

PSYCHO- SOCIAL PROFILE OF CONTRACT LABOURERS – AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

A labour is a person who is considered the most important factor of production. A contract labour is hired through a contractor for a particular work. If that work is for a specified duration, no one should blame it. But, if it going to be a regular/ continuous phenomenon, there is something hidden. And this creates lot of problem. The contract labourers do contribute to nation development because, in most of the infra or construction-based projects, a large number of contract labourers are hired. Hiring contract labourers itself is a contentious issue. One should understand that a contract labour is also a normal human being like other permanent/ regular labour. When a person is socially, psychologically or economically weak he has no other options but to do what is told to do. There are laws to protect the rights and to ensure some basic facilities to contract labourers. Most of us do see with our own eyes, the working conditions of labourers alongside the roads who are engaged in road work. But still they continue to prove that they are productive whose place of work is changed vey frequently. As social workers, the authors would like to empathise with their conditions and appeal to the stake holders to do some good to the contract labourers. There is no denying, that the contract labourers, even after putting their hard work, their well-being is always at stake.

KEY WORDS: *Contractual Labourers, Psycho-Social, Place of Work, Well-being*

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INTRODUCTION

India among the fastest growing economy and with the pace of industrialization and the growing infra projects in India and with the engagement of contract labourers in such infra projects have given rise to the employment of contract labourers. The engagement of contract labourers in manufacturing concerns is also not less important. We should not forget that the massive growth and development of Information & Technology and media the contractual employment of labourers has become a contentious issue. In spite of being a controversial issue, the activities for the employment of contractual labourers are mind boggling. The main focal point is the lower wage and the elasticity to throw a labourer out of employment have become an advantageous point for the contractors.

There is no doubt that these contractors provide huge employment and keep the rural economy cycling. Moreover, these contractual labourers are the main pillars in infrastructural development who toil and moil from dawn to dusk to create marvellous infrastructure projects across the country.

A normal labour works in factory during the scheduled hours of work and go back home to live with his family members. But it is not the case in contractual employment of labourers. These labourers leave their home town and travel thousands of kilometres and migrate to an entirely new town, villages or even outskirts to render his hard labour. He does not even have an option to visit his hometown as per his choice. Thus, his psychology also undergoes a drastic change.

In a study conducted by Bum Joon Lee (2015) and et.al came out with a finding that the contract labourers of both genders have a low well-being.

The present article (study) attempts to throw some light on the psycho social aspects of contract labourers. The study has been conducted among the contract labourers in manufacturing concern in the Union Territory of Puducherry with a view to understand their social and working conditions. A sample of one hundred contract labourers were considered for the present study with diagnostic cum descriptive design. A self-prepared tool was adopted with the following objectives and hypothesis.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Showing the Age Wise Productive Work of Contract Labourers

Age Productive Work	To A Great Extent	To Some Extent	Not At All	Total
21 – 30 years	6 33.3 %	6 33.3 %	6 33.4 %	18 36%
31 – 40 years	13 52 %	9 36%	3 12%	25 50%
41 – 50 years	1 25%	2 50%	1 25%	4 8%
51 – 60 years	2 66.7%	1 33.3%	0	3 6%
Total	22 44%	18 36%	10 20%	50 100%

The table clearly indicate that on the whole 36% of the respondents are aged between 21-30 years, 50% of them are aged between 31-40 years, 8% are 41-50 years of age and 6% are aged between 52-60 years.

Among those contract labourers who are aged between 21-30 years of age, 33.3% contribute to productive work to a great extent, another 33.3% contribute to some extent and the remaining i.e. 33.4% of them do not contribute to productive work at all.

Among those labourers who are aged between 31-40 years of age, 52% of them contribute to productive work to a great extent, 36% of them contribute to productive work to some extent and 12% of them do not contribute to productive work at all.

Among those who are aged between 41-50 years, 25% of them contribute to productive work to a great extent, 50% contribute to some extent and 25% of them do not contribute to productive work at all.

Among those contractual labourers who are aged between 51-60 years of age 66.7% of them contribute to productive work to a great extent, 33.3% of them contribute to some extent only.

On the whole 44% of the contractual labourers contribute to productive work to a great extent, 36% of them contribute to some extent only and 20% of them do not contribute to productive work at all.

Table 2: Showing the Gender Wise Frequency of Change in Workplace

Gender Change of Workplace	Very frequently	Less frequently	Total
Male	4 20%	16 80%	20 40%
Female	12 40%	18 60%	30 60%
Total	16 32%	34 68%	50 100%

On the whole, 40% of the respondents are male and 60% of them are female.

Among those who are male 20% of their work is changed very frequently and 80% of their work is changed less frequently.

Among those who are female, 40% of their work is changed very frequently and 60% of their work is changed with less frequency.

On the whole 32% of the contractual labourers’ work is changed very frequently and 68% of their work is changed with less frequency.

When workers get monotonous with their work, they ask for job rotation. And when it is being done, the complaint of change of work arises. Anyhow, it is a good move but there has to be a striking balance between the change of work and its frequency. The change of workplace in work should not be considered otherwise, but it is simply job rotation. This job rotation is being done to remove the monotonous among the workers.

Table: Showing the Years of Experience and the Overall Well-Being of Contract Labourers

Years of Experience Well - Being	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Total
1 – 2 years	4 28.5%	4 28.5%	6 43%	14 28%
3 – 4 years	6 28.6%	10 47.6%	5 23.8%	21 42%
5 & above	3 20%	10 66.6%	2 13.4%	15 30%
Total	13 26%	24 48%	13 26%	50 100%

It is clearly evident from the above table that on the whole, 28% of the respondents are having 1-2 years of experience, 42% of them are experienced between 3-4 years and 30% of the contractual labourers are experienced with five (5) and more years.

Among those contractual labourers who have 1-2 years of experience, 28.5% say that their overall well-being is good, another 28.5% of them say it is satisfactory and 43% of the contractual labourers say it is poor.

Among those contractual labourers who have 3-4 years of experience, 28.6% of them say that their overall well-being is good, 47% say it is satisfactory and 23.8% say it is poor.

Among those contractual labourers who have 5 and more years of experience 20% rate their overall well-being as good, 66.6% of them say it is satisfactory and 13.4% of them say it is poor.

On the whole 26% of the contractual labourers rate their overall well-being as good, 48% of them say it is satisfactory and 26% of them say it is poor.

Table: Showing the Gender Wise Embarrassment of Being Contractual Labourers

Gender Feeling of Embarrassment	Yes	No	Total
Male	10 50%	10 50%	20 40%
Female	0	30 100%	30 60%
Total	10 20%	40 80%	50 100%

The table indicate that on the whole 40% are male and 60% are female contract labourers.

Among those who are male labourers, 50% say they are embarrassed for being contract labourers and another 50% of them do not say so.

Among those who are female contract labourer, cent percent of them say that they do not feel embarrassed for being contract labourers.

On the whole 20% of the labourers feel embarrassed for being contract labourers and 80% do not say so.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

The present study had the following hypothesis and was tested by applying chi-square test.

Contract Labourers Hailing From Rural Areas Have Bad Working Conditions.

The Calculated Value is 13.97

df is 2

The Table Value for df 2 at 0.05 level is -5.99

Since the Calculated value is higher than the Table value, the hypothesis is disproved.

CONCLUSION

The study has been conducted at a micro level to have an insight into a few psycho social issues of the contract labourers. It is found that 435 of the labourers with 1-2 years of experience say that their overall well-being is poor. Contract

labourers do not have any hold on the work they do. They are under various compulsions and one such compulsion is that their work place is changed. It is found that female contract labourers have a frequent change in their work when compared to their male counterpart. It is also interesting to note that 66% of the contract labourers with five (5) and more years of experience, 66% of them are just satisfied with their overall well- being.

Though there are laws in place, especially for contract labourers, their conditions of work and their earnings remain a debatable issue.

REFERENCES

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