

**AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF LANDLESS  
AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN MADURAI  
DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU**

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## **SYNOPSIS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Agricultural workers constitute the most neglected class in Indian rural structure. Their income is low and employment is irregular. Since, they possess no skill or training, they have no alternative employment opportunities either. We must give special consideration to the landless agricultural labourers". Although there has been tremendous progress in India since Independence, this is one section, which has really a very hard time and which deserves very special consideration". In India the agricultural labourers are facing severe unemployment and underemployment as there is no alternative sources of employment. Although the system of bonded labour is abolished according National Sample Survey NSS 32 round, about 3.5 lakh bonded labourers still exist in India. Workers will have to work from dawn to dusk as there is no fixed hours of works and there is no provision for leave and other benefits.

### **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

The problem of landless agricultural labourers is not only a pressing problem but also a puzzling problem for India. When one thinks of providing living wages to the vast multitudes of Indian and the dreams evolving a socialistic pattern of society: one has to primarily think of millions of people involved in agricultural operations. The pattern of this sector of the society is not simply its number but the provision of gainful employment is the basic need. This present study is focused on the economic conditions of landless agricultural labourers in Madurai District of Tamil Nadu by taking a case study of three blocks. With this background, the following objectives have been framed.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To analyse the socio economic conditions of landless agricultural labourers in Madurai District of Tamil Nadu.
- To examine the expenditure and savings pattern of the landless agricultural labourers.
- To measure the income inequalities among landless agricultural labourers.
- To measure the unemployment rate among landless agricultural labourers.
- To investigate the impact of unemployment rate on expenditure, saving and debt of the landless agricultural labourers.

## **HYPOTHESES**

- There is no association between the Unemployment rate and Gender.
- There is no association between Unemployment rate and Education Level.
- There is no association between Unemployment rate and Community.
- There is no association between Unemployment rate and Religion.
- There is no association between Unemployment rate and Size of the family.
- Unemployment rate do not influence the expenditure of the respondents.
- Unemployment rate do not influence the savings respondents.
- Unemployment rate do not in influence the debt of the respondents,

## **LIMITATIONS**

- This study is undertaken in a limited area. The present study is confined to only three blocks in Madurai District namely Melur, Sedapatti, and

Vadipatti. The size of the sample is 440 o landless agricultural labourer's respondents

- The data were collected from the memory of landless agricultural labourer's respondents so they are subject to their recall bias. The enquiry conducted for the study covers the rural area only. Therefore, an enquiry of this type faces several difficulties. However care was taken to check the data with officials connected with the blocks.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The main purpose of the review of the literature pertaining to the evaluation of performance of landless agricultural labourers to give a proper orientation and perspective to the present work. A survey of literature plays a significant role in establishment the back drop for any research work in social sciences. It is felt that justification of present study can be made by reviewing the available literature on the subject. Therefore, an attempt has been made to review the literature on the subject so as to establish the relevance of the present study. I have reviewed 59 literatures related to my topic.

## **RESEARCH GAP**

While scanning through the available literature on agricultural labourers, it was observed that most of the studies based on the wage and income and expenditure and poverty among agricultural labourers. Very few studies on agricultural labourers are done after implemented Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gurantee Act. In real sense after implementation of MGNREGA people's standard of livings are increasing;

Though there are many studies in Madurai district of Tamilnadu covering some aspects of landless agricultural labourers, a comprehensive study covering the multi dimensional problems of landless agricultural labourers in Tamilnadu, particularly in Madurai district is missing. To fill this gap, the researcher has chosen this topic for the study.

## **CHOICE OF THE STUDY AREA**

The present study was undertaken in Madurai district of Tamilnadu. Agricultural labour was widely spread in this district. Therefore, the district was purposively selected for the present study. This district comes under vaigai delta region of Tamilnadu

## **SAMPLING DESIGN**

The study was based on the input-output data obtained from sample landless labourers in Madurai districts. For selection of labours in Melur, sedapatti and vadipatti block, multi-stage sampling design was employed.

Madurai district comprises 13 taluks and revenue blocks, same names same boundaries. Under the gram panchayat system rural administration or the district is done by panchayat villages and the taluka headquarters. The revenue blocks are further sub-divided by firkas. The last three taluks, Tiruparankundram, Madurai West and Madurai East, were created in February 2014. The thirteen taluks.

**TABLE 2.1**

**BLOCK WISE DISTRIBUTION OF LANDLESS AGRICULTURAL  
LABOURERS IN MADURAI DISTRICT  
(POPULATION SEX WISE 2011)**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Blocks</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1	Thiruparankundram	8848	8067	16915	11
2	T. Kallupatti	9290	10786	20076	8
3	Thirumangalam	10847	12269	23114	5
4	Kalligudi	8913	11188	20101	7
5	Sedapatti	15709	16411	32120	1
6	Usilampatti	8701	9415	18116	10
7	Vadipatti	14650	11497	26147	3

8	Melur	16697	13948	30645	2
9	Madurai West	7090	5487	12577	13
10	Madurai East	7958	6755	14713	12
11	Kottampatti	13693	12111	25804	4
12	Alanganallur	9999	8527	18526	9
13	Chellampattin	10426	11792	22218	6

Sources: Statistical hand book 2011 -2012.

Block statistical hand book 2012

In this procedure, at first stage, two major agricultural labour living blocks were purposively selected. From each block, three major density populated and more land less agricultural labour living village panchayat union were selected at second stage.

**TABLE -2.2**

**BLOCK WISE DISTRIBUTION OF LANDLESS AGRICULTURAL  
LABOURERS IN SELECTED BLOCKS**

	<b>I STAGE</b>	<b>II STAGE</b>	<b>III STAGE</b>	<b>50 %</b>
Madurai	1. Sedapatti	1. Soolapuram	320	160
		2. Mallapuram		
		3.Thirumanickam		
	2. Melur	1. Ambalakaranpatti	300	150
		2. Urananpatti		
		3. Navinipatti		
	3. Vadipatti	1. Katchiakatti	260	130
		2.Mannadimangalam		
		3.Melakkal		
		Total	880	440

Then at third stage, the researcher identified 880 landless agricultural labours in selected villages. So the researcher randomly selected 50 percent of stratified random sampling thus the total sample size was 440

## **DATA COLLECTION**

Primary data as well as secondary data were collected for the present study. A interview schedule has been used to collect the primary data. The data collected through the interview schedule provide information with regard to the economic conditions of the respondents, relating to sources of income, expenditure pattern, indebtedness, savings and standard of living.

The secondary data have been collected from village administrative office, statistical office, Madurai, periodical research reports and Journals Magazines.

## **PERIOD OF THE STUDY**

The study covers a period from January 2016 to June 2017.

## **TOOLS OF ANALYSIS**

The primary data collected for the study were analysed with the help of both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The following mathematical and statistical tools were employed to arrive at meaningful and socially relevant conclusions.

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used for analytical purpose of the study and simple statistical tools such as Chi – Square and One-way Annova was used.

## **CHAPTER SCHEME**

The first chapter presents the introduction about agricultural labourers, definition, category of agricultural labourers in India, and causes of growth of

agricultural labourers, statement of the research problem, significant of the study, objectives, hypothesis and limitations of the study.

## **Chapter II Review of Literature**

The second chapter deals with the review of literature, research gap and profile of the study area.

## **Chapter III**

The third chapter explains the methodology and gives the definition of the concepts used in the thesis.

## **Chapter IV Analysis and Interpretation**

The fourth chapter deals with analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

## **Chapter V Summary and Policy Implication**

The last chapter deals with the summary of findings, suggestions and conclusions.

## **MAJOR FINDINGS**

- Out of 440 respondents 23.2 per cent fall under the age group below 30, 27.7 percent belonged to the age group of 30 – 40, 26.8 belonged to the age group of 40 – 50 and 22.3 percent come under the age 50 and above. It is observed from the table that majority of the respondents come under the age group of 30 -40years who are more energetic, progressive and innovative.
- Out of 440 respondents, 41.6 per cent were males and 58.4 per cent were females.
- 51.4 percent of them belong to Hinduism and 25.4 percent of them belonged to Christian and 23.2 percent of them belong to Muslim.

- Out of 440 sample respondents 267 landless agricultural labourers belong to SC/ ST, 94 respondents belong to Backward Class and 79 respondents belong to Most Back ward Class.
- Out of 440 respondents, 320 of them were married, 62 of them were unmarried, 38 of them had lost their spouse and 20 were separated.
- Out of 440 respondents in the study area, 28.6 percent have studied up to high school level. 19.2 percent of the sample landless agricultural labours have completed higher secondary, 20.2 percent of the respondents were illiterates in study area, and 27 percent of the respondents have completed primary level. Out of 440 respondents only 5 percent have undergone degree and higher studies.
- Out of 440 sample respondents. 22.3 percent of the respondents were in joint family and 77.7 percent of them were in nuclear family.
- Out of the 440 respondents, 20.5 percent of the respondents were in thatched house, 55.9 percent of them were living in tilled house and 23.6 percent of the respondents living in concrete house.
- Out of the 440 respondents, 212 respondents of them have house of their own. 126 respondents, that is, 28.6 percent of them live in a rented house. And 102 respondents, that is, 23.2 per cent of were living in leased houses.
- Out of the 440 respondents 1.1 percent live alone. 6.2 percent of the respondents were having two members. 16.4 percent of the respondent's size of the family was three, 23.6 percent were having four persons in the family and 52.7 percent of them were having more than five family members.
- Out of 440 respondents in the study area, 16.6 respondents were engaged in weeding work, 17.7 percent of the respondents were engaged in nursery and land preparing work. 15.9 percent of the respondents were involved in transplanting work, 14.1 percent of the respondents were engaged in sowing work and 9.5 percent of the respondents were

engaged in applying fertilizer and pesticides and 11.4 percent of the respondents were engaged in watering work.

- Out of the 440 respondents, 60.9 percent of the respondents were engaged in non agricultural activities and remaining 39.1 percent of the respondents were not engaged in non – agricultural work.
- Out of 440 respondents, 33 percent of respondent were going for poultry and cattle rearing work, 26 percent of respondents were engaged in construction work, 25 percent of the respondents were going to coolie work and 16 percent respondents were selling some products as vendors.
- Out of 440 sample landless agricultural labourers in the study area, 53.6 percent of the landless agricultural labourers were found to work for period of below 5 days per month, 23.6 percent get work for 5 - 10 days per month. And 22.8 percent of the respondents get employment for get employment for 10 and above days in agricultural work.
- Among 440 respondents 104 of them get income below Rs. 50,000 and 120 of them have income ranging between Rs. 50,000 – 1, 00,000. It is seen that 30 of them have income above Rs. 2, 00,000 per annum. 110 of them come under the income ranging between Rs. 1, 00,000 – 1, 50,000 and 76 of them come under the income ranging between Rs. 1,50 000 to 2,00,000 per annum.
- Out of the 440 respondents, 122 sample respondents have annual income less than Rs.50, 000. 26.4 per cent of the respondents have annual income betweenRs.50, 000 to 85,000. 108 sample respondents have annual income between Rs.85, 000 to 1, 20,000. 62 sample respondents of the annual income between Rs.1, 20,000 to 1, 50,000 and 32 sample respondents have annual income more than 150,000.
- The gini ratio was estimated to analyse the income of the landless agricultural labourers. The estimated value of Gini ratio is 0.26. It is indicates that there inequality of income among the landless agricultural labourers in this study area.

- Among 440 respondents, 126, 112 respondents in kharif and Rabi and 128 respondents in summer were getting less than Rs.5000. Among the sample respondents 114,128 in kharif and Rabi, 98 respondents were getting income ranging from Rs. 5000 –Rs.10000. 84, 92 respondents in kharif and Rabi and 98 respondents in summer come under the income between Rs. 10000 to Rs.15, 000. Among the respondents, 66, 74 in kharif and Rabi season and 62 in summer season were getting income between Rs.15000 to 20000. Out of 42, 40 respondents kharif and Rabi and 48 in summer season are getting income above Rs. 2, 00, 000.
- Among 440 respondents. 202 respondents are having income from agriculture less than Rs.25, 000, 142 respondents are having agricultural income between 25, 000 to Rs, 50,000 and 96 respondents are having agricultural income more than Rs.1, 00,000. 92 respondents are having non-agricultural income less than Rs.25, 000, 48 respondents are having non-agricultural income between 25,000 to Rs, 50,000 and 32 respondents are having non-agricultural income more than Rs.1,00, 000.
- Among 440 respondents, 65 respondents expenditure is below Rs. 50,000 and 100 of the respondent's expenditure range between Rs. 50,000 – 1, 00,000. 91 of the respondent's expenditure range between Rs. 1, 00,000 – 15, 00,000 and 184 respondent's expenditure is between Rs. 15, 00,000 – Rs2, 00,000 per annum.
- As for as is in concerned the amount of money spent on food per month, 184 of them spend below 30,000 and 126 of them spend between Rs.30, 000 – Rs.40, 000. 18.6 percent of them spend between Rs.40, 000 – Rs.50, 000 and 10.9 percent of them spend above Rs.50, 000.
- As for as is the expenditure on rent concerned 71.4 percent say that it is not applicable. 15.4 percent spend below Rs.12, 000 as rent. 7.3 per cent of them spend between Rs.12, 000 – Rs.20, 000 and 5.9 percent spend above Rs.20, 000.
- As for as the expenditure on clothing is concerned out of 440 respondents, 122 of them spend below 10,000; 198 of them spend

between 10,000 – 15,000; 94 percent of them spend between 15,000 – 20,000 and 26 of them spend above 20,000.

- As for as the educational expenditure is concerned 32.3 percent of them spend below Rs.20, 000 per year, 24.5 percent of them spend between Rs. 20,000 – 40,000; 24.1 percent of them spend between Rs.40, 000 – 60,000 and 19.1 percent spend aboveRs.60, 000.
- As for as the expenditure on fuel, electrical and communication is concerned 116 of them spend below Rs, 12,000 per year, 124 of them spend between Rs.12, 000 – 18,000 and 128 of them spend between Rs.18, 000 – 24,000 and 72 of them spend above Rs. 24,000.
- Among the sample respondents. 21.4 percent of them spend above Rs. 30,000 and 21.8 percent of them spend between Rs. 20,000 – 30,000 on recreation and functions and 30 percent of them spend from Rs.10, 000 to 20,000 and 26.8 percent of them spend below Rs. 30,000.
- Out of the 440 respondents 142 of them spend below Rs. 5000 on medical and 110 of them spend between Rs.5000 – 8000 and 100 of them spend between Rs.8000 – 11000 and 80 of them spend above Rs. 11000 for their medical needs.
- Out of the 440 respondent, 80.4 percent respondents were savings, and 19.6 percent of the respondents were not savings.
- Out of the total respondents, 24.1 percent of the respondents save below Rs. 12,000 per year, 23.2 percent of them save between Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 24,000 per year, 20.9 percent of them save between Rs.24,000 to 36,000 and 12.2 percent of them save above Rs. 36,000 per year .
- Out of 440 respondents, 86 respondents, that is, 19.5 percent do not save. 126 respondents, that is, 35.6 percent save in self help group (SGH), 102 respondents that is, 28.8 percent save in Bank, 72 respondents were having cash in hands. 54 of them, that is, 15.2 percent make their saving in post office.
- Out of the sample respondents, 67.3 percent of the respondents were debted, and 32.7 percent were not debted.

- Out of the 296 respondents, 88 respondents, that is, 29.7 percent get loan from bank. 104 respondents, that is, 35.1 percent get loan from self help group (SHG), 72 respondents get loan from money lenders. 32 of them that is 10.8 percent borrow money from their friends and relations.
- Out of the 296 sample respondents. 94 respondents get loan below Rs.25, 000. 102 respondents get loan between Rs.25, 000 –Rs.50, 000. 64 respondents get loan between Rs.50, 000 – 75,000. 36 respondents get loan above Rs.75, 000.
- The problems faced by the landless agricultural labourers were analysed using Garrett ranking technique and are presented with their mean score and ranks. The poverty was perceived as the main problem faced by landless agricultural labourers with the poverty, followed by financial problems with the landless agricultural labourers. For landless agricultural labourers, health problems were at third rank and irrigation problem was at the fourth rank. , travels time is high, low wages, working time is high the other problems faced by them were ranked fifth, sixth and seventh respectively. The problems related to post – harvest technology was at the 8<sup>th</sup> rank.
- Out of the 440 respondents, 142 and 132 respondents respectively are unemployed for less than 25 days. 88 respondents during kharif and 109 respondents during Rabi are unemployed from 25 to 40 days. Likewise 183 respondents during kharif 153 respondents during Rabi seasons are unemployed for 40 to 70 days. 27 respondents for kharif and 46 respondents for Rabi are unemployed for more than 70 days.
- During summer season landless agricultural labourers were unemployed for less than 25 working days that is 5.7 per cent. 57.5 per cent of the respondents were unemployed for 25 – 40 working days, 34.1 percent of the respondents were unemployed for 40 -70 working days and 2.7 per cent of the landless agricultural labourers were unemployed for above 70 working days.

- The estimated results show that the value of chi-square is 3.240, which is insignificant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., there is no association between unemployment rate and gender.
- The estimated results show that the value of chi-square is 4.752, which is insignificant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., there is no association between unemployment rate and education level.
- The estimated results show that the value of chi-square is 2.214, which is insignificant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., there is no association between unemployment rate and community.
- The estimated results show that the value of chi-square is .667, which is insignificant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., there is no association between unemployment rate and Religion.
- The estimated results show that the value of chi-square is 38.336s, which is significant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., there is no association between unemployment rate and Religion.
- The estimated results show that the value of F is 1.901, which is significant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., unemployment rate does not influence the expenditure of the respondents.
- The estimated results show that the value of F is .875, which is insignificant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. i.e., unemployment rate of does not influence the savings of the respondents.
- The estimated results show that the value of F is .4557, which is significant at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. i.e., unemployment rate influence the debt of the respondents

## SUGGESTIONS

- Agriculture is the major occupation in this block but the wages are very low so step to could be taken so that these workers earn a regular reasonable income.
- MGNREGA would help the landless agricultural labourers in the off season but wages and number of days of employment provided very low. So it necessary to increase the wage and number of days of employment.
- Most of the respondents pointed out that the rate of wage paid to them is low compared to the rate prevailing in other areas. Hence it is suggested that the government has to take necessary steps to implement the minimum wage act to maintain uniform rate of wages to landless agricultural labourers throughout the state.
- From the study, the researcher came to know that the landless agricultural labourers are not paid immediately they finish the work. They are paid after some period. So the researcher suggests that the agricultural labourer must be made aware their rights and claim their wage immediately.
- The researcher reveals that no incentives are provided to the landless agricultural in this area. More over the researcher come to know that in other areas some facilities are given to the labourers while they are working. Further for any kind of work, incentives are essential to enable the workers to do more work perfectly. In this light it is suggested that workers be given the incentives like providing tea, giving rest at regular intervals and providing transport facilities.
- Since the landless agricultural labourers are not able to get employment throughout the year, government institutions and social organizations should come forward to establish rural based industries like coir and cottage industries to provide employment to landless agricultural labourers through out the year.

- There is no landless agricultural labourer's organization. The local leaders and government should come forward to organize union in these areas. This will help them to secure fair wage, proper working hours and to avoid exploitations.
- The disparity in agricultural work and non agricultural work wage and disparity rate between males and females wage rate should be minimized. Equal pay for equal work should be followed in both agriculture and non agriculture work.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through the economic analysis of landless agricultural labourers in Madurai district, it was observed that illiterate is prevalent in this area, inequality in the distribution of income also exist and most of the respondents were engaged in agriculture and related work. Highest percent of the respondents were engaged in building construction work. The expenditure analysis exhibited that major portions of income are spend on food. The saving habit of landless agricultural labourers is found to be very poor in the study area. Finally I have given some suggestion to improve the economic conditions of the landless agricultural labourers, if all this suggestion is taken care off and, in practice there is a reasonable hope for creating tremendous changes in employment opportunity and an increase in standard of living of landless agricultural labourers.

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