

Impact of COVID-19 on livelihood of unorganized sector and suggestive measures

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Abstract

Starting from December 2019 novel COVID-19 pandemics has become major challenge not only to healthcare community but also livelihood of humans. Exponential and uncontrollable spread of life-threatening viruses becomes a serious issue for the governments of all the countries across the globe. Unfortunately, to stop the further spread of the virus most nations suddenly announced strict lockdown for several days. The lockdown situation was very panic and affected adversely on livelihood of human beings. The adverse effect was dramatically more in unorganized sector than the people working in organized sectors. Lack of literacy, awareness and government policies are the major reasons behind this. In this paper, we present the detailed analytical study of the impact of COVID 19 on livelihood of unorganized sector in India. India is developing country, and it has wide range of unorganized sector laborers. The primary data was collected from the laborers directly through questionnaires. By confirming the result of this analytical study, livelihood of unorganized sector affected adversely. Government and NGOs should make extra efforts to frame policies and laws to uplift their lives. The paper will come up with some technological measures to identify and help such unorganized laborers in any kind of community issues to fulfill their basic requirements.

Key words: Covid-19, Unorganized Sector, Impact, livelihood, Measures etc.

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Introduction:

Till the end of December 2019, the world was running smoothly. But on the 31st of December 2019 the World Health Organization firstly knew about the new virus called SARS-CoV-2 found in Wuhan, China. In the outbreak of a novel coronavirus in China killed more than eighteen hundred and infected over seventy thousand individuals within the first fifty days of the epidemic. According to WHO situation Report no 10 dated on 30th of January the first case of COVID-19 was found in India. Till this date total 7818 cases of COVID-19 were reported globally from which 82 were out of China and from different 18 countries. This case of COVID-19 in India was associated with travel history from Wuhan, China as the student resident of Kerala was returned from China. As on February 3, 2020, there are only three confirmed cases in India. All of them belong to state of Kerala, India. The confirmed cases of COVID 19 reached

585752 as on June 30, 2020. During this period 17409 people lost their lives and 347839 people recovered from COVID-19.

To deal with COVID-19 pandemic the Government of India as well as the state governments of India has taken several measures including the quarantine, isolation, mask wearing, social distancing, restriction on intra and international travelling to national level lockdown. The Prime Minister of India announced the Janata Curfew on 22nd of March and then after many states like Kerala, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nādu has imposed the lockdown till 31st of March 2020. Afterward the lockdown has not limited it get extended by many states and it was done in steps as lockdown 1.0, 2.0, and as on. In this lockdown situation the school, colleges, markets, meeting places, wedding halls, gym, hotels, restaurants, malls, public transport facilities were closed and only the essential services such as hospitals, medical shops, banks, police & security was working.

Unorganized Sector and Pandemic:

The fight against the COVID 19 in India created many new socio-economic issues in which the livelihood challenges in poor, unregistered laborer, migrant workers is one of the biggest problems. The Indian Economy is characterized by the existence of a vast majority of informal or unorganized labor employment. As per the Economic Survey 2007-08, 93% of India's workforce include the self-employed and employed in unorganized sector. According to a report of National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in 2009–10, the total employment was 46.5 crore. Out of this, 94% of people are unorganized workers and only 6% were organized workers.¹ (WHO) This unorganized sector covers some of the daily wage workers, domestic workers, mid wives, vegetable and fruit sellers, newspaper venders, fisherman, barbers, agricultural laborer, migrant laborer, landless agricultural laborer etc.

Review of Literature:

Koushik M. & Trikha A. (2020) has developed an article entitled An Exploratory Analysis of The Challenges Faced by The Unorganized Sector in India During Pandemic COVID-19 Lockdown. The article is based on secondary data describing the challenges faced by the unorganized workers. The author has highlighted the unavailability of unorganized labors data due to which the government was also delayed in providing necessary services and shift workers to their hometowns. Also highlighted the issue of absence of union among unorganized workers due to which even they don't have strong legislative support.

A policy paper "COVID-19 and the State of India's Labor Market" is written by Kapoor R. in 2020. The paper discusses the sectoral composition of unorganized workers and breakdown in their livelihood during the pandemic. The author has suggested a few suggestive measures for the welfare of unorganized laborers which are as below.

1. Supporting enterprises to protect low wage regular formal jobs

2. Temporary reallocation of workers
3. Strengthening Workfare Programs
4. Industrial Policy
5. Extending Social Security to Informal Workers

Bagadi S. (2021) has written an article titled “An analysis of the socio-economic impact of covid-19 lockdown on unorganized migrant workers in India”. The data is gathered through television, newspaper published and unpublished data etc. The effect of lockdown has been measured with the help of various variables such as geographical area, socio-economic condition. The author has been given some suggestions as below.

1. documentation of labors.
2. proper skill training to laborers
3. pension service
4. arrangement of medical facilities

Umare M. has written an article entitled “Unorganized Workers: Crisis & management”. The paper tries to focus on the contribution of migrant workers to the national economy. The author has identified the range of issues faced by laborers as well as highlighting the need for and importance of reform in the legislation. The author has suggested policy level changes to tackle the crisis like Covid pandemic.

An article “Unemployment dimensions of COVID-19 and Government response in India –An analytical study” is written by Parvathamma G. L. in 2020. The secondary data of job loss analysis, growth rate during pandemic, government actions has been collected. The data has been combined of variety of states on various sectors of unorganized labor. The author has come up with some suggestions as below.

1. Use of holistic approach to deal with such situation
2. Financial assistance through SHG model
3. Rural industrialization for local employment generation

Research Methodology:

A research methodology describes how a researcher intends to conduct their research. It's a methodical, logical approach to solving a research challenge. A methodology describes a researcher's approach to research to produce trustworthy, credible results that fulfill the researcher's goals and objectives.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To understand the socio-economical condition of daily wage works
2. To study the impact of COVID-19 on daily wage worker
3. To come out with suggestive measures for daily wage workers

Research Design:

The framework of research methodologies and procedures chosen by a researcher to perform a study is referred to as the research design. The design enables researchers to fine-tune research methodologies appropriate for the topic matter and put their studies up for success. One can use descriptive research to uncover trends in a group's features to effectively establish everything you need to understand away from why something happened. Through quantitative sampling the researcher has described the socio economical condition of the daily wage workers. The personal profile of the daily wage workers and the effects of COVID-19 on daily wage workers will be pronounced.

Sampling Design:

A sample strategy is a blueprint for conducting research. A sampling plan specifies the people chosen to represent the target community for research purposes. The purpose of the research is to understand the living condition of various daily wage workers therefore the purposive sampling design of non-probability sampling method has been used for the same. Some of the varieties which have been selected as sample are street vendors, fruit and vegetable sellers, sugarcane workers, auto rickshaw drivers, construction labors, agricultural labors, and maid servants.

Tool of data collection:

There are various approaches for gathering quantitative data. Interviews, focus group discussions, observation, photography, video, surveys, questionnaires, and case studies are examples. In the said research has developed self-structured interview schedule to collect data from different unorganized labors.

Ethical Consideration:

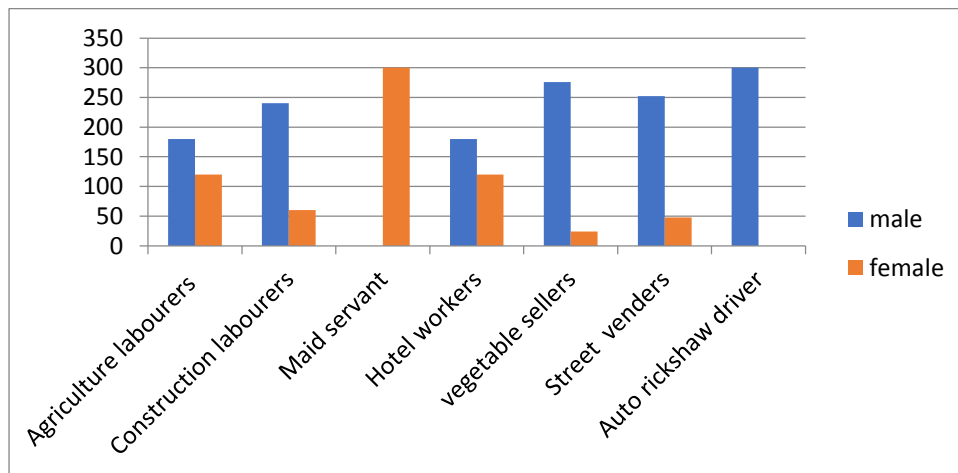
1. Full consent obtained from respondent before conducting data.
2. The protection of the privacy of research participants has ensured.
3. Adequate level of confidentiality of the research data was ensured.

Result and discussion

The 300 sample's data has been collected by the researcher. In this part of the research the researcher has tried to show the various variables of the study with the help of cross tabulation.

Table 1
Gender wise distribution of labors

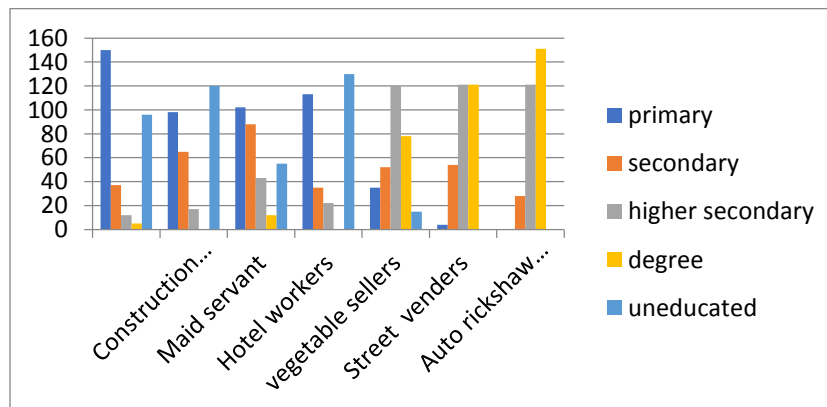
Gender	Agriculture laborers	Construction laborers	Maid servant	Hotel workers	vegetable sellers	Street vendors	Auto rickshaw driver
Male	180	240	0	180	276	252	300
Female	120	60	300	120	24	48	0
Total	300	300	300	300	300	300	300



The above graph shows the gender wise participation of laborers in specific work. Out of total 300 respondents 180 were male agriculture labors and 120 were female agriculture labors. Out of total 300 respondents 240 were male construction labors and 60 were female construction labors. Out of total 300 respondents all 300 female respondents were maid servants. Out of total 300 respondents 180 were male canteen workers and 120 were female canteen workers. Out of total 300 respondents 276 were male vegetable or fruit sellers and 24 were female vegetable or fruit sellers. Out of total 300 respondents 252 were male street venders and 48 were female street venders. Out of total 300 respondents all 300 male respondents were auto rickshaw drivers. Therefore, it is depicted that gender matters while selecting the occupation or means of livelihood among the unorganized labors. Not a single male respondent is working as a maid servant or not a single female respondent is working as an auto rickshaw driver. Even in the case of agriculture labors, construction labors, canteen workers, vegetable and fruits sellers or the street venders the males are domination.

Table 2
Education level of unorganized labors

education	Agriculture laborers	Construction laborers	Maid servant	Hotel workers	vegetable sellers	Street venders	Auto rickshaw driver
Uneducated	96	120	55	130	15	0	0
primary	150	98	102	113	35	4	0
secondary	37	65	88	35	52	54	28
higher secondary	12	17	43	22	120	121	121
degree	5	0	12	0	78	121	151
Total	300	300	300	300	300	300	300



The above graph shows the educational level of the unorganized workers. Out of total agriculture laborers 96 were uneducated, 150 were primary level educated, 37 were secondary level educated, 12 were higher secondary level educated and 5 were graduates. Out of total construction laborers 120 were uneducated, 98 were primary level educated, 65 were secondary level educated, 17 were higher secondary level educated and no one were graduate. Out of total maid servants 55 were uneducated, 102 were primary level educated, 88 were secondary level educated, 43 were higher secondary level educated and 12 were graduates. Out of total canteen workers 130 were uneducated, 113 were primary level educated, 35 were secondary level educated, 22 were higher secondary level educated and no one graduated. Out of total vegetable and fruit sellers 15 were uneducated, 35 were primary level educated, 52 were secondary level educated, 120 were higher secondary level educated and 78 were graduates. Out of total street vendors no one were uneducated, 4 were primary level educated, 54 were secondary level educated, 121 were higher secondary level educated and 121 were graduates. Out of total auto rickshaw drivers no one were uneducated, no one were primary level educated, 28 were secondary level educated, 121 were higher secondary level educated and 151 were graduates. Therefore, it is concluded that not a single street vender and auto rickshaw driver is uneducated but most of them were graduates. Not a single construction laborer or hotel worker is a graduate. So, it is concluded that the education among the agricultural laborers, construction laborers, maid servants and canteen workers is low than the street vendors and rickshaw drivers.

Table 3

Total earning members of the family

earning members	Agriculture laborers	Construction laborers	Maid servant	Hotel workers	vegetable sellers	Street vendors	Auto rickshaw driver
1	118	132	216	38	84	216	192
2	134	168	48	184	191	84	60
3	48	0	36	78	25	0	48
Total	300	300	300	300	300	300	300

The above table shows the total number of earning members of the family. Out of total agriculture labors 118 respondents had only one earning member in the family, 134 respondents had two earning members in the family and 48 respondents had three earning members in the family. Out of total construction labors 132 respondents had only one earning member in the family, 168 respondents had two earning members in the family and not a single respondent had three earning members in the family. Out of total maid servants 216 respondents had only one earning member in the family, 48 respondents had two earning members in the family and 36 respondents had three earning members in the family. Out of total canteen workers 38 respondents had only one earning member in the family, 184 respondents had two earning members in the family and 78 respondents had three earning members in the family.

It is concluded that, in the case of maid servants, street venders and auto rickshaw drivers the majority have a single earning member of the family. In the case of agricultural laborers, construction workers and vegetable sellers, they have more than one earning member.

Suggestion to Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

1. The registration of unorganized workers is vital. The government of Rajasthan had made a good initiative in the form of providing I card to unorganized sector laborers. The benefits of that I card is migrant unorganized sector laborers are now getting the free Ration and basic government facilities to those laborers in their migrant states. Accordingly, if other states also take this initiative, it will be possible to handle the situation various crisis. Like e-shram card CSR of IT companies can develop software in which the unorganized labors can be registered, and which can be linked to all the govt schemes of central as well as state. The local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) &NGOs can also play a key role in this.
2. There is an urge for modification and reframing of legislation. This will help the government to implement various policies and programs for the welfare and development of unorganized labor.
3. The non-government organizations should take the initiative in skill training and literacy programs for unorganized laborers. This will help to create awareness among workers about various government initiatives. Also, this improves the labor force to contribute to the national economy.
4. There is need to proper implementation of various government program like skill India mission which will not only develop the skills of the workers but also develop their entrepreneur skills.

Conclusion and future direction

Welfare of all citizens in basic work of government. Ample amount laws and policies are available for organized sectors contrary to this still government is lagging to develop amount laws and policies for the Well-fare of unorganized sector laborers.

It is very true that Indian constitution is designed holistically, and many social security measures has been incorporated. In schedule IV of Directive Principles of State Policy, several provisions have been made under the umbrella of social security. Various acts have been made for the benefits and welfare. If we look at the various provisions under the legislation which are somewhat related to the workers of unorganized sector, but the majority of the issues are of unorganized workers have been neglected. No one act provides the minimum standard of social security and rights to the workers of unorganized sector. The foremost reason behind this is neither the government is very serious about the legislative provisions for unorganized laborer, nor the laborer are aware about their right and not vocal for this issue. The inclusive act should be made for the unorganized workers which comprise their basic security needs such as food, nutrition, health, education, housing, employment etc.

The basic reason behind this is the unorganized sector laborers themselves are not aware of it and there are not vocal for this issue. The main reason behind this is lack of literacy and knowledge about their rights, laws, and policies. To overcome this scenario the government should form a body which will work on laws and policy framing for the welfare unorganized sector laborers. Also, the role of CBOs & NGOs is crucial in this scenario. By conducting various community drives they can create awareness about government initiative among the laborers. This will help to utilize various government policies and schemes.

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