



Work Profile of Sugarcane Harvesters: A Case Study of Beed District (MS)

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Introduction:

Work structure of the sugarcane harvesters is different from other labourers. The work units begin their work in the dark hours of the morning and cut cane throughout the day. Adult and adolescent boys- cut the cane, remove its top and throw it on the ground. Younger children then put the cane into a pile, collect and bundle the sugarcane tops. The heavy bundles of cane are then tied up and carried by men, women and even children to a cart for transportation. At a work site, it is usual to find fifteen to twenty adults, and twelve to fifteen children. Infants can usually be found in a cloth hammock or simply lying near the field. Girls and younger children sometimes accompanied by senior citizens are left behind at the settlements to do household chores.

Study Area:

Beed District is located to the south of Aurangabad District and centre of Marathwada. Geographically, Beed is spread over 18°27' to 19°27' North latitude and 74°49' to 76°44' East longitude. The district had total population of 2585049 as per 2011 census which account to 2.30% to total. The total area of the Beed District is 10694 sq.km which account to 3.47% to Maharashtra State. There are 11 tahsils in the district. In 2011 census, the district has 9 towns and 1368 villages (including 11 uninhabited villages). The total literacy rate of the district as per 2011 census is 76.99%. The rural and urban literacy rates are 74.73% and 86.04% respectively. Sex ratio of the District is 916 and ranks 31st among the Districts in the State. The sex ratio for rural and urban areas of the district is 912 and 933 respectively. In 2011 Census, the district recorded 3,51,254 (13.6 percent) Scheduled Caste population and 32,722 (1.3 percent) Scheduled Tribe population.

Objectives:

The prime of the current research paper is to study the work profile of the sugarcane harvesters in the Beed district.

Methodology:

Researcher has attempted sample study to find out the practical status of work structure of sugarcane harvesters in the Beed district. For the sample study, about 110 sugarcane harvesters were selected. The information from these sample sugarcane harvesters were collected with the help of interview schedule. The aspects regarding

sugarcane harvesters like extent of Migration of Sugarcane Harvesters, Pushing Factors for Migration, Work Assigning Method for Sample Sugarcane Harvesters, Overall Experience of Sample Sugarcane Harvesters, Type of work performed by Sample Sugarcane Harvesters and Working Hours of Sample Sugarcane Harvesters are studied.

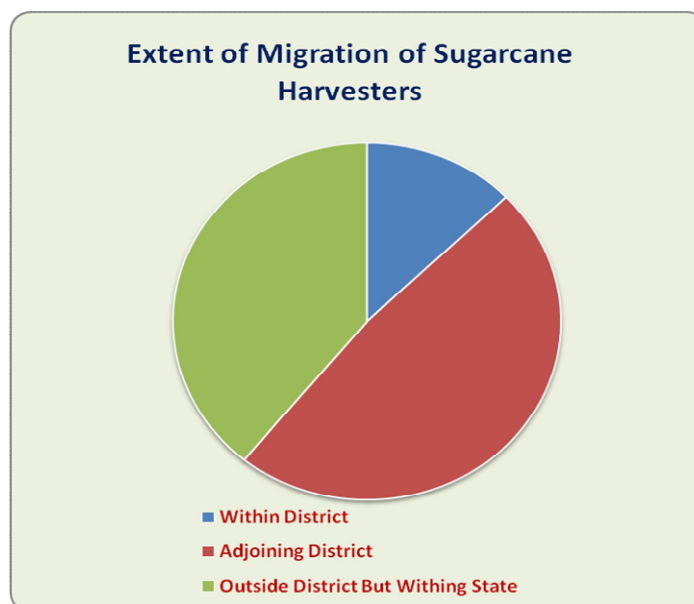
Analysis:

Sugarcane harvester labour needs to migrate to another place for work. The extent of their migration may differ based on demand & situation. The extent for sugarcane harvesters are within district, adjoining district, outside district but within state. All these are considered. Table 1 explains the extent of migration of Sample sugarcane harvesters.

Table No. 1
Extent of Migration of Sugarcane Harvesters

Sr. No.	Extent of Migration	No. of Sugarcane Harvesters	Percentage
1	Within District	14	12.73
2	Adjoining District	53	48.18
3	Outside District But Within State	43	39.09
	Total	110	100.00

Source: Computed by researcher using primary data.



It is observed that out of the total selected sugarcane harvesters 14 (12.73%) migrates with in their districts, and 53 (48.18%) to neighboring districts, 43 (39.09%) to other district but within Maharashtra state. It is seen that the scale of working outside districts is large.



Pushing Factors for Migration:

The migration of sugarcane harvesters has some reasons. One of the prime known reasons is unemployment. During interaction with sugarcane harvesters researcher has come to know some other reasons. It has been listed in table 2

Table No. 2

Pushing Factors for Migration

Sr. No.	Factors	No. of Sugarcane Harvesters	Percentage
1	To overcome the unemployment	74	67.27
2	To avoid the underemployment	13	11.82
3	For better earning through sugarcane harvesting	9	8.18
4	No much farm operation at the village	5	4.55
5	For the repayment of the advance taken	9	8.18
	TOTAL	110	100

Source: Computed by researcher using primary data.

Table 2 shows that, out of total sugarcane harvesters 74% sugarcane harvesters do his business for overcome the un-employment whereas 11.82% do the work of sugarcane harvesting for underemployment. For better earning through sugarcane harvesting 8.18% sugarcane harvesters are engaged.

Since sugarcane harvesters completed their farming work and they have spare time, about 4.55% sugarcane harvesters are engaged in sugarcane harvesting work. To repayment of the advance taken, 8.18% sugarcane harvesters do their job. It is concluded that, the sugarcane harvesters don't have major employment / job at native place. So they choose the work of sugarcane harvesting by migrating.

Work Assigning Method for Sample Sugarcane Harvesters:

Sugarcane harvesters get their work by various means. The details of the same given table 3.

Table No.3

Work Assigning Method for Sample Sugarcane Harvesters

Sr. No.	Method	No. of Sugarcane Harvesters	Percentage
1	Through Mukadam	90	81.82
2	Call by Factory Officers	11	10.00
3	Through Labour Society	5	4.55
4	Self Contact & Other Method	4	3.64
	Total	110	100

Source: Computed by researcher using primary data.



Table 3 shows how and by whom the sugarcane harvester gain their work. It is observed that out of 110 families of sugarcane harvesters 90 (81.82%) families get work through mukadams, 11 (10%) from officers of sugar factories, 5 (4.55%) from labour society and 4 (3.64%) gets by their own relation and other sources. Researcher come to know that, all other ways except Mukadam, goes to finally mukadam. So mukadam is the final medium for work.

Overall Experience of Sample Sugarcane Harvesters:

Experience of any work leads expert to man in the concerned work. The same is applicable to sugarcane harvesters. Sugarcane harvesters' work is hard work which requires physical capability to work for 8 to 10 hours with retiring. The picture of experience of sugarcane harvesters is given in table 4.

Table No. 4

Overall Experience of Sample Sugarcane Harvesters

Sr. No.	Years	No. of Sugarcane Harvesters	Percentage
1	Upto 5 Years	28	25.45
2	5 to 10 years	47	42.73
3	10 to 15 years	23	20.91
4	Above 15 years	12	10.91
	Total	110	100

Source: Computed by researcher using primary data.

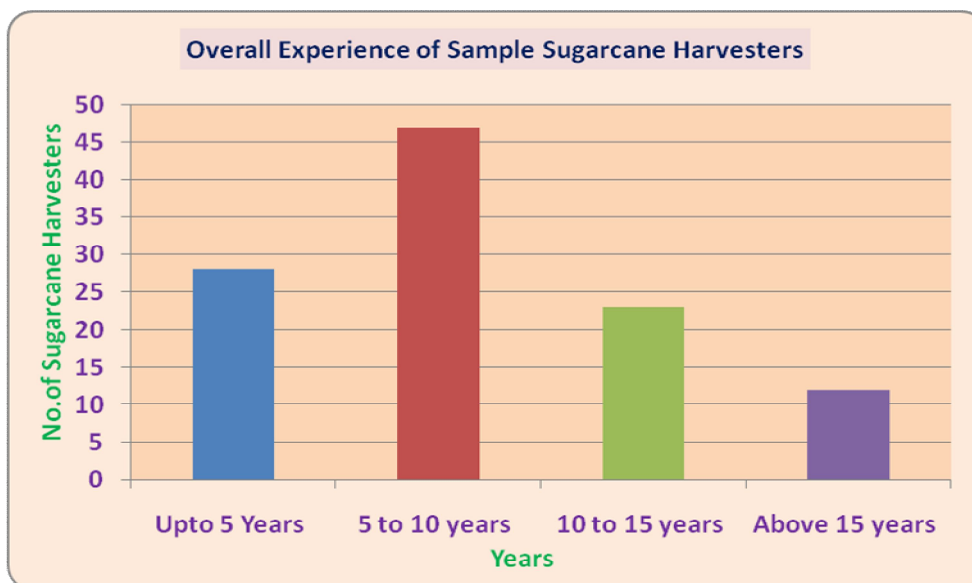


Table 4 shows that, about 25.45% sugarcane harvesters has upto 5 years experience, 42.73% sugarcane harvesters has experience upto 5 to 10 years, 20.91% sugarcane harvesters has experience upto 10 to 15 years. Above 15 years experience has been noticed from the sugarcane harvesters covering 10.91%.



Type of works performed by Sample Sugarcane Harvesters:

Sugarcane harvesters come from the category of labour. These sugarcane harvesters are assigned many works right from cane cutting to loading in heavy vehicle. The details of type of works performed by sample sugarcane harvesters is given in table 5

Table No. 5

Type of work performed by Sample Sugarcane Harvesters

Sr. No.	Nature of work	No. of Sugarcane Harvesters	Percentage
1	Cane Cutting & Loading	58	52.73
2	Cane Cutting & Transport by Own Bullock cart	27	24.55
3	Cane Cutting & Transport by Hiring Cart / vehicle	25	22.73
	Total	110	100.00

Source: Computed by researcher using primary data.

Table 5 shows that, about 52.73% sugarcane harvesters are engaged in Cane Cutting & Loading work whereas 24.55% sugarcane harvesters are engaged in Cane Cutting & Transport by Own Bullock cart. About 22.73% sugarcane harvesters are actively engaged in Cane Cutting & Transport by Hiring Cart / vehicle.

Working Hours of Sample Sugarcane Harvesters:

Sugarcane harvesters work hard for survive. Since sugarcane harvesters come from unorganized sector, the working hours are not fixed. They get wages as per their completion of work / target. So the sugarcane harvesters tries to work more and more to get more income. In working they don't consider the difference of male and female. The working hours of sugarcane harvesters starts from 7 at morning and ends with 6 pm at evening or even more or sometime until the work ends. Researcher has reviewed the working hours of sample sugarcane harvesters and accounted it in brief in table 6

Table No. 6

Working Hours by Sample Sugarcane Harvesters

Sr. No.	Working Hours	No. of Sugarcane Harvesters	Percentage
1	Upto 10 Hours	40	36.36
2	10 to 15 hours	51	46.36
3	Above 15 hours	19	17.27
	Total	110	100.00

Source: Computed by researcher using primary data.

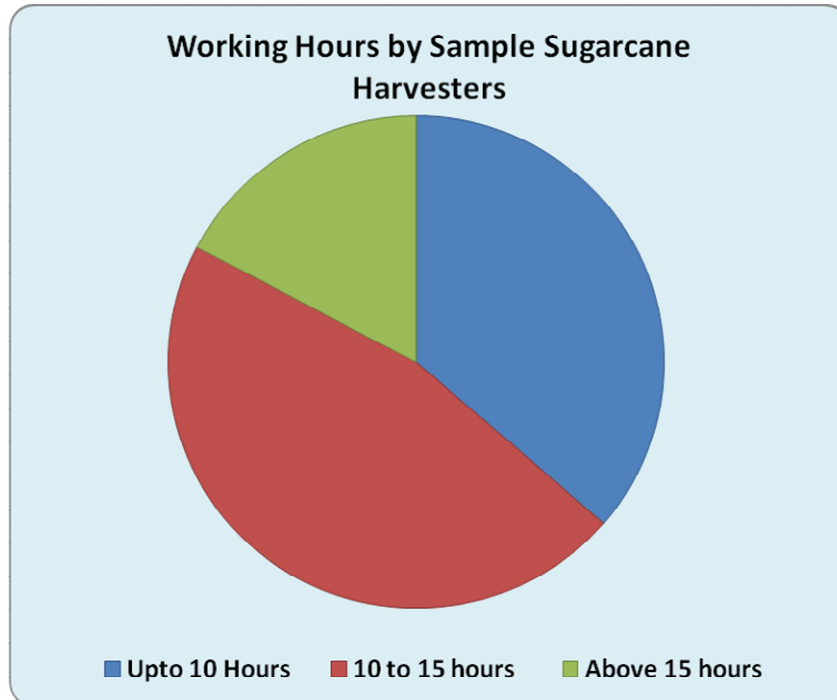


Table 6 shows that, Upto 10 Hours work is performed by 36.36% sugarcane harvesters whereas 10 to 15 hours work is performed by 46.36% sugarcane harvesters. Above 15 hours work is done by 17.27% sugarcane harvesters.

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