

## A STUDY ON THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF FARM LABOURERS

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Standard of living depends on the needs of the people and is determined by income, climate and other factors. Higher standard of living means greater needs for goods and services. This will necessitate larger volume of production of much greater variety. This may also provide stimulus to the production activity in the country. In other words the economic progress of the country is closely linked with the standard of living. The standard of living of a person can be measured from his family budgets which indicate the distribution of family income over the various items of expenditure. From the economic point of view, family budgets help to measure the economic welfare of the individual. The main objective of this study is to throw some light on the various components of the levels of living of farm labourers and to examine the application of Engle's Law of Consumption to this category of people.

### Materials and Methods

A sample of 39 numbers of farm labourers working in the Agricultural College farm was selected at random. These 39 families were stratified into three groups based on their monthly income (Table 1) which included farm wage income as well as income from other sources. Data on domestic expenditure on various items of essential food, clothing, dwelling, fuel, light and luxuries were collected by direct survey method. The data collected pertains to the year 1974-1975. The percentage distribution of expenditure on different items of domestic consumption for different size groups were worked out and are presented in Table 2. Further, the co-efficient of correlation between the total income and percentage expenditure on food, clothing, dwelling, fuel, light and luxuries were worked out and tested for their significance (Table 3).

### Results and discussion

The correlation analysis showed that in all cases the relationship was not significant. The negative sign observed on the  $V$  value for food indicated that the total income and the percentage expenditure on food were negatively associated. This was also evident from Table 1. The percentage expenditure on food of the low income group was maximum (73.72), and that of the high income group was minimum (65.15). It was further observed that the mean percentage expenditure on clothing, dwelling, fuel and light, with respect to the different income groups remained more or less the same. This satisfies the Engle's Law of Consumption which states that the percentage expenditure on clothing, fuel and light and dwelling remains the same and does not change with the changes in income. The percentage expenditure on luxuries has shown an increasing trend.

Table 1

Mean percentage expenditure on consumption items among different size groups

Sl. No.	Size groups (Rs.)	No of families	Mean percentage expenditure on				
			Food	Clothing	Dwelling	Fuel & light	Luxuries
1.	200-400	14	73.72	4.05	3.19	3.11	10.73
2.	400-600	19	73.24	4.02	3.19	3.11	12.81
3.	More than 600	6	65.15	3.99	3.19	3.12	20.34

Table 2

Correlation coefficient between total income and percentage expenditure on different items among different size groups

Sl. No.	Size groups (Rs)	Corelation coefficient between income and				
		Food	Clothing	Dwelling	Fuel & light	Luxuries
1.	200-400	-0.47	-0.51	0.26	0.20	0.35
2.	400-600	-0.19	-0.11	0.20	0.31	0.15
3.	More than 600	-0.64	0.58	0.17	0.58	0.66

N. B. The 'r' values are not significant at (n-2) d. f. either at 5% or 1 % level of significance

with the increase in income. The percentage expenditure was minimum for the low income group and maximum for the high income group. That is, it has shown a direct relationship with changes in income, which is also in conformity with Engel's Law of Consumption.

Summary

The study revealed that (1) as income increased the percentage expenditure on food decreased and vice versa (2) at all levels of income, the percentage expenditure on clothing, dwelling, fuel and light, remained more or less the same. The percentage expenditure on luxuries has shown a direct relationship with the changes in income. Thus the domestic expenditure pattern of the farm labourers has shown that it is in conformity with the Engel's Law of Consumption.

സംഗ്രഹം

കർഷകത്തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ ജീവിതനിലവാരത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് പഠിക്കുന്നതിനും അതു എത്രമാത്രം ഉന്നതതലശാസ്ത്ര വിഭജനമായ ശ്രീ എക്സർണസ് എക്സർസിന്റെ സിദ്ധാന്തവുമായി യോജിക്കുന്നു എന്നു മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നതിനും വേണ്ടി ഒരു പഠനം നടത്തുകയുണ്ടായി.

തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ മൊത്തവരുമാനത്തിന്റെ വർദ്ധനവനുസരിച്ച് ആഹാരസാധനങ്ങളിന്മേലുള്ള ചെലവ് ശതമാനം കുറഞ്ഞു വരുന്നതായും വസ്ത്രം, പാർപ്പിടം, ഇന്ധനം, ലൈറ്റ് എന്നീ ഇനങ്ങളിന്മേലുള്ള ചെലവ് ശതമാനം താരതമ്യേന വ്യത്യസ്തം ഇല്ലാതെയും സുഖഭോഗ വസ്തുക്കളിന്മേലുള്ള ചെലവ് ശതമാനം താരതമ്യേന വർദ്ധിച്ചു വരുന്നതായും പ്രസ്തുത പഠനം തെളിയിച്ചു. പ്രസ്തുതപഠനം ശ്രീ എക്സർസിന്റെ സിദ്ധാന്തവുമായി തികച്ചും യോജിച്ച് പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി.

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