



Problems Faced By Readymade Garments Workers In Ballari District, Karnataka.

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Abstract: Workers in the readymade garment industry are mostly employed as helpers and laborers in home industries. It is impossible to estimate the number of workers in this business because they primarily operate in unorganized or unregistered sectors. Although there are workers in several sectors in Ballari district, for the purpose of the study, so researcher has considered only the workers of the readymade garment industry have been selected for the research study. Thus, it may be claimed that those employed in the ready-made clothing sector have relocated to urban regions in search of work, where they are subjected to economic and social exploitation through the use of more labor and lower pay. It can be said that the workers of the readymade garment industry are subjected to economic and social exploitation. The workers in this industry have a low monthly income and are below the poverty line, whose standard of living is low. Although the workers are partners in the economic development of the industry, they are not getting adequate reward for their work. Even if the workers work in different units of the same enterprise, the wages are not the same. One entity differs from another entity. In order to overcome the inequality of workers, it is necessary for the labor unions and the government to provide adequate employment protection and social security to the domestic workers. There is no doubt that India will become a developed country only then. As their work is more monotonous or repetitive work, they inevitably work to support their families. The working environment in which they are doing is so lacking in basic facilities and due to the use of many chemicals they are prone to many occupational diseases or problems. Searching of readymade garment industry workers in different units of Ballari district. To know their problems, a study is undertaken to suggest suitable measures to overcome the problems, create awareness about the Government schemes and help in getting them.

Key Words: RMG Workers, Wage Discrimination, Social and Economic Problems, Risk factors.

I. Introduction:

Our country is a developing country where employment is an important source of subsistence economy. Its contribution to the country's economy is also seen to be significant. There are many types of unorganized sector out of which readymade garment industry is one in which many men and women are employed. Although there are more workers in the unorganized sector than in the organized sector, they are not unorganized as per the name and do not come under the legal framework. So they are deprived of many facilities. They are facing many discriminations like gender discrimination, caste discrimination, wage discrimination, job discrimination etc. in workplaces. Equal pay for equal work is limited to what is mentioned in labor laws. This study has gained importance in examining the social and economic conditions of the three sectors of workers namely daily wage basis, contract basis and permanent basis workers as mentioned above as well as the conditions at their workplaces.

Karnataka State is at the forefront of development in the industrial sector and in 2019-20 the share of this sector in the income of the state reached 21.3 percent. But it fell to 19.8 percent in 2020-21 due to Covid-19. Textile industry is the main industry as cotton production is very high in the state. In many parts of the state handloom, power loom and ready-made garments sector are developing at a high rate in the state. There are cotton mills in Bangalore, Davangere, Gadag, Hubli, Gokak, Ballari, Nanjangud, Belgaum, Bagalkote, Raichur, Ilakallu, Gudegudda. Karnataka is the readymade garment manufacturing capital of the country with readymade garments production worth \$1.56 billion. Readymade garments are being exported from Karnataka state to America, Italy, Germany, England, Hong Kong, Canada, Australia and Western Europe.

One such mean of research for readymade garments Ballari's ready-made garments, jeans, has a history of hundreds of years. This has been achieved through the hard work of thousands of families. As cotton, the raw material required for jeans, is grown more in Ballari district, jeans manufacturing is at a very high level here. Ballari Jeans has put its stamp on the international map. Today, Ballari is known as Jeans Nadu even before it was called as Borderland.

There are more than 1000 jeans manufacturing units in Ballari. There are two units in the manufacturing of jeans namely spare parts unit and assemble unit. In the accessories section, cutting the cloth separately according to the size, i.e. the leg part of a pant, the packet part and so on. Ready-made garments are made by adding all the accessories in the assembled units. There are 800 units that make these accessories and 200 assembly units. Recently, after 5 decades of production of most jeans clothes, not only in our state, but also in foreign states and foreign countries, the state government and the central government hope to make many industrial units in Kuditini to make jeans fair in Ballari. Ballari is the jeans hub but there is no doubt that Ballari is on the rise. There are many workers in these units.

Utilization of goods and services is essential in production. Economists divide the factors of production into four categories namely land, labor, capital and entrepreneurship. "The laborers who are employed in different types of industries are called 'Industrial Laborers'. But cottage industries are not considered industrial workers in India. Only those working in organized large and medium industries are included in this group. All workers covered by the Industrial Factories Act are treated as organized workers, while workers in cottage industry and contract work are treated as unorganized workers".

1. Review of Literature:

Research always starts with a question and a problem. Its basic objective is to find an answer to a question through the application of the scientific method. Literature, research papers, articles, books related to the study can help the current research study perfectly and meaningfully.

"Health Hazard and Occupational Safety Challenges for Unorganized Sector Works in India" written by **Mohammad Shams Muktar and Dr. Preeti R. Gutmre (2021)** states that it is common for workers in the unorganized sector to fall prey to many health problems. The government instituted many health policies and programs in urban and rural areas of India which include government hospital, community health centers, sub-centers and primary health centers. They are National Health Mission, National Mental Health Programme, Asha, Ayushman Bharat, National Rural Health Mission and National Urban Health Mission, all launched by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. found in their study that it is the combination of all organized activities that ensure the welfare and well-being of all employees working in the unorganized sector.

The article **"Working and Living Conditions of Workers in Unorganized Sector-A Review of Literature"** by **PrasanaKumar Shetty and Surbhikapoor (2014)** provides information about the living conditions of workers in the unorganized sector. He undertook an in-depth study of the working and living conditions of the workers in the unorganized sector. Unorganized sector is popularly known as the insecure sector, where most of the people feel that there is no regular source of income and work throughout the year. The article echoes the general plight of poor relations between employers and employees, discrimination at work, sexual harassment, poor health/medical care and denial, terminal benefits, torture and poor working conditions. Workers in almost all sectors of the sector suggest that more research is needed in this area to suggest practical solutions to existing problems and on issues such as social security and the positive impact of unions and labor laws on workers.

Nitika Diwakar and Tafpikku Ahmed (2014) have done a study on **"Problems and Challenges Faced by the Unorganized Sectors: An Indian Perspective"**. Unorganized sector workers are defined as working in small scale industries. The unorganized sector has less capital and fewer workers at home or less. It is often not consistent. Out of the total population of India, there are only 46.5 crore workers, out of which only 2.8 crore are in the organized sector and 43.7 crore are in the unorganized sector, according to the report of National Sample Survey Institute 2009-10. They do not have any specific framework. The workers are mostly

illiterate and without any knowledge of the laws they are forced to work long hours and low wages given by the employers.

Lilipet S, Jain T and Joseph B (2017); In their study “**Health Problems Among Garment Factory Workers – A Narrative Literature Review**” the objective of this study was to identify the pattern and prevalence of major health problems among garment factory workers. Working for long periods of time without rest, absence of personal protective equipment and inadequate provision of ergonomic facilities at the workplace lead to major health related problems among workers. Workers of repetitive nature are prone to physical, mental and nutritional health problems. Respiratory problems, cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, gynecological diseases, nervous disorders, mental disorders and nutritional deficiencies are common health risks. Sidda therefore opined that it is necessary to organize specific programs aimed at preventing muscular and skeletal disorders for garment workers.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To know the problems faced by the workers of readymade garment industry.
2. To know the social security programs undertaken by the governments for the welfare of workers.

3. Results and Discussion:

Industrial workers in general and garment workers in particular are facing several occupational problems. While some are exposed to work that requires intense concentration, such as cutting, sewing, and finishing, which can result in headaches and blurred vision, others are exposed to more physically demanding tasks and experience muscle aches from prolonged sitting or standing. They primarily have health issues including shoulder discomfort, hip pain, etc. as a result of using their hands for extended periods of time while performing repetitive activities. The information available indicates that women are more likely than men to experience depression or mental health issues as a result of juggling work and housework. As it is very important for the study to know the problems of the workers, the information provided by the workers, the information provided by the workers in the study is described in Table 1 below.

Table: 01

Description of occupational problems of workers in readymade garment industry in Bellary district

Health Problems	Daily wage workers		Contract workers		Permanent workers		Total		Total (%)
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Allergy	16 (25.00)	19 (13.67)	16 (19.57)	13 (23.21)	11 (17.74)	0 (0.00)	43 (20.77)	32 (15.69)	75 (0.18)
Eye Pain	6 (9.38)	27 (19.67)	14 (17.28)	15 (26.79)	9 (14.52)	2 (22.22)	29 (14.01)	44 (21.57)	73 (0.17)
Body Pain	21 (32.81)	31 (22.30)	22 (27.16)	17 (30.36)	19 (30.65)	3 (33.33)	62 (29.95)	51 (25.00)	113 (0.27)
Difficulty in Breathing	15 (23.44)	19 (13.67)	9 (11.11)	9 (16.07)	12 (19.35)	2 (22.22)	36 (17.39)	30 (14.71)	66 (0.16)
Tiredness	3 (4.69)	16 (11.51)	11 (13.58)	2 (3.57)	7 (11.29)	2 (22.22)	21 (10.14)	20 (9.80)	41 (0.09)

Cough	0 (0.00)	9 (6.47)	6 (7.41)	0 (0.00)	2 (3.23)	0 (0.00)	8 (3.86)	9 (4.41)	17 (0.04)
Other	0 (0.00)	7 (5.04)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	7 (3.43)	7 (0.03)
None of the above	3 (4.69)	11 (7.91)	3 (3.70)	0 (0.00)	2 (3.23)	0 (0.00)	8 (3.86)	11 (5.39)	19 (0.04)
Total	64 (100)	139 (100)	81 (100)	56 (100)	62 (100)	9 (100)	207 (100)	204 (100)	411 (100)

Table 1 reveals that the health problems faced by the 411 workers selected for the study at the place of work or by nature of work. Looking at the figures in the table, a total of 411 male and female workers in the entire sector have health problems. Allergy 0.18%, Eye pain 0.17%, Migraine 0.27%, Breathing problem 0.16%, Fatigue 0.09%, Cough 0.04%, Other 0.03%, None 0.04%. . There are no respondents other than the number of daily wage earners who are facing other problems. Women are no exception. Generally speaking, readymade garment workers are more likely to work sitting and standing on the same side, so they have more eyestrain and eye strain in hemming and stitching. A large number of people who face problems like allergies are those who dye their clothes and use chemicals. Its information is depicted in diagram 1.

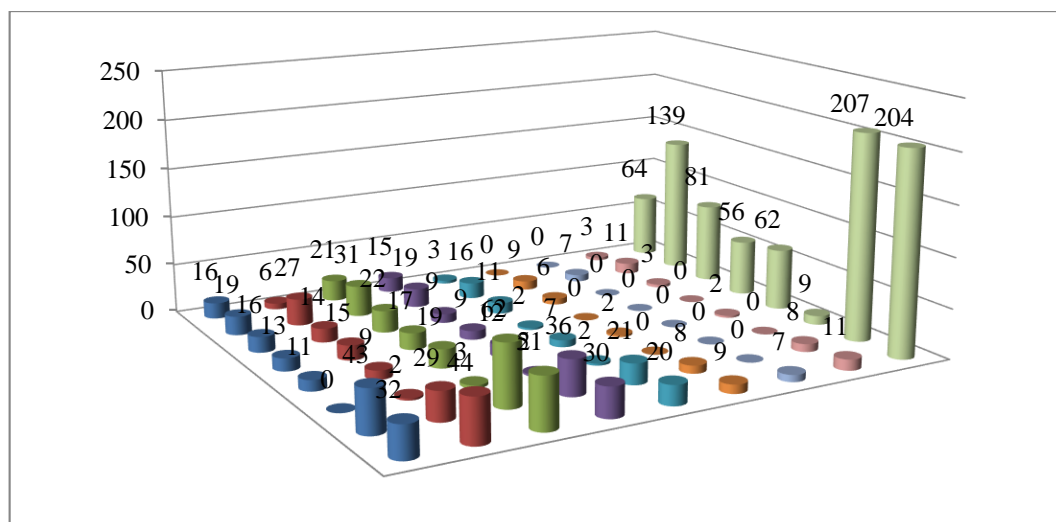


Figure 1: Description of occupational problems of workers in RMG

4. Problems of Workers in Readymade Garment Industry in Ballari

1. Overtime duty: - Bellary has a high demand for readymade garments such as jeans garments. Apart from our country, these are also exported to foreign countries. So this industry is always profitable. As there is a huge demand especially during the festive season, the employers give overtime work to the workers as they produce more for their profit.
2. Lack of transport system: - Majority of people in Bellary is living in villages. They have to travel far away from their place of residence as there is a ready-made garment unit in the urban area. Employers do not provide transport arrangements for any type of workers. Go through government buses or autos.
3. Wage Discrimination: - Wage discrimination is an unsolved problem across India. Garment workers are no exception. As there are many types of jobs, low pay for low work, high pay for high work or high pay for skilled work. For example, low skilled jobs like threading, buttoning, labelling etc. One of them has not come but another can do that job. But some skilful things like cutting cloth etc. can be done only by experienced people. Because their work is indispensable, they are paid more. Similarly, women worked equally as men and were paid less. It is decided that the male is a wage earner and the female is a wage earner.
4. Delay in payment of wages: - Livelihood of workers depends on readymade work. Their wages or wages are low and the cost of daily necessities is high, making it difficult for them to make ends meet. When entrepreneurs delay in paying wages, they resort to debt. Very high interest has to be paid.
5. Job insecurity: - Although the readymade garment industry seems to be always in demand, sometimes there is no work. Because there is always a change in the styles of clothes. People always want new style of clothes. This made the garments less expensive when they were made in the old style without more advanced machines. Only when all of them are sold do the entrepreneurs start making new clothes. As a result, workers have to face insecurity without job stability.
6. Scolding with unspoken words: - Ready-made garment workers do not have any respect as they do menial work. If you don't do the right work or come to work a little late, they scold you with unspoken words regardless of whether you are male or female. As the laborers are in the habit of swearing all the time, they have assimilated excuses regardless of whether they are deaf or work is inevitable.
7. Lack of toilet facilities for women: - Readymade garments units are in many nooks and crannies or in small spaces so they do not have toilet facilities. If they are men, they go outside somewhere. But women are not able to go out and are blocking those going home. Due to this many health problems are faced.
8. Dermatological problem due to excessive use of chemicals: - In readymade clothes especially jeans clothes which have many colors A chemical material is used. Moreover, there are many stages in the manufacture of ready-made garments and some stages require the use of chemicals. Workers working in this stage may suffer from various types of allergies or skin diseases.
9. Physical and Mental stress: - Readymade garment manufacturers not only make the workers work longer hours to get more profit, they have to work more in less time without any kind of freedom, but if they do not work properly, the workers are subjected to a lot of physical and mental stress.
10. Absence of proper medical facility: - Although the garment workers suffer from many allergies, they are not provided with medical facilities by the workers. Due to the high cost in private hospitals, one cannot afford them and has to go to the government hospital. Many people are succumbing to diseases without proper medical facilities.
11. Children are not provided with higher or better educational facilities: - The workers of the readymade garment industry are unable to provide education in better or better schools as they struggle to meet their daily or essential supplies due to their low wages. Their children are not able to pursue higher studies and half of their children drop out of school and join other small jobs.
12. Without any kind of insurance facility: - Many government facilities like insurance facility, health facility, provident fund and ESI. are deprived of It is an unorganized unit and due to lack of stability in their work and non-fixed monthly payments.
13. Not getting the membership of labor union: - Although there are many labor unions, not knowing its existence or presence is a major reason for not getting membership of the labor union. Deprived of the benefits of a trade union.

5. Conclusion:

In some cases, unorganized workers know about government schemes but do not know where to contact and whom to contact. Therefore, the National Social Security Council, a part of the government, and the NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) should come forward to provide information to the unorganized workers to avail the benefits of these schemes.

Although the contribution of the readymade garment industry in the Indian economy is immense, the workers working in this industry face many problems such as wage problems, health problems, etc. As this sector is mostly cottage industry and unorganized sector, there is no legal framework for the workers in this sector. There is no regular relationship between the employer and the employed as the workers in the readymade garment industry mostly work under contract workers. As the workers in this sector are highly illiterate, they are subjected to many forms of exploitation, but without knowing the labor laws that fight against them, they inevitably work for a living.

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