Research Paper

An Analytical Study on the Problems of Agricultural Labourers in Udham Singh Nagar (Uttarakhand)

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ABSTRACT: *This paper provides the thorough understanding of the different sectors of employment in Udham Singh Nagar district in Uttarakhandand mainly focuses on different problems faced by agricultural labourers which led to their exploitationand even migration to a greater extent. The study has been conducted on 320 respondents selected from seven blocks from Udham Singh Nagar district using systematic sampling method through the schedule. The data has been analysed using chi-square test through SPSS software.*
KEYWORDS: *Agriculture, Agricultural labourers, Labour, Udham Singh Nagar, Employment, Sector.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a dominant and crucial part of the Indian economy. Even today it ranks second in terms of farm production in the world. Over 60 percent of the rural households depend on agriculture. This sector contributes 19.9 percent to the GDP (2020-21) and provides employment to 58 percent of the population (2020) directly or indirectly.

Uttarakhand is an industrially backward state whose economy is still heavily reliant on agriculture. Area under the forest cover of the state is 71 percent (2020). Out of total 13 districts of the state only four districts- Haridwar, Udham Singh Nagar, Nainital and Dehradun are agriculturally developed. The remaining 9 districts are hilly areas with meagre farming and that is also based on traditional methods of agriculture. The agricultural labourers who are an active input to the agriculture are leading a miserable life.

Concept of Labour

Any work, manual or mental, undertaken for certain pecuniary consideration is termed as **"labour"** in Economics. The exertions taken merely for their own sake, like game played for amusement, are not treated as labour.[1]In the words of, famous neo-classical British economist Alfred Marshall, "Any exertion of mind or body undergone partly or wholly with a view to some good other than the pleasure derived directly from the work"[2] is called labour. Labour in this sense includes, "the very highest professional skill of all kinds as well as the labour of unskilled workers and artisans and of those employed in education, in the fine arts, in literature, in science, in the administration of justice and in the Government in all its branches"., and we must include also "not only the labour that results in the permanent form, but also that renders services which perish in the act."[3]Labour as such represents labour force that works for a living[4] and yields a balance of utility to the other people.

Agricultural Labour

The First Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee (1950-51), opines "Those people are agricultural labourers who are engaged in raising crops on payment of wages."[5] The Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee (1956-57) enlarged the definition of agricultural labour to include "those who are engaged in other agricultural occupations like dairy farming, horticulture, rearing of livestock, bees, poultry etc." The view point of Census of India, 1981 was, "A person who worked in another person's land for wages in cash, kind or share of crop was regarded as an agricultural labour. Such a person had no risk in cultivation but merely worked in another person's land for wages. An agricultural labour had no right of lease or contract on land on which he worked."

Characteristics of Agricultural Labourers
- Firstly, agricultural labourers are unorganized.
- Agricultural labourers are unskilled.
- Agricultural labourers in india are highly migratory in character.
- Agricultural labourers mostly belong to poorest segment of the society.
- Agricultural labourers are hardly covered by any legislations, rules and regulations.

II. OBJECTIVES
➢ To analyse the different sectors of employment generation in the district UdhamSingh Nagar and the relationship between agricultural development and employment generation.
➢ To analyse the problems of agricultural labourers of district Udham Singh Nagar.

III. HYPOTHESES
- There is no significant relationship between agricultural development and employment generation.
- There is a significant relationship between agricultural development and employment generation.

IV. METHODOLOGY
The present study is conducted on the seven blocks selected randomly from Udham Singh Nagar district in Uttarakhand namely- Kashipur, Jaspur, Sitarganj, Khatima, Bajpur, Gadarpur, and Kichha with a sample size of 320 respondents. The respondents were quite evenly distributed between different blocks. Sampling has been done using systematic random sampling method from each block. The primary data has been collected through direct personal investigation method using a schedule. The tools used for the data analysis includes chi-square test. SPSS software has been used for the purpose of analysis.

V. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Table 1.a- Respondents Distribution Under Different Sectors-Construction Activities					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	268	83.7	83.7	83.7
	Yes	52	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.a shows that 83.7 % of the respondents are not involved in construction activities. 16.3% of the respondents are involved in construction activities.

Table 1.b.- Respondents Distribution Under Different Sectors-Manufacturing Activities					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	224	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Yes	96	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.b. shows that only 30% of the respondents are involved in manufacturing activities and 70 % of the respondents are not involved in manufacturing activities.

Table 1.c Respondents Distribution Under Different Sectors- Service Operations					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	148	46.3	46.3	46.3
	Yes	172	53.8	53.8	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.c. shows that 53.8% of the respondents are involved in service activities, whereas 46.3 % are not involved in service operations.

Table 1.d.- Respondents Distribution Under Different Sectors-Overall Sector Wise Employment Analysis					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Service	172	53.8	53.8	53.8
	Manufacturing	96	30.0	30.0	83.8
	Construction	52	16.2	16.2	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.d shows that out of 320 respondents 53.8 % were employed in service sector, 30% of the respondents were involved in manufacturing sector, and 16.2% are employed in the construction sector.

An Analysis of Relationship between Agricultural Development and Employment Generation

Table 2.a.- Relationship between Agricultural development and Employment Generation					
Count					
		Sector Wise Employment Generation			Total
		Service	Manufacturing	Construction	
Overall Ownership of Agri.-Implements	0	9	1	2	12
	1	142	83	47	272
	2	6	2	0	8
	3	11	7	2	20
	4	2	1	1	4
	5	2	2	0	4
Total		172	96	52	320

Table 2.b. Chi-Square Test Result on the Relationship between Agricultural development and Employment Generation						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	7.327[a]	10	.694	.713		
Likelihood Ratio	9.807	10	.458	.603		
Fisher's Exact Test	6.826			.723		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.152[b]	1	.696	.735	.374	.037
N of Valid Cases	320					
a. 12 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .65.						
b. The standardized statistic is -.390.						

The outcome of the analysis shows that there is no such significant linkage between agricultural development and employment generation under different sectors (p= 0.696 and 0.723). Hence, the **Null hypothesis has been failed to reject it and alternate hypothesis has been rejected.**

Table 3.a. Problems of Agricultural Labour/Bataidar- Low Wage					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	16	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Yes	304	95.0	95.0	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

The table 3.a series presents the data on the major problems faced by the agricultural labour/bataidar. 95% of the respondents out of 320 said that the low wage was one of the problems in their area.

Table 3.b. Problems of Agricultural Labour/Bataidar- HighIndebtedness					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	320	100.0	100.0	100.0

The table 3.b is about problem of High Indebtedness. The data shows that the respondents do not suffer from this problem. 100% of the respondents confirmed it.

Table 3.c. Problems of Agricultural Labour/Bataidar- Insecurity of Future					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	168	52.5	52.5	52.5
	Yes	152	47.5	47.5	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

The table 3.c is about problem of Insecurity of the Future. The data shows mixed response from the respondents. 52.5% of the respondents said that this is not a problem for them. However, 47.5% of the respondents found insecurity of the future as a source of problem.

Table 3.d. Problems of Agricultural Labour/Bataidar- Poor Health and Living Condition					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	296	92.5	92.5	92.5
	Yes	24	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.d shows that poor health and living condition is not a source of problem for the agricultural labour of district US Nagar.

Table 3.e. Problems of Agricultural Labour/BataidarOverall/Combined Effect					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	176	55.0	55.0	55.0
	2	128	40.0	40.0	95.0
	3	16	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.e. is the overall and combined effect of the problems as a source for the labour of district US Nagar. The data shows that 55% of the labour/bataidar had been facing atleast 01 problem. 40% of the labour/bataidar had been facing atleast two problems. Only 5% of the respondents were facing 03 or more problems. The two major source of standalone problems are low wages and insecurity of the future.

VI.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Through the detailed analysis and interpretation it has been found from the study thatthe respondents were from the seven major blocks of the district US Nagar- Kashipur, Jaspur, Sitarganj, Khatima, Bajpur, Gadarpur, and Kichha. The respondents were quite evenly distributed between different blocks. However, the maximum response rate was from Sitarganj (25.3%), followed by Kashipur (13%), Jaspur (13.8%), khatima (11.9%), Gadarpur(12.8%), Kichha (12.5%), and Bajpur (10.6%). The majority of the respondents were from Sitarganj (61.3%), followed by respondents from Kashipur (25%) and Jaspur (13.7%).

The majority of the respondents were Daily Wagers (87.5%), followed by respondents who were having more than one profile (7.5%), Bataidar (2.5%) and Landlord (2.5%). The majority of the Daily Wagers were from Sitarganj (74), followed by Kashipur (38),Gadarpur(36),Kichha (36), Khatima (34), Jaspur (32) and Bajpur. Landlords were primarily from Kashipur and Khatima (02). Bataidar were from Jaspur area. The data table on old employment/business of the respondents from the district Udham Singh Nagar showed that the majority of the respondents were Bataidars (91.2%). 7.5% of the respondents were having more than one employment/business and only 1.3% of the respondents were Landlords. Moreover, there was no respondent whose previous employment was as Agriculture Labourer.

Out of all the 320 respondents, the majority were males (82.5%). Females out of 320 respondents were 17.5%.

The majority of the respondents belong to SC/ST category (73.8%), followed by OBC category (18.8%). The General category was 7.4% of the total 320 respondents.

The marital status of the respondents showed that majority of the respondents were Married (88.8 %). The Unmarried composed of 8.8 % of the total sample size whereas, the percentage of the Widow/Widower and Divorced /Abandoned consist of 1.3 % each of the total sample size.

The majority of the respondents were from 36-50 years (46.3%) and 26-35 years (31.3%), followed by 51-60 years (11.3%), 18-25 years (8.7 %). The lowest response rate category was above 60 years (2.5%).

The majority of the respondents belong to the Hindu religion (81.2%), followed by Muslims (13.8%), and Sikhs (5%).

Out of 320 respondents the majority were earning annual income of Rs.50,000 and below (91.3 %) ,and rest 8.8 % were earning above Rs. 50,000.

Further data on respondents' education level showed that out of 320 respondents 40% education level is upto class VIII. Overall, 71.3% of the respondents' population studied uptoclass VIII, and rest 28.7% were matriculation and above. One important outcome of this data is that only 17.% of the respondents were illiterate, and rest 83% were educated upto a certain level, whereas some were on the higher band of education meter, having qualification of graduate and above (10%).

The data on the annual savings of the family of the respondents showed that 58.7% of the respondents had an annual saving of zero. 27.5% of the respondents had an annual saving uptoRs. 500. Only 8.8% of the respondents had an annual saving of Rs. 10,000 and above, followed by 5% of the respondents having an annual saving in the range of Rs. 5001 to Rs.10,000.

Further data on labour or bataidar showed that the 51.3% of the respondents are currently working as a labour and 48.8 % of the respondents are currently working as Bataidar.

Also, relationship was checked between agricultural development and employment generation under different sectors. The outcome of the analysis showed that there is no such significant linkage between agricultural development and employment generation under different sectors (p= 0.696 and 0.723).

The study has also revealed that the agricultural labourers of the district are facing many problems such as low rates of wages, disguised unemployment, high magnitude of indebtedness, illiteracy, lack of strong organisation to safeguard their interests, and of late increase in the tendency of migration. All these factors cumulatively have worsened their economic and social conditions. Even the legislative measures and implementation of labour welfare programmes failed to succeed in elevating their standard of life.

VII. CONCLUSION

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for about 58% of the India's population. It provides raw materials to industries, food to entire population and feed & fodder to livestock. It is also the important source of finance of Central and State Governments. In fact, India is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses and spices. It also creates jobs for the people, boosts country's economic growth, sustains the country by the food source etc. But despite of all the above benefits and contribution for the country's development and growth, it also has a darker side which affects the livesof specially the farmers and labourers to a greater extent.As a result, the study concluded that there are three sectors of employment comprising- Construction, Manufacturing and service sector. Of which 320 respondents 53.8 % were employed in service sector, 30% of the respondents were involved in manufacturing sector, and 16.2% are employed in the construction sector. It has also been found in the study that problems such as such as low rates of wages, disguised unemployment, high magnitude of indebtedness, illiteracy, lack of strong organisation to safeguard their interests, and of late increase in the tendency of migration.

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