



“GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURS PROBLEMS IN NASHIK DISTRICT, MAHARASHTRA”

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ABSTRACT:

Agricultural labour in India has been the target of all that harmful summation of affects which follow from stagnant and underdeveloped economy. Agricultural labours are considered as one of the inputs in agriculture and allied fields of development in any rural area. All the operations of agriculture activities such as selection of agricultural land, sowing, harvesting, processing can not be completed in and on time without participation of these labours. But still agricultural labours constitute the most neglected class in Indian rural structure. Imbalance between input and output, irregular and uncertain output, meagre earnings are the problems of rural agricultural area. As results, miserable conditions and less socio-economic development of the agricultural labour is a great challenge. Therefore it has been attempted to assess the problems of rural agricultural labours in agricultural and industrial developed Nashik district of Maharashtra State. The present study is based on primary and the secondary sources of data. Data is represented with cartographic and GIS techniques. The overall study shows that the main problems faced by agriculture labours are low, irregular and uncertain wages, low wages for female labour, seasonal work, absence of secure atmosphere at work place, long working distance, lack of union, hard work, etc. There is a lot of variation in intensity of such problems at tahsil level. 27.5 % respondents are agreed that agriculture labours are not paid on time and 26.25 % respondents are approved for the seasonal nature of work. Unemployment during off season period is also one of the issues of the study area.

Keywords: Agricultural Labour, Wages, Migration.

INTRODUCTION:-

Agriculture occupies a key position in the Indian economy and more particularly in accelerating the process of rural development its role stimulating rural development is unique. (V. Rajarajeswari, 2016). Labour is an important input in agriculture. It accounts for more than 40 per cent of the total cost of production of field crops. Agricultural employment is seasonal in character. The determination of farm wages and the supply of labour to agriculture are, therefore, central to any investigation concerning crop production and agricultural growth (Agasty and Patra 2014). Agricultural labour in India is being widely scattered over 5.6 lakh villages. Agricultural labourers, especially in smaller villages away from towns and cities, are generally unskilled workers carrying on agricultural operation in the centuries old traditional wages. (P. Thirupathy, 2015). Agricultural labours problems are different at national, state and local level. Therefore it is essential to study agricultural labours problems and prospects for better planning and improvement of the socio-economic condition of agricultural labours.

OBJECTIVES:

- i. To study the nature agriculture labourers work of the study area.
- ii. To know the problems of agriculture labourers in the study area.
- iii. To suggest the suitable measures for minimizing the intensity of problems of agriculture labourers in the study area.

STUDY AREA:

Nashik District is situated in Tapi basin and upper Godavari basin. It lies between $19^{\circ} 33'$ to $20^{\circ} 53'$ north latitude and $73^{\circ} 15'$ to $75^{\circ} 16'$ east Longitude (**Nashik Gazetteer, 1983**). Nashik is one of the major agriculturally and industrially developed district in the North Maharashtra. It has an area of 15,530 sq. km. Location of the study area is showed in Fig. No.1.

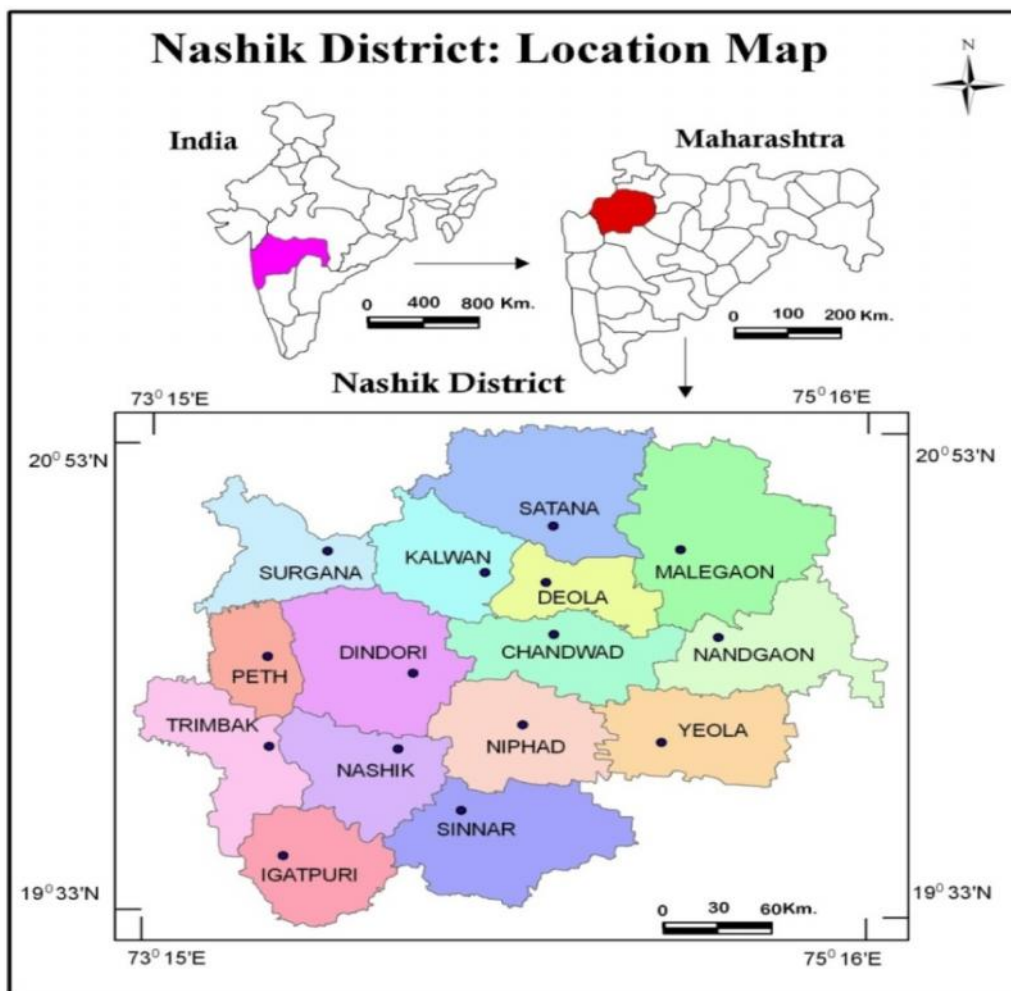
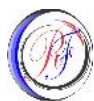


Fig. No.1

The district is a part of Deccan plateau of the Peninsular India and formed by basaltic rocks. Hilly, Godavari basin and Girna basin are physiographic divisions of the study area. The elevation ranges between 300 to 700 m from the sea level. The climate is generally dry except during the monsoon season. The average annual rainfall of the district as a whole is



1034.5mm. The summer season is moderately hot and the temperature varies from 36° c to 40° c. The air is humid during the monsoon season and is generally dry during the rest of the year. Nashik District has 6107187 population as per the 2011 census. Rice, Sugarcane, Onions, Grapes, Jowar, Bajra, Pomegranate and Vegetables are the dominant crops of this region.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on primary and the secondary source of data. Primary data is collected through questionnaire and interview method. Eighty questionnaires were filled from agriculture labourers in Nashik District. Apart from primary data, secondary data is collected from journals and internet. Secondary data is also obtained from socio-economic abstract of the Nashik district (2015), District census handbook & District Gazetteers. The Tahsil has been taken as a unit for analysis of the level of agricultural labour and development. Data is represented with cartographic techniques. ArcGIS software is applied to prepare the base map of the study area.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Nature of work of agriculture labourers:

Nashik district is well developed district in the field of agriculture. Agriculture is main source for employment in rural area because 23.31 percent population of the study area is an agricultural labourers. Both male and female population is involved in this sector. According to 2011 census the total working population in the Nashik district is 27.63 Lakhs, which is 45.25 percent of the total population of the district. The workforce engaged in cultivation is 32.60 percent, whereas 23.31, 1.66 and 33.74 percent accounted in agricultural labour, household and other workers respectively.

Table No.1 Nashik District: Distribution of workers -2011

Sr. No.	Name of Tahsil	Cultivator		Agri. Labourers		Workers in Household Industry		Other workers	
		Population	(%)	Population	(%)	Population	(%)	Population	(%)
1	Surgana	46395	47.56	45723	46.87	576	0.59	4863	04.98
2	Kalwan	59593	52.37	40208	35.34	1297	1.14	12689	11.15
3	Deola	41421	53.47	25426	32.82	1724	2.23	8897	11.48
4	Satana	87871	45.04	77143	39.54	4257	2.18	25819	13.23
5	Malegaon	89320	23.97	89267	23.95	8553	2.30	185522	49.78
6	Nandgaon	48949	37.67	39263	30.22	1890	1.45	39829	30.65
7	Chandwad	74667	58.46	37312	29.22	1969	1.54	13766	10.78
8	Dindori	82358	50.74	60174	37.07	2358	1.45	17424	10.73
9	Peth	24614	36.81	38206	57.13	315	0.47	3737	05.59
10	Trambak	37607	44.09	37549	44.02	795	0.93	9344	10.95
11	Nashik	52216	7.95	46202	07.03	16968	2.58	541637	82.44
12	Igatpuri	49637	44.10	33256	29.54	2386	2.12	27284	24.24
13	Sinner	92661	51.93	38582	21.62	5208	2.92	41971	23.52
14	Niphad	104848	42.49	82920	33.60	4357	1.77	54631	22.14
15	Yeola	75228	53.78	38997	27.88	3479	2.49	22170	15.85
Total		967385	35.01	730228	26.43	56132	2.03	1009583	36.54

Source: Socio Economic Abstract of Nashik District-2015

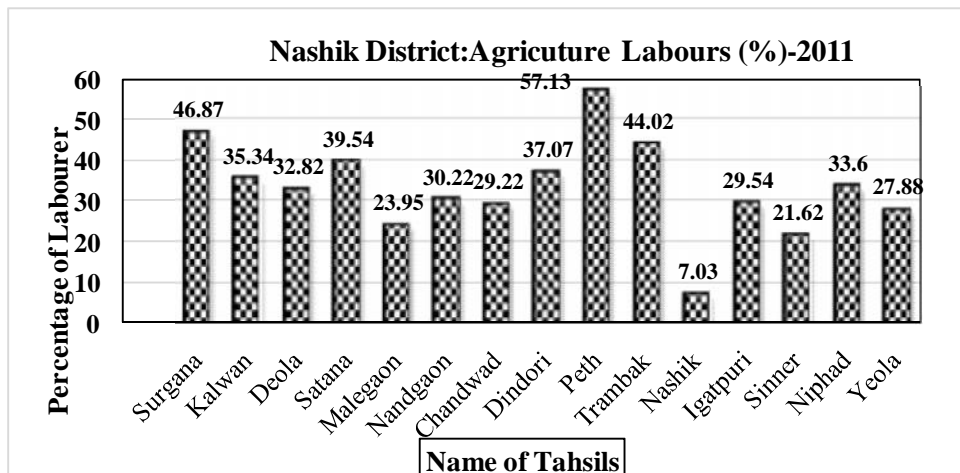


Fig.No.2

Tahasil wise percentage of agriculture labours is shown in the Table No.1 and Fig.No.2. The percentage of agriculture labour is comparatively higher than the household and other workers and its distribution is not uniform in the study region.. It is more in tribal tahsils like Peth (57.13 %), Surgana (46.87 %) Trimbak (44.02 %) where employment opportunities are not too much available except agriculture. On the other hand Nashik (7.03 %), Sinnar (21.62 %) and Malegaon (23.95 %) have less agricultural labours due to the industrial development and more urban population.

In the study region the participation of female labours specially observed in agricultural operations such as harvesting, weeding, threshing, sowing, milking, churning, sheds cleaning , winnowing, grains cleaning, cow dung collection, cow dung cake making, animal caring, feeding and cleaning , nursery , sheds building , feeding, green foddercutting, fodder serving etc. Though all such works require less skill but this work is so rigid. Male labours are engaged in ploughing, sowing, manuring, bundling crops and straws, marketing etc.

Problems of agriculture labours:

Major problems of agriculture labours are studied with help of questionnaire survey of study region. Table No.2 and Fig.No.3 depict the result of the survey. It is observed that the intensity of two problems such as agricultural wages and seasonal nature of work are. The wages of agricultural labours are not given in time, they are always paid very late sometime more than two weeks. 27.5 and 26.25 percent respondents are experiencing the delay in payment and seasonal work respectively. This is mainly observed on a large scale in Dindori, Deola and Nandgaon tahsils. At the same time the intensity of this problem is comparatively less in Nashik, Niphad and Satana tahsils due to the application of agricultural techniques and better economics condition of farmers.

The another problem faced by agricultural labours is seasonal nature of work. 42 percent respondents have an employment opportunities during cropping season. Majority agricultural workers are seen jobless in Nandgaon, Surgana, Peth, Trambak, Sinnar tahsils due to single cropping pattern. The number of days and work hours vary significantly between male and female agriculture labourers. In a year on an average the number of working days of a male agriculture labour is approximately 255 (69.86 %) days, while it is

about 176 (48.22 %) days for a female. During lean season they are either remain unemployed or working as marginal workers in the urban and sub-urban areas of the Nashik city.

The regional variation in daily wages is also one of the problems. It ranges between 250 to 275 Rs. per day in Niphad, Nashik, Dindori and Satana tahsils due to practice of plantation agriculture and the dominance of agro-based industries like wine, sugar and food processing industries.

Table No.2 Nashik District: Problems of Agriculture Labours (%)

Problems of Agriculture Labours	% of respondents	Problems of Agriculture Labours	% of respondents
Wages not given on time	27.5	Scolding from farm owner	03.75
Seasonal nature of work	26.25	Absence of security	10.00
Long walk distance	02.5	Problems of small child care	07.5
Low wages for women	08.75	Hard Physical work	5.00
		Other Problems	8.75

Source: Based of survey of Agriculture labours, 2017

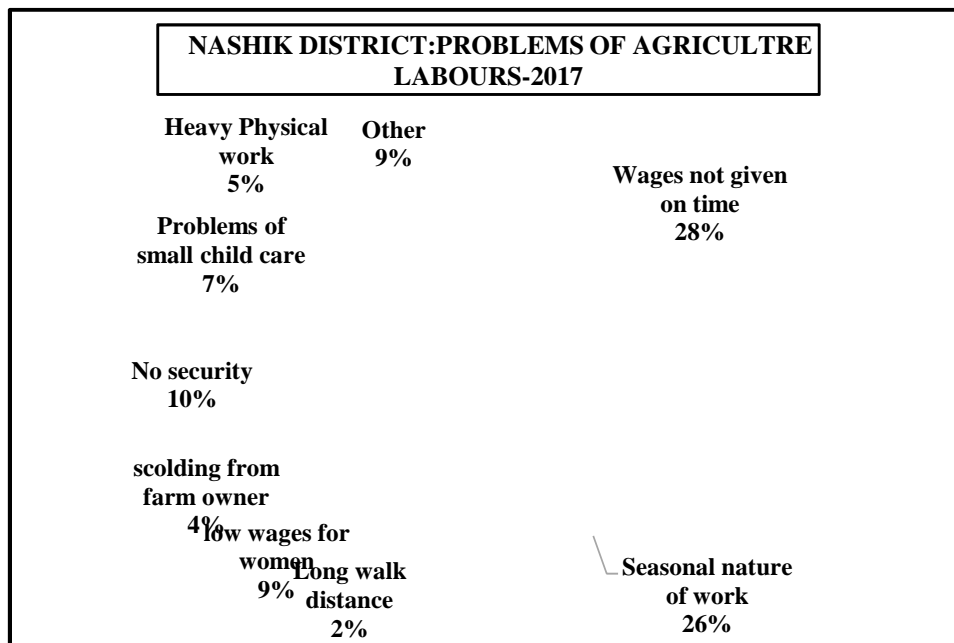
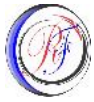


Fig.No.3

The variation in daily wages of male and female is a common problem in the rural areas. It is observed that female agriculture labour are often paid less wages (Rs.150/ per day) than male agriculture labour (Rs.200/ per day) for the same work. Low wages, long distance of work and hard work are the common problems of female workers. 8.75 women labours are facing the problem of low wages.

It is also seen that the labours belong to SC and ST categories are socio-economically backward as compare to the other categories. The findings of the study revealed poor



socioeconomic conditions of the respondents. The majority of respondent's belong to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Out of the total respondents approximately 10 percent labours are expressing the problem of their security at work place.

CONCLUSIONS:

The intensity of agriculture labour problems are not uniform in the study region. Two major problems were observed in the study region. They are low wages for agriculture labours which are not paid on time (27.5 %) and seasonal nature of work (26.25 %). Payments of agricultural wages are mostly in kind. Only occasionally they are fully or partially paid in Dindori, Deola and Nandgaon tehsil but this intensity is comparatively less in Nashik, Niphad and Satana tahsils. The overall study showed that in farm activities participation of female agriculture labour was found maximum in transplanting as compare to male agriculture labour in the study region. Male and female workers were unemployed for 105 and 184 days respectively. They are literate but scattered and have seldom time to talk of their mutual problems. Migrated agricultural labours are working on contract base at farm owners for the period of 6 months or year and they are mostly from khandesh and Marathwada region of Maharashtra. The absence of labour union, illiteracy, ignorance of government policies and schemes, migration etc. are main causes of insecurity. Even they don't have awareness of their fundamental right related to work or wages.

SUGGESTIONS:

The Minimum Wages Act provides for the minimum wage fixation for labour as well. So minimum and equal wages should be fixed for both male and female agricultural labours. It is highly difficult to reckon the equivalent of money wages in kind of payments and see that justice is done. Working hours should be fixed, Awareness programmes should be organized at Grampanchayat level. The problem of seasonal unemployment can be solved by the agriculture allied activities and agro-based industries. Ideal and impractical proposals of creating co-operatives of agricultural labourers have been put forth. They should have an employment opportunity during off seasons or slack seasons.

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