

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DAILY WAGE WORKERS LIFE IN KALLAKURICHI.

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of Corona Virus is having a severe impact on the living condition of the people who belong to the daily wage society. The impact of life killing Corona Virus on the retail markets and other business firms are clearly visible from their bank transactions but in case of daily wagers it is invisible because they spend what they earn and may not have excess on their earnings. As the daily wagers are in different category, it is very difficult to find various issues with the limited impacts. This study reveals that the standard of living of the daily wagers during the lockdown period. The researcher has taken risk to collect data from the daily wagers who are more in numbers in the village regions. The researcher collected primary data from 400 daily wage workers by using simple random techniques of data collection and analyzed the data by applying simple percentage method.

Key word: Introduction – Impact of Covid-19 – Daily Wage Workers – Educational Status – Nature of Daily Wage Work – Income per Day – Problems Facing during Lockdown.

Introduction

Corona virus is a pandemic disease which has affected throughout the world without reason and seeing Colour, Religion, Cast, Language, Literate, Illiterate, Business Men, Daily Wage Worker (Cooli), Rich, Poor and Middle Class, etc. This virus might have affected nearly 40,00,000 people around the world and may cross 3,00,000 death rate globally by the time of this Research Article is published. Everyone knows that this virus was detected first in the City of Wuhan in Hubei Province, China and named a person as Covid-19 patient on 17/11/2019. Then slowly it started affecting the world countries without boundaries. In this order, when India was about to get affected by COVID-19 virus, the government of India decided to implement Lock Down / Shutdown from 25/03/2020 to 14/04/2020 for the first time and extended again from 15/04/2020 to 03/04/2020 for the second time and then now it is for the third time again extended from 04/05/2020 to 17/05/2020. This Lock Down system is to secure the people's life

by preventing them from Corona Virus. So it is a very good system and also helps the people to prevent from corona by isolating and staying at home. In the beginning of the lockdown period, people were able to manage from their own financial sources what they had as savings. Later, when their financial position was zero, they started crying for food and money to look after their children and aged people at home. This is the time that the government, local authorities and volunteer organization may plan and support the people to compensate their basic needs.

Impact of Covid-19

The Lock Down / Shutdown days affected the total Indian economy. All type of Industries like Hotels, Transports (Roadways, Airways and Seaways), Automobile sectors, Electronic sectors, Chemical sectors, IT sectors, Tourism, Textiles, Film Industries and even the Agriculture based Industries have been affected because of unusual condition. There is no doubt that all those sectors are the back born of the Indian Economy and can be raised back with concrete plan. But very harm and sad is that these Lock Down / Shutdown days entirely changed the life standard of the people who belong to the daily wage worker (Cooli) society up to the boundary of expecting even a cup of food for minimum of one time per day. This research article is the result of having studied the life standard of that particular group of people (Daily Wage Workers).

The Building Construction, House Keeping, Dry Cleaning, Rag Picking, Traditional Instrument Playing, Cooking, Hair Dressing (Barbers), Vessels Cleaning in Tea Stalls & Mini Tiffin Centers, Scavenging, Street Selling, Mechanic Shops, Super Market, Retail Shop, Weight Lifting in Market are giving the job opportunities to the daily wage workers. But the lockdown periods stopped the functions of all those places and so they totally locked the life of the daily wage workers without food, money, routine medicines and satisfy the needs of the children.

Meaning

Daily Wage Workers mean any persons who are working in the premises of the employer and who is employed directly or through any agencies including a contractor for wages in any kind of work and who gets their wages directly or indirectly from the employers.

Definition

Daily wage workers mean the workers who work in different categories as Contract workers, Casual workers and Daily wage workers for the completion of the works under hour / day / week / unit / quantity basis.

According to the Apprentice Act - 1961, “Worker means any person who is employed for wages in any kind of work and who gets his/her wages directly from the employer but shall not include an apprentice”.

Daily Wage Workers

Daily wage workers are called as the contractual workers, daily workers, agency workers, casual workers and seasonal workers. The people who are involving in Building Construction, Domestic Works, Dry Cleaning, Rag Picking, Traditional Instrument Playing, Cooking, Hair Dressing (Barbers), Vessels Cleaning in Tea Stalls & Mini Tiffin Centers, Tailoring, Beautician work, Plumbing, Painting, Bricks Work, Street Selling, Mechanic Shops, Weight Lifting in Railway station & Market and other type of contract work are all called daily wage workers.

Profile of the Study Area

Kallakurichi is one of the 38 districts in Tamil Nadu State. Kallakurichi is an emerging agricultural district. It is also known as “Home of Agriculture”. There are over 10 Rice processing units / Modern Rice Mills, Textiles, Jewelry and Agriculture are major business. There are two Co-operative Sugar Mill and many Poultry Farms situated in Kallakurichi district.

It includes two large lakes for irrigation, one in the south and another one is in North. All Nationalized and Privates Banks are being operated in Kallakurichi. Kalvarayan Hills, Gomuki Dam, Periyar Dam and the peak of Vellimalai hilltop are the popular tourist spot in Kallakurichi. Most of the people in the kallakurichi district are the daily wage workers and the illiteracy rate also are high among those daily wage workers.

Problems of the Study Area

Kallakurichi is the one and only district surrounded by more number of villages and tribes. The major part of the work is Agriculture where the money crops are the main sources of the income. But due to low irrigation and high technology, the job opportunity is less in the agricultural sector. So, most of the people prefer to go for daily wage works as Cooli / Labours In Housekeeping, Hotel Work, Tea Stall & Mini Tiffin Centre, Street Selling, Tailoring Work, Super Market And Retail Shops. The Lockdown period has locked the routine life of those people without 0% earning and so they suffer a lot to live the regular life.

Objectives

- To study the impact of Covid-19 virus on daily wage workers
- To study the daily income of the daily wage workers

- To study the need of the daily wage workers during this Corona-19, lockdown days.
- To study the problems of the daily wage workers during this Corona-19, lockdown days.
- To offer valuable suggestions to the government, local authorities and volunteer organizations

Limitation of the Study

- Though there are thousands and thousands of daily wage workers live in Kallakurichi, only 400 samples were able to collect during the Lockdown period.
- The data are related to the people of Kallakurichi region only. So, it will not refer any part of the other regions.
- Very short period was taken to collect data to exhibit to the people / officers concern.

Review of the Study

India Today Report on 26/03/2020 – Corona virus in India: Daily wage Workers worst hit by lockdown – As the country grapples with the rise in Covid-19 cases, people have been forced to remain indoors during the pandemic but the worst affected are the daily wagers and other labourers. The Covid-19 curfew has robbed daily wagers of their daily income. They said they have no food to feed them and their families. Many workers also wish to leave city but are left stranded, as the railway and bus services have been suspended in light of the pandemic.

The Straits Times Report on 29/03/2020 – Corona virus in New Delhi: Daily wage workers in India brave long walk home amid lockdown – A delivery rider who is ferrying goods in Delhi on his reliable cycle cart Mr. Mohammed Riyaz, 19 years old and the eldest of four siblings, was sent away by his family to earn and help feed the family. He told to Straits Times, “we are dying here because of hunger. What are we going to eat if we don’t earn.”

India Today Report on 02/04/2020 – Corona virus lockdown in Chandigarh: Daily wage worders are surviving on donated food – one 60 year old widow Bala says that “No money means no ration. Food packages aren’t enough to feed my family. Sometimes, we only get just one packet and we all eat from it. Don’t know what the government is planning to do, but at least food or rations should be provided by the government on a regular basis, at least basics like four, rice or sugar”

The Times of India Report on 13/04/2020 – Workers go hungry as Tamil Nadu Government’s wage order remains dead letter – The lockdown might be a measure to prevent and control Covid-19. But in this process, the people dependent on daily or weekly wages have

not only lost their livelihood but are also struggling to make ends meet. While the government announced a dole of 1,000 and a hamper of 15kg of rice, 1kg dal and 1kg oil, the ground reality is grim. The state has not taken efforts to ensure the employer pay wages for their workforce for the lockdown period.

India Today Report on 19/04/2020 – Covid-19 lockdown: Daily wage Workers struggle to make ends meet – Amid nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of novel corona virus, many have been forced to remain indoors with the daily wage workers being worst – affected. The Covid-19 lockdown has robbed the daily wage workers of their daily income. They struggle to buy food with no money.

Methodology

This current research is about the daily wage workers. So, the researcher prepared a questionnaire and collected data by applying interview techniques. The data were collected by using simple random sampling method. 400 respondents were met on the basis of convenient sampling. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted by using simple percentage method as a data tool. The data collection period was 15 days from 15/04/2020 to 30/04/2020.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Age and Gender wise Respondents

Age / Gender	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Up-to 30	72(18)	48(12)	120	30
31 – 40	96(24)	64(16)	160	40
41 – 50	48(12)	32(8)	80	20
Above 50	24(6)	16(4)	40	10
Total	240(60)	160(40)	400	100

SOURCES: PRIMARY DATA (Data within the bracket is percentage)

The Table No.1 explains about the Age and Gender of the respondents. From the above table, it is being identified that in the age group of upto 30 years, 18% of the respondents are male and 12% are the female, in the age group of 31 - 40 years, 24% of the respondents are male and 16% are the female, in the age group between 41 and 50 years, 12% of the respondents are male and 8% are the female and in the age group of above 50 years 6% of the respondents are male and 4% are the female.

It is concluded that 60% of the respondents are male and 40% of the respondents are female. The majority (40%) of the respondents is in the age group of 31 – 40 years of age.

Table 2: Gender wise Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification / Gender	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Illiterate	120(30)	80(20)	200	50
Schooling	72(18)	48(12)	120	30
Diploma	24(6)	16(4)	40	10
Degree	24(6)	16(4)	40	10
Total	240(60)	160(40)	400	100

SOURCES: PRIMARY DATA (Data within the bracket is percentage)

The Table No.2 explains about the Educational Qualification and Gender of the respondents. From the above table, it is being identified that 30% of the male respondents & 20% of the female respondents are illiterate, 18% of the male respondents & 12% of the female respondents completed schooling only, 6% of the male respondents & 4% of the female respondents are the Diploma holder and another 6% of the male respondents & 4% of the female respondents are the Degree holder.

It is concluded that 50% of the respondents are illiterate, 30% respondents completed schooling only and other respondents completed both Diploma and Degree in equal percentage.

Table 3 : Gender and Reason for Daily Wage Work

Gender / Reason for Daily Wage Work	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Illiterate & Poor Economy	120(30)	80(20)	200	50.5
No Regular Job	20(5)	10(2.5)	30	7.5
Feed Children	20(5)	20(5)	40	10.0
Fulfill Minimum Basic Needs	30(7.5)	20(5)	50	12.5
Children Education	10(2.5)	10(2.5)	20	5.0
Medical Expenses	40(10)	20(5)	60	15.0
Total	240(60)	160(40)	400	100

SOURCES: PRIMARY DATA (Data within the bracket is percentage)

The Table No.3 explains about the Reason for going to Daily Wage work and Gender of the respondents. From the above table, it is being identified that 30% of the male & 20% of the female are illiterate & live in poor economical condition, 5% of the male & 2.5% of the female respondents replied that they have no regular jobs, 5% of the male & 5% of the female respondents replied that they have to feed their children, 7.5% of the male & 5% of the female

respondents replied that they have to fulfill the minimum basic needs, 2.5% of the male & 2.5% of the female respondents replied that they have to educate their children and 10% of the male & 5% of the female respondents replied that they have to meet the regular medical expenses. These are all the reasons of the respondents to gofor the daily wage work.

It is concluded that 50% of the respondents are illiterate & live in poor economical condition and so they have to meet medical expenses and children education.

Table 4: Gender and Income per Day

Income per day / Gender	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Up to Rs.200	90(22.5)	70(17.5)	160	40.0
Rs.201 – Rs.300	60(15)	40(10)	100	25.0
Rs.301 – Rs.400	30(7.5)	20(5)	50	12.5
Rs.401 – Rs.500	30(7.5)	10(2.5)	40	10.0
Above Rs.500	30(7.5)	20(5)	50	12.5
Total	240(60)	160(40)	400	100

SOURCES: PRIMARY DATA (Data within the bracket is percentage)

The Table No.4 explains about the Income per Day and Gender of the respondents. From the above table, it is being identified that 22.5% of the male & 17.5% of the female respondents are earning up to Rs.200, 15% of the male & 10% of the female respondents are earning Rs.201 – Rs.300, 7.5% of the male & 5% of the female respondents are earning Rs.301 – Rs.400, 7.5% of the male & 2.5% of the female respondents are earning Rs.401 – Rs.500 and 7.5% of the male & 5% of the female respondents are earning above Rs.500 as their daily wage. It is concluded that 40% of the respondents are earning just upto Rs.200

Table 5 : Gender and Nature of Problem Facing.

Nature of Problem Facing / Gender	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Financial Problem	65(16.25)	35(8.75)	100	25.0
Food / Grocery Problem	70(17.5)	50(12.5)	120	30.0
Medicine Buying Problem	40(10)	30(7.5)	70	17.5
Police Men Problem	35(8.75)	25(6.25)	60	15.0
Social, Psychological and Emotional Traumas Problem	30(7.5)	20(5)	50	12.5
Total	240(60)	160(40)	400	100

SOURCES: PRIMARY DATA (Data within the bracket is percentage)

The Table No.5 explains about the Nature of Problem Facing during and Gender of the respondents. From the above table, it is being identified that 16.25% of the male & 8.75% of the female respondents are facing financial problem, 17.5% of the male & 12.5% of the female respondents are facing food / grocery problem, 10% of the male & 7.5% of the female respondents are facing medicine buying problem, 8.75% of the male & 6.25% of the female respondents are facing policemen problem and 7.5% of the male & 5% of the female respondents are facing social, psychological and emotional traumas problem.

It is concluded that 55% of the respondents are collectively facing the financial and food / grocery problem as they are very basic needs to live. At the same time 12.5 of the respondents are facing social, psychological and emotional traumas problem which should be removed very urgently.

Table 6 : Gender and Nature of Daily Wage Work

Gender / Nature of Daily Wage Work	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Agriculture	18	12	30	7.5
Mason	42	38	80	20.0
House Keeping	-	30	30	7.5
Hotel Work	16	14	30	7.5
2 Wheeler & 4 Wheeler Mechanic	10	-	10	2.5
Weight Lifting (Market Place)	15	-	15	3.75
Painting & Plumbing	15	-	15	3.75
Super Market / Retail Shop Work	22	18	40	10.0
Tea Stall & Mimi Tiffin Centre	18	12	30	7.5
Saloon (Hair Dressing)	20	-	20	5.0
Street Selling	16	14	30	7.5
Driver (Auto, Taxi, Load Vehicle)	20	-	20	5.0
Tailoring	18	12	30	7.5
Others	10	10	20	5.0
Total	240(60)	160(40)	400	100

SOURCES: PRIMARY DATA

The Table No.6 explains about the Nature of the Daily Wage Work and Gender of the respondents. From the above table, it is being identified that 20% of the respondents are going for Mason work, 10% of the respondents are going for Super Market / Retail Shop work, 7.5%

each of the respondents are going for daily wage work like House Keeping, Hotel Work, Tea Stall & Mini Tiffin Centre, Street Selling and Tailoring work; 5% each of the respondents are going for daily wage work like Hair Dressing (Saloon) and Driving (Auto, Taxi, Load Vehicle) work; 3.75% each of the respondents are going for daily wage work like Weight Lifting (in Market Place) and Painting & Plumbing work, 2.5% of the respondents are going for 2 Wheeler & 4 Wheeler Mechanic work; and only 5% of the respondents are going for other works.

It is concluded that 20% of the respondents are Mason and 10 % of the respondents are working in the Super Market & Retail Shop. Due to the scarcity of the ground water and rain water the Agriculture work is 7.5% only.

Findings

- 60% of the respondents are male and 40% of the respondents are female. The majority (40%) of the respondents is in the age group of 31 – 40 years of age and the lowest (10%) percentage of the respondents is in the age group of above 50 years of age.
- 50% of the respondents are illiterate, 30% respondents completed schooling only and other respondents completed both Diploma and Degree in equal percentage. It is very sad to express that the Diploma and Degree holders are also going for daily wage works.
- 50% of the respondents are illiterate & live in poor economical condition and so they have to meet medical expenses and children education.
- 40% of the respondents are earning just upto Rs.200 and another 25% of the respondents are earning Rs.201 – Rs.300.
- 55% of the respondents are collectively facing the financial and food / grocery problem as they are very basic needs to live. At the same time 12.5 of the respondents are facing social, psychological and emotional traumas problem.
- 20% of the respondents are Mason and 10 % of the respondents are working in the Super Market & Retail Shop.
- Due to the scarcity of the ground water and rain water the Agriculture work is practiced only 7.5% of the total respondents.
- Female respondents only are going for Housekeeping work.
- Male respondents only are going for Mechanic, Driving, Plumbing, Weight lifting and Hair Dressing (Saloon / Barber) like works.

Suggestions

- ❖ Financial support may be offered based on the number of members in the family (Check the Ration Card) instead of giving equal amount (as Government paid Rs.1,000/- each) paying to all families.
- ❖ Rs.1,000/- is insufficient even for one week during the imbalanced Indian Economy and price of every consumer goods are so costly. So the local volunteers may come forward as a team and help those people.
- ❖ Foods, Grocery packs and necessary Medicines are to be provided at free of cost.
- ❖ Proper medical facilities, proper clean drinking water facilities and sanitary facilities are to be ensured at minimum cost at least.
- ❖ When the people go out of their home to have their own needs, they may not be punished under any circumstances by police or any govt. official.
- ❖ Job opportunity is to be created based on the skill and qualification of the people after the lockdown period.
- ❖ Lockdown relaxation may be given to those daily wage workers to do their work through which they may stand on their own legs and not looking at others hand.
- ❖ People are to be guided to overcome various social, psychological and emotional traumas that they face during this lockdown period.

Conclusion

The Impact of Covid-19 on Daily Wage Workers is the right topic according to the researcher's point of view during the lockdown period due to the Outbreak Virus covid-19. The daily wage workers usually face many problems like job irregularity and imbalanced payment structure. If there is a climate change (weather condition), certain labours like masons may not go for construction work; the drivers who run vehicles for hiring (rent) may not earn unless the public use those vehicles; some category people who are going for work like housekeeping, tailoring, street selling, carpentry, plumbing and painting, may not get income if suddenly they fall ill or any other family related issues that they face. Under all those unavoidable critical conditions, the daily wage workers are swimming upstream and living their life. But unexpectedly the stunning new life killing and pandemic disease Covid-19 fully locked the entire life of the people with no job, no income, no food, no safety and no medicine and

generated social, psychological and emotional traumas problem. So the government, local authorities, volunteers teams and non government organization should come forward and do the immediate measures to save the people first from the starvation and then save from the virus Covid-19.

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