Chapter VI

Conclusions and Suggestions

Sugar industry is one of the organized industries in India. This is mostly dependent on unorganized sector workers like agricultural workers, contract based seasonal migrant workers. They are known as cane harvesters and transport workers. These workers migrate from drought prone areas of Maharashtra.

The findings and suggestions of the present study are based on the particular topics of the study.

Findings of the study:

The main findings of the present study are as follows:

Social Status of Workers:

It has been observed that out of 140 respondents, 50 (35.71%) migrant workers were belonged to Mahar & Nav Boudha castes. The next highest number of migrant workers 34 (24.28%) were from Maratha caste. Besides, 21(15%) migrant workers were belonged to Koli caste, followed by 19(13.58%) Mang Caste, 16(11.43%) Chambhar caste.

It was observed that lower castes workers had almost migrated in larger number in comparison with higher castes workers in surveyed sugar factories. Most of the sampled seasonal migrant families and workers were from backward caste groups, craftsman, and village artisans. The propensity to migrate is more among backward caste groups due to the poverty and absence.

Age Composition:

It has been observed that as many as 53 (37.85%) of the total of 140 respondents were in the age group of 26-40 years. 33(23.58%) respondents were in the age group of 19-25 years. Besides, 29 (20.72%) respondents were in the age group of 41-60 years and the remaining 25(17.85%) respondents were in the age group of 15-18 years.

Literacy:

It was that as large as 90(64.28%) of the total sampled migrant workers were illiterate and only 50(35.72%) were literate respondents. However, it was found that the sampled migrant workers in selected sugar factories were mostly illiterates. it is evident from this data that the illiterate migrant workers were enforced to migrate from their native places to sugar factories for seasonal type of work, because they had no prospects of gainful employment in the drought prone areas in Marathwada and other parts of the western Maharashtra.

The seasonal migrant workers were either illiterate or inadequately educated. It was found that almost all literate sampled migrant workers had not completed their further education; they left school due to various causes.

Landholding:

It was found that as much as 90 (64.28%) of the total were landless migrant workers and only 50 (35.72%) were land holders. Therefore, it should be noted that almost all backward castes migrant workers were found to be land less labourers they were dependent on agricultural activities as the main source of their income and employment.

It may be noted that the propensity to migrate is more among the marginal farmers and landless laborers' majority of the migrant workers households belonging to Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes do not own any land and among those who own some land the size of holding is very small.

Occupation of seasonal workers:

It is significant to note that most of the migrant workers are agricultural and landless labourers who exclusively engage themselves in non-agricultural pursuits such as building houses, digging of wells, construction of roads and other public works in rural areas. Some of them are share croppers or sub-tenants of the land. Consequently, they migrate from their native places to sugar factories for seasonal jobs of the crushing season.

Working experience:

It was observed that out of 140 respondents .71(50.72%) had 6 to 10 years of working experience in sugar factories. 37(26.42%) had reported between 11 to 15 years experience of work and 19(13.58%) respondents had a length of service

between 1 and 5 years.13(9.28%) respondents had never working experience. It was found from this study that about 75% of the total respondents had been working from six to fifteen years as contract basis workers in the selected sugar factories. However, they were neither on muster roll of sugar factories nor labour welfare facilities were provided them by the sugar factories as per provisions of the various labour laws.

BondedLabour:

Majorities of the Koytas are socially and economically backward castes people (Dalits), like Scheduled castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes. This is nothing but bonded labour; it is illegal. The intermediaries often exploit their helplessness by giving certain advance payment and forced them into a kind of bondage.

Changing of sugar factories:

It was observed that out of 140 respondents, 90(64.28%) told that they had not changed sugar factories and 50(35.72%) had changed sugar factories. It is significant to note that about one third of the respondents of the total had been changing sugar factories.

Causes of seasonal Migration:

It has been observed that out of total 140 respondents, 51(36.42%) respondents reported drought conditions at village as the main causes of seasonal migration. 40((28.58%) gave inadequate work by employment guarantee scheme as the cause of seasonal migration.31 (22.14%) gave causes of migration as indebtedness.18 (12.86%) reported no any work in villages as causes of seasonal migration to sugar factories. However, some migrant workers pointed out various causes of seasonal migration such as pressure on land, no irrigated land, low income, low productivity, low rainfall, drought condition, these factors are responsible for mass poverty and seasonal migration.

Helping Persons for Migration:

It has been found that out of total of 140 respondents, 110 (78.58%) reported contractors and mukadams as helping persons for seasonal migration of workers, 19(13.57%) were migrated through friends, besides, 11(7.85%) respondents were migrated through relatives as source of seasonal migration.

Recruitment of Labour

The recruitment of labour under contract labour system is a cheap, reliable efficient and workable system for making use of temporary labour on a contract basis. A. migratory characteristic of contract labour is more prevalent in sugar industry.

Commission System:

The sugar factory gives advances to mukadams and contractors, who are personally responsible for its recovery; they take risk in respect of guarantee of labour refund advances made to labour. Commission is the main source of their income (normally 10 to 15 percent of the earnings). Muadam is paid for his service a commission from the earnings of sugar cane harvest workers.

Contractual Relationship:

There is no formal relationship between employer and employee and lack of social security protection to the unorganized sector workers. Unorganized sector workers in India are living poor socio economic conditions leading to a substandard life.

Working Conditions:

Sugar is the most organized industry, but this sector has the most unorganized workers. The workers are of two types, (1) truck-tractor cane harvesting seasonal workers (2) Bullock cart workers. The contractors make a contract for the supply of harvest workers during the crushing season of sugar factory. Seasonal workers including landless labourers, small and marginal farmers migrate along with their children.

Basic Facilities:

Seasonal migrant workers are scattered in different place, there is no water in their fields. There are no electricity or sanitation facilities in different places where they stay near the sugar factory site and sugar cane field.

Loans and Advances:

Seasonal migrant workers take loans and advances from contractors and Mukadams. Bullock cart workers are paid advances between Rs.30, 000 to Rs. 40,000 per family, while truck and tractor-trolley workers families are given Rs.20, 000 to Rs.30, 000.

Insecure Conditions:

These seasonal migrants work under most insecure conditions with minimal legal protection. However, no labour laws are implemented to protect their rights although some like the Minimum Wages Act, Contract labour Act, Money lending Act and Workmen's Compensation Act are eligible, Social Security Act.2008. In factory provisions of these Acts were not implemented by the sugar factories in order to protect contract basis seasonal workers.

Period of employment:

Sugar industry is a seasonal character. The duration of the crushing season is varied from 150 to 180 days. Contract basis Seasonal workers engage for a crushing season of the sugar factory. During the season 2010-11, the total cane crushing season of the sugar factories available in number of days was around 180 days.

Unemployment and underemployment:

It was found that contract basis seasonal workers cannot work continuously in each month due to the causes of stoppage days, especially, for cleaning and unforeseen breakdowns. Besides, most of the workers reported various causes for their not working continuously in a few days such as strike period of workers, heavy rains, bullockcart broken, shortage of cane supply some times, Farmers agitation for sugarcane rates . Therefore, the shortage of sugarcane, strikes, stoppage days of sugar factory have accentuated the problems of underemployment of contract basis seasonal workers in sugar factories.

Sugarcane farmers Agitation:

It should be noted that even workers were employed on a contract basis work for a crushing season under the schedule of employment of the sugar factories. However, they had not received any payment for stoppage days like natural calamities, farmers' agitation for issue of sugarcane rate, they do not get also average earnings of per day work during the forced unemployment period. They do not get payment during the disturbances in the working of the sugar factory

Hours of work:

It has been observed that as many as 83(59.28%) of the total respondents were opinion that they had to work more than eight hours a day i.e. 9 to10 hours a day. While 36(25.72%) had reported about no fixed time for daily hours of work per day, and 21(15%) reported about uncertainty hours of work. The results show that the hours of work are not fixed by the contractors or mukadams of the sugar factories. They work for long hours say 9 to 10 hours a day in unhygienic atmospheres.

No work no pay Principle:

It may thus be noted that 'no work no pay' principle existed in the sugar factories in respect of contract basis seasonal workers for cane harvesting work. In accordance with these rules and regulations, the Contract labour Act and the Minimum Wages Act had been enacted to give protection to labour.As a result of contract labour, the sugar factory owners as well as contractors allegedly exploit the sugarcane cutters and contract labour by paying them low wages.

Wages and Earnings:

It was observed that wages were paid according to rate of cane harvesting work at Rs.184per ton during crushing season 2010-11. In addition to this, workers get 30% commission of the sugar cane cutting and transporting work. This is not just cane cutting but for an entire operation involving sugar cane cutting, cleaning the sugarcane, tying the loaded vehicles with a rope and finally cleaning the sugarcane fields.

The children also participate in cane harvesting work and they assist their parents by contributing active labour, especially in tying the bundles of cutting sugarcane and also clearing and cleaning the sugarcane field.

It has been found that wage rates paid to contract basis seasonal workers in the sugar factories were found to be lower in the Maharashtra state than wage rates paid to sugar cane harvest workers i.e., sugarcane cutters and transporters, in Gujarat state and other states in India. Cane harvesting workers are paid wages on the basis of volume of work done by them. Wages for seasonal migrant workers vary from state to state in the country. Besides, migrant workers by and large do not get minimum wages.

It was found that more than 90 percent of the total migrant workers opined that they had not received right amount and hypocrisy and corruption about contract labour system, domination of contractors and mukadams on workers, low wages, and lack of labour welfare facilities and rest of them reported that muakadams charged higher rate of commission.

Seasonal migrant workers economic condition is not at all satisfactory. They often get into the clutches of money lenders because of the urgency in getting money to meet situations like accident, death, illness.

Seasonal migrant workers do not have considerable savings in bank or in any other credit societies. The working condition of seasonal migrant workers in the Maharashtra state may be unsatisfactory as the contractors decide the wage paid to them.

Expenditure pattern:

The pattern of expenditure on consumption determines the economic status of the workers. Most of the seasonal migrant workers have to spend the entire income on bare necessities such as food, clothing. This is an indicator of their poor standard of living. Their standard of living is so pathetic and for urgency they have no other way to turn except borrowing money from contractors and mukadams with high rate of interest. They take loans and advances from mukadams and contractors before crushing season of the sugar factories in order to fulfill their basic needs.

Bonus:

It was observed that incentive bonus was paid to contract basis seasonal workers as well as migrant workers by the surveyed sugar factories. The contract basis seasonal workers do not get bonus by the sugar factories. Steel utensils and clothes were provided to male and female contract basis seasonal workers by some sugar factories as incentive bonus at the end of season. These workers were not availing any bonus facility.

Shelter Facilities:

The housing facilities for contract basis seasonal workers were to be negligible by all the surveyed sugar factories. Seasonal migrant families were residing in

temporary huts erected with cane leaves in the sugarcane fields.It was observed that 76(54.28%) out of 140 respondents were staying nearby site of sugar factory area.44 (31.44%) were reported no fixed place of staying in sugar factories.20 (14.28%) respondents were reported as nearby road for staying. Migrant workers do not have a fixed place of work and keep shifting from one place to another place in area of operation of the sugar factory. The workers have no convenient and protective shelters at their camps.

Educational Facilities for Children:

As regards educational facilities, it was observed from union workers representatives in the selected sugar factories that except in a few sugar factories in the Maharashtra state had neither provided adult education facilities under non-formal education programs of the Government nor attempt had been made to provide educational facilities for contract basis seasonal migrant workers children between the age of 6-14. It has been observed that no schooling facilities are made available to the children of these seasonal migrant workers by the sugar factories. Children suffer from interrupted schooling or they do not get facilities of formal education at all.

Exploitation of Child labour:

Seasonal migration often prevents them from education of deserving children as a result of child labour; children are exploited by the contractors and mukadams. These workers are generally denied social security, welfare and health care. A poor condition prevents them from giving a better education to their children. Apart from poverty the low educational status of parents is reflected in the lower educational levels of their children.

Medical Facilities:

It has been observed from sample survey of the seasonal migrant workers that none of the surveyed sugar factories were found to be providing medical facilities for seasonal migrant sugarcane cutters and bullock carter families in respect of mobile medical services to cover remote areas of the sugar factories.

Medical checkups

There were also no special arrangements in respect of seasonal frequent and regular medical checkups of contract basis seasonal migrant workers families. It was observed from the survey of the seasonal migrant workers that these workers suffer from several health hazards. In fact, the workers face ill-health during crushing season

and they undergo pains, stains. Long working hours make them mentally and physically weak.

Workmen's Compensation Act:

The Workers Compensation Act 1923 has been amended several times. It provides payment of compensation to workers, who are injured on account of accidents arising out of and in the course of employment. It was found that contract basis seasonal workers in the sugar factories in the area of study were not covered under the ESI scheme or the workmen's Compensation Act.

Crèches:

At the time of survey, it was observed that none of the surveyed sugar factories had provided such type of crèche facilities to cane harvesting women workers or mothers in a crushing season of the sugar factories. Children were trailing behind their working mothers. Infants were generally left over a piece of cloth or sack under the shade of tree or a seasonal plant in the sugar cane fields.

Trade Unionism:

It was observed that Contract basis seasonal workers as well as migrant workers were not found as members of any trade union and association of workers. The majority of seasonal migrant workers gave some reasons for not joining trade unions such as fear of reprisal by mukadams and contractors, temporary migrant workers etc.

It is significant to note that the seasonal migrant workers as well as agricultural labourers do not enjoy the rights of the unions of the workers. There is no strong trade union of sugarcane cutters and transporters. The bargaining power of these seasonal migrant workers and agricultural workers is thus weaker than sugar factory employees, because they migrate from their native places to sugar factories for seasonal jobs only.These workers cannot not bargain collectively with employers due to the nature of their work.

Social security:

The working condition of seasonal migrant workers is not satisfactory; they work more than 8 hours per day without any break of rest for an hour, for which they do not get also overtime rate for excess hours of work in the sugar factory as per the minimum wages Act, 1948. No bonus is paid

No provident fund is contributed. Although India is the world's largest producer of sugar .The sugar industry neither provides its workers with basic facilities nor shares profits with them.

Seasonal migrant workers do not get protection of labour laws due to ignorance and very loose enforcement. There are no social security measures like bonus, contributory provident fund, insurance etc. There is no compensation for death of bullocks, damaged carts, huts catching fire, etc. However; it depends upon the contractor's links with sugar factories. The bullock cart workers have to face the problems of health of bullocks, traffic troubles and damages of bullock carts, etc.

Lack of Implementation of various Committees Report:

The government of Maharashtra has not implemented the suggestions of the Shri Dadasaheb Rupwate and Panditrao Dound Committees. Therefore, Sugarcane Cutting and Transporting Workers Union are demanding the setting up of a welfare board of these workers as per social security Act2008, where every worker can register and which will regulate their working conditions.

Suggestions:

On the basis of the above findings, the researcher comes to a conclusion that contract based seasonal migrant workers in the surveyed sugar factories of Kolhapur district in Maharashtra state are living poor socio-economic conditions leading to a substandard life. So the present research study recommends some important suggestions in order to improve socio economic conditions and welfare of the unorganized contract based seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories.

1. It is necessary to implement key recommendations on minimum conditions for all unorganized workers given by the National Commission on enterprise in the unorganized sector.
2. The government should provide labour welfare facilities to the contract basis seasonal workers in the sugar factory such as provident fund, bonus, and insurance scheme in case of accidents, death, and insurance of cattle, transport allowance, medical facilities, and educational facilities to the children as per provisions of various Acts of the unorganized workers.

3. The government should form the board for unorganized workers in the sugar industry in order to improve working conditions of unorganized workers like sugarcane cutters and transporters, contract based workers in the premises of the sugar factory and worers in area of operation of the sugar factory.
4. There is need for public private partnership in providing social and economic security for the unorganized workers in the sugar industry like contract based seasonal workers, sugarcane cutters, and transporters.
5. The government should punish those managements of the sugar factories who do not introduce welfare programmes for contract based seasonal migrant workers in sugar factories.
6. The sugar factories should take measures to improve the health and hygienic conditions of seasonal migrant workers as well as contract based workers in the crushing season of the sugar factories.
7. Revision of wage rates for contract based seasonal workers, sugarcane cutting and transporting workers should be made time bound and proper allowance should be given to avoid any decrease in their earnings.
8. Social security is the right of workers in the unorganized sector and it is the responsibility of the government as well as the civil society to provide the same. It is necessary to implement social security Act 2008 for the seasonal sugarcane harvesting workers in the sugar industry.
9. Formation of cooperative societies for contract basis sugar cane harvesting workers should be encouraged.
10. Labour contract and sugar cane transport societies should be organized on the cooperative basis.
11. Seasonal workers as well as sugar cane harvesting workers should engage through labour cooperative societies instead of contractors and Mukadamas.
12. The Contract labour system should be abolished in the sugar industry.
13. Sugarcane cutters, bullock carters and contract basis workers in the premises of the sugar factory should be treated as workers of the sugar factory in order to provide them labour welfare facilities as regular workers of the sugar factory.
14. Sugar factory administrators should be encouraged to improve labour management practice and relations in respect of contract basis seasonal migrant workers.

15. Facilities of group insurances should be extended for the benefit of persons employed by the labour contract cooperative societies and contract basis workers.
16. Standing orders should be applied to contract basis cane harvesting workers as well as seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories.
17. The contract basis seasonal migrant workers should be compensated for loss of wages in case of non availability of work during stoppages or closures and sugar factory on account of cleaning of machinery, unforeseen breakdowns calamity, strikes of sugar factory employees unions, shortage of sugarcane and materials, sugarcane transporting and weighing difficulties and under the circumstances of workers affected by natural calamities.
18. Compensation amount should be paid on the basis of about eighty percent of the total earnings per day of the seasonal migrant workers. The procedure for grant of compensation on account of disability and injury to workers, bullock carters and sugarcane cutters and their dependents during the course of employment, bullock cart breakdown, bullock dies, huts consumed by fire, workers injured by burning, and belongings of seasonal migrant workers families stolen by others etc in these circumstances should be set right to obviate rigidity in the matter of payment.
19. The amount of compensation should be paid by the employers to workmen like seasonal migrant workers and their dependents in case of personal injury caused by accidents arising out of and in the course of employment and for their death. Besides, medical care to injured seasonal migrant workers or sickness workers should be provided by sugar factories.
20. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 should be extended to cover contract basis seasonal cane harvesting workers in respect of hours of work, break the rest, leave and holidays, minimum wages, insurance policy, social security, equal wages for male and female for the same work.
21. The Principle of equal pay for equal work should be implemented in sugar factories for contract basis workers.
22. Wages should invariably be paid to the contract basis workers through sugar factory instead of contractors.

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22. Wages should invariably be paid to the contract basis workers through sugar factory instead of contractors.

23. Transport allowance, canteen subsidy allowance, and night shift allowance retaining allowance should be paid to contract basis seasonal migrant workers and bullock carters.
24. The shelters for contract basis cane harvesting workers should be provided in the premises of the sugar factories.
25. Mobile dwellings should be provided for sugar cane cutter families and bullock carter families at worksites, and those families reside around factory sites,
26. Temporary dwellings arrangement should be made for these contract basis workers families along with adequate facilities of lighting, water supply, for cattle and families, latrines, bathrooms etc.
27. Pair of blankets, footwear boots, hand gloves, sweaters woolen clothes as protective appliance in the winter season should be provided to contract basis seasonal workers like sugarcane cutters and bullock carters.
28. Temporary or mobile crèches at the working places for the breast- fed babies and infants of working mothers in cane harvesting, bailing bagasse and other works should be provided by each factory.
29. Ration cards for seasonal migrant workers families should be issued to obtain food grains, sugar, and sweet oil, kerosene from ration shops or fair price shops regularly.
30. Mobile labour camp and sugar factory site seasonal schools for children of seasonal workers families should be organized in each sugar factory.
31. The working of seasonal schools, vacation and hours of schools, holidays, curriculum programmes of seasonal schools etc, should make to harmonize with the environmental of labour camp, seasonal needs, age group of children, and crushing season of the sugar factory.
32. Incentives like uniforms, text books, slates, mid-day meals, milk etc .free of cost should be provided them in the seasonal schools of the sugar factories.
33. The vacation pattern of seasonal school may be made flexile fixing the minimum number of working days. Games and extra –curricular activities may be organized to infuse, sustained interest among children in school schools.
34. Health services for seasonal migrant workers should be provided through mobile units.

35. The effective steps should be taken for periodic medical examination of contract basis seasonal workers so that timely diagnosis and treatment of occupational diseases will be possible.
36. Mobile unit of health services should be visited to labour camps in a specific days in a week for personal contacts and advise to the mothers about the health of the women during the anti-natal period and post natal period.
37. Medical facilities (both for pre natal and post natal treatment inclusive of free supply of medicines) and maternity benefit should be provided them.
38. Veterinary doctors with adequate veterinary centre staff should be appointed in each sugar factory with a view to providing veterinary facilities to cattle of seasonal migrant workers during crushing season.
39. Contract basis seasonal migrant workers in cane harvesting and in the premises of the sugar factory should be entitled to use the welfare facilities which are meant for direct workers under the existing legislations provident fund, bonus, health insurance.
40. The contract labour Regulations and Abolition Act should be drastically amended as it has failed to protect contract labour in relations to working hours, wages, social security, protective legislations, such as the factory Act, The Minimum Wages Act, Equal Remunerative Act and other Acts should be effectively implemented.
41. Contract basis seasonal workers should be encouraged to join their respective sugar factory unions for the purposes of collective bargaining. A formal grievance procedure should be introduced in respect of contract basis seasonal migrant workers in the sugar factories.
42. It is necessary to form a board for sugarcane cutting and transporting seasonal workers in the sugar industry as per provisions of the social security Act 2008 in India.
43. The government of Maharashtra should be implemented the suggestions of the Rupwate Committee, which suggested forming the Welfare Board of sugarcane harvest and transporting workers in Maharashtra like The Maharashtra Mathadi Hamal and other Manual Workers (Regulation and Employment and Welfare) Act 1969.

In short, all contract based seasonal migrant workers should be provided the following facilities.

a. Conveyance allowance from native places to sugar factories and return to native places.
b. Bonus should be given to workers.
c. Medical facilities should be extended to these workers.
d. Every sugar factory should provide gloves, woolen clothes, blankets to the workers.
e. Basic facilities should be provided for their staying place like electricity, drinking water, sanitation, seasonal schools for their children ration cards, ration shops etc.
f. Steps should be taken to improve the saving habits of contract based seasonal workers.
g. Schools should set up for the education of children of seasonal migrant workers in premises of sugar factories.
h. Insurance for bullock pair at least fifty thousand rupees for sugarcane transporting workers and insurance for two lakh rupees for seasonal cane harvesting workers though sugar factory and government.

Photo: 1 **A Scene of Smoke Chimney of Sugar Factory**



Photo: 2 **Sugar cane loaded trucks in premises of the Sugar Factory**



Photo: 3 **Nature of Hovels of Migrant Labour**



Photo: 4 **Migrant workers' cattle at Labour camp**



Photo: 5 Migrant bullock carters at labour camp

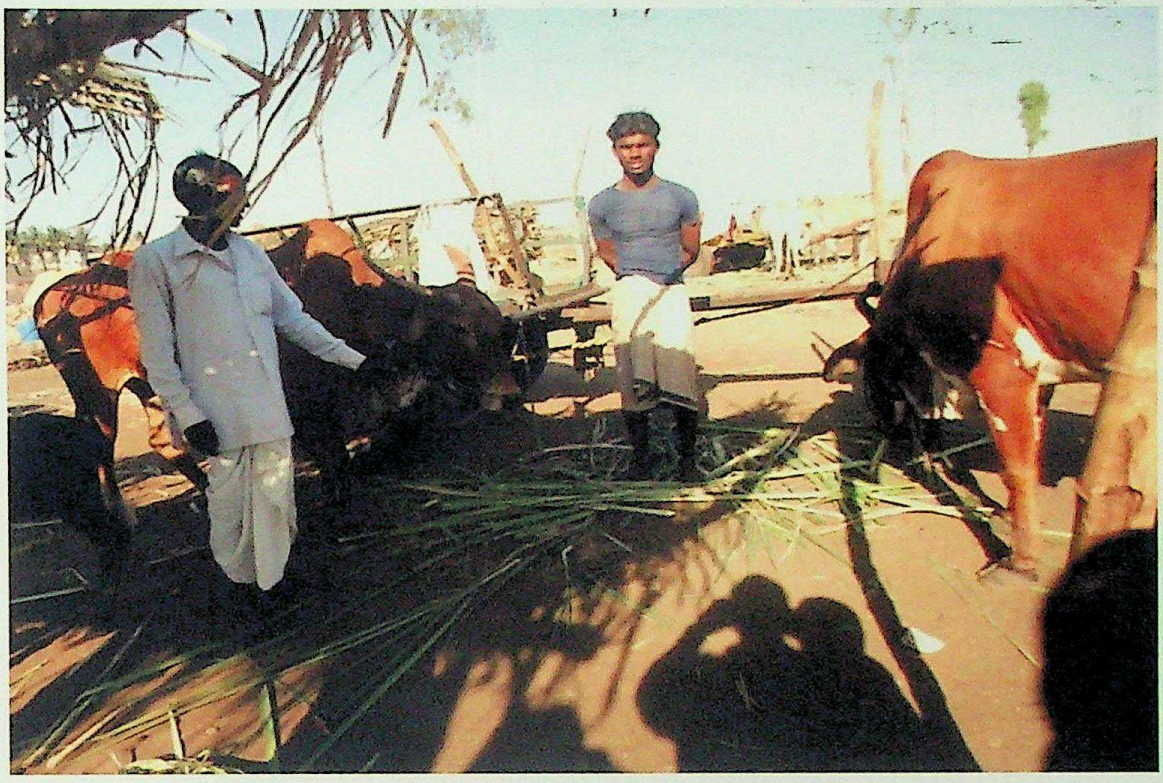


Photo: 6 Life of migrant workers in Hovels



Photo: 7 **Migrant worker's Family in front of Hovel**



Photo: 8 Migrant workers with sugarcane-sickle (Koyta) in sugarcane field



Photo: 9 Migrant workers carrying a bundle of sugarcane



Photo: 10 Migrant workers carrying bundles of sugarcane from long distance



Photo 11: Bullock carter with Sugarcane-sickle



Photo: 12 loading process of sugarcane in the Bullock cart



Photo: 13 Woman worker cutting sugarcane



Photo:14 Migrant workers in sugarcane field



Photo: 15 **Child - helper in sugarcane Field**



Photo: 16 **Migrant workers with child in sugarcane field**



Photo: 17 **loading process of sugarcane in Tractor –Trolley at night**



Photo: 18 **Migrant workers' dwelling place at glance**



Photo: 19 A scene of migrant workers' camp

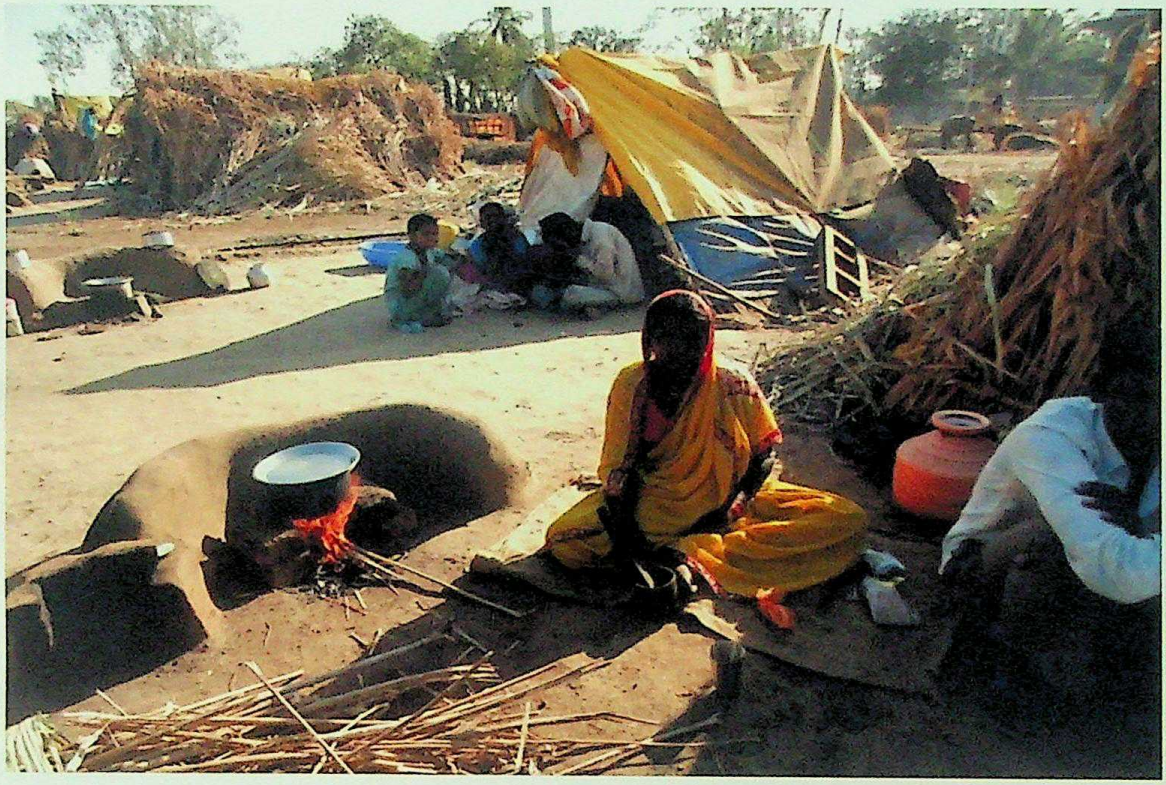


Photo: 20 Migrant worker's Family near fireplace at labour camp

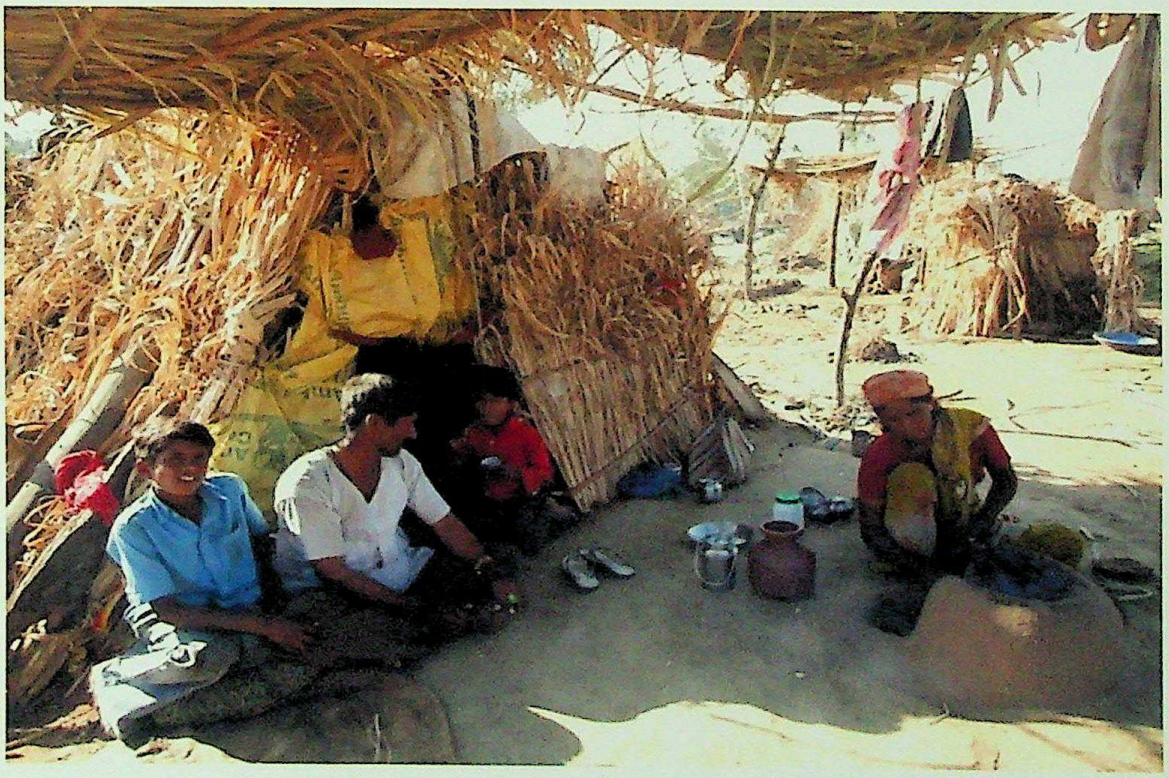


Photo: 21 **Non-schooling children of migrant workers'**



Photo: 22 **Migrant worker's family with non -schooling girls**



Photo: 23 Migrant workers' children at labour camp

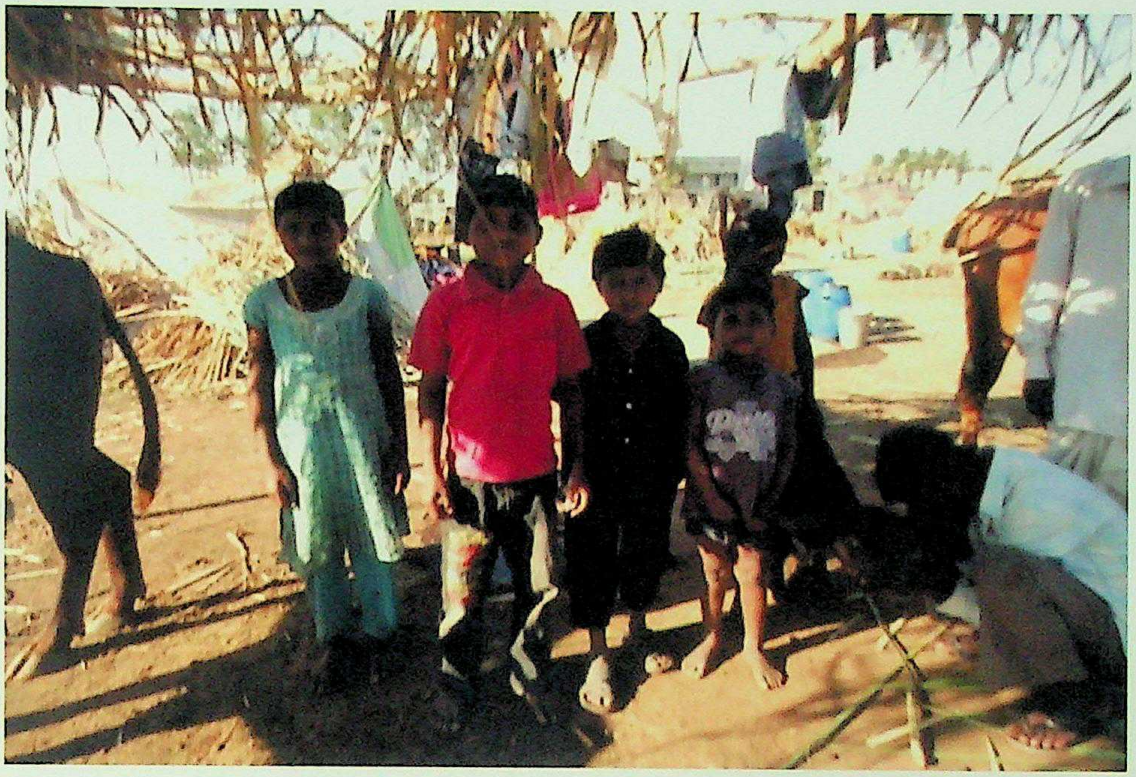


Photo: 24 Elder brother serving food to child at labour camp



Photo: 25 Belongings of Migrant worker's family



Photo: 26 Utensils and storage of Migrant worker's family

