

CHAPTER 4

Chapter – 4

WORKING CONDITIONS AND WAGE DETERMINATION

- 4.1 Wage Determination
 - 4.1.1 Nature of Work
 - 4.1.2 Working Hours
- 4.2 Wages and the Income
- 4.3 Wage Differentiation
 - 4.3.1 Wage Differentiation by Working Mode
 - 4.3.2 Wage Differentiation by Cropping Pattern
 - 4.3.3 Wage Differentiation by Sex Discrimination
 - 4.3.4 Wage Differentiation by Seasons
- 4.4 Minimum Wages : Comparative Analysis
 - 4.4.1 Minimum Wage Rates
 - 4.4.2 Bounded Labourers
 - 4.4.3 Exploitation of Agricultural Labourers
- 4.5 Problems of Wage Determination
- 4.6 Conclusions

Chapter – 4

WORKING CONDITIONS AND WAGE DETERMINATION

4.1 WAGE DETERMINATION

Agricultural labourers do not work on regular basis. To a large extent they remain unemployed and underemployed. Permanent labourers are attached to a particular landlord, who gets work on permanent basis and for a longer period. But the number of such labourers is comparatively small and they too have their own difficulties and problems, like exploitation, rendering bounded labour, low wages etc. From the view point of employment, the position of casual workers is perhaps the worst. And it is these workers whose number is very large.

Not only they are inadequately employed, but their working conditions are also bad. They work under the most tiring circumstances. They have to do a very hard labour in sun, rain and their working hours are not fixed. All these affects on their efficiency, health and life style adversely.

Generally, wage determination is dependent on major factors such as nature of work and working hours.

4.1.1 Nature of Work

Wages are determined by nature of work in the selected villages. Wages are decided by bilateral negotiations. Out of total respondents 20.63% were getting Rs. 25 per day as their wages, 17.46% were getting

Rs. 30 per day and 61.90% respondents were obtaining Rs. 50 per day. Though the wage rate of Rs. 50 per day is obtained by large percentage of respondents, they were not having regular work. Around 87.30% of respondents were not having regular work. Only 12.69% of respondents were avail of the work on daily basis. The availability of the work in rainy season was obtained by only 19.04% respondents and 28.57% were getting work in all seasons. Rainy and winter season work was obtained by 52.38% of respondents. Means, work availability was more in rainy and winter seasons. By months, this period is confined to June to December.

Labour charges were different and based on nature of work like cultivation, harvesting, sowing etc. In Save, Yelane, Shirgaon and Perid villages, the wages for land cultivation was Rs. 100 per day, but in Koparde, this wage was Rs. 75 per day. The wages for other works was also differ by nature and villages. For example harvesting, sowing, plantation, weeding out, the wages ranges between Rs. 30 to 50 per male and Rs. 25 to 30 per female workers.

There was no consistency in wages in the selected villages due to various types of work, working hours and also the mode of work etc.

4.1.2 Working Hours

Indian agriculture is very much dependent on monsoon, because of which, the working hours of agricultural labourers vary from place to place, crop to crops and season to seasons.

The working hours in agriculture sector of selected villages is shown in Table No. 4.1.

Table No. 4.1
Working Hours

Village	Working hours (Daily)			Total
	6.00	7.00	8.00	
1	2	3	4	5
Save	-	-	23	23
Yelane	-	06	-	06
Shirgaon	-	20	-	20
Koparde	-	08	-	08
Perid	06	-	-	06
Total	06 (9.52)	34 (53.96)	23 (36.50)	63 (100)

The working hours were more in Save village but seven working hours per day was observed in Yelane, Shirgaon, Koparde villages. It's percentage goes to 53.96%. It is seen that the working hours are generally from sunrise to sunset, which keeps them in various strains and difficulties.

Working hours were varying in the selected villages. As compared to industrial sector, the working hours were not compulsorily fixed. There is no provision of holidays and other facilities, to which industrial workers are accustomed.

4.2 WAGES AND INCOME

The income of agricultural labourers is very low. For a considerable part of the year, they are out of work and earn nothing. During the time they are employed, they get a very meager amount of income as wages. A large part of their income was derived from wages for the work on the land. Out of total respondents, 52.38% were getting income from wages ranging between Rs. 1001 to 2000 per month and 47.61% respondents were getting income below Rs. 1000 per month. Labourers with payment on weekly basis were seen with 46.3% of respondents and 53.96% of labourers were getting daily payment basis.

The data pertaining to the wage rates for the agricultural operations per day is shown in Table No. 4.2.

Table No. 4.2
Wage Rates paid to the Agricultural Labourers

Sr. No.	Village	Male	Female
1	2	3	4
1	Save	30	25
2	Yelane	30	25
3	Shirgaon	40	30
4	Koparde	30	25
5	Perid	40	30

Source : Field Work

Table No. 4.2 shows that there was no consistency in the wage rates (Male and Female). The payments made in kind were not included here.

Male and female wage rates were also differ by villages. In Shirgaon and Perid villages labourers were paid more. There were different types of wage rates prevailing in village and were based on sex, nature of employment, lean and peak seasons, labourers work power and skill etc.

In the case of male and female agricultural labourers, they were paid both in cash and kind. About 39.68% of their wages were paid in cash. Around 60.31% of wages were paid in both in cash and kind. Generally during the lean season, they were paid in cash and during the peak season they were paid in both cash and kind.

4.3 WAGE DIFFERENTIATION

Generally, no wage differentiation prevail in organized sector, wages in agriculture are not dependent on education. They differ in accordance with sex categories, mode of wages. No equal wage for equal work prevails. It is limited to organized sector only.

In unorganized sectors wages differ. The wages normally differs by mode, cropping pattern, male-female and by seasons. Around 82.53% of respondent were not organized. So, the wage differentiation of these respondents was dependent on the following points.

4.3.1 Wage Differentiation by Working Mode

Wages were determined on the working mode. Working mode can be divided in two heads.

- i) Agricultural Work and
- ii) Other work

Wages for agricultural works was dependent on type of work as indicated above.

The second mode was indirectly related to agriculture sector like irrigation work, excavation, well digging, post harvest processing etc. The wage rate of these works differ in digging of trenches and adjoining the pipeline for irrigation purpose, well, mining works etc. the wages were normally made in cash and for harvest and post harvest treatments, the wages were paid in kind.

4.3.2 Wage differentiation by Cropping Pattern

Wages are also dependent on crop plantation. Rice, varri, soyabean, sugarcane were the major crops grown in study area. Vegetables, ragi and pulses were grown as inter-crops. Vegetable cultivation is increasing and was undertaken on commercial basis.

Wage rates were more for soyabean, rice and sugarcane cultivation. For which the wage rates for male was Rs. 50 and Rs. 30 for the female workers, for other crops, the wage rate was Rs. 30 per male and Rs. 25 for female.

4.3.3 Wage Differentiation by Sex

Wage differentiation was also dependent on gender discrimination. Male were getting wage between Rs. 30 to 40 and female workers were getting Rs. 25 to 30 per day. These wage rates were also differed by villages. Most of the heavy and hard work was being done by male, obviously their wage rates remained higher than female wage rates.

4.3.4 Wage Differentiation by Seasons

Agriculture sector renders some seasonal works, seasonal works normally affected by the wage rates. In the selected villages like, Save, Shirgaon, the wage rate were more intensive to the seasonal works and hence differs to the average wage rates. In rest other villages no differences were found. The average wage rates fall equal to the seasonal works.

4.4 Minimum Wages – A Comparative Analysis

In 1948, the agriculture sector was brought under the Minimum Wage Act with Government Notification dated 24th April, 1998. The Government of Maharashtra has revised the minimum rate of wages, payable to the employees employed in the agriculture (referred as the Scheduled Employment) in the State of Maharashtra.

The Government of Maharashtra having reviewed the minimum rates payable to the scheduled employment considers it necessary to revise it further.

From 26th March 2001, the minimum rate of wages payable to the workers in agriculture sector is mentioned in Table No. 4.3.

Table No. 4.3
Improved Minimum Wage Rates

Sr. No.	Class of employees	Minimum Rate of Wages (Rs.)			
		Zone I	Zone II	Zone III	Zone IV
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Daily rates employees	51	49	47	45
2	<i>Mahinedar</i> or monthly rated employees	1326	1274	1222	1170
3	<i>Saldar</i> or <i>salkari</i> or employees working on yearly basis	15912	15288	14664	14040

Source : Assistant Labour Commissioner, Kolhapur

a) Zone - I

shall comprise of the areas within the local units of –

- i) all Municipal Corporations
- ii) the Pune and Kirkee Cantonments
- iii) the Command Areas receiving perennial water supply from the irrigation schemes (including Lift Irrigation Schemes) constructed and maintained by the government.

b) Zone - II

shall comprise the areas within the local limits of -

- i) Municipal Councils of Bhiwandi, Malegaon, Dhule, Jalgaon, Bhusawal, Ahmednagar, Satara, Sangli, Miraj, Ichalkaranji, Jalna, Parbhani, Beed, Nanded, Latur, Akola, Achalpur,

Yeotmal, Wardha, Gondia, Chandrapur, Vasai, Panvel, Khopoli, Ratnagiri, Manmad, Nandurbar, Shirpur, Wirwade, Amalner, Chalisgaon, Chopda, Pachora, Shirampur, Sangamner, Kopargaon, Lonawala, Baramati, Karad, Phaltan, Islampur, Barsi, Hingoli, Pandhapur, Parli-Vaijanath, Ambejogai, Udgir, Osmanabad, Khamgaon, Buldhana, Shegaon, Akot, Karanja, Washim, Wani, Pusad, Arvi, Pulgaon, Kamptee, Umred, Bhandara and Ballarpur.

- ii) Dehu Road, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Kamptee, Nashik Road and Deolali Cantonments.
- iii) The areas receiving seasonal water supply from the Government constructed dams.

c) Zone - III

shall comprise all other areas in the state, not included in Zone –I and Zone II or IV.

d) Zone - IV

shall comprise of the famine area as determined by Sukhatankar Committee.

- e) In the case of employees employed as *saldar* or *salkari* whose current employment year has commenced on any date prior to the 26th March 2001 and who were prior to that date, paid wages of the minimum rates are then applicable to them, the wages to be payable for that

part of the current employment year, which precedes the 26th March 2001 shall be calculated on *prorata* basis at the old minimum rate of wages and for the remaining part of the current employment year, shall be calculated on *prorata* basis at the minimum wage rate refixed by this notification.

Shahuwadi taluka is not directly included in any zone mentioned above. By the features of this taluka, it fall under the Third Zone, so, their improved minimum wage rate at the taluka is Rs. 47. This rate is equal for male and female workers. The respondents were getting less wage rates as compared to the minimum wage rate so far notified for the taluka.

4.4.1 Wages less than Minimum Wage Rates

Minimum wage rates are awefully determined by conducting various surveys and considering the general price level.

Table No. 4.4
Wage Rates in Selected Villages

Village	Responses to the Minimum Wage Rates		Total
	YES	NO	
1	2	3	4
Save	21 (91.30)	02 (8.69)	23 (100)
Yelane	06 (100)	-	06 (100)
Shirgaon	16 (80.0)	04 (20.0)	20 (100)
Koparde	06 (75.0)	02 (25.0)	8 (100)
Perid	05 (83.33)	01 (16.66)	06 (100)
Total	54 (85.71)	09 (14.28)	63 (100)

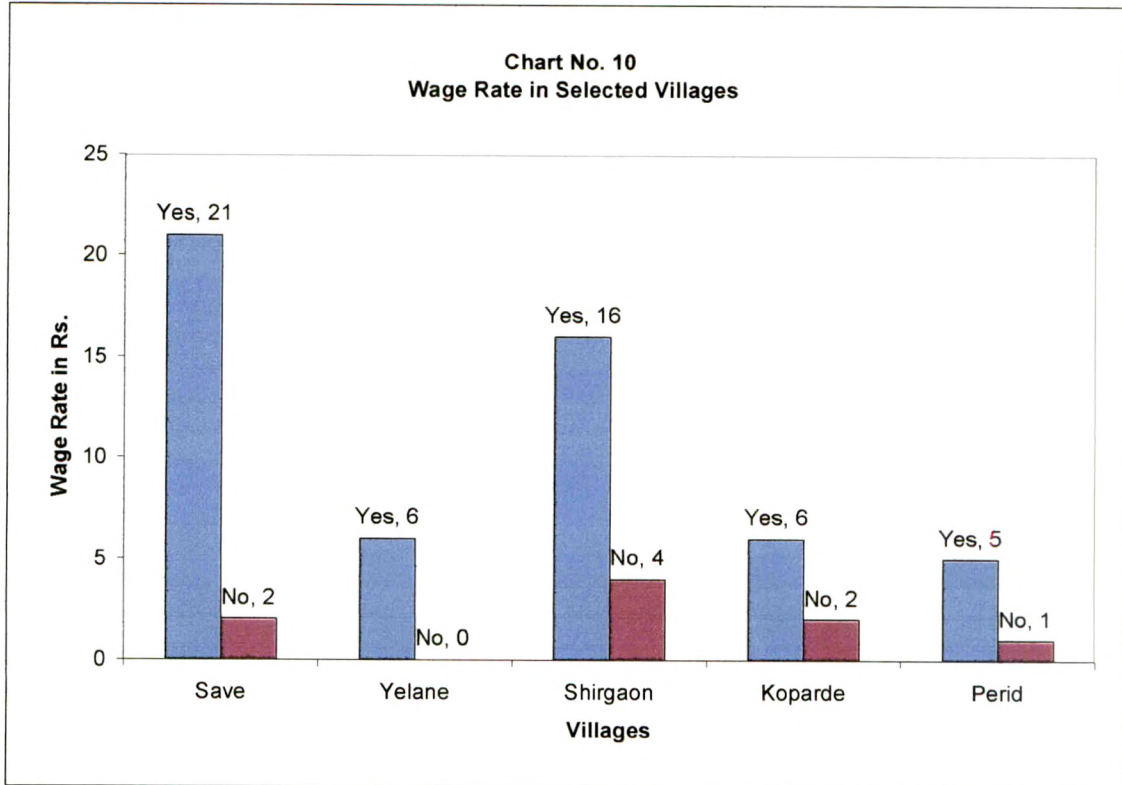


Table No. 4.4 shows that the wages paid to the workers were less than the minimum wage rate. Of the total households, only 14.28% respondents were reported positively. More than 85.71% of respondents were not getting minimum wage rate. Most of respondents did not have the knowledge of minimum wage rates.

4.4.2 Bounded Labour in Selected Area

The Table No. 4.5 shows the percentage of bounded labours in the selected villages.

Table No. 4.5
Bounded Labours in Selected Villages

Village	Responses to the Bonded Labourers		Total
	YES	NO	
1	2	3	4
Save	04	19	23
Yelane	-	06	06
Shirgaon	-	20	20
Koparde	-	08	08
Perid	-	06	06
Total	04 (6.34)	59 (93.65)	63 (100)

The percentage of bounded labours in the selected villages shows non existence of bounded labourers. Only 6.34 % of respondents have reported the existence of bounded labour in SAVE village.

4.4.3 Exploitation of Agricultural Labourers

Exploitation of agricultural labourers depends on various socio-economic factors. No social exploitation was reported. But the economical exploitations were reported in the selected area. No minimum wage rate were paid, even no suitable remuneration were also paid to the workers.

Table No. 4.6
Responses to the Reasonable Remuneration for each Hour of Work

Village	Responses to the Reasonable Remuneration		Total
	YES	NO	
1	2	3	4
SAVE	04 (117.39)	19 (82.60)	23 (100)
YELANE	03 (50.0)	03 (50.0)	06 (100)
SHIRGAON	04 (20.0)	16 (80.0)	20 (100)
KOPARDE	-	08 (100)	08 (100)
PERID	06 (100)	-	06 (100)
TOTAL	17 (26.98)	46 (73.01)	63 (100)

Source : Field Work

Table No. 4.6 explains reasonable remuneration for each hour of work. Only 26.98% respondents were reported positively to the reasonable remuneration paid for each hour of work. Around 73.01% respondents were negatively responded to the suitable remuneration for each hour of work.

4.5 PROBLEMS ABOUT THE WAGES

The major problem of wages in the selected villages was the non payment of minimum wage rate. Most of respondents were not having any idea about minimum wage rate.

Agricultural workers were not getting sufficient income from their work. Their wages were less in which they could not fulfill their basic needs. Their consumption cost was higher than income.

The agricultural labourers were found hard working without reasonable remuneration for their work.

No union had shown any interest in solving the problems of agricultural labourers. So, they were not intensive about their wages and also avail of other facilities. Thus their real wages were not economical.

All respondents in the selected area were totally dependent on the agricultural works. Educational backwardness, non-knowledgeability of the modern techniques, wage problems were the major problems faced by the agricultural workers. Their working conditions were also not satisfactory.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

After having analyzed the primary data related to the working conditions and wage determination of the labourers, we found that, the wage determination depends on the nature of work and the working hours. But, there is no consistency in wage determination due to various types of the work. We also found the differences in working hours, although it depends on the employers. Most of agricultural labourers were unorganized due to which they were exploited by various reasons. There was also a cropwise wage differentiation. We observed that the wage rates remained more for the works in soyabean, rice and sugarcane farms.

All these all are cash crops. Female labourers were getting less wages than the male labourers.

Government of Maharashtra has reviewed the minimum wage rate payable to the scheduled employment considered necessary to revise it further. There are four zones for minimum wages, but Shahuwadi taluka is not directly included in any zone mentioned in this chapter. We have also seen that most of the respondents were earning less than the minimum wage rate. Hence they were not getting sufficient income, which is caused to low standard of living.