CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1. THE BACKGROUND

Economic development largely depends on capital accumulation unlimited supply of skilled labour. Unlimited labour supply exists in those countries where population is so large relatively to capital and natural resources, that there are large sectors of the economy where marginal productivity of labour is negligible, zero or negative (Lewis 1954; Nurks 1958; Fei and Renis 1964). In India a large proportion of the population resides in rural areas and depends mainly on agriculture. A sizeable proportion of the rural society belongs to the rural labour households and majority among them are agricultural labour households. Agricultural labour accounts for one third of the rural work-force. Hence, the agricultural labour households being the subset of rural labour households.

Rural population particularly the agricultural labourers who are mostly landless, marginal and small farmers form a significant section of the rural society. Majority of them belong to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes. After 66 years of independence the socio-economic status of these workers is still bad. Their income has always been meager, resulting in poor living and heavy indebtedness, although they work from dawn to dusk. Their morning holds no promise for the evening and they can never sleep without tensions as they have no stocks left.
There are many reasons for the persistence of these problems, particularly indebtedness among the agricultural labour households in India. As agricultural activities heavily depend upon nature i.e., rainfall, soil etc., these ultimately affect the repaying capacity of the farm labourers. Most of the farm labourers still relay on non-institutional sources. Thus, they are often exploited through high rate of interest and conditions of the loan (Ramachandran and Swaminathan, et al, 2002). Middleman prevents the farm labourers from getting remunerative prices for their produce and labour, majority of the farm labourers also take loans for unproductive things and do not help to generate income. As the surplus income generated through crop cultivation is not assured and is often inadequate. The farmers are unable to repay the loan in time and thus the outstanding debt goes on increasing (Narayanamoorthy and Kalamkar 2005).

Indebtedness has been recognized as one of the hard stumbling block in the way of rural prosperity. It is cancerous, self-perpetuating malignant and maleficent. It reduces agricultural production, clumsiness in the mind, aggravates inequalities in the distribution of social and economic opportunities. Farm labourers in the country are not happy. They are poor and the vicious circle of poverty does not allow to improve their economic condition (Mitra, Roy and Mishra 1986). Hence, once a labourer is caught in the vicious circle of bondage, it is impossible for him to come out of it, because the wages received by him would be less than the subsistence, it forces him to keep on borrowing for maintaining his family. Consequently the debt
of agricultural labourers passes from generation to generation and is never fully paid up (Srivastava 2006).

As per the NSSO estimates 52.32 per cent of agricultural labour households are indebted at the national level. The percentage of indebted households was observed to be higher than the national level in many states, like Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. The highest proportion was found in Kerala (80.76 per cent) and lowest in Assam (11.75 per cent). The total outstanding debt per household at all India level was reported to be Rs.680. The highest is Rs.1808 is in Rajasthan and lowest i.e., Rs.244 was reported from West Bengal (Dhingra 2002).

After the introduction of improved farming methods and mechanization, the level of income of middle and rich farmers increased, but at the same time due to fall in the demand for labour real wages got declined. A study revealed that the agricultural production rose by 6 per cent, but the agricultural wage got declined in all the states except Kerala where the labourers were to some extent organised.

The increasing in the size of population, decline of cottage and village industries, eviction of small farmers, uneconomic holdings and growth of capitalistic farming have led to growing indebtedness among agricultural labourers as the level of income of the agricultural labourers is very poor. Thus, they are seeking loan from non-institutional agencies continuously. There is growing indebtedness among the agricultural labourers (Dhar 2006).

An evil aspect of rural India's rural folk is the heavy
indebtedness that too agricultural indebtedness is more or less a universal one, which has reached dangerous situation in developing countries like India (Agrawal 2005). The old (proverb) dictum that workers in India are born in debt, live in debt and die in debt is still true particularly in farm sector, despite several remedial measures initiated by the Government of India (Darling 1924). In this connection the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's epoch making statement is worth quoting. She said "Nationalisation is an opportunity and a challenge to the banker to cost himself in a dynamic and innovating role. Rural banking in particular will require new techniques and methods of work. To mobilise rural savings you will have to work hard to develop new services which will suit our farmers and make them save more." Strange but true, even after the initiation of institutional financing the agricultural labourers suffered a lot. The magnitude of the problem has been showing an upward trend in Agricultural Labour Enquiries and Rural Labour Enquiries.

The target of indebtedness is the agricultural labourers i.e., poorest of the poor. The loans are not creating income but are used for household requirements. It is in gradual process, so it becomes difficult to repay them and the amount goes on mounting up from generation to generation. Like purposes of the loan, the sources of the loan are also traditional. Both these maladies continue to persist despite several measures initiated by the government during the post independence period to ameliorate the conditions of the weaker sections (Srivastava 1993).
Karnataka is basically an agrarian economy where a majority of the population depends on the primary sector as a source of employment and income. Number of agricultural labourers increased from 56.53 lakh in 1991 to 62.09 lakh in 2001. Whereas the proportion of Agricultural Labourers was decreased to 15.19 lakh in 2011. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total labourers decreased from 26.40 per cent in 2001 to 25.67 per cent in 2011. The percentage of cultivators declined from 29.48 per cent to 23.61 per cent during the same period. On the whole, the traditional occupations are having negligible growth as compared to other sectors in Karnataka (GoI 2011).

As per 2011, census, the number of agricultural labourers has increased in the State by 14.92 per cent during 2001-11, their proportion to total workers has marginally declined from 26.46 in 2001 to 25.67 per cent in 2011. The proportion of Male Agricultural Labourers has increased by a nominal 0.77 percentage points, their female counterparts have registered decline of -3.12 per cent. Among the districts, the proportion of Agricultural Labourers varies from 2.31 per cent in Bangalore district to 44.49 per cent in Chamrajanagar district. In 19 out of 30 districts, the proportion of agricultural labourers is higher than the State average of 25.67 per cent with 16 districts reporting more than 30 per cent. In 3 out of the remaining 11 districts, where the proportion is below the State average, the proportion of agricultural labourers is less than 6 per cent.

Similarly, according to 2011 census, proportion of agricultural
labourers was found to be higher in north Karnataka (57.75 per cent) as compared to south Karnataka (42.25 per cent). Among divisions the highest percentage of agricultural labourers is in Belgaum division (29.90 per cent) and proportion of agricultural labour is as high as 44.49 per cent in Chamrajnagar district, followed by Yadgeri district (42.82 per cent), Haveri district (42.63 per cent) and Raichur district (42.45 per cent) (GoK 2011). However, Raichur district is highly backward district relating to growth rate of outstanding credit by State Co-operative Banks.

Farm labourers barrow year after year but they are not in a position to repay the debt since long back either loans are larger or their agricultural output or amount of wage is not enough to pay off the debt.

Agricultural labourer are compounded by the fact that landless labourer, many small and marginal farmers also work partly on the farms of others to supplement their income. To what extent they should be considered as agricultural labourers is not easy to answer.

1.2. INDEBTEDNESS AMONG AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

The extent of indebtedness among the agricultural labour households was almost similar to that of the rural labour households. However, the incidence of indebtedness was marginally higher among the agricultural labour households (25.10 per cent) than among the rural labour households (25.00 per cent) during 1999-2000. The incidence of indebtedness among the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes and other backward classes of agricultural labour households were reported at
24.90 per cent, 22.00 per cent and 22.70 per cent respectively, while there was decline in the incidence of indebtedness at all India level from 35.50 per cent in 1993-94 to 25.10 per cent in 1999-2000. The States like Gujarat, Kerala, Punjab, J.K, Haveli, Daman and Diu and Laksha dweep recorded raising trend over the above reported period.

At all-India level, as compared to the previous survey (1999-2000), the incidence of indebtedness during 2004-05 increased sharply in respect of all classes of Rural Labour Households (RLHs). It increased from 25.00 per cent in 1999-2000 to 47.30 per cent in 2004-05. Similar trend was also observed in case of households pertaining to the weaker sections of the society. It increased from 25.30 per cent to 48.04 per cent in case of the SC households, from 22.60 per cent to 46.67 per cent in the case of OBC households and from 22.90 per cent to 39.39 per cent in case of ST households over the same period.

State wise data reveal that all the States/UTs, except Uttarakhand, D & N Haveli and Lakshadweep, have experienced the increasing trend in the incidence of indebtedness among all classes of RLHs. The indebtedness was however, highest in Daman & Diu (81.90 per cent) and lowest in Arunachal Pradesh (13.10 per cent). Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Sikkim, Tripura, A & N Island, D & N Haveli, Daman & Diu and Puducherry reported the incidence of indebtedness higher than the national average of 47.30 per cent.

Similarly, the overall trend among the Agricultural Labour
Households (ALHs) was almost similar to that of the RLHs, it was marginally higher among the ALHs (48.40 per cent) than that among the RLHs (47.30 per cent). The incidence of indebtedness among the SC, ST and OBC of ALHs was reported at 49.41 per cent, 41.20 per cent, and 47.25 per cent, respectively. While there was an increase in the incidence of indebtedness at all India level from 25.10 per cent in 1999-2000 to 48.40 per cent in 2004-05. The States of Goa, Uttarakhand and the UT of Daman & Diu showed a declining trend over this period.

As regards the SC households, the increase in indebtedness was recorded in all the State/UTs except Jharkhand, and Uttarakhand where marginal decline was noticed. Similarly, the ST households of all the State/UTs, except Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand, reported an increase in the percentage of the indebted households. The increasing trends was also seen in the OBC households of all the States/UTs except Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand (NSSO 2010).

The incidence of indebtedness was highest in Andhra Pradesh, where more than four-fifth of served farmers were in debt, followed by Tamilnadu with nearly three-forth of farm households reporting indebtedness. In Punjab, Kerala and Karnataka, the proportion was nearly two-thirds and in Maharashtra, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal more than half of the farmers surveyed were in debt (51,770 households surveyed).

Some of the states where the agrarian distress is reported
especially severe. Such as Andra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Kerala and Rajasthan are also those which have high levels of indebtedness.

The proportion of indebted households appeared to be around 48 and 52 per cent across cultivating households as well as those who received income from related activities such as animal husbandry, poultry and management of orchard crops (Shekar and Ghosh 2005).

According to Sainath (2005) there was continuous rise in indebtedness among the poor i.e., 82 per cent of the farm households in the country are in the line perennial debt. Its direct consequence was because of entrenched inequalities, millions were moving to towns and cities in pursuit of jobs that were simply there, eventually ending up as neither farmers nor workers.

Indebtedness is one of the major factors of farmer’s suicide and the agrarian crisis in the country. As many as 61.6 per cent of farmer households are indebted in Karnataka as against the national level average of 48.6 per cent; National scenario of agrarian indebtedness shows that highest ratio in Andhra Pradesh (82 per cent) followed by Tamilnadu (74.5 per cent), Punjab (65.4 per cent), Kerala (64.4 per cent) and Maharashtra (54.8 per cent).

1.3. DETERMINANTS OF INDEBTEDNESS

Socio-economic structure of the rural areas compels the farmers to borrow more and more there is nothing wrong in borrowing. One needs money to cope up his needs but his earnings from the farm are very low. A farmer has to face many problems in his day to day life.
Borrowing is very common phenomenon in the world but the fact is that our farmers are totally unable to return the amount of debt out of their meager income. Thus, indebtedness goes on multiplying year after year.

1.4. CAUSES OF INDEBTEDNESS

First, there has been decline in the growth rate of as well as productivity for almost all crops from mid-nineties. Further the value of out-put from agriculture has been declining from late nineties.

Second, Majority of the Indian population depends on agriculture (in 2004-05 nearly 64 per cent of the rural persons were from households, whose members major activity was agricultural labour). This also indicates that rural non-farm employment opportunities are limited.

Third, with the decline of large size of holdings and increasing marginal holdings (i.e., 63 per cent as per 2000-2001 agricultural census) along with poor returns from cultivation indicates that income of farm households is very low.

Fourth, Green revolution had a greater focus on rice and wheat under irrigated condition by passing crops and regions under rain fed or dry land conditions (which is three-fifth of the 141 million hectares of net sown area in the country during 2003-04). There has been a failure to capitalize on the vast network of institutes' to provide and regulate new technology (including the usage of bio-technology) and a virtual absence of extension service.

Fifth, the neglect of agriculture in plan resource allocation has
led to decline of public investment in irrigation and other related infrastructure.

**Sixth**, supply of credit from formal sources to the agricultural sector is inadequate leading to greater reliance on informal sources at higher interest burden (Mishra 1986).

**Seventh**, the attitude of litigation among the farmers of the country is another cause of financial embarrassment and consequent indebtedness. The cost which farmers incur on litigation is very high. (Lekhi and Singh 2008).

**Last but not the least**, extravagance of the rural agricultural labourer, has aggravated indebtedness. In recent years they do not bother about the lean years when they are having good harvests (Darling 1934).

**1.5. RESEARCH ISSUES**

A detailed review of literature is presented in chapter 2, wherein issues for research are identified. As is evident from the review of literature, many empirical studies (Ramamurthy et. al., 1972; Sharma et. al., 1981; Patil 1986; Raju 1989; Singh and Sharma 1990; Parthasarathy and Shameem 1998; Parvathi Menon 2003; Vidya Sagar and Chandra 2004; Deshpande and Nangesh Prabhu 2005; Mohanakumar and Sharma 2006; Radhakrishana 2002; Kareemulla 2008) have examined the various aspects of rural indebtedness among the farmers and identified causes to it. But most of the existing studies have not analysed the rural indebtedness among agricultural labour households by social groups such as SCs, STs and
OBCs at different regions by conducting the primary survey. An effort examining the nature, magnitude, purpose, causes, consequences and attitude of repayment of indebtedness among agricultural labour households by social groups at different regions is quite important to work out to a relevant policy framework focusing on SCs and STs in rural areas. To fill this gap the present study has been undertaken. Against this background the present study is designed with the following objectives.

1.6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to:

- Study the socio-economic characteristics of agricultural labourer households;
- Estimate the extent of indebtedness from institutional & non-institutional sources of credit among the agricultural labourers by social groups;
- Examine the causes and consequences of indebtedness of the agricultural labour households by social groups;
- Analyse the attitude of agricultural labourers towards the repayment of credit borrowed from institutional and non-institutional credit lending agencies in the study area; and
- Study the problems of indebted agricultural labour households by social groups;
- Suggest the remedial measures to minimise the extent and consequences of indebtedness among the agricultural labourers, especially in respect of SCs and STs in rural areas.

1.7. HYPOTHESES

- Extent of indebtedness among agricultural labour households is higher in dry areas compared to irrigated areas.
 Magnitude of indebtedness is higher in respect of households without cultivated land as compared to the households with cultivated land.

 The average amount of debt is higher in the case of SCs/STs as compared to other households.

 Indebtedness leads to the marginal and small farmers to the landlessness.

**1.8. DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY**

**1.8.1. Nature and Source of the Data**

The study is mainly based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data were collected from the published and unpublished documents of the Directorate of Economic and statistics, Government of India and Karnataka reports of the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), District Statistical Office of Davangere and Raichur, Thahsildar office of Harihar, Jigalur, Sindhanur and Devadurga, and village Panchyat office of selected sample villages Viz. Sarathi, Govinahal, Devikere, Shiddayyankote, Madasirvara, Yaddaladoddi, Chinchodi and Palakanmaradi, University libraries (Karnataka University, University of Agriculture Dharwad, University of Agriculture Bangalore) libraries of different institutions (CMDR, PRC and ISEC) engaged in research activities, various Economic Journals, Books, Periodicals, Magazines, Newspapers and Statistical reports to throw more light on the subject under the study.

The primary data were collected by canvassing the structured interview schedules among the sample agricultural labourer households having rural indebtedness in two districts of Karnataka namely, Davangere and Raichur. A structured interview schedule was
canvassed to elicit the information relating to the identification details such as name of the head of the household, caste religion, households economic status and basic details such as housing condition, landholdings, livelihood strategies and income and household asset position, details of wage employment, awareness and access to employment, awareness and access to social security measures, both promotional and protection, details of institutional and non institutional loans, household savings, details about repayment of barrowed loan and also the problems faced by the rural indebtedness households were elicited from the sample households in the sample villages.

### 1.8.2. Study Area

The present study was carried out in two districts of Karnataka namely, Raichur and Davangere. While Raichur district represents the most backward region, Davanagere represents developed region. Raichur district has highest percentage of farm labourers, SCs/STs population and indebtedness in north Karnataka region, while Davangere district has neither high nor low, but medium percentage of farm labourers, SCs/STs population and indebtedness in south Karnataka region. From each district two taluks viz., Sindhanur and Devadurga from Raichur and Harihar and Jigalur from Davanagere were chosen. These taluks have relatively higher proportion of agricultural labourers. Further from each taluk two villages with different levels of agricultural prosperity and availability of infrastructures were selected, as presented in Table 1.1
### Table 1.1
Name of the Sample Villages in Karnataka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the District</th>
<th>Name of the Taluk</th>
<th>Name of the village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raichur</td>
<td>Davadurga</td>
<td>Palakanamardi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinchodi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sindhanur</td>
<td>Yaddaladoddi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davangere</td>
<td>Jigalur</td>
<td>Shiddayanakote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Devikere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harihar</td>
<td>Govinahal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarathi</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Data

### 1.8.3. Sampling Design and Size

Multi-stage stratified random sampling technique is used viz., state as the first stage, district as the second stage, taluks as the third stage, the villages as the fourth stage and the agricultural laborer households as the final or ultimate stage was adopted for collection of the data among agricultural labourers. The stage wise selection procedure is described below.

#### 1.8.3.1. Selection of State

Karnataka state is selected for the purpose of the present study (Map 1). Karnataka state has been classified into two regions viz. North Karnataka and South Karnataka; these two regions have different types of soil, topography, elevation and climate, rainfall, cropping and employment pattern.
1.8.3.2. Selection of Districts

The next stage of selection is districts; the 30 districts in the state are at different levels of development. Out of total 30 districts in the state two districts viz. Raichur from backward region and Davanagere from advanced region were chosen on the basis of the proportion of agricultural laborers, incidence of rural indebtedness, proportion of outstanding debt, agricultural prosperity, rate of literacy, the incidence of unemployment, poverty and SCs/STs population, density and the like (Map 2).
1.8.3.3. Selection of Taluks

The third stage of selection was the taluks. Raichur district consists of five taluks viz., Devdurga, Lingasagur, Manavi, Raichur and sindhanur and Davanagere district consists of six taluks viz., Harihar, Harapanahalli, Jagalur, Davanagere, Honnali and channagiri, which are at different levels of development. From each district two taluks, one advanced (Sindhanur) and one backward
(Devdurga) from Raichur district (Map 3) and one advanced (Harihar) and one backward (Jagalur) from Davanagere district (Map 4) were selected on the basis of selected economic indicators.

**Map 3**
**Map Showing the Location of Sindhanur and Devadurga Taluks in Raichur District**

Source: www.mapsofindia.com

**Map 4**
**Map Showing the Location of Harihar and Jagalur Taluks in Davanagere District**

Source: www.mapsofindia.com
1.8.3.4. Selection of Villages

For the selection of sample villages, the fourth stage unit was applied i.e., all the villages were listed out and finally 8 villages from 4 selected taluks were selected using random sampling procedures on the basis of socio-economic indicators. One advanced village and one backward village from each taluka viz. Madasiravar (advanced) and Yaddaladoddi (backward) from Sindhanur (Map 5) and Chinchodi (advanced) and Palakanamaradi (backward) from Devadurga (Map 6) and Sarathi(advanced) and Govinahal (backward) from Harihar (Map 7); and Devikere (advanced) and Shiddayyanakote (backward) from Jagalur (Map 8) were chosen. While selecting the advanced and backward villages sufficient attention was taken by considering the factors like proximity to the taluk head quarters or urban centers, availability of banking institutions, post offices, health centers, educational institutions, irrigation canals, cloth shops, transportation and communication facilities etc.

**Map 5**
Map Showing the Location of Sample Villages in Sindhanur Taluk.

**Map 6**
Map Showing the Location of Sample Villages in Devadurg Taluk.

Source: www.mapsofindia.com
1.8.3.5. Selection of Sample Households

In the last stage the households were selected from the sample villages. For the selection of the sample households a list of households with basic details was prepared in each of the sample village by village census. Further the sample households belonging mainly to SCs, STs, OBCs and Others who had rural indebtedness were randomly selected in each village of the study area. From each village 40 households, of which 8 from SCs, 4 from STs, 24 from OBCs and 4 from Others were selected with a view to ensure more representation from the others caste community as the significant proportion is found to be higher and persistent. The total sample size of the study was 320 households consisting of 40 households each from 8 villages.
1.9. TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

Social sciences have developed various methods for inquiry among which interview and questionnaire methods are important. From the economic perspective the interview method is considered as a very useful instrument to collect primary data. In the present study the essential supporting primary sources information were also collected through the interview method.

The researcher personally visited to the sample villages and collected the information with the help of the interview schedule prepared by him. The respondents were approached through the village level worker and village accountant. After establishing rapport with them, the investigator filled in the interview schedule. However, the observation method was also used. The researcher also keenly observed the assets and the type of life led by the respondents as it was to support his analysis of the data. This procedure was largely effective and useful.

1.10. TOOLS OF DATA ANALYSIS

After scrutiny, the collected data were processed to fulfill the objectives laid down for the study. The processing of data was done with help of a computer, a calculator and also manual simple statistical techniques such as averages, percentages ratios and mean variations were used. Graphs, diagrams and flow charts are taken recourse in presenting facts and figures on the study area.

1.11. PERIOD OF THE STUDY

Household survey was conducted in the month of July and
August 2011 information was elicited for the agricultural year (June) 2010 - (May) 2011. Similarly, the secondary data for the sample villages, relating to cropping pattern, land use pattern, agricultural labourer households, number and area operated by different size of landholdings, population by social groups, rate of literacy, etc., also relate to the same year.

1.12. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Generally, the studies on rural indebtedness have concentrated on the macro level only. But this is a unique and comprehensive study of its first kind. It enlists the problems faced by the agricultural labourer, who are in the deep indebtedness. The present study makes useful contribution to the existing body of literature in terms of analyzing the socio-economic condition of agricultural labourers, extent of rural indebtedness, mode and morality of repayment, consequences of debt, expenditure pattern, migration, wage rate, child and bonded labour due to indebtedness and the kind of social security measures needed to protect the agricultural labour. Further, the study highlights the policy inferences to solve their problems and economic conditions. Empirical data on these aspects would be of immense help to concerned extension agencies, research scholars and policy makers to identify their efforts to improve the socio economic well being of the weaker sections of the society in general and agricultural labourers in particular. Hence, this kind of study is quite suitable from the rural development point of view.
1.13. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is mainly based on personal interview of agricultural labourers only in two selected districts of Karnataka. Data provided by the respondent may be biased due to improper maintenance of records. As there are some interior villages which are inaccessible during rainy season, therefore some of the agricultural labourers cannot be contacted during the operation in corn field. The employers are unwilling to confess the truth about the payment of wages to their labourers and it is a micro level study. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized. Despite these limitations, all attempts have been made to make the study an appropriate one so as to generalize the findings of the study of agricultural labourer community as a whole.

1.14. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 presents the introduction, which consists of the background, an insight of agricultural labourers, indebtedness among agricultural labour households and it also presents the research methodology; Chapter 2 presents the brief review of literature; Chapter 3 sketches out the profile of the study area. The meaning, definition, characteristics, magnitude and growth of agricultural labourers in India, Karnataka, Davangere and Raichur districts are presented in Chapter 4; Chapter 5 provides the socio-economic profile of the selected sample agricultural labour households; Chapter 6 analyses the nature,
magnitude, purpose, causes and consequences and repayment
performance of rural indebtedness among agricultural labourers
focusing on SCs/STs, OBCs and Others. A summary of the findings
and the policy prescriptions for the upliftment of agricultural labour
households is presented in the last Chapter.

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