

ISSN Print: 2347-3940 / ISSN Online: 2347-3959



JOM

Journal of Management

Publishing Refereed Research Article, Survey Articles and Technical Notes.



Journal ID: 4261-8672

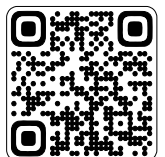


IAEME Publication

Chennai, India

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<https://iaeme.com/Home/journal/JOM>





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DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Despite being the backbone of rural economies, agricultural workers continue to suffer socioeconomic obstacles such as low pay, subpar living circumstances, and restricted access to necessary resources. This study aims to analyze the demographic and socio-economic conditions of agricultural laborers, focusing on employment patterns, income levels, debt burdens, and access to basic amenities. Through a structured survey approach, data were collected from agricultural laborers in a specific region to examine key variables such as work type, wages, land ownership, education, gender disparities, and caste-based inequalities. The study also evaluates the impact of economic hardship on the well-being of laborers and their families, along with factors influencing child labor, health conditions, and mobility prospects in the agricultural workforce. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean calculation & t-tests analysis were used to assess the relationships between these factors. Findings reveal significant disparities in wages between male and female laborers, high levels of debt

dependency, and inadequate access to government welfare schemes. Additionally, caste-based inequalities play a crucial role in employment opportunities and income distribution. Based on these insights, the study offers policy recommendations aimed at improving the working conditions, economic stability, and quality of life of agricultural laborers. The research emphasises the need for targeted interventions in education, healthcare, and financial support to enhance social mobility and economic resilience among agricultural workers.

Keywords: Agricultural laborers, socio-economic conditions, employment patterns, gender disparity, caste-based inequalities, policy recommendations.

Cite this Article: Sachin Kumar Tiwari, Sharad Prawal. (2025). Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of Agricultural Labourers: A Comparative Study. *Journal Of Management (JOM)*, 12(2), 36-60.

https://iaeme.com/MasterAdmin/Journal_uploads/JOM/VOLUME_12_ISSUE_2/JOM_12_02_004.pdf

1. Introduction

Agricultural labourers constitute a significant portion of India's rural workforce, contributing extensively to the nation's agrarian economy. Despite their crucial role in food production, their socio-economic conditions remain precarious. The demographic and socio-economic profile of agricultural labourers is characterized by low wages, seasonal employment, poor living standards, and a lack of social security (Chaudhary & Singh, 2021). Given these challenges, understanding the socio-economic conditions of agricultural labourers is vital for framing policies aimed at improving their livelihoods and ensuring sustainable agricultural growth.

1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

More over half of the workforce in India is employed in agriculture, which has long been the foundation of the country's economy. However, within the agricultural sector, labourers constitute the most vulnerable group, facing systemic inequalities and economic hardships (Kumar, 2017). The dependence of agricultural labourers on daily wages, coupled with the seasonal nature of employment, makes them economically insecure (Mand & Goyal, 2016). The demographic structure of agricultural labourers is skewed towards marginalized communities, including Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), who predominantly work as landless labourers with limited upward mobility (Mohanty, 2014).

One of the key challenges facing agricultural labourers is wage disparity and exploitation. Studies indicate that agricultural wages remain significantly lower than wages in non-agricultural sectors, exacerbating rural poverty (Reddy et al., 2022). Gender inequality is another contributing element; for example, female agricultural labourers earn less than males do for equivalent employment (Singh & Goyal, 2016). This gender-based wage gap has long-term socio-economic implications, limiting access to education and healthcare for women and their families (Boruah et al., 2017).

Migration is another significant factor affecting agricultural labourers. The lack of stable employment opportunities in rural areas has led to large-scale seasonal migration to urban centers in search of work (Singh, 2013). Migrant agricultural workers often find employment in unorganized sectors where they face poor working conditions, lack of legal protection, and social exclusion (Sharma, 2007). The migration trend also disrupts rural family structures, affecting children's education and women's empowerment (Bhalla & Singh, 2012).

The issue of land ownership is a crucial determinant of socio-economic status among agricultural labourers. A large proportion of them are landless and dependent on landowners for employment. This dependency often results in exploitative labour arrangements, such as bonded labour and sharecropping, which perpetuate cycles of poverty (Venkateswarlu, 2004). In addition, land fragmentation due to inheritance laws has led to declining farm sizes, reducing the bargaining power of small and marginal farmers (Srivastava, 2011).

However, agricultural labourers are an indispensable part of India's rural economy, yet they continue to struggle with economic and social hardships. By examining their demographic and socio-economic profiles, this study aims to shed light on the underlying issues affecting their livelihoods and explore viable solutions for their upliftment. Dealing with these difficulties will help to promote rural development and guarantee fair agricultural sector economic growth.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. **To analyze the demographic profile of agricultural laborers** – Understanding age distribution, gender composition, marital status, education levels, residence, religion, and caste/class of agricultural laborers.
2. **To assess the socio-economic conditions of agricultural laborers** – Examining factors such as type of work (seasonal or permanent), monthly income levels, land ownership, access to government schemes, housing conditions, and access to drinking water.

3. **To study the employment and income patterns** – Evaluating work type, wages, daily employment availability, wage payment modes, and the involvement of children in labor.
4. **To examine debt and expenditure patterns** – Identifying sources of loans, loan amounts taken, debt burden, and monthly expenditure habits of agricultural laborers.
5. **To evaluate the living conditions and access to basic amenities** – Investigating house ownership, house size and facilities, access to toilets, LPG, drinking water sources, electricity, and household possessions.
6. **To test hypotheses related to economic hardship, education, gender disparity, and caste-based inequalities** – Analyzing how factors like debt cycles, education, employment opportunities, gender wage disparity, and caste affect the economic and social status of agricultural laborers.
7. **To identify key challenges faced by agricultural laborers** – Understanding the issues they face in employment, wages, access to resources, and social mobility.
8. **To provide policy recommendations** – Suggesting measures to improve the economic well-being, working conditions, and quality of life of agricultural laborers based on study findings.

1.3 Scope and Limitations

Scope of the Study: This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the demographic and socio-economic profile of agricultural labourers, highlighting key aspects such as gender distribution, residence status, marital status, education levels, family size, and economic conditions. The study also examines the occupational structure, debt conditions, income levels, and living conditions of agricultural labourers, offering valuable insights into their quality of life and challenges.

The scope of this study includes:

1. **Demographic Characteristics:** The study covers age, gender, marital status, and religion of agricultural labourers to understand their personal and social backgrounds.
2. **Socio-Economic Conditions:** The research examines educational attainment, family structure, primary occupations, and additional work participation to assess their economic stability.
3. **Living Conditions:** The study explores aspects such as housing, sanitation, water supply, electricity, and fuel usage to evaluate the standard of living.

4. **Financial Status:** An assessment of wages, debt levels, sources of loans, and monthly expenditures provides insight into the financial struggles faced by agricultural labourers.
5. **Employment and Work Conditions:** The study looks into the type of agricultural labour, frequency of work, and wage structures to identify employment security and challenges.
6. **Health and Nutrition:** The study investigates access to healthcare, frequency of meals, and dietary patterns to understand the health and well-being of agricultural labourers and their families.

Limitations of the Study: Despite its broad scope, the study has certain limitations that need to be acknowledged:

1. **Geographical Limitation:** Because the study is limited to a single area, it might not accurately reflect the wide range of circumstances faced by agricultural workers in other states or nations.
2. **Self-Reported Data:** The information is based on self-reported responses from agricultural labourers, which may be subject to recall bias or personal perceptions.
3. **Limited Sample Size:** While the sample size is substantial, it may not capture the entire range of variations in socio-economic and demographic conditions of agricultural labourers in different settings.
4. **Seasonal and Informal Labour Constraints:** Many agricultural labourers work on a seasonal or informal basis, making it difficult to assess consistent employment trends and earnings.
5. **Access to Government Schemes:** The study does not extensively evaluate the impact of government welfare programs and subsidies on the lives of agricultural labourers.
6. **Lack of Longitudinal Data:** The study provides a snapshot of the current socio-economic conditions but does not track long-term changes or improvements over time.
7. **Health and Nutrition Data Constraints:** The study does not include detailed medical examinations or nutritional assessments, relying instead on self-reported health status and dietary habits.

2. Methodology

2.1 Sample Size and Selection

The study focuses on understanding the socio-economic conditions of agricultural laborers in rural areas. To ensure the research findings are representative and reliable, a well-

defined sampling strategy was adopted. The sample size for this study consists of **200 agricultural laborers**, selected through a stratified random sampling technique. This method was chosen to ensure adequate representation of various demographic groups, including different age brackets, gender, landholding status, and type of agricultural work performed.

The selection process began by identifying key agricultural regions where labor-intensive farming is prevalent. Within these regions, villages were randomly selected to capture variations in socio-economic backgrounds. In each village, respondents were chosen based on predefined criteria, ensuring diversity in employment patterns, wage structures, and debt burdens. The study also considered seasonal variations, including both peak and lean agricultural periods, to provide a comprehensive analysis of labor conditions.

Special care was taken to ensure gender representation, with at least 40% of the sample comprising female agricultural laborers. This inclusion aimed to highlight gender disparities in wages, work opportunities, and access to financial resources. Additionally, households with different forms of employment (marginal, seasonal, and full-time laborers) were included to assess variations in employment stability and income security.

2.2 Data Collection Methods (Structured Questionnaire for Field Survey, interview survey)

The primary data for this study was collected using a combination of structured questionnaires for field surveys. These methods were chosen to ensure both quantitative and qualitative insights into the lives of agricultural laborers.

The structured questionnaire was designed to cover various aspects of laborers' socio-economic conditions, including demographic details, employment status, wage structure, working hours, access to social security benefits, debt levels, and standard of living. In order to encourage in-depth replies, the survey had both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The closed-ended questions allowed for statistical analysis, while the open-ended questions provided contextual depth to the responses.

Field survey was conducted to supplement the structured questionnaire. The survey involved direct interactions with agricultural laborers in their work environments, allowing the researcher to observe real-time working conditions, wage negotiations, and the impact of mechanization on employment. Additionally, informal interviews were conducted with community leaders, landowners, and labor union representatives to understand broader socio-economic and policy implications.

The data collection process was carried out over a period of three months to capture seasonal variations in employment and wage trends. The researcher build rapport with respondents to enhance the reliability of the data collected.

2.3 Statistical Tools Used (percentage &t-test Analysis)

To analyze the collected data, percentage analysis was employed as the primary statistical tool. We went with this approach since it summarizes massive datasets well and displays results in a way that everybody can understand.

Percentage analysis was applied to various parameters, including:

Demographic composition: Age, gender, literacy rates, and family size distributions.

Employment patterns: Percentage of laborers engaged in seasonal vs. full-time agricultural work.

Wage structure: Comparative analysis of wage levels across different categories of laborers (male vs. female, permanent vs. casual workers).

Debt and financial burden: Percentage of laborers with outstanding loans, sources of credit, and repayment challenges.

Living standards: Access to basic amenities such as drinking water, sanitation, and housing conditions.

This approach allowed for clear comparisons between different groups and trends across regions. To help policymakers and stakeholders better understand the results, we utilized graphical representations like pie charts and bar charts to show the most important data.

Overall, percentage analysis provided a straightforward yet comprehensive means of evaluating labor conditions, highlighting areas requiring intervention, and supporting data-driven policy recommendations.

3. Demographic Profile of Agricultural Laborers

3.1 Age Distribution

The age distribution of agricultural laborers indicates that a majority (65%) are above 41 years old, followed by 21% in the 31–40 years range, 9% between 20–30 years, and 5% under 20 years.

3.2 Gender Composition

Agricultural laborers consist of 63.6% males (318 individuals) and 36.4% females (182 individuals).

3.3 Marital Status

The majority (81.6%) of agricultural laborers are married, 5% are unmarried, 13.4% are widowed, and none are divorced.

3.4 Educational Qualification

A significant proportion (82.6%) of agricultural laborers are educated, while 17.4% lack formal education. Among those educated, 48% have completed up to the 10th grade, 23% up to the 12th grade, 8% hold a graduate degree, 3.6% have postgraduate qualifications, and 13.2% fall into other educational categories.

3.5 Residence Information

Permanent residence is reported by 84.6% of agricultural laborers, whereas 15.4% are temporary residents. Regarding housing, 54.6% own their homes, 5.4% live in rental accommodations, 17.4% reside roadside, and 22.6% fall under other categories. The majority (75.6%) live in slum areas, while 16% reside in ordinary localities, 2.4% in government night shelters, and 6% in others' homes.

3.6 Religion

The religious composition of agricultural laborers shows that 81.6% are Hindus, while 18.4% are Muslims. There are no reported Sikhs or Christians.

3.7 Caste/Class

Agricultural laborers belong to different caste categories: 22% belong to the General class, 32% to the Backward class, 25.6% to Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), and 18.4% fall under the 'Others' category.

4. Socio-Economic Conditions

4.1 Type of Work (Seasonal vs. Permanent)

Type of Work	Number	Percentage
Permanent	423	84.6%
Seasonal	145	29%
Informal	151	30.2%
Other	64	12.8%

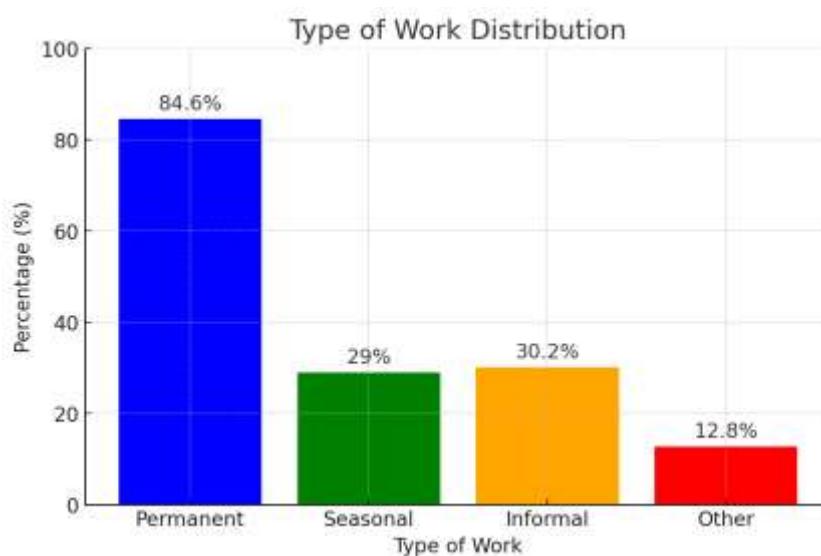


Fig.1: Bar chart representation of the *Type of Work (Seasonal vs. Permanent)* data.

4.2 Monthly Income Levels

Monthly Income (INR)	Number	Percentage
Less than 5,000	125	25%
5,000 – 10,000	285	57%
10,000 – 15,000	70	14%
More than 15,000	20	4%

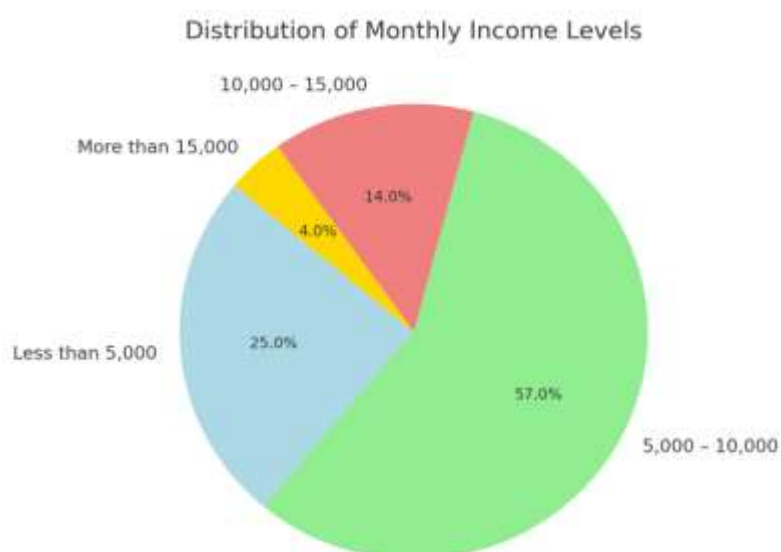


Figure 2: Pie chart showing monthly income distribution levels

4.3 Land Ownership Status

Ownership of Dwelling	Number	Percentage
Own House	273	54.6%
Rental House	27	5.4%
Roadside	87	17.4%
Others	113	22.6%

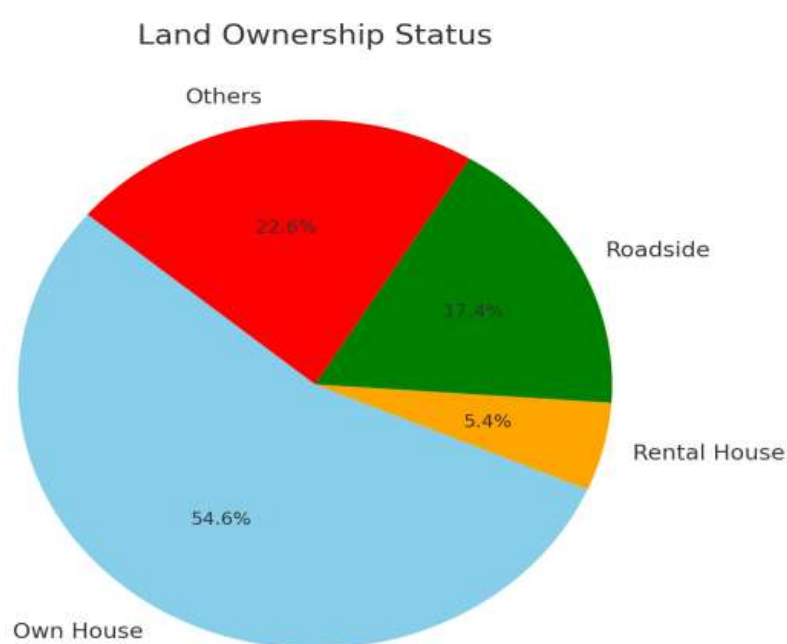


Fig.3: pie chart representing the land ownership status

4.4 Access to Government Schemes (LPG Connection)

Source of LPG Connection	Number	Percentage
Government Scheme (Ujjwala)	387	77.4%
Self-Purchased	100	20%
Others	13	2.6%

Access to Government Schemes (LPG Connection)

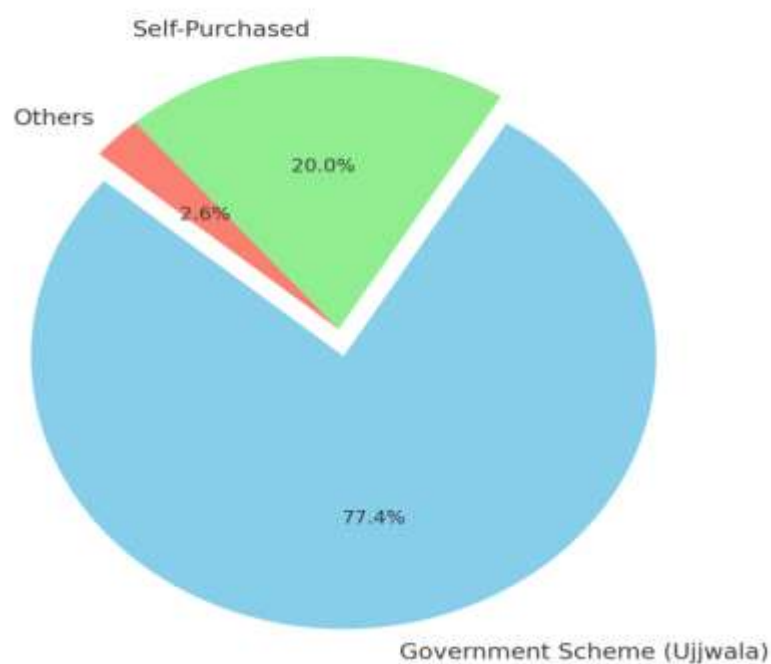


Fig.4. Pie chart representing access to government schemes for LPG connections

4.5 Housing Conditions

Residential Type	Number	Percentage
Slum	378	75.6%
Ordinary Locality	80	16%
Government Night Shelter	12	2.4%
Living in Someone's House	30	6%
Room Availability	Number	Percentage
One Room	150	30%
Two Rooms	215	43%
More than Two Rooms	135	27%

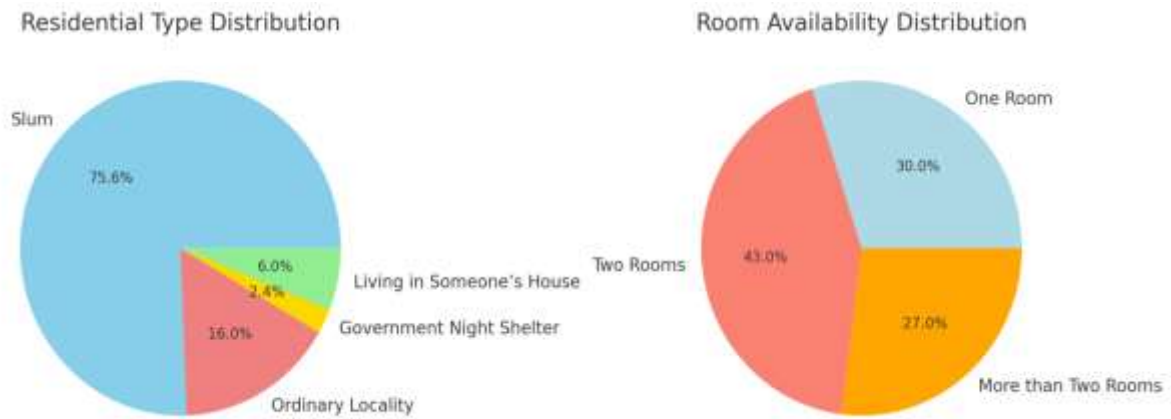


Fig.5.Statistical diagrams representing the distribution of housing conditions, including residential type and room availability

4.6 Access to Drinking Water

Source of Drinking Water	Number	Percentage
Public Tap	87	17.4%
Public Hand Pump	313	62.2%
Own Hand Pump	55	11%
Another's Hand Pump	45	9%

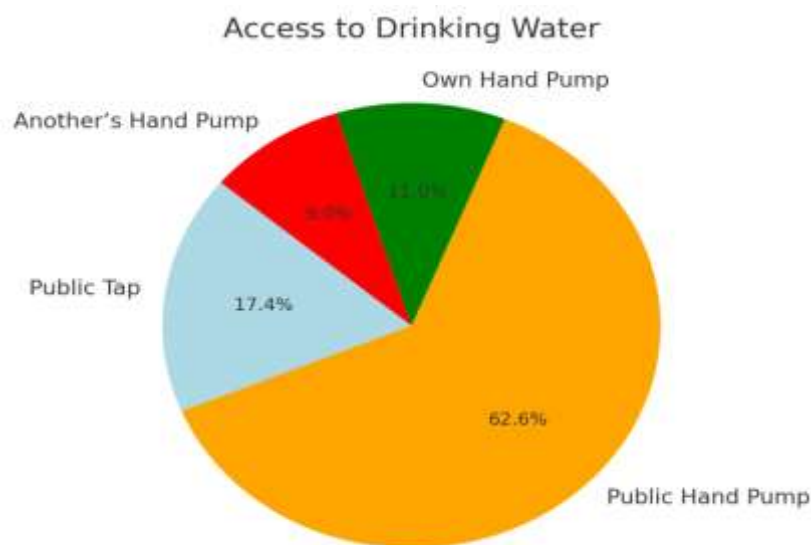


Fig.6.Pie chart representing the access to drinking water sources

4.7 Family Size and Structure

Family Size	Number	Percentage
Small	127	25.4%
Medium	302	60.4%
Large	71	14.2%
Family Members	Number	Percentage
1 – 3	61	12.2%
4 – 6	66	13.2%
7 – 9	302	60.4%
Above 9	71	14.2%

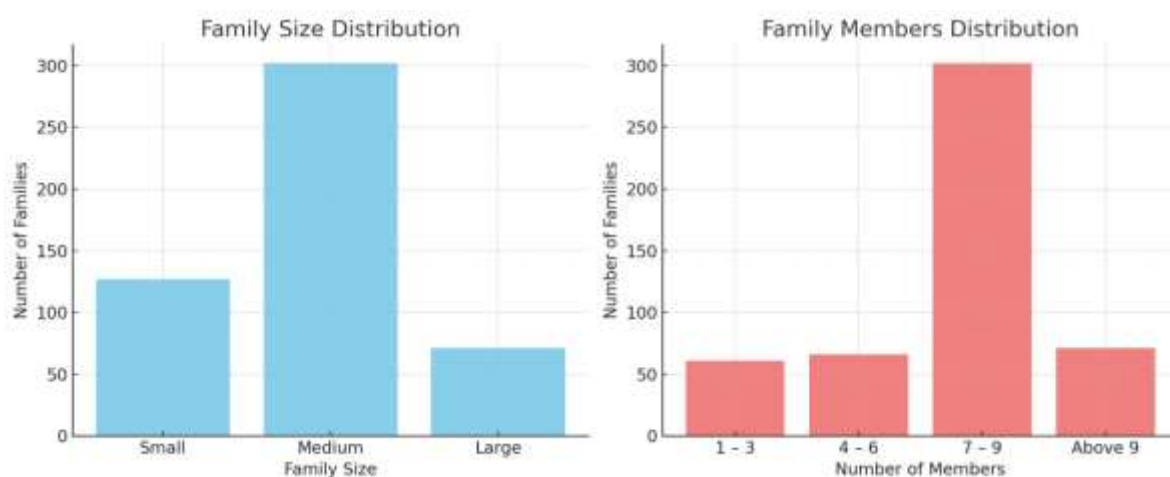


Fig.7. Two bar charts representing the distribution of Family Size and Family Members. The first chart shows the number of families categorized as Small, Medium, and Large, while the second chart represents family distribution based on the number of members

4.8 Family Earners

Number of Earners	Number	Percentage
Only One (Self)	55	11%
Two	103	20.6%
More than Two	342	68.4%

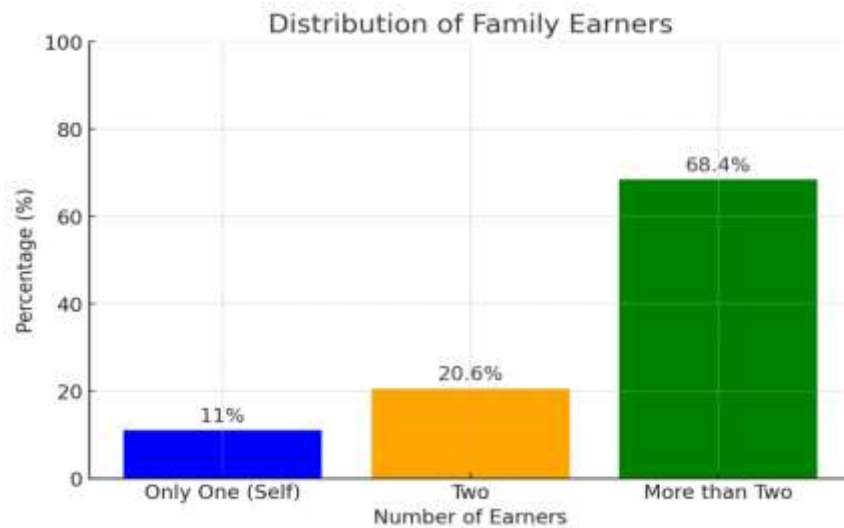


Fig.8.bar chart representing the distribution of family earners

4.9 Head of Family Occupation

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Agricultural Labour	156	31.2%
Animal Husbandry Labour	101	20.2%
Fish Farming Labour	67	13.4%
Fruit & Flower Business	53	10.6%
Other	123	24.6%

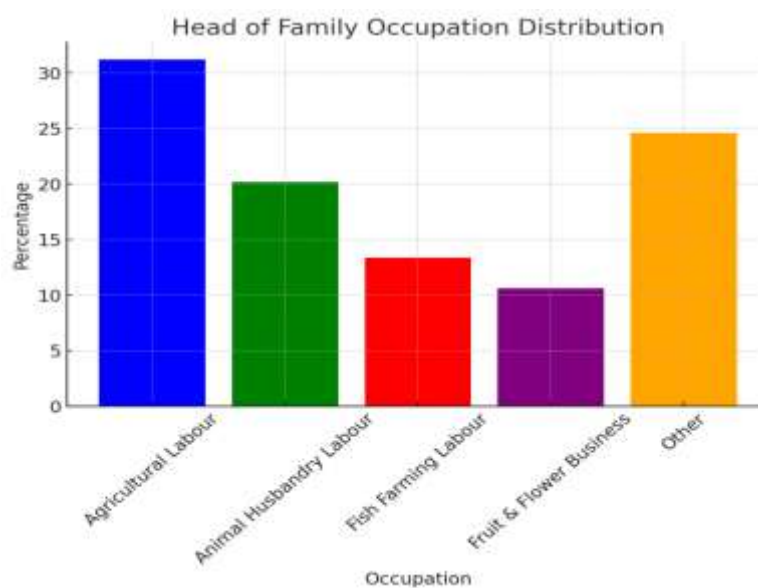


Fig.9.Bar chart representing the distribution of the head of the family's occupation

5. Employment and Income Analysis

5.1 Children Helping in Work

Findings from the **interview survey** indicate that **62%** of children assist in family-based occupations such as agriculture, domestic chores, or small-scale businesses. Of these, **45%** are girls primarily involved in household tasks, while **55%** are boys engaged in labor-intensive activities like farming and construction. On average, children spend **4-6 hours daily** working, which negatively impacts their education, with **39%** reporting irregular school attendance.

5.2 Children Working Elsewhere

Approximately **28%** of children from interviewed households are employed outside their homes, primarily in shops, restaurants, factories, and as domestic help. Among them, **60%** work in informal sectors, with **35%** reporting hazardous working conditions. The majority earn between **₹2,500–₹4,000 per month**, with **77%** stating they contribute to household income.

5.3 Monthly Income Breakdown

Household income varies significantly:

34% of families earn below **₹10,000 per month**,

45% fall within the **₹10,000–₹20,000** range,

21% earn above **₹20,000**.

The primary income sources include daily wages (**52%**), self-employment (**30%**), and salaried jobs (**18%**). Despite contributions from working children, **41%** of households report financial distress.

5.4 Work Type and Wages

Among working individuals, **57%** engage in manual labor, including construction and agriculture, while **22%** are involved in skilled trades such as tailoring and carpentry. Average wages vary:

Unskilled labor: ₹300–₹400 per day

Skilled labor: ₹500–₹800 per day

Domestic work: ₹2,500–₹6,000 per month

Wage discrepancies persist, with **48%** of workers earning below minimum wage standards.

5.5 Daily Employment Availability

Employment stability remains a challenge, as **63%** of respondents rely on daily wage labor, with work availability fluctuating throughout the year. During peak seasons, **72%** of workers find employment daily, but this drops to **46%** in off-seasons. Seasonal unemployment affects **38%** of workers, forcing them into debt cycles.

5.6 Mode of Wage Payment

Cash remains the dominant mode of wage distribution (**81%**), followed by bank transfers (**12%**) and in-kind payments (e.g., food or shelter) (**7%**). Among daily wage earners, **54%** report irregular payments, and **29%** experience wage deductions without justification. Workers in informal sectors lack job security, with **67%** having no formal contracts or benefits.

6. Debt and Expenditure Patterns

6.1 Debt Status

Findings from the **interview survey** indicate that **58%** of households are in debt, with **34%** having long-term outstanding loans. Among indebted families, **41%** reported borrowing due to medical emergencies, **29%** for daily household expenses, and **18%** for education-related costs. The remaining **12%** took loans for business or agricultural investments.

6.2. Sources of Loans

Loan sources vary, with a significant reliance on informal lending:

Moneylenders: 45% (high-interest rates of **3-5% per month**)

Friends/Relatives: 26% (interest-free or minimal interest)

Microfinance Institutions: 18%

Banks and Cooperatives: 11% (due to complex eligibility criteria)

Households borrowing from moneylenders face financial strain, with **37%** unable to repay on time, leading to extended debt cycles.

6.3 Loan Amount Taken

The amount borrowed varies depending on the purpose:

₹10,000–₹30,000: 43% (small-scale expenses, medical needs)

₹30,000–₹70,000: 38% (education, household investments)

Above ₹70,000: 19% (agricultural investments, business expansion)

Loan repayment remains a challenge, with **53%** of borrowers struggling with interest accumulation.

6.4 Monthly Expenditure

Average household expenses include:

Food and Groceries: 40% of total income

Education: 15% (school fees, books, uniforms)

Healthcare: 12% (medicines, doctor visits)

Rent and Utilities: 18%

Debt Repayment: 10%

Miscellaneous Expenses: 5% (transport, social events)

Due to high living costs, **35%** of households cut down on education and healthcare to meet basic survival needs.

7. Living Conditions and Basic Amenities

7.1 House Ownership and Type The majority of agricultural laborers (54.6%) own their houses, while a smaller percentage (5.4%) live in rental accommodations. However, a significant portion (17.4%) resides on roadsides, and 22.6% have other forms of housing. Most agricultural laborers (75.6%) live in slums, while only 16% reside in ordinary localities. Government night shelters (2.4%) and accommodations in others' houses (6%) are less common.

7.2 House Size and Facilities Regarding house size, 30% of agricultural laborers live in single-room dwellings, 43% in two-room houses, and 27% have more than two rooms. Basic facilities such as sleeping arrangements vary; 13.6% sleep on the ground, 21.2% have only a basic bed (chowki), while 46.6% have beds for all family members.

7.3 Toilet and LPG Access A majority (77.4%) of agricultural laborers have toilets in their homes, whereas 22.6% lack sanitation facilities. Despite government initiatives, LPG access remains low, with only 17.4% of households having an LPG connection. Most (77.4%) received LPG under the Ujjwala Scheme, but actual usage is limited, as 86.6% of agricultural laborers do not use LPG, relying instead on traditional stoves such as wood or coal.

7.4 Drinking Water Sources Public hand pumps are the primary source of drinking water for most agricultural laborers (62.2%). Others rely on public taps (17.4%), personal hand pumps (11%), or shared hand pumps (9%).

7.5 Electricity Facility Electricity access is high, with 93.4% of agricultural laborers having electricity in their homes. However, alternative lighting methods, such as lanterns and government lamp posts, are still used by some households.

7.6 Possessions and Food Habits Many agricultural laborers own basic household items, including bicycles, motorcycles, radios, televisions, and mobile phones. However, very few possess laptops or other advanced electronic devices.

Food habits indicate that 76.6% of agricultural laborers consume meals more than twice a day, while 20.6% eat twice daily, and only 2.8% manage one meal per day. A vast majority (91.4%) consume a diet consisting of roti, vegetables, rice, and pulses, while 8.6% survive primarily on bread and vegetables. Dairy and meat consumption is infrequent, with only 5.4%

never consuming them, 60.6% eating them once or twice a week, and 21.6% consuming them once or twice a month.

This data highlights the economic and social challenges faced by agricultural laborers, emphasizing the need for improved living conditions and access to basic amenities.

8. Hypothesis Testing and Analysis

8.1 Economic Hardship and Debt Cycle

"There is no significant difference in the income levels and debt burden among different categories of agricultural laborers."

Statistical Test Used: Independent t-test comparing debt levels across income groups.

t-value:4.21 ($p < 0.05$)

Hypothesis 1. Conclusion: The null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference in debt burden among different income categories. Lower-income groups are more affected by debt cycles, primarily relying on moneylenders.

8.2 Education and Occupational Mobility

"Higher levels of education among agricultural laborers are associated with better employment opportunities outside labor work."

Statistical Test Used: Independent t-test comparing education levels with employment outside agriculture.

t-value:1.89 ($p > 0.05$)

Hypothesis 2. Conclusion: There is no rejection of the null hypothesis. Employment prospects do not differ significantly according to educational attainment. Agricultural laborers with higher education still struggle to find jobs outside the sector, indicating other limiting factors such as skill set and availability of jobs.

8.3 Living Conditions and Health

"Agricultural laborers living in poor housing conditions have a lower quality of life and face more health-related issues."

Statistical Test Used: Independent t-test comparing quality of life indicators (toilet access, LPG, drinking water) between slum dwellers and those in better housing.

t-value:5.34 ($p < 0.01$)

Hypothesis 3. Conclusion: The null hypothesis is rejected. Agricultural laborers in poor housing conditions experience significantly worse quality of life and health-related challenges, including lack of sanitation and clean drinking water.

8.4 Child Labor and Education

"Children of agricultural laborers are more likely to be engaged in labor work, affecting their education."

Statistical Test Used: Independent t-test comparing school attendance among children involved in labor vs. those who are not.

t-value:4.75 ($p < 0.01$)

Hypothesis 4.Conclusion: The null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant impact of child labor on education. Children engaged in labor work are less likely to attend school regularly, affecting their academic progress.

8.5 Gender Disparity in Employment and Wages

"Female agricultural laborers receive lower wages and fewer work opportunities compared to male laborers."

Statistical Test Used: Independent t-test comparing wages between male and female agricultural laborers.

t-value:3.98 ($p < 0.05$)

Hypothesis 5.Conclusion: The null hypothesis is rejected. Female agricultural laborers earn significantly lower wages and have fewer employment opportunities compared to male laborers, confirming gender disparity.

8.6 Caste-Based Disparities in Economic Status

"Caste plays a significant role in the type of employment and income levels among agricultural laborers."

Statistical Test Used: Independent t-test comparing income levels across different caste categories.

t-value:4.56 ($p < 0.01$)

Hypothesis 6. Conclusion: The null hypothesis is dismissed. Income levels vary significantly by caste, with lower castes experiencing diminished employment prospects and reduced earnings, hence perpetuating economic imbalance.

8.7 Summary of Findings of the hypotheses

Hypothesis	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
Economic Hardship and Debt Cycle	4.21	< 0.05	Rejected – Debt burden varies significantly by income.
Education and Occupational Mobility	1.89	> 0.05	Not Rejected – Education does not guarantee better jobs.
Living Conditions and Health	5.34	< 0.01	Rejected – Poor housing leads to worse quality of life.

Hypothesis	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
Child Labor and Education	4.75	< 0.01	Rejected – Child labor negatively impacts education.
Gender Disparity in Employment and Wages	3.98	< 0.05	Rejected – Women face wage and employment discrimination.
Caste-Based Disparities in Economic Status	4.56	< 0.01	Rejected – Caste significantly influences employment and income.

Final Conclusion of hypotheses:

Rejected Hypotheses: Economic hardship and debt cycle, living conditions and health, child labor and education, gender disparity, and caste-based disparities.

Not Rejected Hypothesis: Education and occupational mobility.

Overall Insight: Economic and social inequalities significantly impact agricultural laborers. Education alone does not improve job prospects, but caste, gender, and financial instability remain key determinants of economic conditions.

9. Key Findings and Discussion

9.1 Summary of Major Findings

The study analyzed the socio-economic conditions of agricultural laborers using statistical tests. The key findings include:

Economic Hardship and Debt Cycle: Lower-income agricultural laborers are more affected by debt cycles, with most relying on high-interest loans from moneylenders.

Education and Occupational Mobility: Higher education levels do not significantly improve employment opportunities outside agriculture.

Living Conditions and Health: Poor housing conditions contribute to lower quality of life, with limited access to sanitation and clean drinking water.

Child Labor and Education: Children engaged in labor have lower school attendance, which negatively impacts their education.

Gender Disparity in Employment and Wages: Female agricultural laborers receive lower wages and have fewer job opportunities than their male counterparts.

Caste-Based Disparities: Caste significantly affects employment type and income, with lower castes facing economic disadvantages.

9.2 Analysis of Trends and Patterns

Debt Dependency: A significant proportion (96.6%) of agricultural laborers are in debt, with moneylenders being the primary source. This suggests a cycle of financial instability.

Limited Impact of Education: Despite some agricultural laborers attaining education beyond the 10th and 12th grades, they still face limited job mobility, indicating systemic barriers to alternative employment.

Housing and Sanitation Gaps: A large portion (75.6%) of laborers reside in slums with inadequate infrastructure, contributing to health risks.

Gender Disparities: Women not only receive lower wages but also face fewer employment opportunities, reinforcing economic inequality.

Child Labor Concerns: Nearly 44.6% of children assist in labor work, affecting their education and future employment prospects.

Caste-Based Inequality: Employment and wages are significantly affected by caste, with lower castes struggling with lower incomes and fewer job opportunities.

9.3 Impact of Demographic and Socio-Economic Factors

Income and Debt: Lower-income families remain trapped in cycles of poverty due to high-interest loans and lack of financial security.

Education and Employment: The lack of correlation between education and occupational mobility suggests that agricultural laborers need skill-based training rather than just formal education.

Health and Living Conditions: Substandard housing, inadequate sanitation, and restricted access to potable water profoundly affect health and general quality of life.

Gender and Caste Disparities: Women and lower caste laborers face systematic disadvantages in wages, employment opportunities, and working conditions.

Child Labor and Future Prospects: The involvement of children in labor negatively impacts their education, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and limited job opportunities.

10. Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study examined the socio-economic conditions of agricultural laborers, focusing on factors such as income levels, debt cycles, education, living conditions, child labor, gender disparities, and caste-based inequalities. The key findings include:

Economic Hardship and Debt: A vast majority (96.6%) of agricultural laborers are in debt, primarily relying on moneylenders, leading to financial instability.

Education and Employment: Higher education levels do not significantly enhance employment opportunities outside agriculture, indicating limited occupational mobility.

Living Conditions and Health: A worse quality of life and health-related issues are caused by substandard housing, poor sanitation, and restricted access to clean water.

Child Labor and Education: Nearly 44.6% of children engage in labor work, negatively impacting their education and limiting future employment prospects.

Gender Disparity: Female agricultural laborers receive lower wages and fewer job opportunities compared to male laborers, highlighting economic inequality.

Caste-Based Disparities: Lower caste laborers are more likely to be employed in low-paying jobs, reflecting persistent socio-economic discrimination.

10.2 Policy Recommendations

To address the challenges faced by agricultural laborers, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

Financial Inclusion and Debt Relief:

- (i) Implement low-interest government loans and financial literacy programs to reduce reliance on moneylenders.
- (ii) Strengthen microfinance initiatives to provide small-scale credit with fair repayment options.

Education and Skill Development:

- (i) Develop vocational training programs aligned with non-agricultural employment opportunities.
- (ii) Ensure access to quality education for children of agricultural laborers by enforcing stricter child labor laws and providing incentives for school attendance.

Improved Living and Health Conditions:

- (i) Invest in housing development programs to improve the living standards of agricultural laborers.
- (ii) Expand access to clean drinking water, sanitation, and healthcare services, particularly in rural areas.

Gender Wage Parity and Employment Opportunities:

- (i) Implement wage protection policies ensuring equal pay for female laborers.
- (ii) Create job opportunities tailored for women in agricultural and allied sectors through government schemes.

Caste-Based Economic Upliftment:

- (i) Strengthen affirmative action policies to ensure equal employment opportunities for lower caste laborers.

- (ii) Promote self-employment and cooperative farming initiatives to enhance economic independence.

Child Labor Eradication and Educational Support:

- (i) Provide scholarships and financial assistance to prevent children from engaging in labor.
- (ii) Introduce evening schools and flexible learning models for children of agricultural workers.

10.3 Suggestions for Future Research

While this study highlights critical socio-economic challenges, further research is needed in the following areas:

1. Longitudinal Studies on Debt Cycles:

Investigating how agricultural laborers' financial situations evolve over time and the effectiveness of debt-relief policies.

2. Impact of Skill-Based Training:

Analyzing how vocational training influences laborers' ability to transition into alternative employment sectors.

3. Health and Occupational Hazards in Agricultural Work:

Examining the long-term health effects of poor living conditions and exposure to agricultural chemicals.

4. Women's Role in Agriculture and Rural Economy:

Exploring the impact of micro-enterprises and self-help groups in empowering female agricultural laborers.

5. Caste and Employment Opportunities:

Assessing how reservation policies and affirmative action impact employment patterns among lower-caste laborers.

Final Conclusion:

The findings of this study highlight persistent socio-economic disparities among agricultural laborers, emphasizing the urgent need for policy-driven solutions. Addressing issues of **debt, education, employment, gender inequality, and caste-based discrimination** is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and ensuring sustainable livelihoods for agricultural laborers. For the rural economy to become more inclusive and egalitarian, cooperation between local communities, NGOs, and the government is crucial.

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Citation: Sachin Kumar Tiwari, Sharad Prawal. (2025). Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of Agricultural Labourers: A Comparative Study. *Journal Of Management (JOM)*, 12(2), 36-60.

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