An Analysis of the Challenges Faced by Landless Labourers in Theni District

1.Dr.E. Rajeswari 2. Dr. G. Deepika 3.Dr. P. Soni Pawar

1.Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education, Coimbatore, rajiguna84@gmail.com, https://orcid.org/0009-0008-7751-476X

2.Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education, Coimbatore, deepikakcas@gmail.com,

2.Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education, Coimbatore, sonipawar2008@gmail.com,

Abstract

India, is the most populous nation in the world, has evolving socioeconomic conditions, political trends, and disease patterns that have influenced contemporary global thinking. Even though the recently passed MGNREGA, 2005 guarantees 100 days of work per year, there is a lot of fraud when it comes to the issuance of job cards. Additionally, job seekers who truly require such assistance are not given work, and gather rolls are not kept up to date. The issue of agricultural landlessness is a subset of the larger issue of rural underemployment and unemployment. The main focus of research is on the issues that agricultural laborers encounter. The farmers in the Theni district are the subjects of the study. The convenience sampling approach was used to choose the respondents. Contexts were chosen for this study from three particular communities in the Theni district. The principal inclusion has a size of 123. Therefore, agricultural landless laborers are crucial to the agriculture industry, as both landowner farmers and agricultural landless laborers are necessary for production. Keywords: Landless Labourers, Problems, Wage, Employment.

Keywords :

Introduction

The district of Theni, located in Tamil Nadu, India's southern region, is a witness to a thriving agricultural population set against picturesque scenery. But the attractive exterior hides the hard reality that landless labourers, who make up a sizable portion of the population, must endure. Famous sociologist M. Kannan explores the complexities of their hardships in his seminal book, "The Invisible Struggles: Landless Labourers in Theni." Kannan painstakingly explores the unsaid struggles of the oppressed population in the pages of this ground-breaking study, highlighting important concerns including landlessness, abusive labour practices, and the vulnerability of landless labourers to changes in the economy. His work provides a solid foundation by offering a comprehensive grasp of the complex and multidimensional facts influencing the lives that these people lead. Together with Kannan's perceptive critique, prominent social justice activist Meera Siva offers an optimistic viewpoint in her seminal essay, "Breaking Chains: Empowering Landless Labourers in Theni." Siva focuses on empowerment tactics because she is a strong supporter of laws that use skill-building, education, and gender-sensitive measures to eliminate the cycle of poverty. Her art offers a picture of improved chances and positive transformation for this marginalised society, infusing optimism into the discourse around landless labourers.

By adding their perspectives to the conversation on the difficulties encountered by landless labourers in the Theni district, a number of different writers have broadened our understanding. Economist Ravi Varma examines how land changes affect regional economic equality as he looks at their financial implications. Aishwarya Rajan sheds light on prejudice and exploitation within this vulnerable group by drawing attention to the gender-specific struggles faced by women who work as landless labourers.

Migration trends among landless labourers are examined by migration studies specialist Sanjay Desai, who offers insights into the socioeconomic dynamics influenced by migration. Legal expert Ananya Pillai examines the rights and potential remedies that could provide this marginalised people with justice as she explains the legal aspects of landlessness. In summary, the combined perspectives of these writers lead to a more thorough and sophisticated comprehension of the complex difficulties encountered by landless labourers in the Theni district. Together, their efforts set the stage for well-informed legislative interventions, community-driven projects, and social initiatives that seek to give Theni's landless labourers a more just and equitable future.

Objective of this study

To Identify the challenges faced by Landless Labour.

Scope of the study

In-depth analysis of the various challenges faced by landless labourers is the main goal of the study. With a focus on the surroundings of the Theni district in Tamil Nadu, India, it provides a thorough examination of socioeconomic variables, unfair labour practices, gender inequality, and the effects of legislation.

Methodology:

In this study, a descriptive survey design was used. The data compilation process also makes use of secondary and primary sources. A questionnaire is used to collect the primary data. Multiple sources of secondary data were consulted, such as trade magazines, journals, periodicals, and online resources. The sampling unit used in this study was Theni District. The factor analysis and convenience sampling strategy have been chosen for this investigation.

Statement of Problem

Landless labourers face numerous obstacles that impede their capacity to make a living and maintain their general well-being in a number of areas, including Theni district in Tamil Nadu, India. Due to their lack of land ownership, they are forced to work in hazardous environments with little job security, low pay, and abusive working conditions. Their vulnerable circumstances are made more severe by economic changes, which trap them in poverty cycles. Gender differences introduce an additional level of intricacy, since women within this cohort experience certain types of prejudice and mistreatment.

Review of Literature

As per Raju B.V. (2017), a substantial portion of India's rural labour is comprised of agricultural labourers. He used original sources for his research. His research indicates that 44% of the primary employees are agricultural labourers. Members of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes make up the majority of agricultural labourers. Their income was modest and unfair. Since they lack the requisite training and abilities, they are without other options for employment.

In his study paper "A Study on Migration of Agriculture Labourers from Hyderabad Karnataka Area to Maharashtra," K. N. Doddamani (2014) made the case that regional inequality is the primary cause of the rise in seasonal movement of agricultural laborers in the Hyderabad-Karnataka area. The survey also discovered that the primary labor source for the building and construction sectors in other cities is migrants from Hyderabad, Karnataka.

According to a 2016 study by B.N. Venu, et all “migration was a common choice for agricultural laborers in Karnataka's rain-fed districts seeking a better standard of living. The majority of laborers move from places with rain to areas with irrigation”. Young people from rural areas are progressively moving to urban areas' industrial sectors, according to the report. The majority of laborers were seasonal migrants, with rain-fed situations seeing the highest frequency of migration (70%). In situations where they were rain-fed, they moved to different areas following the planting season and returned for harvest.

India is primarily an agrarian nation, with 70% of the population still relying on agriculture for a living, according to Radhakrishnaiah M. Sankaraiah's 2015 analysis. In India, a sizable portion of the rural labor force is employed in agriculture. 80.78 percent of the agricultural laborers in this study are men; approximately 38.19 percent are members

of the Backward Caste; 66.89 percent lack literacy; 78.24 percent reside in nuclear families of agricultural laborers; and 42.59 percent live in mixed-type homes. However, 82.87% of people own their own home, and 34% of people handed away two to three acres of land.Aparna (2012) also shown how the MGNREGA has increased land rent by affecting the utilization of inputs, laborers' productivity, and irrigation and infrastructure improvements. Cardholders have invested their funds in machinery and chemical fertilizers for their fields. Based on the assessment above, it appears that no specific research has been done on agricultural laborers' earnings, the financial contributions that their employment makes to their household income, or their spending and savings patterns.

In 1975, Sumar Sarkar performed a survey titled "Employee pattern and wage structure of agriculture labor in 1975-76." The recent shifts in the employment landscape and the pay scales for agricultural laborers without land were examined in this investigation. After coming to the conclusion that the impoverished tenants lacked control over the means of production and that, in certain situations, their steady development was driving them to sell their labor under unfair

The desire of Gharaunda (Haryana) landless laborers to take jobs to supplement their income was studied by Kumbhare, SL. in 1983. 66 percent of labor households said that they might potentially augment their meagre employment (66 days per year) by adding to their wages, according to survey data gathered from an all-India coordinated project. For the majority of them, dairying was their favourite extracurricular activity. The limitations they encountered included inadequate room for housing the animals and limited access to feed and fodder on a wide scale.

Limitations of the study

- There are certain limits to consider, even if the study on landless labor in the Theni district illuminates a significant socioeconomic issue. First, it could be challenging to give a complete and comprehensive picture of the problem due to the study's limited scope due to the absence of reliable data on landless laborers. Additionally, the study's generalizability might be restricted because it might be difficult to extrapolate its findings to other places with characteristics that are different from the Theni district's unique socioeconomic context.
- A deficiency of detailed qualitative insights into the viewpoints and experiences of the landless laborers themselves may limit the study. A deeper grasp of the subtleties of the impacted population's challenges, goals, and coping techniques may be limited in the lack of firsthand stories and narratives. It's also possible that the study ignored the intersectionality of problems that landless laborers confront, such as gender, caste, or ethnic differences, which could have an effect on how broadly the findings can be applied to different segments of society.

Data analysis and Interpretation

Factor Analysis

A set of methods known as factor analysis works to decrease the number of variables to a smaller number of factors that more efficiently and economically represent the majority of the original data by looking at correlations between the variables. Even though a factor analysis outcome may have a subjective interpretation, the method often results in an understanding of relevant psychographic aspects and leads in the cost-effective use of data collection efforts. The subjective element of factor analysis is minimized by randomly splitting the sample in half and deleting the factors from each half separately. If similar factors keep coming up, the analysis is regarded as reliable or strong.

TABLE - 1

KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST FOR FACTORS RELATED TO PROBLEMS IN LANDLESS LABOUR

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.791
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	791.638
	df	105
	Sig.	.000**

**p<0.01 S-Significant

The previous table was subjected to two tests to ascertain whether or not there was a significant correlation between the variables: Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO). The value of test statistics is 0.791, which indicates that the factor analysis for the chosen variable is good or acceptable for the data, according to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. Employing Bartlett's test of sphericity, one can ascertain whether or not the data are statistically significant based on the test statistic values and the corresponding significance level. It demonstrates that the relationships between the variables are strong.

TABLE – 2

EIGEN VALUES AND PROPORTION OF TOTAL VARIANCE OF EACH UNDERLYING FACTORS RELATED TO PROBLEMS IN LANDLESS LABOUR

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.319	35.463	35.463	5.319	35.463	35.463	2.989	19.929	19.929
2	2.316	15.439	50.902	2.316	15.439	50.902	2.686	17.907	37.836
3	1.218	8.122	59.024	1.218	8.122	59.024	2.360	15.731	53.567
4	1.008	6.723	65.747	1.008	6.723	65.747	1.827	12.180	65.747
5	.899	5.996	71.743						
6	.774	5.160	76.902						
7	.655	4.369	81.271						
8	.590	3.933	85.204						
9	.495	3.299	88.503						
10	.445	2.964	91.468						
11	.336	2.238	93.706						
12	.299	1.994	95.699						
13	.256	1.705	97.404						
14	.217	1.446	98.850						
15	.172	1.150	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Fifteen components had Eigen values greater than "one," according to the findings of the principal component analysis of the variables linked to issues with landless laborers, as shown in Table 2. Of those four components, the first contributed 35.46 percent to the variance, followed by the second at 15.43 percent, the third at 8.12 percent, and the fourth at 6.72 percent. The first four factors make up the final factors solution, and taken as a whole, they account for

65.74 percent of the variance in the scale items that measure the factors associated with issues with landless labor. Therefore, based on the results above, it is apparent that these are the causes linked to issues with landless labor.

TABLE - 3
COMMUNALITIES FOR FACTORS RELATED TO PROBLEMS IN LANDLESS LABOUR

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
[The availability of stable and consistent employment opportunities is a significant challenge for me.]	1.000	.573
[The lack of land ownership hinders my ability to secure loans or credit for personal and family needs.]	1.000	.759
[I often face insecurity in housing and str3gle to find affordable and stable accommodation.]	1.000	.682
[The absence of 1 land makes it difficult for me to engage in farming or related activities.]	1.000	.437
[Accessing social welfare programs and government support is challenging due to my lack of land ownership.]	1.000	.707
[I frequently encounter discrimination and exploitation in the workplace because of my vulnerable status.]	1.000	.610
[Limited access to education and skill development opportunities is a significant obstacle in my life.]	1.000	.740
[Healthcare accessibility is a major problem for me, impacting my overall well-being and that of my family.]	1.000	.681
[The lack of legal recognition and protection for landless laborers makes it challenging to assert our rights.]	1.000	.761
[I feel that the wages and benefits for landless laborers are inadequate and 2t commensurate with the work we do.]	1.000	.512
[I constantly battle to get access to necessities like electricity, clean water, and sanitary facilities..]	1.000	.735
[The lack of representation and voice in decision-making processes affects landless laborers' interests.]	1.000	.455
[I believe that government policies do 2t adequately address the specific challenges faced by landless laborers.]	1.000	.656
[The uncertain nature of employment for landless laborers creates financial instability for me and my family.]	1.000	.793

[I face challenges in accessing training programs and resources that could enhance my skills and employability.]	1.000	.760

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The Factor Extraction Process was used to define the number of factors to be extracted from the data and to specify the most commonly used Varimax rotation method in the preceding table (Communities). The overall variance in the data is taken into account in the principal component analysis. The fourteen components in each variable explain a share of the variance. The common components known as variance communalities explain the fraction of variance. Principal Component Analysis is based on the basic premise that all variation is shared. As a result, the communalities are all 1.000 prior to extraction. The most frequent method for calculating the amount of elements to maintain, checking Eigen values, was then used.

TABLE-4
ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX FOR FACTORS RELATED TO PROBLEMS IN LANDLESS LABOUR

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
[I often face insecurity in housing and str3gle to find affordable and stable accommodation.] X1	.823	-.034	.039	-.039
[. I constantly battle to get access to necessities like electricity, clean water, and sanitary facilities. .]X2	.710	-.067	.294	.374
[Limited access to education and skill development opportunities is a significant obstacle in my life.]X3	.704	.477	.125	.017
[I face challenges in accessing training programs and resources that could enhance my skills and employability.]X4	.689	.514	.028	.143
[The uncertain nature of employment for landless laborers creates financial instability for me and my family.]X5	.113	.836	.024	.284
[I believe that government policies do 2t adequately address the specific challenges faced by landless laborers.]X6	-.052	.669	.450	-.063
[Accessing social welfare programs and government support is challenging due to my lack of land ownership.]X7	-.093	.611	.545	.166
[I frequently encounter discrimination and exploitation in the workplace because of my vulnerable status.]X8	.450	.511	.262	.277
[The lack of representation and voice in decision-making processes affects landless laborers' interests.]X9	.301	.450	.376	.146
[The lack of legal recognition and protection for landless laborers makes it challenging to assert our rights.] X10	-.225	.179	.775	.280
[Healthcare accessibility is a major problem for me, impacting my overall well-being and that of my family.]X11	.333	.101	.737	.127
[The absence of 1 land makes it difficult for me to engage in farming or related activities.]X12	.295	.181	.555	.098
[The lack of land ownership hinders my ability to secure loans or credit for personal and family needs.]X13	.231	.019	.116	.832
[I feel that the wages and benefits for landless laborers are inadequate and to commensurate with the work we do.] X14	.043	.282	.179	.632
[The availability of stable and consistent employment opportunities is a significant challenge for me.] X15	-.464	.221	.220	.510

The Rotated Component Matrix, a significant principal component analysis output, is shown in the above table. The factor loadings, or coefficients, show how the factors and the fifteen variables (X1 to X15) are correlated. From the above factor matrix, it is found that coefficients for factor-I have high absolute correlations with variable X_1 ([I often face insecurity in housing and str3gle to find affordable and stable accommodation.] X_2(Access to basic amenities such as clean water, sanitation, and electricity is a constant str3gle for me) and X_3 (Limited access to education and skill development opportunities is a significant obstacle in my life), that is, **.823, .710 and .704** respectively. Similarly factor-II has high absolute correlation with variable X_4 (I face challenges in accessing training programs and resources that could enhance my skills and employability), X_{11} (Healthcare accessibility is a major problem for me, impacting my overall well-being and that of my family.), X_9 (The lack of representation and voice in decision-making processes affects landless laborers' interests), X_{18} (customers who purchase quality products are highly satisfied), that is, **.689,0.333 and 0.301** respectively. Similarly factor-III has high absolute correlation with variable X_{12} (The absence of 1 land makes it difficult for me to engage in farming or related activities) and X_{13} (The lack of land ownership hinders my ability to secure loans or credit for personal and family needs.), that is, **.295 and .231** respectively. Similarly factor-IV has high absolute correlation with variable X_5 (The uncertain nature of employment for landless laborers creates financial instability for me and my family) and X_7 [I believe that government policies do to adequately address the specific challenges faced by landless laborers.]), that is, **.113 and .093** respectively. For instance, of the fourteen variables in this study with an absolute factor loading value greater than or equal to 0.5, factor I is at least moderately linked with fifteen of the variables. It is challenging to interpret the factor in such a complicated matrix. The rotated factor matrix should now be computed.

TABLE - 5

COMPONENT TRANSFORMATION MATRIX

Component	1	2	3	4
1	.478	.593	.524	.382
2	-.872	.232	.356	.243
3	.085	-.664	.143	.729
4	-.063	.392	-.761	.513

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

The factor correlation matrix is shown in the above table. In the factor correlation matrix, the diagonal elements will be 1s and the off diagonal elements will be 0s if the factors are uncorrelated with one another. With the exception of a few variables, all other variables are found to have, if not zero correlations, at least reasonably low correlations since the matrix was rotated using Varimax.

SUGGESTION

One could propose the following ideas to enhance the socioeconomic standing of agricultural laborers:

- Free government land must be provided to landless agricultural laborers so they can build their modest homes. The government must offer interest-free loans so that people can build their homes.
- Since landless agricultural laborers typically do not have year-round employment, the government must offer the oppressed classes alternative employment options.
- Women constitute an essential component of Indian society. The government must guarantee equal protection for women who work because there are numerous discrepancies in women's lives. Individuals who exhibit discrepancies should face harsh penalties.
- The Karnataka government has to guarantee that the Public Works Department gets employment for the unemployed laborers in agriculture.
- Employees of the Social Welfare Department and the Labor Department are required to randomly visit agricultural areas and inspect the working conditions of landless laborers. Should they be laboring as slaves, the government must intervene quickly to ensure the workers' wellbeing. enhancing the circumstances of employment

- Regulation of working hours: Laborers are required to put in eight hours of work. To guarantee this, the government must send out a notice to the local PDOs and agricultural officials.
- Appropriate instruction to raise agricultural laborers' proficiency. By doing this, the laborers are guaranteed their jobs.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the living standards and income of agricultural landless laborers are extremely low, and they suffer a number of issues. It is discovered that their pay varies depending on their gender and the type of work they do. to enhance the working conditions for agricultural landless laborers and the development of rural communities through the provision of better roads, housing, employment opportunities, and irrigation capabilities, among other things. In order to enhance living conditions and overcome natural forces such as erosion, draughts, and flooding, the government should take appropriate action in a number of areas affecting agricultural landless laborers, including wage patterns, work hours, and living situations. In terms of all social and economic factors, the standing of agricultural laborers without land is low. The trained landless laborers from other districts were discovered operating harvesters and driving vehicles on farms. Therefore, agricultural landless laborers are crucial to the agriculture industry, as production relies on both landowner farmers and agricultural landless laborers.

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