



**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON WORK AND SAFETY OF
MIGRANT LABOURERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KARUR
DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU**

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Abstract : This research explores the socio-economic characteristics, workplace conditions, and occupational safety of migrant labourers, emphasizing their employment patterns, earnings, access to safety provisions, and healthcare facilities. The results indicate that the majority of migrant workers are male, married, and possess only basic education, with a considerable share employed in agriculture and earning between ₹5,000 and ₹10,000 per month. Although a limited number have received substantial workplace safety awareness and training, the availability of protective equipment and health insurance remains insufficient. Many labourers endure extended working hours, reside in rented housing, and lack access to social security benefits, often working under unsafe conditions with low wages and inadequate living facilities. Statistical evaluation reveals no significant correlation between the type of industry and safety training received, employment type and workplace accidents, or educational level and wage satisfaction, with the latter showing only marginal significance. The study highlights the pressing need for focused policy actions, enhanced workplace safety measures, and strengthened social welfare programs to improve the quality of life for migrant labourers.

Keywords: Migrant labourers, workplace safety, wage satisfaction, occupational health, social security

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The well-being and safety of migrant labourers are critical issues, particularly in Tamil Nadu's Karur district, which draws a large workforce to industries such as textiles, cement, and bus body manufacturing. Although these workers play a vital role in driving economic development, they frequently encounter challenges related to job stability, equitable pay, workplace safety, and access to social security. This research seeks to examine their employment conditions, occupational risks, and the efficacy of current safety protocols by analyzing employment trends, health hazards, wage systems, and legal safeguards. Furthermore, it will assess the efforts of both government and private sector entities in protecting labor rights and promoting workplace safety. By reviewing existing policies and regulations, the study aims to offer actionable



recommendations for enhancing labor welfare, thereby supporting policymakers, employers, and labor unions in fostering a safer and more sustainable work environment for migrant workers in Karur district.

1.2 INDUSTRY PROFILE :

Migrant labourers from various states and rural Tamil Nadu form a crucial part of the workforce. They contribute significantly to industrial growth but face several challenges. Poor workplace safety, lack of social security, and job insecurity are common issues. Many workers lack formal contracts, leading to exploitation. Industrial accidents and exposure to hazardous conditions further add to their struggles. Low wages and inadequate living conditions worsen their quality of life. Addressing these concerns is crucial for sustainable industrial development. Improved workplace safety, fair wages, and better living conditions are necessary reforms. Skill development programs can enhance productivity and worker well-being. Collaborative efforts among policymakers, industry leaders, and labor welfare organizations are essential.

1.3 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Migrant laborers play a crucial role in industries like textiles, construction, and agriculture in Karur district, Tamil Nadu. However, they often face challenges related to working conditions, wages, job security, and safety. Many of them work in physically demanding jobs with minimal protection, leading to health risks and workplace accidents. This study is important to understand their daily struggles, assess workplace safety measures, and highlight areas that need improvement. By focusing on their working conditions, we can suggest better policies to ensure their well-being, fair treatment, and improved safety standards.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

2.1 PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

- To analyze the work conditions, safety of migrant labourers in Karur district, Tamil Nadu.

2.2 SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

- To identify and analyze the biggest challenges faced by migrant labourers in their work and living conditions.
- To examine the relationship between the type of employment and the occurrence of workplace accidents among migrant labourers in Karur district.
- To examine the relationship between the industry type and the receipt of workplace safety training among migrant labourers.
- To analyze the relationship between educational qualification and levels of wage satisfaction among migrant labourers.



2.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Data is based on labourer responses, which may be influenced by personal biases or fear of retaliation.
- Limited access to official records may affect the accuracy of workplace accident data.
- The study focuses on selected industries, potentially overlooking other migrant labor sectors.
- Time and resource constraints may limit the depth of analysis and sample size.

III LITERATURE REVIEW

Sahu (2025) analyzed precarious conditions of migrant brick kiln laborers in India, focusing on informal contracts, occupational hazards, and limited healthcare access. The study highlighted the vulnerability of workers due to weak labor protections. **Rajput (2025)** examined extreme heat conditions faced by kiln workers in India, emphasizing rising temperatures and inadequate protective measures. The study stressed the urgent need for improved safety regulations and climate adaptation strategies. **Pinto da Costa (2024)** explored night-time farming shifts in Brazil due to extreme daytime heat, highlighting adverse effects on workers' health, sleep patterns, and social lives, emphasizing labor rights violations and necessary policy interventions. **Singh (2024)** investigated the death of a migrant farm worker in Italy due to heat stress, bringing attention to labor exploitation, poor working conditions, and the lack of protective policies for agricultural laborers. **Mohamad (2024)** analyzed extreme heat challenges for migrant laborers in Dubai, contrasting their hardships with wealthy residents' privileges, revealing disparities in labor laws, living conditions, and economic inequalities. **Kumar & Singh (2023)** studied mental health issues among migrant workers, identifying high stress and depression due to job insecurity, low wages, and poor living conditions, calling for stronger mental health support systems. **Patel & Desai (2023)** explored the impact of language barriers on workplace safety, revealing that miscommunication leads to accidents, misunderstandings, and exploitation, advocating for multilingual training programs for laborers. **Reddy et al. (2023)** examined the effects of long working hours on migrant workers, linking excessive workloads to chronic health conditions, fatigue, and workplace accidents, urging for policy interventions and stricter labor laws. **Choudhary & Singh (2022)** examined living conditions in migrant labor camps, uncovering overcrowding, poor sanitation, and inadequate facilities, calling for better housing policies and improved worker accommodations. **Mehta & Patel (2022)** studied the nutritional status of migrant workers, highlighting malnutrition and health risks due to insufficient diets,



recommending employer-provided meal programs and dietary support. **Nair & Menon**

(2022) researched social isolation among migrant workers, revealing mental health struggles, loneliness, and cultural disconnection, stressing the importance of community integration initiatives. **Das & Roy (2022)** explored challenges faced by female migrant workers, highlighting gender-based violence, discrimination, wage gaps, and unsafe working conditions, advocating for gender-sensitive labor policies. **Srinivasan & Ramaswamy (2022)** explored occupational health risks among informal sector migrant workers, finding high exposure to hazardous conditions, poor healthcare access, and lack of workplace safety enforcement. Based on the above reviews we can identified the exact research gap to address the lack of specific , indepth and localized research on the work ans safety conditions of migrant labourers in a particular industrial area or hub.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the work and safety conditions of migrant labourers in Karur district, Tamil Nadu, focusing on employment patterns, workplace safety measures, challenges, and overall well-being. Primary data was collected from 143 respondents through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data was sourced from academic research, journals, books, media reports, and online databases. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation from different industries, including textiles, construction, agriculture, and services, considering varied demographics, job roles, and experience levels. The study population consists of migrant labourers across these sectors in Karur. Data collection followed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative in-depth interviews and case studies. For analysis, simple percentage analysis was employed to compare various factors affecting industrial relations and workplace safety, enabling a clear understanding of the relative significance of each factor. This approach ensures reliability, validity, and comprehensive sectoral insights.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1

Biggest challenges faced by Migrant Labours

Challenges faced by migrant labours	Frequency	Percent
Unsafe working conditions	54	37.8%
Low wages	47	32.9%
Lack of housing	43	30.1%



Language barriers	29	20.3%
Poor healthcare access	26	18.2%
Discrimination	19	13.3%

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation:

The data shows that migrant laborers in Karur face major challenges like unsafe working conditions (19.6%) and lack of housing (14.7%), along with issues like low wages, language barriers, and poor healthcare access. The majority of labourers face unsafe working conditions and lack of housing.

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS

1.ASSOCIATION BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND WORK SAFETY TRAINING

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Null Hypothesis (H_0) 1: There is no significant association between the industry type and the extent of work safety training received.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) 1: There is a significant association between the industry type and the extent of work safety training received.

Table : 4.2

Industry and work safety training received by the respondent

Industry	Work safety received by the respondents					Total
	Not at all	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very great extent	
Agriculture	10	8	7	12	2	39
Construction	7	5	12	9	5	38
Service sector	4	7	13	9	7	40
Textile	4	5	7	7	3	26
Total	25	25	39	37	17	143

Source : Primary Data



	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.642 ^a	12	.733
Likelihood Ratio	9.117	12	.693
N of Valid Cases	143		



Interpretation:

The chi-square analysis shows a Pearson Chi-Square value of 8.642 with 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.733, which is greater than the standard significance level of 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant association between the type of industry and the extent of work safety training received by the respondents. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, that the level of work safety training does not differ significantly across industries.

2.ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORK PLACE ACCIDENTS

Null Hypothesis (H_0) 2: There is no significant association between employment type and the experience of workplace accidents.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) 2: There is a significant association between employment type and the experience of workplace accidents.

Table : 4.2

Type of employment and respondents work place accidents

Employment type	Experience of workplace accidents					Total
	Always	Never	Often	Rarely	Sometimes	
Contractual	3	9	9	14	22	57
Daily wage	2	5	5	17	13	42
Permanent	1	15	4	11	13	44
Total	6	29	18	42	48	143

Source : Primary Data

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.866 ^a	8	.209
Likelihood Ratio	10.380	8	.239



N of Valid Cases	143		
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Interpretation:

The above table reveals a Pearson Chi-Square value of 10.866 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.209, which is greater than the standard significance level of 0.05. This result indicates that there is no statistically significant association between the type of employment and the experience of workplace accidents among the respondents. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, suggesting that the occurrence of workplace accidents does not differ significantly across contractual, daily wage, and permanent employees, and the experience of such incidents appears to be relatively independent of the employment type.

ONE WAY ANOVA

3.COMPARING MEANS BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND WAGE SATISFACTION

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in wage satisfaction across respondents with different educational qualifications.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in wage satisfaction for at least one educational qualification group compared to the others.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18.112	3	6.037	2.618	.053
Within Groups	320.504	139	2.306		
Total	338.615	142			

Interpretation :

The ANOVA results indicate that the between-groups sum of squares (18.112) suggests some variation among the groups, but the p-value (Sig. = 0.053) is slightly above the conventional significance level of 0.05. This means that there is no statistically significant difference among the groups at the 5% significance level, though it is close. The F-value (2.618) suggests moderate variability between groups compared to within- group variance.

V.FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 FINDINGS :

- Most migrant labourers are male (59.4%) and married (44.8%), with primary education (32.2%)



being the highest qualification for many.

- A large share live in Puliyoor (25.9%) and work mainly in agriculture (28%).
- The majority earn between ₹5,000–₹10,000 (30.8%) and have 4–6 dependents (34.3%).
- Most are contractual employees (39.9%) and work more than 10 hours daily (33.6%).
- Family or friends (43.4%) are the main source for finding jobs.
- While 27.3% are highly aware of workplace safety and have received training, only 29.4% report high accessibility to safety equipment.
- 33.6% sometimes experience workplace injuries, but 52.4% lack health insurance and 53.8% have only moderate access to healthcare.
- 45.5% live in rented houses, and 60.8% are not enrolled in any social security schemes.
- The majority of migrant labourers face unsafe working conditions (37.8%), followed by low wages (32.9%) and lack of housing (30.1%).
- There is no significant association between industry type and the extent of work safety training received ($p = 0.733$).
- There is no significant association between type of employment and the experience of workplace accidents ($p = 0.209$).
- Educational qualification does not significantly affect wage satisfaction, though the result is close to significance ($p = 0.053$).

5.2 SUGGESTIONS :

- Improve workplace safety by enforcing stricter safety regulations, conducting regular inspections, and ensuring continuous safety training for all workers across industries
- Provide affordable housing schemes or worker hostels to address the lack of proper accommodation for migrant labourers.
- Increase minimum wages or introduce wage standardization to reduce dissatisfaction, especially among low-paid contractual and daily-wage workers.
- Reduce excessive working hours by implementing regulated shift systems to protect workers' health and productivity.
- Enhance access to safety equipment by making it mandatory for employers to supply adequate and functioning protective gear.
- Improve healthcare access by providing employer-sponsored health insurance and setting up mobile health clinics in work areas.
- Bridge the social security gap by ensuring enrolment of all migrant workers in government welfare and pension schemes.



- Support skill development programs to enable workers with lower education levels to access better-paying and safer jobs.
- Facilitate communication for migrant workers by arranging language support and awareness programs to overcome language barriers and discrimination.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has provided valuable insights into the working conditions, socio-economic challenges, and opportunities faced by migrant labourers. Through an in-depth analysis of employment types, wages, workplace safety, healthcare access, and social security enrollment, it is evident that migrant workers play a crucial role in various industries but often struggle with financial instability, inadequate living conditions, and limited access to essential services. While many workers benefit from contractual or permanent employment, a significant portion still faces wage dissatisfaction, unsafe work environments, and a lack of social security benefits. Addressing these issues through policy reforms, improved workplace safety measures, better access to healthcare, and fair wages is essential to ensuring the well-being and productivity of migrant labourers. As migration trends continue to shape labour markets, fostering inclusive policies and sustainable employment opportunities will be key to enhancing the quality of life for migrant workers and their families.

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