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A Study on Problems of Migrant Construction Workers in Coimbatore City

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Abstract

The present study is based on the problems faced by migrant construction workers in Coimbatore city. Construction sector plays a major role in the development of the economy. Where the construction workers face many problems in their day-to-day life. Some of the problems are discussed in the present study. The major problems are working for more number of hours, staying away from home, bad habits, absence of social security, misunderstanding, arguments, stress, skin problems & sexual health problem, and physical health problems. The working conditions and the facilities provided at the sites are far from satisfactory. Workers from different states like Mumbai, Kerala, Bihar, Orissa, and Karnataka Migrate to our state especially Coimbatore districts for recovering their family economy where local economy offer limited livelihood alternatives. Coimbatore districts provide employment opportunity for those people in different sectors.

Keywords: Migrants, construction workers, health problems, Coimbatore

1. Introduction

Worker migration is generally defined as a cross-border movement for the purposes of employment and better living in a foreign country. However, there are no universally accepted definitions of worker migration. The term "worker migrant" can be used restrictively to only cover the movement for the purpose of employment. Millions of people move from their home countries for work. Migrants look for any work as they are in poverty and insecurity. Migrant workers make significant impact on the world economy. They face many problems like mistreatment and discrimination. Both skilled and unskilled migrant worker are required to complete many work. According to the Indian constitution article 19 provides people basic freedom to move to any part of the country and the right to reside and earn a livelihood in the place of their choice. Poverty, unemployment and helplessness force people to leave their place of origin and to go to unknown places to work in extremely difficult condition. The construction sector is an important sector of the economy and contributes significantly to GDP. According to the NSSO estimates, about 5.57 percentages of workers are engaged in building and other construction work.

Construction labourers' problem in India is one of the major problems in India. Nowadays, construction sector plays a major role in which construction workers face so many problems in their day-to-day activities. The study was done among 50 construction workers in Coimbatore. Major problems of migrant construction workers are working for more number of hours, staying away from home, bad habits, absence of social security, misunderstanding, argument with partners, stress, skin problems, sexual behaviour and sexual health problems and physical health problems.

Need of the Study

The study of migration is of great significance for the growth and reconstruction of rural areas in India. People movement from rural areas to urban areas since the living condition is better in urban areas. In rural areas, they face many problems like poverty, high population pressure, lack of health care facilities, education, etc. In addition, people migrate due to wars, local conflicts and natural disasters such as cyclonic storms, flood, earthquake, Tsunami, drought. The overseas Indian population spans across the globe and almost present in all the continents. In this study the problems of migrant construction workers in Coimbatore city and their level of study has been analysed.

Objectives of the Study

- To describe the socio-economic profile of migrant construction workers in Coimbatore
- To find out problems of migrant construction workers in Coimbatore

Methodology

To undertake this study a sample of 50 migrant workers from Coimbatore have been selected as respondents by applying simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire has been administered to the respondents and primary data have been collected. Statistical tools namely simple

percentage analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) have been used to analyse the primary data. Secondary data for the study have been collected from various publications in journals, magazines, websites and books.

Analysis and Interpretation**Personal Profile**

Table 1 shows the classification of the respondents based on their age, educational qualification, marital status, wages per week, type of family, Native region, Construction work was initiated due to, Type of work performed in construction, Period of experience in the present job.

Table 1: Personal Profile of migrant construction workers

| Particulars | Variables | No | % |
|--|----------------------|----|-------|
| Age | Below 20yrs | 10 | 20.0 |
| | 20 – 40 yrs | 24 | 48.0 |
| | 40 – 60 yrs | 16 | 32.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| SEX | Male | 36 | 72 |
| | Female | 14 | 28 |
| | Total | 50 | 100. |
| Educational qualification | No formal education | 17 | 34.0 |
| | School level | 33 | 66.0 |
| | Graduate | 0 | 0 |
| | others | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Marital status | Married | 40 | 80.0 |
| | Unmarried | 10 | 20.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Wages per week | Up to Rs.3000 | 10 | 20.0 |
| | Rs.3000 – Rs.4000 | 24 | 48.0 |
| | Rs.4000 – Rs.5000 | 9 | 18.0 |
| | More than 5000 | 7 | 14.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| Type of family | Joint | 33 | 66.0 |
| | Nuclear | 17 | 34.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Native Region | North | 36 | 72.0 |
| | South | 10 | 20.0 |
| | East | 3 | 6.0 |
| | West | 1 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| Construction work was initiated due to | Own interest | 10 | 20.0 |
| | Family | 11 | 22.0 |
| | Friends | 26 | 52.0 |
| | Wanted Advertisement | 3 | 6.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| Type of work performed in construction | Iron Worker | 6 | 12.0 |
| | Mason | 11 | 22.0 |
| | Plasterer | 7 | 14.0 |
| | Laborer | 26 | 52.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| Period of experience in the present job | Upto 1 year | 10 | 20.0 |
| | 1-5 Years | 16 | 32.0 |
| | 5-10 Years | 9 | 18.0 |
| | More than 10 Years | 15 | 30.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| The work is on contract basis | Yes | 13 | 26.0 |
| | No | 37 | 74.0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| Working Hours Per Day | 8-10 hours | 42 | 84.0 |
| | 10-12 hours | 6 | 12.0 |
| | 12-13 hours | 2 | 4.0 |
| | More Than 13 hours | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |
| Have u faced any problem at the work place | Yes | 50 | 100.0 |
| | No | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 50 | 100.0 |

From the above Table 1 it is evident that

- 20 per cent of the migrant workers belong to the age group of below 20 years, 48 per cent of them are in the age group of 20 to 40 years, the age group of 32.0 per cent of the respondents are 40 to 60 years.
- 72 per cent of the respondents are male and 38 per cent of the respondents are female.
- 34.0 per cent of them have no formal education and 66 per cent of the respondents have school level education.
- 80 per cent of the migrant workers are married, and remaining 20 per cent of them are unmarried.
- Weekly Wages earned by 20 per cent of the migrant workers is up to Rs.3000, 48 per cent of the respondents' monthly income is between Rs.3000 to Rs.4000, 18 per cent of the respondents earn is between Rs.4000 to 5000 per week and 14 per cent of them earn above 4000 per week.
- Majority (66 per cent) of the migrant workers live in Joint family structure and 34 per cent of them are in Nuclear Family.
- 72 per cent of migrant workers came from north India, 20 per cent of them are residing in south India and 6 per

cent of the respondents' residential area is East Side, 2 per cent of the respondents came from west India.

- 20 per cent of the migrant workers was initiated to construction work due to own interest, 22 per cent of the respondents was initiated to construction work due to family members, 52 per cent respondents was initiated to construction work due to friends, 6 per cent migrant workers was initiated to construction work due to advertisements.
- 12 per cent of the respondents were working as an iron workers, 22 per cent of them were mason workers, and 14 per cent of them were plasterer, majority (52 per cent) of the migrant workers are labourer.
- 26 per cent of the migrant workers are on contract basis and majority (72 per cent) of the respondents are on daily basis.
- Majority (84 per cent) of the migrant workers are working 8 to 10 hours per day, 12 per cent of the respondents are working 10 to 12 hours per day, 4 per cent of the respondents working 12 to 13 hours per day. All the respondents have faced many problem at the work place.

Table 2: Personal factors Vs. Opinion on level of satisfaction of migrant construction worker

| Particulars | Variables | Opinion Score | | | F-Value | Sig |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------|------|---------------|---------|------|
| | | N | Mean | STD Deviation | | |
| Age | Below 20yrs | 10 | 2.27 | .640 | .832 | .442 |
| | 20 – 40 yrs | 24 | 2.00 | .619 | | |
| | 40 – 60 yrs | 16 | 1.97 | .615 | | |
| Type Of Family | Joint | 33 | 2.00 | .615 | .523 | .473 |
| | Nuclear | 17 | 2.13 | .638 | | |
| Native Region | North | 36 | 1.98 | .598 | 1.108 | .356 |
| | South | 10 | 2.34 | .664 | | |
| | East | 3 | 2.00 | .742 | | |
| | West | 1 | 1.57 | . | | |
| Experience | Upto 1 year | 10 | 2.14 | .639 | .119 | .948 |
| | 1-5 Years | 16 | 2.05 | .643 | | |
| | 5-10 Years | 9 | 2.00 | .643 | | |
| | More than 10 Years | 15 | 2.00 | .627 | | |
| Wages | Up to Rs.3000 | 10 | 2.27 | .640 | .788 | .507 |
| | Rs.3000 – Rs.4000 | 24 | 2.00 | .619 | | |
| | Rs.4000 – Rs.5000 | 9 | 1.86 | .567 | | |
| | More than 5000 | 7 | 2.12 | .687 | | |
| Working Hours | 8-10 hours | 42 | 2.01 | .610 | 1.847 | .169 |
| | 10-12 hours | 6 | 2.43 | .664 | | |
| | 12-13 hours | 2 | 1.57 | .000 | | |
| | More Than 13 hours | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |

Ho: There is no significant change between personal factors and level of satisfaction among migrant construction workers.

Opinion score of the respondents in the age group of below 20 years is high with respect to the satisfaction level of migrant construction workers (mean score 2.27) and the least score of 1.97 has been traced among the respondents in the age of 40-60 years. Since the significant value (0.442) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

Opinion score of the respondents for type of family are, Nuclear family have the high mean score of 2.13 and the low mean score of 2.00 has been found among the migrant workers who are Joint Family. Since the significant value (0.473) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

The high mean score 2.34 of the respondents residing in south region and the least mean score 1.57 of the respondents living in west region. Since the significant value (0.356)

is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

The high mean score 2.14 of the respondents working experience is upto 1 year. And the low mean value of 2.00 has been found for the respondents who working in 5 to 10 years and more than 10 years. Since the significant value (0.948) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

Respondents whose weekly income is upto Rs.3000 have a high mean score of 2.27 and the migrant workers whose monthly income is between Rs.4000 to Rs.5000 have the least mean score of 1.86. Since the significant value (0.507) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

The opinion of the respondents whose working hours is 10-12 hours have the high mean score of 2.43 and the low mean

score of 1.57 has been found among the migrant construction workers who are working 12-13 hours. Since the significant

value (0.169) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Personal factors Vs. Opinion on problems faced by migrant construction workers

| Particulars | | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | F-Value | Sig |
|----------------|-------------|----|------|----------------|---------|------|
| Age | Below 20yrs | 10 | 3.43 | .327 | .658 | .522 |
| | 20 – 40 yrs | 24 | 3.55 | .360 | | |
| | 40 – 60 yrs | 16 | 3.59 | .373 | | |
| Sex | Male | 36 | 3.52 | .352 | .351 | .556 |
| | Female | 14 | 3.58 | .373 | | |
| Marital Status | Married | 40 | 3.58 | .364 | 3.436 | .070 |
| | Unmarried | 10 | 3.35 | .259 | | |
| Contract Basis | Yes | 13 | 3.50 | .349 | .218 | .643 |
| | No | 37 | 3.55 | .361 | | |

Opinion score of the respondents in the age group of 20 to 40 years is high with respect to the problems faced by migrant construction workers (mean score 3.55) and the least score of 3.43 has been traced among the respondents in the age of 20 years. These scores have showing the overall opinion of respondents on problems faced by migrant construction workers. Since the significant value (0.522) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

The opinion of the female respondents are have the high mean score of 3.58 and the low mean score of 3.52 has been found among the male migrant workers. These score have suggested that there is no vast difference in the opinion of the respondents on the problem faced by migrant construction workers. Since the significant value (0.556) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

The opinion of the respondents whose marital status have the high mean score of 3.58 and the low mean score of 3.35 has been found among the migrant workers who are married. Since the significant value (0.070) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

The high mean score 3.55 of the Respondents who working is on Normal basis. And the low mean value of 3.50 has been found for the respondents who working is on contract basis. Since the significant value (0.643) is above 5% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected.

Suggestions

The following suggestions have been given based on the findings of the study:

A face to face structured questionnaire interview was used to obtain the data.

Conclusion

The findings suggest important messages for the migrant's construction workers. There is a lack of adequate information for the migrants making them aware of their health risks and rights in relation to health services in the destination countries and we suggest that the government of Tamil Nadu should be responsible for providing this information. Employers should provide orientation on possible health risks and appropriate training for preventive measures and all necessary access to health care services to all their workers. Headache, respiratory diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, musculoskeletal diseases and injuries were the most common health problems experienced by them. Additionally, different types of cuts and fracture or dislocation were the most common type of injuries and accidents that occurred during work among the migrants. Although the majority of the migrant workers were employed in risky jobs, most of them were not provided training for prevention or management of

health risks before their work or provided preventive measures during work. From this study we can say that no country was especially risky and no group of workers were identified as especially vulnerable to health problems or accidents. In a country where more than ninety percent of its population is engaged in unorganized sector of employment, the pathetic condition of the migrant workers and especially the migrant construction workers is a great development challenge.

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