

An Analysis of Economic and Working Conditions of Bonded Labour: A Case Study of District Sirsa, Haryana

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Abstract – Bonded Labour exists mainly in the Asian countries and agricultural societies. This type of labour is related to the cases where monetary or financial contracts occur such as loans, which if the debtor find himself to pay unable, he has to serve the creditor for some specific period or unspecific period. The present study highlights the analysis of the economic and working conditions of bonded labour in Ellenabad and Nathusari Chopta of Sirsa district of Haryana. Main objectives of the study are examine the economic conditions of bonded Labour, the problems and working conditions of bonded labour and find out the reach level of different schemes to the concerned working class. For this purpose primary data were collected through interview method and percentage method was used for analysis the data. Finding of the study reveals that the bonded labours are leading a very miserable life.

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INTRODUCTION

A man is keeping another man in perpetual bondage for his selfish and personal designs is a kind of man's cruelty to man which is not confined to a particular country or a particular region but is found as a global phenomenon for thousands of years, right from the biblical days to the present era. Bonded labour today occurs in many countries all over the world. It thrives in South Asian countries like Pakistan, Nepal and India.

Bonded labour is a consequence of compliance between a debtor and a beneficiary or a landlord in which the debtor vows his own property. To go for further detail, first of all we shall have to understand the terms 'bonded labour system' and 'bonded labour'. By bonded labour system we means that particular process in which a person is debt some amount by creditor to confronts his daily needs, which he is unable to fulfill due to his economical compulsions. So for this amount a creditor goes for relationship with a debtor, in which the creditor credits him some money, but with some conditions. A person who obtains loan has to abide by the rules of bonded labour, which are dictated by the creditor. The two basic features of bonded labour are indebtedness and forced labour. Forced labour can hereditarily descend from father to son or be passed on for generations together. During the period of bondage, the debtor cannot seek employment with

any other person. Bonded labour refer to a long term relationship between the employee and the employer cemented through a loan, by custom or by force which denies the employees various freedoms including freedom to choose his or her employer, to enter into a fresh contract with the same employer or to negotiate the next generation . If a person agrees to the condition of bonded labour he is bond to avoid by it for life long. His/her entry in the clutches of bonded labour may be voluntary but his exit dependent on the owner wish. A labourer often passes on creditor-debtor relationship to his family members which he fails to overcome and this vicious circle passes on from this bonded labour to his family. In this way bonded labour continues for indefinite duration and involves illegal contractual stipulations. These stipulated contracts deny an individual the basic right to choose his or her employer or to negotiate the terms of his or her contract. These bonded labours can be fined out in money sectors such as the agricultural, silk, mining, match production and brick kiln industries. These labours are bonded not only due to economical condition, but are rain forced due to some cultural bondations also. Labour agrees to go for loan at the condition of bonded labour for a specific period but due to unavailability of paying off his money, he is tied up to those contracts which pulls him into the vicious circle of bonded labour.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To examine the socio-economic conditions of bonded Labour
- 2) To know the problems and working conditions of bonded labour
- 3) To find out the reach level of different scheme to the concerned working class.

METHODOLOGY

Multistage purposive sampling technique has been used to select the primary sampling units' viz. labourers, in order to achieve the specific objectives. A total of 60 respondents have been taken from Sirsa district. I randomly selected two blocks (Ellenabad and Nathusari Chopta) In these block I randomly selected four villages (Bhuratwala, poharka, Jamal and Kagdana) for evaluating the specific objectives of the study. 15 respondents from each village have been selected once again randomly.

To collecting the primary data, the time period has been selected from 2016 to 2017 throughout scheduled questionnaire and interview and high sampling procedure. To achieve the specific Objectives of the study, data collected has been analyzed; the data has been tabulated and analyzed. For the purpose of analysis, logical tool and techniques such as percentage, has been used. The formula for calculating the simple arithmetic mean is as follows:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where, \bar{X} = sum of the values of the variables considered

N= number of observations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It has consisted of three sections. Section 1 explains the economic conditions of Bounded Labour while section 2 depicts the problems and condition of labour at the worksite. Section 3 discuss about the reach level of different scheme to the concerned working class.

Section 1: This section presents the main reasons for the adoption of Labour in bonded, annual income, property, debt, Expenditure, Durables available at households of labourers.

Main reasons for the Adoption of this occupation: The furnished results related to the

adoption of the concerned occupation are presented through table 1.1 and it is revealed by the respondents that unavailability of work, loan, unskilled and no idea about the other options available with them have been the main reasons for the adoption of working as bonded labour.

Table 1.1

Main reasons for the Adoption of Bonded labour

Reasons	No .of respondents	Percentage
Unavailability of work	20	33.33
Loan	9	15
Un skilled, un education, no trained	1	1.67
No knowledge of other occupation	30	50.00
Total	60	100.00

(Sources: field survey)

However, it is also noticeable that maximum percentages of respondents have agreed to the fact that they do not have any knowledge about the options to them as 50 per cent respondents said that point. 33.33 per cent respondents have been of the opinion that unavailability of work has been the reason which pushed them to work as the bonded labour. But the worse results have been obtained from 16.67 per cent respondents as they replied as being in debt has been the reason behind the adoption of the occupation in point.

Annual Income of the Bonded Labour: The results related to the annual income of the respondents are presented through table 1.2. It is revealed by the results that maximum responses have been registered in the category ranging from 50000-60000 as 58.33 per cent of respondents replied in the mentioned manner. 13.33 per cent labour has said that they were earning between 60000-70000. Except for that respondents have been observed to be earner in the range 70000-80000 and 5 per cent respondents' income has also been recorded above 80000. But 16.67 per cent farmers' condition has been observed most vulnerable as they have not been able to earn even 50000 per annum. So, it is clear from the results related to the earnings of the bonded labour that they are being exploited by their masters indicate their helplessness for one or other reason.

Table1.2

Annual Income of the Bonded Labour

Annually income (in rupees)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 50,000	10	16.67
50,000-60,000	35	58.33
60,000-70,000	8	13.33
70,000-80,000	4	6.67
Above -80,000	3	5.00
Total	60	100.00

(Sources: field survey)

Property with the Bonded Labour: Regarding the responses related to the property with the bonded labour, it has been found that 83.33 per cent respondents do not have any land with them. Only 10 per cent respondents have agreed to the fact that they have a small piece of land with them. Except for that they do not have any another kind of property with them.

Table 1.3

Property with the Bonded Labour

Land (in acres)	No. of Respondents	Per cent
O	50	83.33
0-2	6	10.00
Above -2	4	6.67
Total	60	100

(Sources: field survey)

Annual Expenditure of the Family of Bonded Labour: The results related to annual expenditure on different components are presented through table. It is revealed by the results that they have no expenditure to spend on their children's education as their children are getting their education from government schools. It is also revealed by them that maximum expenditure have been devoted to the health related issues. Regarding clothes, 50 per cent respondents replied that they have less than 1000 expenditure on family clothes. Only 33.33 respondents have been observed to be spending above 2000 rupees on the family members' cloth. Regarding entertainment, maximum respondents have accepted the fact that they have less than 1000 rupees to spend on these activities.

Table 1.4

Annual Expenditure of the Family of Bonded Labour

Annual expenditure (in rupees)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Education		
0	60	100.00
Health		
Less than 10,000	17	28.33
10,000-20,000	20	33.33
20,000-30,000	21	35.00
Above -30,000	2	3.33
Cloth		
Less than 1,000	30	50.00
1,000-2,000	10	16.67
Above -2,000	20	33.33
Entertainment		
Less than 1,000	48	80.00
1,000-2,000	8	3.33
Above -2,000	4	6.67

(Sources: field survey)

Annual Debt of the Bonded Labour: A very dismal picture has been surfaced by the respondents of the labours in respect of their condition of debt as all the respondents have been observed to be under debt.

Table 1.5

Annual Debt of the Bonded Labour

Annual Debt (in rupees)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
10,000-20,000	7	11.67
20,000-30,000	8	13.33
30,000-40,000	20	33.33
Above -40,000	25	41.67
Total	60	100.00

(Sources: field survey)

A total 41.67 per cent respondents have to repay loan amounted to above 40 thousands while 33.33 per cent have accepted the fact that they have a debt on their head which is amounted to 30000-40000. So, it has once again a very deplorable picture has revealed by the study that they have forced to work as the bounded labour due to the acute poverty they were lining under.

Durables with the bonded labour at the households: The furnished results related to the durables at their houses revealed that maximum respondents have Gas at their home provided by the Government but only 20 per cent respondents have agreed to the fact that they have T.V. at their

home while 16.67 per cent respondents have the facility of cooler but only 5 per cent respondents have found to have Freeze at their house. So as far as the results related to the durables at their home is related, it is found that maximum percentage of farmers do not have very necessary durables like T.V., Radio at their home indicate the deprivation of that section to the source of very bases of information and entertainment.

Table 1.6

Durables with the bonded labour at the households

Name of goods	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Radio	5	8.33
Television	12	20.00
Freeze	3	5.00
Fan	55	91.67
Gas	56	93.33
Cooler	10	16.67

(Sources: field survey)

Section 2: The present section deals with the results related to timing of payments of salary, facilities provided at the worksite, components of food, facilities given on the occurrence of any accident and problems faced at the worksite.

Timing of Payments: The furnished results related to the time of payment revealed that maximum percentage of labours have got their salary in advance reveal their worse condition as maximum have taken loan from their masters for that they have to work at the moneylenders home without having any option with them and the very fact has been revealed by 86.67 per cent labour. So, it can be said that the century old custom of being exploited at the hands of moneylenders have been overtaken by the labours. 8.33 per cent respondents have also put forward that they get their salary after waiting for long time. Only 5 per cent respondents are of the view that they get their salary as per schedule.

Table 2.1

Timing of Payments

Time of payment	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Advance	52	86.67
In time	3	5.00
Delay	5	8.33
Total	60	100.00

(Sources: field survey)

Problems of Bonded labour at work place: The results related to the problems being faced by the bonded labour at their workplace are presented through table. 83.33 per cent respondents have agreed to the fact that they have always been overloaded with work. However, a very meager percentage of respondents have also complained about the bad working conditions which were provided to them. Except for that, less availability of facilities at their workplace has also been given a reason of problems by the bonded labour.

Table 2.5

Problems at the Worksite

Type of problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Over load	50	83.33
Bad working condition	4	6.67
Less availability of facilities.	6	10.00
Total	60	100.00

(Sources: field survey)

Facilities Provided at the Worksite:

Table 2.2

Facilities Provided at the Worksite

Type of facilities	Full time stay		Half time stay	
	No of Respondents	Percentage	No of Respondents	Percentage
House	25	100.00	0	0.00
(a) Kaccha	5	20.00	-	-
(b) Pakka	20	80.00	-	-
Pure drinking water	25	100.00	35	100.00
Type of toilet	25	100	35	100.00
(a) Open	3	12.00	0	0.00
(b) Hole	22	88.00	5	14.28
(c) Flush	0	0.00	30	85.72
Food	25	100.00	35	100.00
(a) One time	0	0.00	20	57.14
(b) Two time	0	0.00	15	42.86
(c) Any time	25	100.00	0	0.00

(Sources: field survey)

It is revealed by the results that maximum proportion of labour have found working as full time stay at their masters home where they have been provided residing place. However, 80 per cent of labour have been provided with Pakka houses to reside in. they have also provided food which can be given any time on demand. Except for that, toilet facility has also been provided to them.

Components of Foods: Regarding the results of the components of food they were served by their masters, it has been noticed that every labour has been getting Roti and Lassi full to their hunger. Except for that their masters have proved good enough in relation to the serving of food to them as a large chunk of bounded labour agreed to the fact

that they have also got milk in their food. But curd and sailed has not been found the part of most of the respondent's plates.

Table 2.3

Components of Food

Component of food	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Roti	60	100.00
Lassi	60	100.00
Milk	50	83.33
Curd	10	16.76
Sailed	3	5.00

(Sources: field survey)

Injuries of bonded labour at the Work Site: The results related to the injuries taken place during the work at masters' field have also been obtained and it has found that 90 per cent respondents have not got such type of miss happening with them.

Table 2.4

Injuries of Bonded labour at the Work Site

Facilities	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Medical Treatment	9	90
Proper Care	0	0
Holidays	1	10
Total	10	100

(Sources: field survey)

However, 10 per cent were of the view that they have to face such type of situation and maximum number of the farmers among them has given positive responses when enquired about that if their masters have arranged treatment to their wound. But once again very insensitive behavior of their masters have revealed by the study that they have never allow them to go on holidays on the occurrence of getting any justice by the labour. If they have gone, the salaries commensurate to their salaries have been deducted. So, they were forced to work with their fresh wounds on their bodies.

Health Problem: It is very depressed to find out that 100 per cent respondents have felt pain due to the hardness of their work. They replied that due to the arduous nature of their job, they have the problem like back pain and sick stiffness.

Section 3: This section gives the results related to the reach level of government efforts to the section selected for the study

Sensitization Channel: Regarding the sensitizing the labour about their exploitation, it is their family members who feels that they are being exploited and exhorted them to leave this disrepute occupation. However, in some cases, it has been their neighbor who sensitizes them about their being in exploitation.

Table 3.1

Sensitization Channel

Sensitization Channel	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Family members	42	70.00
Neighbor	8	13.33
Any other	10	16.67
Total	60	100.00

(Sources: field survey)

Proof of Identity: The results related to the identity proof with the bonded labour are presented through table 3.2. It is revealed by the results that the basic identity proof has been held by all the respondents selected under the study as the results related to voter card, Aadhar card and Rashan card have been found with them.

Table-3.2

Proof of Identity

Identity card	No. of Respondents	%
Voter Card	60	100
Aadhar Card	60	100
Rashan Card	60	100

(Sources: field survey)

Benefited availing by the Bonded labour provided under Different Schemes: The results related to the reach level of different schemes aims at the welfare of poorer section of the society are presented through table 3.3. it is found from the table that maximum percentage of the bonded labour have been found to avail the benefits of Pradhan Manthri Ujjwala Yojana as indicated by the 83.33 per cent respondents. JanDhan Yojana has also been observed very famous among the selected respondents. Except for that, Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana has also benefited the farmers,

however, not proved so much helpful to raise the level of welfare of the concerned section.

Table-3.3

Benefited Availing by the Bonded labour Provided under Different Schemes

Name of Yojana	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana	50	83.33
Jan Dhan yojana	48	80
Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana	35	58.33
Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana/Indra Gandhi Awas Yojana	30	50
Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana	6	10
Pradhan Mantri Sinchai Yojana	4	6.67

(Sources: field survey)

Facilities available of their children in School:

The furnished results related to the benefit provided for the up gradation of the poor children in terms of providing them free better education are presented through table 3.4 and revealed that maximum benefit has been accrued to the children of the poor section.

Table -3.4

Facilities available of their Children in School

Name of available facilities	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Mid day mil	50	100
School dress	50	100
Books	50	100
Scholarship	50	100
Cycle	4	6.67

(Sources: field survey)

CONCLUSION:

On the basis of the results, it can be found that unavailability of work; loan, unskilled and no idea about the other options available with the laborers have been the main reasons for the adoption of working as bonded labour. The results related to the income condition of labour has surfaced a dismal picture followed by the maximum expenditure devote to the health related issues. So, it has once again a very deplorable picture has revealed by the study that they have forced to work as the bonded labour due to the acute poverty they were lying under. The conditions however have been recorded satisfactory to some extent but a very shocking revelation has

been made by the respondents in the sense that they have never allow them to go on holidays on the occurrence of getting any justice by the labour. If they have gone, the salaries commensurate to their salaries have been deducted. So, they were forced to work with their fresh wounds on their bodies. As far as the government efforts are taken into account to uplift the poorer section, the steps taken in the direction of providing free education to the children of the poor section has proved helpful in short-run but the real realization of the efforts never done. So, the results have not been recorded up to the mark. So, it is high time for the government to adopt concrete methods to pull out the poorer section from the web of exploitation. So, some suggestions are given as follows:

1. The government should investigate with help of NGO appropriately bonded labour that are reported and should take immediate action for the liberation of labourers indentified.
2. Government should make strict law to shun the system of bonded labour.
3. The government should provide special training for such workers who are exploitation by the owner of the land or house.
4. After liberation of bonded labour should ensure the rehabilitation and should secure a minimum sum so that their life may run smoothly.
5. There should be psychological and appropriate institutional follow up as well as other exiting programmes to help the rehabilitation of their bonded laborers.
6. After abolition of bonded labour system government should ensure that fund for the welfare of these bonded labour should be well distributed among reserved candidates.
7. Government should make amendments in the bonded labour system acts so that reserved person may get punishment.
8. There should be free flowing of money by private institutes besides government agencies which provide loan at low rate of interest so that a person may get help at time of need and the instalment for these loans must be cheap and easy.
9. For the betterment of bonded labour people should also abandon their conventional approach.

10. A nationwide public awareness campaign should be launched regarding the legal prohibition of bonded labour.

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