

Socio-Economic Conditions of Rural Labour and Marginal Farmer Households in Border Area of Punjab: A Case Study of Gurdaspur District

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Abstract

This study has been conducted to analyze the socio-economic status of marginal farmers and rural labour households in border district of Gurdaspur, Punjab. By using multistage convenient sampling technique, the total sample constituting 174 households, out of which 92 were rural labour and 82 were marginal farmer households were surveyed for the period 2020-21. The study revealed that income of the sampled households was insufficient to meet their daily expenses and poverty eradication schemes were not properly implemented. The contribution of non-farm income was remarkable for all respondents. There is need to increase subsidized food under public distribution scheme and pension under old age pension schemes, more employment under MGNREGA, and the like respectively.

Keywords: Family size, Income, Consumption, Per capita income, Consumption

JEL Classification: D13, N55, Q12, Z13

Introduction

The contribution of Punjab in food basket of India is remarkable since mid-1960's and till today the share of Punjab in the food basket of India is 37.82 per cent and 20.92 per cent in wheat and rice respectively (Economic Survey, Punjab 2020-21). The mechanization has created the problem of over capitalization (in the form of overtractization and other equipments), particularly for marginal and small farmers. Whereas it has created lack of employment opportunities for agricultural labourers and aggravated the problem of debt/loans for both marginal farmers and landless/agricultural workers, only the large farmers are gainers from it.. The use of new high yielding variety of seeds, pesticides and weedicides has been increasing day by day. Majority of the labourers of rural area changed their occupation from agricultural labourers to non-agricultural labourers. Sometimes difficulties are faced by farmers due to the shortage of labour and they have to pay high wages to labourers. The study has been conducted to analyse the socio-economic status of rural labour households and marginal farmers in the border area of Punjab on the basis of primary data. Majority of the studies have discussed the issues of indebtedness and income separately. But few of them analysed the socio-economic conditions of rural labour households and marginal farmers and no one of them had analysed above discussed issues in the border districts of Punjab. Hence, the present study tries to fill this

gap in this area of research. After the mid-sixties, several research studies have been conducted in Punjab and India to evaluate whether the gains of the Green Revolution have trickled down to all the sections of the farming communities or not and consequently to study their socio-economic conditions. According to laxminarayn study (1977), after the successful implementation of green revolution, substantially increase in income in the agriculture income of these states and wage rate of agriculture laborers also increase faster than inflation rate and improvement in their living standard. But data clearly shows, out of the total income of laborers, only small proportions of their income earned from agriculture sector. After economic reforms in 1991-92 there is also increase in real wage rate of workforce but before 1990's there was an increase in debt per household of agriculture labourers. The share of debt from non-institutional sources fell but still share of this debt is about 80 percent in most of the states in India (Sharma, 2005). The authors had analysed the influence of agrarian distress upon labour force since last few decades. The study pointed out that due to relatively slower decline in share of agriculture in total employment than that of GDP, the density of workforce is increasing in the country. The crisis in agriculture not only reduced their employment but also dampened their wages (Deshpande and Shah, 2007). The study also revealed the source of income of the respondents in terms of proportion. For the large and medium farmers, the proportion of agriculture income was

84.1 per cent, proportion for small, marginal farmers was 84.9 and 36.2 per cent respectively. The share of non-farm income was zero for large farmers, for marginal, small and medium farmers it was 26.7, 7 and 8.5 per cent respectively (Vatta and Pavithra, 2013). The study brought out that average crops productivity, income, and off-farm income play a positive role in the income level. Thus, a number of studies reviewed above have tried to find the relationship among the indebtedness, agriculture production and productivity, nature of employment of informal labour force and marginal farmers etc. These studies have discussed the issues of indebtedness and income separately. But few of them analysed the socio-economic conditions of rural labour households and marginal farmers and no one of them had analysed above discussed issues in the border districts of Punjab. Hence, the present study tries to fill this gap in this area of research, with the specific objectives of studying socio-economic characteristics

of level, pattern and per capita income and consumption expenditure of rural labour and marginal farmer households in the border area of Punjab.

Data Sources and Methodology

Out of the total 22 districts of Punjab, six districts (Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Taran Tarn, Gurdaspur and Fazilka) are sharing boundary line with Pakistan. Punjab is divided in to three main regions i. e Majha, Malwa and Doaba region. For the study purpose, only Gurdaspur District is selected. A multistage convenient sampling technique has been used to select the ultimate respondents. The district being sample unit at first stage, the blocks at second stage, villages being at third stage and only rural labour households and marginal farmers are the respondents at fourth stage. Further from this district, all the development blocks (15 kilometres from boundary line as per the guidelines of Border

Table 1. Respondents According to Different Categories of Income

Particular	Category	Category	Category	Category	Total
	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Rural Labour Households	38 (41.30)	45 (48.91)	4 (4.34)	5 (5.43)	92 (100)
Marginal Farmers	17 (20.73)	34 (41.46)	25 (30.48)	6 (7.32)	82 (100)
Total	55 (31.60)	79 (45.40)	29 (16.67)	11 (6.32)	174 (100)

Source: Field Survey 2020-21.

Table 2. Average Family Size and level of Income of Respondents

Size of family (Number of members)	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total
Labour households	4.23	5.07	5.5	5.5	5.08
Marginal farmers	5.04	5.65	5.18	5.11	5.25

Source: Field Survey 2020-21

Table 3. Average Size of Land Holding Among Marginal Farmer households

Particulars	C1	C2	C3	C4
Land ownership	1.32	1.72	2.7	1.5
Land on rent (in)	0.06	0.52	0	1.33
Land on rent (out)	0	0	0.85	0
Land on mortgage(in)	0	0	0	0
Land on mortgage (out)	0	0.03	0	0.04
Crop Sharing (in)	0	0	0	0
Crop sharing (out)	0	0	0	0
Total Operational land	1.38	2.27	3.55	2.87

Source: Field Survey 2020-21.

Table 4. Level and Pattern of Income of Sampled Marginal Farmer Households (Rs.)

Source of Income	C1	C2	C3	C4
Income of agriculture Sector				
Income from agriculture sector	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Casual labour in agriculture sector	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Income from sale of crops				
Paddy	37485.51 (37.8)	54440.07 (33.63)	88144.4 (21.58)	134516.67 (29.23)
Basmati	0 (0.00)	4930.15 (3.05)	2427.5 (0.59)	0 (0.00)
Wheat	32289.04 (32.56)	32928.5 (20.34)	173702.35 (42.52)	119542.5 (25.97)
Sub-total	69774.55 (70.36)	92298.72 (57.02)	264274.25 (64.7)	254059.17 (55.2)
Income from Allied activities				
Income from Allied activities	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Income from poultry production	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Income from sale of milk and milk products	4348.24 (4.38)	36725.59 (22.69)	43150.4 (10.98)	0 (0.00)
Sub-total	4348.24 (4.38)	36725.59 (22.69)	43150.4 (10.98)	0 (0.00)
Income from other Sources				
Construction work	11808.82 (11.91)	1835.29 (1.13)	5760 (1.41)	0 (0.00)
Income from agriculture implement on rent	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1680 (0.41)	8666.67 (1.88)
PM-KISAN Nidhi Yojna	5647.05 (5.63)	5647.05 (3.49)	5520 (1.35)	4000 (0.87)
Other Sources	7588.67 (7.65)	25358.98 (15.67)	86408 (21.15)	193513.3 (42.05)
Sub-total	25044.44 (25.25)	32841.32 (15.67)	99368 (21.15)	206180 (44.8)
Total	99167.33 (100)	161865.6 (100)	408472.7 (100)	460239.1 (100)

Source: Field Survey 2020-21.

Note: The figures in the parentheses are percentages.

Area Development Program) had been selected for study purpose. The selected community developments blocks from Gurdaspur district were Dera Baba Nanak, Kallanaur, Gurdaspur, Dorangla and Dinanagar. From each block, one village was selected randomly for study purpose. Further from each village out of the total labour households and marginal farmers, 10 per cent houses were selected as respondents for a well prepared questionnaire. Further for the classification of class intervals regarding the income

among labour households, first category defined is under less than Rs. 70,000 annual income per household (C1). The Second category fall under more than Rs.70,000 and less than Rs. 1,40,000 per household annually (C2). The third category fall under more than Rs.140000 and less than 2,10,000 per household annually (C3). The fourth and the highest income category being more than Rs. 2,10,000 per households annually. Among the marginal farmers, first category considered is under less than Rs. 1,50,000 annual

Table 5. Per Capita Income of Sampled Marginal Farmer Households (Rs.)

Source of Income	C1	C2	C3	C4
Income of agriculture Sector				
Income from agriculture sector	0	0	0	0
Casual labour in agriculture sector	0	0	0	0
Income from sale of crops	0	0	0	0
Paddy	7437.6	9635.41	17016.29	26324.2
Basmati	0	872.59	468.63	0
Wheat	6406.56	5828.05	33533.27	23393.84
Sub-total	13844.16	16336.06	51018.19	49718.04
Income from Allied activities	0	0	0	0
Income from poultry production	0	0	0	0
Income from sale of milk and milk products	862.75	6500.1	8330.19	0
Sub-total	862.75	6500.1	8654.52	0
Income from other Sources	0	0	0	0
Construction work	2343.02	324.83	1111.97	0
Income from agriculture implement on rent	0	0	324.32	1696.02
PM-KISAN Nidhi Yojna	1120.45	999.48	1065.64	782.78
Other Sources	1505.69	4488.32	16681.08	37869.53
Sub-total	4969.15	5812.62	19183.01	40348.33
Total	19676.06	28648.78	78855.72	90066.37

Source: Table 3

per household. The Second category being with income under more than Rs.1,50,000 and less than Rs. 3,00,000 per household annually (C2). The third category is for income more than Rs.3,00,000 and less than 4,50,000 per household annually (C3). The fourth category fell under more than Rs. 4,50,000 per household annually (C4). The average monthly consumption expenditure has been calculated as the expenditure of 30 days as per the procedure of NSSO 72nd round. The reference period of the study was August 2020. Further, standard statistical tools like mean value and proportions have been used while carrying out tabular analysis.

Results and Discussion

From the above table it is clear that out of 174 total sampled respondents, 92 are from rural labour households and 82 respondents are from marginal farmer households. Further among the rural labour households and marginal farmers, majority of the respondents fall under category one and two, It clearly shows that most of the labour households have income less than Rs.70,000 and between 70,000 and Rs. 1,40,000 per household annually. On the other hand, among the marginal farmer households, majority of the respondents are (41.46 per cent and 30.48 per cent) fall under the category two (C2) and three (C3) respectively.

The family size is the important variable to determine the level of income, expenditure and therefore household savings as well as liabilities. The average size of the family members of rural labour and marginal farmers is 5.08 and 5.25 respectively. Among the rural labour households the minimum size of family members is 4.23. Thus, it means average income and family size are positively related. The low income or uncertainty of income led to decrease in family size and certainty of income led to increase in family size. On the contrary, the maximum average size of the families among marginal farmer households fall under the second category of income i. e 5.65.

The above table revealed the average size of land holding among marginal farmer households. They might be having some other sources of income. The sampled respondents under first category had average land holding to the tune of 1.32 acre as their own land and 0.06 acre of land as rent. Among the second category, the average size of land holding is 1.72 acre as own land, 0.52 acre of land as a rented and 0.03 acre land as a mortgaged out. Further, the table also revealed that the average size of land holding of sampled marginal farmer households under third category is 2.7 acre as own land and 0.85 acre as land on rent (out) and under fourth category, the size of their own land holding is 1.5 acre, 1.33 acre as land on rent (in) and 0.04 acre of land as

Table 6. Level and Pattern of Consumption of Sampled Marginal Farmer Households of last 30 days (Rs.)

Items of Consumption	C1	C2	C3	C4
Non-durables				
Expenses on food grains	1503.92 (17.1)	1622.5 (14.54)	1572.41 (13.95)	1647.81 (14.99)
Consumption of milk	1491.71 (16.96)	1823.64 (16.34)	2264.83 (20.1)	2266.67 (20.63)
Contominent and Spices	220.53 (2.51)	275.78 (2.47)	278.04 (2.47)	281.81 (2.56)
Vegetables	510.26 (5.8)	514.21 (4.61)	522.06 (4.63)	530.71 (4.83)
Sugarcane products	448.07 (5.09)	463.09 (4.15)	483.33 (4.29)	484.39 (4.41)
Edible oils	185.71 (2.11)	191.23 (1.71)	198.45 (1.76)	203.45 (1.85)
Others (Specify)	800.27 (9.1)	787.12 (7.05)	951.06 (8.44)	904.13 (8.23)
Sub-total	5160.47 (58.67)	5677.65 (50.88)	6270.18 (55.64)	6318.97 (57.5)
Services				
Education	296.63 (3.37)	836.87 (7.5)	780.69 (6.93)	244 (2.22)
Healthcare	674.56 (7.67)	740.05 (6.63)	810.45 (7.19)	846.36 (7.7)
Conveyance (Bus railway/rickshaw)	380.49 (4.33)	415.3 (3.72)	411.3 (3.65)	612.78 (5.58)
Light service charges	672.54 (7.65)	713.89 (6.4)	1070.93 (9.5)	1039.11 (9.46)
Gas service charges	36.71 (0.42)	365.46 (3.27)	487.83 (4.33)	509.03 (4.63)
Others (Specify)	1574.14 (17.9)	2409.92 (21.6)	1438.63 (12.77)	1418.92 (12.91)
Sub-total	3635.07 (41.33)	5481.49 (49.12)	4999.83 (44.36)	4670.2 (42.5)
Total	8795.54 (100)	11159.14 (100)	11270.01 (100)	10989.17 (100)

Source: Field Survey 2020-21.

Note: The figures in the parentheses are percentages.

land on a mortgage (out). From the above facts, it is clear that as the size of land holding increases, with availability of other farm and non-farm resources of income, the gross income of the sampled marginal farmer households had been increasing.

The rural labour and marginal farmers are placed at bottom of the economic ladder. The average annual gross income of Marginal farmer households is Rs. 99167.33, 1,61,865.6, 406792.065 and 460239.14 of category one,

two, three and four respectively. Out of the total income of Rs. 9 9167.3 among category one, the maximum amount of their gross income is from the sale of agriculture crops and from allied activities. The farmers belonging to first category respondents also earned income from construction work. In case of fourth category with income more than Rs.4,50,000, their maximum amount of gross income is also from the sale of their agriculture crops. Besides, the ample scale of mechanization and changing occupation structure,

Table 7. Per Capita Consumption Expenditure of Sampled Marginal Farmer Households (Rs.)

Items of Consumption	C1	C2	C3	C4
Non-durables				
Expenses on food grain	298.4	287.18	303.55	322.47
consumption of milk	295.97	322.77	437.23	443.58
Condominent spices	43.76	48.81	53.68	55.15
Vegetables	101.24	91.01	100.78	103.86
Sugarcane products	88.9	81.96	93.31	94.79
Edible oils	36.85	33.85	38.31	39.81
Others	158.78	139.31	183.6	176.93
Sub-total	1023.9	1004.89	1210.46	1236.59
Services				
Education	58.86	148.12	150.71	47.75
Healthcare	133.84	130.98	156.46	165.63
Conveyance (Bus railway/rickshaw)	75.49	73.5	79.4	119.92
Light service charges	133.44	126.35	206.74	203.35
Gas service charges	7.28	64.68	94.18	99.61
Others	312.33	426.53	277.73	277.68
Sub-total	721.24	970.18	965.22	913.93
Total	1745.15	1975.07	2175.68	2150.52

Source: Table 5

still their main source of gross income is from sale of their agriculture crops. In all the categories maximum percentage of their gross income is from agriculture/sale of crops i.e is 70.36, 57.02, 64.97 and 55.2 percent respectively. The Production of milk and milk products among allied activities is another vital source of income for first three category's respondents. Therefore, there is need to encourage the first category respondents to increase the scale of their income by dairy farming, poultry farming and other progressive farm occupations. These facts are matched with other study (Anupama et. al, 2017), stating in absolute term the average annual gross income of marginal farmer households is Rs. 139365.27 and in relative term maximum proportion of their gross income is from farm income and allied activities.

The table above shows the per capita income of marginal farmers whose average size of families is 5.04, 5.65, 5.18, 5.11 of category one, two three and four respectively. The economic status of the family is also determined from per capita income of the family. The per capita income of the families falling under category one is Rs. 19676.06, of second category it is Rs. 28648.4, of third category it is Rs. 78531.4 and of fourth category it is Rs. 90066.37. Further, among all the categories, the maximum amount of their income is from sale of their crops, followed by the income from the non-farm sector. The highest per capita income from first, second, third and fourth categories is from other sources which include construction work, MGNREGA, pensions,

drivers and industry etc. Besides all these sources of their incomes, their per capita income is meagre to meet their basic needs of life. The reason behind having relatively higher income of the fourth category respondents is that they have non-farm sources of their income such as income from renting of agriculture implements and other sources like own business.

The values of consumption expenditure of the marginal farmers in border district of Gurdaspur are exhibited in table 5. The consumption expenditure of last 30 days among sampled marginal farmers is Rs. 8795.54, 11159.14, 11270.01 and Rs. 10988.87 for category one, two, three and fourth respectively. Among these respondents, the maximum expenditure is on consumption of foodgrain and milk. From the list of durables goods, the maximum expenditure is on other goods which includes, tea leaves, fruits and chicken etc. The marginal farmer households who fall under the fourth category, their consumption expenditure of last 30 days on non-durable goods is on consumption of milk, foodgrains, sugarcane and so on. On the other hand, the study reveals that consumption expenditure depend upon the income and size of families. From the first category the maximum proportion of consumption expenditure spent is (58.67 percent) on the non-durable goods and 41.33 percent on the durable goods. From the fourth category, the maximum proportion of the expenditure is on the non-durables, followed by durable goods and their respective share is 57.5 and 42.5 respectively.

Table 8. Level and Pattern of Income of Sampled Rural Labour Households (Rs.)

Source of Income	C1	C2	C3	C4
Income of agriculture Sector				
Income from agriculture sector	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Casual labour in agriculture sector	22211.57 (35.76)	20026.67 (23.39)	10068 (5.43)	7969.2 (2.7)
Income from sale of crops				
Paddy	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	00 (0.0)
Basmati	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	00 (0.0)	00 (0.0)
Wheat	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	00 (0.0)	00 (0.0)
Sub-total	22211.57 (35.76)	20026.67 (23.39)	10068 (5.43)	7969.2 (2.7)
Income from Allied activities				
Income from poultry production	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Income from sale of milk and milk products	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Income from agriculture implements on rent	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Sub-total	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Income from other Sources				
Construction work	13143.68 (21.19)	32056.88 (37.43)	12950 (6.99)	7080 (2.4)
Brick-klin factory	6931.58 (11.16)	2600 (3.04)	0 (0.0)	00 (0.0)
As domestic worker	2806.18 (4.52)	3658.44 (4.27)	7945 (4.29)	0 (0.0)
Others (specify)	17017.26 (27.4)	27292.13 (31.87)	154200 (83.27)	280400 (94.91)
Sub-total	39898.7 (64.24)	65607.45 (76.61)	175095 (94.56)	287480 (97.3)
Total	62110.27 (100)	85634.12 (100)	185163 (100)	295449.2 (100)

Source: Field Survey 2020-21.

Note: The figures in the parentheses are percentages.

The study revealed that in case of consumption expenditure, all the respondents related to these four categories have their maximum consumption expenditure on their daily needs i.e on non-durables rather than durables.

The table revealed that the level and pattern of consumption expenditure of marginal farmers, it becomes relevant to examine the per capita income of these

respondents. The spending on health, education and services by households also determine the social status of the society. In this study the per capita consumption of the sampled marginal farmer households is Rs.1745.15, 1975.07, 2175.68 and 2150.46 for first, second, third and fourth category respondents respectively for the last 30 days. The per capita consumption depends upon the family size and income.

Table 9. Per Capita Income of Rural Labour Households (Rs.)

Source of Income	C1	C2	C3	C4
Income of agriculture Sector				
Contractual labour in agriculture labour	0	0	0	0
Casual labour in agriculture labour	5250.96	20026.67	1830.55	1568.74
Income from sale of crops				
Paddy	0	0	0	0
Basmati	0	0	0	0
Wheat	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	5250.96	20026.67	1830.55	1568.74
Income from Allied activities				
Income from poultry production	0	0	0	0
Income from sale of milk and milk products	0	0	0	0
Income from agriculture implements on rent	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	0	0	0	0
Income from non-agriculture Sector				
Construction work	3107.25	32056.88	2354.55	1393.7
Brick-klin factory	1638.67	2600	0	0
As domestic worker	663.4	3658.44	1444.55	0
Others (specify)	4022.99	27292.13	28036.36	55196.85
Sub-total	9432.32	65607.45	31835.45	56590.55
Total	14683.28	85634.12	33666	58159.29

Source: Table 7.

The sampled respondents fall under category one spend their maximum amount of their consumption expenditure on non-durable goods that is Rs. 1023.9. Further among the non-durable goods the maximum per capita consumption on food grain, followed by milk and other purposes. The sampled respondents under first category spent their per capita consumption expenditure maximum on services that is on electricity bills, followed conveyance and other sources. The respondents falling under four category spend maximum part of their per capita consumption on non-durable goods, followed by services, which clearly shows that their first preference of spending is on food items and basic needs.

The rural labour households are placed at the bottom of income distribution. The uncertainty and irregularity of their income lead to the fluctuations in their income. An attempt has also been made to highlight the inter-categories income of rural labour households. The above table shows the sources of gross income of rural labour households. The average annual gross income of the sampled respondents is Rs. 62110.27, 85634.12, 185163 and 295449.2 of the concerned categories one, two, three and four respectively. Among the category one, out of the total income of Rs. 62110.27, income from agriculture sector (Casual labour) is Rs. 22211.57 and from non- agriculture it is Rs. 39898.97.

But not even a single penny comes from allied activities. Among the second category respondents, the average annual income of sampled respondents is Rs. 85634.12, out of which Rs. 20026.67 from agriculture sector and Rs. 65607.45 from non-agriculture sector. The largest sources of contribution in their gross income are construction work, wages domestic workers and brick-klin factory workers and so on. From the category fourth, out of the total income of Rs. 295449.2, Rs. 287480 is from non-agriculture sector and only Rs. 7969.2 is from agriculture sector. The other sources of gross income under non-agriculture sector are through vending vegetables, work under government scheme like MGNREGA, plumber, carpenter and shops etc. On the contrary, among the category one the maximum proportion in gross income of sampled respondents is from other sources, followed by construction work and brick-klin factory work among non-agriculture sector and their respective share is 27.4, 21.19 and 11.16 respectively. The proportion of agriculture sector is 35.76 per cent. The non-agriculture sector also plays vital role among all the respondents and their respective share is 64.24, 76.24, 94.56 and 97.3 respectively for all the four categories. These facts are also matched with (Sukhveer et. al., 2018) study, where the average annual gross income of sampled agricultural labour is Rs. 81452.17 in rural Punjab.

Table 10. Level and Pattern of Consumption among Rural Labor Households

	(Rs.)			
Items of Consumption	C1	C2	C3	C4
Non-durables				
Foodgrains	1350.14 (16.84)	1412.04 (15.81)	1542.97 (17.9)	1599.99 (16.2)
Consumption of milk	1389.35 (17.33)	1444.15 (16.17)	1526.46 (17.7)	1791.67 (18.15)
Containment and spices	265.92 (3.32)	275.03 (3.08)	285.83 (3.32)	291.18 (2.95)
Vegetables	527.8 (6.58)	519.76 (5.82)	488.12 (5.66)	533.37 (5.4)
Sugercane products	416.57 (5.2)	430.79 (4.82)	446.04 (5.17)	464.21 (4.7)
Edible oils	157.96 (1.97)	174.55 (1.95)	169.66 (1.97)	215.1 (2.18)
Others (Specify)	565.33 (7.05)	710.02 (7.95)	710.57 (8.24)	831.02 (8.42)
Sub -total	4673.07 (58.3)	4966.34 (55.59)	5169.65 (59.96)	5726.54 (58)
Services				
Education	271.38 (3.39)	310.3 (3.47)	451.87 (5.24)	84.5 (0.86)
Healthcare	964.14 (12.03)	829.33 (9.28)	712.5 (8.26)	890.33 (9.02)
Conveyance (Bus railway/rickshaw)	251.21 (3.13)	279.3 (3.13)	262.2 (3.04)	272.5 (2.76)
Power bill charges	267.83 (3.34)	269.83 (3.02)	298.33 (3.46)	402 (4.07)
Gas service charges	318.28 (3.97)	317.22 (3.55)	340.63 (3.95)	587.33 (5.95)
Others (Specify)	1269.89 (15.84)	1961.33 (21.95)	1386.93 (16.09)	1910.92 (19.35)
Sub-total	3342.73 (41.7)	3967.31 (44.41)	3452.46 (40.04)	4147.58 (42)
Total	8015.8 (100)	8933.65 (100)	8622.11 (100)	9874.12 (100)

Source: Field Survey 2020-21.

Note: The figures in the parentheses are percentages.

The per capita income of rural labour households is significant variable to determine the status of the family. The per capita income of the sampled rural labour household respondents is Rs. 14683.78, 16890.36, 36666 and 53718.04 belonging to concerned categories one, two, three and four respectively. The maximum amount of per capita income of the respondents from all categories comes from non- agriculture sector, which clearly shows that due to mechanization of agriculture in Punjab rural labour has

diversified its occupation for increased their earnings.

The consumption expenditure of any community not only provides an insight into the well being of its members, but it also gives an idea about the poverty as well as its probability of being caught in a vicious debt trap in the current and future time. The above table shows the level of consumption of sampled rural labour households for last 30 days. The average consumption of last 30 days is Rs. 8015.80, 8933.65,

Table 11. Per Capita Consumption of Rural Labour Households (Rs.)

Items of Consumption	C1	C2	C3	C4
Non-durables				
Food grains	319.18	278.51	280.54	314.96
Consumption of milk	328.45	284.84	277.54	352.69
Containment and spices	62.87	54.25	51.97	57.32
Vegetables	124.78	102.52	88.75	104.99
Sugarcane products	98.48	84.97	81.1	91.38
Edible oils	37.34	34.43	30.85	42.34
Others (Specify)	133.65	140.04	129.19	163.59
Sub-total	1104.75	979.55	939.94	1127.27
Services				
Education	64.16	61.2	82.16	16.63
Healthcare	227.93	163.58	129.55	175.26
Conveyance (Bus railway/rickshaw)	59.39	55.09	47.67	53.64
Power bill charges	63.32	53.22	54.24	79.13
Gas service charges	75.24	62.57	61.93	115.62
Others (Specify)	300.21	386.85	252.17	376.17
Sub-total	790.24	782.51	627.72	816.45
Total	1894.99	1762.06	1567.66	1943.72

Source: Table 9.

Table 12. Average propensity to Consume of Sampled Marginal Farmer Households

Particulars	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total Average
Average monthly income (Rs.)	8263.94	13488.8	33899.38	38353.26	23501.36
Average monthly consumption expenditure (Rs.)	8795.54	11159.14	11270.01	10988.87	10553.39
Average propensity to consume	1.06	0.82	0.33	0.28	0.44

Source: Table 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Table 13. Average Monthly Income and Consumption Expenditure of Rural Labour Households

Particulars	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total
Average monthly income (Rs.)	5175.86	7136.18	15430.25	24620.77	13090.76
Average monthly consumption expenditure (Rs.)	8015.8	8933.65	8622.11	9874.12	8861.42
Average propensity to consume	1.55	1.25	0.56	0.4	0.68

Source: Table 8 and 10

8622.11 and 9874.12 of respondents belonging to categories C1, C2, C3, and C4 respectively. Among non-durable goods the maximum amount is spent on consumption of milk and wheat by all respondents of all categories, because milk and wheat are the basic needs of households. These households do not have land for cattles, hence they purchased the milk from the market. The percentage wise comparison of average consumption expenditure among different categories can

also be seen. It can be perceived from the table above that all the respondents from different categories spend maximum percentage of their consumption expenditure on the milk and milk products among non-durables goods i.e the first, second, third and fourth category respondents spend Rs. 41.7, 44.41, 40.04 and 42 respectively. In case of expenditure on services, healthcare expenditure takes the maximum chunk in case of all categories. Thus, the study revealed that there

is need to provide health facilities to the rural community at affordable rates.

As already stated that the size of families of various categories and the per capita expenditure of various categories is a good tool of measurement of living standard of people. The per capita household consumption expenditure is highest among the first class interval category as compared to other class intervals. Majority of the respondents fall under first category, due to which their average per capita consumption expenditure is high and number of earners is less as compared to third and fourth category respondents. The third and fourth category respondents contain only few respondents and their expenditure on family marriage function is nil.

The above table shows the average monthly income and consumption expenditure of marginal farmer households. The average monthly income of marginal farmers is Rs.8263.94, 13488.8, 33899.38 and 38353.26 respectively for category one, two, three and fourth. On the contrary, the average monthly consumption expenditure is Rs. 8795.54, 11159.54, 11270.01 and 10988.87 for the same first, second, third and fourth category respondents. For the respondents falling under category one, it is difficult to survive, due to low income and high consumption expenditure. The category-wise average propensity to consume of these sampled respondents is 1.06, 0.82, 0.33 and 0.28 respectively.

The average monthly income of majority of the sampled respondents of category one, two, three and fourth category is Rs. 5175.86 and 7136.178, 15430.25 and 24620.77 respectively. The average propensity to consume of the respondents is 1.55, 1.25, 0.56 and 0.40 of category one, two three and four respectively. The average consumption expenditure of first two categories is more than their income, that their income is more than the expenditure on both basic necessities durable and non-durables goods. In both the case of marginal farmers and rural labour households, it can be seen that for all the categories income is more than the expenditure on basic necessities, however their average propensity to consume is more than the majority of the cases. This indicates that their expenditure on unproductive items is more, which leads to the debt/loan problem.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The proportion of income from allied activities of marginal farmer households is less as compared to other sources and of rural labour households is totally nil. Therefore, there is need to promote allied activities like dairy, apiary, poultry and fishery farms with proper training and free targeted subsidies. The proportion of income from MGNREGA is quite low due to non-payment and poor implementation of the scheme by the local administration. There is need to implement MGNREGA with proper procedure and also there is need to increase number of days

for employment. On the other hand, the amount provided by Punjab government under old age, orphan people is Rs. 750 per month to a beneficiary (Eco Survey, 2020-21), which is quite low and need to be increased minimum up to Rs. 3,000 per month. The widow pension to beneficiary and her child is Rs.750 each per month. However, the amount paid to her children is only up to 18 years. There is also need to increase the benefit till the age they want to complete their higher education and are self-dependent and amount should also be increased. Even after the implementation of Public Distribution Scheme in Punjab, the quantity provided to the family is 30 k.g of wheat per member twice a year at Rs. 2 per k.g and under Antyodhya scheme is 35 k.g per of wheat per member twice a year at Rs. 2 per kg (Eco Survey, 2020-21). This quantity of food is insufficient for even single member for the six months, there is also need to increase this limit. Among the expenditure on services for both marginal farmers and rural labour households, the maximum proportion is being spent on health, there is also a need to provide health services in rural areas at affordable price. Since the income of both marginal farmers and rural labour households had turned out to be very low therefore the study suggests that the marginal farmers can increase their income by renting out their agricultural tools and equipments. This will also solve the problem of over capitalization. For the rural households to increase their income, employability can be generated through the Skill Development Centres, where they can be trained to repair and maintain the agricultural machinery, tools and equipment to generate self employment.

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