



WORK STRUCTURE AND NATURE OF THE WORK OF THE SLUM WORKERS IN ICHALKARANJI

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ABSTRACT :

Human development is about enlarging human choices. Critical to this process is work, which engages people all over the world in different ways and takes up a major part of their lives. There is no automatic link between work and human development. The quality of work is an important dimension of ensuring that work enhances human development. Some type of work contributes to the human development, and some does not. Some work even damages human development. In many cases workers in hazardous conditions face serious risks of abuse, insecurity and loss of freedom and autonomy. The present research paper analysed the work structure and nature of the work of the slum dwellers in Ichalkaranji. It is the fact that, still now most of the slum workers are unskilled and engage in trade activities in an unorganized sector as well as informal sector in Ichalkaranji city. Globalization and digital revolution has created new opportunities, but slum workers were far away from this. The working conditions also have adversely effected on the human Development status of the slum workers in Ichalkaranji.



KEY WORDS: *Work structure, Human development, Nature of work, Skilled, Unskilled.*

1.1 - INTRODUCTION:

There is no direct correlation between work and human development. But the link between work and human development is synergistic. Work enhances human development by providing incomes and livelihoods, by reducing poverty and by ensuring equitable growth. Human development—by enhancing health, knowledge, skills and awareness— increases human capital and broadens opportunities and choices. Hence, sufficient as well as quality of work is an important element of ensuring that work enhances human development. Issues such as poverty, discrimination and violence, as well as lack of opportunities, less economic development etc. prevent positive links between work and human development. Some work is very damaging to human development i.e., child labour, forced labour and the labour of trafficked workers and also uncertain and unsecured work in unorganised and in formal sector. In many cases workers in hazardous conditions face serious risks of abuse, insecurity and loss of freedom and autonomy. This is of particular concern for young people, women, and people with disabilities and others who may be marginalized people in slums.

Globalization has generated gains for some and losses for others. The digital revolution has created new opportunities, but has also given rise to new challenges, such as irregular contracts and short-term work, which are asymmetrically distributed between highly skilled and unskilled workers.

Women are disadvantaged in the world of work—in both paid and unpaid work. This is absolutely true about slum workers in the world and also in India.

On this backdrop, the main purpose of this research paper is to take an overview for understand the work structure and nature of the work of the slum workers in Ichalkaranji.

1.2 - OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has been carried out with the following objectives.

- A. To understand the relation between work and human development.
- B. To study the work structure of slum workers in Ichalkaranji .
- C. To understand the work nature of the slum dwellers in Ichalkaranji.
- D. To suggest the remedies to improve the work life of the slum workers in Ichalkaranji.

1.3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study has been applied the following research methodology.

- 1. The present study is based on primary as well as secondary data.
- 2. Primary data is collected from the slums in Ichalkaranji.
- 3. Secondary data has been collected from various published sources on websites.
- 4. Descriptive analytical methodology has been used for the study.

1.4 - WORK STRUCTURE OF SLUMS IN ICHALKARANJI

The quality of the human development status of any society is reflected in the field in which people work, as well as the kind of work done by the workers in a society.

Table No. 1.1 -- Work structure of slums in Ichalkaranji

Sr. No	Kind Of Work	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	Labour	438	87.26	216	85.38	654	86.62
2	Service	13	2.58	3	1.18	16	2.12
3	Petty Trading	51	10.16	34	13.44	85	11.26
	Total	502	100	253	100	755	100

Source – Compiled from field survey in slums of Ichalkaranji, 2017-18.

The above table no. 1.1, illustrates that, 86.62% of the workers in slums of Ichalkaranji work as laborers. 11.26% slum people are engage in small business. Only 2.12% of people working in the service sector. It means, the proportion of laborers in slums of Ichalkaranji is high. Of the total male workers, 87.26% workers are labourers. 10.16% doing work as a small business holder. While the number of worker in service sector is only 2.58%.Out of total female workers, 85.38% are female labourers. At the same time, the proportion of female engage in small business activity is 13.44% and only 1.18% female working in service sector. It means the number of female labourers is higher among female workers in slums of Ichalkaranji.

In short, it can be said that most of male and female workers in Ichalkaranji slums are identified as workers. At the same time, it is also true that, there is a large supply of labour from slums to various type of industries and trade activities in an unorganized sector as well as informal sector in Ichalkaranji city.

1.5 -- WORK NATURE OF THE SLUM WORKERS IN ICHALKARANJI.

The nature of work of any social group illustrates its economic and social structure. Many times it belongs to culture, tradition and inheritance of the individual or society. It also shows the capacity of earning of individual or group of workers. It is important to understand the level of human development and overall standard of living of society. The nature of work will influence probable

achievements of the human development of population. The slum workers in Ichalkaranji were monthly working as wage laborers. Actually the slum workers in Ichalkaranji engaged in various 47 economic activities. But it has classified into main 9 categories in the present study.

Table No. 1.2 - Nature of work of the slum workers in Ichalkaranji.

Sr.no.	Nature Of Work	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	Textile	142	28.28	29	11.46	171	22.65
2	Construction	56	11.15	11	4.36	67	8.87
3	Bigari	46	9.16	17	6.72	63	8.34
4	Housework / Home Maid	00	00	87	34.38	87	11.52
5	Small Business	53	10.56	30	11.86	83	11
6	Coolie	37	7.39	00	00	37	4.9
7	Garbage Scavenging	2	0.4	12	4.74	14	1.85
8	Self-Employment	57	11.35	26	10.28	83	11
9	Other Than The Above	109	21.71	41	16.2	150	19.87
	Total	502	100	253	100	755	100

Source - Compiled from field survey in slums of Ichalkaranji, 2017-18.

The above table no. 1.2, illustrates the nature of work related statistics of the slum workers in Ichalkaranji. It is clear from the above table no. 1.2, that the 22.65% workers were engaged in the decentralized textile industry. Workers, who were doing work other than indicated in the table, are 19.87%. The proportion of those who work as housework or maids is 11.52%, which seems to be done by only female in slums.

After then there are small business holders (11%), self-employed (11%), construction work (8.87%), Bigari (daily wage workers at less dignified work) (8.34%), Coolie (4.90%) and garbage scavengers (1.85%) respectively. In caste based and hereditary occupations with means that the community is not free and allowed to select occupations of its choices. Dalits remain in occupations forced upon them centuries ago resulting in their continued exploitation and discrimination (**Baseline Study Report, 2014**). More than 75% slum dwellers in Ichalkaranji is belongs to minority and Dalit class.

It is clear from the statistics given in the above table, the number of slum workers (22.65%) working in decentralized textile industry (22.65%) in Ichalkaranji city's highest, but the proportion of workers in other sectors (77.35%) rather than textile is significant. That is, a large section of slum workers in Ichalkaranji are keeping the distance from decentralized textile industry. Almost all slum workers in Ichalkaranji working in unorganized and informal sectors in the economy of the city and many of them are engaged in the low paid and less dignified work.

Work can enhance human development, but some work damages it - the link between the two is not automatic. It depends on the quality of work, the condition of the work, the societal value of work and so on. The quality of work also includes whether a job provides dignity and a sense of pride and whether it facilitates participation and interaction (**HDR, 2015**).

Looking at the nature of the work of slum dwellers in Ichalkaranji, the above quote can be said to be applicable to most of them in large extent. The work that most slum workers do is not conducive to their human development. Considering the gender wise nature of work in slums of Ichalkaranji, it seems that 28.28% of the male work in the decentralized textile industry.

Below that, 21.71% of workers were doing the other form of work to earn income for their families. Next to them male workers engage largely in self-employment (11.35%), construction

(11.15%), small business (10.56%), Bigari (excavation work etc.) (9.16%), coolie (7.39%) and garbage scavengers (0.40%). The number of male maid workers has been recorded to be zero. While the majority of slum dwellers are among the most economically disadvantaged, slum people with reasonable incomes actually chose to live within or on the edges of slum communities. There can be no. of reasons for making this choice, but it is usually, because they are involved in or own business located near or in the slum area (UN-HABITAT, 2007). This trend has also been experienced in slums of Ichalkaranji.

Of the total female workers, 34.38% are working as house maids. Despite of house maid, female worker in slums of Ichalkaranji is engaged in other work like Hospital Nurse, Salesman etc.) (16.20%) small business. (Grocery store in slum area, vegetable stall, cloth or readymade cloth sale in slums and elsewhere etc.) (11.86%), self-employed (10.28%), Bigari (6.72%) and garbage scavengers (4.74%) respectively. The number of female workers who work as a coolie is found to be zero.

1.6 -- SKILLED AND UNSKILLED WORKERS IN SLUM OF ICHALKARANJI

It is true that the economic development of any country requires the permanent skilled workers class. Skilled workers save time money and labor in any production process. Due to skilled labor average cost of production decreases. Now is the time to be a worker with special skills and the right education. But there has never been a worse time to be a worker with only ordinary skills and abilities, because Computers,

Robots and Digital Technologies are acquiring these skills and abilities at an extra ordinary speed (HDR, 2015). On the backdrop of the above notion to access, what is the condition of workers in the slums of Ichalkaranji is important.

Many slum workers in Ichalkaranji are laborers. Of course, every work requires some kind of skill. Many workers gain such skills through their daily work experience and consistent work. Although the slum workers in Ichalkaranji did not attend any skill training institutes, many of them have embraced specific skills through experience. For example, power loom workers and sizing workers and process workers in decentralized textile industry, CNC machine operators, cantering workers in construction sector etc. Therefore, despite of institutional training, according to the type of their work, the slum workers are divided into two categories i.e. skilled and unskilled.

Table No. 1.3 - Skilled and unskilled slum workers in Ichalkaranji

Sr.no	Gender	Skilled	%	Unskilled	%	Total	%
1	Male	105	25.67	399	74.33	504	100
2	Female	25	9.96	226	90.04	251	100
	Total	130	17.22	625	82.78	755	100

Source – Compiled from field survey in slums of Ichalkaranji, 2017-18.

As shown in the above table no.1.3, of the total slum workers in Ichalkaranji, 82.78% are unskilled. The proportion of skilled workers is only 17.22%. Female workers have a higher proportion of unskilled workers than male counterparts. The proportion of skilled workers among male is 26.67 % and the number of unskilled workers is 74.33%. In contrast, only 9.96% of the female workers are skilled and 90.04% are unskilled. Deepak, a 39 year old centring worker in construction sector said that, ‘Many civil engineers seek help from me in designing the slab of a building. Ask for advice. I have not acquired the skills through any engineering collage or training institute. Mainuddin, 32, who works in a power loom factory said something similar. He said, I have been operating power loom since I was 16 year old. I learned how to operate a machine at my uncle’s power loom factory. Currently, I can fix it, repair it without the help of a Jobber if the machine is damaged. But I do not get any additional benefit from this skill. Of course, it is a reality, in an unorganized or informal sector in city, the distinction between skilled and unskilled worker is not taken into account when determining pay and working conditions. The minimum wage and other working conditions as per legislation do not apply in factories

and other fields, or mostly of unorganized sectors. Many workers get wage according to the piece rate and the nature of work.

1.7 - CONCLUSIONS

The above study lead to the following major conclusions.

1. Of the total male workers, 87.26% workers are labourers and out of total female workers, 85.38% are female labourers. It means, the proportion of labourers in slums of Ichalkaranji is high.
2. There is a large supply of labour from slums to various type of industries and trade activities in an unorganized sector as well as informal sector in Ichalkaranji city.
3. The 22.65% workers were engages in the decentralized textile industry.
4. The proportion of those who work as housework or maids is 11.52%, which seems to be done by only female in slums.
5. There are small business holders (11%), self-employed (11%), construction work (8.87%), Bigari (daily wage workers at less dignified work) (8.34%), Coolie (4.90%) and garbage scavengers (1.85%) respectively.
6. A large section of slum workers in Ichalkaranji are keeping the distance from decentralized textile industry.
7. Almost all slum workers in Ichalkaranji working in unorganized and informal sectors in the economy of the city and many of them are engaged in the low paid and less dignified work. Of the total female workers, 34.38% are working as house maids. Despite of house maid,
8. The total slum workers in Ichalkaranji, 82.78% are unskilled. The proportion of skilled workers is only 17.22%.

1.8 -- EPILOGUE

In summary, many workers in the unorganized sector in Ichalkaranji are less educated and unskilled. They do not want to acquire skill due to lack of time and not enough convenient training facility. On the other hand, stakeholders in the unorganized or informal sector recognize the importance of skilled workers, but are unwilling to pay for it. As a result, workers in the slums appear to be indifferent to the acquisition of skills. All these conditions have adversely effected on the human Development status of the slum workers in Ichalkaranj. It is possible to provide more wage work in the unorganised sector to the slum workers of Ichalkaranji city to free them from the traditional and unskilled work which they are doing. For that, they need to be given special training. Decentralised textile industry and engineering industry in Ichalkaranji city can provide abundant employment opportunities for young male and female slum workers.

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