UNDERSTANDING OF CASUAL LABOURERS IN SURAT CITY: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UDHNA LABOUR MARKET

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"We are living in such a strange world where the poor walks miles to get food and the rich walks miles to digest food"

1. Introduction

The structure of the labour market, patterns of employment growth and labour-market institutions play an important role in shaping development patterns and outcomes. However, there is lack of analytical documentation on these issues. India's economy grew at an average of about 6.6 percent per year between 2011 and 2017. Multiple stresses and strains, such as a rising fiscal deficit, high consumer inflation, the collapse of the mining sector, and a logjam in infrastructure projects, led to a macroeconomic slowdown from 2011 to 2013, when GDP growth fell to an average of 5.6 percent per year. From 2013 to 2017, growth recovered to 6.9 percent per year, making India one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world, although still below its potential and aspirational growth of more than 9 percent per year.

Today, India is counted among the most important emerging economies of the world but employment conditions in the country still remain poor. The Indian labour market is characterised by predominance of informal employment with more than 90 per cent of India's informal workforce working as self-employed and casual workers. Overall, labour-force   to population ratio (in the age group 15 years and above) at 56 per cent is low in India compared to nearly 64 per cent for the rest of the world. The low participation in India is largely because the female labour force participation rate (LFPR) is dismally low at 31 per cent, which is amongst the lowest in the world and the second lowest in South Asia after Pakistan. The chief features of Indian labour market are as follows:

- It Consists of 487 million workers in 2012-13,growing 2% annually, with a stable worker-population ratio of 40%.
- Lower level of women's participation in workforce (28%) – perhaps an underestimate.
- Low level of open unemployment (3.1%) – high level of disguised unemployment (or under-employment), mostly in rural areas and in agriculture.

2. Casual Labour: A definition

Casual labour, irregular employment or part time labour, including the labour of workers whose normal employment consists of a series of short term jobs. Casual labours is usually hired for hour or day or for the performance of specific tasks, while part-time labour is typically scheduled for a minimum number of hours per week. The present study made an attempt to analyse the socio economic conditions of the casual labours of the Udhana Labour Market of Surat City, the state of Gujarat. In each and every year a huge amount of labourer are migrated to this city from different parts of the country in order to have better employment opportunity and to earn their livelihood.

3. Review of Literature

A.Srija & Shrinivas V. Shirke in their wok "*An Analysis of the Informal Labour Market in India*" highlighted that the challenges to in formalisation are multi-faceted and that a single tool like labour reforms alone cannot address it completely. The need of the hour is to generate an enabling environment that will develop the urge of "formal" culture in the labour market.

Leibenstein & Galenson (1995) had tried to show that labor intensive techniques might generate immediate output, but little surplus since the wage bill would be large. Economic development preceded investment but the use of labour intensive techniques leaves little surplus for investment. Further accoding to them, use of capital intensive techniques n the process of production will increase the re-investable surplus by minimizing the wage bill.

4. Objective of the Study

In order to make the study not only of academic interest but also of practical utility, the following objectives have been designed. The present paper attempts

- To understand the overall situation of the casual labourers at Surat city, with special reference to Udhana Labour market.
- Attempts have been made to study the socio economic condition of the labourers and
- The reason behind their migration.

5. Methodology and Data collection

To achieve the said objectives, present study is based on primary data. Data has been collected from 60 respondents by direct oral investigation and observation method. For the purpose of the study a comprehensive field survey has been performed in the Udhana Labour market of the Surat City of the state of Gujarat. Therefore the study is primarily based on primary data collection.

After the proper data collection, the data feeding work with the coding and decoding methods has been performed. The data are predicted with the help of tables, charts and graphs like cylindrical, bar, pie chart, graph etc and analysed by applying appropriate econometrical and statistical tools.

6. Data Analysis and Findings:

In order to analyse the socio economic conditions of the Casual Labours of the City the following parameters have been used. These parameters includes their socio economic profile, states from which they are migrated, reason behind migration, their community background, educational background, the type of work they are performing and the remuneration and working conditions in which they are engaged. These parameters has been briefly analysed as under:

i) Socio-Economic profile of the casual Labourer

The following table reveals a macro picture of the study carried out in the Udhana labour market of the Surat City in the state of Gujarat. From the study it is evident that the labourers are engaged in work directly or some cases through contractor. And out of the total labourers engaged 27.78 percentages engaged directly which comprises of 16.38 percentage of male workers, 6.35 percentage of female workers and 4.05 percentage of child workers. Moreover, the data shows that the rest amount of labourers i.e. 72.76 percentage is engaged through contractors and it is comprises of 36.42 percentage male worker, 25.49 percentage of female workers and 10.31 percentage of child workers. So it is obvious that the most of the labours of the Udhana Casual labour market depend on the contractors in order to find a job in the market.

Table 5.1: Socio Economic profile of the casual Labourers

Sl. No.	Item Description	Value
1.	Percentage of Workers	
A)	Directly Employed	27.78
i)	Male	16.38
ii)	Female	6.35
iii)	Children	4.05
B)	Through Contractor	72.22
i)	Male	36.42
ii)	Female	25.49
iii)	Children	10.31
2.	Migrated family	73.33 %
3.	Average size of the family	3.6
4.	Average number of earners per family	1.8
5.	Average monthly income per family	Rs 22,400
6.	Literacy level rate in percentage	62.50

It is also evident that the average family size of the casual labour is 3.6 persons per family. It is very much important to note here that the casual labour consists of both the native labour of the city and the migrated labourer from different parts of the country, mostly from Odisha.

The share of the migrated labour is more i.e. around 73.33 percentages as against native labour. Moreover, it is clear that the average number of earners per family is 1.8 persons and the average monthly income of the family is 22,400.
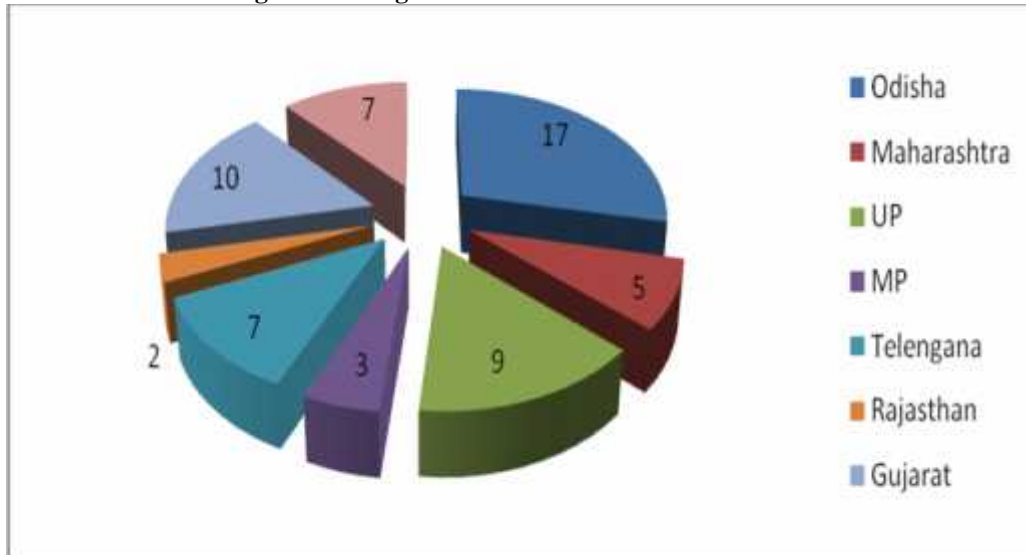
The huge amount of average income of the family one of the prominent reasons, why the labours are migrating from different parts of the country to the city? Another surprising outcome of the study is that the literacy rate high is significant in the casual labour market in the city reading at 62.50 percentage.

ii)   Migrated Labourers
It is evident from the study that the total casual labourer of the city comprises of 72.32 percentages of migrated labours and the rest are the native place labourers i.e. from the Surat City. They are basically migrated from Odisha, Maharashtra, Telengana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and from other part of the Surat City.

Figure: 5.1 Migrated Labours from different states

But the most important thing to note here is that during the study it was found that most labourers are from Odisha who are migrating from Odisha along with their family. The above pie chart has revealed the migrated labourers from the different states. It is very much important to note here that the labourers sighted various causes for their migration such as Landless labourers, Unemployment, Less job opportunities in their home land,Low wage rates in their natives places, Some of the people have their own land but due to lack of irrigation facility, Social burdens and Some other economic problems. The reasons of migration are illustrated in the following table.

iii)   Educational Background
Those labourers staying in the city by migrating from their native place, every member of the family used to work as a labourer including wife and children too. The following table reveals the educational background of the Casual Labourers in the City.

Table 5.2 Educational Profile of the Casual Labourer

Sl. No	Educational Qualification	Migrated	Non-Migrated	Total
A.	Illiterate	68 (31.48)	13 (6.01)	81 (37.50)
B.	Literate	54 (25.00)	81 (37.50)	135 (62.50)
1.	Primary	33 (15.28)	52 (24.07)	85 (39.35)
2.	Intermediate	18 (8.33)	21 (9.72)	39 (18.05)
3.	Graduation and above	3 (1.39)	8 (3.70)	11 (5.09)

(Note: The bracketed term indicates the percentage figures)

The above table demonstrates the educational qualification of the casual labourers in the city comprising both migrated and non-migrated labour force. It is quite evident that the for the migrated labourer the literate rate is around 25 percentage while for the non migrated labourers the same is 37.5 percentages. Moreover it is evident that the educational level of the non-migrated labourers is far better than the migrated labourers so far as primary, intermediate and graduate & above is concerned.
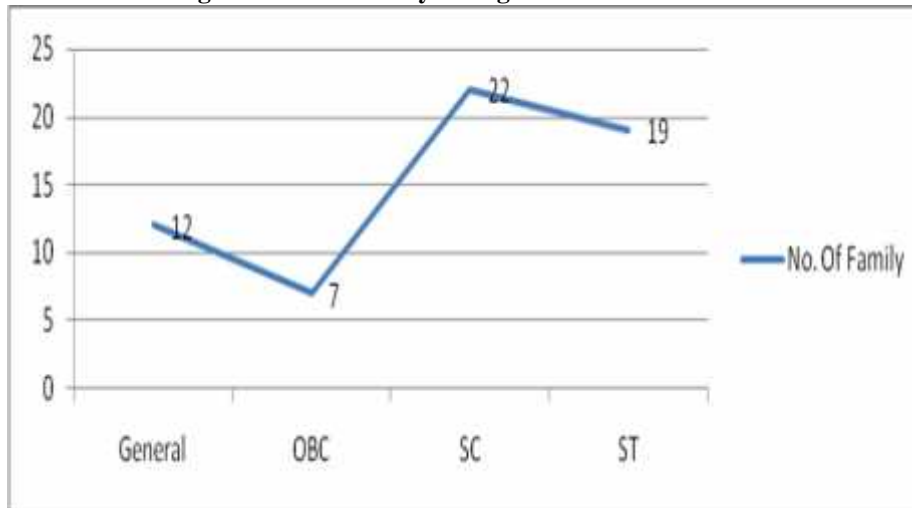
iv)   Community Background
The labourers that are working as casual labourer in the city comprises of the General Category, Other Backward Category, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled tribe. A brief summary of the community background is as under.

It is clear from the figure that the share of the minority category i.e. the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe are most comprising 68.33 percentage out of which 22 family household are Scheduled Caste and 19 families are Scheduled Tribe. On the otherhand the share of the General Category and Other Backward Category in the casual labour market in the city is 12 and 7 respectively.
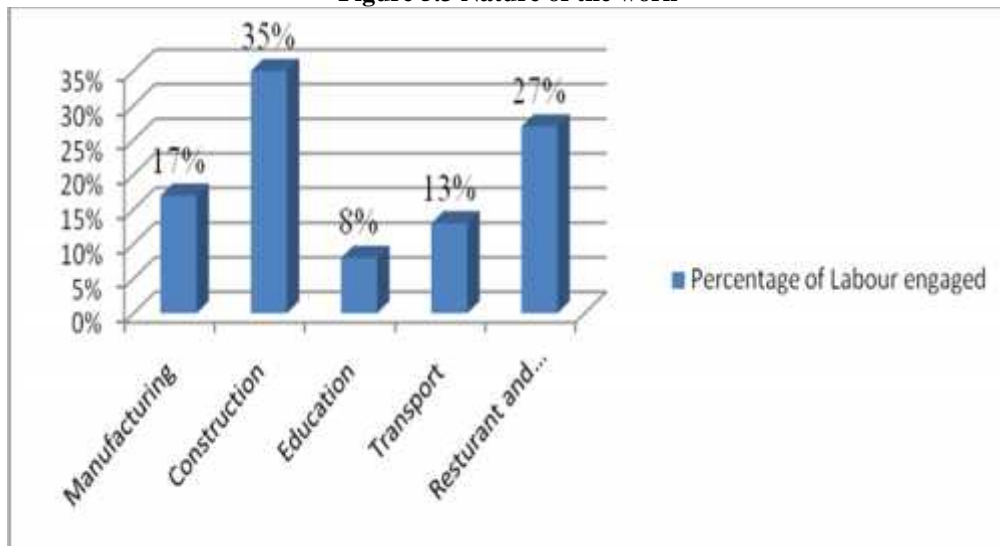
Figure 5.2 Community Background of the Casual Labourer

v) Nature of the work they are performing

From the study it is clear that some of the labourers staying in Surat City and some are coming every day from different places. These labourers use to come every day in the morning, all these labourers travel by trains, private buses and public transports. Every morning, the middlemen/contractor comes this place who bargains the wage. After the fixation of the wage, he provides transport for the labourers towards the working place. Many of the labourers have their own fooding arrangement. Some of the labourers, who don't, find their food at the working place or of the distance from the working place in Surat City.

Figure 5.3 Nature of the work

These labourers assigned themselves in the construction site like road or building, panting and/or other similar works in this city. The various works performed by the casual labourers are briefly analysed in the above diagram. The diagram demonstrates that the sector which absorbs most amount of the casual labour is the construction sector i.e. 35 percentage followed by Restaurant and accommodation sector (27%), manufacturing sector (17%), transport (13%) and education (8%).

vi) Working hour and Remuneration

The labourers are working in different sectors as enumerated above with the fixed working hours, generally eight (08) hours. Sometimes the working hours extended but didn't become less. Much of the time they get their remuneration at the end of the day/ work. Those laboures who are working as labourer, get a remuneration of Rs 300 to Rs 350 per day and for gavandi/mistry Rs. 600 to 700 and the painters get the wage of Rs. 500 per day. There is no discrimination between wages of the male and Female. Some people get work every day, and some don't. Another most important feature of the labour market is that at working place, there is absence of any kind of exploitation.

vii) Working conditions and other economic parameters:

The Health problem faced by the casual labourers in the city is also very serious. For example people are suffered with dog bitting on account of their strangeness in the working locality. Those are staying on footpath; much of the time becomes the victim of police torture. Some of the labourers staying Surat city, have their permanent houses and many of those labourer after staying here, at least since 30 years, still staying in small huts, or on footpath and/or on monthly rent.

7. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The present study reveals the actual socio-economic conditions of the labour class in our country which highlight the gloomy picture of the economy. Despite the 70 years of independence and about 13 years of the implementation of the most liable scheme MGNREGS, still the problems of labourer is not correctly realised. So the main drawback in the schemes propounded by government of India is not in its formulation, rather its implementation. So the main question arises to which extent the unemployment schemes are implemented, so that the maximum benefit will be exploited by the labour class. So far the study is concerned the standard of living of the casual labourer in the Udhana labour market is very poor. Despite the abolisation of intermediaries through different policy measures by the Government of India, still the casual labourers are completely depending on middle man in order to find a job in the market.

As such, Government should seriously take into consideration the situations of these labours and not only take the necessary steps to formulate the policies for the development of the working class, but attention should be given for its proper implementation. So that the actual benefit will be realised by the labour class and it will lead fruitful step towards economic development of the nation.

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