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## Housing for Farm Workers in Kondarajanahalli-A Study

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### Abstract

Agricultural workers or Farm Workers are a highly vulnerable lot. The main purpose of this study was to find out if the hundreds of farm workers working in the selected five villages of Kondarajannahalli gram panchayath of Kolar district have access to a very basic necessity-housing. They belong to the unorganized sector. Today their numbers are increasing thanks to the loss of agricultural land to urban expansion and renewal. To understand the ground realities better a survey was conducted in Kondarajanahalli gram panchayath of Kolar district. The research gap has shown that with the high mechanization of agriculture and decreasing farm land it has resulted in the direct fallout of seasonal and disguised unemployment. The problem of unemployment has brought down the household income and made housing a huge problem. Though the government has brought out many housing schemes for the homeless farm labor the real rural poor still many are left out of the safety net. Here a problem of demand and supply has risen in an uncontrolled manner. Heavy work competition and all for meagre wages has pushed these hapless hordes into hunger and starvation. They are not to be confused with sharecroppers. They slept in groups on the edges of fields in rural areas and while those migrating to urban areas slept on footpaths. So how was their housing problem addressed? This study intends to find this out. The sample size was 150 and covered five villages of Kondarajannahalli GP. The research methodology used was collecting both primary and secondary data. Simple random sampling was used to elicit answers from the farm labour and percentage method was used to analyse the collected data. The findings showed that indebtedness and low wages were the main economic drawbacks for not having access to houses. Besides fragmented pieces of land and not finding farm work within their own villages was another drawback because they had to go as migrant workers to cities in search of jobs thus falling prey to jobbers or middlemen. They were bundled into lorries or tractors to cities and made to work for a pittance. The solution lay in distributing houses without harping on ration cards as it's a well known fact that farm workers suffer from seasonal unemployment and are akin to migrant labor who work around the year in different places and different jobs.

Keywords: Agricultural labour, Farm workers, bonded labor, housing, low income groups, sharecroppers

### 1. Introduction

Agricultural laborers may be defined as bonded or semi bonded laborers or full time landless laborers. The target groups taken for study are those landless labor who are suffering under seasonal unemployment. Many previous research studies have said that the cause of landless farm labor is a lost cause because of rapid mechanization of agriculture and decreasing sizes of the farms it has resulted in disguised and seasonal unemployment. How has housing schemes by the government both at central and state level aid them as they tend to be footloose and keep moving through farms looking for work and source of income for a few months atleast. So thus they tend to sleep on the edges of fields and in small make shift tents close to their fields of work. The Indira Awas yojana (central scheme) and Rajiv Awas Yojana were Karnataka state scheme introduced in 1992 to provide housing for homeless rural and urban poor. Are these houseless farm labor counted. Do they have loan facility to build a home? Is there any budgetary allocation or debt waiver in this regard? In this regard hundred and fifty farm labor from Kondarajannahalli a gram panchayath under Kolar district was selected as sample. Under Kondarajannahalli GP five villages Ammeerahalli Bettadahosahalli

Gajaladinne Papparajanahalli and Kogiluhalli were selected as samples for study. Thirty samples were taken from each village where twenty five were men and five were women laborers. So 125 were male samples and 25 were female samples. There were variables taken to ascertain their standard of living which related to wages earned to in season and off season employment and the awareness of the agricultural labour.

## 2. Review of Literature

(Anil, 2011)The shift from food crops to commercial crops raised important questions regarding the food security of the state. Rice being the staple food of the population and tapioca being the most important cereal substitute is faced with a drastic decline in the internal production of food. The state produces only less than one-fourth of its food requirement. The decline in the production of food crops is unprecedented and such a phenomenon has very rarely occurred in any other economy. The food security of the state was in a state of jeopardy

Laxminarayan (2013) in his article “Changing conditions of Agricultural Labourers” in his paper attempts to throw light on the changes which have taken place over a period of time in the socio-economic condition of agricultural labour households in three villages in Punjab, Haryana and Eastern UP. Attention has been focused on the demographic characteristics of these 58 households and changes in their income employment, indebtedness, asset formation etc.

Brindaviswanathan and Kavi Kumar (2013) their study examined linkage between agricultural performance and internal labour migration in India at state level and district level. Their study was purely based on the secondary data. Study was conducted in econometrics model and simultaneous equation model was used to analyse the panel data. The results suggest that “the impact of yield change on the immigration rate depends on both the inter-play between inter and intra-district immigration rates”. The study concludes that policy makers should imply some policy measures for agricultural labourers to effectively participate in agricultural sector.

Sarda Prasad (2014) analyzed the shortage of agricultural labourers in Banda and Hamirpur district of Bundelkhand region in Uttar Pradesh. The study was based on primary data. Data were collected from field survey. Study found that main reason for shortage of agricultural labourers is rural-out migration and MGNREGA work in the study area. The study has suggested that Government should facilitate MGNREGA labour to the farmers in subsidized rates to overcome shortage of agricultural labourers.

## 3.Research Gap

The only way to stop migration of farm labor during seasonal unemployment to the already overburdened urban areas was to provide them housing facilities in their villages itself. These farm labor were mostly not united and thus fell prey to jobbers or middlemen as there was heavy competition for work. Staring at low wages, bonded labor, indebtedness, disguised unemployment were the issues ailing these labor. These landless workers were still sleeping on the edges of fields where they worked in groups and cooked and lived in makeshift shelters before going in search of sustenance in other big fields where harvesting was due. Heavy mechanization of farm tools and implements and slowly decreasing agricultural land, seasonal unemployment and severe exploitation at the hands of middlemen, who promised them rosy jobs in cities often dumping them made housing for them hang in balance. Even having ration cards by some proved futile as hunger and starvation prompted these families to go out of their villages for jobs. Thus the research gap has shown that with the high mechanization of agriculture and decreasing farm land it has resulted in the direct fallout of migration for jobs by the agricultural labor. The problem of unemployment has brought down the household income and made housing a huge problem.

## 4.Objectives:

- 1.Profile of the sampled agricultural workers of Kondarajanahalli.
- 2.Awareness and non-awareness of farm labour about Governments housing schemes.

3. Suitable suggestions to be made regarding housing for farm labor of Kondarajanahalli.

**5. Research Methodology:**

Both primary data as well as secondary data was used for the study. Primary data was collected by means of a field survey. Secondary data was collected from previously published articles books and reports. A questionnaire was designed and interview method was used to collect data. Simple random sampling was done and descriptive analysis was followed. Percentage method was used to analyse the collected data. One hundred and fifty samples were collected from five villages of Kondarajanahalli Gram Panchayath.

**6. Data analysis and Interpretation.**

Table-1-Profile of the farm labor of Kondarajanahalli GP.

Sl.no.	Names of sampled villages	Sampled no. of farm labor	Men Labor	Women labor	Wages received on season	Wages received off season
1	Ammeerahalli	30	25	5	500-700Rs	220Rs.
2	Bettadahosahalli	30	25	5	500-800Rs.	200Rs.
3	Gajaladinne	30	25	5	500-800Rs.	300Rs.
4	Paparajnahalli	30	25	5	500-700Rs.	250Rs.

**Source Field survey 2022 June**

Table -1

The table above shows us that total sample size is one hundred and fifty and the wages received during on season that is during harvest time is a paltry amount given between Rs.500 - 800 Rs. given in Bettadahosahalli and Gajjaladinne. While the least wages given was in Kogiluhalli between Rs.500-600 Rs. According to the sampled farm labor this amount was not even enough to feed their families. While the wages received in the non harvest season was so little that they had to go to other far off villages in search of susstenance.

They also told that they camped on the edges of fields and cooked in a single pot for the family groups together. This has indicated that the target group of farm labor taken for study travelled in search of work during the failure of harvest in their villages. They made use of make shift tents and did not have even mud houses as such.

Table -2-Government schemes in these sampled villages.

Si.no.	Names of selected villages	Sampled no. of farm labor	Govt.schemes					
			Minimum wages		Providing housing		Provision of lands	
			AW	NAW	AW	NAW	AW	NAW
1	Ammeerahalli	30	40%	-	5%	-	-	35%
2	Bettadahosahalli	30	30%	-	10%	-	-	30%
3	Gajaladinne	30	40%	-	20%	-	-	10%
4	Paparajanahalli	30	50%	-	10%	-	-	10%
5	Kogiluhalli	30	40%	-	20%	-	-	10%
6	05	150	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Field Survey 2022 June**

The second table shows the number of government schemes. Minimum wages Act of 2020 Abolition of Bonded labour Act 1976 Provision of Housing sites(Karnataka CM 1 lakh housing scheme(2022) whose major benefit is to provide 1 lakh rupees & to provide subsidy for house construction or house renovation where the major beneficiaries were the Karnataka govt. people. ) and Provision of lands for the rural poor.AW\* is awareness of the farm labor and NAW\* refers to the non awareness of these schemes. Those sampled labor have said the government has spoken about sites but it was still in the implementation stage.

**Limitations**

1. The main limitation was that these farm labour were jobless with the advent of mechanization of agriculture.
2. Use of agricultural land for building townships and urban utilities cut down the size of fertile farm lands.
- 3.Low wages and indebtedness leading to bondage of labour.
4. Falling prey to moneylenders and jobbers and middlemen for the sake of a better livelihood.

**Conclusion**

Providing housing for landless agriculture laborers has to be addressed at the grassroot level more seriously. Involving social minded groups and NGO's will also help in making matters better besides publicizing with more involvement of government and other local bodies is the need of the hour.

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