Chapter I

Introduction

The sugar industry is claimed to be the second largest in the Indian economy, being next only to the cotton textile industry. The claim is based on the extent of labour employed; the amount of capital invested and the value of output.[1] Sugar industry is a seasonal character. Seasonal factory is one which normally works for more than half the days of the year.[2] Sugarcane is a highly perishable commodity and it has to be processed in a sugar factory as soon as it is harvested in order the deterioration of the sugar content of the sugarcane.[3] Therefore, sugar factories have to work during the season when the sugarcane is harvested normally from the month of November to the end of may in a crushing season of the sugar factory. The average duration of the crushing season in the sugar factories also depends on the daily cane crushing capacity of the sugar factories. In India, average crushing season of the sugar factories varied from 116 to 165 days.

Sugar industry provides employment opportunities to workers into two parts viz, direct and indirect employment. Direct employment may be divided into two parts, seasonal and permanent workers. Direct employment may be divided into parts, seasonal and permanent workers. Besides, a large component of indirect employment is generated in cane harvesting, transportation and loading, unloading of sugarcane. However, indirect employment depends upon the size of plant. A sugar factory having capacity of 2000 M.T.requires at least 800 bullockcart, 50 trucks and 50 tractors-trailers for cane harvesting and transporting of sugarcane. Each sugar factory provides employment nearly about 5000 to 6000 cane harvesting labourers for the period of crushing.[4]

Unorganized Contract basis labour:

One significant feature of the sugar industry is to engage contract basis labourers during the crushing season. It has also been the practice in sugar factory to contract out a number of regular jobs on running contract basis like cane loading, handing of materials i.e. press mud, limestone, molasses, firewood, store materials, construction and erection jobs. The workers are drawn mainly from the villages within the district and from the other districts of the state or other states for a crushing season of the sugar factory. This migratory character of worker is found in sugar factory.

Agriculture labour is an essential requirement of the sugar factory. The agricultural labour consists of only unskilled labourers working in the area of operation of the sugar factory. These labourers harvest sugarcane and transport to sugar factories. The main feature of nearly all the sugar factories is the workers are still essentially agriculturists and the great majority live in their villages. The workers are generally unorganized and wages tend to be low.[5]

Migration of labour:

The migration term generally applies to people who move from one place to another or establish a temporary residence as a condition of employment. The United Nations defines migrant workers broadly as people working in a foreign country who lack citizenship or resident status. According to this definition, between three and five million people were engaged in migrant labour in the United States at the beginning of the twenty-first century. U.S.governmental bodies and popular usages most commonly apply the term to workers engaged in agriculture, especially those of Mexican origin and other Latinas. Federal law defines migrant workers as individuals who travel at least seventy –five miles in search of employment. More than 85 percent of fruit and vegetable crops produced in the United States require hand planting, hand cultivation, and hand harvesting, and the majority of individuals involved in such work were born in Mexico.

The Term migrant worker has different official meanings and connotations in different parts of the world. The United Nations' definition is broad ,including any people working outside of their home country .The term can also be used to describe someone who migrates within a country ,possibly their own, in order to pursue work such as seasonal work.

The United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families defines migrant workers as follows

The term "migrant worker refers to a person who is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national.

Migration is an important factor in the erosion of traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic group, and nation-states.. Migration is not a single act of crossing a broader, but rather a lifelong process that affects all aspects of the lives of those involved.

Seasonal Migrant workers are persons employed by a country other than their own for only part of a year because the work they perform depends on seasonal conditions. They are a subcategory of foreign migrant workers. (www.states.oced.org/glossary).

The worker moving from one region of the country to another to find employment. Migrant workers are used extensively for crop harvesting, mandating that they follow the harvest seasons. (www.answers.com/migrant worker).

Seasonal migration of contract basis workers from one area to another area in sugar factory is an acute problem today.[6] Migration is a change of location of a person or agencies in physical space.[7] Generally, there are two types of criteria of migration (1) distance (2) duration .From the distance point of view; migration can be classified under four categories.

1. Rural-Rural Migration: in many poor countries like Senegal, rural-rural migration occurs when labourers from poorer regions travel to agriculturally – rich and irrigated areas which have more work.
2. Rural-Urban Migration:, migration of poor agricultural workers move to large cities and manufacturing centers in developing countries in Asia.
3. Urban-Rural Migration: migration that occurs when individuals retire back to their villages. Often, migrants who return bring back skill sets that benefit their home areas tremendously.
4. Urban-Urban Migration: this movement takes place from the centre of towns to the outer areas of the town.

However, it is also classified as intra-district; inter district, intra-state, interstate, and international migration. Moreover, S.N. Agarwal [8] N.D. Kamble, [9] K.C. Zanchariah,[10] pointed out those three types of migration under distance criteria, like short distance, medium and long distance migration.

From the duration point of view, migration can be studied under three categories (1) Casual- temporary (2) periodic–seasonal (3) permanent. However, it may be stated from this classification that the movement of people from one place to another is of great social significance. The movements are either into or out of an area.[11] The former is termed as immigration while the latter is termed as emigration.[12] Besides, there are two types of factors of migration ,push and pull factors,[13] which means the circumstances at home that repeal and those abroad that attract. The push

and pull factors of migration among a tribal and lower income groups of population are categorized under the following heads (1) Ecological factor (2) Demographic factor (3) Social and cultural factors.

Like transnational migration, national migration (internal) plays an important role in poverty reduction and economic development. Situations of surplus labour in rural areas because scarcity of arable is a common "push factor" in the move of individuals to urban based industries and service jobs. Environmental factors including drought, water logging, and river erosion also contribute migration.

Seasonal Migrant Labour in global Economy:

The migrant workforce has historically played a vital role nationally and across local communities over recent times. The economic globalization has created more migrant workers than ever before. In developing countries, the key factors to promoted many workers is unemployment and increasing poverty. While developed countries have increased their demand for labour. As a result, millions of workers and their families travel to countries other than their own to find work. According to International labour Organization, at present, there are approximately 175 million migrants around the world.

According to the United States Public Health Service, there are estimated 3.5 million migrant and seasonal farm workers in the United States, men, women .and children who work in all fifty states during peak periods of agriculture. A migrant farm worker is an individual who moves from a permanent place of residence in order to be employed in agricultural work. However, American agriculture depends on the labour of these workers; employment of agriculture is usually of short duration and requires frequent moves. Many men travel without their families, and most workers return during the winter to a home base, usually in Florida, Texas, California, Puerto Rico, and México. Children of migrant farm workers often changes schools several times a year. Most migrant farm workers earn annual incomes below the poverty level and few receive benefits such as a social security or workers' compensation. (www.answers.com/topic/migrant-worker).

Women migrant labour:

Economic conditions in developing countries have created the need for a new wave of migrant workers, predominantly young females. In Europe alone there are 3 million female migrant workers.The 1970s and 1980s have seen an increase in female migrant labourers in France and Belgium. Female migrants work in domestic occupations which are considered part of the informal sector and lack a degree of government regulation and protection .Minimum wages and work hour requirements are ignored and piece rates are sometimes also implemented. Women's wages are kept lower than men because they are not regarded as the primary source of income in the family.

In California, women have involved in migrant labour for a number of reasons. The most common reasons are economic conditions of the family, the husband's wage is no longer enough to support the family. Many of these women come from developing countries, and are low skilled. Additionally women who are widowed, divorced or single and have limited economic opportunities in their native country may be forced to leave out of economic necessity.

The problem of seasonal migrant workers in sugar industry is not a new phenomenon. The sugar industry is a seasonal nature; sugarcane is a crop that requires a vast amount of hand labour. The work in sugar factories lasts for five months only, workers get jobs only for a particular period of crushing season and workers remain idle during the intervening period, then they return to their home lands after the end of crushing season of the sugar factory. A majority of workers consisting of men, women, girls and boys are employed on sugar cane plantations in north and Central America, South America and other sugarcane and beet producing countries. The Royal Commission of Agricultural Report[14] pointed out that about 75% of labour employed in large sugar mills in Bihar and Orissa states, was composed of such type of migratory labour. This seasonal migration trend of labour force had also found in other plantation areas in different parts of India.[15]These migrant workers are faced to a position of wandering from place to place in search of work. The work of these labourers may be agricultural, industrial or some kind of unskilled, casual labour. In their frantic search for some employment, these labourers have to travel a considerable distance from one village to another and even from one taluka to another from one district to another and even from one state to another.[16]

It is significant to note that they work under control of contractors and mukadams.They have no security and does not know if and how much he or she will earn each day, his work is unskilled, irregular seasonal and often carried on far from the centers of sugar mills[17] The entire mass of contract basis labour in sugar factories today remains unorganized with the result that their voice is never heard beyond their camps. Even the post war reconstruction plans, both official and non official pay little or no attention to this important aspect of the rural economy of the country.[18]

It is needless to say that more than 50% of the sugar factories of the total are concentrated under co-operative sector today, even though all the co-operative sugar factories know the facts of contract basis workers recruited through contractors and mukadams. Contract basis seasonal Migrant workers are also exploited by employers and contractors in the sugar factories with a view to paying them lesser wages than actual wages of workers due to weak bargaining power of these workers. They are still struggling for their basic amenities and Social security. The practice of employing contract basis migrant labour prevails in varying degrees in almost all the industries including sugar industry. However, the unorganized labourers are not protected and wages are almost non-existent and it is extremely difficult to enforce the rules where they exist.

One important feature of the sugar industry is that its capacity to provide a number of direct and economic benefits to its employees such as medical, education, accommodation and other social welfare amenities, but sugar factories do not provide such benefits to contract basis seasonal migrant workers. The main reason for the existence of the contract labour practices in the sugar factories is to conduct business in the most efficient way. Contract labour contributed to reduction in costs, streamline administrative and accounting procedures.

Nearly more than ten lakh agricultural workers are engaged in sugarcane cutting workers in Maharashtra state. Of which, seven lakh workers engaged in 210 sugar mills in the state, while the remaining 3 lakh workers migrate to the neighboring states of Karnataka and Gujarat. These workers mostly belong to tribal communities, the nomadic tribes; Scheduled castes and OBCs.Their working conditions are pathetic with not even bare minimum facilities provided them. These workers are mostly migrants from rain shadow areas of the state who come to Mrathwada region for engaging in this work. They get work for six to eight months in a year. Although sugarcane cutting is considered unskilled work, it is in reality a

skilled work which requires strenuous work which requires bending for hours together.(N.S.Arjun,2010). [19]

In Maharashtra state, these workers come from drought prone areas. Each factory has to make an agreement with contractors and mukadams for providing seasonal migrant labour in crushing season of the sugar factories. When the sugar factory starts, i.e. approximately at the beginning of November month bands of workers begin to arrive from the neighboring districts in the Maharashtra state. Contract basis seasonal workers as well as migrant workers are unorganized, with no union to take up the arduous task of organizing and trying to fight for their minimum rights. The workers are themselves are called as Koyta i.e. as instrument of cutting sugarcane. The problem of seasonal migrant workers is peculiar in Kolhapur, Ahmadnagar, Nasik, districts in the Maharashtra state as well as in Gujarat state. Hence, there is need to regularize relationship between the sugar factory management and seasonal contract basis workers.

A Review of Studies:

The present review of literature is confined to the studies on seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories in India. The problem of seasonal migrant workers has been studied by different researchers. The most important studies are referred such as Pathare P.A.Dhongade M.P. ,Acharya T.K.T. (1971),[20] Amrita Rangaswamy (1974),[21] Suresh Shinde (1985),[22] K.N.Vaidya (1966),[23]R.N.Agarwal (1976),[24] B.S.Baviskar (1966)[25] Breman Jan (1978) [26]

The Government of India had appointed the various committees and commissions in order to study the workers in the sugar industry like Employment study of the sugar industry,(IAMR) (1979),[27] the Report on the Workers in the Indigenous Sugar factories in the Uttar Pradesh (Govt. of India(1982)[28] The Report of the Maharashtra Rajya Sakhar kamgar Union on sugar cane cutting and transporting labour (1981),[29]

The Report of a Committee appointed by the Gujarat High Court to enquire into the conditions of employment and living of the Migrant sugarcane cutters. However, most of these surveys had conducted mainly on organized workers in the sugar factories. Unorganized labour such as contract basis workers has mostly been left out of the purview of laws.

It may be noted that the past studies and reports show that none of any state or institution has conducted any survey on the problems of social security of seasonal

migrant workers in sugar factories still today. However, with the exception of a few studies on a specific category of seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factory in India, no detailed research has been done on social security of seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories. The review of earlier research studied on the present study reveals that some studies have been conducted by researchers and labour institutions at national and international level.

These studies have pointed out various issues' including social security schemes of unorganized sector workers in India. Dasgupta (1979), [30] examined socio-economic insecurities of low income women workers in the informal economy and importance of voice representation in improving their socio-economic situation. This study examines socio-economic security in informal economy .The National Commission on Rural Labour in India (NCRL 1991)[31], estimates more than 10 million circular migrants in the rural areas alone. These include an estimated 405 million interstate migrants and 6 million intra-state migrants. The Commission pointed out that there are large number of seasonally migrant workers in the agriculture and plantations.

Srivastava's study (1998) [32] shows state wise data of migrant workers in different sectors of India. Parduman Singh (1995)[33] has analyzed social security systems in developing countries .Seasonal workers are covered for medical benefits in off season in Iran. Agricultural workers are covered in Brazil, Guatemala and Haiti. The unemployment protection schemes are still very few in the developing countries. Therefore, migrant workers must be covered under all social security schemes and should have equal rights. Bhagoliwal (1985)[34] pointed out that social security has thus, been considered a device provided by society arising out of natural, social and individual and economic causes. The social security system of a country consists of the complex of its social insurance and social assistance schemes. A number of recent studies have pointed out present position of seasonal migrant workers in Indian economy.

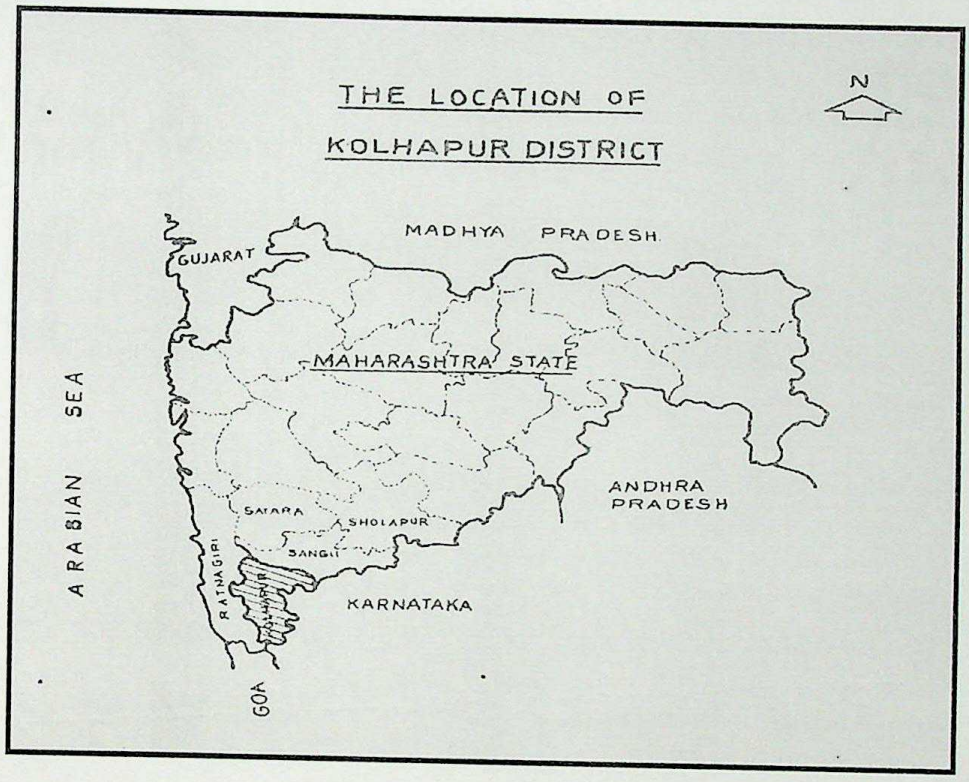
Research Area:

Kolhapur district is the second of all the districts in the Maharashtra state in respect of sugarcane areas and sugar factories. During 2011-12, there were 20 sugar factories in Kolhapur district. Therefore, this area is chosen as a research unit of the

study. (See Map.1.1). Most of the labourers migrate from drought prone areas of Solapur, Sangli, Satara, Osmanabad, Nanded, Beed, latur, Jalana Parbhani districts to sugar factories in Kolhapur district for a crushing of the sugar factories through contractors and mukadams.

Map.1

The Location of Kolhapur District



Significance of the study:

This study has a special significance in the era of growing concepts of decent work for all workers. Labour rights and international labour standards. Decent work is a broad concept, which is regulated to overall development of the society and workers. The ILO has been actively involved in the development of social protection systems. The present study has examined the social security status of seasonal migrant workers through the social security indicators. There are some indicators of social security for workers such as medical care, sickness and maturity benefits, unemployment benefits, employment injury benefit, old age benefit, voluntary social

insurance, universal non-contributory schemes, and provident funds, security of income, wages and working conditions.

Objectives of the study:

The main objectives of the present study are as follows

1. To know the present position of unorganized seasonal migrant workers in the sugar industry.
2. To examine the provisions of labour policies of government and social security schemes.
3. To examine the labour laws and programmes of the unorganized sector workers.
4. To know wages and working conditions of seasonal migrant workers in sugar factories.
5. To understand the role of unions of workers in respect of social security schemes of

   Unorganized seasonal workers in sugar factories.
6. To suggest measures in order to introduce welfare amenities and social security schemes for unorganized seasonal workers as well as seasonal migrant workers in sugar industry..

Hypotheses of the study:

Researcher has made efforts to formulate some hypotheses of this study, which have been formulated on the basis of the available research data in respect of seasonal migrant workers in the selected sugar factories in the Kolhapur district. The hypotheses of the study are given below.

1. Drought prone areas implies greater intensity of seasonal migration, unemployed workers, agricultural workers from drought prone areas are likely to more mobile than non-drought prone areas workers.
2. Social security programmes helps to improve the living and working conditions of contract basis seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories.

Period of the study:

The period of the present study was for two years i.e. 2010-11 and 2011-12

Research Methodology:

The present study attempts to find out the social security status of unorganized seasonal migrant workers in the selected sugar factories in Kolhapur district off Maharashtra state. There were 20 sugar factories in Kolhapur district during 2010-11.Out of which, four sugar factories were selected for the present study, like Panchganga .Kumbhi-Kasari .Shri Datta –Shirol .Shri Doulat,Chandgad. The present study is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the seasonal migrant workers. Data were collected through personal interviews based on a semi structural schedule. The secondary data were collected through various sources like journals, books, Reports of the governments and non government agencies. Websites were also used for data collection of the present study.

Sample Design:

The primary data is based on the proportion of seasonal migrant workers in the selected sugar factories in Kolhapur District. Table 1.1 is showing factory wise distribution of sample size of migrant workers in the selected sugar factories of Kolhapur district. The proportion of sugar cane cutter migrant workers was much higher in a few sugar factories. It was very difficult to conduct survey of all seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories of Kolhapur district. Besides, the interviews of representatives of trade unions of workers were conducted. Data were processed and tabulated according to the requirement of various aspects of the present study.

Table 1.1

Factory wise distribution of sample size of migrant workers in selected sugar factories

Sugar Factory	Total No. of migrant workers	10% Sample of total workers	% of sample Migrant workers
Panchganga	500	50	35.72
Kumbhi-Kasari	410	40	28.58
Shri Datta (Shirol)	320	30	21.42
Shri Doulat (Chandgad	200	20	14.28
Total	**1430**	**140**	**100.00**

An average method of statistical tool was used for tabulation and interpretation of data. However, all data so gathered were finally examined and used for writing the present report of the study.

Limitations of the study:

The scope of the present study is limited to unorganized seasonal migrant workers in the selected sugar factories of Kolhapur district only. The data collected for this study was based on four selected sugar factories only.

Chapter scheme:

The following are the chapters of the present study.

Chapter I. Introduction

Chapter II Growth of Sugar Industry

Chapter III. Social security of unorganized labour

Chapter IV Profile of Migrant workers in Sugar factories

Chapter V Working Conditions of Migrant workers

Chapter VI Conclusions and Suggestations

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