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TRENDS IN WAGE SHARE IN THE CONTEXT OF LABOUR SHORTAGE: THE CASE OF TAPPING WAGE SHARE IN RUBBER SMALLHOLDINGS SECTOR IN KERALA

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The study is an attempt to understand the trends in the share of tapping wages in farm income of the rubber smallholding sector in the backdrop of uncertainties in NR prices and the reported shortage of tapping labour. The database consisted of documented field level time series data on wages of smallholdings from primary sources and published official data on productivity and price during the 30 year period which is divide into pre-reforms (1980-1981 to 1990-199) and post-reforms (1991-1992 to 2009-2010) phases. The tapping wage share is defined as the share of annual tapping wages in annual farm income of the smallholdings. The study found that the average tapping wage share was 19.63 per cent. The tapping wage share was comparatively higher during the pre-reforms phase (24.18%) compared to the post-reforms phase (18.11%). The trends in comparative growth rates and instability indices of real values of the selected variables over the two pha??????? ? • ?•?? •?•????•?•????????•??? ????????¡???•?•????????????R?RS?? ????•? ?•??????? ???R?sr?? ?j??•????????????????? ?•?????•????•?? •????•???? ? •?• ? ??? • ?•? ?? ?? •??? •? ?? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?????•?•???????•????•?? •????•???R?Rs?? ?j? ?•????????•?? ??•?????•?•????•?? •????•?????R?RS?? ?? ?•??? comparatively higher growth rate in wages (4.73 %). During the 30 year period also the growth rate of wage ????????? ?•?????•?•????•?? •????•????r?Rs?? ??•????•??•???????•????•?? •????•?????????? ?•???R?Rs?? ???? ? instability indices showed that during the pre-reforms phase wage share (9.02) was the most unstable variable. During post-reforms phase though wages were comparatively stable (7.51) wage share was highly unstable (30.87). The correlation analysis showed a negative and significant coefficient of correlation ???R?sS????• ????•??? ?????? ????•? ?•????????•????•?•???rR?¢?????????•?? ? ???•? • ¢???? ??? • ?•? ? •?•? ? •? ? ? ?? •? ?•??????????? ??? ?? ?? ? ? ? ??? ? ??? ? ?• ?? • ?? • ?? ? •?? ? •?? ? ?? ? ?¢ ??? • • ?• ?? ?? ?? • ?•? ? ??? • ? ?•?? ?? •?? •?? • ?? made in the real values of farm income and wages but also grew at a negative growth rate during the 30 year period.

Keywords: Farm income, Real values, Rubber smallholdings, Tapping labour, Wage share

INTRODUCTION

Growing market uncertainties have become an important characteristic of all primary commodities since the second half of the 1990s. The implications of this phenomenon have attracted considerable

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