

Impact of Covid-19 on Socio-Economic Conditions of Coffee Labourers in Kodagu District of Karnataka

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Abstract: *The coffee place that is known as Kodagu, a large share of the labourers at these homes are predominantly from north Karnataka and neighbouring areas, including Periyapatna and Hunsur taluks in Mysuru region. Following the Novel Coronavirus and inconvenience of lockdown in the nation and take off of the transient work power to the places where they grew up, the collect of pepper and post-gather procedure of coffee have endured a shot in Kodagu. The district from last two years badly effected by heavy rainfall and which adversely affected coffee and other plantation crops. But in this year before monsoon outbreak of COVID 19 and lockdown made some migrant workers to return their domicile place. Most of the migrant and permanent workers are staying in line houses within the estate so didn't face any problem of jobless. Those workers are staying within the plantation has not faced any problem but they are not supposed to move out from the plantation because of fear of spreading COVID 19.*

However, these people depend on plantation work for their livelihood. This lock down has affected their economic life to some extent. In this context, the study is carried out to know the impact of COVID 19 on socio-economic life of the coffee workers. In this situation researcher able to collect data only from 50 respondents and study area is restricted to Madikeri taluk of Kodagu district.

Key Words: *Coffee, Plantation, socio-economic, Covid 19, labourers.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The plantation is the main work of Kodagu people. Coffee is developed on more than 1.05 lakh hectares in Kodagu. Migrant labourers in Kodagu have emerged as the mainstay of the workforce in coffee plantation across the district. March to May is the time for picking ripe coffee bean, but because of COVID 19 many migrant workers moved to their home town some planters faced problem of shortage of labourers as they do not get sufficient number of workers from domain region (The Hindu dated April 1, 2020). This unexpected situation affected socio-economic life of the daily earners. With Kodagu region confronting serious common catastrophe during the most recent two years presently included with the COVID-19 flare-up and the ensuing lockdown, numerous specialists have come back to their home locale, notwithstanding a rare sorts of people who have been working in the ranches for a long time and dwell in the bequests itself. Transient specialists leave Between 90 and 95 percent of coffee has been reaped after the lockdown controls over the region, and the collect of pepper, a between crop in coffee ranches, was to start. Pepper is generally reaped among March and May, and domains in Kodagu to a great extent rely upon vagrant labourers for the job. Planters are facing a shortage of 0-60% of migrant workers as a large number of them have returned to their native districts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Mahalakshmi, (2012), in her examine on the Socio-monetary status of girls employees in tea Plantation industries found out that no. of girls people are going through many hassle in the tea Plantation. Because girls employees are engaged greater than the male people. The look at is essentially attention on their dwelling condition, wages earning and socio-safety gain. The essential thing for his or her development and the hassle faced through the employees are also recognized.

A comparative look at of the informal situations of the plantation labourers of India labourer of India and Sri Lanka, through Neelam Choudhary and Deeksha Tayal. The observe focuses on the section of plantation labourers, who are directly hired by way of the agency are settlement employees. The have a look at additionally advice the effectiveness of any formalization method could require collective involvement and social talk among all the key players in the plantation sector.

Reenomol Joseph in her dissertation titled "A case observe on social-economic conditions of Tea plantation employees at Ellaparath Panchayath" in 2018 highlights that people are paid very less wages and their dwelling conditions can enhance whilst government and associations help them in schooling and better working conditions.

Shapan Chandra Majumder Sanjay Chandra Roy (2011), Socio-monetary conditions of Tea Plantation employees in Bangladesh: A Case study on Sreemongal, it's been cited that most of the international locations tea have grown to be a massive product regarding export incomes and task. From this examine, it's been based that Bangladesh produces about fifty five-60 million kg of tea annually and with this, it stands in the 10th position out of 30 tea-producing countries within the universe. The have a look at finds that the operating scenario for pickers is habitually deprived, with the low activity, low wages, and earnings security, discrimination alongside ethnic and gender strains, lack of protective gear, and insufficient primary facilities together with housing and now and again even ingesting water and meals. The writer attempted to recognize the modern-day socio-economic issues confronting the tea industry body of workers of Bangladesh and therefore affords recommendations to resolve the troubles.

Based on the above literature review, the researcher tried to examine the socio economic conditions of the workers during Covid 19 situation.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The study is carried out to assess the impact of COVID -19 on socio-economic condition of coffee workers residing in Madikeri Taluk of Kodagu district.

4. METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on primary and secondary data. In order to meet the study objectives, data collected randomly from coffee labourers in estates of Madikeri taluk of Kodagu district. Primary data is collected from 50 respondents and data is collected through phone calls as unable to meet them personally. Journal and news report used as secondary data for the study. The data obtained from primary and secondary sources will be presented in tables.

5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The field data collection for the study is constrained to plantation workers engaged in coffee work situated at Madikeri region. The worker who stays within the estates is considered for the study.

6. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The socio economic profile of the respondents is listed in the table below. Various parameters like respondent's age, educational qualification, marital status and various indicators which give an overview of their conditions have been analysed.

Table 1: Socio-Economic profile of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Experience in current plantation	
Male	12	0 – 5 years	12
Female	38	6 – 10 years	34
Type of migration		11- 15 years	02
Long term	38	Above 16 years	02
Short term	04	Place of Stay	
Seasonal	08	Within the Plantation	50
Age		Outside the Plantation	---
Below 25 Years	03	Income(per day)	
25 – 35 years	14	Below Rs.300	38
36 – 45 years	09	Rs.300 – Rs. 500	12
46 – 60 years	22	Rs.500 – Rs.700	---
Above 60 years	02	Category	
Marital Status		SC	18
Married	46	ST	29
Unmarried	04	Minorities	---
Educational Qualification		Others	03
Illiterate	25	Subsidiary income	
Primary	18	Cattle	23
Middle school	07	Poultry	16
Savings Habit		Agriculture	04
Yes	11	Other	--
No	39	Nil	07

(Source: Primary data)

The above table shows that 12 male and 38 female workers were interviewed through phone to collect the data. Majority of workers working in the estate for long period and male workers are paid wages between 300 to 500 rupees per day, female are paid below ₹ 300 per day. Out of 50 respondents 18 are belongs to SC, 29 are ST and 3 respondents belong to some other caste. The most of the workers engage themselves in other work to generate subsidiary income after plantation work.

Table 2: Association between lockdown impact and working conditions of workers stays in estate

Sl. No	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1.	I had problem of job loss during lockdown	--	--	18	32
2.	I have employed for less wages during lockdown	--	--	--	50
3.	I have to work inside the estate and not supposed to move out during this lockdown	50	--	--	--
4.	Outside workers are not allowed to the estate during COVID 19 situation	42	08	--	--
5.	Migrant workers are not sent to their home town by the planters as they have contract of some years to serve.	39	11	--	--
6.	The socio-economic life is not affected by lockdown	12	13	17	08
7.	The situation is normal same like before lockdown	--	--	29	21

SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree D=Disagree SD=strongly disagree

Chart 1: Association between lockdown impact and working conditions of workers stays in estate



The 50% of the respondents agreed that they have not faced any working and earning problem as they stay inside the estates. But these workers are not allowed to move outside during lockdown owing to fear of spreading COVID 19 as Kodagu reported one case of positive in the month of March. The remaining 25 respondents given opinion that, their socio economic life has affected by lockdown as they don't get any subsidiary income.

7. FINDINGS:

The major findings of the study are:

- The workers are less educated in this region. But these are trying to save money for their children education.
- The study noticed that as respondents are staying in line house and they need not to travel anywhere for the work, so didn't face any problem of earnings to lead the life in that tough situation.
- The 25 respondents say that their socio-economic conditions got affected because they are not able to generate any subsidiary income from poultry, agriculture and other.

8. CONCLUSION:

The nationwide lockdown from 25th March, 2020 has harshly affected lives and livelihoods across rural India. Agriculture and similar sectors employ more than half of the labour force in the country. Covid -19 is the time for harvest of plantation crops like pepper, coffee, banana. Following Covid-19 pandemic, planters has suffered losses but 50% of workers are allowed work in estates with all Covid-19 safety protocols. According to the study, socio-economic life of

the workers affected by this lockdown to some extent even though, they stay inside the estate. The workers who stay outside are not able to travel for work and faced lots of problems during this time and some migrant workers left to home town for their safety.

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