The problem of unemployment in U.P. is a serious problem and is still becoming more serious even after 37 years of planning. Agricultural labourers in U.P. are facing the problem of unemployment, and the same is the case with agricultural labourers of Kanpur district. The problem of unemployment has drawn the attention of the Government, social and political workers. Economic development of U.P., is largely associated with the solving of problem of unemployment of agricultural labourers.

1. MEANING AND NATURE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

a) Meaning of unemployment

From the economic point of view, a man is, generally, said to be unemployed when he is not able to get any type of job for his bread and butter. When persons are physically and mentally capable to work and also have a desire to work, but are not able to get any work, these are said to be unemployed.

"An unemployed individual is that individual who is in search for a job and is unsuccessful in getting such one which is according to his ability and capability".\(^1\)

"An individual is said to be unemployed only then when he wants to do a work, but there is no work for him".\(^2\)

1. 'League of Nations'
2. 'Pegu'
If an individual is incapable of doing a work due to his physical or mental incapacities, or he does not want to do any work, then he is not treated as 'Unemployed'. Young babies, old persons, patients, and physically or mentally handicapped persons are capable of doing a work and, therefore, they can be said to be unfit for employment. In a similar way a person, who is capable of doing a work but does not want to do or refuses to do, is not treated as unemployed.

b) Nature of unemployment

So far as nature of unemployment is concerned, it is of various types, like full unemployment, partial unemployment, voluntary unemployment, seasonal unemployment and technical unemployment.

i) Full unemployment

When the capable labourers do not get the employment of any type, the unemployment is known as 'full unemployment'. The number of labourers increases every year but the sources of employment do not increase in the same proportion on account of which the full unemployment is found among the labourers. In Kanpur district there is an increase of about 21.8 % in the population and the increase in the unemployed labourers is also nearly in the same proportion. About 90 % of the area of the district is covered by the agriculturists even then the agricultural labourers are unemployed.

This unemployment is noticed among the educated, uneducated skilled and unskilled, technical, non-technical, rural, urban, and in every type of labourers.
ii) Partial unemployment

When a labourer gets the employment but does not get the work according to his ability and capability, then this is known as partial unemployment. In Kanpur district some such labourers are available who get the work for the whole time but do not get wages which match with their ability and capability. Therefore, they, even after being employed, are the victims of partial unemployment. It has been observed in the survey that the labourer who can work for 8 to 10 hours per day gets the work hardly for 4 to 5 hours per day. The reason for this is the lack of mobility among the labourers. A labourer of one place tries to seek the employment in the near vicinity of that place and does not move far away from that place, howsoever low wages he may get, the work also may or may not be according to his ability and capability.

iii) Voluntary unemployment

Actually voluntary unemployment should not be considered as unemployment because the individual himself does not want to do any work. Such individuals are those individuals whose forefathers were big Zamidars and a huge landed property has been left by them. If these individuals have a desire to do some work, there is plenty of work form them, but actually they do not want to do anything. Thus they like to remain unemployed. The number of such unemployed persons is very little in this district.

iv) Seasonal unemployment

These are some such industries connected with agriculture to which the supply of the raw material is possible only in a
particular season, e.g., sugar factories, rice mills, etc. The labourers in these industries get employment in a particular season and in the rest of the period of the year they remain unemployed. Such an unemployment is known as seasonal unemployment. In Kanpur district when the season for a particular crop is favourable, the agricultural operations are performed in a planned and systematic way, and there the labourers get employment. But when the season is not favourable for agricultural work, the services of the agricultural labourers are not needed and in that case labourers remain unemployed. This unemployment is the seasonal unemployment. In agricultural work majority of the labourers get employment at the time of cultivation of land, sowing of seed, and the harvesting of crop. In the remaining period majority of the labourers remain unemployed.

v) Technical unemployment

This type of unemployment arises on account of the use of labour saving devices at the different stages of farming for the crop production. In this scientific age several such machines have been invented which perform the agricultural operations in place of agricultural labourers. Such type of farming is known as mechanized farming and by that the agricultural labourers remain unemployed. This type of unemployment is known as technical unemployment. First of all modern agriculture was used in the developed countries and then it came to developing countries. In Kanpur district mechanized farming is there but not with every farmer,
because every farmer cannot afford to purchase the necessary implements and machines. Thus technical unemployment is there in the district but not to a very great extent.

2. CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN KANPUR DISTRICT

The following are the main causes of unemployment.

i) Rapid increase in the population

At present the rate of increase in the population of India is 2.4 per cent whereas in Kanpur district, it is 3.1 per cent per annum. This increased population includes labourers also who are to be adjusted in some of the industries. So far as the farming industry is concerned it has not so developed that it may give employment to all the agricultural labourers. Thus the main cause of unemployment of agricultural labourers is the increasing population of the district.

It can also be observed that there were 9.0 million unemployed in the first five year plan, 11.8 million in the second and 17.0 million in the third five year plan. Thus it is clear that the unemployment is increasing with the increase in the population.

ii) Slow progress in industrialization

Industrial development has taken place in India rapidly. The labourers from the villages would move to work in the industry. Since industries are not absorbing the labourers of the villages, hence, there is unemployment of labourers in the rural areas.
iii) Slow progress in the development of cottage industries

Another main and important cause of the unemployment of agricultural labourers is the shortage of cottage industries. The cottage industries, despite of removing disparities in the income are also helpful in giving employment to the unemployed ones. Since the progress in the development of cottage industries is slow, the agricultural labourers cannot engage themselves in such industries. Hence, they are unemployed.

iv) Abolition of joint family system

The abolition of joint family system is also responsible for the rural unemployment. In a joint family earning of any one member or more becomes a source of livelihood for all. But in disjoint family every member of the family has to search for a job for himself. One more consequence of disjoint family is observed in the rural structure that the total holding of the family is further subdivided with the division of family. The result of this is that the cultivable land becomes so small in size that it remains not enough for the livelihood of all the members of the family of its owner. Thus the unemployment is increased with the break up of the joint family.

v) Uncertainty of agriculture

It is said that agriculture is a gamble against monsoon. This saying is perfectly true because agriculture is completely dependent on irrigation, the main source of which is rains. The farmers who do not have other sources of irrigation, have always to wait for monsoon for getting rains and irrigating their fields. But when there is a condition
of drought, their whole of the crop is destroyed, with the result that majority of the agricultural labourers remain unemployed and then the problem of their bread and butter arises. This type of unemployment is known as unemployment due to uncertainty of agriculture, and is found everywhere, nothing to say of Kanpur district.

vi) Defective system of education

At present the system of education is such that mostly graduates and post graduates deserve nothing more than a post of clerk. The increasing tendency of using unfair means in the examination is responsible for blank brain without any knowledge. Such persons remain mostly unemployed, because for the higher post they cannot be selected, and the lower post is not acceptable to them due to superiority complex. The result is that they remain unemployed. The education should be such that every candidate may come out with some practical knowledge instead of theoretical knowledge only.

vii) Entry of refugees and Indians from other countries in India

A large number of inhabitants of Burmah, Bangla Desh and Sri Lanka entered the premises of our country, and this is also responsible for unemployment to some extent.

viii) Lack of capital for investment

From the agricultural census it has been observed that quite a sufficient area of the land in Uttar Pradesh is 'barren and unculturable land' and also is lying as 'culturable waste'.

The main reason for culturable waste is the lack of capital which is of primary importance in agriculture. Hence, the agricultural labourer who could have been employed in case of culturable waste, remains unemployed. Not only this, the educated and technical hands, who can start their own farming business, also suffer due to lack of capital.

ix) Mechanized farming

Now-a-days people are more interested in replacing the man power by the mechanical power in order to increase the speed of economic development, and they are doing so in all the fields, especially in the field of agriculture. The result is that the requirement of agricultural labour is lessened and the labourers remain unemployed, or have lesser chances of employment.

x) Lack of mobility among labourers

For want of education in farmers as well as in agricultural labourers they have developed a tendency of being immobile and the result is that they remain without employment.

xi) Agriculture as a seasonal business

Since agriculture is a seasonal business, agricultural labourer gets employment at the time of sowing and harvesting only. For the rest of the time during the year he remains without work. Since this nature of agriculture cannot be changed, there is no remedy for this cause of unemployment.

xii) Shortage of transport facilities

There are a number of villages in the rural area which are not connected by rail or road to other places and, therefore,
one feels very troubled some to move from one village to another which is situated at a long distance. The result is that a labourer who might get some employment anywhere else, becomes immobile and thus unemployed. In this case the labourer feels himself helpless for want of migration facilities.

xiii) Caste system

In the rural area caste system is also a cause for unemployment. A labourer belonging to the higher caste will never like to serve under a farmer belonging to a lower caste. He would like to remain unemployed rather than to accept employment under a farmer of lower caste.

3. CAUSES OF IDLENESS AMONG LABOURERS

The following are the main causes of idleness among labourers.

1) Indolent nature

By and large, the people of our country are habitually idle, and want the food without any effort. They do not go out in search for a job or some work till they are getting food for existence by any means without putting any labour. It is this indolent nature of labourers which is responsible for their unemployment.

ii) Diet of the labourers

There are some such labourers who are not in a position to take full diet both the times, and there are some such labourers who take over-diet without thinking about its consequences. In
both the cases the result is that they become incapable of doing any work, and hence, dominated by idleness.

iii) **Worries and anxiety**

There are some such labourers whose lives are full of worries and anxieties the reasons for which can be so many. The result is that they cannot concentrate on any type of work and pass their time in seclusion. Such labourers can be treated as idle workers.

iv) **Religious mindedness**

Many villagers keep themselves in the worship of God. Hindus and Muslims waste a lot of time in such works. If the agricultural labourer is Brahmin and is religious minded, he will devote at least one hour in the morning, one hour in the noon and one hour in the evening for performing Puja. Thus he becomes unfit for employment. Some Brahmins on the basis of their high caste, do not want to work with the person of low caste. Their religion is an obstacle in getting an employment.

v) **Helplessness to remain idle**

There are some such labourers who want to work and always remain in search for a job, but they don't get it. The result is that they are helpless to remain idle.

4. **EFFECT OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

In the state of U.P. it has been observed that the population of the state has been continuously increasing with the increasing rate. During the last decade the population had increased by 25%. The result is that the agricultural labourers have also
increased. The expansion of cities and the increase in the residential quarters for the increased population have been responsible for the decrease in the agricultural land. In Kanpur district a larger number of villages have been included in the city and the culturable land has been utilized for constructing houses for residential purposes. The overall effect of all this is that the unemployment among the agricultural labourers has increased too much. Although small scale industries in Kanpur Mahanagar and Kanpur - Dehat have provided the employment to the labourers to some extent, but they are also facing different types of problems in the present administration.

However, unemployment is a painful issue in the society and this unemployment among the labourers and the other sections of the societies which include the educated persons also, has created other problems also in the society which have their own good and bad effects. The following are the bad effects of unemployment.

1) **Bad effects**

a) Wastage of human power

Human power in any country is the valuable asset for the country which can be utilized for the all-round development of the nation and the country. But if the unemployment prevails in the society, that human power will go waste and the development of the nation and the country will be hampered.

B) **Lowering of standard of living**

In raising the standard of living money plays a very
important role. The unemployment among labourers and other persons lowers the per capita income, with the result that they remain trying to remain alive and to provide bread and butter for their family members. They cannot even think of raising their standard of living.

c) **Increase in the tendency for unsocial and illegal activities**

There is a proverb: 'Empty mind is the devil's workshop'. It is cent per cent true. When a labourer or any person is unemployed, i.e., not engaged in any work, his mind is naturally empty, and then he thinks for the bread and butter for his family members which is not possible due to lack of money. When this money is not earned by him due to unemployment he adopts illegal means for getting the money and tries to snatch it from others by stealing, looting, robberies, dacoities, etc. In some cases when a person is not financially weak but is without any job, he develops the tendency for such activities which are not allowed in the society and thus becomes a criminal.

**This is all due to unemployment.**

d) **Political unrest**

The social and political unrest is only due to unemployment, because the selfish persons try to become leaders and by exploiting the unemployed labourers and other young persons try to achieve their own political goals. Thus the youth energy is misused and the political unrest is created.
e) **Indebtedness**

When a labourer is unemployed he falls short of money and therefore, for the maintenance of his family he raises loans from the mahajans who advance the loans on a very high rate of interest. The result is that the loans remain worried in paying the interest every month and the actual loan remains at the same level. This is a very glaring bad effect of unemployment.

f) **Exploitation of labour power**

Unemployment is the main cause for the exploitation of labour power. When a labourer is unemployed, his helplessness compels him to accept the wages whatever are offered to him. The employer knows his present condition and, therefore, tries to take the undue advantage of it. He pays him low wages and tries to take more work from him. On the other side, the labourer is compelled to surrender and accept whatever is being paid to him on account of his being in the unemployed condition.

g) **Disproportionate distribution of income**

Since the labourers are available in a large number, they are employed on minimum wages or even less than that. In this way, due to less expenditure, the income of the employer increases and that of the labourer decreases. This is the disproportionate distribution of income which is on account of the unemployment of the labourers.

h) **Low prestige in the society**

When an individual is unemployed, he is not in a position to command that respect in his society as is commanded by the employed person.
i) **Difficulty in the marriage ceremonies of the children of unemployed persons**

The persons, who are unemployed and their sons and daughters are of marriageable age, have to face lot of difficulties in setting and performing the marriage ceremonies of their sons and daughters.

j) **No proper care of children**

When an individual is unemployed he, due to shortage of money, cannot and does not pay that much attention to the bringing-up and education of their children as is needed for them.

k) **Dis-interest in the various ritual ceremonies and traditions of the society**

Since an unemployed labourer is financially weak and has no source of income, he cannot afford to spend money on the various ceremonies which have been being performed in the family generation after generation. Under such circumstances he starts showing dis-interest towards these ceremonies and traditions saying that expenditures on all these celebrations is nothing but extravagance. Thus these ceremonial functions are gradually eliminated from his family.

l) **Increase in population**

A person who is married and is unemployed generally spends his most of the time at home and remains in touch with his wife. The result is that his family size increases enormously and the population of the country is increased.

m) **Increase in the tendency of begging**

Unemployment among the labourers creates the problems of
bread and butter for them. The result is that some of the labour-
ers are turned beggars for filling the bellies of their family-
members.

These are the bad effects of unemployment, which indicate
that it is a very painful problem in the society. It is, therefore,
essential that something must be done in order to remove the
problem of unemployment.

11) **Good effects**

a) **Increase in the number of business units in the country**

When a person is unemployed and he observed that his other
fellows are running a small scale industry or a business, he is
also tempted for the same in order to maintain himself at par with
his other fellows. A person who does not get employment, thinks to
do a business. Govt. has also provided financial facilities for
the same. Thus unemployment leads to increase the business.

b) **Inculcates the habit of being polite**

Whenever an individual, who is unemployed, goes to another
and begs for some employment, he will have to be very polite in
his request, otherwise, he will be turned out by the employer.
Thus the unemployment inculcates the habit of being polite in any
individual and he learns to pay respects to others.

c) **Creates faith in God**

When an individual is unemployed and is living a very
miserable life, he remembers the Almighty at that time and starts
having faith in Him. Thus a person who is an atheist starts having
faith in God.
d) **Incentive for the tendency towards unity**

When a number of persons who are all unemployed and are running under the same equal conditions form an association of unemployed persons for the one common cause. Thus a tendency of being united develops in them which is very necessary for the country.

e) **Availability of good brains for the political development**

When the unemployed persons become unsuccessful in getting any employment, they somehow become associated with the political leaders of their locality and become fully devoted to them. Among such unemployed persons, sometimes good brains are available, and one day they become intelligent leaders of the country.

f) **Unemployment aids in family planning**

Generally the individuals, who are unemployed, remain unmarried till they get some employment and become self-supporting. Thus such persons get themselves married very late which is a good and important factor for family planning.

g) **Increase in the different types of construction work by the Government**

Government also helps the unemployed persons by launching big schemes for the benefit of the public and providing employment to unemployed persons on a very large scale. Thus the whole public and the country as a whole is benefitted by such schemes, and there is a good development of the country. The scheme of 'Antyodaya' is also for the purpose of giving employment to unemployed persons.
h) Increase in the military force

Unemployment directly helps in increasing the military force of the country, because only those persons go to military services who do not get employment anywhere else. By and large, military service is not the first choice of the persons. Therefore, unemployment is the boon for military force which is very essential for the country.

i) Helpful to under-developed countries

There are many such under-developed countries where there is a dearth of man power. In such countries man power can be provided from other countries. The unemployed persons can be provided employment by sending them to such countries. Agricultural labourers who are unemployed can be sent to those countries which are facing shortage of man power. By doing so, both the countries gain, i.e., the country where unemployment is prevailing is benefitted, because its agricultural labourers get employment, while other country is also benefitted, because its shortage of man power is removed.

j) Availability of capable persons

Unemployment provides capable persons to different business activities in sufficient number, because, when the number of unemployed persons is large, the selection of suitable and capable persons can be made very easily. Thus unemployment makes available the suitable and capable persons.
k) **Incentive to higher education**

These days everybody has started thinking that the problem of unemployment can be solved only by increasing the educational qualifications. If one is highly qualified, he will not remain unemployed. The result is that the tendency for higher education with devotion has developed in the youth. The adult education is also the result of this thinking.

5. **POSITION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN KANPUR DISTRICT**

Out of all the unemployed persons in Kanpur about 10% are unemployed, because they do not want to work. They are idlers. Even if work is offered to them they would not take interest in it. About 70% agricultural labourers in Kanpur district are willing to work but they are not getting work. They roam about here and there and pass their time in gossips and undesirable activities. About 10% of those who were previously working in the town in some industry are unemployed. Some of these industries have become sick and some of them have been closed down and therefore, they are retrenched. Now they have come back to the villages and are unemployed. About 5% of agricultural labourers have been removed by their employers in the village due to their bad behaviour and inefficiency. Hence, they are unemployed. These labourers are preventing others, for not to accept employment in those houses where they were previously working. The percentage of such workers who are prevented to work is about 5%.

6. **CRITICAL STUDY OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

On the whole, it may be said that many agricultural labourers in U.P. are unemployed. Kanpur district is also facing the same
problem, but on survey, a special fact has been observed in the Kanpur district, that the persons who are residing in the rural areas are more eager to work in the town than in the villages. Some of them feel themselves insulted in working on a farm. So the problem before such persons now is not to get employments but to get unemployment of a white collar type.

Another problem in Kanpur district for the agricultural labour is that of the working hours. They want work for a few hours only, while farmers want to take work for more hours. Hence, there remains a tension between the employer and the employee. It is good that there are no agriculture labour unions in Kanpur district. Had there been such unions in existence, there would have been agitation against this, and then many other problems might have cropped out, with the result that smooth working in agriculture would have been hampered.

It is a fact that some employers are misusing their powers because of the various problems of unemployed persons. They are paying less wages, providing less facilities, and taking more work, so much so that some of the agricultural labourers are like slimy persons, because they cannot tolerate the severe consequences of keeping themselves completely unemployed. In short, it may be concluded that there is an alarming problem of unemployment in U.P., as well as in Kanpur district.
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Source: Agricultural Statistics - 1988
CSA University of Agriculture and Technology, Kanpur.
Table 5.2 - Area, production and average yield of pulses in Kanpur district.

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Source: Agricultural Statistics, 1988, CSA University of Agriculture and Technology, Kanpur.