
Socio economic conditions of depressed class women labour in construction sector of Bangalore city

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ABSTRACT

The unfortunate socio-economic conditions of women workers on construction sites in major cities have become far worse than previously thought and seen. This was corroborated by the field survey conducted in construction sites of Bangalore city. The construction sites taken for survey were the new multi storeyed buildings from Bangalore Mysore Road, Kengeri and Ullal Upanagara Koramangala and JP nagar. For this study 150 samples of migrant women workers were collected. The other factor was all of them were from scheduled castes. The rationale behind the study was firstly to find out if their conditions have improved post pandemic and secondly to understand how far the government schemes and welfare boards have served their purpose? Has all these social security measures alleviated their problems to a certain extent or not? The main objective was to find out if their socio economic status changed after migration and to find out if there was any possibility to avail help from the government schemes other than Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bhima Yojane and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bhima Yojana or get help from NGO's. Research gap showed that there were many shortcomings for these distressed groups as they were sidelined repeatedly but why was it so? Did they avail of 1% cess meant for construction workers? Research Methodology followed was using both primary and secondary data though it was a primary study. Descriptive analysis was followed. Simple random sampling was carried out and percentage method was used for data analysis. The findings indicated that most of the time they were not paid the full amount, often fell sick besides there was no prevention for the on site accidents and no immediate medical help was forthcoming. Conclusion showed that this problem of distress migration arose because of severe drought conditions in many north Karnataka states and their inability to work as agricultural labourers as big farmers preferred to use tractors. Socially and economically they were a totally repressed lot and suffered more post pandemic in their quest to sustain themselves and their families.

Keywords: Construction sites, Depressed classes, women labour, socio economic conditions, cess, welfare boards.

1. Introduction

'Migration' denotes movement of population from one village or town to another village or town. The word migration derived from Latin word 'migrare', means to change one's residence. According to New Webster Dictionary migration means, "The act or an instance of moving from one country, region or place to settle in another or the act or an instance of moving from one area to another in search of work". Many scholars have given clear definition for migration.

Safa opines that 'migration is normally viewed as an economic phenomenon though non-economic factors obviously have some bearing. Thus, the concept of migration embraces essentially four crucial dimensions: Space, Residence, Time and Activity changes. It has been argued by many economists that rural to urban migration may be due to economic factors. But when it comes to Indian villages it has been seen that migration was a complicated multifaceted event. It is commonly understood that the main motivation for migration was the different socio economic environment. In the place of origin and the place of destination different instances operate. The push pull migration theory of Bague also has implied that its mostly in the native villages this movement primarily takes place and even their reaching places selected will be more in number. Many economists have commonly

inferred that rural urban migration in any form were mostly poverty induced distressed or subsistence vs developmental occurs due to some economic and non-economic factors.

A field survey was conducted on the building sites in Pramod layout, Mysore road, Ullalupanagara JPnagara and Koramangala in Bangalore city. Only women belonging to distressed classes were taken for survey. One hundred and fifty samples were collected. In North Karnataka Raichur Bijapur Yadgir Gulbarga Bellary Koppal Bagalkot and Bidar suffer from an acute shortage of rainfall and always have drought like conditions. They are thus riddled with poverty and look for a source of livelihood elsewhere. Bangalore a bustling city with a huge population and with a roaring construction business has given sustenance for hundreds of such women and men by giving them jobs in the construction sites. But rural migration to urban lands has created a huge space problem in the cities which have expanded since the last two decades. How to stem this occurrence which has created many city problems like housing medical facilities the springing of slums crimes lack of educational facilities? It has been suggested to introduce 15% cess for construction workers and implement all safety measures and give minimum wages set by the government in 2021 and not that set up in 1948. To alleviate their poverty NGOs can distribute midday meals on work sites or even arrange for teaching their children free of cost.

2. Review of literature

According to Ravenstein (1880), migrants move from areas of low opportunity to areas of high opportunity. The choice of destination is regulated by distance, with migrants from the rural areas often showing a tendency to move first towards nearby towns, and then towards large cities. Further, Ravenstein observes that each stream of rural-urban migration produces a counter stream of urban-rural migration, although the former tends to dominate the latter. He also points out that the urban residents are less migratory than the rural. Lastly migration accelerates with growth in the means of transport and communication and expansion of trade and industry. The importance of the economic motive in the decision to migrate, the negative influence of distance and the role of step-migration is the highlight of Ravenstein's theory.

Building on Ravenstein's laws of migration, Lee (1966) divides forces exerting influence on migration perception into "pluses and minuses". The former pull individuals towards them, the latter tend to drive them away. There are "zeros" also, in which the competing forces are more or less, evenly balanced. These forces are associated with the area of origin and the area of destination and are influenced by personal factors which affect individual that facilitate or act as an obstacle to migration. Brueckner and Zenou (1999) add an urban land market to a static Harris-Todaro framework and look at the urban area as a monocentric city with an endogenous population. An exogenous shock like the enlargement of the modern sector or an increase in the urban wage, the unemployment rate and thus the probability of being employed are the forces that restore the equilibrium. In this model formal sector growth does not necessarily induce migration: enlarging the formal sector causes land rents to rise, which may depress a potential migrant's expected utility in spite of his better chances of finding a job. When this is the case, the overall urban population, and thus the informal sector, must shrink to restore the migration equilibrium.

3. Research Gap

With agriculture getting mechanized more and more, the subsistence of farm labour has taken a backseat. With agricultural wage rates (minimum wage floor rate increasing from Rs.350 per day to 1500Rs. Per day as of 2021) most of the big farmers are trying to minimize the use of labour in their farms. With unseasonal heavy rains destroying standing crops and with no other source of employment or sustenance rural urban migration is more prevalent in the post pandemic year.

4. Objectives

- 1) To compile the profile of sampled migrant workers.
- 2) To understand causes for migration whether distress migration or to increase economic level.

- 3) To analyze the changes in socio economic status after migration.
- 4) To find out if there are any possibilities for these labourers to avail any helpful interventions from government, self help groups,anganwadi’s etc:

5. Research Methodology

Both primary data and secondary data was used for analysis. The primary data consisted of the sample design of scheduled caste and Tribal migrants which were taken for study. Only women were taken as samples. They were interviewed face to face .Sample size was one hundred and fifty. And simple random was used to collect samples. Descriptive analysis was followed. As many labourers were illiterate and questionnaire was filled up by the investigator and the interviewed sample put their thumb print in their respective names in the questionnaire. Their surveyed age groups were 25-35 years. Secondary data comprised of collecting material from previously published articles books and reports from government.

6. Result and Discussion

Table-1-Profile of the migrant workers.

Sl.no	Working construction sites	No.of sampled workers	Per month wages	Housing	Provision of food and water on site	Toilet facilities	No. of earning family members	In family no. of adults&children
1	Pramod Layout	30	450 Rs	Onsite shacks	No	No	01	02(a)4(c)
2	Sattva Melody	30	Rs.500	On site tents	No	No	01	2(a)5(c)
3	Navami Landmark	30	Rs.500	Tents	No	No	01	2(a)4(c)
4	JPnagar residential site	30	Rs.600	On site tents	No	No	01	2(a)3(c)
5	Koramangala sites	30	Rs.600	On site tents.	no	no	01	2(a)3(c)
6	05 sites	150						

Source: Field Survey 2022 -January.

Table analysis: Though the minimum wage rate was fixed at Rs.1500 it was seen that a paltry amount of Rs.400-600 Rs was paid per month which had all the families on the verge of starvation. With food inflation prevalent post pandemic the access to two square meals per day was a rarity. 2(a) denotes 2 adults per family and 2(c) denotes number of children per family. In the table (a) refers to adults and (c) refers to children. Giving these faceless migrant workers an identity and social inclusion by providing ID cards and ration cards will go a long way in mitigating their problems.

Table -2- Was it distress migration or to maintain a comfortable economic level.

Sl. No.	Sampled construction sites	No.of sampled respondents	Water scarcity	Mechanization of farms	Low farm wages leading to starvation
1	Pramod layout	30	50%	25%	25%

2	Sattva Melody	30	40%	20%	40%
3	Navami landmark	30	50%	15%	35%
4	JP nagar residential site	30	50%	20%	30%
5	Koramangala sites	30	45%	20%	35%

Source: Field Survey 2022 January

Table Analysis: The above table shows that it’s a clear case of distress migration as these labourers wanted to earn to keep their body and soul together. It was not only a general case of rural urban migration. Agricultural wages was below subsistence level coupled with greater mechanization and water scarcity. led these migrant workers to go to cities in search of work. Even in cities they never earned much.

Table -3 Analysis of changes in Socio economic status post migration.

Sl.no.	Sampled work sites	Sampled no. of respondents	Children education	Afford medical facility	Housing	Steady income per month	Debt status
1	Pramod layout	30	20%	20%	10%	10%	40%
2	Sattva melody	30	25%	20%	10%	10%	35%
3	Navami Landmarks	30	20%	25%	10%	10%	55%
4	Koramangala	30	10%	25%	10%	10%	55%
5	JPnagara	30	10%	20%	10%	10%	60%

Source--Field Survey- January 2023.

Table analysis: The above table shows that debt status is the highest among all the laborers. This indicates that there was no improvement in their socio economic status post migration as they couldn’t avail the government’s housing scheme as none of them had ration cards due to their migratory status.

Limitation:

The main limitation was due to the shortage of time many more samples couldn’t be collected to make the study more diverse.

Suggestions:

- 1.To apply and get Aadhar card and Ration card so as to avail government benefits and schemes.
2. To avail the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bheema to use the financial schemes of government.
- 3.To extend The Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bhima Yojana an insurance scheme of the government which covers accidents and sudden loss of life to all construction workers..

Conclusion

To conclude bringing out more rural projects which will ensure employment in rural areas such as PMJRY(Jawahar Rozgar Yojana) to usher in better employment schemes in rural areas will bring down rural urban migration to a certain level.

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