CHAPTER 4

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN INDIA AND KARNATAKA: AN ANALYSIS OF THEIR CHARACTERISTICS, MAGNITUDE AND GROWTH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The importance of agriculture in economic development of any country, rich or poor is borne out by the fact that it is the primary sector of the economy, which provides the basic ingredients necessary for the existence of mankind and also provides most of the raw materials which when transformed into finished products serve as basic necessities of the human race. In India agriculture is the largest sector of economic activity. It provides not only food and raw materials but also employment to a very large proportion of the population. Being the dominant sector the improvement or changes in national output depend on agriculture. Agriculture forms the back-bone of the Indian economy and despite concerted industrialization in the last six decades; agriculture occupies a place of pride. Being the largest industry in the country, agriculture provides employment to around 65 per cent of the total work force in the country. The data provided by the census of India reveals that in 1981, about 69 per cent of the total workers were engaged in agriculture and allied activities; during 1991, the share of agriculture in total employment slightly declined to 68 per cent. In absolute terms, agriculture provided employment to 256 million persons in 1997, thus bringing percentage of economically active population in agriculture to 61 per cent. It is really disturbing that the proportion of agricultural labourers has increased and the cultivators have indicated a decline.
Labour is the most important input in increasing production in traditional agriculture. In the early stage of development, since land was available in plenty increase in labour supply led to the clearing of more land for bringing it under cultivation. At this stage of development the increase in labour supply was a boon to the society. It made positive contribution and helped in increasing agricultural production. Modernizing agriculture involved introduction of new technology. The technological innovation required increased use of capital in agriculture. Even with the use of more capital and new technology a number of farm-operations required intensification of labour use such as seed bed production, weeding, irrigation and harvesting. Thus, labour is critical input in modern agricultural development.

Agricultural labourers are socially and economically poorest section of the society. Agricultural labourer households constitute the historically deprived social groups, displaced handicraftsmen and dispossessed peasantry. They are the poorest of the poor in rural India. Their growth reflects the colonial legacy of under development and the inadequacies of planning intervention in the past. Overcrowding and growth of agricultural labourer continued unabated, given poor labour absorption in the non-agricultural sector and also inadequacies of reforms in the agrarian structure. The poverty syndrome among agricultural labourers needs to be read against such a background of prolonged rural under development, assetlessness, unemployment, low wages, under-nutrition, illiteracy and social backwardness constitute the poverty syndrome among
agricultural labourers. These reinforce each other so as to constitute a vicious circle of poverty. There is little inter-generational upward mobility among agricultural labourer households.

Human factor is of supreme importance in any pattern of economic development. More so are the agricultural labourers of India, the country’s largest unorganized section comprising the poorest workers, toiling on the sunny fields of India. Most of them hail from the socially disadvantaged sections of our society and a large number of them continue to live under the poverty condition.

Agriculture sector employed about 193 million or about 67.53 per cent of total work force of 286 million in India in 1991. But it contributed only about 24.5 per cent of GDP. It indicates the low level of the average per-capita productivity of the agricultural workers leading to very low rates of wages. The new economic policy and globalization introduced in India in 1991 seemed to have failed to lift this group from the depths of poverty. The latest trends of falling prices of the agricultural products and the extension of the period of unemployment have worsened their living conditions, though not beyond recovery or improvement. Most of these problems are common to India as a whole, though their nature and extent vary from state to state and from region to region depending mainly on the agrarian conditions of the region.

Workers in the agricultural sector are classified into three main categories namely, cultivators, agricultural labourer and workers engaged in forestry, fishing and livestock etc. We are primarily
concerned with the second category of the above categories, viz.,
agricultural labourer. We shall study the growth of agricultural
labourer, their problems and the measures of the assistance adopted
by the government.

In this chapter an attempt is made to present the meaning and
types of agricultural labourer, their features and problems. Further,
the various government measures adopted to improve the conditions
of agricultural labourers are briefly outlined. At the end the growth of
agricultural labour over a period of time in India, Karnataka and the
study area is made in order to present the latest position of
agricultural labourers.

4.2 MEANING OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

Agricultural labourers who are mostly landless and form a
significant section of rural society mainly depend on wage
employment in agriculture. Majority of them belong to the category of
Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and are among the worst
exploited section of the society. Their income has always been
meagre, resulting in poor living and heavy indebtedness. Much worse
are those who get casual agricultural work merely exist and do not
live. Their morning holds no promise for the evening and they can
never sleep without tensions for they have no stocks left for the
morning. Struggling for their morning and evenings they pass their
whole life.
4.3. DEFINITION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

In order to understand the problems of agricultural labour and to formulate an appropriate policy in this regard, it is necessary to identify these labourers. In order to identify it is necessary to define them.

Unlike industrial labour, it is rather difficult to give an exact definition of agricultural labour because in the absence of a capitalistic type of agriculture in our country, a separate class of workers depending wholly on wages does not exist. Since the line between agricultural labourers and other agricultural groups is subject to a marginal shift, one class overlaps the other; therefore, we cannot compartmentalize the agrarian society into distinct classes. This overlapping creates difficulties in evolving an exact definition of agricultural labour. Another difficulty in defining agricultural labour arises from the fact that many small and marginal farmers work partly on the farms of others to supplement their income. It is difficult to say to what an extent these farmers may be included in the category of agricultural labour.

This, however, does not mean that no attempt has been made to define Agricultural labour. Different experts and various committees have been set up by the Government of India to study the problems of agricultural labour have attempted to provide a precise definition of the term ‘agricultural labour’.

The basic definition of agricultural labour was provided by the department of Census, Government of India. According to the Census
of India, 1961, all those workers were included in the category of agricultural labour who worked on the farms of others and received payment either in cash or kind (or both). The 1971 Census excluded those farm workers from the category of agricultural labourers for whom working on the farms of others as a secondary occupation.

The First Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee (1950-51) considered an agricultural labourer as one who was employed on wages in the process of crop production for more than one half of the total number of days on which he actually performed work during the year. According to this definition even those people were included in the category of agricultural labourer who were having a small piece of land but worked for 50 or more than 50 per cent days on the land of others.

The Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee (1956-57) made the definition more broad and viewed agricultural labour to include not only labour employed in crop production but also engaged in allied activities like animal husbandry, poultry and dairy. Thus several more categories of workers were brought within the scope of the term, "Agricultural labour" in the second enquiry. In the same enquiry, an agricultural labour household was defined to include only those households who derived 50 or more than 50 per cent of its income as wages for work rendered in agriculture only. The definition of agricultural labour in the Rural Labour Enquiry was the same as that of the Second Labour Enquiry Committee.

According to the Census of India 2001 "A person who works on
another persons land for wages in cash or kind or share will be regarded as agricultural labour”. She or he has no risk in the cultivation but merely works on another land for wages. An agricultural labourer has no right of lease or contract on land which she/he works.

From the above definitions it may be concluded that "All those persons who derive a major part of their income as payment for work performed on the farms of others can be designated as agricultural workers. For a major part of year they should work on the land of other on wages.

4.4. TYPES OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

Agricultural labourers can be broadly divided into family labourers, hired labourers and bonded labourers.

4.4.1. Family Labourer

This category belongs to small farmers who are not financially sound to hire labour. Small farmers are hire labour during peak seasons such as transplanting, weeding and harvesting. When labour is required in abundance and the operations have got be completed in a short period of time.

4.4.2 Hired Labourer

Hired labour can further be divided into two groups; casual labour and attached labour. Attached workers who are more or less in continuous employment, are under some sort of contract with the employers during the period of employment, while casual workers are
employed from time to time according to the exigencies of work. Casual labourers are employed on daily wages for specific operation which lasts only for a short period. While attached workers are often employed on contract, mostly oral contract, extending over a longer period that is quarterly, half yearly or yearly. The wages of attached labourers are generally lower than those of casual labourers who are employed on piece work basis. The terms and conditions of employment of attached workers vary from region to region, according to local tradition.

A striking difference between the casual and attached labour is that the former is free to chose his own employer as well, as jobs, while the latter is not free to do so. The bulk of agricultural labour is casual labour in our country as most labourers prefer individual freedom and higher wage to security of job. In recent times the annual contract are fast disappearing and labourers are employed on monthly basis and they are free to change their employers and jobs whenever they want to do so.

### 4.4.3. Bonded Labourer

There is also a special class of agricultural labour called the 'bonded labour' who are at the bottom of agricultural ladder in India. The prominent feature of this system is that a man pledges himself or sometimes a member of his family against a loan. Inability to pay back the loan results in the attachment of that person to the creditor till such time when the loan is finally paid. Agrarian serfdom thus
lingers on in India- a relic of the Middle Ages which might well be regarded as one of the darkest blemishes in the economic life of the present day India.

4.5. CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

The census of India defines an agricultural labourer as a person who works on another person's land for wages i.e., money, kind or share.

There are certain peculiar characteristics of agricultural labour that help us to distinguish them from industrial labour.

Firstly, agricultural labour is unorganized unlike industrial workers; agricultural workers need not work in unison. A lack of contact between workers makes it impossible to develop any meaningful organization.

Secondly, agricultural workers are basically unskilled; they may not be skilled even in the art of cultivation. Consequently, their supply is perfectly elastic and therefore whatever they earn is in the nature of transfer earnings. The employer often uses this position to his personal gain by contracting to less than what the market forces would have warranted otherwise.

Thirdly, agricultural labour is migratory in character. It can be drawn from a distant place to the place of work during a busy season.

Fourthly, the employers of agricultural labour himself may not be a person of high means. This will be a situation when a small farmer employs to another small farmers who may not have sufficient
work to do by him. A direct contact, therefore, between the employer and the worker is a distinct characteristic of agricultural labourer.

Finally, agricultural labourer is hardly ever covered by any rules and regulations. Law, if at all it exists it flouted more often than it is observed.

In brief, it may be observed that the situation of an agricultural labourer differs substantially from that of an industrial labourer; he is an unorganized lot, his bargaining power is weak, and generally, the supply of agricultural labourer exceeds its demand.

4.6. MAGNITUDE OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

Overall 350 million people below the poverty line in the country around 300 million are in the rural areas. These consist largely of the landless labourers, small and marginal farmers, rural artisans and other workers. Over the course of 6½ decades of planning the level of living of the bulk of the landless agricultural labourers and marginal farmers has undergone little improvement. Various socio-economic measures such as landreform measure, minimum wages to agricultural labour etc., have not helped to solve the problems of rural poor. Even the spectacular increase in agricultural production in the regions of green revolution have not brought uniform and substantial improvement in the wages of agricultural labour. Thus, "neither the general economic development nor even reform measures through the instrumentality of state in India seem capable of reaching far enough to purvey hope and viability to the class of people who bear the burden of immiserising economic transition under the alien rule,
while aliens had at least the alibi of being aliens, independent India has none in extenuation of her record”.

Agricultural labourers are socially and economically one of the poorest sections of the society. They constituted 37.73 per cent of the total rural work force in 1981. They have no assets or assets with low productivity, no regular full time jobs or very low paid jobs. They are unskilled, unorganised and have dispersed over a large area. Their poor living conditions affect their working efficiency and productivity in agriculture and this in turn affects the economy as a whole.

The problem of rural labour unemployment is aggravated by the growth of population and labour force in recent decades. Excess labour could not be shifted to the manufacturing sector due to the slower rate of growth of that sector. Agriculture had to bear this burden of excess labour which has resulted in low productivity in agricultural sector. Thus, casual nature of employment, ignorance, email size of the establishments with low capital formation per person employed, and superior strength of the employer, scattered nature of the establishments, as result of all these agricultural labourers have not been able to organise themselves in pursuit of a common objective.

It is a matter of some controversy whether a separate class of agricultural labourers existed in the pre-British rural India. There is, however, enough evidence to show that there was large scale extensive additions to the ranks of agricultural labour during the British rule in India. The policy of free trade by British Government was to help manufacturers in Britain, which ruined the handicrafts industry in
India. Village and Cottage Industries could not withstand the competition from the manufactured goods of Britain. The village industries received a setback. Village artisans lost their jobs and joined the ranks of agricultural labourers. Thus, new land tenure, monetisation of transactions and decline of village industries are responsible for the growth in the number of agricultural labour in India.

The growth of agricultural labourer was a product of a process of disintegration and immiserisation, and not of a developmental process in the Indian economy. The growth of population has added to the number of agricultural labourers. The ranks of agricultural labourer have swelled from 7.5 million in 1881 to 144.3 million in 1981. In one hundred thirty years the number of agricultural labourers has increased by 136.8 million.

The problems of agricultural labourer have not arisen due to the specific weaknesses of this class. The basic cause is the lack of sufficiently fast growth which appropriated with structural and technological changes. Hence, the principal instrument for tackling these problems is the totality of planned effort for development. Growth by any means to be followed by removal of poverty is not a viable strategy for cohesive development of Indian society. "No rate of growth that can be realistically envisaged could make major impact on the problem within the foreseeable future if inequality remains as acute as at present, nor could any feasible egalitarian policies after the position significantly in the absence of an accelerated rate of growth. Growth and reduction in inequality are both indispensable to
a successful attack on mass poverty”. The growth strategy must seek not only a higher rate of growth but also reduced inequality in the distribution of income. The composition of the growth must be such as which would favour the rural and urban poor.

4.6.1. Agricultural Labour Market

The extents to which the employment and wages of agricultural labour can be increased within the agricultural sector, depends on the supply and demand for labour. The supply of agricultural labour depends on a number of factors, such as the size and composition of rural labour force, its initial and seasonal pattern of employment. The demand for labour in agriculture depends on yield increasing technologies, extent of irrigation, cropping pattern, mechanisation of agricultural processes and proximity to urban centers.

4.6.2. Supply of Agricultural Labour

In our country the decadal census data provides information on the size and composition of rural and urban force, by sex and age groups. The workers are further classified according to the type of economic activities who are engaged especially in agricultural activities. The data has some important limitations which restrict their usefulness in the study of the labour market. The Census data does not provide any information about the duration of employment, or unemployment, they do not throw light on the variations in the work force in different periods of years, the reference periods specified for collecting data on the worker and non worker status of persons is
another limitation. The data of different census cannot be compared as the concepts and definitions get changed from one census to another. Yet census data can give a broad trend in the growth of agricultural labour force. The census results clearly show that there has been a tremendous increase in the number of agricultural labourers from 1881 to 1981.

Another important determinant of supply of labour is the participation rate of potential workers. In the peak season, the workforce swells, women, children and older people join the labour force during the harvesting season. The important factors which influence the participation rates are changes in cropping intensity and production, development of the non-agricultural sector, changes in literacy rate and growth in the population. Pandey S.M. has done regression analysis on the 1971 census and came to the conclusion that spread of literacy and the growth of increase in population severely depresses the overall, as well as the male participation rate in rural areas suggesting that more and more young children, especially males, are going to school, which reduces the size of active labour force. The female participation shows no significant effect on either the over-all or male participation rate. A higher sex ratio increases the male participation rate. A larger size of non-agricultural sector and a higher level of cropping intensity tend to depress the rural participation rate especially among females. The tendency among rural people, particularly females, children and old males, to withdraw from the active labour force becomes stronger with the development of
agricultural and non-agricultural sectors which results in an increase in employment opportunities and income of the males.

The above conclusions cannot stand as the basis of any sweeping generalizations, as most of the states in our country are too big and heterogeneous. Such a study for one point of time could be useful only when it is attempted at such disaggregated level, say for districts. Very little is known about (a) income-leisure preference of labour households and (b) intersectoral mobility of labour. An important change in these two aspects can seriously affect the supply of labour.

The composition of the agricultural labour force among the labourers with land and without land provides a structural feature of the labour supply. According to Baudhayan Chatterji the structural features can be represented by (1) the percentage of agricultural labour households among all rural households, denoting the total supply of agricultural wage labour, (2) the percentage of casual labourers among all agricultural labourers, representing the supply of free wage labour, i.e., labour which is not employed under any obligatory terms, (3) the average number of unemployed days per casual labourer. In the agricultural economy of India, the demand for labour is the more significant aspect in determining the functioning of the labour market. In the short run the supply of labour is more or less constant.

**4.6.3. Demand for Labour**

On the diagnostic side several factors such as the impact of family labour employment on the demand for hired labour, the relationship between the size of farm, extent of irrigation,
mechanisation of agricultural processes, proximity to urban centers etc., have been studies by a number of researchers. D. Ghosh has thrown light (1956-57) on the demand for the services of the hired agricultural labourers which in part is governed by the same factors that determine the total demand for labour in agriculture, but in part by force which lead to the substitution of hired labour by self-employment. He noted that index of agricultural output increased by 30 per cent between 1950-51 and 1956-57 periods, the gross area sown was 13 per cent. The irrigated area increased by the same proportion. If one ignores the differences in the quantum of labour required for cultivating land of different quality and in bringing fresh land into cultivation, one can conclude that the demand for agricultural work increased by about 13 per cent as a result of the extension of the area under cultivation between 1950-51 and 1956-57. Another 5 per cent of the demand for agricultural labour may be added on account of extensive use of fertilizers and improved practices. Thus, the total demand for agricultural labour, hired and self employed increased as much as, if not more than, the percentage increase in the number of agricultural labourers viz., 13 per cent. Ghosh concluded "If wages of hired worker fail to rise, it must have been due to the replacement of hired labour by the labour of the cultivating owner and his family”.

4.6.4. New Technology and Demand for Agricultural Labour

The new agricultural technology is a very significant development in Indian agriculture. The new technology which is
known as HYV of seeds and other inputs has in certain areas increased agricultural production substantially. A number of empirical studies in several parts of the country have indicated that the new technology has increased employment and wages of agricultural labourer wherever it was introduced. According to the experts the HYV programme is a labour intensive technology, some of the developments in technology, such as short duration crops, further it increases labour absorption capacity because it permits multiple cropping and intensive use of land. On the other hand there are some other studies that have come to the conclusion that wages, employment and mechanisation have all increased substantially.

4.7. ECONOMIC CONDITION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN INDIA

Agricultural labourer is at the lowest rung in the socio-economic set-up of the rural society as would be seen from the following facts.

i) A major part of agricultural labour households do not own any land. As per the 32nd round of the NSS about 51.37 per cent of the agricultural labour households did not own any land. The average size of land cultivated per agricultural labour households was 1.33 acre only.

ii) Agricultural labourer remain as unemployed for a large part of the year, he finds only seasonal employment. This is the period when he is forced to barrow and fall in debt. Once if he falls in debt he finds it hard to get out the bondage.
iii) Hours of work in agriculture depends upon natural factors. The working conditions obviously are fixed by nature. Since they have to work in the open they work both in sun and rain. The hours of work vary from place to place, season to season and from crop to crop. The working hours are generally from sunrise to sunset. Sometime they are made to work during the nights as well for irrigation and threshing. In fact, terms are dictated to them and they have absolutely no bargaining power.

iv) The household income and consumption expenditure of an average agricultural labour households are precariously balanced, and that too when they find some work. Otherwise, most of them are in debt, which they owe to the money lenders and other local sources.

As per NSS estimates, 52.32 per cent of agricultural labour households were indebted at national level. The percentage of indebted households was observed to be higher than the national level in many states, like A.P., Haryana, J&K, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. The highest proportion was found in Kerala (80.76%) and lowest in Assam (11.75%). The total outstanding debt per households at the all India level was reported to be Rs. 680. The highest (Rs. 1,808) was in Rajasthan and the lowest (Rs. 244) in West Bengal.

v) The money wages of agricultural labourer are miserably low. In spite of the fact that minimum wages legislation has been enacted in most of the states, this is hardly observed.
vi) Finally the standard of living of agricultural labourers is degrading. The abject poverty, which is largely the consequence of a meager income level, haunts every aspect of their living. This can be quantified in terms of low consumption expenditure on the one hand and the pattern of consumption on the other. As is to be expected food forms the most significant items of consumption expenditure of these households. As per the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Reports these households spend 85.3 per cent of their income on food, 6.3 per cent on clothing and footwear and 8.4 per cent on services and miscellaneous. The consumption pattern is indicative of extreme backwardness and unemployment.

4.8. GOVERNMENT MEASURES PERTAINING TO AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

Since independence, the central as well as the state governments have taken some measures to improve the economic condition of agricultural labourer. They include the passing of legislation to fix minimum wages for agricultural labour, the removal of disabilities, the ceilings on land holding and the redistribution of surplus land among the landless labourers etc.

4.8.1 Indian Constitution

The Indian constitution has declared the practice of serfdom as an offence. It has abolished agrarian slavery including forced labourer by law but it will take some time before it is removed from practice.
4.8.2. Minimum Wages Act

The minimum wages Act was passed in 1948, according to which every state Government was asked to fix minimum wages for agricultural labour within three years. The minimum wages are fixed keeping in view the total costs and standard of living. Since conditions in various parts of the country are different, in many states, the rates are fixed even below the current rates of wages. In practice, it has failed to increase the wages and earnings of agricultural labour.

4.8.3. Other Legislative Measures

The Zamindari system has been abolished by law in all the states and with that all the exploitation associated with the system has been removed. Besides, tenancy laws have been passed in most of the states protecting the interests of the tenants and labourers and enabling them to acquire the lands they cultivated. Many states have passed legislation fixing ceiling on agricultural holdings by which the maximum amount of land which a person can hold has been fixed by law. According to these laws, the surplus land of rich land-owners is to be distributed to the landless labourers.

4.8.4. Organization of Labour Co-Operatives

During the Second Five-Year Plan, efforts were made to encourage the formation of labour co-operatives. These co-operatives whose members are workers would undertake the contract of government projects, such as construction of roads, digging of canals
and tanks, a forestation etc. They provide employment to agricultural workers during off-season and also eliminate the possible exploitation of workers by the private contractors. The basic idea of the movement is commendable. The movement has yet to gain momentum in the rural areas.

4.8.5. Employment Guarantee Scheme

The Government of Maharashtra introduced in 1977 the Employment Guarantee scheme under which any able bodied person in rural areas can apply for a job to the Collector of his district or to his authorized subordinate officials and the latter will provide him employment within 5 kilometers of his place of residence. For this purpose, the Government has to prepare and keep in readiness various public works, such as irrigation works, road construction etc. The rate of wages will not be such as to attract agricultural workers from their normal employment in agricultural operations. This was a pioneering scheme which the Government has been trying to improve upon with the experience gained. Under the scheme, the State assumes the responsibility to provide work on demand. If work is not provided in a fortnight from the date of demand a payment of allowance at the rate of Rs. 1 per day is to be made. The Maharashtra Employment Guarantee scheme is being adopted by other states as well, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana launched by the Central Government in 1989 is a further step in this direction.
4.8.6. 20-Point Programme

In July, 1975, the Government introduced the 20-point economic programme which included a number of measures to improve the economic condition of the landless workers and other workers in the community of the villages. These measures were

i) Speedy implementation of ceiling legislation and distribution of surplus land among landless labourers and small peasants;

ii) Provision of house sites for landless labourers and conferment of ownership rights of the houses if they have been occupied by them for a certain period;

iii) Abolition of bonded labour;

iv) Liquidation of rural indebtedness and moratorium on recovery of debts from landless labourers, artisans and small peasants.

4.9. GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN INDIA

It appears from available evidence that before independence our country was unaware of any such phenomenon which later on came to be known as the class of agricultural labourer. The Indian census reports from 1961 to 2011 are one of the earliest warning notes about the growth of surplus population on land. It was cumulative effect of a large number of factors like land tenure, monetization and commercialization of the agriculture and decline of the handicrafts, etc. During the period after independence the proportion of agricultural labour continued to be increased (Figure 4.1).
The data provided in Table 4.1 shows that the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to rise with the increasing year in Indian economy. Such proportion was estimated at 28.0 million and 144.3 million in 1951 and 2011, respectively.
4.9.1. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in India

Economic development involves structural change in the overall economy of any country. According to Kaldor "one of the best known generalizations in economics is that development involves a continued fall in the share of the 'primary' sector in total output and employment and continued rise in the share of the 'secondary' and 'tertiary' sectors".

In this section, the shares among the three major categories viz., total agricultural workers (cultivators +Agricultural labour) only cultivators and only agricultural labourers are considered for looking distribution of agricultural workforce in India, during period of 1961 to 2011. It can be seen from the Table 4.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population (in millions)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Workers (in per cent)</th>
<th>Total Cultivators (in per cent)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Labourers (in per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>72.36</td>
<td>52.80</td>
<td>19.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>548</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>68.35</td>
<td>42.33</td>
<td>26.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>67.01</td>
<td>39.85</td>
<td>27.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1027</td>
<td>58.40</td>
<td>31.71</td>
<td>26.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1210</td>
<td>54.60</td>
<td>24.60</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of India 1961 to 2011.

The Table 4.2 shows that the Indian population is tremendously increasing since the period of 1961 to 2011. But the
working population engaged in agricultural in 1961 was 72.36 per cent, whereas, in 2011 it is only 54.60 per cent. It shows that dependency of population on agriculture has declined and cultivator's percentage has also declined during the same period. But the agricultural labourers workforce has increased in during the period of 1961 to 1991, whereas, in 2001 it has slightly declined. However, the agricultural labourers workforce has increased in 2011. The percentage of cultivators has also declined during the periods of 1961 to 2011. The proportion of agricultural labourers was estimated at 19.56 per cent, 26.98 per cent, 26.02 per cent, 27.16 per cent, 26.69 per cent and 30.00 per cent in 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 respectively (Figure 4.2). From this it may be concluded that agricultural workforce is shifting from agriculture to other sectors.

**Figure 4.2**

Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in India, During 1961-2011

Source: Table 4.2
4.9.2. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Karnataka

The data given in Table 4.3 reveals that there has been considerable increase in the number of population and number of agricultural labourers in Karnataka.

Table 4.3  
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Karnataka, During 1961-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population Figures in '000'</th>
<th>Total Agricultural workers (in %)</th>
<th>Total Cultivators (in %)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Labourers (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>23587</td>
<td>70.36</td>
<td>53.70</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>29297</td>
<td>66.69</td>
<td>40.00</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>37136</td>
<td>65.03</td>
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<td>34.36</td>
<td>28.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>52733</td>
<td>55.88</td>
<td>29.48</td>
<td>26.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>61095</td>
<td>49.28</td>
<td>23.61</td>
<td>25.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of India 1961 to 2011.

The total population in Karnataka has increased from 2,35,87,000 in 1961 to 6,10,95,000 in 2011. Further the percentage of agricultural labourers has also increased from 16.65 per cent in 1961 to 25.67 per cent in 2011. On the other hand the percentage of agricultural workforce declined from 70.36 in 1961 to 49.28 in 2011. In the same period the percentage of cultivators also declined from 53.70 in 1961 to 23.61 in 2011 (Figure 4.3).
From this it may be concluded that the population is growing rapidly. The percentage of workers depending on land is declining. But the percentage of agricultural labourers are not declining during the same period. It shows increasing dependency of agricultural labourers in agricultural. It means, non-agricultural employment opportunities are not created to absorb the surplus labour force from agriculture.

4.9.3. **Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Davangere District**

Table 4.4 provides the data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Davanagere district, during 2001 to 2011. The data shows that the decadal growth rate for the district stands at 8.71 per cent. While at the aggregate level the proportion of cultivators has
decreased from 30.76 per cent in 2001 to 26.38 per cent in 2011. The total decrease accounted for -4.38 per cent. A similar trend was also observed across the residence. Similarly the proportion of agricultural labourers has decreased from 34.54 per cent in 2001 to 33.81 per cent in 2011, accounting the total decrease at -0.73 per cent, whereas in the case of rural areas the proportion of agricultural labourers has marginally increased from 43.73 per cent in 2001 to 44.33 per cent 2011. The total increase was at 0.6 per cent, similarly the percentage of cultivators and agricultural labourers to total workers was estimated at 28.07 per cent and 21.71 per cent, respectively in 2001. Hence, the total agricultural workers were estimated at 49.78 per cent during the same period (Figure 4.4).

Table 4.4
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Davanagere District, During 2001-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agricultural Workforce</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Percentage Decadal change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural workers</td>
<td>82.97</td>
<td>79.37</td>
<td>-3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cultivators</td>
<td>39.24</td>
<td>35.04</td>
<td>-4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>43.73</td>
<td>44.33</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural workers</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cultivators</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural workers</td>
<td>65.30</td>
<td>60.19</td>
<td>-5.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cultivators</td>
<td>30.76</td>
<td>26.38</td>
<td>-4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>34.54</td>
<td>33.81</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001-2011.
4.9.3.1. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Harihar Taluk

Harihar taluk is the fourth highly populated taluk in Davangere district as per 2011 census. Table 4.5 provides the data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Harihar taluk ranging from the period 1961 to 2011. The data reveals that the total population tended to rise with the increasing year. It is 3.09 times higher in 2011 as compared to that of in 1961, while the proportion of cultivators tended to decrease with the increasing year. Such proportion was estimated at 44.10 per cent and 19.71 per cent in 1961 and 2011, respectively. This implies that the proportion of cultivators has declined more than 50 per cent during the period of five decades. Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1981 and thereafter (1981
onwards) declined. Similarly the proportion of agricultural workers tended to increase with increasing year upto 1981 and there after (1981 onwards) declined. It is due to the shift of population from agricultural sector to other sectors. The distribution of agricultural workforce has been depicted in figure 4.5.

**Table 4.5**

**Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Harihar Taluk, During 1961-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Agricultural workers (in %)</th>
<th>Total Cultivators (in %)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Labourers (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>82309</td>
<td>63.22</td>
<td>44.10</td>
<td>19.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>124112</td>
<td>69.80</td>
<td>33.09</td>
<td>36.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>173320</td>
<td>70.06</td>
<td>27.97</td>
<td>42.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>245654</td>
<td>47.65</td>
<td>22.20</td>
<td>25.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>254170</td>
<td>42.01</td>
<td>19.75</td>
<td>22.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of India 1961 to 2011.
4.9.3.2. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Jagalur Taluk

Table 4.6 presents the data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Jagalur taluk during 1961-2011. The data shows that the total population tended to rise with the increasing year. It is 2.08 times higher in 2011 as compared to that of in 1961, while the proportion of cultivators tended to decrease with the increasing year. The proportion of cultivators was estimated at 69.02 per cent and 40.37 per cent in 1961 and 2011, respectively. This indicates that the proportion of cultivators has declined around 29 per cent during the period of five decades. However, the per cent of cultivators has increased from 40.37 in 2001 to 40.83 in 2011, accounting for a total increase of 0.46 per cent.

Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1981 and thereafter (1981 onwards) declined. Similarly the proportion of agricultural workers tended to increase with increasing year upto 1981 and there after (1981 onwards) declined (Figure 4.6). This implies that around 25.54 per cent of agricultural workers have shifted from farm to non-farm sector. However, it got increased in 2011. The proportion of agricultural labourers increased from 20.23 per cent in 2001 to 27.01 per cent in 2011, accounting for a total increase of 6.78 per cent.
### Table 4.6
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Jagalur Taluk, During 1961-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Agricultural workers (in %)</th>
<th>Total Cultivators (in %)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Labourers (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>82796</td>
<td>86.14</td>
<td>69.02</td>
<td>17.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>97340</td>
<td>87.25</td>
<td>52.80</td>
<td>34.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>111264</td>
<td>87.60</td>
<td>50.17</td>
<td>37.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>136765</td>
<td>84.12</td>
<td>49.90</td>
<td>34.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>158883</td>
<td>60.60</td>
<td>40.37</td>
<td>20.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>171822</td>
<td>67.84</td>
<td>40.83</td>
<td>27.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of India 1961 to 2011.

### Figure 4.6
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Jagalur Taluk, During 1961-2011

Source: Table 4.6
4.9.4. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Raichur District

Table 4.7 provides the data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Raichur district, during 2001 to 2011. The data shows that the decadal growth rate for the district stands at 15.51 per cent. While at the aggregate level the proportion of cultivators has decreased from 28.21 per cent in 2001 to 27.15 per cent in 2011. Of the total decrease at -1.06 per cent a similar trend was also observed across the residence. Similarly the proportion of agricultural labourers has decreased from 44.83 per cent in 2001 to 42.45 per cent in 2011 of the total decrease at -2.38 per cent. Hence, the total agricultural workers were estimated at 73.04 per cent in 2001 and 69.60 per cent in 2011 (Figure 4.7).

Table 4.7
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Raichur District, During 2001-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agricultural Workforce</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Percentage Decadal change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural workers</td>
<td>85.79</td>
<td>82.99</td>
<td>-2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cultivators</td>
<td>33.38</td>
<td>32.65</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>52.41</td>
<td>50.34</td>
<td>-2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural workers</td>
<td>15.72</td>
<td>14.47</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cultivators</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>10.77</td>
<td>9.97</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural workers</td>
<td>73.04</td>
<td>69.60</td>
<td>-3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cultivators</td>
<td>28.21</td>
<td>27.15</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>44.83</td>
<td>42.45</td>
<td>-2.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001-2011.
Figure 4.7
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Raichur District During 2001-2011 (in Per cent)

Source: Table 4.7.

4.9.4.1. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Devadurg Taluk

Devadurg taluk is the fourth highly populated taluk in Raichur district as per 2011 census. Table 4.8 provides the data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Devadurg taluk during 1961-2011. The data reveals that the total population tended to rise with the increasing year. It is 3.09 times higher in 2011 as compared to that of in 1961, while the proportion of cultivators tended to decrease with the increasing year. Such proportion was estimated at 57.90 per cent and 19.71 per cent in 1961 and 2011, respectively. This implies that the proportion of cultivators has declined more than 50 per cent during the period of five decades. Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1991 and thereafter (1991 onwards) declined. Similarly the
proportion of agricultural workers tended to increase with increasing year upto 1991 and there after (1991 onwards) declined. It is due to the shift of population from agricultural sector to other sectors. The distribution of agricultural workforce has been depicted in figure 4.8.

**Table 4.8**

**Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Devadurga Taluk, during 1961-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population (in millions)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Workers (4+5 in %)</th>
<th>Total Cultivators (in %)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Labourers (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>103855</td>
<td>75.16</td>
<td>57.90</td>
<td>17.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>126352</td>
<td>81.19</td>
<td>40.68</td>
<td>40.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>157894</td>
<td>83.49</td>
<td>38.00</td>
<td>45.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>176889</td>
<td>88.63</td>
<td>37.27</td>
<td>51.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>222457</td>
<td>78.01</td>
<td>31.35</td>
<td>46.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>280606</td>
<td>68.06</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>34.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Figure 4.8**

**Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Devadurga Taluk, During 1961-2011**

Source: Table 4.8
4.9.4.2. Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Sindhanur Taluk

Table 4.6 presents the data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Sindhanur taluk during 1961-2011. The data show that the total population tended to rise with the increasing year. It is 2.08 times higher in 2011 as compared to that of in 1961, while the proportion of cultivators tended to decrease with the increasing year. The proportion of cultivators was estimated at 63.71 per cent and 40.37 per cent in 1961 and 2011, respectively. This indicates that the proportion of cultivators has declined around 29 per cent during the period of six decades.

Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1991 and thereafter (1991 onwards) declined. Similarly the proportion of agricultural workers tended to increase with increasing year upto 1991 and there after (1991 onwards) declined (Figure 4.9). This implies that around 25.54 per cent of agricultural workers have shifted from farm to non-farm sector. However, it was increased 2011. The proportion of agricultural labourers got increased from 18.96 per cent in 2001 to 27.01 per cent in 2011.
Table 4.9
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Sindhanur Taluk, During 1961-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population (in millions)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Workers (4+5 in %)</th>
<th>Total Cultivators (in %)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Labourers (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>96957</td>
<td>82.67</td>
<td>63.71</td>
<td>18.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>139978</td>
<td>83.09</td>
<td>43.10</td>
<td>39.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>199868</td>
<td>86.55</td>
<td>40.18</td>
<td>46.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>240383</td>
<td>92.75</td>
<td>37.79</td>
<td>54.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>360164</td>
<td>79.69</td>
<td>33.27</td>
<td>46.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>393200</td>
<td>61.84</td>
<td>27.91</td>
<td>33.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of India 1961 to 2011.

Figure 4.9
Distribution of Agricultural Workforce in Sindhanur Taluk, During 1961-2011

Source: Table 4.9
4.10. THE CONCEPTS OF DRY AND IRRIGATED REGIONS

In this section an attempt has been made to define the concepts of dry and irrigated regions.

4.10.1. Dry Region:

According to the Indian Agricultural Atlas (1971), the dry areas generally include the zones having an annual rainfall of less than 750mm.

The concept of dry land farming is based on the fact that rains are scanty and irregular and that there are hardly any irrigation facilities. Thus, the extreme variability in the amount and distribution of rain is the main problem. The only thing that is absolutely certain in these areas is the uncertainty of rainfall. One does not know when there will be rain and of what magnitude. In some areas heavy downpours occur for short period resulting in floods and the destruction of crops. The start and closure of the rains may vary and the onset and withdrawal of monsoons may be gradual or abrupt resulting in the prolonging or shortening of the rainy period.

The people living in these areas have meagre resources and low management skills; thus, the level of development is also low, as are the literacy rates. Most of the dry areas are sparsely populated and due to this, the average sizes of the land-holdings are larger as compared to other areas with better rainfall and irrigational facilities. The level of income of the people is generally low except certain developed packages. The development of infrastructure i.e.,
communication lines, marketing centers and storage facilities is poor. Credit and other facilities are inadequate.

In this region due to low resources and the poor management skill of the dry land farmers, per hectare yield of the dry land areas is generally low. There are wide variations in the yield of principal crops and this leads to instability in the economy of the region. Because of predominance of a dry mono-crop culture and the low intensity of cropping the annual labour requirement is low and unevenly distributed. This has led to the under-employment of the cultivating population. Thus, the stabilizing and elevating of crop production in these areas holds the key to achieving stability in agricultural production.

4.10.2. Irrigated Region

The problem of Indian agriculture is mainly the problem of water supply. Soil in India is comparatively dry; rainfall is uncertain and also it is unequal in distribution. Therefore, irrigation is having tremendous importance in this country. Sir Charles Triveyan says: “Irrigation is every thing in India. Water is even more valuable than land. Because when water is applied to land it increases productivity at least six fold”.

Irrigated land leads to double and multiple cropping intensity. It also helps greatly in raising the yield per hectare by enabling the fuller-utilization of the existing inputs. This has special significance for a country like India where the present yield per hectare is miserably low. A highly efficient and irrigated cropping system alone
can sustain India’s huge and expanding population. In India there is lack of employment opportunity as seasonal unemployment is one of the main problems in rural areas. But irrigated land provides employment throughout the year in rural areas and can provide better income and better standards of living for the people of an irrigated region.

The irrigated land can provide more man days of work as well as suitable works to agricultural labourer and agricultural development. Most of the people living in the rural areas most of them are illiterates and unskilled labourers. So, they can not go freely into non-agricultural sector like industry, trade and commerce service sector etc. Therefore, irrigated land not only provides more employment to agricultural labourer, but also it provides broad base to their livelihood.

The commercial crops that are grown in irrigated areas usually require more labourers because these crops take more water and require more care. Since Irrigated land leads to double and multiple cropping it will provide working opportunities throughout a year for the agricultural labourer.

Due to development of irrigation and agriculture, the agriculture allied activities like dairy, poultry, sheeping, fishery, sericulture have gain importance in the region. Because of development in infrastructure facilities, these activities provide extra man-days of work for the people.
4.11. CONCLUSIONS

It has been observed from the forgoing description that the agricultural labourers are socially and economically poorest section of the society. Agricultural labourer households constitute the historically deprived social groups, displaced handicraftsmen and dispossessed peasantry. They are the poorest of the poor in rural India.

It has been observed that the human factor is of supreme importance in any pattern of economic development. More so are the agricultural labourers of India, the country’s largest unorganized section comprising the poorest workers, toiling on the sunny fields of India.

Agricultural labourers who are mostly landless and form a significant section of rural society mainly depend on wage employment in agriculture. Majority of them belong to the category of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are among the worst exploited section of the society. Their income has always been meagre, resulting in poor living and heavy indebtedness.

It has been found that agricultural workers are basically unskilled; they may not be skilled even in the art of cultivation. Consequently, their supply is perfectly elastic and therefore whatever they earn is in the nature of transfer earnings. The employer often uses this position to his personal gain by contracting to less than what the market forces would have warranted otherwise.
Since Independence, the central as well as the state governments have taken some measures to improve the economic condition of agricultural labourer. They include the passing of legislation to fix minimum wages for agricultural labour, the removal of disabilities the ceilings on land holding and the redistribution of surplus land among the landless labourers etc.

The Indian census reports from 1961 to 2011 one of the earliest warning notes about the growth of surplus population on land. It was cumulative effect of a large number of factors like land tenure, monetization and commercialization of the agriculture and decline of the handicrafts, etc. During the period after independence the proportion of agricultural labour continued to be increased. The proportion of agricultural labourers tended to rise with the increasing year in Indian economy. Such proportion was estimated at 28.0 million and 144.3 million in 1951 and 2011, respectively.

It has also been observed that the agricultural labourers workforce has increased during the period of 1961 to 1991, whereas, in 2001 it has slightly declined. However, the agricultural labourers workforce has increased in 2011. The percentage of cultivators has also declined during the periods of 1961 to 2011. It reveals that agricultural workforce is shifting from agriculture to other sectors.

The percentage of agricultural labourers in Karnataka has increased from 16.65 per cent in 1961 to 25.67 per cent in 2011. On the other hand the percentage of agricultural workforce declined from 70.36 in 1961 to 49.28 in 2011. In the same period the percentage of
cultivators also declined from 53.70 in 1961 to 23.61 in 2011. This implies that the non-agricultural employment opportunities are not created to absorb the surplus labour force from agriculture.

The data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Davanagere district, during 2001 to 2011 shows that at the aggregate level the proportion of cultivators has decreased from 30.76 per cent in 2001 to 26.38 per cent in 2011. Similarly the proportion of agricultural labourers has decreased from 34.54 per cent in 2001 to 33.81 per cent in 2011.

The data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Harihar taluk during 1961-2011 reveals that the proportion of cultivators has been declined more than 50 per cent during the period of five decades. Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1981 and thereafter (1981 onwards) declined. Similarly the proportion of agricultural workers tended to increase with increasing year upto 1981 and there after (1981 onwards) declined.

The proportion of cultivators in Jagalur taluk tended to decrease with the increasing year during 1961-2011. Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1981 and thereafter (1981 onwards) declined. This implies that the agricultural workers have been shifted from farm to non-farm sector.

The data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Raichur district, during 2001 to 2011 shows that at the aggregate level the
proportion of cultivators has decreased from 28.21 per cent in 2001 to 27.15 per cent in 2011. Similarly the proportion of agricultural labourers has decreased from 44.83 per cent in 2001 to 42.45 per cent in 2011.

The proportion of cultivators in Devadurg taluk tended to decrease with the increasing year during 1961-2011. Such proportion was estimated at 57.90 per cent and 19.71 per cent in 1961 and 2011, respectively. Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1991 and thereafter (1991 onwards) declined.

The data on distribution of agricultural workforce in Sindhanur taluk during 1961-2011 show that the proportion of cultivators tended to decrease with the increasing year. Whereas the proportion of agricultural labourers tended to increase with the increasing year upto 1991 and thereafter (1991 onwards) declined.