characteristics; size of family, income and expenditure indebtedness of family food habits, and nature of accommodation etc.,

Out of 500 respondents selected for the present study, 466 (93.20) were male and 34(6.80%) were female, which indicates that the work is not attracting females proportionate to their population. Most of the female Agriculture labourers are concentrated in cultivation.

Majority of the respondents mother tongue is kannada, the regional language of Karnataka, Muslims whose mother tongue is colloquial Hindi mixed with Urdu comes next place. Few migrated respondents have Telugu and Tamil as their mother tongues.

Age belong to the age group of 16-45 years. The mean age of our respondents is 37.28 daily and monthly mean wages of the respondents are Rs. 36.66 and 916.05 respectively.

To understand the extent of work satisfaction we have to take into consideration of various work facets/ dimensions and examine how far farmers perceive these facets and derive satisfaction from their work. The first dimension of work to satisfy workers is work itself. It should contain intrinsic interest, variety, opportunity for learning challenges it offers etc. but farmers work is mainly physical in nature, demanding strength. There is no variety but only monotony. The work has no intrinsic attractions as such. The second condition of work satisfaction is rewards. It has to be rewarding in terms of pay, promotions and recognition. For our respondents the wage depends upon ones own capacity. To earn more he has to work more. It was found that farmers work is comparatively remunerative. But other rewards such as promotions and recognitions are completely absent. Hence it may be concluded that most of the respondents are illiterates in terms of pay, promotions and recognition. For our respondents the wage depends upon own capacity

The finding report above suggest the following conclusion where works, in whatever occupation, have become dissatisfying and alienating, or have been designed in such a way as to be devoid of intrinsic interest, workers name pay as the most satisfying aspect of their works. Unable to change other conditions of their work they claim enhanced pay to compensate for the disadvantages of their work situation.

Mandya District farmers and agriculture labourers union which is active in Malavally taluk area has a greater potentiality to educate and organize the labourer. Unfortunately the interest of officer bearers of the association has been diverted to issues of irrelevance to workers. They have started celebrating festivals, and religious functions, spend on charity feeding, involving in social work removal of parthenium weed, felicitating politicians and government officials for their personal benefits. Hence it is suggested to concentrate on the problems of its members and help workers by providing basic amenities to agriculture labourers and small farmers.

It is also suggested to form a confederation of cultivators and harvesters association. This may facilitate awareness about problems faced by fellow workers. A combined

strategy may be formulated to resolve problems by united efforts. The confederation as an apex body of Association of all Agricultural labourer in the district will be in an advantageous position to claim better attention of all concerned.

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