

LABOUR FORCE LIFE TABLES FOR INDIA, 1961 AND 1971

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Introduction

The labour force or the economic active population (consists of the employed and the unemployed persons seeking work for first time or employed before but out of job, also includes unpaid family workers) is the backbone of a country's economic structure. The distribution of this population among different age groups is an important phenomenon. It is of great interest for planners and policy makers to observe persons entering into labour force, how long they would remain in that status, at what age they would retire from, how many would leave this status due to death at each age and the amount of losses in labour force due to retirement?

The simple way to observe this phenomenon is to apply life table technique and to calculate the expectation of working life at different age groups. This gives the expected number of years, a cohort would stay in economic status and also the number of inactive years in the economic status for that cohort. In other words it would give, the process of growth and structural change of the labour force, estimating quantities as life time expectations of earnings, evaluating returns from investments in human capital, assessing economic implications of changes in activity rates and age structure of the population.

The present study is limited for Indian data for the years 1961 and 1971 for both sexes. The complete life tables (for each sex) for the years 1961 and 1971 have been taken from the life tables prepared by Immerwahr and Sinha¹ under different fertility and mortality assumptions. The abridged life tables for each sex and each year were constructed on the basis of the above referred complete life tables.

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¹ Immerwahr, G. E. and Sinha, U. P., "Mortality Rates for India 1951-81 for Use of Computer Simulation Model (COMPSIM)", I.I.P.S./Sim-37/1970, International Institute for Population Studies, Bombay, pp. 1-29 (mimeographed).