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Research Papers

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## A Sociological Profile of Hotel Workers: A Case Study of Gulbarga City

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### Abstract

*Workers working in Unorganized sector are facing lot of problems. As such, workers working in Hotels are also have many of the socio-economic problems. To analyze the sociological problems of the hotel workers the present study was made in Gulbarga city using interview based survey covering 80 workers working in Hotels. The study highlighted that many of the minors are working in the hotels, where there is unhygienic environment is there. The problems of the hotel workers include the lower wages, more working hours, employers' exploitation, and surprisingly, majority of the respondents are from poor families and a few are orphans. People from Other backward castes and Lingayats dominated as hotel workers, as they do not have education and any of the government facilities. Hence, it suggested to empower the hotel workers by formulating the welfare policies.*

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### Introduction:

The globalization made immense change and transformation in different industries and occupations. The technological change is also took place after globalization. As a result, the cities and urban areas were started growing and making mobility of the people from rural to urban areas. The urban centres represented numerous occupations, industries, commercial centres and other industries. It was during the 19th century the Western urban centres faced the problem of accommodating and feeding the people who come from rural areas. In order to cater to the requirements of the new entrants in the city the hotel Industry came into existence. Thus hotel Industry is characteristic phenomenon of urbanizing. The concept of hotel has undergone a change from time to time. Looking at the various kinds of hotel organizations in different countries of the world, it is extremely difficult to have common explanations of the phenomenon.

Providing lodging and boarding facilities to

the tourists and travelers is a very old tradition in all civilized societies. The rest houses, Sarai, arid Dharmasalas all along the national highways were intended to extend all comforts to the people who moved from one place to another. The rulers took pride in building such houses. It is said that even rich people had the tradition of providing such facilities to the tourists but the concept of hotel is new and one can establish a difference between 'salaries' and modern hotels.

The term hotel comes from French and was "Originally used to denote only extremely large and pretentious inns" Now the term inn denotes "a smaller, less formal type of hotel operation but implies no reduction in the services offered to the guest" (Seavy, 1983). In recent years the hotel industry developed very fast and today it can qualify as a specialized branch of the hotel industry. As such a separate educational programme is also started in Hotel Management and Catering Technology. The Hotels, Clubs and Resorts are playing an important role in serving the

tourists. Many of the people think all these are one, but they are different in nature. There is need to distinguish clubs from hotels even though clubs provide almost the same services as that of hotels. Theoretically "Hotels must accept to capacity and serve all persons desiring accommodations so long as the customer maintains accepted standards of behaviour. A club usually provides services only for members and their guests have no legal obligation to serve others" (Seavy, 1983).

Hotel industry is one of the leading industry and has a vast potential of employment. From the study of available literature, it appears that so far this industry has not attracted the attention of social scientists. It is observed that in medium and small sized hotels the workers have neither service rules nor have adequate remuneration for their labour. They suffer from, all kinds of insecurities. There are no written contracts between the employer and employee. A large number of workers working in these hotels are on temporary basis without any annual increments or other benefits. It is one of the most unorganized sector worker force. Though hotel owners have their association through it they succeeded in exploiting the public and the labour force. The deteriorating quality in their services is noticed by one and all. There is no strong organization of hotel workers. A few attempts that were made now and then have not brought an improvement in their living. They live in the lowest and dirtiest portion of the building. There is no awareness in them about the happenings around them. They are neither educated nor knowledgeable about several labour laws. They are ignorant. Their object poverty and plight made the researcher to take up the present study. Their problems made the researcher sensitive and compelled to do a bit in highlighting their conditions and problems. Hence, the present study is made on sociological aspects of hotel workers in Gulbarga city.

#### Objectives of the Study:

1. To analyze the socio-economic conditions of the hotel workers.
2. To ascertain the workers level of education.
3. To ascertain, the working condition of, hotel workers in the hotels.
4. To ascertain the reasons for joining hotel services.
5. To examine the respondents relationship with their masters.
6. To understand the problems of the hotel workers and suggestions to improve

their conditions.

#### Methodology and Limitations:

The present study is made on the workers working in different hotels in Gulbarga city. Gulbarga city is located in North Karnataka and headquarters of Hyderabad-Karnataka region, which is a backward region in Karnataka. As there are thousands of hotel workers in Gulbarga city, it is not possible to collect the information from all the hotel workers. Hence, the present study is made on sample survey using interview schedule covering the socio-economic aspects of the hotel workers. Further, 80 hotel workers of different ages are surveyed to collect the primary data. The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

#### Analysis and Discussion:

The collected primary data is analyzed, interpreted and discussed as under.

#### 1. Age of the Respondents:

The age factor is very important in determining the eligibility of an individual to seek employment in any industry. For different kinds of jobs different age limits have been prescribed. The hotel workers, it seems, do not have any particular age for joining the work. The directive principles of state policy mentioned in our constitution the minimum age prescribed for children are above 14 years. A child who has completed 18 years of age can be employed. But there are many children who are below the age of 18 employed in hotels. They came from the economically weaker sections, their poor family conditions made them to 'discontinue their education because of their financial problems. When they suffer from hunger they join hotels as workers. For the purpose of study the hotel workers have been classified into five age groups. The table given below explains the age compositions of the workers.

Table No. 1. Age-wise Composition of Respondents

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Below 14 Years	9	11.25
15 Years to 20 Years	29	36.25
21 Years to 30 Years	32	40.00
31 Years to 40 Years	9	11.25
41 Years to 50 Years	1	1.25
Total	80	100.00

The above table reveals the different age groups of the respondents. Age is a very important biological factor of an individual. The age distribution of the respondents brings out the fact

that out of total 80 respondents about 9 belong to below 14 years of age. It means about 11.25% of the respondents are comes under this age group. 29 workers constituting 36.25% belong to 15 to 20 years of age group. The highest percentage i.e. 40% numbering 32 workers belongs to 21-30 age group. Between the age group of 31 to 40 years have 9 members constituting 11.25%. There is only one member who belongs to age group of 41-50 years constituting 1.25% of the sample. From this table it can be said that the major portion/of the workers belongs to the age group of 15—30 constituting 76.25% of the total respondents. It is interesting to note that after 41 and above age group there are very few workers. When workers do not work hard due to age they will be removed from the services.

### 2. Rural-Urban Composition:

A large number of workers are from rural areas. They have migrated to city to secure better job opportunities. In all the cities we find numerous occupations. City provides job opportunities to people in both skilled and unskilled sectors. Many unskilled workers secured jobs in hotels and restaurants. The following table provides the rural-urban background of respondents. In this study we have categorized the respondents into three divisions namely, rural, urban and semi-urban.

Table No. 2. Rural-Urban Composition

Area	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Rural	55	68.75
Urban	22	27.50
Semi-urban	3	3.75
Total	80	100.00

The above table reveals that respondents have come from different places. It is observed that 68.75% of the total respondents belong to rural areas, while 27.5% belong to urban area. Only 3 respondents constituting 3.75% have come to city from semi-urban areas. From this, we can infer that hotels have employed a large number of workers from rural areas. The workers from urban areas may find some other occupation. Therefore, the urban people do not have so much of liking for seeking employment in hotel.

### 3. Caste-wise Composition of Respondents:

It is necessary for one to know which castes have opted for hotel services. Until recently working in hotel was considered as an inferior task, higher castes in this region have not shown

preference for hotel employment. The table 3.4 provides an insight into the association of caste and occupations. In this study the castes have been divided into five categories namely, Brahmins, Lingayats, Backward castes/classes, Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes end others. The table given below gives caste—wise distribution of respondents.

Table No.3. Caste-wise Composition of Respondents

Name of the Caste	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmins	2	2.50
Lingayats	34	42.50
Backward Classes	29	36.25
SC/ST	9	11.25
Others	6	7.50
Total	80	100.00

The above table deals with the caste-wise composition of the hotel workers. It is observed that hotel workers belong to different caste groups. Out of the total respondents only two Brahmins are working in the hotels studied. Of whom 42.50% i.e. 34 workers are Lingayats, 36.25% i.e. 29 respondent belong to the back-ward classes and the 11.25% i.e. 9 respondents belong to the SC/ST community and 7.50 i.e. 6 respondents belong to other castes. It is noticed from the above table that the different castes are working in the hotel industry. The Lingayats are in a large number employed in the hotel and the next comes that of the backward classes. SC/ST are in small number because of their caste status. The hotels belonging to high caste Hindus do not prefer workers from Scheduled castes. It is interesting to note that only two respondents belong to Brahmin. It is felt that among Brahmins working in hotel is considered as below their dignity.

### 4. Education Level of Respondents:

Education is one of the very important indicators of social status. Several hotel workers are literate and attended school. But due to shortage of jobs, even educated persons wanted to go in for hotel employment. The table 3.6 describes the education level of the respondents.

Table No. 4. Education Level of Respondents

Educational Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	23	28.75
Primary	9	11.25
Secondary School	23	28.75
High School	21	26.25
College	4	5.00
Total	80	100.00

The above table deals with the education level of respondents. In hotel industry we find more literates than illiterates among hotel workers. The data show that 28.75% of respondents i.e. 23 are illiterate and 71.25% respondents i.e. 57 are literates. As examined the data in terms of their level of education it is noticed that 11.25% respondents i.e. 9 belong to primary level, 28.75% respondents i.e. 23 have completed their secondary education, 26.25% respondents i.e. 21 is significant to know that they have completed high school education and 4 respondents constituting 5% of the respondents have attended colleges. From this we can infer that literates are in majority among the hotel working population.

#### 5. Occupational Background of the Respondents' Parents:

In order to acquaint with the economic background respondents families their occupation composition is studied. Their parents have different kinds of occupations. The workers coming from the rural background belong to agriculture and agricultural activities, the workers belonging to urban area are the sons of labourers, cycle riksha pullers government and other occupations. The following table highlights occupational composition of respondents.

Table No.5. Occupational Background of the Respondents' Parents

Parents Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	38	47.50
Agricultural Labour	15	18.75
Hotel Labour	7	8.65
Cycle/Auto/Rikshaw pullers	5	6.25
Government Job	3	3.75
Other Workers	12	15.00
Total	80	100.00

The above table deals with the respondents parents occupational background. The hotels workers come from different family backgrounds the workers who came from rural areas have their parents as agriculturists and agricultural labourers. About 47.5% of the respondents' parents occupation is agriculture. 18.75% respondents' parents occupational background is the hotel worker and 6.25% respondents' parents occupation is Cycle/Auto Rikshaw pulling and 3.75% respondents' parents are working in the

government jobs and 15% respondents' parents come from other occupations.

#### 6. Income of the Family (per month) of the Respondents:

It is necessary to understand the family background of the respondents in respect of economic conditions of the parents of the workers. The families have been classified into five categories depending upon their monthly income. The following table reveals the family income.

Table No. 6. Income of the Family (per month) of the Respondents

Income of the Family (Rs.)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Nil	3	3.75
200-599	20	25.00
600-999	34	42.50
1000-1399	15	18.75
Above 1400	8	10.00
Total	80	100.00

The above table explains the 3.75% i.e. 3 respondents of our sample do not have any income; 25% i.e. 20 have income between Rs.200-599; 42.50% is the highest i.e. 34 come under category of Rs.600-999; 18.75% i.e. 15 belong to Rs. 1000-1399 and 10% i.e. 8 of the respondents come under the income of Rs. 1400, and above. The data reveals that the workers are drawn in large number from the family backgrounds which come under Rs. 600-999.

#### 7. Monthly Income of the Respondents (with food and accommodation):

The economic condition of the respondents was studied. Since there are no permanent employees in hotel in Gulbarga, the income has been taken on monthly basis and daily basis. It is seen that those who are paid monthly are provided with food and accommodation and those who are paid daily wages are neither provided with food nor accommodation.



Table No. 7 (a) Monthly Income of the Respondents (with food and accommodation)

Monthly Income (In Rupees)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Below 100	5	6.25
101-200	12	15.00
201-300	28	35.00
301-400	10	12.50
401-500	11	13.75
501-600	5	6.25
601-1000	1	1.25
Total	73	91.25

Table No.7 (b). Without Food Daily Wages (in Rupees) composition

Daily Income (in Rupees)	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Upto 10	1	1.25
11-15	4	5.00
16-20	2	2.50
Total	7	8.75
Total of Table 10 (a)	73	91.25
Grand Total	80	100.00

The above two tables 7(a) and 7(b) reveals the position of respondents in respect of their income. In the first table 3.10(a), it is noticed that 28 workers constituting 35% of the respondents get monthly income of Rs. 201-300. The lowest income i.e. less than Rs. 100 is drawn by 5 workers constituting 6.25% of the respondents, 15% of the respondents i.e. 12 get Rs. 101-200; 12.5% i.e. 10 respondents get Rs. 301-400; 13.75% respondents get Rs. 401-500; 6.25% i.e. 5 respondents get Rs. 501-600 and there is only one who comes under the category of Rs. 600—1000.

Among daily wage earning respondents as depicted in table 7(b), there are 4 members who get Rs. 11—15; two get Rs. 16-20 and or gets up to Rs. 10 per day. From this we can say that most of the workers are economically very poor and get very meagre payments. Their economic conditions are very poor, within this amount they are required to cater to the requirements of their dependents.

#### 8. Reasons for Joining Hotel Service:

In this study an attempt is made to know the reasons for joining the hotel services from the

respondents. It is usually held that the hotel workers enjoy low status among higher and middle castes in India. The lower castes are rarely employed for better and highest kinds of works such as cooking and supplying the food to the customers. The study revealed that majority of the hotel workers are from the rural areas. Why they go in for hotel jobs need to be examined. The field work data reveal the reasons for accepting hotel services. The question was asked to the respondents regarding the reasons for joining hotel service and was given the important reasons among the following:

1. Poor conditions of the family
2. Quarrel with the parents/other members of the family
3. Orphans (no one to look after him/her) and
4. Family tradition (occupation) continued.

There are a large number of workers who are well educated but do not have any specialized skill. The poor persons chose hotel service in the first instance because the hotel owners provide them with food, accommodation, clothing and shelter, which a very difficult to be achieved in the beginning. That is why many would try to seek employment in hotel. When a worker gets into hotel service, he feels secured. The young boys from the rural areas unless are sure of their job, their marriage will be postponed. Thus they would like to take up hotel job and save some money for their marriage. Most of them were unable to continue their education owing to financial difficulties. The table given below depicts the most important reason for joining hotel services by the respondents.

Table No. 8. Reasons for Joining Hotel Service

Reasons for joining	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Poor Conditions	68	85.00
Quarrel with their parents	2	2.50
Orphans	3	3.75
Family Tradition	6	7.50
Others	1	1.25
Total	80	100.00

From the table stated above, it is observed that nearly 85% of the respondents joined hotel services owing to poor income of their parents. About 2.50% narrated that they had quarreled with their parents; 3.75% maintained that there was no one to look after them; 7.50% mentioned that they continued their parents occupation and one respondent stated that the reason for joining the job

is his personal choice. Poverty appears to be the main reason for joining the hotel services.

#### 9. Working Hours of Respondents:

Health and efficiency of workers depend mostly on the number of hours of work expected of them. In well organized industries hours of work are strictly adhered to by the workers as well as employers. It is said that "an Indian worker is incapable of steady and continuous work". The question of hours of work has always been an important element in Factory Act and for industrial workers in India until 1948 regulation stipulated 48 hours of work a week. Workers in shops and commercial establishments are regulated, by State Acts. Karnataka stipulates 9 hours per day and 48 hours per week with half an hour or one hour rest during the working hours. But the hotel owners extract more work from their workers as they are not covered by the provisions of this Act.

Table No. 9. Working hours of Respondents

In Hours	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Below 8 hours	21	26.25
9-10 hours	26	32.50
11-12 hours	32	40.00
Above 13 hours	1	1.25
Total	80	100.00

The above table reveals the respondents working hours per day. In our sample 26.25% respondents are working daily for 8 hours; 32.5% respondents are working for 9 to 10 hours; 40% respondents are working for 11 to 12 hours and the 1.25% respondents are working above 13 hours a day. The majority of the respondents are working from 11 to 12 hours a day and only one is stated to be working for 14 hours.

#### 10. Attitudes towards Job:

An understanding of the attitudes of a worker towards his job is very important. The successful functioning of any industry or organization depends on the interest with which the workers contribute their labour. In several industries the efforts are made to provide facilities and incentives to the workers. Promotions and awards are the measures that sustain the interests of the workers in their jobs.

Table No. 10. Respondents Attitudes towards Job

Attitudes towards Job	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Satisfied	60	75.00
Not Satisfied	20	25.00
Total	80	100.00

The above table deals with the respondents' attitude towards his job. It is observed that the respondents expressed their satisfaction and dissatisfaction regarding their jobs. The feeling of some made us to understand that they are interested in seeking other occupation. They would be in their present post until they get better job. The data reveals that 75% of respondents are satisfied with their jobs as they are interested in changing their present job. It is inferred that a large number of workers have expressed their satisfaction in their present position. A few of them explained that even if they dislike the present job, there is no other job available and therefore they have accepted the job as a good job. In general, it is noticed that most of them have inclination for better earnings.

#### Suggestions from the Study:

A few suggestions have been made with a view to bring out sociological studies on hotel industry. Since it is considered as one of the fourth biggest industry, it is strange to note that it has not attracted the attention of research scholars of social sciences.

1. The sociological studies on the conditions of hotel workers should be taken up keeping in view the different categories of hotels. The different categories of hotels have their unique characteristics. Therefore the works should be undertaken in all categories of hotels.
2. There are very few works worth mentioning on the problems of labourers in the unorganized sector. For instance agricultural labourers are unorganized similarly. The hotel workers in cities which are of medium sized are unorganized. No efforts so far have been made by sociologists to highlight their problems. Nor the government has thought of any scheme to help them. Therefore, there is need for scientific works on them. Unless the scientific works are available, it will be extremely difficult to do something for the uplift of hotel workers.
3. The government should bring down the distance between temporary and permanent workers, particularly in case of hotel workers in medium sized cities. All the benefits given to the

permanent employees should be extended to hotel workers who are working on temporary basis for more than five years. It is only then possible for them to constitute a group with some voice.

4. The social welfare department should formulate a few schemes to provide them assistance, financial or otherwise, to develop their latent abilities. The government should encourage them through granting special financial assistance for establishing independent hotels.

5. The social workers, sociologists and officials should devote their attention towards the understanding of the living and working conditions of hotel labourers and think of the ways and means to provide assistance they needed for their uplift.

**Conclusion:**

The present study is a study of the hotel workers of Gulbarga city, a medium sized city in Karnataka State. A brief description of the growth of hotels in Gulbarga city is discussed. It is observed that Gulbarga had very few hotels before independence, but after independence the number of hotels increased as the city has grown in terms of population. The present study restricts its study only to those hotels where more than 4 workers are employed. This study excludes from its purview. The lodgings and Khanavali provide either lodging or food. The hotel in the present study is defined as an arrangement where coffee, Tiffin and food is provided to the customers from morning 7 am to 9 pm.

It has been found out that among hotel workers majority of them are from rural areas. It is their poor economic conditions that compelled them to take up hotel job even though it brought little status to them. Most of them have heavy burden of their dependents. Their socioeconomic conditions made them live in very unhygienic conditions. They have no strong union and have no securities in life. It is noted good number of them have completed their matric examination. They have accepted hotel services because they are unable to get any other suitable job for them.

A few problems have been identified and highlighted of hotel workers of Gulbarga in this study. Temporary nature of their service, poor economic condition, unhealthy living conditions, absence of organization and insecurity in their services have been identified as problems of hotel workers. Again the absence of any rule from employer or government makes their future dim and far from bringing them on par with other workers belonging to other sectors. Hence, there is

a need for the scientific studies of their problems and programmes for their uplift.

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