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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF SUGAR FACTORY EMPLOYEES – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT
The sugar industry is an agro-based industry that plays an important role in uplifting the socio-economic conditions of village people. The sugar industry in India is the world's second-largest sugar manufacturing industry. In the village, many people look into local employment, with family responsibilities, and they wish to work in a local factory. The sugar industry fulfils its dreams by offering local and rural employment, where many sugar industries are located in rural areas. Employment in the sugar factory is helpful to enhance employees' economic level by income, investment, savings and asset creation, and it also enhances their social conditions by social interactions and social involvement. Hence, the present study focuses on how sugar factories in Vijayapur District benefit rural people in Vijayapur District and how these sugar industries uplift the socio-economic conditions of employees of the sugar factory.
KEYWORDS: *Socio-Economic Conditions, Sugar Factory, Rural*

INTRODUCTION

Sugar is an agro-based industry, it is the backbone of the village in terms of facilitating income generation, job creation, local job opportunities, uplifting the standard of living, providing job security, and stable income for regular workers. It is a facilitating benefit to farmers, labourers and seasonal workers. The primary objective of the sugar industry is to enhance member welfare by economically empowering the underprivileged, fostering local development, and benefiting society broadly. Sugar units in Andhra Pradesh have notably driven socio-economic progress for local communities. Post-globalisation, economic liberalisation, and privatisation, these units grapple with intense competition and survival pressures due to outdated technology, weak finances, biased government policies, excessive political interference, management instability, inadequate modernisation, limited diversification, and unprofessional leadership.

Vijayapura district in Karnataka hosts a thriving sugar industry, driven by favourable agro-climatic conditions for sugarcane cultivation. The district has 5 public limited sugar factories like Indian Cane Power Ltd., Jamakhandi Sugars Ltd, Shri Basaveshwar Sugar Ltd, Sangamanatha Sugar Ltd, and Shri Sai Basava Sugars Ltd. These sugar industries benefit not only the employees but also the village sector in many ways.

The employees of the sugar factory are benefiting in such a way that to can lead better lives and improve their socio-economic conditions. The present study deals with how sugar factories help in uplifting the socio-economic conditions of sugar factory employees.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Glenn M Ostia et.al (2024). socioeconomic status of the respondents was examined in terms of economic sustainability, income management and job satisfaction. The respondents stated that they were economically sustainable, had good income management, but they disagreed about job satisfaction due to heat-intensive heavy milling activities and being underpaid.

Dr. Pradeep Bapuso Lad (2022). The primary goal of this study is to examine the labour challenges, opportunities available, skill development influencing factors and driving factors for motivational performance of sugar factory workers. In this study, they found that hardship sugar factory employees after retirement. And suggests some measures like savings planning, factory support policy and government policy changes needed.

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Muthumeenakshi (2020) examines statutory welfare measures and their impact on quality of work life (QWL) among sugar mill workers in Tamil Nadu, where 44 mills operate across cooperative, private, and public sectors, supporting 50 million sugarcane farmers and 5 lakh rural workers. The study highlights how welfare enhances employee well-being—covering mental, physical, moral, and emotional aspects—to boost productivity, with Tamil Nadu contributing 10% to national sugar output. It emphasises QWL through employer-provided facilities and worker participation, positioning welfare as key to attracting/retaining talent amid labour-intensive operations. Udhalwad (2025) provides a quantitative socio-economic profile of 250 sugarcane migrant workers from Beed district, Maharashtra—a drought-prone area driving distress migration due to crop failures and land scarcity. The study reveals high vulnerability: 44% aged 14-30, 42.8% uneducated or primary-educated, 68% in kutcha/semi-pucca housing, over 60% landless, chronic debt via informal lenders, and limited welfare access despite 84% BPL and 86% E-Shram cards.

RESEARCH GAP

The major studies focus broadly on the conditions of migrant workers of sugar factory workers. Hence, the present study explores the socio-economic conditions of regular employees of the sugar factory employees.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is significant to understand the socio-economic conditions of sugar factory employees in Vijaypur district. So that it can recommend the sugar factory management to make some industry policies to attain the requirements of the employees.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The present study aims to explore the socio-economic conditions of sugar factory employees of Jhamakhandi sugar factory in Vijaypura district, Karnataka, in terms of their level of satisfaction towards socio-economic conditions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a descriptive-analytical design to investigate the socio-economic characteristics of sugarcane migrant workers in Vijayapura district, Karnataka. It relies primarily on quantitative methods to empirically assess the living and working conditions of employees at Jhamkhandi Sugar Factory. A simple random sampling method was used to collect responses from 50 respondents.

Table 1 Key variables considered in the study

category	Key variables
1. Demographic profile	Age, gender and marital status
2. Education Background	Level of education
3. Housing and Family status	Type of housing and type of family
4. Income, expenditure and savings	Monthly Individual income, family income, expenditure pattern and savings pattern
5. Access to finance	level of access to banks and other financial institutions
6. Social status	Level of social interactions

Table 2. Results and Discussions

Category	Key Variables
1. Demographic profile	In case of age, the majority 85% respondents were young (18-30). All are male, indicating low women participation. 80% of the respondents were married.
2. Education Background	72% had secondary education 16% had primary 4% were uneducated, and 8% had graduated
3. Housing and Family status	Most (82%) had their own house remaining were rented and others. The housing status was pakka (68%) and kaccha (14%). 74% were nuclear families.
4. Income, expenditure and savings	72% Monthly Individual income was 30000-40000, 83% family income was less than 20000, 67% expenditure fell under more than 20000 and 55% were taken loan.
5. Access to finance	All had a Bank account, some of them had a Jan Dhan account, and all had an electricity facility, and all had their own toilets and own water facility.
6. Social status	Because of this employment, they were socially integrated with other participants in culture, festival and other functions.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Launch specialised literacy initiatives for adults and schooling programs for children in labour households or factory premises.
2. Enhance availability of low-cost loans, foster Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and support cooperative banking systems among sugar factory employees.
3. Offer women workers customised healthcare, workplace safety measures, and childcare assistance to encourage female participation in the sugar factory.
4. Arrange some sports and cultural programmes among workers to stay connected with other employees.
5. Give moral support and counselling arrangements for workers to reduce stress,

CONCLUSION

The socio-economic profile of sugarcane factory workers in Vijayapura district reveals deep structural vulnerabilities, including low education, insecure housing, chronic indebtedness, and limited welfare access despite the industry's economic contributions exceeding ₹500 crore annually. Workers, predominantly from marginalised castes, endure exploitative conditions akin to Beed migrants, with gender disparities amplifying risks for women amid seasonal operations at factories like Jhamkhandi Sugars.

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