

Economic & Nutritional Status of Industrial Workers in Sikandrabad City of Bulandshahr District - A Review Study

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ABSTRACT

The increasing rate of marginalisation due to the fast changing globalisation and mechanisation has accelerated the severity of exploitation of unskilled workers, particularly unorganised workers in the industries. There has been an increasing identification of poverty as evidenced by statistics pertaining to the informal industrial sector. Moreover, the nature of the work in the industrial sector is increasingly becoming subcontracting due to the opening up and also to withstand the pressure of labour market demand in the global setting. The increasing tendency of openness makes the illiterate and untrained labourers in the industrial sector more vulnerable to further exploitation. The working and living conditions are revealed to be highly detrimental to workers health. To overcome this situation, the government from time to time has enacted legislations and constituted welfare boards to improve the working and living conditions and wage regulations. But these bodies failed miserably in ensuring the said priorities. It is found that to tide over this situation, they have been introducing their own ways of welfare programs. But these programs in effect are found to be providing only cosmetic face lift to the workers in the industrial sector and are fully outside the ambit of the basic requirements of industrial workers particularly Sikandrabad city.

Keywords: nutrition, economic, health, bulandshahr district, sikandrabad, industrial workers

I. INTRODUCTION

Considerable debate has taken place about the relationship established between the trends in economic growth and employment, especially, in the manufacturing sector, for different periods during pre and post-reform phases in the Indian context. This debate has been getting stronger because of the fact that the main-stream economic theory assumes output growth to be accompanied by employment growth. It is also assumed that rapid economic growth, especially in a large diversified economy like India's, GDP growth would be accompanied by growth in industrial employment, especially in manufacturing. In most of the developing economies of the world the only unorganised sector supporting economic development and the majority of the people are employed in this sector only. So the key livelihood is informal work in their economies. The workers who are working under the umbrella of unorganised nature, do not have strength to fight for their survival due to illiteracy, insufficient sources.

The informal sector plays a major role in the Indian economy. It is providing gainful employment opportunities to millions of people and is also contributing a significant share to the Nation's output. It is estimated that about two-fifths of India's Gross Domestic Product is generated from the informal sector and about 90 percent of the families are dependent on this sector directly and indirectly for their survival. Despite this, a large number of workers engaged in this sector in both rural and urban areas are illiterate, poor and vulnerable. They live and work in unhygienic conditions and are susceptible to many infectious and chronic diseases. These workers have neither fixed employer-employee relationship nor do they obtain statutory social security benefits. They do not have the bargaining power to fight discrimination and victimization for protecting their rights to a desired standard of living.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sikandrabad Industrial area industries are the age-old business carried out in India (Singh et al., 2005).

It has provided employment for millions of people thus creating a source of earning for poor, illiterate or less educated people (Bamji et al., 1996; Foster and Gariballa, 2005).

In the past, the condition of the knitting industries was not up to the mark compared to present industries (Jaiswal, 2011).

Poor physical conditions at work, non-availability of modernised equipments, low wages and non-supportive management staff worsen the physical and mental health of the workers (Medhi et al., 2006).

Nutritional status, health status and occupational stress are distinct but interrelated factors (Sassoon, 2010).

Any variation in one factor will affect the other two factors. If there is an increase in occupational stress, it affects nutritional status and in turn creates health problems. On the other hand, change in health status predisposes the occupational stress and initiates nutritional problems. (Ronnenbeg et al., 2000).

Kusumaratna (2002) reported that physical hazards such as inadequate lighting and overheating at several units must receive attention and intervention. The management must be aware that this condition could influence workers productivity and factory production. The amount and quality of light at a workplace, walls and work surface can influence the health of the people and their job performance. Illumination is one of the critical elements in the design of any workplace, because without adequate lighting, important elements could not be seen correctly.

Many studies have indicated interrelation between nutritional status, health status and occupational stress (Singh et al., 2005; Bedi, 2006; Medhi et al., 2006; Kawaharadai et al., 2007). Keeping in view the present investigation was conducted to study the health and nutritional status of the workers working in industries in Sikandrabad in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh India.

Buckle PW's (2002) study on workers in 2010 revealed that 20% of the workers faced at least one musculoskeletal disorder during one month, 27% workers also reported morbidity on the WHO healthy day's module in the previous month of the study. The study also highlighted that the most common health problem was back or neck problem followed by arthritis among the workers.

Tiwary G. and Gangopadya P.K and Schneider (2011) in their research also found out that the industrial workers have a high risk of 50% for musculoskeletal injuries, higher than other industrial workers. The repeated postural changes like bending forward or standing and weight bearing may cause backache, low back pain and neck pain and so on.

Gaurav R.B, Kartikeyan, S Wayal R and Joshi S.D (2005) study, the reported prevalence of musculoskeletal problems was 1.1% with not much difference in the two groups. In previous studies, it was reported variably as 4%, 60.7% and 40% affecting neck to foot.

Shah, C.K.,(2009) study quoted that the occurrence rate of WRMSDs increased with increasing age but was lowest in the respondents who were over 50 years of age. Highest percentage of the respondents (34%) experienced their first incident of WRMSDs in the first five years of work. Most of the workers (54.6%) reported WRMSDs of gradual onset, 20.2% reported WRMSDs of sudden onset while only 2.5% implicated a known accident. The highest prevalence of 12 months period WRMSDs in unskilled women workers in industry according to body sites in the study was low back pain (44.1%), followed by neck (28.%) and then knees (22.4%). Studies in biomechanics have also implicated factors such as physical loading in the etiology of prevalent occupational LBP.

Telaprolu N., Lal B.,and Chekuri S.(2013), Adsul B.B. Land P.S, Howal P.V. and Chaturvedi R.M(2011), Joshi TK Menon KK and Kishore J (2001) in their study , around 12.1% had sustained work related accident/injury during the last 1 year. Poor language skills prevent them from understanding the safety precautions given and to follow the instructions given by supervisors. Civil workers had a high risk of injury (6.6% vs. 17.2% P=0.001) and most of them were mechanical injuries, which may be due to the high rate of manual work using sharp tools and falls. Injury constitutes wounds (7.2%), contusion (1.8%), burns (0.5%) and fracture of bones (0.8%). Currently 2.3% had signs or symptoms of injury with no significant difference in two groups. The prevalence of injuries in previous studies was 7.9%, 7.56% and 25.42%, the reduction may be attributed to increased mechanisation and good works.

Tiwary and Gangopadhayay (2011) in their study found several occupational diseases prevalent among the industrial workers. For them, the major diseases requiring attention are as follows: silicosis, lead poisoning, diseases of joints and bones, carbon monoxide, and benzene poisoning, skin diseases and so on.

III. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

People who are engaged in Sikandrabad industries of Bulandshahr district are facing serious problems such as poverty, health, insufficient nutritious food, unhygienic environment, literacy, physical stress, economic problems, occupation problems and other problems. The researcher is keen to understand the problems of workers in Sikandrabad city of Uttar Pradesh district Bulandshahr. The researcher believes that the present study will be helpful in finding out the problems of industrial workers. It may be useful in implementing new welfare schemes for industrial workers in Sikandrabad. So in this study the research mainly addresses the socioeconomic, nutritional and health problems of industrial workers of Sikandrabad city, Bulandshahr District of western Uttar Pradesh.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Workers in Sikandrabad city of Bulandshahr district live as a community and face problems such as low wages, health hazards, sexual abuse, exploitation and denial of their rights. They are exploited by the supervisors at work. Their children do not get proper child care and medical facilities. They do not have proper housing facilities.

Sikandrabad industrial workers suffer from more stress of work, which leads to several physical and mental health problems. Women workers face not only occupational hazards but also other forms of overt and covert harassment including sexual harrassment. They suffer from mental agony and psychological stress and strain. Health issues arise as

thousands of people are working in environments that are hazardous, harsh and completely unacceptable. The worsening working conditions are the result of growth in industries and growing unorganised nature of women's work. This study will help the researcher to identify the problems of economic, nutritional, health status of industrial workers.

V. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To analyse the problems of industrial workers in Sikandrabad city, Bulandshahr district, Uttar Pradesh.

VI. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To study the Socio-economic conditions or status of the labourers in Sikandrabad industries
2. To examine the health status of Sikandrabad industrial workers.
3. To study the nutritional problems faced by workers in industries in Sikandrabad.
4. To identify and suggest measures to concerned authorities to reduce the vital problems of workers in Sikandrabad industries.

VII. RESEARCH DESIGN

The objective of the study is to assess the socio-economic, nutritional, health and other problems of workers in Sikandrabad industries in the district of Bulandshahr. The present study is based on descriptive design. Descriptive research design is used in this study to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe industrial workers. The researcher has used review literature design to see the association between selected problems of industrial workers in Bulandshahr city. Though many studies conducted were earlier on problems of industrial workers which may give various information about the working and living conditions. This study tries to focus on the specific problems of health, nutrition and mainly focuses on economic problems faced by workers particularly in the industrial sector of Bulandshahr.

VIII. AREA OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in Sikandrabad city, Bulandshahr District of western Uttar Pradesh. In industrial work sites, many workers are selected by personal contact. Identifying the workers in industries is very difficult. In Sikandrabad city, four areas are covered for workers' personal interviews. The interview schedule consists of different parts pertaining to personal data of the respondents, occupational problems, general health problems and other problems faced by the respondents.

IX. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher has conducted the study in the Sikandrabad industrial area of Bulandshahr District, Uttar Pradesh. So, the findings of the study cannot be generalised to all over the district and the State. Another limitation is that the study was confined only to the industrial workers.

X. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of the present study offers the following viable suggestions with regard to the study of socio-economic, nutritional and Health status of industrial workers of industrial area of Sikandrabad city, as follows;

- Majority of the respondents perceive the high level of social factors that means they face social problems at the workplace. It is because of temporary work, social exploitation and poverty. People at senior positions can give equal support to both men & women workers and also equal increment in their everyday wages. They also have to face minor psychological factors because of work stress and in such situations, they can be relaxed by allowing chatting with their family members or going out on weekends. The seniors and co-male workers can motivate the women workers in the workplace to cope up with their health issues.
- Create awareness among industrial workers about their rights and set up mechanisms to redressal.
- Ensuring decent working conditions and proper contract systems and providing basic health care for industrial workers and their children.
- Adequate intervention from the government authorities is required for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of the industrial workers
- Effective implementation of the labour laws that make provisions of better health, safety and welfare of industrial labour.

- Organise public medical camps where industrial sites are located.
- Frequent and constant inspection from the government is required to reduce the problems of the industrial labours.
- Encourage the industrial labourers to inculcate saving habits by initiating banking awareness.
- Ensure adequate insurance facilities for the industrial labourers.
- It was observed from the study that appropriate medical help is needed for the migrant workers
- Most of the workers face skin diseases because of heavy exposure to the sun at the workplace, so the employer has to provide safety equipment.
- Some of the female respondents say that they sometimes have to face physical harassment at the workplace. Severe action should be taken against those who are involved in the harassment of women workers.
- It was found that heat, noise, dust and stress related problems are prevalent in the workplace and these are the common problems faced by the respondents.
- Create awareness about different Government Schemes for industrial workers
- Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for children of working women should be provided at the workplace.
- Non-formal education should be provided to the children of industrial workers who are between 3 years to 5 years.
- Create awareness about financial literacy and cashless transaction procedure to the workers.

XI. CONCLUSION

Industry is one of the central pillars of the growing Indian economy as it develops infrastructure and generates more employment. The Industrial sector provides employment to the largest number of unorganised labourers in India, next to the agriculture sector. Workers constitute a significant part of the workforce in India and a big pool of unskilled labour force in the industrial segment. The rate of worker participation is increasing in the industrial segment. Workers in the unorganised sector face many problems, especially in the industrial sector. Regarding basic amenities, respondents reported having no facility for the toilet and medical as well. The source of water supply was through borewell followed by public water supply. The majority were residing away from the site followed by nearby sites and within the site.

The study revealed that workers were unskilled and facing various health problems in Sikandrabad industrial sector, therefore, training programs should be organised by the government and non-government organisations. Their basic rights and duties were violated in many forms like wage discrimination, sexual harassment at work place, occupational hazards, poor safety measures are the important factor which affects the mental health of the workers and their right to 'work with dignity' is greatly affected.

The present study aims to review the existing literature, the study of socio-economic, nutritional and health status of industrial workers in Sikandrabad city. It can be concluded that the majority of workers in this study are illiterates and others with only primary education. The knowledge of ergonomics was generally poor among the workers. Working in the same position for long periods, lifting and transferring heavy loads & working for elongated hours were the most perceived job risk factors for work related musculoskeletal disorders.

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