

## A study of socio-biography of the sugarcane harvesting labourers and their constraints in Ahmednagar District

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### ABSTRACT

The socio-biographical characteristics of sugarcane harvesting labourers were studied. In all 210 sugarcane harvesting labourers were randomly selected for the present investigation. The study concluded that overall (71.91 per cent) of the respondents were from young age group of below the age of 36 years including 72.85 per cent males and 27.15 per cent females. Overall 25.23 per cent of the respondents were educated upto Secondary level. More than half (56.19 per cent) of the respondents belonged to the Scheduled caste and Tribes. About 41.90 per cent of the respondents had agriculture labour + farming as their main occupation. Majority (94.77 per cent) of the respondents had small size of family their members (upto 3). Overall 42.42 per cent of the respondents had land holding from 1.01 to 2.00 hectares which included 48.80 per cent rainfed, 40.47 per cent seasonally irrigated and 10.71 per cent was annually irrigated. Majority (71.90 per cent) of the respondents had income range from Rs. 9334 to 14333 per head per season. Almost all respondents (100.00 per cent) faced problems regarding children's education, inadequate accommodation facilities, lack of toilet and bathrooms facilities at factory site.

**KEY WORDS :** Socio-biography, Sugarcane harvesting labourers, Constraints

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### INTRODUCTION

The Nation's wealth and strength is located in its human resources. However, it is observed that since immemorial time our planners, economists, administrators, scientists of various technologies, educators and social scientists have given proportionately more attention to mobilize financial resources and improve the land rather than training the manpower for improving their skills and livelihood status which is one of the major parameters of the agricultural development. India is the world's largest sugar producer and Maharashtra is the country's largest sugar producing State contributing over one-third of the country's output through its 174 co-operatives and one private sugar factory. Sugarcane farming was introduced in western Maharashtra by the pioneers of the Co-operative movement during 1950s. Sugarcane is the most important cash crop in the state of Maharashtra. Sugar industry plays a pivotal role in the social change of the rural people. On the other hand, sugarcane harvesting is a heavily labour-intensive operation and thousands of labourers came from drought prone areas to work as sugarcane harvesting labourers for the requirements of

their livelihood (Desai and Gumber, 1982). When all options for livelihood cease, there is no alternative with them unless they migrate to other areas for their livelihood survival (Deshinkar and Daniel, 2003). Generally the duration of sugarcane-crushing season is from November to April/May every year. During this approximately six-month period, people from Central Maharashtra and Marathwada region, migrate to the sugarcane belt. A large majority of labourers migrate from Beed, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Nashik, Jalna, Parbhani, Aurangabad, and Latur districts in search of more employment days through sugarcane harvesting work. The sugarcane harvesting labourers in factory area face the problems of accommodation. It is also necessary to undertake analysis of migration, effects of migration, socio-economic situations at their native places and the factory areas. So, even the area under sugarcane crop is stable, there is continuous increase in the yield of sugarcane per unit area. Hence, there is no alternative to demand of sugarcane harvesting labourer. It is therefore necessary to study the socio-biographical characteristics of sugarcane harvesting labourers viz., age, education, size of family, marital status, experience, caste, occupation, size of holding, annual

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