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RESEARCH ARTICLE

**SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF AGRICULTURE LABOURERS IN VILLUPURAM
DISTRICT- A STUDY**

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Abstract

To study the socio-economic condition of agriculture labourers in Villupuram District 2.To examine the problems of agriculture labourers' in the study area 3. To Study the pictures of the historical background of Villupuram district. 4.To Study the respondents views on persistence of poverty and measures to social welfare schemes in the study area. 5. To Suggest some rational policy measures to increase the living condition of the agriculture labours in Villupuram district.

Keywords: Socio- economic, Agriculture labours, Villupuram District

Introduction

India is a country crossed seven decades of independence, still plaguing the huge development difference in rural, urban and also rich & poor. As a developing nation, Country's 68.84 percent of the population lives in villages and there are 6,40,867 villages in India. According to 2011 census, the literacy rate of rural women population is 58.8 per cent (Census, 2011). United Nations "2007 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects" estimated that India would continue to have the largest rural population in the world until 2050. There are several problem and challenges which are creating difficulties in the lives of Indians, like increasing poverty, rising crimes,

corruption criminalization of politics and so on. Nevertheless, the problems and challenges faces by women, especially rural women are predominant.

Rural women in India are less literate then rural men because of the negative perception of the family towards educating the girl child. Still, there is statistical bias in under estimating the role of rural women in development. Even though women work for longer hours than men and contribute substantially to family income but they are not perceived as productive workers (Pankajam and Lalitha,2005) Equal pay for equal work is one of the foundations of the gender equality movement all over the world. With regard to India, the Labour Bureau data clearly indicates that

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there has been a huge disparity in terms of salaries for men and women for equivalent work.

Even more in rural areas the wage disparities was further high when compare to urban parts of the country. The data indicate that daily wage disparities have continued constant since 1999, though they did rise in the early 2000s. Since 2013, the discrimination in wages paid to women tends to be higher in physically exhaustive works, but lower in the case of work such as sowing and harvesting. Outside the agricultural sphere, it appears that gender stereotypes predominant, if one considers unskilled non agricultural work (jayaram,2003)

To develop the status of the women in all aspects especially in political aspect and to make a legal foundation for direct democracy at the local level, both in rural and urban areas the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution of India was made by the government. For the present study, Villupuram district (also vizhupuram) was selected as study area. Villupuram District is the 23rd district of the State of Tamil Nadu. The Villupuram district had commenced its function on 30th September 1993 with headquarters at Villupuram that was part of erstwhile South Arcot District. It has been recently bifurcated into Villupuram and Kallakuruchi district on 12.11.2019 which had combined extent of 7745.91Sq.km.

The District is situated in the northern part of Tamil nadu and close to State Capital at Chennai at a distance of about 100kms from its Northern Border. The district Headquarter located at Villupuram which is about 160 kms from Chennai. The boundaries of the district are Tiruvannamalai and Kanchipuram districts in the North, Cuddalore, Kallakurichi districts in the South and Dharmapuri, Salem district in the west and Pondicherry and Bay of Bengal in the east. Municipalities two(Villupuram ,Tindivanam) Eight Town panchayat, 13 Panchayat Unions and 688 Village Panchayats in the District.

Population:

As per 2011 census, the total population of the combined district is 34,63,284 of which 17.45 lakhs are

males and 17.18 lakhs are females. The urban population was 5,09,876 and rural population was 29,53,408 as per census 2011, Thus, 85.28 percent of the total population reside in rural areas, while only 14.72 percent of the total population is urban based. This suggest that the degree of urbanization in the district is lesser when compared to the state average which stands at 48.45 percent.

Agricultural labour forms the backbone of the rural economy since it has assumed an indispensable position due to the high dependence of the state on agriculture. The performance of the agricultural labour influences the growth of the Indian economy. Agricultural labour is one of the most important segments of labour force in Tamil Nadu. Land and labour are the two main inputs in traditional agriculture unlike industrial labour are difficult to define.

The reason is that unless capitalism pays attention to agriculture the life standard of the separate class a worker depending wholly upon wages does not come up compounded by the fact that many farmers, small and marginal also work particular in forms for other supplement of their income. In simple term it can be define that agriculture labourer are those who are engaged in cultivating crops on payment of wages. The first Agriculture Labour Enquiry was conducted by the ministry of labour in 1950-57 to probe the economic condition of agricultural labourers.

The second Enquiry was conducted in 1956-57 by the Ministry, through the National Sample survey in the 11th and 12th round August 1956- August 1957. A working party consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the national Sample survey Directorate Central Statistical organization, and the Indian Statistical Institute was responsible for planning the survey, It made some improvement in methodology of the survey, the sample design. The concepts and definition were pretested in the course of a Try – out on Agricultural labour Enquiry in April – May 1959 conducted in 24 sample village spread over 15 (Pre –reorganizations) states

Sources

Primary Sources

The study is mainly based on primary sources. The research work is fully supported by the Official records or Tamil Nadu Government. The Government Orders of various Department of Villupuram district such as development officers, Assistant directors of statistical officers, Agricultural officers, Labour Revenue, Co-operative, public home, judicial, Education and Development are giving us sample professions and their Socio-Economic status. The research project relating to the socio-economic conditions agricultural labours that were conducted at various times in Villupuram district are also very much useful for the completion of the project.

Secondary Sources

The number of books has been consulted for writing this project work. The next important secondary sources is R.C. Ditt's, "The Economic History of India", 2 Volumes, (Delhi,1976) which depicts about important of agriculture labour. Uzhavum Nesavurn, written by Shiva shanmuga Sundaram reveals about the agriculture labour.

Methodology

This study aims at analyzing the living conditions of agriculture labourers in the rural areas of Villupuram District. This type of analysis helps the planners will identify the socio economic causes and associated reasons behind the occurrence of low living conditions among the agriculture laborers in the study area. This study is primarily analyzing the socio economic conditions in the exploratory framework. Then the household's socio economic characteristics are correlated with the causes and magnitude of poverty social welfare schemes and thereby it gives analytical orientation to this study. Thus, study is partly exploratory and partly analytical nature,

Classification of Agricultural Labourers:

Statistics regarding daily wages paid to Agricultural Labourers, are collected every month from 385 villages at the rate of one village per Block.

The Agricultural Labourers are classified into two groups viz.,

1. Field Labourers
2. Other Agricultural Labourers.

Field Labourers comprise of Ploughmen, Sowers, Puckers, Tranplanters, Seeders, Reapers and Harvesters. Other Agricultural Labourers engaged in watering, carrying loads, digging wells and other agricultural related works.

Agricultural Labourers can be divided into four categories:

1. Landless Labourers, who are attached to the land lords;
2. Landless Labourers, who are personally independent, but who work exclusively for others;
3. Petty farmers with tiny bits of land who devote most of their time working for others ;
4. Farmers who have economic holdings but who have one or more of their sons and dependants working for other prosperous farmers.

The first groups of labourers has economic holdings but who have one or more of less in the position of serfs or slaves, they are also known as bonded labours.

Agricultural Labourers can also be divided in the following manner:

1. Landless Agricultural
2. Very small cultivators whose main source of earnings due to their small and sub-marginal holdings is wage employment.

Landless labourers in turn can be classified into two broad categories:

1. Permanent Labourers attached to cultivating households.
2. Casual Labourers.

The second group can again be divided into three subgroups:

- Cultivators
- Share croppers
- Lease holders.

Permanent or attached labourers generally work on annual or seasonal basis and they work on some sort of contract. Their wages are determined by custom or tradition. On the other hand temporary or casual labourers are engaged only during peak period for work. Their employment is temporary and they are paid at the market rate. They are not attached to any landlords.

Under second group comes small farmers, who process very little land and therefore, has to devote most of their time working on the lands of others as labourers. Share croppers are those who, while sharing the produce of the land for their work, also work on the leased land but also work as labourers.

Review of Literature:

The author S.N. Balaraman reiterates that sex discrimination in farm wages is a fact of life in most parts of the world. Whether development or under developed and it exists in two ways. The first one is paying less to women for the same type of work which he calls open discrimination and the other in restricting women to low paid unskilled jobs denying them access to better paid jobs and the author confirms that both these types of discrimination exist in India and it is true of Tamil Nadu also.

Radha kamal Mukarjee in this work “Economic History of India(1989-2006)” has portrayed India as the agricultural mother of Asia and the industrial workshop of the world in the 17th centuries. In the Economic History of India 1857- 1956 edited by V.B.Singh many writers have contributed on the demographic trend, agriculture, irrigation, industry, infrastructure and social organization in India between 1857 and 1956.

B.T.Tyagi in this book on” Agriculture Economics and Rural Development” has given and celebrate account on the characteristics and the causes of backwardness of Indian agriculture while making a comparative analysis on traditional and modern agriculture. According to him, the Socio-Economic conditions of the peasants affect the cropping pattern in India. Small farmers have a high preference for food grain where as the big farmers prefer commercial crops.

A.N. Agarwal has deals with the problems, progress and prospects of Indian agriculture in India in the post independence period. This work deals with land use and cropping pattern, production and productivity, irrigation, green revolution and farm mechanization. It also deals with rural industrialization. It has been conclude that the spread of new agricultural technology and green revolution to few crops, few areas and rich farmers and agriculture labour.

R.C. Arora in his book “Industry and Rural Development” has dwelt on rural industrialization, small and cottage industries in India in the post independence period and in conclusion it is said that management, raw materials, marketing and technology were the major problems of industrialization.

Conclusion:

The study deals about the social the and economic condition of agriculture labour in Villupuram District. The significance of limited in tracing the change in socio economic and political condition of agricultural labour focus on the social focus on the social factors such as age, sex, caste, religion and household of the agriculture labour and economic condition of occupation, income generation, savings, credit, source of finance and other basic facilities in the study area. Villupuram District has been purposively chosen because no such study tracing the social and economic transition has been made for this district. Villupuram District had experienced many trials and tribulation under the rule of several dynasties which belonged to different religions and languages and therefore, the socio-economic mix present in the deserves our attention and the value of the study of the social history of Villupuram District.

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