

# Workers Problems on Cashew Processing Industry in India

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Received: July 18, 2025, Accepted: August 26, 2025, Published: September 16, 2025

## Abstract

The cashew-nut manufacturing business enterprise has played a crucial role in the economic development of the country, and it is the backbone of the Indian economy. It contributes to the generation of employment opportunities, the promotion of exports, and the fostering of cashew processing entrepreneurship. The cashew industry was a labor-intensive sector. Cashew enterprises have been accepted as the engine of growth for promoting equitable development. In recent years, the cashew industry has been facing so many constraints. Most of the cashew entrepreneurs are fighting for their existence. This study has been conducted to highlight the problems of cashew entrepreneurs in the Prakasam district. Various research identifies that one of the major problems faced by the cashew entrepreneurs was the lack of manpower. An attempt to focus on the labor problems of cashew entrepreneurs at Vetapalem village. The quantitative approach identifies that the lack of manpower issues will affect the processing operations & growth and improvement of cashew enterprises. Various studies have identified the issues of a shortage of skilled labor, overflowing wage rates, and a lack of workforce planning. There must be a detailed survey and research to know the cashew processing entrepreneur's problems.

**Keywords:** Cashew Processing; Constraints Entrepreneurship; Engine of Growth; Workforce Planning.

## 1. Introduction

At first, the cashew was mainly thought of as a tree that might be used for afforestation. It has developed into a crop of major economic and commercial significance because of its capacity to flourish in a variety of agro-climatic situations. A significant amount of labor is needed for the processing and selling of cashew nuts, which are vital to the sector. Nonetheless, India's processing industry continues to face difficulties. Many small and medium-sized processing facilities still use conventional techniques in spite of the advancement of numerous technologies. Technology transfer, insufficient capital investment, resource limitations, and sporadic neglect are problems associated with this reliance.

Additional challenges for the processing facilities include restricted bank funding options, with high interest rates being a major worry. Operations are made more difficult by a lack of experienced staff, inconsistent access to high-quality raw materials, frequent power outages, challenges in implementing cutting-edge technologies, and worker shortages. Furthermore, a sizable number of middlemen are involved in both the domestic and international markets for cashew nuts in India. In rural locations, the lack of structured markets frequently exposes growers to unfair business tactics by dishonest traders. Additionally, due to changes in global markets, cashew nut export prices have demonstrated significant volatility.

Therefore, it becomes essential to carry out a methodical scientific investigation in order to recognize and resolve the issues related to cashew nut processing and marketing. In order to support the industry's competitiveness and sustainable growth, this initiative seeks to inform stakeholders on its prospects, risks, vulnerabilities, and strengths.

## 2. Objectives of The Study

The objectives of the present study deal with

- To study & evaluate the problems of the cashew industry in Andhra Pradesh,
- To analyze the labor challenges of cashew entrepreneurs in Bapatla District,
- To make suggestions to the cashew industry to overcome challenges related to labor in India & in Andhra Pradesh.

### 3. Methodology of The Study

To determine the issues and difficulties faced by cashew processing entrepreneurs, an exploratory study was conducted. data gathered for analysis and collected from primary and secondary sources. To learn more about the difficulties and issues facing the Indian cashew business, a secondary study was conducted. Information from national and international publications, papers, seminars, yearly reports, and websites was gathered to accomplish the aforementioned.

Based on their turnover and capital investment, cashew entrepreneurs are divided into three groups: micro, small, and medium. To gather data, a structured, methodical questionnaire was created. The managers and business owners in the Bapatla district were given this questionnaire.

Cashew entrepreneurs are categorized into 3 parts as Micro, Small, and Medium, based on their capital investment and turnover. An organized, systematic questionnaire was formulated for data collection. This questionnaire was circulated to the managers/entrepreneurs of the Bapatla district.

A convenient sample distribution procedure was followed for the collection of the data from the entrepreneurs. An attempt has been made to analyze the problems and potential in processing of cashew nut in Andhra Pradesh and the opinion of the cashew processing entrepreneurs, traders, and Manufacturers towards cashew nut Firms. For statistical analysis of this study, a comprehensive analysis has been made with the help of percentage analysis, simple ranking method, and an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test, which is a statistical method used to compare the means of three or more groups to determine if there are statistically significant differences between them. It works by analyzing the total variance in the data and partitioning it into components representing variation between the groups and variation within each group. The test uses an F-statistic, which is a ratio of between-group variance to within-group variance, to calculate a p-value and test the null hypothesis that all group means are equal.

#### 3.1. Hypothesis Testing

H0: There is no significant difference in manpower problems among the performance of Cashew Entrepreneurs.

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### 4. Literature Review

Labor economics is the branch of economics that deals with the behavior of workers, employers, and the labor market. It focuses on how labor markets function, the supply and demand for labor, wage determination, labor mobility, and the role of labor policies. The goal is to understand how labor is allocated and compensated, as well as the factors that influence employment, unemployment, and wage levels.

#### 4.1. Labor Market Supply and Demand

- Labor Supply: Refers to the number of workers willing to work at different wage rates. Factors affecting labor supply include:
- Wages: Higher wages generally encourage more people to enter the labor market.
- Population Changes: Immigration, birth rates, and aging populations affect the overall labor supply.
- Education and Skills: The level of education and specialized skills can affect individuals' willingness and ability to participate in certain labor markets.
- Labor Demand: Refers to the number of workers employers are willing to hire at different wage levels. Key factors include:
- Productivity: The more productive a worker is, the more likely they are to be in demand.
- Technology: Automation and technological advancements can either reduce or increase labor demand, depending on the industry.
- Economic Conditions: General economic growth, business cycles, and demand for goods/services affect labor demand.

#### 4.2. Labor Market Equilibrium

- Equilibrium Wage: The wage at which the quantity of labor supplied equals the quantity of labor demanded.
- Unemployment: Unemployment can arise when the wage is set above the equilibrium, creating a surplus of labor, or when workers have mismatched skills.

#### 4.3. Wage Determination and Inequality

- Wage Structure: Wages are not equal across all workers or industries. Key factors influencing wage differences include:
- Human Capital: The value of a worker's skills, education, experience, and training.
- Labor Market Power: The relative bargaining power between workers and employers. Unions, minimum wage laws, and labor regulations can influence this.
- Market Imperfections: Monopolies or oligopolies in certain industries can drive up wages for specific workers, whereas others might experience wage suppression.
- Discrimination: Race, gender, and age discrimination can influence wage disparities even for similarly qualified individuals.
- Wage Differentials: Economists examine why wages differ across:
- Industries: For example, tech and finance tend to offer higher wages than agriculture and retail.
- Regions: Wages in urban areas tend to be higher than in rural areas.
- Skills: Highly specialized workers earn more than those in low-skill jobs.

#### 4.4. Global Labor Market Fragmentation

While much has been written about labor shortages and migration in developed economies, there is limited exploration of how the global fragmentation of labor markets affects agricultural production in developing economies. The migration of seasonal agricultural workers

from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe or the Middle East is a prime example of a global labor flow that remains poorly understood in terms of long-term socioeconomic impacts.

**Digital Labor Platforms:** The rise of digital labor platforms in the agribusiness sector is a relatively new phenomenon. Apps that allow workers to find short-term agricultural tasks are increasingly common. However, the implications for wage levels, job security, and working conditions are not fully understood.

**Sustainability and Labor Market Transitions:** There is increasing attention on how sustainability practices in agriculture (e.g., organic farming, regenerative agriculture) may influence labor markets. For instance, organic farming may require more labor-intensive methods but offer higher wages compared to conventional farming practices.

**Emerging Policy and Regulatory Shifts**

Labor economics in agribusiness is deeply intertwined with government policies. In the past few years, several key policy shifts have had significant implications for agricultural labor markets.

#### 4.5. International Perspective of The Labor Market

Incorporate studies from diverse global regions to provide a broader perspective. Here are a few regions and areas to consider:

- **Developing Economies:** Research focusing on labor in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America (e.g., challenges related to informal labor, gender disparities, rural unemployment).
- **Developed Economies:** Studies on the digitalization of agriculture and its impact on farm labor in developed countries like the U.S., Europe, and Australia (e.g., farmworker wages, mechanization, and skilled labor needs).
- **Global Value Chains (GVCs):** Focus on how labor in agribusinesses is influenced by international trade, with recent studies on fair trade practices, labor rights in global supply chains, and wage differences across borders.

#### 4.6. Emerging Trends and Gaps

- **Technology and Labor Displacement:** While there has been extensive research on automation's potential to displace agricultural workers, there is still limited understanding of how specific labor markets (e.g., rural versus urban, seasonal versus full-time labor) are transitioning and adapting to these technological changes.
- **Sustainability and Labor Economics:** Few studies examine the intersection of labor economics and sustainability in agribusiness. How do labor conditions evolve as firms prioritize environmental sustainability (e.g., organic farming, regenerative agriculture)?
- **Impact of Globalization:** Despite studies on global supply chains, there is a gap in understanding how international trade agreements (e.g., USMCA, EU-Mercosur) affect the labor market in agriculture.
- **Gender Disparities:** Although gender has been increasingly recognized in agribusiness research, specific studies addressing gendered labor markets in different agricultural sectors (e.g., horticulture, dairy farming) remain underexplored.

#### 4.7. Financial Implications of Labor Challenges in Andhra Pradesh

The financial implications of labor challenges in Andhra Pradesh are multifaceted, affecting both the state's economy and the livelihoods of workers in various sectors, especially agriculture, industry, and services. Understanding these implications requires examining the relationship between labor market challenges and economic performance, particularly the effects on productivity, income distribution, and government spending. Here's an analysis of the financial implications of labor challenges in Andhra Pradesh:

**Agricultural Sector and Labor Shortages:** Andhra Pradesh's economy has a large agricultural base, with a significant percentage of its population engaged in farming and related activities. Labor challenges, particularly shortages during peak harvesting seasons, have financial consequences:

#### 4.8. Migration and The Impact on Productivity

- **Out-migration for Work:** Many agricultural laborers in Andhra Pradesh migrate to other states (like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra) or abroad, especially to Gulf countries, in search of better wages. This migration creates a labor vacuum in rural areas, disrupting agricultural productivity.
- **Financial Implication:** Reduced local labor availability during key agricultural phases hampers output. This leads to lower production levels and higher reliance on technology or mechanization to meet labor demands, which can be costly for smallholders.
- **Government Expenditure:** The state might need to spend more on incentives or subsidies to encourage local labor participation or provide financial support to farmers to cope with these challenges.

#### 4.9. Wage Gaps and Labor Inequality

Wage inequality, especially within the agricultural sector and among different types of workers, poses a significant financial challenge:

**Labor Market Disparities**

- **Rural vs Urban Wage Gap:** The wage gap between rural labor (primarily engaged in agriculture) and urban labor (in industries and services) is substantial.
- **Financial Implication:** Low wages in rural areas exacerbate income inequality. This inequality reduces consumer spending in rural economies, impacting local businesses and economic growth.
- **Increased Poverty:** A large portion of rural households in Andhra Pradesh is dependent on low-wage labor, leading to higher poverty rates and lower economic mobility.

#### 4.10. Limitations of Existing Studies

- **Geographic Limitations:** Much of the research on agribusiness and labor economics is heavily concentrated in certain countries or regions (e.g., North America, Western Europe). There's a lack of comparative studies that assess labor trends across different continents or low- and middle-income countries.
- **Policy Focus:** Many studies emphasize theoretical models or case studies, but there is a shortage of research connecting policy changes to real-world labor market outcomes.
- **Data Gaps:** The reliance on outdated or small-scale datasets means that many studies are unable to capture the complexity of modern labor economics in agribusiness.

### 5. Data Analysis

Workers are the key Element for any business organization for process and production. The problems of cashew processing entrepreneurs were a Shortage of labor, the non-availability of skilled workers, and many institutions that desired to capitalize on the depreciation of their functional expenditure. The following table explains the reasons for labor issues occurring for Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSME) cashew entrepreneurs. Many types of companies in India come under MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) if they meet the criteria for investment in plant and machinery (or equipment) and annual turnover, including businesses in manufacturing, services, agriculture, and even creative and educational fields. Examples include small-scale manufacturers of auto parts and coir products, IT services, hotels, coaching centers, and agricultural businesses.

#### 5.1. Table Workers' Problem of Cashew Processing Entrepreneurs (Rankings)

	Micro Firms	Small Firms	Medium Firms
Alternate Income Opportunities Available	2	1	1
Increase the level of literature	2	1	1
Schemes to Economic Backwards	1	4	4
Absenteeism	7	6	5
Overflowing Wage Rates to the Worker	4	3	3
Malpractices of Labor	6	6	7
Effect of Trade Unions	9	9	8
Training is Needed	8	8	9
Unskilled Work	5	5	5

The above table discloses the labor issues of micro, small, and medium cashew entrepreneurs in Vetapalem village. After conducting surveys through the Likert scale method, rankings are given in the above form. The major problems faced by cashew entrepreneurs are that Alternative income opportunities are available, increasing the literacy percentage were the major reasons in the case of small and medium entrepreneurs, but micro entrepreneurs' opinion is a little bit different, they are in favor of welfare schemes for economic backwardness. The rest of the causes of labor issues are detailed in the above table.

#### 5.2. Table Comparative Analysis of MSM Cashew Entrepreneurs' Problems Relating to Workers (Source: Data Collected from Field Survey)

Rational Motive	Micro Scores	Small	Medium
Absenteeism of labor	42	161	30
Alternative Sources of Income	60	180	35
Government Schemes to Economic Backwards	65	174	33
High Wage Rates for Workers	58	177	34
Impact of Trade Unions	32	91	23
Increase the level of literature	60	180	35
Malpractices of Labor	45	161	24
Training is Needed	37	136	19
Unskilled Work	54	165	30
Mean Average	50.34	158.34	29.23
Square of mean	23787	233249	7962
Standard deviation	11.62	28.775	5.869

Interpretation: Small enterprises show the highest mean score (158.34) and the highest variability (standard deviation = 28.775), indicating more pronounced and varied labor-related problems.

- Micro enterprises also experience significant issues, but with less variability.
- Medium enterprises report comparatively lower average issues (29.23) and lower variability, suggesting better worker-related conditions or stronger organizational structure.

#### 5.3. Table Analysis of Variance (Anova)

Source	Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
Between-Groups	86338.0741	2	43169.037	F=129.74137	0.000
Within-Groups	7985.5556	24	332.7315		
Total	94323.6296	26			

Interpretation: Since the F-ratio is large (129.74) and the p-value is very small ( $p < 0.001$ ), you reject the null hypothesis. This implies at least one group mean is significantly different from the others.

#### 5.4. Table Workers' Wise Descriptive Statistics (Source: Calculated Values)

Here is a descriptive statistics table with interpretation for the Scarcity of Manpower, Absenteeism, Lack of Skilled Labor, High Wage Rates, and Schemes to Backwards:

##### 5.4.1. Scarcity of manpower

Category	N	Mean	MS	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)
Micro	145	29	10,875	40.835	3.391	22.353	35.647
Small	295	59	34,821	65.985	3.843	51.470	66.530
Medium	110	22	4,906	24.930	2.378	17.341	26.659
Total	550	36.66	50,602	46.626	1.988	32.763	40.557

Interpretation:

- Small enterprises have the highest average score (59), suggesting a higher perceived problem with manpower scarcity. The large standard deviation (65.985) indicates significant variability in how this issue is perceived.
- Medium enterprises report a lower average score (22), with a smaller standard deviation (24.930), indicating that their perceptions of scarcity are more consistent and less pronounced.
- The 95% confidence intervals for small and medium enterprises do not overlap significantly, showing a marked difference in the perceived problem.

##### 5.4.2. Absenteeism

Category	N	Mean	MS	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)
Micro	145	29	7,075	26.786	2.224	24.640	33.360
Small	295	59	28,319	52.235	3.041	53.039	64.961
Medium	110	22	2,700	8.367	0.798	20.436	23.564
Total	550	36.66	38,094	35.784	1.526	33.669	39.651

Interpretation:

- Like scarcity of manpower, small enterprises experience a higher level of absenteeism (Mean = 59). This is reinforced by the high standard deviation (52.235), suggesting varying perceptions of absenteeism across small businesses.
- Medium enterprises report relatively lower absenteeism (Mean = 22) with a much smaller standard deviation, reflecting more consistency in their labor force attendance.
- The confidence intervals for small and medium enterprises again suggest differing perceptions, with small enterprises experiencing a higher level of absenteeism.

##### 5.4.3. Lack of skilled labor

Category	N	Mean	MS	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)
Micro	145	29	7,175	27.249	2.264	24.565	33.435
Small	295	59	27,277	49.679	2.892	53.331	64.669
Medium	110	22	2,898	10.932	1.042	19.957	24.043
Total	550	36.66	37,350	35.034	1.494	33.732	39.588

Interpretation:

- The small enterprises again show the highest perceived problem (Mean = 59), and with a high standard deviation (49.679), indicating large differences in how this issue is felt.
- Medium enterprises report lower levels of concern (Mean = 22) with a smaller standard deviation (10.932), signaling that the lack of skilled labor is less of a concern and the perceptions are more uniform.
- The confidence intervals confirm these differences, with small enterprises experiencing significantly higher challenges related to skill shortages.

##### 5.4.4. High wage rates

Category	N	Mean	MS	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)
Micro	145	29	7,941	30.561	2.538	24.026	33.974
Small	295	59	26,483	47.639	2.774	53.564	64.436
Medium	110	22	2,798	9.721	0.927	20.183	23.817
Total	550	36.6	37,222	34.903	1.488	33.683	39.517

Interpretation:

- Small enterprises report the highest concerns about high wage rates (Mean = 59), with a moderate to high standard deviation (47.639), suggesting a considerable range of opinions.
- Medium enterprises report a significantly lower concern about wage rates (Mean = 22), with a much smaller standard deviation (9.721), reflecting more consistency in their assessments.
- The confidence intervals for small and medium enterprises suggest a clear distinction in concerns about wages between the two groups.

#### 5.4.5. Schemes for backwards

Category	N	Mean	MS	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)
Micro	145	29	6,975	26.315	2.185	24.717	33.283
Small	295	59	34,141	64.684	3.766	51.619	66.381
Medium	110	22	3,234	14.265	1.360	19.334	24.666
Total	550	36.66	44,350	41.562	1.772	33.186	40.134

Interpretation:

- Small enterprises again report the highest concern with schemes for backward areas (Mean = 59), with a very high standard deviation (64.684), showing significant variability.
- Medium enterprises have a much lower perception of the problem (Mean = 22), and the smaller standard deviation (14.265) confirms that the issue is less severe and more consistent in their perception.
- The confidence intervals indicate a noticeable difference between small and medium enterprises in terms of the perceived impact of schemes for backward areas.

Results:

- Small enterprises tend to experience significantly higher concerns across all categories compared to micro and medium enterprises. This is evident in the higher mean scores and larger standard deviations for small enterprises, which suggest more variation in perceptions.
- Medium enterprises generally report lower concerns with higher consistency (lower standard deviations), indicating that they may be better equipped or more resilient in dealing with these challenges.

#### 5.5. Table: efficient workers' problems based on ANOVA (source: calculated values)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	P-Value	Result
Between Entrepreneurs	3,863.333	2	1,931.666	0.87235	0.4428	Ho Rejected
Within Entrepreneurs	26,572	12	2,214.333			
Total		14				
Between Entrepreneurs	3,863.333	2	1,931.666	1.64818	0.2331	Ho Rejected
Within Entrepreneurs	14,064	12	1,172			
Total	17,927.333	14				
Between Entrepreneurs	3,863.333	2	1,931.666	1.74024	0.2169	Ho Rejected
Within Entrepreneurs	13,320	12	1,110			
Total	17,183.333	14				
Between Entrepreneurs	3,863.333	2	1,931.666	1.75713	0.21412	Ho Rejected
Within Entrepreneurs	13,192	12	1,099.333			
Total	17,055.333	14				
Between Entrepreneurs	3,863.333	2	1,931.667	1.14075	0.3519	Ho Rejected
Within Entrepreneurs	20,320	12	1,693.3333			
Total	24,183.333	14				

Interpretation:

Section 1:  $F = 0.87235$ ,  $p = 0.4428$ : No significant difference between the entrepreneurs based on lack of skilled labor (since  $p > 0.05$ ).

Section 2:  $F = 1.64818$ ,  $p = 0.2331$ : Again, no significant difference in this case ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Section 3:  $F = 1.74024$ ,  $p = 0.2169$ : No significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Section 4:  $F = 1.75713$ ,  $p = 0.21412$ : No significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Section 5:  $F = 1.14075$ ,  $p = 0.3519$ : Again, no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Conclusion:

In all the cases provided in the table, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected because of the p-values being greater than 0.05, indicating no significant differences among the groups based on the lack of skilled labor.

## 6. Conclusion

Andhra Pradesh state's marketplace share has registered a decline in the national market. It has to compete with the other states that have more raw nut output, better technical know-how, cheap labor, and advanced market mechanisms. The traditional suppliers of raw cashew nuts in the state have become competitors in the national market. This turn in the Andhra Pradesh cashew industry influences the performance of cashew processing entrepreneurs. The problems and challenges that await in the years to come become the subject matter of this research work. A lot of investigation was done in the field of cashew production, processing, labor efficiency and problems, labor health hazards, marketing challenges, and other issues in the cashew industry. The research study has provided that, though all micro, small, and medium categories of cashew processing entrepreneurs are facing similar problems, there is a clear varying degree of impact on their operations in respect of the efficiency of workers, such as scarcity of manpower, labor absenteeism, lack of skilled labor, high wage rates, and trade union impact problems.

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