Title: Impact of COVID – 19 Lockdown on the Socio-Economic Condition of Informal Sector Wage Workers in India

Investigators, Affiliations and Contact Emails:
Archana Srivastava (Assistant Professor @ BITS Pilani, Hyderabad Campus, India)
Manoranjan Das (Research Associate @ BITS Pilani, Hyderabad Campus, India)

Abstract

Outbreak of COVID – 19 pandemic, and nationwide unprecedented lockdown has brought a grinding halt to economic activities, adversely affecting the life and livelihood of informal sector wage workers. They are struggling on two fronts of life: one is to safeguard themselves from pandemic threat and other is to fight for survival due to loss of livelihood. The study aims to investigate the plight of three categories of labors: returned migrant labors, stranded labors and local daily wage labors. The objective is to analyze the risks faced by them at the work place during lockdown which compelled the migrant laborers to return back to their natives and also the effects of pandemic on their socio-economic conditions at native places.

Research Questions:

1. What are the problems of migrant labor in destination?
2. What are the problems raised by migrant labor stranded in their way to home?
3. Problems faced by returned migrants in their natives during lockdown?
4. Whether there is a need for permanent agency to see this type of disaster?
5. To see whether there is co-ordination between Labor & Employment departments of all the states and the central government to solve the problems?

Data Description:

Primary data will be collected from two Covid-19 hotspot areas i.e., Bhandaripokhari from Bhadrak district of Odisha and Shamirpet from the Ranga Reddy district of Telangana. The sample size will be approximately 40 per cent of the informal sector wage workers of the stratified areas which includes local daily wage workers, returned migrant workers. Further data shall be collected from at least 10 stranded wage workers in controlled environment/situation i.e., immediately
during lock down, and post lockdown period at both native and work places. Data pertains to their remittances, consumption and expenditure pattern and healthcare services during the lockdown period as compared to the normal circumstances.

The survey will be carried out at three stages for migrant laborers stranded in their work place and stranded in their way to home from work place. The stages are; (a) Immediately at the work place destination to know their living/working condition (during lockdown) (b) at their native (origin village) after the normalcy is achieved to know their socio-economic condition and (c) at workplace after returning from native and resume of work.

**JEL Codes: O17, I18, O15**

**Keywords:** Informal sector, Public Health, Migration, COVID – 19, Pandemic