International Journal of Applied Engineering & Technology

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON CHALLENGES FACED BY MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE PALGHAR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT
Migrant workers are an essential yet vulnerable part of the labour market; they frequently deal with issues including discrimination, exploitation, and unstable working conditions. Traveling both domestically and abroad in pursuit of work, they make a substantial economic contribution while suffering from physical and mental adversity. Migrant laborers play a vital role in many industries, but they usually face structural obstacles and social marginalization. This research paper was conducted with a focus on exploring the challenges faced by migrant workers in Palghar district. Text mining technique using the qualitative tool NVIVO 12 has been used in the current study. The outcome of the study indicated that the major challenges faced by migrant workers are Lack of appreciation, Discrimination, long working hours, Exploitation, Unsafe working conditions, Limited job opportunities, and Transportation problems. The minor challenges faced by migrant workers are Language barriers, Access to education, Documentation issues, and social security

Keywords: Migrant workers, NVIVO 12, Text mining, exploratory, qualitative

INTRODUCTION

Migration, whether local or foreign, is a complex phenomenon influenced by social, cultural, and economic factors. The physical and mental health of migrants and their families are significantly impacted, which has a profound impact on how they live. While migrants from within the nation migrate for a variety of reasons, most frequently to improve their quality of life and economic possibilities rather than to flee persecution or conflict, migrants from outside the nation migrate across borders in search of new opportunities. According to data from the World Bank, the size of internal migration is far larger than that of international migration. India has long had a high rate of internal migration; the most recent census indicates that there were over 450 million internal migrants in 2011, which is a significant increase from prior years. Approximately 20% of the workforce and 10% of the Indian economy are made up of these migrants, according to the Indian government's Economic Survey of 2016–17, which UNESCO has verified. (Shweta, Singh., et al. 2022).

Interstate migration for work has been increasingly common, especially among daily wage workers from states like West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha. Based on data from the National Sample Survey, cities like Delhi and Mumbai become important centres for migration, with a significant migrant population. Significant out-migration occurs from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, whilst Maharashtra is notable for having a large inflow of internal migrant labour. (Shweta, Singh., et al. 2022).

In India, migrant workers are an important yet vulnerable group of people. They are mainly from rural areas where they frequently experience marginalization and prejudice as a result of a complex interaction of factors including caste, creed, nativity, and socioeconomic difficulties. This particular demographic group faces a great deal of social vulnerability, which is characterised by incidents of violence, humiliation, and exploitation in addition to restricted access to basic services including healthcare, social security, employment possibilities, and sanitation. In many places, migration is a strongly ingrained habit that is mostly driven by men looking for work as daily wage laborers or blue-collar employees in more industrialized nations. (Ashvinkumar, B., et al. 2023). The economic empowerment that comes with migration is debatable, though, because migrant workers usually have trouble integrating into urban areas and finding fulfilling jobs. According to reports, migrant workers frequently face prejudice and underpayment when compared to their native colleagues. Even though they are

temporary residents, migrant workers have close relationships to their home countries and families, frequently traveling back for important life milestones.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Ashvinkumar, B., et al. (2023).** The research aimed to investigate the perspectives and firsthand experiences of migrant labourers working on construction sites in Bhavnagar, Western India, concerning the COVID-19 lockdown and its effects on their lives. The study's conclusions demonstrated that migrant workers encountered serious financial difficulties, such as unemployment and financial problems, in addition to social issues like abuse, discrimination, and a lack of social services. There have also been reports of psychological effects like loneliness, anxiety, and terror. Three main demands from the government were financial assistance, employment prospects in their home countries, and an orderly departure of migrants. Lack of facilities for common illnesses and inadequate care during the lockdown were among the healthcare problems.

2. **Ishita, Dey. (2021).** The study aimed to draw attention to the difficulties encountered by migrant domestic workers in India during the lockdown and Covid-19 outbreak. The results highlight that, like other migrant workers, migrant domestic workers encountered several difficulties during the pandemic, such as limited access to COVID-19 information and the possibility of transmission because of their sporadic employment. Although encouraging, the state's response fell short of addressing the injustices that were already in place, especially about the long-standing social distance surrounding touching and not touching, which has disadvantaged some populations. The subjective and experienced aspect of touch makes containment measures more difficult, even with initiatives like employing drones to spray disinfectants in public areas.

3. **Nasnurul, et al. (2023).** This article's goal was to outline the difficulties in supplying Terengganu, Malaysia's migrant workers with suitable accommodation. The results show that because of issues with affordability and access to suitable housing, migrant workers frequently live in cramped, unhealthy environments. Furthermore, the significance of appropriate housing for migrant workers is not well understood by employers, migrant workers, or residents. The Malaysian government enforces Act 446, but many companies continue to disregard it, which leads to migrant laborers living in subpar conditions.

4. **Nivedita, Jayaram., Divya, Varma. (2020).** The article's goals were to highlight the structural problems that India's internal migrant workers faced, especially during the Covid-19 lockdown, and to criticise the insufficient policy responses that only addressed short-term fixes rather than the root causes of the issues. The results showed that abuses of workers' rights, unsafe working conditions, and a lack of pay and job security were prevalent in urban labour markets, as seen by the large-scale departure of migrant workers during the lockdown. The article makes the case that the crisis was largely viewed as an interstate movement issue rather than addressing the more significant systemic difficulties impacting migrant workers, despite the fact that popular empathy was evident, legislative solutions were restricted to temporary relief initiatives.

5. **Shweta, Singh., et al. (2022).** This study aimed to critically evaluate the literature concerning the psychological and mental health difficulties encountered by internal migrants in India during the COVID-19 outbreak and the ensuing national lockdowns. After careful consideration, the assessment determined that India must implement an integrated 'rights-based strategy' to offer migrants complete care, including financial assistance, medical attention, and proactive labour-market regulations. It recommended a top-down strategy to provide migrants with the necessary support, involving a range of governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the State and National Health and Family Welfare Departments, local corporation and municipal councils, mobile medical units, mental health care providers, and NGOs.

6. **Wajid Fauzi, et al. (2023).** The study attempted to examine the variables affecting the governance policy for the protection of migrant workers in Indonesia. Although the policy had been in place for more than three years, difficulties continued to arise in providing enough protection for migrant workers, according to the study's findings. Some policy components were put into practice, like the waiver of placement fees and the

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International Journal of Applied Engineering & Technology

3819

creation of Integrated Services, while important components like regional financial participation and training preparation were not. It was determined that the primary elements influencing the execution of policies were the varied behaviours exhibited by Indonesian Migrant Workers, the hierarchical integration amongst institutions, and the socio-economic situations during the Covid-19 outbreak.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To explore the challenges faced by migrant workers.

2. To give appropriate suggestions to the government towards the eradication of the challenges faced by migrant workers.
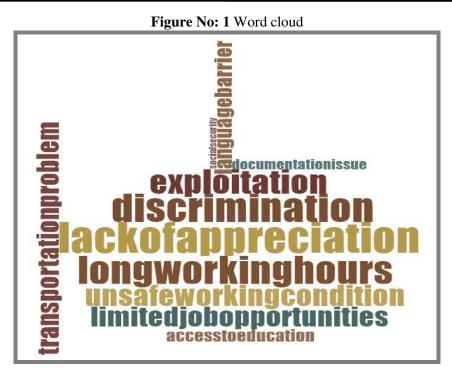
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research Design	Qualitative and Exploratory
Research Approach	Inductive Approach
Sampling Techniques	Non-Random Convenience Sampling Techniques
Sample Size	Face to face interview was conducted of 55 Migrant Workers
Statistical Tool	NVIVO 12
Statistical Technique	Text mining Viz. Mind map, word frequency and word cloud

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table No: 1 Summary table

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
Lack of appreciation	18	32	13.33
Discrimination	14	30	12.50
Long working hours	16	29	12.08
Exploitation	12	26	10.83
Unsafe working conditions	22	23	9.58
Limited job opportunities	23	22	9.17
Transportation problem	21	21	8.75
Language barrier	15	18	7.50
Access to education	17	15	6.25
Documentation issues	18	14	5.83
Social security	14	10	4.17

As per table No: 1 It can be seen that the major challenges faced by migrant worker Lack of appreciation with 32 counts 13.33 weighted percentage, Discrimination with 30 counts 12.50 weighted percentage, Long working hours with 29 counts and 12.08 weighted percentage, Exploitation with 26 counts and 10.83 weighted percentage, Unsafe working conditions with 23 counts and 9.58 weighted percentage, Limited job opportunities with 22 counts and 9.17 weighted percentage and Transportation problem with 21 counts and 8.75 weighted percentage. Further, it can be seen that minor challenges faced by migrant workers are Language barrier with 18 counts and 7.50 weighted percentage, Access to education with 15 counts and 6.25 weighted percentage, Documentation issues with 14 counts and 5.83 weighted percentage, and Social security with 10 counts and 4.17 weighted percentage

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International Journal of Applied Engineering & Technology

3820

International Journal of Applied Engineering & Technology

Figure No: 1 Word cloud

As per Figure No: 1 of word cloud, it is seen that the major challenges faced by the migrant workers are Lack of appreciation, Discrimination, Long working hours, Exploitation, Unsafe working conditions, Limited job opportunities, and Transportation problems. The minor challenges faced by migrant workers are Language barriers, Access to education, Documentation issues, and social security

CONCLUSION

The study provides insight into the complex issues that migrant workers face, both big and small. The results highlight a range of concerns that obstruct the integration and well-being of migrant labour forces, from systemic obstacles to societal prejudices. At the forefront of these difficulties are basic issues like discrimination and a lack of recognition for their achievements, which make them feel more alienated and lower their morale. Additionally, long work hours, unfair labour practices, and hazardous working conditions are common problems for migrant labourers, which increases their vulnerability and jeopardises their fundamental rights and dignity. Their socioeconomic mobility and general quality of life are severely hampered by further challenges such as poor social security procedures, restricted access to education, documentation problems, and language limitations in addition to these major challenges. These obstacles, despite their apparent insignificance, greatly exacerbate the problems encountered by migratory laborers and impede their capacity to prosper in their new areas. A comprehensive strategy that includes institutional assistance, governmental reforms, and societal initiatives targeted at promoting inclusive settings and defending the rights and well-being of migrant workers is needed to address these issues. Stakeholders at all levels must work together to pass laws that guarantee fair treatment, advance equality of opportunity, and make it easier for migrant workers to integrate into society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Actively implement and enforce labour laws to prevent exploitation and guarantee migrant workers' fair working conditions.

- Create systems of assistance for language learning and cultural acculturation to help break down communication barriers and promote a more seamless transition into the host community.

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International Journal of Applied Engineering & Technology

3821

International Journal of Applied Engineering & Technology

- To ensure that migrant workers, regardless of their immigration status, have access to healthcare, education, and other vital services, social protection programs should be strengthened.

- Invest in infrastructure development to enhance transit networks and lessen the obstacles migratory workers must overcome to obtain necessary services and employment opportunities.

- Strengthen ties with the nations of origin to expedite paperwork procedures and guarantee that migrant workers' credentials and skills are acknowledged.

- Run awareness campaigns and provide sensitivity training to end discrimination against migrant workers and promote a welcoming and courteous culture in society.

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3822

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