

Problems Faced by Garment Workers in Bengaluru - A study

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Abstract: Women forms half of the Indian population and nearly 1/3rd of the work force. But unfortunately too much gender discrimination and physical, sexual abuse exist in garment industries at Bengaluru. The life of 5 lakh plus garment workers in Bengaluru is hellish and unfortunately despite passing innumerable legislations the working conditions and health work place harassment is on the increase. Further, the condition of migrated workers who with many ambitions of educating family members, financial assistance to the parents is not heard properly by the concerned. Extreme work problems, lack of secure job, absence of basic facilities, extended working hours sans adequate overtime allowance, denial of leave, bonus, gratuity etc., all added to the helpless and miserable existence of these women in Bengaluru. Health care for garment workers comes under the governments Employee State Insurance scheme (ESI). Though the permanent workers are covered by ESI but the services are under utilised primarily because of bureaucratic roadblocks, the poor quality of said services, the problem of under staffing at ESI dispensaries and hospitals, and corruption at primary care centers. Mindless procedures that makes the workers difficult to approach ESI dispensaries and hospitals and very difficult situation to access services during emergencies made the employees to approach private hospitals. Though ESI is meant to provide a comprehensive health care system and insurance to worker along with many shortcomings, the problem arises from the difficulty in ensuring efficient management and proper accountability within the system.

Keywords: Garment workers, health, abuse, ESI, working conditions, migration.

1. Introduction

Bengaluru's garment industry is characterised by relatively large units, with limited subcontracting and with limited used of contract workers (Roy Chowdhary, 2005). Bengaluru is famous for the production of woven varieties. Since the employers discourages subcontracting and to prefer to run much of their operation in house, the quality of garments is also enhanced.

Five lakh employees are employed in garment industry at Bengaluru where there is concentration of garment factories in Bengaluru Urban district. The ratio between factory sector workers and all workers in the garment industry was 45% in Karnataka which was higher than in any other Indian state. The size of the employment during 2014-15 is highest in Karnataka i.e., 471 employees per factory when compare to Tamilnadu

118, Gujarat 77, Haryana 295 and All India 151.

Indian garment industry is truly a global one with severe competition for capturing the major consumption markets in America and Europe. The industry since labour intensive in nature and can be started with small investment, many economies are making sincere attempts to boost their economic development. Further there is a shift in the demand from tailor made to readymade use of garments. In India 33,371 garments units are functioning in 19 clusters. Today, readymade garments exports is contributing 4.48% to India's GDP and is generating 1721700 direct employment and 3341700 indirect employment.

There are about 1200 big, medium and small garment factories in the city and Bengaluru (Sudeshna Saha 2014). Nearly 5 lakh people are working in these factories of these 80% are women, and most are first generation migrants from rural Karnataka. Factories are located in different industrial centers but there is heavy concentration of garment units in three areas viz., Peenya Industrial Area, Mysore Road, Bommanahalli. Garment workers are facing harassment in work places and even today in the 21st Century psychological and sexual abuse continues unabated. It is common for every petty difference clothes are thrown at women workers to their faces, even physical pushing and humiliations abuses are used. These are some hellish instances that the managements of garment industries have perfected as better industrial relations.

A. Statement of the problem

Unable to bear the harassment by the male supervisors and management many female garment workers committed suicide. Workers in garment industry are mainly exposed to prolonged sitting and standing, working with their hands lifted to shoulder level or even higher, highly repetitive work etc. have been shown to predict impaired work ability and enhance long term sickness. These workers are subjected to various workplace hazards. Garment workers are facing multiple health problems. Workers with high physical work are well documented and it is hard truth that than suffer musculoskeletal disorder, cardiovascular disease, long term sickness absence, early retirement and all-cause mortality. Besides this the garment workers are exposed to nutrition problems ophthalmic problem, gastrointestinal problem, respiratory problems etc.

But still so far garment workers are unjustified, deprived of better working conditions, kitchenless hostels with full of dirt and exploitation both local and migrant workers is a common matter. The aged workers are removed on the pretext of higher wages. The poor quality of food provided in the canteen tends to lower workers calorie intake. The previous researchers show that the women workers do not drink enough water in order to avoid going to the rest room. In addition to this sexual harassment, physical harassment is common in many of the garment industries at Bengaluru. Against this background a study is taken to assess the demographic profile of workers, problems relating to the working conditions problems relating to health, workers facing work harassment and garment workers facing problems relating to hostel is taken up. The collected data has been presented in the form a tables and analysis of data done through the application quantitative techniques like Chi-square and ANOVA.

B. Objectives of the study

- 1) To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
- 2) To analyse problems related to working conditions.
- 3) To analyse workers problems relating to occupation and health hazards.
- 4) To analyse the reasons behind workers facing work harassment.
- 5) To analyze the reasons behind workers facing problems relating to hostel.

C. Hypotheses

- 1) To demographic profile of respondents is not supporting the study.
- 2) There are no problems related to working conditions.
- 3) The workers are not facing problems relating to occupation and health hazards.
- 4) There are no reasons behind workers harassents.
- 5) The workers are not facing any problems in the hostel.

2. Research design

In this present study the researcher has used both descriptive and analytical type. Descriptive study performed with an objective of describing the state of affiars as it exist at present and mainly involved surveys and fact knowing enquireis of multiple kinds. The researcher has used descriptive research to identify the reasons for employee facing problems relating to working conditions etc., The researcher has used analytical type to analyse the existing facts from the data collected garment workers.

A. Sample of the study

Using the formula suggested by Bill Godden the sample of the study was decided.

SS = infinite where population is > 50,000

SS = Z2 x (P) x (i-p)/c2

Z = Z valueA (e.g. 1.96 for a confidence level)

P = Percentage of population picking a choice, expressed as

decimalB.

C = Confidence interval, expressed as decimal.

(e.g. 0.04 = +/- 4 percentage points)

AZ values (Cumulative Normal Probability Table)

1.645 = 90% Confidence level

1.96 = 95% Confidence level

2.576 = 99% Confidence level

SS = 3.8416 x 0.5 x 0.5 / 0.0016 = 0.9604 / 0.004

= 600.25 or 600.

Sampling Table	
Area	No. of sample selected
Peenya Industrial Area	200
Mysore Road	200
Bommanahalli	200
Total	600

Factories are located in different industrial areas of Bengaluru with a concentration of three areas as mentioned under. Therefore these areas were selected for the present study.

B. Universe of the study

The study is confined to Bengaluru only. Since there is heavy concentration of garment factories in three areas of Bengaluru these areas were covered with 200 sample each.

C. Sampling technique

Convenient sampling techniques was adopted and data has been collected using a structured questionnaire. 600 sampel was fixed for the study as suggested by Bill Godden (2004).

D. Sources of data

The present study uses both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected by administering a well drafted structured questionnaire administered as schedule. Before administering questionnaire a pilot study was conducted in order to check the relevancy of questions framed and in the light of experience the final questionnaire was prepared and used for the data collection. Totally 650 questionnaires were used for the purpose of primary data collection and out of 650 only 600 were usable one which was known at the time of preparing tables for the study. Secondary sources were journals, books and different websties.

E. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire framed for this puporse is a strcutured one and all the questions to be asked known in advance. The scales used to evaluate questions are;

- 1) Descriptive scale (Yes or no)
- 2) Likert 3 point and 4 point scale

F. Statistical tools and techniques

Chi-square and ANOVA statistical tools were used to interpret the data. These two quantitative metrics measures the

variation in the data and also assist in testing the data scientifically.

3. Review of Literature

Biplab et al. (2006) have stated that garment authorities should give them chance to develop new skills, reward them if workers done their job finely. The author suggested that the worker should take a short break at work if they feel anxious or stressed.

Wendy Barnes et al. (2008) expressed that though labour laws in four countries, China, Mexico, Nicaragua and Phillippines are addressed regarding work place abuse against pregnant women working in the garment industry, still pregnant women faces abuse and discrimination.

The sister charity sruvey (2012) reveals a total lack of compliance in setting up internal complaint committee as per the sexual harassment of women at work place (prevention, prohibition and redressal) Act 2013 by factories operating in Mysore Road and Peenya Industrial Area of Bengaluru. Further, the study reveals that though these committees were set up, they remain only on paper.

Rohini Mohan (2017) states that employees has been to recruit migrant workers from states such as Bihar, Odissa and UP. The study further reveals that labourers continue to arrive from rural Karnataka in search of garment sector job. The wages of migrant workers are lower than that of local workers. Migrant workers are more vulnerable than the local workers since they are new to the city and do not know local language.

Lillipet, S. et al. (2017) reported that the health problems of muculoskeletal disorder was more prevalent in garment workers and it varies from 15.5% to 78.89% and the most reported prevalence of backpain was between 22.2% and 68.5% among the factory workers involved in sewing, cutting and delivery.

A. Survey findings

Table-1 highlights data regarding demographic profile of garment workers. There are 180 respondents falling in the age group of 21-25 years, 130 in the group 15-20 years, 110 in the 26-30 years, 90 belongs to 31-35 years and 50 belongs 36-40 and 40 belongs to the above age group of 41 years. The Chi-square test fails to accept H0 and accepts H1. Therefore, it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents belongs to different age group. There are 20 illiterates followed by 230 studied up-to middle class, 180 up-to 10th standard, 130 up-to PUC and 40 are degree holders. Chi-square test fails to accept the null hypotheses and accepts the alternative. Therefore, it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents belongs to different education status. 250 respondents or 42% of total 600 are getting a monthly salary of Rs. 800 to 10000 followed by 120 between Rs. 6001-8000, 90 respondents between rs. 10001-12000, 80 respondents newly recruited are getting between Rs. 4k - 6k, and 60 respondents are getting a monthly salary of Rs.

12001 above. Chi-square statistical tool fails to accept the H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded that there exists significant variation in the data and respondents belongs to different income group.

Further, the table also highlights information about mode of communication. 240 respondents uses bus provided management, 120 come by train, 90 walk and rickshaw, 60 uses private vehicle and 30 members avail other modes of communication. Chi-square statistical tool fails to accept the H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variations in the data and respondents use different mode of communication.

210 respondents are living in the rented house. 90 each are living in the factory accommodated residence and living in the slum areas. 60 respondents are residing in their relative house and 150 respondents only own their own residential house and are living in their own houses. Chi-square statistical tool fails to accept H0 and accepts H1 and therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents residential accommodation varies from one to another. There are 440 married respondents and 160 are unmarried. 250 respondents migrated from rural Karnataka area to Bengaluru, 60 within Bengaluru city, and 290 migrated from outside Karnataka. There are 360 Hindu respondents followed by 120 Muslims, 90 Christians and 30 Jains and others.

Table-2 reveal data about problems faced by respondents relating to working conditions. 370 respondents out of 600 have expressed strongly agree followed by 180 agree, 20 stood as neutral and 30 somewhat agree. Out of 370 respondents who said strongly agree, 82 said about low wages, 80 about no job security, 75 about compulsory overtime but normal pay, 68 about denial of leave and 65 illegal dismissal. Out of 180 respondents who said agree, 45 said about low wages, 40 no job security, 35 denial of leave, 32 about compulsory overtime but normal pay and 28 about illegal dismissed. Out of respondents who stood neutral, 6 said about compulsory overtime but normal pay, 5 about no job security, 4 about illegal dismissal 3 about low wasa. Out of 30 who said somewhat agree, 8 said about no job security, 7 about compulsory overtime but normal pay, 6 about itself dismissal, 5 about low wages, 4 about denial of leave Chi-square test fails to accept H0 and accepts H1 and here it is concluded that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents expressed different problems relating to working conditions.

Table-3 highlights data about garment workers facing problems relating to occupation and health hazards. 350 respondents said strongly agree followed by 180 agree and 70 somewhat agree. Out of 350 who said strongly agree, 90 said about over crowd, ill ventilated poorly illuminated rooms, 80 about finger injury, needle piercing, cardio vascular, gynecological, respiration, gastrointestinal and other problems, 75 about asthma or TB and 60 about musculoskeletal and 45 about infertility among women problems. Out of 180 respondents who said agree 50 said about job related and health

related problem, 45 about over crowd, ill-ventilated, poorly illuminated rooms, 10 about musculoskeletal and 5 about infertility among women. ANOVA statistical tool fails to accept H0 and accepts H1 and hence it is concluded here that there exist significant variations in the data and respondents are aware of driver of occupation and health hazards.

Table-4 States information about garment workers facing work harassment 342. Respondents or 57% said strongly agree over the different type of work harassment followed by 204 agree, 24 stood neutral and 30 somewhat agree. Out of 342 who said strongly agree, 72 said about gender discrimination 65 about workplace harassment, verbal, mental and sexual abuse, 62 about not allowed to from union to protect their job, 60 about physical harassment, 51 about no employment contract and 32 about migrated workers denial of effective grievance redressal. Out of 204 who said agree 45 said about work place harassment, verbal, mental and sexual, 40 each about gender discrimination and physical harassment, 34 about not allowed to form union of protect their job, 25 about no employment contract and 20 said about denial of migrated workers grievances redressal. Out of 24 respondents who stood neutral a majority of 6 respondents said about work place harassment, and 5 each about gender discrimination and physical harassment and out of 30 who said somewhat agree 9 said about gender discrimination, 5 each about workplace harassment and physical harassment, 4 each about no employment contract, and denial of migrated workers effective grievance redressal. ANOVA test fails to accept H0 and accepts H1 and hence it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and garment workers faces difference type of work related harassment.

Table-5 provides information about workers facing the problems of hostel. 318 said strongly agree, 202 agree and 80 somewhat agree. Out of 318 who said strongly agree 71 said about hostel is not clean, 63 about discrimination, 52 about no kitchen facility, 50 about poor infrastructure, 45 about water availability is irregular and 37 about exploitation of migrant works. Out of 202 who said agree, 48 said no kitchen facility, 46 about hostel is not clean, 45 about poor infrastructure and 37 about exploitation of migrant workers. Out of 80 who said somewhat agree majority of 19 said about no kitchen facility,

18 hostel is not clean, 10 water availability is irregular and 10 about discrimination. ANOVA fails to accept H0 and accepts H1 and hence it is concluded that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents who resides in the managements hostel faces different problems.

4. Conclusion

The study shows the presence of significant difference in the nature of working conditions income, problems relating to occupation and health hazards and employees facing general and work related harassment. The survey highlights the existing problems faced by women workers so that the employers may bring some positive changes in the working conditions, and bring more health and facilities and provide better conditions in the hostels. The migrant workers should not be distinguished and they should treat on par with local workers. It is high time on the part of garment unit owners to introduce simultaneously monetary based welfare activities and non-monetary i.e., physical abuse stopping, stopping scolding etc., provide them better working conditions and do not exploit them since they are available in good number who are unfortunately less educated and cannot switch over to other industries.

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Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents (Combined)

Characteristics	Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Age in years	15-20	130	22
	21-25	180	30
	26-30	110	18
	31-35	90	15
	36-40	50	8
	41 & above	40	7
Hypotheses			
H0	There are no significant variation in the data		Reject
H1	There are significant variation in the data		Accept

Chi-square Table : Calculated value = 136, Sig. level @ 5%, df = 5, TV = 11.070

Chi-square Analysis: The calculated value being 136 higher than the TV - 12.592 @ 5% level of significance with df = 5 fails to accept H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents are aware of it.

Education	Illiterate	20	3
	Upto Middle	230	38
	Upto 10th Std.	180	30
	Upto PUC	130	22
	Degree	40	7

Hypotheses

H0	There exist no significant variation in the data	Reject
H1	There exist significant variation in the data	Accept

Chi-square Table: Calculated value = 268.3332, Sig. level @ 5%, df = 4, TV = 9.488

Chi-square Analysis: The calculated value being 268.3332, higher than the TV = 9.488 @ 5% level of significance with df = 4 fails to accept H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents are aware of it.

Salary (Rs. per month)	4000 - 6000	80	13
	6001 - 8000	120	20
	8001 - 10000	250	42
	10001 - 12000	90	15
	12001 and above	60	10

Hypotheses

H0	There is no significant variation in the data	Reject
H1	There is significant variation in the data	Accept

Chi-square Table: Calculated value = 191.67, Sig. level @ 5%, df = 4, TV = 9.488

Chi-square Analysis: The calculated value being 191.67, higher than the TV = 9.488 @ 5% level of significance with df = 4 fails to accept H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents are aware of it.

Mode of communication	Walk to work	60	10
	work & rickshaw	90	15
	Hired bus by management	240	40
	train	120	20
	private vehicle	60	10
	Others	30	5

Hypotheses

H0	There exist no significant variation in the data	Reject
H1	There exist significant variation in the data	Accept

Chi-square Table: Calculated value = 282, Sig. level @ 5%, df = TV = 11.070

Chi-square Analysis: The calculated value being 282, higher than the TV - 11.070 @ 5% level of significance with df = 5 fails to accept H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents are aware of it.

Residence	Own house	150	25
	Rented	210	35
	Relation house	60	10
	Factory accommodation	90	15
	Slum	90	15

Hypotheses

H0	There exist no significant variation in the data	Reject
H1	There exist significant variation in the data	Accept

Chi-square Table: Calculated value = 120, Sig. level @ 5%, df = 4, TV = 9.488

Chi-square Analysis: The calculated value being 120, higher than the TV - 11.070 @ 5% level of significance with df = 4 fails to accept H0 and accepts H1. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variation in the data and respondents are aware of it.

Marital status	Married	440	73
	Single	160	27
Migration status	Rural to Bengaluru (Karnataka)	250	42
	Within Bengaluru city	60	10
	Outside Karnataka	290	48
Religion	Hindus	360	60
	Muslims	120	20
	Christians	90	15
	Jains and Others	30	05

Table 2
 Problems relation to working conditions

Nature of problem	SA	A	N	SWA	T
No job security	80	40	5	8	133
Illegal dismissal	65	28	4	6	103
Low wages	82	45	3	5	135
Compulsory OT but normal pay	75	32	6	7	120
Denial of leave	68	35	2	4	109
Total	370	180	20	30	600

Source: Primary Data

Note: SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, N – Neutral, SWA - Some What Agree, T - Total

Hypotheses

H0 There is no significant variation in the working conditions data Reject

H1 There is significant variation in the working conditions data Accept

ANOVA Table

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	MS	F-ratio	5% F-limit (from the F-table)
Between sample	16120	(4-1)=3	16120/3 =537.3333	537.3333/26 =20.67	F(3,16) =3.24
Withing Sample	416	(20-4)=16	416/16 =26		
Total	16536	20-1 = 19			

ANOVA Analysis

The above ANOVA table shows that the calculated value of F is 20.67 which is greater than TV = 3.24 @ 5% level of with d.f. being V1 = 3 and V2 = 16 fails to accept null hypotheses. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variations in the data and respondents are aware of variations in the data and problems relating to working conditions.

Table 3
 Garment workers problems relating to occupation and health hazards

Type of occupation and health hazards	SA	A	SWA	T
Asthama or TB	75	40	15	130
Musculoskeletal problems	60	25	10	95
Over crowd, ill-ventilated, poorly illuminated rooms	90	45	18	153
Infertility among women	45	20	05	70
Finger injury, needle piercing, cardiovascular gynaecological, respiration, gastrointestinal and other problems	80	50	22	152
Total	350	180	70	600

Source: Primary Data

Note: SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, N – Neutral, SWA - Some What Agree, T - Total

Hypotheses

H0 There is no significant variation in the working conditions data Reject

H1 There is significant variation in the working conditions data Accept

ANOVA Table

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	MS	F-ratio	5% F-limit (from the F-table)
Between sample	7960	(3-1)=2	7960/2 =3980	3980/70.67 =56.31	F(2,12) =3.88
Withing Sample	848	(15-3)=12	848/12 =70.67		
Total	8808	15-1 = 14			

ANOVA Analysis

The above ANOVA table shows that the calculated value of F is 56.31 which is greater than TV = 3.88 @ 5% level of with d.f. being V1 = 2 and V2 = 12 fails to accept null hypotheses. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variations in the data and respondents are aware of variations in the data and problems relating to working conditions.

Table 4
 Garment workers facing work harassment

Type of work harassment	HA	A	N	SWA	T
Gender discrimination	72	40	5	9	126
No employment contract	51	25	3	4	83
Workplace harassment, verbal, mental & sexual abuse	65	45	6	5	121
Physical harassment like hitting with a piece of cloth, slapping and scolding	60	40	5	5	110
Migrated workers denial of effective Grievance redressal	32	20	3	4	59
Not allowed to form union to protect their job	62	34	2	3	101
Total	342	204	24	30	600

Source: Primary Data

Note: HA - Highly Aware, A - Aware, N - Neutral, SWA - Some What Aware, T - Total

Hypotheses

H0 There is no significant variation in the working conditions data Reject

H1 There is significant variation in the working conditions data Accept

ANOVA Table

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	MS	F-ratio	5% F-limit (from the F-table)
Between sample	11440.5	(4-1)=3	11440.5/3 =3813.5	3813.5/113.9 =33.48	F(3,20) =3.10
Withing Sample	2278.0	(24-4)=20	2278/20 =113.3111		
Total	13718.5	24-1 = 23			

ANOVA Analysis

The above ANOVA table shows that the calculated value of F is 33.48 which is greater than TV = 3.10 @ 5% level of with d.f. being V1 = 3 and V2 = 20 fails to accept null hypotheses. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variations in the data and respondents are aware of variations in the data and problems relating to work harassment.

Table 5
 Garment workers facing problems relating to hostel

Type of hostel problems	SA	A	SWA	T
Poor furniture, no cupboard and beds & mattress	50	45	15	110
No kitchen facility	52	48	19	119
Hostel is not clean	71	46	18	135
Water availability is irregular	45	30	10	85
Migrant workers are exploited since they do not speak or understand local language	37	18	8	63
Discrimination between migrants & locals about food and accommodation	63	15	10	88
Total	318	202	80	600

Source: Primary Data

Note: SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, SWA - Some what agree

Hypotheses

H0 There is no significant variation in the working conditions data Reject

H1 There is significant variation in the working conditions data Accept

ANOVA Table

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	MS	F-ratio	5% F-limit (from the F-table)
Between sample	4722.1470	(3-1)=2	4722.1470/2 =2361.0735	2361.0735/ 130.3111 =18.118	F(2,15) =3.68
Withing Sample	1954.6668	(18-3)=15	1954.6668/15 =130.3111		
Total	6676.8138	18-1 = 17			

ANOVA Analysis

The above ANOVA table shows that the calculated value of F is 18.118 which is greater than TV = 3.68 @ 5% level of with d.f. being V1 = 2 and V2 = 15 fails to accept null hypotheses. Therefore it is concluded here that there exist significant variations in the data and respondents are aware of variations in the data and problems relating to hostel.