

Migration

Cross Road Labour Market Survey Report



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Survey Conducted by
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(Oct - Nov, 2022)

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Report Published by
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Introduction

The Surat city has emerged as one of the major economically sound cities in India that induced various kinds of labor migration to the city. Diamond, construction, textile etc. industries have grown in a largely informal labour economy. One of the biggest informal labor markets in the city is the daily wage labor market, a primary source of livelihood for several migrant laborers. The market caters for daily wage works, construction, painting, and so on. This market is characterized by multiple squares - daily wage laborers arrive at these squares at the start of the day hoping to find prospective employers in search of their labor. The labor square is locally known as naka.

Those who arrive at the naka to buy labor power are either the employers or petty contractors. There is competition among the laborers to offer their labor at a lower supply price. Workers are typically hired for a day or few days of work. If they are unable to obtain a job offer, they hawk at around the squares hoping to be spotted by a potential employer. The SMC does not keep a data track on the number of people working in the daily wage labor market or their socio-economic profile or their well-being.

During pandemic time, daily wage laborers were one of the major vulnerable groups in the city in terms of accessing basic necessities and transportation facilities to reach their home. Across India the issues of daily wage migrant laborers were so pertinent during and post covid times. This is why the labor migrants in the city has become one of the target groups to study as part of our urban fieldwork. By exploring the structure and nature of the daily wage labor market, the study is exploring the status of socio-economic conditions of the daily wage labor migrants and policy responses towards the well-being of the workers.

Review of literature

The review of literature explores the existing studies on daily wage labor market to understand its experience in various industrial societies and major other cities in india. The study by Singh

(2002) on daily wage labor market in Delhi traces the existence of similar markets in various industrial societies. When the daily labor market in England had emerged in the 19th century, the market was characterized by a stage of relative surplus value extraction. Marx observed how in Bethnal Green district, children as young as age nine would arrive on Monday and Tuesdays at the market to be hired by milk manufacturers. This contract would last only for one week. Lenin made similar observations in Russia while studying the growth of capitalism there. Impoverishing conditions in rural regions caused a steady flow of peasants towards the towns to work as migrant laborers. Markets were typically conducted in towns, fairs or industrial centers. Two cases of the daily labor market are illustrated by Singh (2002) in Cambodia and Germany, exploring two different phases of capitalism.

- Germany: Wage laborers and employers assembled at the 'arbeitsamt', a labour office run by the government to liaison between the two parties with the help of the labor agents who are middlemen in the process. This system is run on the basis of credits. For example, if a plumber provides 10 hours of plumbing labor to a piano teacher, the piano teacher must provide 5 hours of teaching labor in the future.
- Cambodia: International organizations such as the ILO provided support for the micro-employment generation program in Cambodia, which was primarily used for road construction. Owing to large labor supply, labor requirements were informed via chiefs of the commune daily. The chiefs inform the communes requesting workers to assemble at the site the next day. Jobs are allotted through a lottery system where those who were not lucky try again the next day.

The emergence of daily labor markets in the city of Delhi also signal impoverishment of peasants rather than a migration in search for higher wages. None of the workers were aware of unions in the region or the state labor department of the government. Additionally, none of the workers expected to join the formal sector. Karthika Naraparju's (2014) study of Navi Mumbai reveals access to basic amenities, housing, finance etc. that migrant laborers in the city possess. It highlights how many laborers do not receive their wages, in addition to unemployment or lack of access to basic amenities. Based on market level covariate analysis, the study concludes that problems regarding wage payment could be solved using a regulated labor market. The lack of a

political voice can be explained as one of the reasons many daily wage laborers are unable to raise their demands for better working and living conditions.

Objective of the study

- To understand the the structure and behavior of daily labor markets in Surat city
- To assess the well being of migrant workers in the daily labor market

Methodology

The study has used both qualitative and quantitative methods. For the quantitative analysis, the Navasarjan organization had assigned us to conduct an analysis of a survey they had collected on daily wage laborers for their upcoming project to address the issues of migrant laborers in Surat city. The survey was conducted across four nakas in the city which covered 160 naka workers comprising 40 samples from each nakas. For the qualitative analysis, we visited various Nakas in the city as well as shelters of workers. Hence, insights are also drawn from in depth interviews and focused group discussions conducted with daily wage laborers.

Profile of daily wage workers

The survey followed 160 daily wage workers from four daily wage labour markets in Surat: Bhatar, Udhana Cross Road, Ramnagar and Daksheshwar. 40 workers from each market were consulted for the purpose of this survey.

Age composition

It is evident that the workforce is overwhelmingly young - 68.76% of the workers are below the age of 35. Of this, 4.38% are children. The following Table 1 illustrates the age composition of the workers surveyed across all labour markets. Of this, four girls were surveyed in Bhatar and 2 girls and 1 boy was surveyed in Daksheshwar.

Table 1

Age Composition of workers

Age	Frequency	Percentage of population
More than 60	3	1.88
36-45	36	22.5
46-60	11	6.88
14 - 17	7	4.38
18-25	37	23.13
26-35	66	41.25

Gender composition

Of the 160 workers, a majority of the workers are men - 59.38% of the workers are men. Daksheshwar market accounted for equal proportion of men and women participating in the survey.

Table 2

Gender composition of workers

Gender	Frequency	Percentage of population
Woman	65	40.63
Man	95	59.38

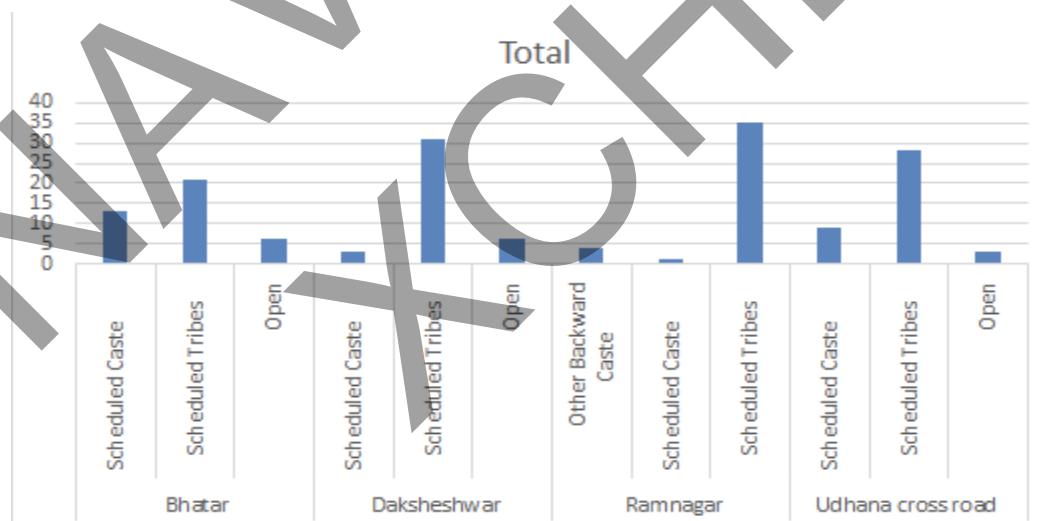
Caste and religious composition

A majority of the daily wage workers across the 4 markets belonged to the Scheduled Tribe category, comprising nearly 71.88% of the population surveyed. Meanwhile, OBC category workers were surveyed the least, only comprising 2.5% of the population. Table 3 illustrates this composition in detail.

Table 3*Caste composition of workers*

Caste category	Frequency	Percentage of population
Other Backward Caste	4	2.5
Scheduled Caste	26	16.25
Scheduled Tribes	115	71.88
Open	15	9.38

Figure 1 provides a look at the caste composition in each market surveyed in this study. It is evident that across all 4 markets, ST community is dominant. SC category workers follow behind, except in Ramnagar and Daksheshwar market where OBC and Open category workers follow respectively.

Figure 1*Caste composition of workers in each market*

99.38% of the workers surveyed are Hindu while only 1 worker surveyed identified as a Buddhist. While Hindu workers surveyed belonged to each of the 4 caste categories, the Buddhist worker surveyed belonged to the SC community.

Native place of workers

The daily wage workers at the markets are primarily migrants coming from a diverse set of states across the country. While a 36.88% of the workers comprising the majority are native to Gujarat, workers from Madhya Pradesh comprised 33.75% of the workers surveyed, following closely behind. Other major states that workers have migrated from include Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, among others such as Bihar and West Bengal. The figures are illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Native places of workers

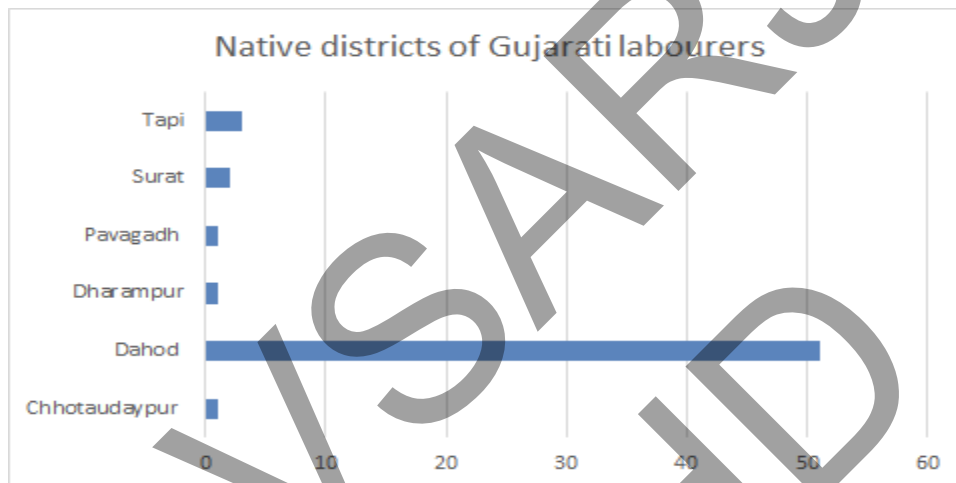
Native state	Frequency	Percentage of population
Rajasthan	7	4.38
Gujarat	59	36.88
Madhya Pradesh	54	33.75
Maharashtra	32	20
Other	4	2.5
Uttar Pradesh	4	2.5

Majority of the workers in Bhatar and Daksheshwar markets hail from Madhya Pradesh. Meanwhile, Ramnagar market has native Gujarati workers higher in number while Udhana Cross Road market possess the largest number of workers from Maharashtra. Bhatar and Udhana Cross Road market was also frequented by workers from other states.

Of the Gujarati daily wage workers, majority belonged to Dahod district as described in Figure 2. Other Gujarati workers came from districts such as Surat, Tapi, Chhotaudaypur, Dharampur and Pavagadh. Majority of these Gujarati workers belong to ST.

Figure 2

Native districts of Gujarati workers



Studying the caste compositions across these districts reveal that majority of workers from ST community come from Dahod district, while workers from SC and OBC community are evenly distributed across all 6 districts identified in the survey. This is illustrated in detail in Table 5. According to the 2011 census, Dahod district has around 75 percent of tribal population. And Tapi district has around 85 percent of tribal population. Majority of the Gujarati daily wage workers we met in the Naka belong to south gujarat tribal districts. For them, labour migration to Surat has become a livelihood strategy.

Table 5

Caste composition across native districts

Other Backward Caste	3
Dahod	1
Pavagadh	1
Surat	1
Scheduled Caste	2
Chhotaudaypur	1
Dahod	1
Scheduled Tribes	54
Dahod	49
Dharampur	1
Surat	1
Tapi	3
Open	0

Education qualification of workers

Over 53.13% comprising majority of the population are illiterate, followed closely by 26.25% of the population who have studied till Classes 6 - 10. Table 5 highlights the distribution across education qualifications.

Table 5

Education qualification of workers

Education qualification	Frequency	Percentage of population
Graduate	4	2.5

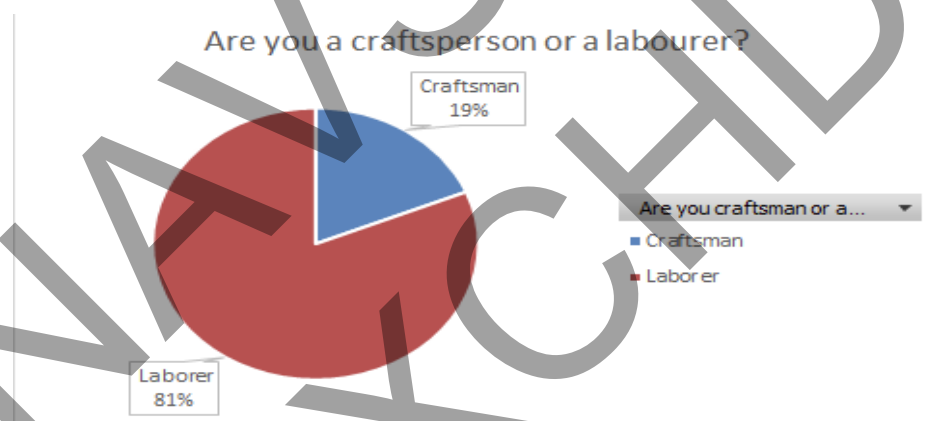
1 to 5 class	19	11.88
11 to 12 class	9	5.63
6 to 10 class	42	26.25
Illiterate	85	53.13
Other	1	0.63

Occupational status of workers

Two broad categories of workers were observed at the markets: the craftsperson and the labourer. While labourers primarily engage in construction or digging work, craftspersons are engaged in works such as masonry, painting, plumbing and so on. A majority of the daily wage workers in the markets are labourers, comprising 81.25% of the labourers surveyed, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3

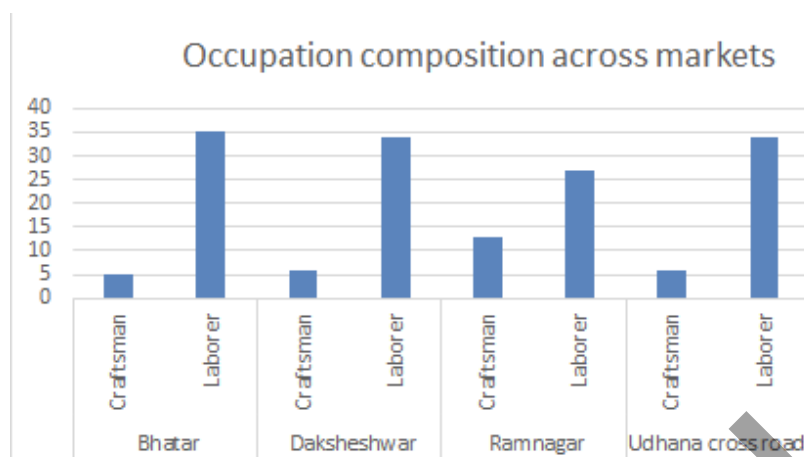
Occupational status of daily wage workers



The most number of craftpersons search for work at Ramnagar market. Laborers frequent all markets, the highest flow observed to Bhatar market. This breakdown is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4

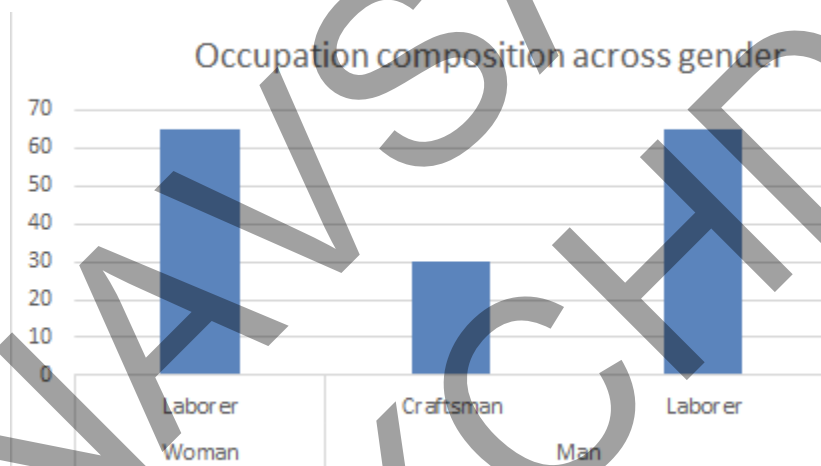
Occupation composition across markets



All the craftspersons surveyed are men while men and women surveyed as labourers are equally proportional as underlined in Figure 5.

Figure 5

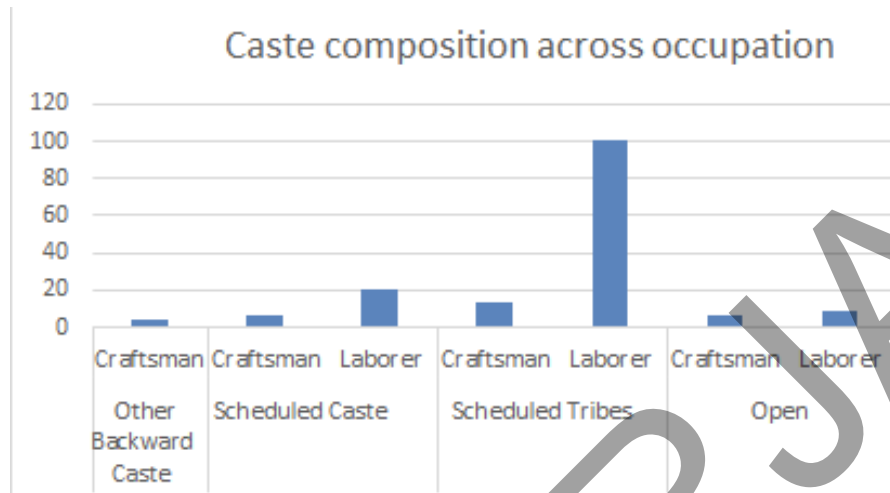
Occupation composition across gender



All workers surveyed from the OBC category are craftsmen. But the largest number of craftsmen come from the ST community, comprising 46.67% of the craftsmen in the market, which makes up to 8.75% of the total workers surveyed. But a majority of workers from ST community comprising 63.12% of the population surveyed are employed as labourers.

Figure 6

Caste composition across occupation

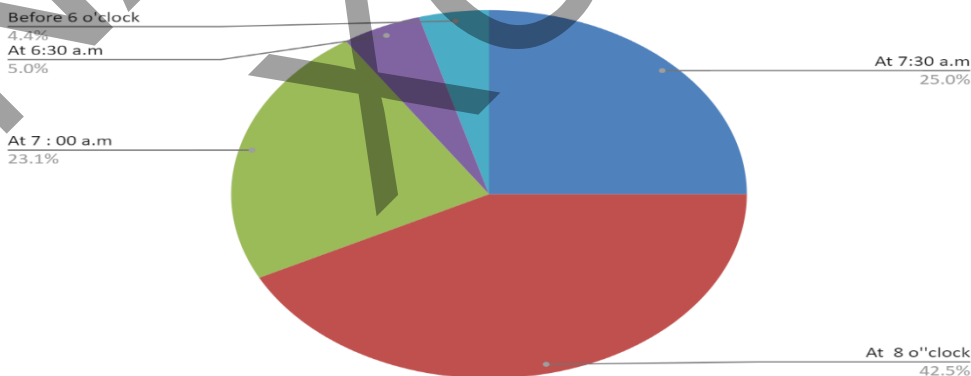


Structure and Behaviour of the daily labor market

The nakas are situated at significant points in the city where major infrastructural development has occurred. Naka does not have its own space, nor has the government assigned a separate space for Naka. Its existence is surrounded by shops or situated at the roadside. Workers arrive at Naka around 6 am, and the maximum they wait for the work is 10 to 11 AM. Most of them return to their shelter if they don't get any work. Figure 7 is a graphical representation of the time workers arriving at the market.

Figure 7

Time when workers reach at the Naka



According to the survey, 42 percent of the respondents reach the Naka around 8 am in the morning. And around 48 percent arrive between 7 to 7:30 in the morning. In our interviews, the workers have responded that the average time they wait to get the work is around 1-2 hours. If we go to Naka after 11 AM, we cannot see the existence of Naka as such, except for a few workers sitting to get work. They also leave Naka very soon.



Ramnagar Naka at 7:30 in the morning



Ramnagar Naka at 11 AM

In the early morning, Naka is one of the active places in that region where auto drivers stand, and tea shops are active. We could see gambling activities and alcoholic men in the Naka. It indicates that although many women work in the Nakas, men predominantly occupy the market, be they

employers or laborers or the aesthetic appearance of that space. The woman stands in the corner of the Naka. They don't sit in a space where men are dominated. The negotiation always happens in a men-dominated space of Naka. When an employer requires a woman workforce also, they approach the space where the woman sits, or any male worker approaches them according to the number of requirements provided by the employer. Although we have seen a few women who can negotiate with the employer, most women workers stand at the Naka either with their families or in a space where women are 'supposed' to stand.

Many families also come to Naka, where both husband-and-wife work together and carry their children. When we inquired about how their pattern of work negotiation, they revealed that they prefer to work as a family. Here the husband or father negotiates on behalf of his wife and children. Although men have higher wages than women, employers always try to reduce their wages when a family has small kids. Like gender and family, the worker's appearance is another factor that impacts the hiring process. A painter has to stand in Naka wearing the dirty clothes used for painting works. It is the appearance expected by employers/contractors looking for painters. While hiring construction workers, employers will look for cement on worker's feet and hands.

During our field visit, we tried to learn how workers knew about Daily Wage Labour Market. The response of the workers was mixed. According to the survey, 62 percent of the respondents knew about the Naka through their friends or family, indicating that they knew about the Naka from their village. Only 36 percent of the respondent found the Naka themselves. The connection between Naka and the village is evident from the case of Adivasi migrant workers from the Dahod district in Gujarat. They belong to one of the most marginalized tribal groups called Bill, most of whom are seasonal migrants. Their migration is primarily concerned with the low-income opportunities in their native place. They have agriculture in their home. Most of their cultivation they do use for self-consumption. They even carry food grains to Surat. The agricultural labourer wage is 150-200 in their village which makes nothing for their livelihood. Hence, they chose to migrate to Surat. Hence, they work for 4-6 months in the Naka and return home periodically. During April and May, they go for sowing work for corn or Makkai cultivation. And in August, they again go back to the village for the harvest of corn. The same cycle happens for the crops being sown in the winter season.

We also enquired whether they change the labor square if they don't get work. The majority response was no because it was already too late to change locations by the time, they realized that they wouldn't get work for the day. Other reasons include they had no friends and acquaintances in other squares or other squares were too far from their shelter. Workers from the Dahut district said they don't change the Naka since all of their friends or relatives work in the same Naka. It indicates that the workers have set their Naka from their village itself.

The well-being status of the workers

Housing and basic facilities

Our fieldwork experience indicates that workers are in the city primarily because of their low-income opportunities at their native places. When they relocate to the city, there are many things to be a concern for the workers in which include housing, basic needs, education of the children etc. Figure 8 depicts the housing status of 160 respondents across four nakas surveyed.

Figure 8



Around 33 percent of the workers living in huts which is either made by plastic sheet/banners or tin or asbestos sheet. Out of respondents, 31 percent live in rented house in which workers either live with the family or coworkers. The average number of people live in a rented space is 6-8 people where basic facilities such as electricity and drinking facility are met. 24 percent of the respondent live in open space which set in road side or in the space of under the bridge. The

people who live in the open space lack electricity facility and drinking water. Out of the respondents, only 3 percent live in govt supported shelter home run by NGOs as part of the National Urban Livelihood Mission. We could observe that many workers lack awareness regarding the shelter facility. We also visited shelter homes to conduct interviews with workers. We could experience that shelter does not provide a separate room for the family. However, shelter homes had decent living environments by ensuring all basic facilities.

Education of the children

We also inquired about the educational aspect of the daily wage workers. Out of the 160 respondents of surveyed workers, 53 people brought their kids with them. In this, only 17 kids are going to school, and 17 kids tag with their parents at the workplace. These children also help their parents in their work without being paid. Eleven kids out of 53 were babies who were taken by their parents at the workplace. The remaining eight kids take care of their siblings at home without schooling. The inter-state migrant children have the issue of pursuing education in their mother tongue. Although several NGOs and SMC have Hindi or Marathi medium schools that aim at migrant children, the worker's awareness of the same is less. Moreover, these schools are far away from their residents. The issue of education is pertinent among seasonal migrants. Since they don't have a permanent settlement, many of their children do not go to school.

Food security

Food security is the primary concern that we observed among daily wage workers. Out of 160 respondents, 140 of them possess ration cards. Most of their ration card is registered to the Fair Price Shop (FPS) in their native place. Hence, they are not able to access the ration. However, the One Nation One Ration Card Scheme launched in 2019 allows a beneficiary to access his food entitlements from anywhere in India, irrespective of where the ration card is registered. Although the scheme is aimed at migrant workers, most of our respondents are unaware of the scheme. In shelter homes, the NGOs are trying to get portability access for workers' ration cards; they have faced issues in the Adhar verification. Most workers do not participate in the election process as their voter id is registered in their native. It can be one of the reasons that government formulates policies with sedentary bias. It is evident in the case of ration access, electoral participation, and education.

Financial Inclusion

Around 74 percent of the respondents hold bank accounts based in their native place only. When we inquired about the pattern of savings, 55 percent of the respondents kept their savings to themselves only, and 27 percent did savings in their respective bank accounts. Some workers expressed that their belongings get robbed, including money. It indicates safety issues of the workers concerning their life and belongingness. When observing the financial inclusion aspect of the workers, most of them have debt from informal sources. They don't rely on the formal credit system as they lack awareness of it, and it follows a rigorous process. We observed that marriage and agriculture have been primary reasons for loans. Their loan source indicate that the workers have consistent relations with their villages. A 23-year-old migrant worker from Dahud region expressed that he had taken a loan of Rs 1.5 lakh from an informal source for marriage purposes. The money lender charges 10% interest on the loan amount. He complains that money lender in the village charge high interest rate, and if they do not pay the amount within the stipulated time, the moneylender threatens the family. It implies that daily wage laborers' access to the formal credit system is much required.

Workplace issue of the labors:

Other than Daily Labour Market Naka Labours face daily problems at the workplace which makes the uncertainty in their wages, safety and other basic amenities. One-by-one all are being discussed based on the Survey data and the Insights being gained from In-depth Interviews, Focused Group Discussions and Participant Observation.

Wage

At the labour market the daily wages of labours vary from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000 this variation persists because of the type of work being done by the labours and also the employer or the contractors negotiation for a per day wage also makes a difference as at the last hour of the market around 9 A.M. to 10 A.M. due to insecurity of not getting a work makes them to work even if the wages is quite less as compared to the usual wages.

The type of work which is being done by the labour is also an key for the variation in the wages as skilled and specifically skilled labours have different wages as a construction site labour may get between 300 to 500 rupees. A Mason may get between 500 to 1000 Rupees it depends on the experience of the mason being hired. A Plumber gets Rs. 700 to 800 Rupees. A Painter gets Rs. 300 to 700 Rupees.

The Variation in the wages of the labour depends on their experience too as a new mason may get less wages as compared to the mason who is well experienced in his/her work.

Also, for the female labours if they have a small kid or baby then they are being paid less and the excuse which is being made is that they work less because they see their kids on the construction site which makes them less efficient as compared to men labours thus making thier wages slightly lower as compared to men labours.

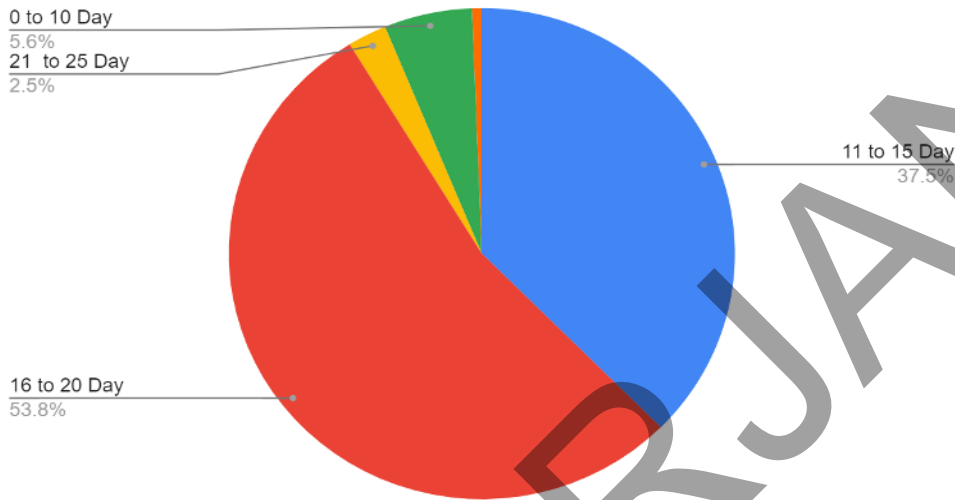
Mal practices are also being done with the labours as one of the labour we interviewed shared his experience how he got robbed by an employer. As after being hired from an employer the person went with the labour the employer threatened him to give the money he has and just go. So this made the labour got to give his money which he had with himself. And being asked if he had done any police complaint then he replied “what will we do sir after all this money is being taken from me so no point to do any police complaint”.

Contractors issue with daily wage labours

As the labours which are being hired through contractors usually work on a low wages as compared to the average wages of a labour as because they get a security of work for a definite number of days the labours also does not argue that much because getting work on a daily basis is uncertain for the labours. The Below Pie Chart shows the Number of days work being got by the labours of the 160 samples.

Figure 9

Number of Days work being got by the labours in a month



The Average number of days work being got by labours is 16 to 20 days that is approximately 54 % of the sample. Only 2.5 % get the 21 to 25 days of work in a month.

Employer behaviour

The behaviour of employers with respect to the labours usually depends on efficiency they provide as because on being asked about the employers behaviour the most common reply was that “if we will do the work properly then no issue”.

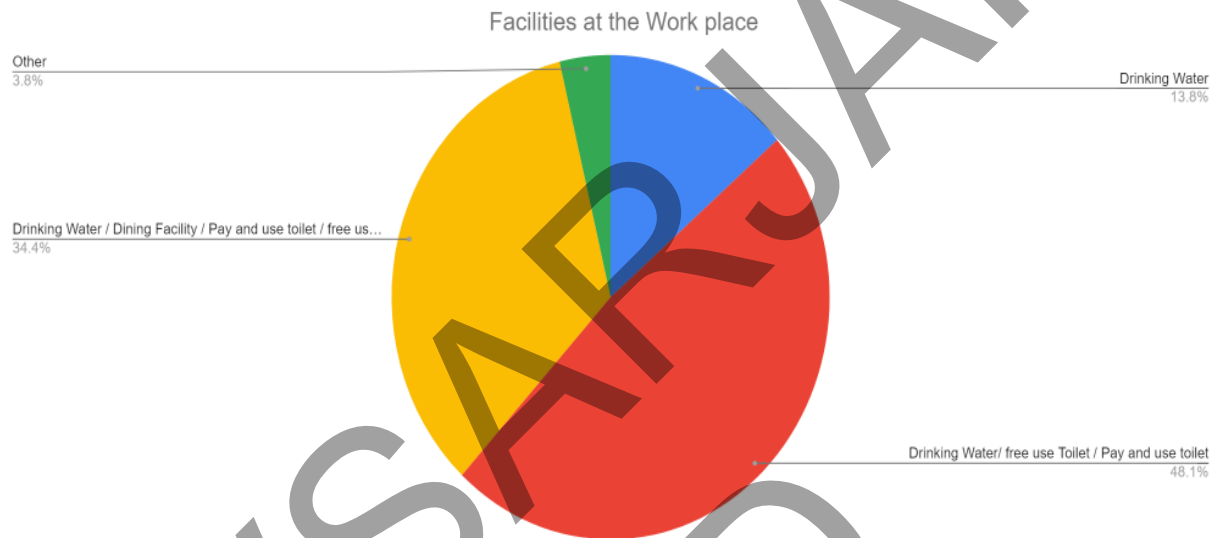
Safety during the work

As approximately 96% of people are not given the safety equipments at work place and 2.5 % were provided with Hand Gloves/Gum Boots/ Helmet. And only 2 got belt along with the equipments which is indicated in red in the pie chart. Only 1 got Belt/ Gum boots at the workplace for the work. So through this it is clearly can be seen that there is no provision for safety for laborers at the place which may result in worse health conditions for them. As because with no Gum boots and Hand Gloves the cement is being in direct contact with the skin and also

the dust is also an issue along with that no Helmet may result in incidents which are not being desired by the employer and the labour but the safety is being compromised at the workplace.

Workplace Facilities

Figure 10



As per sample data at the workplace there is no food being provided by the employer the labour has to carry along or just have to eat from the street vendors. And the other facilities like drinking water was provided approx 97% of labours and the toilet facility was being provided to 82.5% of labours. And the drinking water facility was available to 14% of labours. Dining facility for food which is being brought by labour itself was given to 35% of labours.

Accidents at the Workplace

The Injuries which are being happened to labours at the workplace were very common like a small cut or negligible and one incident of severity was happened to the labour the labour was on bed rest for 2 months due to leg injury the employer gave the compensationa for the treatment

and even gave the money for the number of days of work was lost due to that accident. But the same thing happened with another labour but he did not get the compensation.

Health issues due to working conditions:

On being asked about the health issues at workplace the labours did not have any health issue which emerged due to the working conditions. But what we can see that is not being provided with the safety equipments like gloves and gum boots they have some skin issues which is not considered a problem by the labours. Additionally, the dust also leads to various health issues but it still goes on unnoticed.

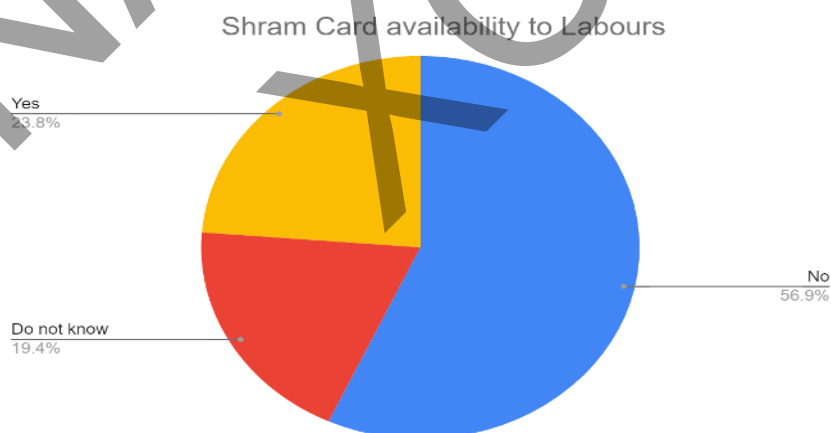
Union of Labour:

Laborers were not part of any union and they were not aware about the labor union thing as almost everyone said no on being a member of any union.

Labor card :

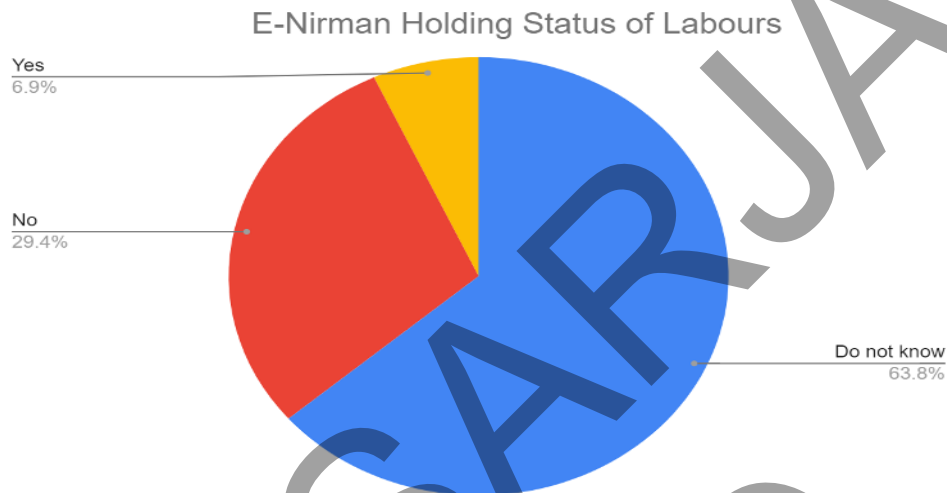
On being asked about the Shram Card only 24% had Shram Cards, 20% don't have any information regarding Shram Card. 57% did not have the Shram Card. Below Chart shows the graphical representation of Shram Card availability to laborers.

Figure 11



Also Gujarat Government has entitled a E-Nirman Card scheme to labours which is being issued by the Gujarat Building & Other Construction Worker's Welfare Board.

Figure 12



This E-Nirman Card is being available to only 7% of labours who were respondents. 64% did not knew about E-Nirman Card. And 30% did not had the card.

Exploitation at the workplace:

At the workplace some labours did faced exploitation like not being paid the wages at which they were hired on being asked they said that if their work is not upto the mark then it may happen also sometimes they are compelled to do some extra work regardless of the extra hours although its very likely to happen. Women did not face any harassment at the workplace.

Conclusion

As through this exposure of daily labour market we got to know a lot of insights which remain hidden under the shadow of data that only presents the picture but not a actual detailed picture that how alternatives are being used bu labours with respect to their employment, their daily life exposures to new places , new working conditions under new employers. Also daily wage labour's less awareness towards the government facilities but it also results due to the irresponsive and less interested bureaucrats towards the development of daily wage labour. Labours do not get their entitlements what they need and should be provided to them.

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