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FARM LABOUR MANAGEMENT

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Farm Labour Management

The farm labour is an agent of production and on the other hand, a member of the consuming society. In this way, farm labour is both means as well as end of production.

Labour defined

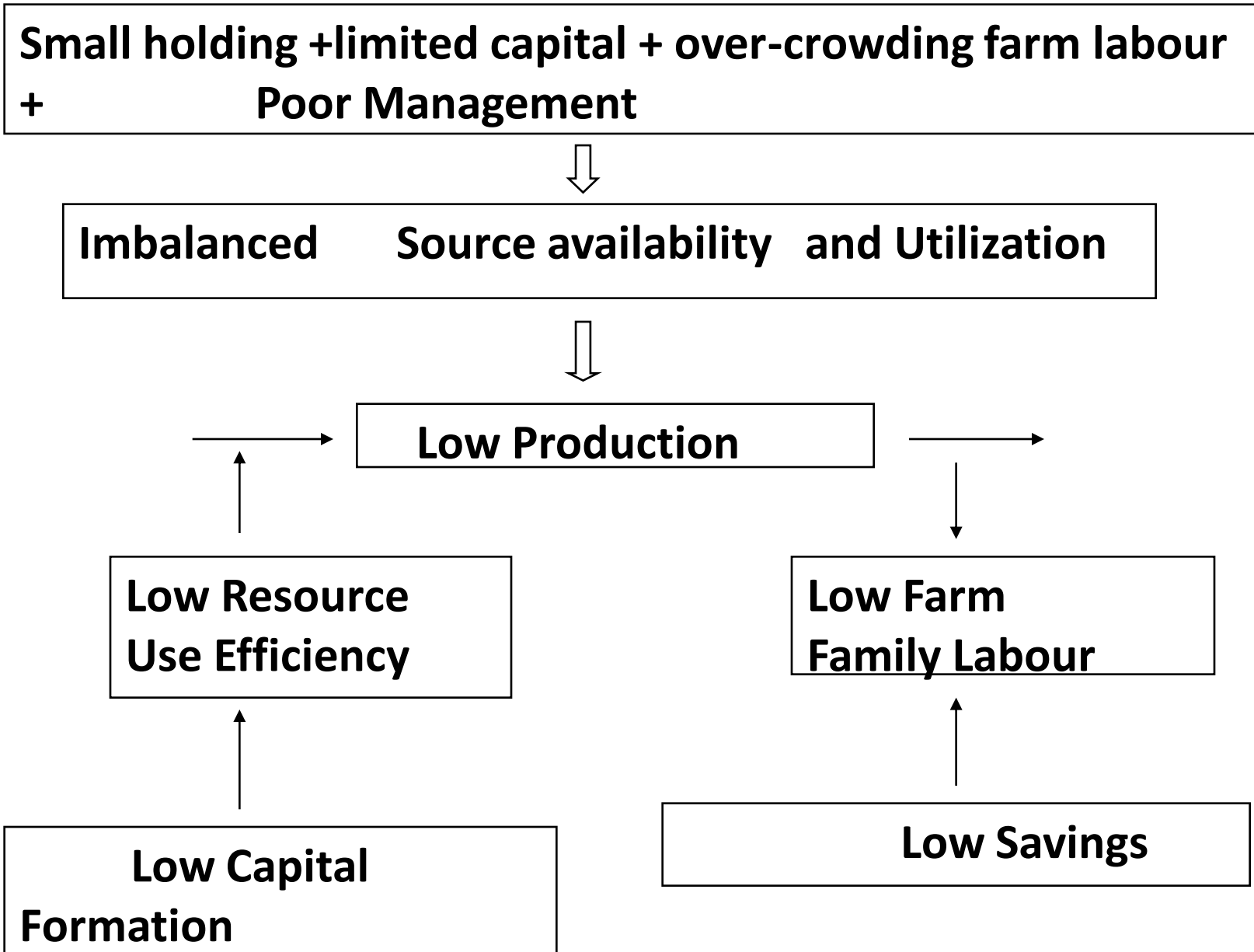
In economics , any work whether manual or mental for acquiring income is called labour. But we are concerned with physical labour expressed in terms of toil and exertion involved in farm production.

Farm labour Management

Labour efficiency in agriculture refers to the amount of productive work accomplished per man on the farm per unit of time. In general , the higher the labour efficiency, the greater are the returns from farming. The farmer who dose not introduce new methods and techniques to increase productivity can soon go out of the business because of increasing labour costs. Inefficient labour also results in low production which in turn means low wages for the labour.

The resource availability on the farms is thus imbalanced leading to a low production which result in low returns to the farm business and low farm family labour earning.

The situation thus creates a vicious circle as under:



This vicious circle does not allow the farm labour a living wage and poverty conditions persist in the farm sector, especially among the agricultural labour.

Classification of farm labour is (i) farm manager's labour. (ii) farm family's labour. (iii) Hired labour. (a) landless agricultural labour. (b) Casual labour. (c) Attached labour. (d) Bonded labour and (e) Migratory labour.

The first two categories constitute permanent labour force available on the farm and is a fixed resource due to a general lack of mobility. Three categories is a variable input and can be hired when needed.

Farm manager's Labour

Except for large commercial private or government farms, which hire all the required labour and have a paid manager, Indian farmer, is a manager, capitalist and a labourer. The Indian farmer, though good labourer, remains to be an inefficient farm organizer and a poor capitalist.

Family labour

Family labour is a fixed resource and a cost. Family labour consists of adult males, females and children engaged in the farm work. Person of the farm family and the period spent by them on off-the-farm employment should not be considered as farm labour.

Hired labour

Hired labour is employed by small and large farmers. but the labour cost is concerned more with large farmers as seriously limiting their net income. The necessity of hired labour occurs during the sowing time and more intensely at the harvesting period. when there is a great rush of work to be finished within a few days. The hired labour may be classified as under:

1) Year-round (2) monthly (3) daily (4) Piece- work (5) Custom labour .

In india, a further category of hired labour is as:

a) Landless Agricultural labour

The second Agricultural labour Enquiry committee (1956-57) reported that 57% of the agricultural labour households were landless.

b)Casual labour

According to the report 83% were casual labour household of the total agricultural labour households. the casual labour is employed on daily wages for short unspecified periods.

c)Attached labour

Of the total agricultural labour household 17% were attached labour household, i.e. on a contract basis for a specified period.

d)Bonded Labour

There are the serfs found in traces in certain parts of the country.

e)Forced Labour

Under the old tenancy system, a tenant was forced to work without payment under the threat of eviction from land.

f)Migratory Labour

The labour migrates temporarily from the densely populated area to other regions in search of employment particularly during the rush periods.

Composition of farm Labour

Indian farm labour consists of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled worker:-

Skilled Labour

Specialized and trained labour for specific jobs is known as skilled labour, viz. Carpenter, blacksmiths, Mechanics, and drivers, well-borers etc. Absence of a mechanic may cause a loss of the whole day of a tractor or a pumping set. Wages of the skilled workers whether engaged permanently or casually, are always higher than those of the other categories of labour.

Semi-skilled labour does the job which can not be taken up by ordinary labour, but at the same time does not require any elaborate training: such jobs can be performed after some experience of working with the experienced workers. The wages of such workers are a little higher than those of the ordinary unskilled laborers.

Unskilled Labour

It is ordinary labour employed for manual work, which does not need any training of specialized nature. It does not mean, however, that with experience the efficiency does not increase. Unskilled labour is generally engaged in field work as cattle attendants, cotton pickers, ploughmen, weeders and harvesters etc.

Measuring labour efficiency

In india and other developing countries where there is unemployment and underemployment on farms the productive work done by person may be considered as a good measures of labour efficiency on well organized farms:

a) On a crop production farm

The hectares of crop per man is considered a good measure on farms

$$= \text{Total work units} / \text{Man equivalent}$$

b) On a Dairy Farm

Number of cows per man (ii) The amount of milk produced or sold per man.

c) On a fruit farm

Special features of Indian farm labour

They are large in number (2) are mostly unskilled. (3) lack staying power (4) majority of them are under debt and lack bargaining power (5) payments of wages are low, many times seasonal and in kind. (6) hours of work are long and irregular and above all, employment opportunities are meager, seasonal and uncertain. No wonder, thus, the Indian farm labour efficiency is at a very low and large part of it is wasted by way of unemployment and underemployment.

Some of the methods which have been found to be useful in improving the labour efficiency are:

- Enlarging the size of the farm business (2) Planning labour distribution-enterprise combination. (3) Improving labour management with planning of the work, incentives, and training of the workers (6) Farm work simplification is another method to improve the efficiency of labour.

Management of Labour

The following specific steps can go a long way in increasing the labour efficiency:

a) Planning the Work

Farmers are not always efficient managers. Labour is wasted on many farms because of a poor management. For efficient management of labour a farmer should:

- 1) Make a labour calendar to keep down the peak labour requirements
- (2) Prepare a plan of work and duty list well ahead in time at least one day earlier
- (3) Check implements and tools in advance for their being in working order
- (4) should assign the work according to capabilities and as far as possible according to the aptitude and liking of the workers
- (5) make available at hand facilities of water, etc. especially in summer
- (6) Keep one day's work ready for permanent labour, for rainy days and for the period when it is not possible to work outdoors
- (7) set up work standards for different types of work.

b) Incentives

Work incentives are also an important part of the labour management. Labour is most efficient when incentives for work are strong. Housing, recreation, health facilities etc .should be provided to the farm worker as funds permit. Experienced and trained workers should be given incentives so that they prefer to stay on the farm and the farmer has not to keep employment fresh hands all the time. Incentives

THANK YOU