AGRICULTURAL LABOUR IN FOUR INDIAN VILLAGES*

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The book is a collection of research papers on agricultural labour in one village in Rajasthan and three villages in different parts of Gujarat. The contributions have been ably reinforced by an analysis by Dr. V. S. Vyas, who is also the Editor of the publication. The study attempts a number of co-relationships and thus constitutes an advance over other literature on agricultural labour which has hitherto mainly attempted factual accounts of the problem. The analytical content provided to the study is useful to understand the facts and problems and has policy implications on the issue of wage fixation which has been engaging the minds of most of the state governments. Studies of this nature, therefore, should be more useful to help reach certain vital conclusions on the subject.

The four villages have been purposively selected for village surveys. The analysis of rural labour emerges from the secondary data as by-product of the main study. The villages are from different tracts. They would presumably reflect the agrarian characteristics of the areas to which they belong. It is difficult to say how far the information they yield would carry a wider significance and represent the regions or the parts to which they belong. Purposive selection carries limitations about the representative character and to that extent in the generalization of the results. They are case studies and should be regarded as valuable within this framework.

* V. S. Vyas (Ed.), Agricultural Labour in Four Indian Villages, Vallabh vidyanagar, Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth, 119 pp. Rs. 5/.
The book attempts to examine problems of agricultural labour in the context of the agricultural conditions that obtain in the villages. The demand and supply of labour, the trends in the size of the labour force, levels of wages and conditions of employment are all sought to be examined in relation to the different facets of agriculture and economic life in these villages such as crops, size of holdings, nature of and practice in agriculture, levels of incomes of the cultivators and the pattern of consumption and family expenses of both the cultivators and the labourers. Interesting results emerge from these analyses. For instance, an attempt has been made to relate the demand and supply of agricultural labour to subsistence agriculture or commercial farming. Similarly, the size of holding in some cases, the nature of crops in others and the extent of self-cultivation and labour as subsidiary to farming in a third set of circumstances are related to the size of work force, wages and work. On the basis of these the demand and supply conditions of rural labour are worked out. Thus, it is pointed out that where incomes of the farmers are high, the wages of agricultural labour also tend to be more favourable. Bigger holdings again ensure fuller labour utilization. In subsistence agriculture, further, the attempted co-relations display erratic trends, and shows low labour absorption. It would be interesting to know whether extension of irrigation changes the subsistence character of agriculture and carries in turn an impact on labour conditions. Then, backward and extensive cultivation would connote low labour demand, though holdings may be large. Demand for labour, in addition, is boosted by higher farm inputs, though larger employment does not go with better wages. These are only a few co-relationships drawn for illustration from the analysis in the book. Most of these co-relationships lead to the conclusions which can be accepted with a little reserve. Actually the results of some co-relationships cancel those under others. Ultimately, the reader is not able to obtain a clear picture of some of the cause and effect phenomena between farming conditions and agricultural labour.

Similarly, it is argued that the demand for labour would rise on account of increase in various farm inputs which make for the intensive agriculture. The period of employment and the number employed will, therefore, mount. One, however, is not on firm ground
when one assumes that with more education among farmers the demand for labour would increase because the female labour particularly in the farmers’ families would not work, out of a feeling that agricultural labour is a lowly occupation. The question is what type of education would lead to this development. And would that revolutionize the social fabric and the place of family labour in agriculture? We should also equate this possibility with the shortage of labour that arises due to migration and the non-farm alternative occupations that tempt them to switch over. If extension of intensive cultivation is the main plank of our agricultural development for a long time, with the given built-in agrarian structure, and the functioning of the ladder the sustaining problem would be the demand rather than the supply of farm labour. Migration and rural occupational diversification for a long time would also constitute a few of the important solutions to the problems of agricultural labour.

The analysis would have been clearer to the reader if some of the basic facts were borne in mind. There are certain social classes from which the supervisory farmers are drawn. Here the employer–employee relations would persist in spite of any of the above co-relation- ships. Similarly, the practice of serf labour is sustained, among others, by the social hierarchy of the agricultural classes and by the prevalence of floating large tribal and backward population. Big holdings would create large demand for outside labour. But extensive farming of inferior crops would not offer enough scope for employment of outside labour. The truth, however, is that both these factors might jointly prevail in the same situation so that though holdings are large but because farming is extensive and of inferior crops, demand for labour is not augmented. Therefore, before we expect crops or size of holdings or any other criteria to explain the nature and extent of employer-employee relations in agriculture it is necessary to be clear about our concepts of subsistence agriculture, extensive farming, commercialized or monetized cultivation, intensive or irrigated cultivation of essentially subsistence character, and proletarianization. If some of these concepts are clear and the context in which they are employed properly spelt out our analysis might become more meaningful and we would derive conclusions which would be consistent and operationally useful.
Similarly, the input-output analysis, farm programming and budgeting would not probably yield results to help wage fixation under our conditions. Regulatory approach coupled with a strong social purpose might have to be our interim policy for sometime to come. It is difficult to say how far the analysis of the book would or would not provide guide lines to such a workable frame.

The reviewer is not aware of local agricultural conditions in Rajasthan, but is fairly acquainted with North Gujarat and Central Gujarat and intimately associated with South Gujarat. With this background it may be ventured that the concepts employed and co-relations worked out from the prevalent conditions in most of the villages might stand a second look. The features of the Hali system given in the book bring out at best its transitional nature. The social class structure and the background of labour movement of Afast does not suggest conditions for the pure Hali system to stick. The Halis would exist in any agricultural situation if only there are the supervisory agricultural classes on the one hand and a large backward and tribal population on the other. The strength of the Halis in the same manner sometimes is not related to their demand in agriculture but may be associated with social status it is supposed to impart to the employer-cultivator. The system will decay because it is socially out mode and burdensome to the occupation. But the present trends of scarcity, high prices and distress living of the large poor masses in the rural areas seem not only to perpetuate but strengthen it. It is a paradox that the unwanted and undesirable system persists despite the unwillingness of the parties to it by the sheer obstinacy of the socio-economic forces.

These are a few remarks offered in the manner of loud thinking on the subject along with the authors and the editor. They should not take away from the contribution of the publication to the literature on the subject. The book is valuable not only because it carries useful data and valuable analysis but also because it throws up issues which would provide fresh lines of research and study of the question of rural proletariat.
આ પુસ્તક સુધારાના સાથે અને રશયાના મેટે બુધ થયેલ બીજા યુનાની ગીત-ગીત પશ્ચિમ વિશ્વમાં પૂર્વવિકરણ આપ્યા હતા તે થી પુસ્તક અને ગીત-ગીત વિવિધ અંગી સાથે સંબંધિત હતી. તે તેની પ્રથમ પ્રથમ પ્રાર્થના સમયમાં પણ પ્રમાણ આપે હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની વિવિધ પ્રકૃતિની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. તે પુસ્તક માટે પ્રારંભિત હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી. આજે ગીત-ગીતની પ્રારંભિત વિવિધતા થઈ હતી.
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ભાષા માટે, ઉપયોગ અંગ-અંગ ઉપયોગ કરાયાય સમાન (Input-output analysis) અધયાયને farm programming નેંની પક્કત હલાલ કાપી માણવી સામાન્ય હેઠળી વાવરીની અવરથી પક્કત હલાલ હેલાકે સમય માટે કબ્બરી છ. આહે આ હલાલ કબ્બર અંગને હલાલ કબ્બરી છે તે કહ્યું મુદ્દા છે.

આધીને કરતાં રાજસ્થાનની તા નહી પરિણામ અહિરતની ભોજન-પરિસ્થિતિના સારી જેને પ્રાણ છ. અને આ પ્રાણ આંદોલન અને સામાગ્રિક પરિસ્થિતિમાં માંગીના વ્યુખા અને સંચાલન પુનઃબિસ્થાન કામ કરી છ. આ પુષ્કળની આધીની "ખાલી" પક્કતન કાપીની તેની પહેલાતી પરિસ્થિતિની સારી. પ્રાણ આશે છ. સામાન્ય રીતે સમય હાસ અને આસપાસ અંગને આ પક્કત હેઠળ થઈએ. પરિણામની રાજ્યના સામાન્ય અને આધીની પરિસ્થિતિ અનુસાર નાંખી આ અનુભવીની પરિસ્થિતિ આશુ કહેવી શકાય છે.

હુંના આ પુષ્કળ અંગને દેખવી શકાય, આ વિચાર સાહિત્યમાં તે હમેરી પ્રથા આધારે. આ પુષ્કળ આવીને તેમાં આપેલ અંગના તથા અંગ વિસ્તારની પક્કતની પરિસ્થિતિની આધીની. પ્રાણ આશે અને નહી, પરિણામના સંચાલન અને અભાષક પર કહેવા અહિરત માટે પણ છે.