

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN BIHAR ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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Introduction

Until the mid 1960s, the main thrust of development policies all over the world was to accelerate the growth process since the trickle down mechanism was supposed to take care distributional objectives. Unfortunately, the development experience of many countries during the two decades after second world war raised question about the relevance and efficiency of the trickle down hypotheses since a large fraction of the population of underdeveloped countries continued to live in abject poverty. A qualitative change in the development policies was discernible in 1970s. The reduction of poverty became an explicit goal of development and programmes were designed so as to increase income & employment opportunities of target groups of the population. Of course the redistributive objective still remained an income oriented goal in the sense that income was viewed as the only concept of value of individuals.

A very different perspective on development is provided by the UNDPs Human Development report. The essence of UNDP's perspective is that while income is an important objective development must encompass improvements in other non-income indicators as well. Because human well-being cannot be equated with wealth or income. In particular, the Human development Report advocates the use of the Human Development Index. Which is composite of three basic components of human development longevity. Knowledge & income as a more comprehensive measure of socio-economic progress.

Infact, human is an inexhaustible store of energy and skill. The development of energy scheme is based on human capabilities. The resourcefulness of physical

elements depends on capabilities of man to use them. A healthy person with technological know-how is more able to exploit physical variable of environment. Man is the most dynamic agent of production and the beneficiary of the entire process of resource development and Utilization As such, the purpose of the present paper is the highlight population as a resource in the state of Bihar in close connection with the demographic aspects.

Issues :

Bihar plain (divided Bihar) has a population of 8,29,78,796 according to the census of 2001 (provisionsl). The growth rate at 23.24 percent is same as the national average during 1991-2001. The density of population is 869 oer 39 km as compared 497 for the state. Thus, Bihar plain is quite densely populated, owing no doubt to the ling occupance and the high fertility of the land. This density, however, varies and is highest in the central and western part of the region in the districts of Vaishali, Patna and Darbhanga where the density is over 1000 persdons per square km. The adjoining districts of central parts also have a high density of over 800 persons per square km.

The population has been steadily raising in Bihar plain. It has risen from 21.70 million in 1901 to 1921 when several epidemics, floods & other natural calamities visited Bihar. The population exhibits steadily rising frends during 1921, 51 when if increased by around 10 per decade in most districts. Thereafter, the population has been increasing at an accelerated pace at around 20 percent or more per decade. This phenomenal growth has resulted in an extreme pressure of population upon the land. The growth in the central pars, which were already densely populated has been particularly high.

The sex ration in bihar plain ranges from 868 fenakes oer 1000 males in Patna and Khagaria districts to 1019 in Siwan district according to 2001 census (provisional). The very high sex ration in Siwan, Saran and Gopalganj (1019, 969 and 967) respectively are indicative of the migration of the male persons to other areas in search of jobs. The people from this region have settled as far away as Mauritius and Surinam in the last two centuries. A large number of people form North Bihar seek employment in the police, and in the industries at Calcutta

Migration of people has also taken place for working in the tea gardens of Assam, coalmines of Dhanbad and in the farms of Haryana-Punjab, but such migrants are often seasonal and return for agricultural operations every year. The low sex ratio in Patna indicates the influx of male persons in search of job. The level of literacy is low in this region.

Male literacy is much higher to 55% than female literacy 10 to 25%. Again, male literacy is much higher over 50% in Patna, Nalanda, Bhojpur and Jhanabad (all in South Bihar Plain). These districts also have a higher female literacy of over 20%. The districts in the Kosi belt viz : Saharsa, Madhepura, Purnia and Katihar have the lowest levels of female literacy (12 or 13%).

The figures for occupational structure of population in 2001 are not available. However, the pattern is not likely to be much different from previous years as little development has taken place. Only about 30% of the total population is workers. Of these nearly 80% are male and only 20% are female workers.

There is an overwhelming dependence upon agriculture since about 80% workers are dependent upon this single occupation. Of these nearly 60 to 70% are cultivators and 30 to 40% are agricultural workers. Only about 2 percent workers are engaged in industrial occupations. Their share is only marginally higher in Patna district. Patna again leads in commercial and professional (tertiary) employment. In all other districts such employment is small. In the absence of alternate jobs, the growing population naturally falls back upon agriculture. Which is unable to support it. The resultant poverty is obvious.

Concerns :

The Bihar Unemployment Committee (1954) found a large surplus shown in the 1951 census to be redundant to be redundant to be requirement of the rural economy. The committee estimated that 110.50 lakh of self-sufficient workers were engaged in agriculture in Bihar and among them as many as 47.33 lakh were redundant. Even among those gainfully engaged in agriculture, the intensity of employment varied from 40.31 to 91.53 percent of the available mandays.' There was a high

incidence of both underemployment and unemployment in the rural sector of the State.

The number of subsistence farms in each district was obtained by the Bihar Unemployment Committee by dividing the cultivated area in the second column by the number of acres constituting a subsistence farm. Thereafter taking two adult labour units as necessary for each farm the committee arrived at the total farm population required for the district.” For the reasons mentioned above the committee did not davit the 7.5 lakh of the male and the 6.5 lakh of the female earning dependent assumed to belong mainly to the age group of boys and girls below 14 years. By deducting the number of the workforce thus required from the number shown as engaged on farms in the Census Tables of 1951, the Committee got the redundant farm population. The disclosure of fact that of the 110.50 lakh farm population about 43.8 lakh were redundant in bound to cause an uneasiness to any authority responsible for planning the proper utilization of labour force. At the4 same time, it is very significant to note that were the farming intensity to be increased, by 50 percent, this unemployment would diminish to 16.39 lakh.

The calculation of the optimum land labour ration, however, is not a simple talk. It will be different under different patterns of cultivation, depending on the intensity of the cropping scheme and the composition of the different kinds of produce raised it will depend to a great extent on the prevailing practices and the natural conditions. Again, it will depend on the number of the farm livestock under mixed farming. It will further be determined by the extent to which the subsequent storing and processing of the produce is undertaken on the farm or within the family or whether the produce is sole straightaway. All these conditions can be brought out only be detailed enquires.

The Ninth Round of the National Sample Survey worked out a table. Showing the employment intensity of the gainfully employed rural population. This is given below in Table 1. Which bring out the extent of underemployment of the farm population.

Weekly Hours at Percentage of Gainfully Employed Farm Population

WORK	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
No work	4.92	6.95	11.87
1 to 7 hours	0.82	0.82	1.69
8 to 14 hours	2.05	1.87	3.92
15 to 28 hours	6.08	5.41	11.49
29 to 42 hours	10.60	6.73	17.33
43 to 56 hours	14.77	7.89	32.66
57 to 70 hours	14.58	2.54	17.12
71 and Over	3.56	0.36	3.92
Total	67.38	36.62	100.00

Source : Bihar Economy Through the Plans, p. 546.

Underemployment in agriculture is a serious problem in Bihar. Two aspects of this problem deserve immediate attention, viz seasonal idleness of labour and excessively high labour-land ration. Agriculture being a seasonal operation. The first aspect (seasonal idleness) can be taken care of by means of mixed farming (including dairying and poultry farming) and through the provision of other secondary means of employment. Intensification of farming can become a major factor in solving the problem of rural underemployment. The other aspect is more intriguing. This is involved in the whole question of the productivity of the agricultural workers. The future aim should be to increase the productivity per worker by shifting labour to new lines of production. To make the transition easy, there should be planned control of the future growth of population.

Prospects (Suggestive Remedies) :

1. The volume of investment to be undertaken over the years must be large enough to liquidate unemployment. Open and disguised
2. Taking into consideration the comparative immobility of the labour-force and the large number of depressed pockets, it is necessary to make a planned dispersal of investment projects.
3. It is necessary to diversity the predominantly agricultural rural economy through a suitable development of the secondary and the tertiary industries. Such a process will incidentally help to mop up the agricultural surplus in the rural areas. Further, the opportunity cost of such a development may be favourable in view of the fact that it will largely meet industrial housing requirements as well as act as a counter to labour absenteeism (i.e. absenteeism that is caused by the labourer's frequency visits to his rural home). With the general of such facilities as electricity and transport, the cost of rural development will decline further.
4. Adequate occupation mobility is basic to any scheme designed to bring about changes in the employment pattern. Economic incentives (as also economic hardships) should be able to ward off the labour's irrational preference to stick to uneconomic job.
5. It cannot be over-emphasised that the state must have both a short-term and long-term population policy to keep the rate of multiplication of population in check. While the reasonable of a long-term policy is readily appreciated, that of a shor-term is not.

Human Development planning perhaps needs to become more selective and specific and there seems to be a case for crash programmes adequate for the purpose of bridging he immediate gaps but buttressed by facilities for evening classes and meanwhile-you-work programmes and refresher courses.

A review of employment trends prepared by the National Employment Service indicated that Kerala, Maharashtra, Mysore, Punjab and West Bengal had rates of growth higher than the all-India figure (29.1 percent) while Assam, Bihar,

Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan, had a lower one Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Uttar Pradesh were just near the all-India mark.

The quantum of total employment in this period rose in all industries, barring mining and quarrying. There was significant increase in employment in administrative, educational, scientific and research service, railways, road transport and in sugar, cotton and iron and steel industries.

Judging by the figure of job seekers on the live registers of the Employment Exchanges, there was a 53.5 percent increase in employment.

State-wise, the increase in the number of unemployed was more market in Assam (120 percent), Bihar (96.4 percent), Madhya Pradesh (134.5 percent). Mysore (74.6 percent) and West Bengal (71.4 percent) that in other States.

In spite of this the spectre of shortage of manpower for certain professional and technical jobs continued. This was fairly acute in the case of mechanical engineers, hard & Soft ware engineers, civil engineers. General fitters, turners, electricians, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, secondary school teachers, stenographers and typists.

Conclusion :

To conclude, the general human development problems are essentially the outcome of the interplay of there dynamic forces:

- 1) The growth of population and the working force.
- 2) The growth and diversification of educational and training facilities, and
- 3) The growth and diversification of employment opportunities. The demographic, educational and economic factors act and react on one another with the result that significant changes in one or more of them are bound to be reflected in the manpower situation in due course of time. The manpower situation of today is the outcome of what has happened before. Similarly, the present developments in the demographic, educational and economic fields will determine the manpower situation of the future.

At the end, it is pously hoped that with increasing awareness and developmental efforts, this state of Bihar would be able to achieve its past glory once again,

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