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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF LABOURERS IN UNORGANISED SECTOR IN HARYANA



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ABSTRACT:

The unorganized sector has low productivity and offers lower wages. Even though it accounted for over 94 percent of workers, India's unorganized sector created just 57 percent of India's national domestic product in 2006, or about 9 fold less per worker than the organized sector. Poverty rates are reported to be significantly higher in families where all working age members have only worked the unorganized sector throughout their lives. Agriculture, dairy, horticulture and related occupations alone employ 52 percent of labor in India. About 30 million workers are migrant workers, most in agriculture, and local stable employment is unavailable for them. Haryana is developing fast in manufacturing, industrialization and food grains production. Due to this reason laborers are migrating from other areas in search of work in Haryana.

KEYWORDS: laborers, unorganized sector, unregistered economic activity, working condition, low wages

INTRODUCTION

Over 94 percent of India's working population is part of the unorganized sector. In local terms, organized sector or formal sector in India refers to licensed organizations, that is, those who are registered and pay sales tax, income tax, etc. These include the publicly traded companies, incorporated or formally registered entities, corporations, factories, shopping malls, hotels, and large businesses. Unorganized sector, also known as informal sector or own account enterprises, refers to all unlicensed, self-employed or unregistered economic activity such as owner manned general stores, handicrafts and handloom workers, rural traders, farmers, etc.

India's Ministry of Labor, in its 2008 report, classified the unorganized labor in India into four groups. This classification categorized India's unorganized labor force by occupation, nature of employment, especially distressed categories and service categories. The unorganized occupational



groups include small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural laborers, share croppers, fishermen, those engaged in animal husbandry, beedi rolling, labeling and packing, building and construction workers, leather workers, weavers, artisans, salt workers, workers in brick kilns and stone quarries, workers in saw mills, and workers in oil mills. A separate category based on nature of employment includes attached agricultural laborers, bonded laborers, migrant workers, contract and casual laborers. Another separate category dedicated to distressed unorganized sector includes toddy tappers, scavengers, and carriers of head loads, drivers of animal driven vehicles, loaders and unloaders. The last unorganized labor category includes service workers such as midwives, domestic workers, barbers, vegetable and fruit vendors, newspaper vendors, pavement vendors, hand cart operators, and the unorganized retail.

The unorganized sector has low productivity and offers lower wages. Even though it accounted for over 94 percent of workers, India's unorganized sector created just 57 percent of India's national domestic product in 2006, or about 9 fold less per worker than the organized sector.

In the present paper, socio-economic conditions of the laborers working in the brick cline and food grains mandies in Jind and Rohtak district of Haryana are analyzed.

Social conditions of laborers in unorganized sector in Haryana

1. Education level: Most of the laborers are illiterate and have middle level education only. Very few laborers have high school and inter school education level. Poverty and lack of educational service in nearby areas are the main cause of low level of education among laborers.

2. Class and caste: Most of the laborers are of scheduled caste and backward class. Very few laborers belong to general class. Due poverty of parents, traditional beliefs and customs, laborers have to work in unorganized sector.

3. Migrated: Most of the laborers are migrated from West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. Due to lack of work in their native place they have migrate to Haryana in search of work.

4. Housing: most of the laborers have kaccha house of one or two rooms with open kitchen without bathrooms. Due to poverty they make their house near the work place and their houses are not permanent.

5. Basic facilities: Very few laborers have the basic facilities like water, electricity, cleanliness. They have to fetch water from distant areas.

6. Sanitation: laborers are not living in healthy surrounding as sanitation services are provided to them.

7. Health services: The lack of savings and support systems also mean that there is no fall-back in other emergencies, especially major illnesses or the death of an earning member in the family. The rising costs of private healthcare and the systematic dismantling of the public health system in these times of liberalization are a major reason for the huge indebtedness of households in the unorganized sector. There is a pressing need to provide insurance, especially health insurance cover to the workers.

8. Family type: most of the laborers are living in nuclear family with their children. Very few laborers are

living with their parents.

9. Food: laborers make their food in their house but with low income they are not able to get quality food grains. Children of most of the laborers are undernourished and malnourished and susceptible to diseases.

Economic conditions of laborers in unorganized sector in Haryana

1. Pay and working conditions: Unorganized sector work is characterized by low wages that are often insufficient to meet minimum living standards including nutrition, long working hours, and hazardous working conditions. The laborers are not getting enough wages regularly and they are also feeling as bounded laborers. The use of cheap labor in the unorganized sector is the major source of profit for employers and contractors who exploit the workers' lack of collective bargaining power and state regulation.

2. Skilled or unskilled: most of the laborers are unskilled. Due to illiteracy or low education level and poverty, they are not trained in any work.

3. Regular employed: laborers are not getting regular work in a year. Most of them are without work for six months and this period whatever they have saved is spent on food and on living.

4. Savings: the laborers are not able to save their pay more future as they do not have regular work. Whatever they earn is spent in the same year and sometime they have to take loan from the employer or artiya in the locality. Living in abject poverty, most workers in the unorganized sector barely manage a subsistence existence. There is no question of saving, particularly for times when they are unable to work.

5. Child labor: Parents often take the help of children to supplement their own earnings, and this is a major reason for the widespread prevalence of child labor in the unorganized sector.

6. Account in bank or post office: Laborers do not have account in the bank and post office to deposit their savings. Their money is deposit with their employer. it not easy for them to open account in the bank or post office as nobody help then in opening account.

7. Knowledge of financial help schemes: laborers have no knowledge about the financial help schemes of the state government but they want that state government should pay attention to them and provide financial help to make them self dependent.

8. Equal pay for equal work: Women are given low and unequal wages. Sexual harassment is common but unarticulated due to fear of loss of employment. There is no question of paid leave and maternity benefits.

9. Pension: Hazardous work conditions often cause accidents, loss of limbs, etc. Such disability is disastrous because there are no other sources of income for these households. More importantly, there is no provision of old age security such as a pension.

Suggestions to improve the socio-economic conditions of laborers in unorganized sector

1. The state government should provide job oriented training and financial help to the laborers working in the unorganized sector.
2. Every year the state government should conduct survey of the laborers working in the unorganized sector to connect them with the mainstream.
3. Primary educational services and mobile health services should be provided to the children and family members of these laborers.
4. There is need to hear their problems and to pay sensitive attention to them by the state government.
5. There is need to connect these laborers with banks and post office and provide them identity proof like adhaar card so that government financial help can be directly provided to them.

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