

## CHAPTER I

### TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF RURAL LABOUR

1.1 Population of any area can be classified in two categories, workers and non-workers. The workers in case of rural areas are termed as 'rural workers'. The set of workers can again be divided in two subsets: the self-employed workers (including their unpaid helpers) and other workers who work outside their own premises for others in lieu of payment in any form for their work.

1.2 Thus self-employed includes all those who work for themselves, their families or for others either by way of help (without payment) or as an exchange worker and also those who work for others on payment but work in their own premises. One example of the latter category is the women workers who do the dehusking of the paddy for others, working in their own dwellings (usually on piece rate basis).

1.3 There may be other possible ambiguities which must be cleared at the outset. For example, tailors are treated as self-employed even though there are tailors (mostly found in urban areas) who go from door to door with their sewing machines and work in the premises of their employers. Similar is the case with carpenters. But these categories are treated as self-employed because they possess for themselves also the 'means of production other than labour'. Similar is the case with darners. If they work at a place they possess, they are treated as self-employed. But if they visit door to door to do work, they belong to the 'other than self-employed' category. The washermen are treated as self-employed because they do the washing at the place of their choice or the place which is possessed by them. They also have the own capital including working capital. But women workers owing their own sickle for harvesting or labourers owning light shovel or spade are not treated as self-employed because these tools are treated as accompaniments of some category of labourers and not as 'means of production other than labour'. It may also be noted that if a worker, possessing an axe, fells a tree (where he has a right to fell trees) for sale, he is treated as self-employed but if he does this for others on payment he is 'other than self-employed worker'. Here the distinguishing criteria is his possession of trees and the 'choice of work' by the worker. The 'other than self-employed workers' are treated as labourers. Here again the labourers can be drawn either from white or blue collar workers categories. The labourers drawn from the white collar workers set, for example work

charge staff in many engineering departments (accountants, typists, Assistant Engineers), teachers, etc. often on daily wage basis, are termed as white collar labourers. The labourers drawn from the blue collar workers set are termed as blue collar labourers. Thus, there are three subsets, the self-employed workers, the white collar labourers and the blue collar labourers.

1.4 In such a situation, the sub-set representing the blue collar labourers working in the rural areas can be defined to represent the rural labourers. Thus, some of the rural labourers may also work partly as self-employed (either in agricultural or in non-agricultural occupations or both) and or as white collar labourers. But the category to which such labourers belong will be deemed to be the class of rural labourers. This is the first approximation to begin with. The next step is related to provide this with empirical content. In the National Sample Survey Organisation surveys, "Rural Labour is defined as those living in rural areas and engaged in manual labour in agriculture or non-agricultural occupations receiving wages either in cash and/or in kind". Labour Bureau, Government of India, in its General Report on Intensive Type Studies on Rural Labour in India (1967-70) defines that "a household was to be treated as a Rural Labour Household if at least one of its members had reported wage-paid manual employment (other than in the capacity of apprentice) during the period of 12 months preceding the date of enquiry". These are not very different than that of ours.

1.5 We must also note and emphasise that in our definition of rural labour the criterion of wage payment has been used in such a manner that it may not be a true attribute for all those who are defined as rural labour using the same criterion. After all, a worker who spends nearly whole of his worktime in self-cultivation and only a marginal part of it (say, 5 per cent) in wage-labour is essentially a self-employed worker. But we would still define him as a rural labour because of the fact that even 5 per cent of his worktime is spent on wage-labour indicates that his own resources are inadequate to keep him fully occupied. In other words, the criterion of wage-employment is used by us more in the sense of an indicative phenomenon and not as an attributive criterion. This is relevant in the semi-feudal mode of production where the labourers (i.e., the

direct producers) may be put in the process of being divorced from their means of production but may not have completed it.

1.6. Labourers in rural areas may be categorised either on the basis of their place of work (rural or urban) or on the basis of their residence or on the basis of both. Even if the basis is taken as both (a very broad approach indeed), the proportion working as labourers in rural areas will be overwhelmingly large. The other problem concerning this broad approach is that a labourer working in urban areas may be only occasionally coming to reside in rural areas. An extreme example will be of urban labourers who may be coming to some rural homes or dwellings (may be their own) during festivals or on holidays. These are all essentially connected with the housing conditions, recreation aspects or other socio-economic conditions of urban labourer and, therefore, need not be mixed up with the work, work culture and working conditions (taken in its broadest meaning) in the rural areas. Therefore place of work which is the essential criteria for occupation, ought to be the basis of categorisation of rural labour. Those who work as labourer in both the places, viz., rural and urban areas, may also be treated as rural labourers.

1.7 The three Rural Labour Enquiry reports, 1962-65, 1974-75 and 1977-78 have not explicitly defined rural labour but have provided a definition for rural labour household which is identical in all the three reports. The definition of rural labour which is, however, implicit therein can be stated as follows:

1.8 Labourer is a worker whose major source of income in a year is wage-paid (wages, salaries or perquisites either in cash or kind or both) manual labour. The term 'manual work' was taken to mean a job essentially involving physical operations. A job, though involving some physical labour but requiring a certain level of general, professional, scientific or technical education was not classified as manual work. On the other hand, jobs not involving much of physical labour and at the same time not requiring some educational (general, scientific, technical or otherwise) background were treated as manual work. Thus, the definition excluded engineers, dentists, midwives etc. from manual workers even though their jobs involved some element of physical labour but included peons, chowkidars, watchmen, etc., even if their work did not involve much of physical labour.

1.9 This definition is different from ours because we do not use either major 'source of income' or major 'source of time disposition' in the definition. Otherwise wage-paid manual labourer is same as the 'blue collar labourer' of ours. We argue among ourselves that how one

is different from the other worker (so far the terms of reference of NCRL is concerned) if one is deriving 45 per cent of income and the other is deriving 55 per cent of the income from wage-paid manual labour. Both belong to the same socio-economic milieu more so in our rural setting. Therefore, the definition as given in the reports of the different Rural Labour Enquiries is narrower than ours. The other problem with this narrow definition is that it does not take into account the vast magnitude of unemployment and under-employment prevailing in this country. A worker may not be getting major part of his income from wage labour nor he may be devoting major part of his time on wage labour, not because of his other occupation is his main occupation but because low demand of wage labour in that area. This is clearly evident in tribal areas.

1.10 Of course, when categorisation within the set of labourers has to be done for industry or the occupation, major source of income or time disposition may be necessary for such a categorisation. That is why the Agriculture Labour Enquiry, 1950-51, in an attempt to define agriculture labour, defines main occupation as follows:

"The main occupation of a person is the occupation in which he was engaged for 50 per cent or more of the total number of days worked by him during the previous year. All other occupations should be treated as subsidiary occupations".

1.11 However, the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry (1956-57) uses the 'earning' instead of 'time disposition' criterion for the purposes of defining main occupation. Indian population censuses and surveys also take the 'main occupation' in their definitions of categories of workers because their concern is not with specific category but all the categories among the workers.

1.12 The definition of rural workers adopted by ILO convention in 1975 (Convention no 141 and recommendation 149 thereafter) takes a restricted view of the rural workers whereby it excludes certain set of workers for example the 'self-employed employees. But if a rural worker as defined by ILO is adopted to mean rural labourer as is done sometimes by ILO itself, it would mean a much broader definition than what we have suggested. Some categories included in the ILO convention may be treated as potential rural labourer if it is assumed that distress diversification of the workforce adding to the set of wage earner continues. For example if rural development remains a far cry and no further land reform take place, one can assume distress diversification of the workforce and in that case sharecroppers sub-tenants etc can be treated as

potential rural labour. However if it is assumed that further land reforms measures such as giving tenancy rights to the share-croppers, consolidation of holdings, growth of custom service sector for marginal and small farmers, etc. are also associated with rapid rural development, the share-croppers may be treated as potential Kulaks.

1.13 Responses regarding definition of rural labour have been received from experts, State governments, voluntary agencies, trade unions etc. A good number among these have made use of different parameters to define the term. Their anxiety is to capture all the direct producers which could constitute the set of rural labour. According to the popular view which came out of the whole set of comments, a rural labour is a person who is normally a wage paid, manual worker, dwelling and working in villages and rural areas. He/she is normally unskilled, un-organised, often agricultural labourer, works and seeks employment mainly in rural sector. Thus, being a manual labourer, unskilled, un-organised and living and working in a rural area, seems to be the obvious characteristics of a rural labour. There are a few who hold the view that not only unorganised but organised, not only unskilled but skilled, should be defined a rural labourer, provided they are employed in rural areas. Here the criterion seems to be in terms of their rural non-development status and employment. Views related to the question of including or excluding the self-employed have also been expounded. Similar has been the issue related to the small and the marginal farmers and share-croppers. A common tendency has been to be to lend support to (appreciate, accept and confirm as satisfactory), the ILO's 141 convention's definition.

1.14 There is a difference of opinion among experts. Some feel that "the definition adopted by the Rural Labour Enquiry should be the basis" and it "would be an acceptable definition if rural labourer household is defined as one which receives a major part of its total income from employment on wages".

Some others maintain that "a narrow focus on rural labourers" defined on a main income source criterion may not serve the purpose of the National Commission on Rural Labour which should be interested in a wide range of workers including "partly self-employed who may also hire some worker". The emphasis is to include "all those who operate within the low income segment of the rural economy" which would implicitly mean that the rural workers as defined and adopted by ILO convention be taken to mean rural labour.

1.15 Many fail to make a clear and sharp distinction between workers and labourers. Some have not realised that labourers are a sub-set of the workers' set. The anxiety to include a class of direct producers in the category of rural labour, results in a support to the ILO convention. Many feel that there is not much difference between bulk of marginal farmers, share-croppers, small sub-tenants and rural labourers and therefore, these should be included in the rural labourers' set.

1.16 We also shared this anxiety but at the same time we wanted to avoid ambiguity as far as possible. Our definition of rural labourer is certainly not oblivious of this overlapping of self-employed manual workers and other manual workers. It would include many if only they work as a labourer for a short period. But to treat every self-employed manual worker as a labourer, we feel would be an over-reaction to this phenomenon of overlapping which would dilute the focus of NCRL.

1.17 The Twenty Fifth Round of NSS show that income of lowest 10 per cent of cultivating households has a significant proportion of wage income. According to our definition also those cultivating workers who have wage income from manual work as part of their total income, would come in the category of rural labourer. Therefore, a large bulk of share-croppers, small artisans, sub-tenants, marginal farmers etc. who even for a few days work as wage manual worker, would form the part of the rural labour set, except for those who inspite of their distress economic condition, refuse to do manual labour because of either being conscious of their status or because they belong to upper caste

1.18 However, rural India is characterised by a heterogenous social formation scenario. There are some areas, for example, hill areas of North West Uttar Pradesh, which even today show a very strong survival of pre-capitalist social formation to almost complete exclusion of capitalist labour market. There the direct producers are the part of petty production syndiom. Therefore the definition of rural labour is set in following terms:

"A person who is living and working in rural area and engaged in agricultural and/or non-agricultural activities requiring physical labour and getting wage or remuneration partially or wholly, in cash or kind or both during the year or such own-account workers like small farmers and artisans who are not usually hiring in labourers but are a part of the petty production system in rural areas."

## CHAPTER II

### THE RURAL LABOUR

2.1 The latest estimate of work force in rural India is available from 43rd Round of National Sample Survey<sup>1</sup> for the period July 1987 to June 1988. The estimated total workers (including unemployed workers) in rural areas of India then happened to be about 259.5 million out of which male and female workers were 165.0 and 94.5 millions respectively (Table 1). Workers happened to be 55.4 and 33.2 per cent of male and female population respectively. Though there were variations among the States, the participation rate (i.e. worker population ratio) for female remained lower than that of males (Table 2) in all States. There are two main reasons for this. One reason is that upper caste/class women do not engage themselves in economic activities particularly outside their homes because of affluence and status consciousness arising out of widespread feudal ethos. The other reason is the scarcity of jobs (i.e., gainful economic activities). Poor economic condition is also responsible for this phenomenon. In such conditions while men engage themselves in economic activities, the women of poorer section of the society engage themselves in free collection of goods (vegetables, roots, firewoods, cattle feed, etc.), begging, prostitution etc. It is mainly because of these that the per day employed per worker per year (Table 2)<sup>2</sup> happened to be lower in case of female than male.

2.2 The workers can be broadly divided into two categories, that is self-employed and labourers. The National Sample Survey adopts the criteria where "the nature and type of work, from which a household derives its major income is an important indicator of activity pattern of the household members". However, the usual status of work force is estimated with reference to relatively longer period of a reference period. This categorisation provides an estimate of rural labourers which happened to be 66447 and 36064 thousands males and females respectively in 1987-88 in India (Table 3) Table 4 provides

estimate of usually unemployed workers. They can be assumed to be not belonging to the self-employed categories. Therefore using the major income criteria, the total labourer in rural India can be estimated to be 109.5 millions. The percentage of labour households in the rural households in 1987-88 happened to be 39.7 where the agricultural labour households were 30.7 per cent (Table 5). This, however, is according to a narrow definition of rural labour (see Chapter I of the report).

2.3 According to definition adopted by us in Chapter I a large bulk of marginal farmers (who would be supplementing their income by working as wage labourers) and artisans (who would mostly find their place in the landless category of household) particularly bulk of them under jajmani system of payment (a feudal form of payment in lieu of labour supplied) and also part of the petty mode of production syndrome in pre-capitalist social formation would constitute the rural labour household. The households having no land or having cultivated land of one hectare or less were 71.8 per cent of all rural households in 1987-88 (Table 6). If we exclude from this category non-agricultural self-employed rural households which was 12.3 per cent of rural household in 1987-88 (Table 5), the residual percentage of households would be 59.5. The 10.1 per cent of rural households who are categorised as having major income from sources other than 'self-employed' and 'wage/salary labour' may be assumed of having some meagre income from working as labourers. Large bulk of members in such households who would have remained unemployed, worked with an employer 'under obligation not specifically compensated by wage or salary'. This segment of household also constitute those engaged in free collection of goods, rentiers, pensioners, remittance recipients, beggars, prostitutes, old disabled and other destitutes. It is also obvious from Table 7 that 37 per cent of rural households did not engage them-

selves in crop production. If 12.3 per cent of non-agricultural self-employed households is excluded from this, the estimated non-cultivating household can be approximated as 24.3 per cent. There were about 28.8 per cent of rural households who though engaged in crop production, did not hire any labour even in peak season (Table 7). Almost all of them can be categorised as agriculture labour households according to our definition. In this way the percentage of rural household becomes about 53.5. This may constitute a good approximation to rural labour households according to our definition. This also implies that about 6 per cent of rural households which happened to be a part of marginal peasantry gets excluded from the category

of rural labour households. Therefore, it seems that National Sample Survey estimate of rural labour is an under-estimation of about 25 per cent (of course with variation among the States) if our definition is accepted. Even this may be an under-estimate because non-agricultural self-employed households (which happened to be about 12.3 per cent of all rural households) comprise of many artisans who might have also worked as labourers.<sup>4</sup> Taking all these into account, it can be concluded that labourers constitute about 60 per cent of the working population in rural India.<sup>5</sup> Assuming an annual growth of about 2.5 per cent,<sup>6</sup> the present strength of rural labour (as per definition adopted in Chapter I) would be more than 16 crores.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RURAL LABOUR

3.1 Employment and wages are the two main ingredients which are responsible for material well-being of the labourers' class. Though employment levels of rural labourers are not directly available, some indications of this level can be approximated from Table 2 which provides estimates of employment levels for the entire work force. Usually self-employed would report employment for almost all the year round which might not be correct. Therefore, the employment levels for the labourers are likely to be lower than those for the entire work force given in Columns 4, 5 and 6. On the same grounds, the percentage of unemployed labourers to total labourers would be higher than what are given in columns 4 and 5 of Table 4.

3.2 Similar interpretation would also be valid for figures given in Table 3. The average wage/salary earnings per day per person as shown in Tables 10, 11 and 12, is certainly low in large part of the rural India. This would suggest that the labourers as a class would hardly opt for voluntary unemployment unless completely incapacitated by illness. Therefore, for labourers' class columns 2 and 3 of Table 8 would register negligible values whereas involuntary unemployment, figures obtained by daily status unemployed would be much higher (may be more than twice) than those in columns 4 and 5 of Table 8 which represent the workers as a whole. Moreover, employment levels have also been overestimated by the National Sample Survey Organisation because persons working for 4 hours or more in a day (as per definition) have been deemed to be employed for the whole day. Similarly the unemployment rates for rural labourers will be also much higher than those for all rural workers as given in table 9.

3.3 Since the average wage/salary earning per day for adults (Tables 10 and 11) also includes salary earnings of the organised sectors in the rural belt, the wages of the rural labourers of the unorganised sector would approximate to those of the wages of casual agricultural labourers if not less. It will be seen from Table 13 that except for Kerala the wages have mostly remained at a level below the required statutory minimum. Moreover, in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the lowest wage for adult male labourers which I came across in 1989, was Rs. 3/- per day. "The lowest wage rate we came across is Rs. 3/-." It was in village Bansakha, Block Sigma, Distt. Raipur, Madhya Pradesh. Even in Chengalpattu District near Madras, we found wage around

Rs. 5/-. Obviously, industrial development has not automatically raised the wage to the minimum level. In Chotimurari, Block Harnaut, District Nalanda, Bihar we found wages to be around Rs. 5.50 and it was being paid all in kind. But a number of trade union leaders claimed that average wage during the agricultural operations was lower than Rs. 5.00 in Bihar. We visited some places in the State where wage was around Rs. 4.00 per day.<sup>8</sup>

3.4 The low conditions of living in the rural areas is also indicative of pitifully low living conditions of rural labourers. Table 14 shows that the per capita consumer expenditure is not only low in rural areas but in Madhya Pradesh, it is about half to that of its urban areas. The per capita monthly consumer expenditure in some rural areas is so low that had the expenditure been evenly distributed the entire rural population in Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa would have been living in poverty. Even after four decades of India's independence (which saw a plethora of policies related to rural development and also target oriented policies for eradication of poverty) one finds that about 32.7 per cent of rural population are living in poverty (Table 15, column 6), the large bulk of which (may be about 80 per cent) would be rural labourers households. The highest poverty ratio is found in Bihar, the second highest in Madhya Pradesh and the third highest is in Orissa. The lowest poverty ratio is to be found in Punjab, the second lowest in Haryana and the third lowest is to be found in Kerala (Table 15). It may, however, be noted that standard of poverty in Table 15 corresponds to minimum caloric requirement only. The percentage of rural population in poverty would have been much higher had other essentials of living (such as clothing, housing etc.) were taken into account and previously the population in poverty of the labourers' class would have been still much higher. Thus, there is enough indication of miserable condition of living of the rural labourers.

3.5 It will be evident from Table 16 that illiteracy is well pronounced among the rural workers with the notable exception of Kerala. The proportion of 'not literates' among female workers is higher than the proportion among male workers in each of the states. The rural workers include, the self-employed, the non-manual salary/wage earners and the rural labourers. Since the former two categories of

workers are likely to be more literate than the third, it would be realistic to assume that large bulk of rural labourers in all parts of India except in Kerala would fall in the category of illiterates. The incidence of poverty of the rural labourers and their illiteracy are the important source of generating higher intensity child labour in the countryside. The proportion of working population in the age-group 5 to 14 years (Columns 6 and 7 in Table 16) would almost wholly be from the rural labourers' households. There are evidences to suggest that quite a significant proportion of the rural labourers also suffer the curse of bondage.<sup>9</sup> It is also well known that bondage is widespread in the rural areas which are still deep in quagmire of non-development.

3.6 All the above mentioned facts, particularly those related to wages, per capita consumer expenditure and poverty ratio (Tables 10,

11, 12, 15 and 16), clearly suggest that the process of development during the last four decades have, by and large, not affected the rural labourers which is large segment of working population. It is evident that worst sufferers in this context are Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. It is also evident from these facts that rural labourers in Haryana, Punjab and Kerala enjoy a higher standard of living than the rest in the country. If current level of poverty ratio only is taken into account, Gujarat's situation is almost as good as Haryana and is a shade better than Kerala. But if wages and per capita consumer expenditure are also considered alongwith poverty ratio, Gujarat will rank after Haryana, Punjab and Kerala. Thus, that the socio-economic condition of rural labourers is not only far from satisfactory, but there are evidences of continuance of considerable regional disparity in their socio-economic condition.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE REASONS FOR DEGRADED SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF RURAL LABOUR

4.1 We have seen in Chapter III that taken as a whole, the rural labourers, by and large, live in abject poverty, are severely exploited and also suffer from illiteracy. One has to look at the occupational structure of rural areas in order to understand and analyse the reasons for the relative deprivation of people living in rural areas in general with notable exception of Haryana, Kerala and Punjab (Table 14) and rural labour in particular.

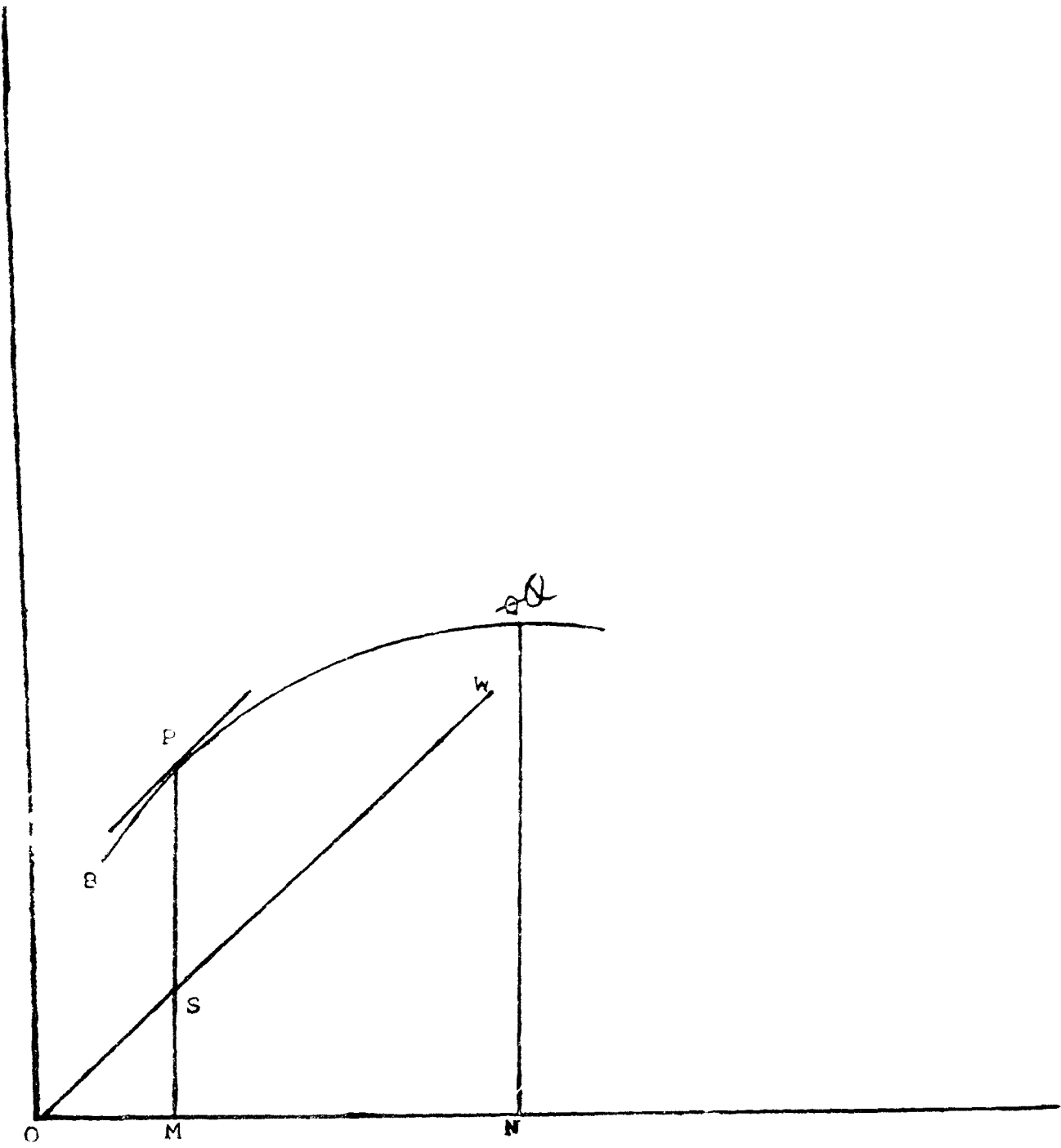
4.2 The most important occupation in all the 14 major states in India is agriculture in 1987-88 (Table 17 to 20). In Kerala, however, agriculture is not as important as in other States. Among the male workers, manufacture accounts for 10.7 per cent of workers (second highest among States, highest being 13.7 per cent as in Tamil Nadu) and services account for 28.4 per cent which is highest among all the States (Table 19). The picture, as far as ranking of States is concerned, is similar for female worker also except that West Bengal instead of Tamil Nadu occupies the top position. So far the male workers are concerned, Kerala occupied the top position even in 1951 among the States in the context of employment in manufacturing (i.e., 15.5 per cent) followed by Tamil Nadu and the third position was that of the West Bengal (Table 17). Similar was the position with regard to female workers in 1951 (Table 18). Agriculture even then was the principal source of employment in all the 14 major States. In the context of male workers employment in services sector Gujarat occupied top position among the States (i.e., as high as 33.7 per cent) followed by Kerala (i.e., 25.8 per cent). But by 1987-88 Gujarat lost its top place which was occupied by Kerala. However employment in services sector has declined in post-independence period except in the case of employment of male workers in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and female workers in Kerala. The highest increase in male employment in services sector is in Bihar. In an under-development syndrome, the decline in employment in the production of goods implies accentuation of economic crisis. However, it is evident that the occupational structure since 1951 which in its overall picture is one of almost no change in occupational structure since 1951 which in itself is an evidence of persistence of non-development syndrome. It is because of preponderance of agricultural activity in the rural sector that studies have found highly significant negative correlation between rural poverty and agricultural production.<sup>10</sup> In a labour-surplus under-

developed economy where main source of subsistence and employment is provided by agricultural sector, the foundation of socio-economic prosperity is essentially related to agricultural development. It is the increased production in rural areas arising out of agricultural development, which not only will boost local demand for non-agricultural goods and services but also provide much needed surplus for small local investments and agro-based raw materials and thereby causes rise in employment and wages. In India, Punjab and Haryana provide classic example of this phenomenon in post-independence era. This thesis has wide empirical validity through time and space.

4.3 The theoretical basis to examine empirically the extent of capitalist farming in agriculture, in an economy where production is also for market and wage labour is also in evidence, can be illustrated with the help of figure. This figure shows the relationship between value of output and labour input when it is assumed that the land area and capital is fixed and constant. Here value of output is defined by curve BPQ and wage cost by OSW. A farmer using wage labour will use OM of labour input (which maximises his profit, i.e., his family income) and the corresponding value of output will be PM. In this case, the family income (PS) will be equal to the value of output (PM) minus the wage cost (SM), that is,  $PS = PM - SM$ . Whereas a farmer using family labour only in cultivation will maximise his family income by employing ON family labour and the corresponding value of output will be ON such that  $ON > PM$ . It is needless to emphasise that in the latter case (popularly known as subsistence farming) while the value of output per unit of land (i.e., yield) will be higher and the value of output per worker will be lower than the former case (termed as capitalist farmer). This dualism has been the characteristic feature of the Indian agriculture for long.<sup>11</sup> (See Figure)

4.4 However, if more capital is used in the farming, land area remaining the same, the output curve (BPQ) shifts upwards in each of the two cases (whether farming is of capitalist type or subsistence type) increasing both the land and labour productivity. But in absence of accumulation, if subsistence type farming transforms itself to capitalist type, the increase in labour productivity and decline in yield will be the outcome. On the other hand if farming





FIGURE—CHAPTER—IV.

changes from wage labour to family labour, the movement will be from P to Q implying positive increase in yield but decline in labour productivity. This movement, given the dual character of our agrarian scenario and a strong survival of feudalised structure, implies absence of capitalist development even if some accumulation may be taking place. Therefore, if both yield as well as labour productivity are increasing, it implies that accumulation is taking place which is a characteristic feature of capitalist agriculture.

4.5 Estimates based on districtwise data<sup>12</sup> (given in Table 21), based on the above theoretical formulation, provide direct empirical answer to the extent of growth of capitalist agriculture (i.e., development in agriculture) in different States in India. It appears from the table-21 that the States which show capitalist transformation in agricultural sector at a fairly high level are only in Haryana and Punjab, at a moderate level are Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra and at a still lower level is West Bengal. This is also corroborated<sup>11</sup> from Table 22 related to growth of agricultural production for the period 1952-53 to 1986-87.

4.6 It is, therefore, not surprising that in Punjab (depicting strongest feature of agricultural development) the proportion of rural population in poverty is lowest (Table 15, columns) and wages for casual agricultural labourers is second highest (Table 12, column 3). In Gujarat, Haryana and Kerala also the proportion of rural population in poverty is relatively low whereas Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa (which are characterised by a non-development syndrome in agricultural sector) have highest, second highest and third highest proportion of rural poor in poverty respectively among the States. The wages in Kerala is high

not because it has developed agriculture but because its rural area is relatively more industrialised and the rural labour is fairly well organised. Similarly strong militant poor peasant movement in Central Bihar since early seventies is responsible for somewhat higher wages than warranted by its level of agricultural development. Though the real wages do not show much increase from the level obtained in 1956-57 which were even then extremely low (Table 23), the wages in 1987-88 for males and females when correlated with percentage of rural population in poverty were found to be significantly negative (that is,  $-0.709$  and  $-0.809$  respectively). Thus, not only agricultural prosperity but also the wage increase happens to be responsible for reduction in poverty level in India.

4.7 On the other hand the target oriented programmes for eradication of poverty and unemployment in the countryside which were launched with renewed vigour and much fanfare from time to time after early seventies have not met with much success in improving the lot of rural labourers in India, instead they have often strengthened the exploiters and parasitic elements in the society.<sup>14</sup> The much published policy of pushing public sector financial institutions in a big way in rural areas mainly with a view to free the rural economy from the stronghold of traditional sources of rural credit (i.e., the village money lenders, landlords etc. which has remained an important prop of semi-feudal relations of productoin retarding development and promoting severe exploitation of rural labourers), failed to achieve its objective (in large part of this country) in absence of infrastructural support to agricultural development in terms of land reforms, water management and rural electric supply.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SOLUTION

5.1 The solution to the poor socio-economic condition of living of the rural labourers lies in adequate public investment (which because of the past neglect will have to be massive and without delay) in land and water management and rural electric supply and land reforms (at least those related to land ceiling, tenancy reforms and distribution of surplus land if not accepting the ideal dictum that 'cultivable land should belong to the tillers'). This strategy will be of direct benefit to the agricultural labour households with land who constitute a large proportion of rural labour households except in Punjab and Haryana (Table 24). The direct beneficiaries will be many more if land ceiling is lowered to family labour level and enforced rigorously. This strategy will also weaken semi-feudal production relations which has been responsible for severe socio-economic exploitation and semi-slave condition of living for rural labourers in large part of India, and also pave the way for technological development and diversification in the rural economy leading to increased levels of employment and wages. It has been the failure to adopt this strategy which is, to a large extent, responsible for recent phase of increasing organised agrarian and other rural violence in part of this country.

In early years following independence the proposition of laying down of a statutory minimum wages for unskilled labourers were mooted in order to improve the socio-economic conditions of poor and exploited millions. Thereafter, State governments have been notifying minimum wages for their States from time to time, but by and large its implementation has remained highly unsatisfactory. Then the statutory minimum wage (which is based on minimum need) differs from area to area (Table 13) which also is illogical.

5.2 The solution, therefore, also lies on prescribing an all India minimum wages, non-payment of which should be made cognizable and non-bailable offence. With the above mentioned proposed infrastructural support to the rural economy, it could be possible and well within the capacity of employers to pay even more than

the statutory minimum wages. If on some account some employers find it difficult to pay the need based wages, they will have to convert themselves to family labour syndrome and will have to give up the luxury of services of outside labourers. Such a socio-economic transformation will be a step towards reduction in exploitation of labour and realisation of our cherished goal of growth with social justice.

5.3 Table 13 can be made the basis for recommending an all India minimum wage for the unskilled labourers. Moreover, "one major conclusion of the 36th Session of the Labour Ministers' Conference held in May 1987 was that minimum wages, particularly in respect of agriculture labour should be reviewed and new rates of minimum wages notified within six months i.e., by 20-11-87, wherever required. It was also generally felt that a level of wages not lower than Rs. 11/- per day should be fixed. The need for periodical revision of minimum wages once in at least over 2 years or on a rise of 50 points of the Consumer Price Index Numbers as recommended by the 31st Session of the Labour Ministers Conference held in July, 1980 was reiterated. The Sub-Committee feels that minimum wages should be fixed on a rational basis. Some of the factors which should be taken into account are the poverty line, requirements of nutrition, shelter, clothing, fuel, light, medical and educational expenses, etc. The wages arrived at by this method would also help evolve a rational minimum. The minimum wages should also be fixed on a realistic assumption of the consumption units in a family, and the number of workers in a family.<sup>16</sup> The present statutory minimum wage in Bihar for unskilled labourer is Rs. 16.50 per day. Considering the rise in prices since 1987 and taking into account the above mentioned facts Rs. 16.50 may be recommended as the statutory minimum all India wage per day at today's prices.

5.4 The other target oriented schemes and social security measures can go to supplement the above mentioned measures which occupy the top priority and that too not at the cost of priority of public investment mentioned earlier.

## REFERENCES

1. National Sample Survey Organisation, Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Government of India, (January 1990), *Key Results of Employment and Unemployment Survey, All-India (Part-1)*, NSS 43rd Round (July 1987—June 1988).
2. Personday per worker is obtained by obtaining first the ratio of persons employed as per Current Daily Status divided by workers (persons usually employed plus usually unemployed) and then the ratio is multiplied by 365.
3. National Sample Survey Organisation, Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Government of India, (January 1990), *Key Results of Employment and Unemployment Survey, All-India (Part-1)*, NSS 43RD Round (July 1987—June 1988), p. 20.
4. Assuming that artisans from among the 25 per cent of those households might also might have worked occasionally worked as labourers, the estimated labour household approximate  $53.5 + (12 \frac{3}{4}) = 66.25$  per cent.
5. Report of the Sub Committee of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Labour for Studying and Reporting the Problems of Unorganised Workers in Agriculture Sector constituted originally on 17th December 1986, p. 1
6. The ratio of rural labour households as per National Sample Survey and our estimate is  $397/56.4 = 0.7039$ . The rural labourers are then estimated on pro-rata basis  $(109.5/0.7039 = 155.56$  millions).
7. This is obtained by multiplying 'daily status unemployment by 365 and then dividing the same by total work force (i.e., 'usual status' employed plus unemployed).
8. Report of the Sub-Committee of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee, op cit., p. 7.
9. Ibid, pp. 18-23; see also Prasad, Pradhan H., (1989), *Lop Sided Growth*, pp. 31—34 and 44-54.
10. Montek Ahluwalia, 'Rural Poverty in India, 1956-57 to 1973-74', World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 279, November 1978 and Pradhan H. Prasad, op. cit., pp. 67—69
11. For the earliest theoretical exposition of this phenomena see Sen, Amartya Kumar, 'An Aspect of Indian Agriculture', *Economic Weekly*, Annual Number, February 1962; see also Bhatadwaj, Krishna (1974), *Production Condition in Indian Agriculture*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 11-12 and 91-92.
12. The source of data is Bhalla, G S and Tyagi, D. S. (1981), *Patterns in Indian Agricultural Development*, ISID New Delhi, pp. 214-255. The value of output is estimated for 41 crops on the basis of all India average prices for the triennium ending 1969-70, p. 213. The rate of growth of labour productivity is with respect of Male Agricultural Workers. Preference of male workers in such estimates is adhered to because of weakness related to enumeration of female work force. However, if it is assumed that the ratio of female to male workers in each State has not changed between 1962-65 and 1980-83, the estimates of growth rate of labour productivity for Male Worker and for All Worker will be the same.
13. This also gets corroborated from the Reports on Price Policies for Kharif and Rabi of 1985-86 by Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, Government of India where it is shown that the bulk (about 90 per cent) of the bufferstock of foodgrains for the government is supplied by Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
14. See Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Rural Development, Annual Report for 1985-86 and 1986-87, Concurrent Evaluation of IRDP. The Main Findings of the Report of the Committee to review the Existing Administrative Arrangements for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Programme, December 1985: Rath, Nilkantha, "Garibi Hatao: Can IRDP Do It?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 9, 1985; Sanwal, Mukul, "Garibi Hatao: Improving Implementation", *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 7, 1985; Dandekar, V.M., "Agriculture, Employment and Poverty", *Economic and Political Weekly*, September 20-27, 1986; Bagchee, Sandeep, "Poverty Alleviation Programme in Seventh Plan", *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 24, 1987; Saxena, A.P., "Concurrent Evaluation

- IRDP", Economic and Political Weekly, September 26, 1987; Rao, V. M. and Erappa, "IRDP and Rural Diversification", Economic and Political Weekly, December 26, 1987.
15. Prasad, Pradhan H., op. cit, pp 74-94 and "Poor Peasant Movement in Central Bihar" in Journal of Social and Economic Studies, New Series, Second Issue 1989, pp 209-27;
- see also "Neglected Aspects of Indian Planning" and "Political Economy of India's Retarded Development" in Economic and Political Weekly, July 15, 1989 (pp. 1591-95) and January 27, 1990 (pp. PE 29-34) respectively.
16. Report of the Sub-Committee of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee. op. cit., p. 14.

Table 1

Population and Work Force in January 1988 in Rural Areas

State	Population (000)		Workers (000)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh .	22429	22297	13636	10924
Assam . . .	10679	9956	5756	1680
Bihar . . .	35068	34035	17956	6634
Gujarat . . .	13147	12766	7471	4964
Haryana . . .	6067	5369	3088	1627
Himachal Pradesh . . .	2212	2243	1251	1107
Karnataka . . .	14536	14263	8431	5457
Kerala . . .	11158	11535	6348	3981
Madhya Pradesh	23626	22466	13018	9290
Maharashtra . . .	22396	22143	12446	10311
Orissa . . .	12742	12605	7480	3651
Punjab . . .	6888	6202	4010	2037
Rajasthan . . .	16109	15156	8442	6906
Tamil Nadu . . .	17683	17458	10824	8332
Uttar Pradesh	52722	47584	27774	10495
West Bengal . . .	22985	21935	12968	4563
All India . . .	297770	284821	164967	94565

Source : Sarvekshana: Special Number : NSS 43rd Round (July 1987-June 1988). Results of the fourth Quinquennial Survey on Employment and Unemployment (All India Page 16 for col. (2) & (3) and pages 62 and 114 for col. (4) & (5).

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Table 2

Employment Levels 1987-88 in Rural Areas

State	Percentage of Worker to population		Personday employed per worker per year		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	All
1	2	3	4*	5*	6*
Andhra Pradesh .	60.8	49.0	326	244	290
Assam . . .	53.9	16.9	328	142	283
Bihar . . .	51.2	19.5	336	213	302
Gujarat . . .	56.8	38.9	326	209	279
Haryana . . .	50.9	30.3	317	124	245
Himachal Pradesh	56.6	49.4	317	241	282
Karnataka . . .	58.0	38.3	341	240	301
Kerala . . .	56.9	34.5	277	162	234
Madhya Pradesh	55.1	41.4	339	246	299
Maharashtra . . .	55.6	46.6	332	258	298
Orissa . . .	58.7	29.0	332	226	297
Punjab . . .	58.2	32.8	335	80	244
Rajasthan . . .	52.4	45.6	329	278	305
Tamil Nadu . . .	61.2	47.7	318	254	290
Uttar Pradesh . . .	52.7	22.1	339	243	311
West Bengal . . .	56.4	20.8	324	156	279
All India . . .	55.4	33.2	330	228	292

NOTE: Usually self employed would report employment for almost all the year round which might not be correct.  
\* Therefore employment levels for the labourers are likely to be lower than those for the entire workforce given in Col. 4, 5 & 6.

SOURCE:

(i) Col. (2) &amp; (3) above derived from Table I.

(ii) Col. (4) to (6) estimates as per method given in Item 2 of Reference on Page 31 of this report, using Table I and page 110 of Sarvekshana—Special Report—43rd Round—Sep. 1990.

Table 3

*Distribution of Usually employed workers (rural) by employment Status in 1987-88*

State	Male (000)			Female (000)		
	Self-employed	Regular employees	Casual Labourer	Self-employed	Regular employees	Casual labourer
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh	6889	1343	5067	5135	147	5219
Assam	3410	831	1260	1008	218	374
Bihar	9765	1575	6160	3419	343	2838
Gujarat	3497	898	2905	2342	167	2391
Haryana	1937	310	653	1250	32	318
Himachal Pradesh	886	107	208	1075	11	14
Karnataka	1518	697	3054	2435	146	2819
Kerala	2498	683	2419	1904	310	1086
Madhya Pradesh	8359	1251	3290	5989	359	2852
Maharashtra	6210	1659	4331	5457	245	4498
Orissa	3830	662	2707	1967	88	1446
Punjab	2340	702	858	1704	70	226
Rajasthan	5560	590	2050	5590	122	1088
Tamil Nadu	4638	1425	4337	3680	552	3768
Uttar Pradesh	19984	1583	5733	8268	239	1893
West Bengal	6829	1197	4574	2679	262	1359
All India	94053	16050	50397	55936	3404	32660

SOURCE: Sarvekshana - Special Number, September 1990. (Derived on the basis of statements on pages 62, 94 and 95).

Table 4

*Rural Unemployment and Under-employment*

State	Usually unemployed in 1987-88		Percentage unemployed to total workers		Percentage of usually employed (5+) seeking or available for additional work 1983	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh	336	424	2.5	4.5	18.4	21.5
Assam	256	80	4.7	11.3	6.9	8.0
Bihar	456	34	2.6	0.8	27.7	20.4
Gujarat	171	64	2.4	1.7	11.1	9.9
Haryana	188	27	6.5	4.3	29.2	7.1
Himachal Pradesh	51	7	4.5	0.9	21.8	7.8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Karnataka . . . . .	131	57	1.6	1.3	19.6	20.0
Kerala . . . . .	748	681	12.5	25.0	24.9	27.3
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	118	90	0.9	1.2	12.2	9.6
Maharashtra . . . . .	246	111	2.1	1.2	20.9	24.0
Orissa . . . . .	280	151	3.8	5.4	21.1	21.4
Punjab . . . . .	110	37	2.9	7.4	19.6	14.6
Rajasthan . . . . .	242	106	3.0	1.8	14.6	7.4
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	424	332	4.0	4.5	31.7	30.1
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	475	95	1.8	1.2	15.2	8.8
West Bengal . . . . .	368	263	3.0	10.6	31.7	37.1
All India . . . . .	4467	2565	2.8	3.5	20.3	18.1

SOURCE: Sarvekshana—Special Number—43rd Round NSS, Sept. 1990  
(Col. (2) to (5) page 114).  
Col. (6) and (7) NSS, 38th Round—1983  
NSS Report No : 341—page 91.

Note: Usually Self-employed would report employment for almost all the year round which might not be correct. Therefore employment levels for the labourers are likely to be lower than those for the entire workforce on the same grounds, the percentage of unemployed labourers to total labourers would be higher than what are given in Col. 4 & 5 above.

Table 5

Percentage distribution of households according to employment status

State	Rural 1987-88					
	Self-employed		Labour		Others	All
	Agriculture	Non-Agriculture	Agriculture	Non-agriculture		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	27.7	13.7	39.5	8.9	10.2	100
Assam . . . . .	47.2	11.5	19.7	11.1	10.5	100
Bihar . . . . .	34.7	12.1	36.1	6.4	19.7	100
Gujarat . . . . .	30.0	7.9	34.3	16.2	11.6	100
Haryana . . . . .	41.6	15.2	19.7	7.1	16.4	100
Himachal Pradesh . . . . .	64.9	8.7	4.8	10.0	11.6	100
Karnataka . . . . .	34.7	10.5	39.3	7.1	8.4	100
Kerala . . . . .	23.8	15.5	30.1	17.7	12.9	100
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	49.4	8.6	31.4	4.0	6.6	100
Maharashtra . . . . .	33.5	8.6	38.6	7.8	11.5	100
Orissa . . . . .	32.4	14.1	35.2	7.5	10.8	100
Punjab . . . . .	34.3	16.5	28.1	7.6	13.5	100
Rajasthan . . . . .	45.2	12.9	12.7	21.5	7.7	100



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	22.4	13.5	40.2	13.2	10.7	100
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	53.8	12.7	20.1	5.5	7.9	100
West Bengal . . . . .	29.3	15.9	35.9	7.6	10.3	100
All India . . . . .	37.7	12.3	30.7	9.0	10.3	100

SOURCE: Sarvekshana-Special Number 43rd Round NSS. (Page 23)

Table 6

Percentage distribution of rural households in 1987-88 by size class of land cultivated

State	hectares					
	0.00	0.01-0.40	0.41-1.00	1.01-2.00	2.01-4.00	4.01 and above
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	45.8	16.0	14.3	12.3	07.2	04.4
Assam . . . . .	31.2	16.3	24.3	19.5	06.9	01.8
Bihar . . . . .	34.8	25.0	18.5	12.6	06.3	02.8
Gujarat . . . . .	47.2	08.8	14.1	11.7	10.0	08.2
Haryana . . . . .	45.7	04.6	07.7	12.3	13.5	16.4
Himachal Pradesh . . . . .	11.5	42.6	31.1	10.9	03.2	00.7
Karnataka . . . . .	40.1	10.7	14.8	15.8	10.4	08.2
Kerala . . . . .	19.6	61.1	12.2	05.2	01.4	00.5
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	25.8	08.3	15.5	18.8	18.0	13.6
Maharashtra . . . . .	39.1	09.9	12.8	16.5	11.6	10.1
Orissa . . . . .	35.8	20.2	21.4	15.1	05.9	01.6
Punjab . . . . .	57.0	05.2	06.8	10.7	10.3	10.0
Rajasthan . . . . .	22.0	08.9	19.6	18.0	14.0	17.5
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	57.1	16.7	12.8	08.1	03.9	01.4
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	22.6	24.5	23.3	16.4	09.0	04.2
West Bengal . . . . .	39.6	28.3	17.6	09.9	03.8	00.8
All India . . . . .	35.4	19.1	17.3	13.9	08.5	05.8

SOURCE: Sarvekshana. NSS 43rd Round-Special Number (Page 33)

Table 7

Percentage distribution of households engaged in Crop production in 1987-88 by use of hired labour

State	[Regular]	During peak season	Casual No labour use	Households not engaged in crop production	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	3.4	33.8	7.1	9.1	46.6
Assam . . . . .	3.9	14.8	7.3	42.2	31.7

1	2	3	4	5	6
Bihar . . . . .	5.4	16.7	10.3	30.9	36.8
Gujarat . . . . .	2.4	10.9	12.1	21.5	53.1
Haryana . . . . .	3.8	14.1	12.2	22.1	47.8
Himachal Pradesh . . . . .	0.6	10.6	2.4	76.2	10.2
Karnataka . . . . .	5.8	21.7	7.2	20.8	44.5
Kerala . . . . .	4.1	12.1	24.1	38.1	21.6
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	5.6	16.1	11.8	40.8	25.8
Maharashtra . . . . .	5.7	20.1	11.9	21.4	40.9
Orissa . . . . .	5.6	20.7	7.7	30.0	36.1
Punjab . . . . .	6.5	16.0	8.1	10.9	58.5
Rajasthan . . . . .	2.1	13.8	9.5	50.8	23.8
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	4.6	21.4	9.7	6.8	57.5
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	3.0	19.0	11.9	41.7	24.3
West Bengal . . . . .	7.2	25.7	5.7	20.5	40.9
All India . . . . .	4.5	19.6	10.1	28.8	37.0

SOURCE: Sarvekshana: Special Number: NSS 43rd Round (Page 35).

Table 8

*Voluntary and Involuntary Unemployment in Rural Areas*

State	Personday per worker in 1987-88			
	Voluntarily Unemployed		Involuntarily Unemployed	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	22	96	17	25
Bihar . . . . .	16	145	13	6
Gujarat . . . . .	23	140	16	16
Haryana . . . . .	19	234	29	7
Karnataka . . . . .	15	112	9	13
Kerala . . . . .	32	142	56	61
Madhya Pradesh	18	114	8	5
Maharashtra . . . . .	23	98	10	9
Orissa . . . . .	16	117	17	22
Punjab . . . . .	17	279	13	6
Rajasthan . . . . .	15	72	21	15
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	18	81	29	30
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	16	114	10	8

1	2	3	4	5
West Bengal . . . . .	25	181	16	28
All India . . . . .	19	121	16	16

SOURCE: Estimated as p.r method given in item 2 of the Reference on page 31 of the report using Table 1 and pages 110 and 119 of Sarvekshana Special number NSS 43rd Round, September, 1990.

Table-9

*Rural Unemployment Rates in 1987-88*

State	Current Weekly		Current Daily	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	40	53	49	94
Bihar . . . . .	37	25	37	26
Gujarat . . . . .	43	27	47	71
Haryana . . . . .	79	39	83	55
Karnataka . . . . .	23	29	25	53
Kerala . . . . .	144	234	167	275
Madhya Pradesh.	23	14	23	21

Table 11

Average Wage/Salary Earning (Rs. 0 00) per day in 1987-88  
by Adult\* Female Labourer

State	Agricultural Labourer		Non-Agricultural Labourer	
	Regular	Casual	Regular	Casual
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	9 99	6 15	23 39	7 53
Bihar . . .	9 29	8 41	33 37	9 23
Gujarat . . .	10 40	8 96	30 64	9 34
Haryana . . .	16 76	13 13	14 41	16 09
Karnataka . . .	7 71	5 81	22 84	7 65
Kerala . . .	24 58	15 39	32 97	10 99
Madhya Pradesh	6 87	6 74	17 42	8 58
Maharashtra . . .	8 23	5 96	23 79	7 68
Orissa . . .	6 41	6 17	19 43	7 00
Punjab . . .	10 81	14 51	29 36	10 73
Rajasthan . . .	11 51	9 37	19 64	8 68
Tamil Nadu . . .	6 53	6 14	13 91	6 77
Uttar Pradesh . . .	6 85	7 79	21 72	9 43
West Bengal	13 81	10 76	15 20	8 02
All India	10 65	7 43	26 28	9 11

\*age 15 - 59 years

SOURCE: National Sample Survey's 43rd Round figures  
obtained by NCRL from CSO

Table 12

Average Wage/Salary Earning (Rs. 0 00) per day in 1987-88  
by Child\* Labourer

State	Agricultural Labourer		Non-Agricultural Labourer	
	Regular	Casual	Regular	Casual
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	1 51	5 68		6 67
Bihar . . .	6 16	8 25	20 06	8 36
Gujarat . . .		8 09		9 21
Haryana . . .	6 07	8 55	1 55	11 63
Karnataka . . .	1 78	5 53	10 54	7 20
Kerala . . .	2 07	17 31	13 09	10 74

1	2	3	4	5
Maharashtra . . .	27	14	29	35
Orissa . . .	44	61	50	90
Punjab . . .	34	48	38	66
Rajasthan	54	19	59	52
Tamil Nadu	77	67	84	107
Uttar Pradesh . . .	28	13	30	33
West Bengal	40	119	46	152
All India	42	44	46	67

SOURCE: Sarvekshana. Special Number: NSS 43rd Round  
(Page 116)

Table 10

Average Wage/Salary Earning (Rs. 0 00) per day in 1987-88  
by Adult\* Male Labourer

State	Agricultural Labourer		Non-Agricultural Labourer	
	Regular	Casual	Regular	Casual
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	11 54	9 73	31 72	13 47
Bihar . . .	10 01	9 99	33 88	14 21
Gujarat . . .	11 94	9 42	37 82	13 28
Haryana . . .	16 32	16 40	36 78	17 31
Karnataka . . .	11 92	9 13	35 03	11 84
Kerala . . .	28 58	23 34	40 34	25 79
Madhya Pradesh	8 42	8 16	29 84	11 48
Maharashtra	14 97	9 77	33 90	14 21
Orissa	10 54	8 47	30 87	10 04
Punjab	17 29	18 93	33 36	20 81
Rajasthan . . .	12 96	13 48	33 26	12 60
Tamil Nadu . . .	10 83	10 83	26 30	13 46
Uttar Pradesh	11 81	10 42	31 86	15 47
West Bengal	12 78	12 53	35 19	14 62
All India	14 58	11 24	34 90	15 73

\*age 15 - 59 years

SOURCE: National Sample Survey's (43rd Round) figures  
obtained by NCRL from CSO.

1	2	3	4	5
Madhya Pradesh	..	6.37		7.76
Maharashtra	1.27	5.55		6.58
Orissa	3.74	5.12	2.48	7.51
Punjab	15.76	11.50	27.97	10.41
Rajasthan	1.24	8.31	7.84	6.77
Tamil Nadu	6.92	5.96	3.34	6.00
Uttar Pradesh		7.62	10.00	7.70
West Bengal	3.28	9.49	13.65	7.40
All India	6.30	6.79	11.49	7.83

\*age 5-14 years

SOURCE : National Sample Survey's 43rd Round figures obtained by NCRL from CSO.

Table 13

Daily rates of minimum wages for unskilled Agricultural labourers

State	Date from which effective	Rates of minimum wages (Rs.)
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	9-2-1987	8.50 to 11.00
Bihar	16-10-1986 16-10-1990*	10.00 16.50
Gujarat	4-2-1986 1-8-1990	11.00 15.00
Haryana	1-4-1987 31-12-1990*	16.25 with meals 31.75
Karnataka	1-2-1985 12-07-1988*	9.50 to 11.00 12.00 to 17.65
Kerala	1-6-1984	12.00 to 15.00
Madhya Pradesh	26-6-1987 1-10-1990*	11.00 16.47
Maharashtra	1-2-1983 1-5-1988*	6.00 to 12.00 12.00 to 20.00
Orissa	15-7-1986 1-7-1990	10.00 25.00
Punjab	1-4-1987 1-9-1990*	18.48 20.00 to 40.00
Rajasthan	1-3-1987 2-7-1990	14.00 22.00
Tamil Nadu	5-4-1983 April 1990+	8.00 14.00 to 16.00
Uttar Pradesh	28-5-1987 29-4-1989*	11.50 to 12.50 19.00 to 20.00
West Bengal	31-10-1985 1-10-1990*	16.34 22.88

1	2	3
All India (Central Government)	12-2-1985	8.50 to 12.75

Source: Report of the Sub-Committee of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Labour for Studying and Reporting the Problems of Unorganised Workers in Agricultural Sector Constituted Originally on 17th December 1986, pp. 61-62.

\*Updated on the basis of the information available with NCRL.

Table 14

Average Monthly per Capita Consumer Expenditure in 1987-88

State/Union territory	Rural	Urban	Percentage of Rural to Urban per capita Expenditure
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Andhra Pradesh	160.13	230.28	69.50
Assam	153.60	269.93	56.90
Bihar	136.57	186.48	73.24
Gujarat	161.20	240.65	66.99
Haryana	214.66	287.76	74.60
Himachal Pradesh	209.61	345.70	60.63
Jammu & Kashmir	204.36	270.81	75.46
Karnataka	149.13	222.78	66.94
Kerala	211.47	266.22	79.43
Madhya Pradesh	141.98	235.98	60.17
Maharashtra	160.77	279.53	57.51
Orissa	127.51	225.20	56.62
Punjab	244.19	269.95	90.96
Rajasthan	177.84	237.87	74.76
Tamil Nadu	154.29	248.79	62.02
Uttar Pradesh	148.67	216.73	68.60
West Bengal	149.87	249.45	60.08
All India	158.10	250.63	63.08

Source : NSS Report No. 372

Report on the fourth Quinquennial Survey on Consumer Expenditure: 43rd round (sub-sample)

Table-15

Percentage of Rural Population in Poverty

State	57-58	70-71	Change per annum between 57-58 & 70-71	72-73	87-88	Change per annum between 72-73 & 87-88
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	53.5	41.0	(-)0.96	57.7	33.8	(-)1.59
Bihar . . . . .	59.7	59.0	(-)0.05	55.1	42.7	(-)0.88
Gujarat . . . . .	**	**		43.9	21.2	(-)1.51
Haryana . . . . .	***	***		21.6	11.7	(-)0.66
Karnataka . . . . .	41.3	47.2	0.45	52.3	35.9	(-)1.09
Kerala . . . . .	59.6	62.0	0.18	57.8	16.4	(-)2.76
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	57.7	52.9	(-)0.37	61.3	41.4	(-)1.33
Maharashtra . . . . .	56.2*	45.6**	(-)0.82	53.9	36.7	(-)1.15
Orissa . . . . .	66.6	65.0	(-)0.12	71.0	48.3	(-)1.51
Punjab . . . . .	28.0***	23.6***	(-)0.34	21.5	7.2	(-)0.95
Rajasthan . . . . .	33.4	41.8	0.65	47.5	26.0	(-)1.43
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	67.8	57.3	(-)0.81	63.0	39.5	(-)1.57
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	52.3	40.6	(-)0.90	53.0	37.2	(-)1.05
West Bengal . . . . .	67.3	70.1	0.60	64.0	30.3	(-)2.25
All India . . . . .	53.4	49.1	(-)0.33	54.0	33.4	(-)1.37

\*Increase is denoted by (+) and decline by (-)

\*\*Gujarat plus Maharashtra

\*\*\*Haryana plus Punjab

Source: Columns 2 and 3, Montek Ahluwalia, 'Rural Poverty in India, 1956-57 to 1973-74', *World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 279* November 1978 and for Column 5 and 6, Planning Commission, Government of India.

Table 16

Educational Levels and Child Labour in Rural Area in 1987-88

State	Percentage of workers							
	15 year and above				in the population of age-group			
	Not literate		Literate up to primary level		5-9 year		10-14 year	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	54.5	87.4	26.1	9.5	6.9	5.9	37.3	41.8
Bihar . . . . .	58.3	95.5	21.1	3.2	0.7	0.6	13.4	6.3
Gujarat . . . . .	41.5	77.7	34.8	15.7	3.0	3.2	14.9	18.0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Haryana . . . . .	42.2	81.8	36.3	12.2	.	.	15.1	16.2
Karnataka . . . . .	48.0	80.1	30.1	13.6	4.7	4.5	25.4	24.4
Kerala . . . . .	17.3	31.7	48.2	37.1	2.4	1.8	5.4	3.9
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	54.3	91.2	29.3	7.6	0.4	0.7	19.8	21.1
Maharashtra . . . . .	40.6	74.5	35.4	17.7	4.8	5.3	16.9	21.9
Orissa . . . . .	46.8	89.5	33.8	7.2	.	0.7	21.3	16.6
Punjab . . . . .	45.0	52.4	28.7	18.4	0.1	0.1	23.6	13.6
Rajasthan . . . . .	57.5	68.2	24.5	5.4	0.4	0.7	22.4	37.8
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	38.2	70.5	39.4	20.2	1.3	2.0	20.4	28.2
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	53.2	92.8	24.9	5.5	0.4	0.3	17.1	9.1
West Bengal . . . . .	56.1	81.2	31.7	18.2	6.1	6.6	20.4	14.0
All India . . . . .	48.9	82.9	29.8	12.2	2.3	2.4	19.0	18.2

Source : Key Results of Employment and Unemployment Survey All India (Part I), NSS 43rd Round (July 1987 - June 1988)  
Pages 74-77, 84 & 85

Table—17

Percentage distribution of Rural Male Workers by Industry in 1951

State	Production of goods				All Col 2 to Col. 5	Services Like Trade, Commerce, Banking, Transport, Administration, etc.
	Agri-culture	Mining & Quarrying, Plantation, Forestry, Fishing, Live-stocks etc.	Manu-facturing	Cons-truction		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	69.1	4.0	10.4	1.2	84.7	15.3
Bihar . . . . .	84.1	2.1	2.9	0.5	89.6	10.4
Gujarat . . . . .	52.4	3.9	9.2	0.8	66.3	33.7
Haryana* . . . . .	.	.	.	.	.	..
Karnataka (Mysore) . . . . .	67.3	0.3	8.0	1.8	77.4	22.6
Kerala . . . . .	49.9	7.1	15.5	1.7	74.2	25.8
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	78.7	2.6	6.9	0.7	88.9	11.1
Maharashtra . . . . .	70.8	2.5	9.4	1.5	84.1	15.9
Orissa . . . . .	74.7	2.2	6.2	2.0	85.1	14.9
Punjab* . . . . .	66.7	1.4	7.7	0.5	76.3	23.7
Rajasthan . . . . .	72.8	3.5	7.4	0.9	84.6	15.4
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	65.1	3.0	12.0	1.4	81.5	18.5
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	79.1	1.5	9.5	0.6	90.7	9.3
West Bengal . . . . .	63.6	5.3	10.9	1.1	80.9	19.1

The rural estimates for 1951 were obtained by subtracting the figures for urban centres available in Paper No. 1 of 1967, from the total.

\*Punjab+Haryana

Source: Census of India 1961, Paper No. 1 of 1967

Table 18

*Percentage distribution of Rural Female Workers by Industry in 1951*

State	Production of goods					All Col. 2 to Col. 5	Services like Trade Commerce Banking, Transport, Administration etc.
	Agri-culture	Mining & Quarrying, Plantation, Forestry, Fishing, Live-stocks etc	Manu-facturing	Construc-tion			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	78.5	1.3	6.0	0.6	86.4	13.6	
Bihar . . . . .	87.4	1.3	3.1	0.3	92.1	7.9	
Gujarat . . . . .	77.3	4.2	3.2	0.2	85.1	14.9	
Haryana* . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Karnataka (Mysore) . . . . .	77.1	2.8	7.2	0.9	88.0	12.0	
Kerala . . . . .	50.5	3.9	30.9	0.3	85.6	14.4	
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	85.0	1.3	7.0	0.2	93.5	6.5	
Maharashtra . . . . .	85.5	1.0	5.2	0.7	92.5	7.5	
Orissa . . . . .	59.4	2.0	13.4	0.4	75.2	24.8	
Punjab* . . . . .	75.8	1.6	6.4	0.3	84.1	15.9	
Rajasthan . . . . .	80.5	3.5	5.6	0.6	90.2	9.8	
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	68.8	2.5	10.8	1.0	83.1	16.9	
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	82.8	1.5	4.9	0.2	89.4	10.6	
West Bengal . . . . .	53.9	12.6	17.5	0.7	84.7	15.3	

\*Punjab + Haryana

Source: Census of India 1961, Paper No. 1 of 1967.

Table 19

*Percentage distribution of Rural Male Workers by Industry in 1987-88*

State	Production of goods					All Col. 2 to Col. 5	Services like Trade, Commerce, Banking, Transport, Administration, etc.
	Agri-culture, Plantation, Forestry, Fishing, Live-stocks etc.	Mining & Quarrying	Manu-facturing	Construc-tion Gas, Electricity and Water			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	73.9	1.1	7.9	2.9	85.8	14.2	
Bihar . . . . .	79.6	1.0	5.0	1.4	87.0	13.0	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gujarat	67.7	0.5	9.5	9.7	87.4	12.6
Haryana	69.8	0.4	8.7	4.6	83.5	16.5
Karnataka	79.3	1.1	6.3	2.4	89.1	10.9
Kerala	52.2	1.8	10.7	6.9	71.6	28.4
Madhya Pradesh	85.1	0.8	4.9	1.7	92.5	7.5
Maharashtra	75.1	0.3	7.4	3.9	86.7	13.3
Orissa	74.4	1.5	6.3	4.4	86.6	13.4
Punjab	68.8	Neg.	9.8	5.2	83.8	16.2
Rajasthan	64.9	2.2	7.9	13.6	88.6	11.4
Tamil Nadu	64.7	0.7	13.7	3.6	82.7	17.3
Uttar Pradesh	78.4	0.1	7.3	2.6	88.4	11.6
West Bengal	70.8	0.5	9.6	2.0	82.9	17.1

Table 20

Percentage distribution of Rural Female Workers by Industry in 1987-88

State	Production of goods				All Col. 2 to Col. 5	Services like Trade, Commerce, Banking Transport Administration etc.
	Agri-culture, Plantation, Forestry, Fishing, Live-stock, etc.	Mining & Quarrying	Manu-facturing	Cons-truction, gas, Elec-tricity & Water		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh	80.7	0.6	8.1	1.4	90.8	9.2
Bihar	89.3	1.3	3.9	1.0	95.5	4.5
Gujarat	72.1	0.2	3.6	20.3	96.2	3.8
Haryana	88.6	0.4	2.6	0.4	92.0	8.0
Karnataka	83.9	0.5	9.6	1.2	95.2	4.8
Kerala	53.7	0.6	23.7	1.2	79.2	20.8
Madhya Pradesh	90.5	0.3	5.2	1.9	97.9	2.1
Maharashtra	90.7	0.1	2.8	3.1	96.7	3.3
Orissa	74.1	1.4	13.4	3.1	92.0	8.0
Punjab	74.4	0.1	5.5	3.3	83.3	16.7
Rajasthan	83.0	0.6	4.0	10.2	97.8	2.2
Tamil Nadu	74.9	0.3	14.1	1.3	90.6	9.4
Uttar Pradesh	90.5	0.1	3.9	0.6	95.1	4.9
West Bengal	56.7	0.4	27.3	1.2	85.6	14.4



Table-21

*Labour and Land Productivity in Agriculture Between 1962-65 & 1980-83\**

State	Percentage of districts showing positive labour productivity and Land productivity			
	> 0	> 2% per annum	> 3% per annum	
1	2	3	4	
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	58.8	58.8	41.2	
Bihar . . . . .	20.0	0.0	0.0	
Gujarat . . . . .	88.9	88.9	50.0	
Haryana . . . . .	100	100	71.4	
Karnataka . . . . .	89.5	68.4	21.1	
Kerala . . . . .	57.1	0.0	0.0	
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	48.8	11.6	2.3	
Maharashtra . . . . .	100	84.0	28.0	
Orissa . . . . .	27.3	9.1	9.1	
Punjab . . . . .	100	100	100	
Rajasthan . . . . .	53.8	38.5	15.4	
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	18.2	0.0	0.0	
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	100	95.7	66.0	
West Bengal . . . . .	78.5	21.4	0.0	

Source : Bhalla, G S and Tyagi, D S (1989), *Patterns in Indian agricultural Development - A District Level Study*, ISID, New Delhi, pp 214-55

\*Please see Item No 12 of Reference of Page 33 of this report

Table-22

*Growth of Agricultural Production*

State	Average annual growth of agricultural production			
	1952-65	1969-87	1952-53 to 1986-87	
1	2	3	4	
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	2.74	2.75	2.75	
Bihar . . . . .	2.97	0.97	1.80	
Gujarat . . . . .	4.55	1.98	3.04	

1	2	3	4
Haryana . . . . .	*	3.90	
Karnataka . . . . .	3.54	2.68	3.04
Kerala . . . . .	2.27	0.58	1.28
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	2.49	0.60	1.38
Maharashtra . . . . .	2.93	3.11	3.04
Orissa . . . . .	2.48	3.18	2.89
Punjab . . . . .	4.56*	4.62	4.38*
Rajasthan . . . . .	2.74	1.04	1.74
Tamil Nadu . . . . .	4.17	2.02	2.91
Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	1.66	2.86	2.36
West Bengal . . . . .	1.94	1.07	1.43

Source : Prasad, Pradhan H., (1969), *Lopsided Growth* Oxford University Press, p. 78 and publications of Central Statistical Organisation, Government of India.

Table-23  
*Real Wages*

State	Average daily wage of Agricultural labourers at 1956-57 prices (Rs.)			
	Male		Female	
	1956-57	1987-88	1956-57	1987-88
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh . . . . .	0.90	1.39	0.50	0.88
Bihar . . . . .	0.90	1.43	0.70	1.21
Gujarat . . . . .	1.10	1.35	0.80	1.28
Haryana . . . . .	*	2.35	*	1.88
Karnataka . . . . .	0.80	1.31	0.50	0.83
Kerala . . . . .	1.30	3.34	0.70	2.21
Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	0.80	1.17	0.60	0.97
Maharashtra . . . . .	0.80	1.40	0.50	0.85
Orissa . . . . .	0.80	1.21	0.50	0.88
Punjab . . . . .	2.00*	2.71	1.20*	2.08
Rajasthan . . . . .	1.00	1.93	0.60	1.34

1	2	3	4	5
Tamil Nadu .	0.80	1.55	0.50	0.88
Uttar Pradesh .	0.90	1.49	0.60	1.12
West Bengal .	1.40	1.76	1.00	1.54
India . . .	1.00	1.61	0.60	1.06

\*Punjab and Haryana

Source : For Columns 2 and 4, Jeemol Unni, "Agriculture Labourers in Rural Labour Households, 1956-57 to 1977-78", *Economic and Political Weekly*, June 25, 1988. The Consumer price index for agricultural labourers (for the period 1965 onwards) and for industrial worker (for earlier period) was used as wage deflator.

Table 24

*Percentage of Agricultural Labour Households with Land*

State	56-57	64-65	74-75	77-78	1983
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh .	34.3	34.6	39.1	41.2	39.5

1	2	3	4	5	6
Bihar . . .	61.2	62.5	58.2	60.0	47.9
Gujarat . . .	..	25.4	34.5	40.2	26.4
Haryana . . *	..	..	16.8	7.6	4.6
Karnataka . .	36.2	35.2	46.7	45.6	45.7
Kerala . . .	51.6	70.2	86.7	87.5	82.1
Madhya Pradesh.	40.5	46.3	52.8	49.7	49.2
Maharashtra .	33.3	31.6	47.0	42.4	41.9
Orissa . . .	46.5	54.7	62.6	53.4	55.8
Punjab* . . .	9.3	12.3	0.4	7.3	4.8
Rajasthan . .	37.2	49.0	46.4	60.5	53.6
Tamil Nadu . .	37.3	31.5	36.2	36.3	28.4
Uttar Pradesh .	55.6	53.9	56.8	60.9	53.6
West Bengal . .	36.5	41.9	45.8	45.2	47.0
All India . . .	42.9	43.9	49.2	48.6	44.1

\*Punjab and Haryana combined

Source, Rural Labour Enquiries— various reports— Labour Bureau— Shimla.