

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES FOR MIGRANTS LABOUR

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ABSTRACT: The problem of migrant laborers in the country has become very serious due to Corona infection and lockdown. Migrants, as they move to a new place, are faced with challenges related to a totally new environment, which they have to adapt to and live in for the temporary duration of time. They face several challenges such as social challenges often due to the non-acceptance by society in which they have moved in, psychological challenges related to job availability as well as anxiety and uncertainties for the safety of the families back home. The cause and consequences of the disease may be the same, but the multi-layered layers of socio-economic status are not uniform for people suffering from this disaster, whether they are positive or negative with the corona virus. The migration of laborers to the states has become a challenge even after the central government gives the go-ahead to the migrant laborers' return. During the lock-down, the migrant laborers who have passed on it have exposed our sensibilities as well as our plans, their implementation, administrative capacity and political will. In the current crisis, migrant workers remained neglected in both places, their native state and the state of migration. The reason for this has been the lack of proper planning and implementation. In this era of Corona crisis, all the necessary arrangements including registration of laborers, arrangement of vehicles, screening can now make it difficult for the government. This may seem a relief at the moment, but this reverse migration is going to be a disaster for both the states. Even for those states which are centers of economic activity and for them from where people reach factories, shops, farms and other labor markets to earn a living. The Ministry of Labour and Employment is committed to provide security in employment, wage security and social security to every worker. Along with bringing transparency and accountability in the implementation of labor laws, the Ministry took important initiatives during the year to establish the reputation of each worker through the provision of increasing social security, employment opportunities and quality.

KEYWORDS: Economic activity, Psychosocial, Digital, Technological, Unemployment

I. INTRODUCTION

The lockdown is applicable nationwide due to Corona virus. In such a situation, the condition of the economy has deteriorated along with the poor, laborers, farmers, daily earners. Sudden breaks caused by lockdown in running life have started adversely affecting people's lives. An atmosphere of fear, anxiety, loneliness and uncertainty has been created inside people; people are going through mental and physical stress day and night.

Due to the corona virus epidemic, people are facing problems like infection, unemployment and financial constraints, as well as many mental pressures. In this environment, nervousness, restlessness, loneliness and depression can cause major problems. Infectious diseases have a profound psychological effect on everyone, even those who are not affected by the virus. The psychological consequences of a global pandemic also affect the social fabric. We all know that without mental health, there cannot be true physical health. There is no doubt that mental and physical health are fundamentally and inseparably interlinked.

The new disease is unfamiliar in its nature and no inference can be made about its results. Also it is imperceptible or invisible. All its features make it a source of serious concern.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, researchers outlined several mental health concerns, including depression, stress and psychosis, and panic attacks, along with the disease. There are several reasons for this. People infected with Corona virus and receiving treatment may also have suffered social isolation. This happened because they were kept in isolation. His illness may also have been seen as a stigma and due to which he may have felt discriminated against. It is also possible that among the people suffering from COVID-19, the guilt of infecting others has also gone home.

Presently, it is necessary to pay attention to these factors in order to understand the experiences of the people affected by COVID-19 and make public health policy. By doing this, their mental health concerns can also be taken care of. It is clear that infectious diseases have a profound psychological effect on all people - even those who are not affected by the virus. People suffering from post-traumatic stress or those who are particularly concerned about health and are worried about getting affected by an illness may have panic attacks and may give more stressful reactions.

The ILO has reported that the global spread of the corona epidemic has affected working hours and earnings. Four out of five people (about 81 percent) have been affected by partial or complete lockdown worldwide. According to the report, "6.7 percent of working hours are expected to expire in the second quarter of 2020 (April-June) due to the current Corona crisis, which could lead to the loss of approximately 19.5 million jobs." The continued sharp decline in working hours globally due to the COVID-19 means that 1.6 billion workers in the informal economy – that is nearly half of the workforce- stand in immediate danger of having their livelihoods destroyed.

Migrants, as they move to a new place, are faced with challenges related to a totally new environment, which they have to adapt to and live in for the temporary duration of time. They face several challenges such as social challenges often due to the non-acceptance by society in which they have moved in, psychological challenges related to job availability as well as anxiety and uncertainties for the safety of the families back home. They migrate for the reasons of better income opportunities and better jobs and hence willing to move away from their families in search of the same. Most of them are into daily wage earners and earn to take back for only the day they work. There is a heavy dependence of the families back home on the money sent through the earnings of the migrants.

With the onset of rapidly communicable diseases such as the COVID-19 and also due the closure of small businesses and businesses dependent on migrants as well as imposed social distancing norms, most of the migrants are left with no choice but to head homeward. As a result, the majority of the migrants began heading to their native places using any means possible like walking, cycling, vehicle pooling, etc due to the restrictions & closure of means of mass commute. The migrants faced several hardships on account of closed administrative borders, closed state borders, non-availability of food in addition to the depleting savings as their only option of earning daily came to a halt. Though they stayed put till they could stretch their resources, it is a 'human thing' to want to return back to their families in times of distress. They are the key workers of the society who have been put on hold due to the disruption that has occurred within the society. Their problems need to be empathized with and they need better understanding by society given their circumstances.

Today the whole world is seen kneeling in front of the global epidemic called COVID-19. Every country struggling with this disaster has different situations and problems. The cause and consequences of the disease may be the same, but the multi-layered layers of socio-economic status are not uniform for people suffering from this disaster, whether they are positive or negative with the corona virus. Looking at the recent odd conditions of India battling Corona.

II. INDIA AND THE MIGRANT LABOUR

India is a developing country with a large population. But in the face of unemployment, these resources remain the biggest challenge for the country. Based on the previous population census, India's population is more than 1.3 billion. According to a survey of 2011-2012, 195 million or 48.6 percent of the population is daily wage laborers. Despite many provisions made for these daily laborers, the ground reality seems to present a different picture. According to a recent survey, 4 out of 10 laborers do not have even one day's ration and about 90 percent have lost their only means of earning. Apart from all this, one of the major reasons for the migration of these daily laborers and the spate of migration is emotional reasons. They were turned away overnight by the cities. Those whom he gave his services over the years entered the shell of self-protection. Now these migrant laborers losing their emotional and economic support are full of terrible restlessness, anger and anger. They now want to live their lives on their own, while their migrant city has held them hostage.

In the Economic Survey of 2017, it was estimated that between 2011 and 2016, 90 lakh workers were moving from one state to another every year (i.e. the movement of 4.5 crore workers between 5 years). At the same time, according to the 2011 census, the number of migrant workers is around 14 crore.

According to the Economic Survey of 2018-19, the number of laborers in the unorganized sector is 93% of the total work force, the NITI Aayog has 85% and the National Statistics Commission 82%. Similarly, there is no definite data on the contribution of the industries of the unorganized sector to the economy, but according to the

National Statistics Commission, at least 50% of the unorganized sector contributes to the GDP, whereas the Arjun Sengupta report which was discussed a few years ago had given it 60% percent.

According to the Livelihood Bureau (an organization that works only among migrant laborers), there are more than 12 crore such workers in the country who come from the villages towards the labor markets of big cities. The largest number of them are construction workers (about 4 crore), then domestic workers (2 crore) and textile workers (10 million). Apart from these, a large number of migrant laborers work in the fields of agriculture, mines, brick kilns and transport etc.

III. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION INITIATIVE TO COUNTER THE COVID-19

The ILO recommends nationwide coordinated and coherent measures to counter the COVID-19 epidemic in three pillars:

- Protection and support of employment and income for workers - especially for weaker groups like workers, women, elderly, disabled workers working in informal sector
- Protecting health, essential services and workers accessing workplaces and frontline workers of health services
- Protecting businesses, especially small and micro enterprises

In this situation, there is a great need for effective social dialogue mechanism between various components of ILO, government, owners and workers. For any action to be effective, trust must be established among the constituents and trust requires consultation and cooperation.

The second important dimension is the International Labor Standard (ILS) which is more important in the current situation. It provides a strong basis for formulating the policy responses necessary for sustainable and equitable recovery.

The international labor standard coordinates the idea of a human-centered approach to economics and development, and balances the stimulating demand, the needs to support businesses and protect workers. For example, the Employment and Decision Work for Peace and Tolerance, Employment Policy Convention C.122, Protection of Wages Convention (C.95) states that if an occupation ends its occupation, then the labor privileges of the worker.

IV. NEW GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

While back home, the migrants need to be supported with relevant information and counselling for job search and employment opportunities given their skills and previous experience through their local governance and panchayat structures, integrated into the social protection schemes that apply to local workers, and provided with referrals for continued health care and to address their grievances. These measures along with effective coordination and collaboration between the states of origin and destination and between state and local authorities are paramount for effective social and economic reintegration.

V. GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGICAL INITIATIVES TO EASE DOWN THE PROBLEMS OF MIGRANTS LABOUR

The Ministry of Labor and Employment has developed an integrated web portal 'Shram Suvidha Portal' to bring transparency and accountability in the implementation of labor laws and to remove the complexity of observing them. The availability of facilities at the Shram Suvidha Portal is as follows: -

1. Transparent labor inspection scheme on risk based criteria through computerized system and uploading of inspection reports by labor inspectors within 72 hours. The time period for uploading the reports has been reduced to 48 hours.
2. Shared registration for ESIC and EPFO
3. Shared ECR for ESIC and EPFO
4. Single annual online return for 8 central laws and three returns under the Mining Act, 1952
5. Online licensing under the Central Labor Regulation and Abolition Act, 1970 and the Inter-State Migrant Workers (Employment Regulation and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 in addition to the labor inspection scheme for enforcement agencies.
6. Chief Labor Commissioner under the three laws i.e. Contract Labor Regulation and Abolition Act, 1970, Inter-State Migrant Workers (Employment Regulation and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 and Building and Other Construction Workers (Employment Regulation and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 Central online registration.

Several rating and review platforms have been developed by civil society organizations and trade unions to enable migrant workers to share information with each other about their experiences with specific recruiters, employers, and other migration intermediaries. These platforms seek to empower workers to make more informed decisions.

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