

CHAPTER - I

Introduction

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The co-operative sugar factories in Western Maharashtra have transformed its rural economy. These co-operative sugar factories have generated adequate levels of income to sugar-cane producers and employment for rural population.

The nature of employment provided by the co-operative sugar factories has not always been permanent. They offer work on seasonal basis. During the season which means the period each year during which sugarcane is crushed and sugar is manufactured. The sugar factories provide employment to the rural masses. Usually the season starts by November and ends with May every year. During this period these factories offer work on temporary basis. This has created the category of seasonal workers in the factories.

A seasonal worker is appointed in writing by the Managing Director to do seasonal work mainly and/or also for the period necessary for cleaning and overhauling either before and/or after the season.¹ These workers get employment for about 4 to 5 months after which they are thrown out of job. This seasonal characteristic of labour has posed a

1. Bombay Industrial Relation Act 1946.

number of problems. Basically the levels of income may not be adequate to help them through the year. The feature of employing workers on seasonal basis has established the practice of contract labour. The concerned sugar factory may not employ these workers directly. They may be employed through contractors. This practice will naturally deprive them off their basic claims on sugar factories. Hence, it remains a proper scrutiny into the plight of these seasonal workers.

OBJECTIVES :

The objectives of the study are :

- a) to understand the socio-economic conditions of the seasonal workers in sugar industry with special reference to Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Limited, sangli ; and
- b) to suggest the ways and means whereby the sugar factory may undertake the improvement in the conditions of the seasonal workers.

METHODOLOGY :

The present study is confined its survey to Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Limited, Sangli (SSSK) as it is the oldest in the region with maximum crushing capacity. Taking into account its employment potential

this sugar factory has been selected. In all there are about 875 Seasonal Workers in the factory, out of which 10% samples were selected. A Socio-economic survey was conducted through a pre-designed questionnaire. This questionnaire was determined by the researcher himself which helped to ascertain the suggestions of the workers.

CHAPTER SCHEME :

There are five chapters in the present study. The first chapter is an introductory one. It introduces the subject. The second one deals with the Sugar Industry in India. The third Chapter deals with the history of Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Limited, Sangli. Chapter Four deals with the Socio-economic profile of the seasonal workers in the Sugar Industry with special reference to Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Limited, Sangli. The last Chapter is the concluding chapter. It deals with the main findings of the study and suggestions to improve the conditions of the seasonal workers in the sugar industry with special reference Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Limited, Sangli.

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