

Experienced Stress of Farm Labour in BPL Village



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Abstract

Stress as the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it. The demand can be a threat, a challenge or any kind of change which require the body to adapt. The response is automatic, immediate. However, it can be bad when it make people upset, stressful living conditions tools upon the individual capacity to manage the situations efficiently. People living below poverty line are leading a life with lack of basic amenities, economic marginalization & social exclusion. The intensity of problem enhances when they belongs to scheduled caste community and getting multiple rejection at social social, economic, educational front. This in turn seriously threatens the mental health of them. India's 25.70% rural population is BPL, so it is important to explore the mental health status of rural BPL groups who are underprivileged largely employed in unorganized daily wagers, earning bread from being as construction labour, farm labour etc. The sample comprised of 100 male farm labours and female farm labours of Lebrua village of Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh. They were assessed on ADSS developed by Bhatnagaret. al ,2011. However, in this present study the scores of only stress subscale will be taken into account. The data was analyzed using t-test, to know the significant difference between means. The result indicated there were significant differences, while females reporting higher stress as compared to their counterparts.

Keywords: Stress, Farm Labour, Below Poverty Line.

Introduction

Poverty is a state in which a human being or community is disadvantaged of, and or lacks the basic amenities for a least standard of well-being and existence. These fundamentals may be material assets such as food, safe drinking water, clothing and shelter or they may be social assets such as access to information, education, healthcare, social status and opportunity. Poverty stands as the biggest barrier in the development of any economy. India being a developing country still traps into the net of poverty. The government have been struggling hard to eradicate poverty. People are defined as poor or rich depending on the financial status of their family. Persistently poor people are not capable to approach good quality foods and life style. Grants and (Hulme,2004) considered that Health service expenditures are often far from the needs of the poor and can leave them dependent on the further accessible but lower quality and often expensive private service providers. Material and social denial are the two long standing factor linked to poverty (Commins, 2004).

Rural Poverty Individual mental and physical health is influenced by the social environment through three most important mechanisms: personal relationships and networks, individual socioeconomic status, and background effects of the places in which people live (Link & Phelan, 1996).

Blank (2005) indicates that rural poverty is dissimilar than urban poverty due to the lonely nature of many small communities, the dissimilar opportunities that are presented within rural economies. These small communities may be ill-treated and kept aloof from the least available resources. The level of superstitions and caste system is also found high in rural areas which may be responsible for the deteriorating condition of poor people. The rising gap between the development of the urban area and the underdevelopment of rural areas also gives rise to poverty. India being an agriculture based country is largely dependent on farming for living, which has low output and demands high input in terms of manual work for small scale farmers.

The survey of 5,000 farm households across 18 states says that 76 per cent farmers would prefer to do some work other than farming.

Sixty-one per cent of these farmers would prefer to be employed in cities because of better education, health and employment avenues there. A high percentage of farmers complained of repeated losses; 70 per cent of respondents said their crops were destroyed because of unseasonal rains, drought, floods and pest attack.

National Sample Survey office (NSSO) and Census surveys, which also pointed to agrarian crisis and increasing number of people giving up farming, covered hundreds of thousands respondents. None the less the CSDS study lends further credence to reports of the poor state of India's farmers

The farmers' suicides in India, also known as the agrarian crisis, is the phenomenon of suicides among Indian farmers from 1990 to the present. It has been exacerbated by the inability to repay growing debt, often taken from local moneylenders and microcredit banks to pay for high priced high yield seeds marketed by MNCs and the non-implementation of minimum support prices (MSP) by state governments. During the duration from 1998 to 2018, it has resulted in the suicides of 300,000 farmers in the country, often by drinking pesticides themselves

India is an agrarian country with around 70% of its people depending directly or indirectly upon agriculture. Farmer suicides account for 11.2% of all suicides in India. Activists and scholars have offered a number of conflicting reasons for farmer suicides, such as monsoon failure, high debt burdens, government policies, public mental health, personal issues and family problems.

The farm women interviewed mainly identified as 'farmers' wives' rather than 'farmers', regardless of their involvement in farm labour. This raised an important contrast between 'farmers' wives', who were regarded as having a distinctive occupational identity supporting farmers' work, and 'the wives of farmers', who worked in alternative professions. The extent of farmers' wives work was often underplayed, and included domestic and childcare responsibilities, traditional farm labour, managing paperwork, and running diversification businesses. Gendered expectations extended into acquisition patterns, with family farms largely passed down along male lines: this created tensions where generational Outlooks Clashed. Kuruvilla & Jacob (2007) in their study using epidemiological data on psychological illness among the different socio-economic groups observed that stress due to social events and mental health problem is significantly correlated with poverty. An inverse relationship between socio economic status and mental disorder has been documented (Dalgard, 2008; Hunt, McEwen & McKenna, 1979; Kessler et al 1994). This finding supports the putative relationship between poverty and stress because stress is a significant factor in the etiologic of depression 80% of all patients with depression has histories of chronic stress or stressful life events (Hammen 2005). Studies which find significant correlations between socio-economic status (SES), self-reported stress, and cortisol (Cohen et al. 2006; Evans and English 2002; Evans and Kim

2007; Lupien et al. 2011; Li et al. 2007; Lupien et al. 2000; Arnetz et al. 1991; see Dowd et al. 2009 Changes in Farming Experience and Practice

In recent years, farming has undergone changes that have transformed its day-to-day work. A common perception was that larger farms had been more successful in adapting than smaller family-run farms. Certain types of farming (such as dairy farming) have become less profitable, leading to changes in the composition of farms. Interviewees repeatedly spoke of an intensification of farming practices in response to falling returns, and the diminished sense of control they exercised over their work. Partly in response to farming's reduced profitability, a number of the farms studied had expanded into diversification activities. Mechanisation has qualitatively transformed farmers' day-to-day work, as has the growing regulation of the industry. Agricultural crises such as the BSE and FMD outbreaks have had acute regionalised effects as well as longer-term implications for livestock farming.

The biggest change in farming has been the fall in the use and availability of farm labour, as traditional labourers have found greater recompense in other sectors, and as farms have rationalised their labour forces. Migrant labour has made up some of this shortfall, together with contract labour. Other strategies have included farmers combining working on their own farms with seasonal contract work, and informal systems of labour exchange.

The stresses of farming work had a number of effects upon interviewees' physical and mental well-being. The most common of these were a lack of sleep, back problems, worrying about work, irritability and feeling down. Despite considerable evidence of occupationally-related illness, little sick leave was taken and stigma was attached to talking about mental health. Workload intensity, the non-controllability of certain aspects of farming (such as disease and seasonality), and insecure futures were major factors in these symptoms, which were raised throughout farming communities, although principal farmers worried most about the future and finances.

Stress was not always framed in health terms, and was sometimes regarded as a positive or constant force, motivating people to devise solutions to problems and providing stimulation. Nor did stress have a universal meaning; some avoided the term altogether, or preferred to talk about frustration, anxiety or worry. In terms of how farming embodies a number of stressors, the report makes a three-fold analytical distinction, considering these in terms of aspects that are intrinsic to the work of farming, more extrinsic features, and directly work-related characteristics of stress. Less directly linked to the work of farming, but tied up in farming lifestyles, were stresses involving family tensions and financial problems.

Intrinsic aspects of Farming Stress

Were sometimes intensely worrying but were also part of interviewees' traditional expectations about the challenges inherent in farming. They included: x seasonality and the difficulties presented by adverse weather conditions; and stock crises and

disease, including the BSE and FMD outbreaks. Pressures relating to extrinsic dimensions of agricultural stress were mainly an issue for principal farmers who took more strategic and managerial roles. These stressors included: the current legislative and political framework; the media and public perceptions of farmers; and competitive forces and the prices that could be achieved for produce.

Work-related aspects of stress in farming emerged as important, and applied to interviewees in a range of roles. These included: potentially dangerous farming practices; workload and organisation; the work activities related to particular types of farming and their busy periods (such as lambing and silage-making); rising paperwork demands; and tensions associated with family farms and acquisition. Of these, psychosocial hazards assumed particular significance: the aspects of work concerned with its organisation or management that were potentially harmful to farming communities; paperwork was the most commonly-cited cause of stress.

Methodology

Purpose

1. To explore the stress in Below Poverty line farm labour of Lebrua village in Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

Table-1: (Stress According to Gender Mean and SDs)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Score range	Mean of Male (a1)	SD of Male	Mean of Female(a2)	SD of Female	Mean of total Population	Critical Ratio
1-	Stress	0-14	9.14	2.13	9.62	2.44	9.40	2.18

Show that female farm labours have a higher stress than their male counterparts. Further, the obtained scores are even higher (Especially for the males) than the normative data of individuals, (7.05 of female and 6.4 male respectively, Bhatnagar 2011). The results when seen in the context of the range of the scores. (which is 0-14 for stress subscale) also that the obtained stress score are on the higher side. Interpretation in terms of cut off point as the manual of ADSS also shows (moderate Level of stress for both male and female. symptoms included for stress physical fatigue, headaches, insomnia, muscle aches/ stiffness (especially neck shoulders and low back) and decrease in concentration and memory, indecisiveness, mind racing going blank, confusion, loss of sense of humour. The item no. 4, 12, represented the affective symptoms and the respondent replied to it, "हमको तो आराम करत में दिक्कत होत है काहे की शरीर बहुत दुखत है" (I find difficulty in taking rest become of body pain). "कौनो कुछ बोल दे है तो बहुत बुरा लागत है" (I feeling very bad if someone anything). In response to item no 17, 29, & 30 the respondent replied as "हमना ही शांत हो पायीत है जल्दी बहुत जोर से गुस्सा आवत है कही चल जात है" (Since I cannot calm down easily on losing my temper i prefer to go out for some time.). "कौनो जबाब देवत कामना ही करत है" (I do not want to answer anything).

2. To explore the gender differences in stress reported by farm labours.

Design

Ex- Post facto research with exploratory orientation.

Variable:

Level of stress has been explored across gender.

Tool

Anxiety, depression, Stress Scale (ADSS) constructed by Bhatnagar, Singh, Pandey, Sandhya, Amitabh, (2011) was administered. The present paper discusses the reported depression of the farm labours of Levruwa village from Jaunpur district.

Sample

The sample comprised of 100 males and 100 females Below Poverty Line farm labour equally distributed across gender Lebrua village of Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The purposive sampling method was used.

Result and Discussion

Stress as a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised as personality significant and as taking or exceeding resources for coping (Lazarus & Folkman 1984)

कौनो याद आवत है तो हम बहुत रोवत है उस बात को सोचत है तब" (I cry when memorize anyone).

The findings are in line with the findings of previous studies. Patel (1996) found that poverty and disability are directly correlated to Stress. Kumari (2006) and Gupta (2014) on sample of Socially Disadvantaged and Scheduled caste people the quality of life is found to be poor and leads to symptoms of Stress.

Conclusion

The stress is found high in female farm labour. The major cause behind stress was poverty and marginalization. This negatively affects their mental and physical health both. The need of the hour is to extend mental health service in rural areas before occurrence of mental problems and make small scale farmers economically sound. The policy implication from the above-discussion calls for an emphasis on the larger crisis that of low returns and declining profitability from agriculture and that of poor non-farm opportunities.

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