A study on working and living condition of migrant workers in garment industry

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***Abstract:** Migration is considered as the geographic mobility or the process of movement of people from one place to another. Garment Industry in India plays a vital role in the development of the country. India stands second largest textile fiber producer in the world and it is the largest cotton and jute producer. Nearly nine garment industries in tones of fiber production are carried out in India every year due to which it stands as the second largest textile manufacturing in the global level. Large mass of migrants finds employment at the garments hub in India. There is need of study to be made to examine the living and working condition of the migrant labour at the place of their destination to examine the problems they face and to find if they are happy and satisfied after their migration process. The study has found that even after migration the quality of the migrants have not shown much improvement. Though the working conditions were satisfactory, yet none of the migrants live in own houses. Migrants of the current study have restricted access to basic needs, social entitlements and housing.*

***Key Words:** Migration, Area, Movement, Geography, Migrants.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Migration is considered as the geographic mobility or the process of movement of people from one place to another. Generally a person moves from his home town to other place in order to gain income benefit. There are other reasons for migration too like exodus during ethnic conflict, natural disaster, political instability, economic hardship as well as search for economic and social improvement, betterment of livelihood and so on. The migrants tend to move from places of lower economic opportunities to areas with higher potential opportunities. Migration from different states to other states in India has now become so rampant that its impact is felt in every aspect of life. Migration has become a way of life to many, who are unskilled and semi skilled and find difficult to get better jobs within their natives and locality. Most of the poor people migrating to cities and towns join one or another informal sector activity either in wage employment or self-employment.

Garment Industry in India plays a vital role in the development of the country. India stands second largest textile fiber producer in the world and it is the largest cotton and jute producer. Nearly nine garment industries in tones of fiber production are carried out in India every year due to which it stands as the second largest textile manufacturing in the global level. (Make in India Report 2017).

There are large numbers of labors required for the garment manufacturing in India. And many un skilled and illiterate workers migrate to garments hub in search for better employment and better job. Even that sector gives life for those migrant workers by providing employment. This study is been confined in order to find out the working and living condition of migrant labors who are employed in the garment industries of India.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The garment industry is one of the oldest and largest export industries. The industry exemplifies the challenges associated with global manufacturing: low wages, "flexible" contracts and sweatshop conditions. Informal garment and textile workers often experience isolation, invisibility and lack of power, especially those who produce from their homes. Textile industry is one of the main pillars holding the Indian Economy. It constitutes about 14 percent of industrial production, 20 percent of total export earnings, 4 percent of GDP and direct employment to an estimated 35 garment industries on people. In spite of these, India's entire share in the world textiles trade is still maintained at around 3 percent. (India Mirror 2016).

India, the largest democracy in the world, had a population of 1,170,938,000 people in 2010(3). The Indian garment industry "provides direct employment to over 33garment industries on people and is the second largest provider of employment after agriculture". About 21.9% of total manufacturing jobs in India belong to the garments industry with smaller factories and home-workers making up a large portion of India's informal sector of over 433 garment industries. As such, the garment industry represents a large source of revenue for Indians. (CITI 2008)

Migrant workers are an increasingly important part of the global garment industry workforce. These workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation: they often do the same job as local workers but for lower wages and in more precarious conditions, and face specific barriers to articulating and demanding their rights as workers. Abuse of migrant workers in textile and garment supply chains is a growing problem. (Fact Sheet 2016)

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

As large mass migrant labors are moving from their hometown to other places for better living condition and high income. And at the place of destination they generally suffer because of lack of knowledge on local language and they are been abused by the local people. There is need of study to be made to examine the living and working condition of the migrant labour at the place of their destination to examine the problems they face and to find if they are happy and satisfied after their migration process. This study is made to find out answer for this research problem.

4. OBJECTIVE:

The following are the objectives of the study,

- To examine the socio and demographic background of the migrant workers
- To analyze the living condition of the migrant labour
- To find out the working condition of the migrants and
- To understand the problems of the respondent at the place of destination

5. METHODOLOGY:

This study is conducted among 100 migrant workers employed in garment sector of Tirupur district from August 2016 to November 2016. Tirupur district is selected as the study area as one of the largest textile hub in India. Simple analytical tools are used to find out the result of the study.

6. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Socio and demographic background of the migrants

Socio and demographic background of the migrants is necessary to be studied as this will reveal the family background of the migrant worker.

TABLE 1

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MIGRANTS

S.No	Social characteristics	Number	Percentage
1	**Religion**		
	Hindu	60	60
	Christian	26	26
	Muslim	14	14
	Total	100	100
2	**Community**		
	OBC	31	31
	SC/ST	54	54
	Others	15	15
	Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

In the social background there was study made on the religion and community of the migrant labors. Out of 100 sample migrants majority of 60 percent are from Hindu religion which is followed by 26 migrants in Christianity and 14 migrants following Islamic or Muslim religion. And majority (54%) of the labors are from SC/ST community followed by OBC 31% and others being 15%.

TABLE 2
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS

S.No	Demographic characteristics	Number	Percentage
1	**Sex** Male Female Total	81 19 100	81 19 100
2	**Type of family** Joint Nuclear	51 49	51 49
3	**Age of the respondent (in years)** <20 20-30 30-50 >50 Total	38 44 13 5 100	38 44 13 5 100
4	**Education level** Illiterate Primary Secondary Higher secondary Total	26 45 25 4 100	26 45 25 4 100
5	**Marital status** Married Unmarried Widow Total	46 45 9 100	46 45 9 100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

In the current study, the details on the sex wise distribution of the migrants indicates that among the 100 migrant respondents, only 19 were females and other 81 were males, the sex ratio being 234 females per 1000 males. Migration is predominant among males. Migration is thus found to be dependent on sex. Among 100 migrants 51 percent of the sample respondents were from joint family and without a big difference remaining 49 percent are from nuclear family; indicating the independence between migration and type of family. The basis of age can be noted that majority of the workforce (44 percent) were from the age group of 20-30 years. It was followed by 38 percent of the sample respondents being in the age group of less than 20years, 13 percent of the respondents from the age group of 30-50years and only 5 percent of the respondents were from the age group exceeding 50years. Hence, migration takes place at a younger age.

It is to be noted that 26 percent of the sample respondents were illiterates. In the sample group 25 percent of them had a chance to undergo secondary education and only 4 percent of them had attained higher secondary education. About 71 percent of the migrant garment industries workers of the current study were found to be either illiterate or had completed only primary level of education. Migration is thus depending on the educational level. Data relating to marital status of the members in the current study highlights that 46 percent of the population were married and other 45 percent were unmarried. In the selected sample about 9 percent of the migrant were widows.

7. LIVING CONDITION OF THE MIGRANTS:

Table 3
Living Condition of the migrants

S.No	Accommodation	Number	S.No	Accommodation	Number
1	**House** Rented Owned Total	100 0 100	6	**Bathroom** Within the house Outside the house Away from the house	32 45 23

				Total	100
2	**No. of rooms** 1 2-3 >3 Total	80 6 14 100	7	**Details of latrine** Within the house Outside the house Away from the house Total	32 45 23 100
3	**Type of floor** Mosaic Cement Tiles Total	65 23 12 100	8	**Type of latrine** Pit latrine Independent Shared Total	13 12 75 100
4	**Type of roof** Asbestos Terrace Tiles Total	43 37 20 100	9	**Drainage facility** Open Closed Total	65 35 100
5	**Type of lighting** Electrified Non-electrified Total	100 0 100	10	**Drinking water** Within the premise Near the premise Away from the premise Total	32 22 46 100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

From the above table it is found that all the sample respondents (100 percent) live in rented houses. The table also shows that a majority of 80 percent of the sample units live in single room house while the remaining 20 percent live in 2-3 rooms and in rented houses with more than 3 rooms. When analyzed on the flooring of the houses of the respondents most of them (65 percent) reported that they have mosaic flooring, followed by 23 percent living in cement flooring and only 12 percent of the migrants live in tiles flooring houses

When an analysis was made on the availability of basic amenities, such as bathroom a majority of 45 percent reported that they have bathroom outside the house, 32 percent stated they have bathroom within the house and 23 percent stated that they have bathroom away from their home.

The study also finds the details of latrine available to the respondents in their place of destination. It reveals that a majority of 75 respondents are sharing their latrine. It is followed by pit latrine by 13 percentage and 12 percent of respondents have independent latrine facility.

The next analysis was on the drainage system, in which a majority of 65 percent of the respondents stated that they have open drainage system in their accommodation and only 35 had closed drainage system.

There was also question related to the availability of drinking water, where a majority of 46 percent stated that they have to go away from their premises for getting pure drinking water, 32 percent had drinking water facility within the premise and 22 percent stated that they had water facility near their premise.

8. WORKING CONDITION OF THE RESPONDENTS:

According to the Fair Wear Foundation Report (2004)Garment production can be split up into the following steps:

1. Yarn manufacturing / spinning garment industries (Threads are manufacture from cotton)
2. Knitting process (Machines convert the threads in garment cloth rolls)
3. Dyeing and bleaching process (In this process the clothes are bleached first as white garments and then colored using dyeing process)
4. Compacting and calending process (In this process clothes are dried and straightened.)
 5. Cutting the cloth (by hand or machine)
6. Stitching process (Clothes are cut and stitched as garments.)
7. Fabric printing (If required logos and slogans are printed in this screen printing process)

 8. Embroidery process (Embroidery designs are made in clothes if required by the design)
9. Labelling process (Labels of each brand are stitched in the clothes
10. Checking process (Garments are checked for any faults like small holes, scratches, imperfect color, stitching errors etc.)
11. Ironing process (In this process garments are ironed)
12. Packing and shipment (All garments are uniformly arranged and each piece is packed in a polythene covers and then packed in cardboard boxes. Finally loaded in containers and shipment.)

All the selected migrant labors are enrolled in the above mentioned activities of the garment production in the Tirupur District.

9. WORKING CONDITION OF THE RESPONDENTS:

An attempt was made to analyze details on the workplace of the respondents based on the distance from their accommodation to work place, mode of transport and rating of working condition by respondents. The results of the analysis are tabulated as follows,

TABLE 4
DETAILS ON WORK PLACE

S.No	Detail on work place	Number
1	**Approximate distance**	
	Within the site	32
	<5 km	60
	≥5 km	8
	Total	100
2	**Mode of transport**	
	By walk	53
	Bus	29
	Bike/moped	12
	Bicycle	6
	Total	100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

From the table it can be inferred that among the 100 sample respondents a majority of 60 percent have their houses within 5kms of their work sites. Another 32 percent lived in the work site and only 8 percent of respondents had their work places more than 5kms away from their houses.

When the workers were asked to specify how they get to work, a majority of 53 percent stated that they go by walk to the workplace. This was followed by 29 percent of migrants using public modes of transport such as bus and 12 percent of the respondents stated that they used bikes or moped for travelling and only 6 percent of the sample migrants stated that they used bicycle to travel to their work place.

10. WORKING CONDITIONS:

The present study has made an attempt to observe the employment status of the migrant garment industries workers in Tirupur District. The following table shows the findings of the analyses,

TABLE 5
WORKING CONDITION

S.No	Working condition	(%)	S.No	Working condition	(%)
1	**No. of days employed in a week**		3	**Wage per month(₹)**	
	4			<5000	10
	5	10		5000-8000	40
	6	30		8000-10000	50
	Total	60		Total	100
		100			
2	**No. of hours of worked in a day**		4	**Rating of working condition**	
	6	15		Very Good	71
	7	30		Good	10

8	10		Average	9
10	45		Poor	7
Total	100		Very poor	3
			Total	100

 Source: Primary data, 2016

The respondents were asked questions on the number of days they were employed in a week in order to analyze their working conditions. A majority of 60 percent of the migrant said that they were employed 6 days in a week, 30 percent said that they were employed for 5 days in a week and 10 percent stated that they were employed for 4 days in a week.

The study also found out the number of working hours for the migrant workers in a day, where, a majority of 45 percent said they worked for 10 hours a day, followed by 30 percent stating they worked for 7 hours a day, 15 percent stating 6 hours and 10 percent said they worked for 8 hours a day.

When considering their wage, different migrant workers get different wages based on their skill, working hours and the type of work they do. In this a majority of 50 percent were getting income in the range of ₹8000-10000 in a month, 40 percent of respondents in the range of ₹5000-8000 and a minimum of 10 percent getting less than ₹5000.

Regarding the working condition the respondents were asked to give their views on a 5 point rating scale as `very good', `good', `average', `poor', and `very poor'. A majority of 71 percent have rated their working condition as `very good', followed by 10 percent rating as `good', 9 percent of respondents rated as `average' and about 10 percent together has given rating as poor and very poor .

11. PROBLEMS OF MIGRANTS:

Migrants migrate impelled by pull and push factors. How far migration has enhanced their standard of living is an issue, which warrants thorough investigation. The migrants were asked to assign ranks on the various problems they face both at the work place and the environment in which they live. Some of the problems faced by migrants and their families have been identified and are outlined here. For the most severe problem faced by the migrant, rank `1' was assigned and for the remaining problems ranks were assigned in descending order. The ranks were then converted into percent position using the formula,

Percent position= 100(R-0.5)/N

Were, R is the rank assigned; and N= number of problems. The calculated percent position was then converted into scores using Garrett Ranking Scores table. The assigned scores are given in table below.

TABLE 6
PROBLMES OF MIGRANTS

S.No	Problem	Scores	S.No	Problem	Scores
1	Language	71.81	6	Availability of health provision	48.37
2	Getting ration card	55.78	7	Children education	46.69
3	High cost of living	54.58	8	Health	42.73
4	Away from relatives	53.91	9	Job promotion	41.56
5	Poor living condition	50.79	110	Finding shelter	39.73

 Source: Primary Survey 2016

12. CONCLUSION:

The current study depicts migration to be more pronounced among males at an younger age. As migrant workers are from other states they have language problem. Besides this, they find difficult in getting ration cards; which calls the attention of the administrators to effectively monitor the public distribution system. Economic pull factors are the causes for migration. Even after migration the quality of the migrants have not shown much improvement. Though the working conditions were satisfactory, yet none of the migrants live in own houses. Migrants of the current study have restricted access to basic needs, social entitlements and housing. In this, the role of the stake holders –viz, the Government, the local authorities and the owners of the premises is important to make suitable arrangements for the better housing facilities and for providing basic housing facilities and basic amenities to the migrants. A concerted

national strategy on migration which insures access to entitlements of the migrants to build a sustainable and equitable pathway to progress is the need of the hour.

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