

Employment and Income Generation in Brick Industries: A Study in Rangia and Hajo Block of Kamrup(R) District of Assam

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Abstract: Brick making industry is one of the important industries in the unorganised sector mainly confined to rural and semi urban areas. The brick kiln sector is next to the agricultural sector in terms of employment to rural and semi urban workforce. It provides employment opportunities to both the local as well as migrant workers. Though the Kamrup (R) district is not industrially so developed, yet a good number of brick industries have been set up in different parts of the district. Therefore, in this paper, an attempt is made to study the employment absorption capacity of brick industry in Kamrup(R) district and also the income generating capacity of the industry to the workers.

Key Words: Brick Industry, Employment, Health, Income structure, Labour

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I. Introduction

Brick industries provide employment opportunities to a large number of workers. India is the second largest brick producer in the world, next only to China, and has more than 10,000 operating units, producing about 140 billion bricks annually. [1]. Not only the local workers, but also the migrant workers also get employment opportunities in brick industries as it is a labour intensive industry. The industry is generating sufficient number of employment opportunities to the unemployed and helping them in generating some income. G.C. Mathur (1990) in his paper "Employment potential of brick industry" stated that brick industry in India employed about 3 million rural people on a seasonal basis. Brick industry offered employment opportunities for the unemployed. A shortage of skilled labour impeded the development of the brick industry. So, to increase the industry's productivity, training facilities for unskilled labour were necessary. However, it was recommended that brick manufactures' associations organised themselves to undertake manpower planning and that welfare laws relating to industry were enforced. [2] The economic condition of migrated brick workers on the river Haora, West Tripura district, Tripura was studied by S. Das (2014). For collecting the data, 10 brick fields were selected. To know the economic condition, 100 brick workers were interviewed. The survey showed that the workers had to spend all most all their income consumption. They hardly had any saving. They bought ordinary food items from the market. Their diet was normal. As a whole, the study showed that the economic condition of the workers in the brick field was not at all satisfactory. [3]

II. Objective

The main objective of this paper is to study how the brick industries of Rangia and Hajo block of Kamrup(R) district are providing employment opportunities to the unemployed persons and thereby helping them in generating some income.

III. Methodology

The study is mainly carried out by taking primary data collection. Primary data is collected by preparing a structured questionnaire and visiting total 6 industries randomly from both Rangia and Hajo block of Kamrup(R) district, 3 industries from each block. The collected data are analyzed in tabular form.

IV. Area of the study

The study area covers 2 CD Blocks of Kamrup district. These are Rangia and Hajo CD blocks. Kamrup district is located at Western side of the state. Total geographical area of the district is 4345 sq.km viz. 5.5% of the total geographical area of the state. The state capital Dispur is situated in the district. The district is surrounded by Darrang and Marigaon district in the East, Nalbari and Goalpara district on the West, Udalguri and Baska district on the North and Meghalaya on the South. Kamrup district comprises two sub divisions namely, Guwahati and Rangia. [4] As per 2011 census, total population of Kamrup district is 15, 17,542 out of

which 7, 78,461 are male and 7, 39,081 are female. Total area of the district is 3,105 square k.m. Density of population is 489 person per square k.m. Sex ratio is 949 females per 1000 males. Average literacy rate is 75.55%, male literacy rate is 81.30% and that of female is 69.47%. [5]According to 2011 census, Out of the total population, 90.62% population of Kamrup district lives in rural areas of villages. Total population living in rural areas is 1,375,148 out of which 706,140 are male and 669,008 are female. Sex ratio in rural areas is 947 females per 1000 males. In rural areas of Kamrup district, literacy rate is 74.21%, male literacy rate is 80.10% and female literacy rate is 67.96%. [5]kamrup district has 12 Revenue Circles and 14 CD Blocks which comprises 1068 village including 31 uninhabited villages as per 2011 census. [5]. Out of the 14 CD Blocks, 2 Blocks from Kamrup rural are selected. The selected CD Blocks from Kamrup rural are- Rangia CD Block and Hajo CD Block. According to 2011 census, Rangia CD block has a total area of 186.98 square kilometers. Total population of this block is 132,000 out of which 68,583 are male and 63,417 are female. [5] According to 2011 census, total area of Hajo CD block is 251.17 square kilometers, total population is 193,980 out of which 99,920 are male and 94,060 are female. [5]

V. Results and Discussion

Regarding employment and income generation in brick industries, whatever results are obtained by conducting the survey are discussed below-

Table 1: Total number of workers engaged in selected industries in Rangia block of Kamrup(R) district:

Block	Name of the industry	Male	Female	Total
Rangia	GKK	180	120	300
	ABI	100	50	150
	MBI	80	40	120
Total		360	210	570

Source: Field survey

From the study, it is found that the selected industries of Rangia block is providing employment opportunities to 570 unemployed persons out of which 360 are male and remaining 210 are female.

Table 2: Total number of workers engaged in selected industries in Hajo block of Kamrup(R) district:

Block	Name of the industry	Male	Female	Total
Hajo	ASB	150	100	250
	PKB	90	50	140
	MKB	80	40	120
Total		320	190	510

Source: Field survey

In Hajo block, it is found that the total number of workers engaged in the 3 selected industries is 510. Among 510 workers, 320 are male and the remaining 190 are female.

VI. Workers Involved In Different Process Of Brick Making And Local Names Of The Workers Involved In Different Types Of Process

The whole task of brick making undergoes through different processes. These processes are discussed below-

1. Process of raw brick making:

The 1st step of brick making is mixing the clay with water properly and thereafter it is given into the shape of brick. Thereafter these raw bricks are arranged into open space for sun drying. Those who are involved into the process of raw brick making and arranging for sun drying are locally known as ‘Pathera’. Generally, the local workers are involved in this process. The Patheras work along with their families as one unit in the field. For preparing the raw bricks, the owners of the industry bring the clay from nearby places by tractor at Rs. 400-Rs.500 per tractor. This cost varies from district to district and even industry to industry depending upon the distance from where the clay is collected to the place where it is stored.

2. Carrying of sun dried bricks:

After 2-3 days, sun dried bricks are carried into the storage. Workers who are involved in carrying the sun dried bricks to the storage are locally known as ‘Kessareja’.

3. Arranging the green bricks in the line:

Green bricks are then arranged in the line in a proper manner in the kiln prior to firing. Workers who are involved in this process are known as ‘Loadmistry’ locally.

4. Covering the arranged bricks with material like sand:

After the bricks are arranged in the round in a proper manner, the arranged bricks are covered with the material like sand. Those workers who are involved in this process are known as ‘Rabbishman’ locally.

5. Firing of green bricks:

The most important task of brick making is the firing of green bricks. This task is performed basically by the workers from Bihar, West Bangle etc. Workers involved in the task are locally known as ‘Fireman’.

6. Carrying the fired bricks to the storage:

The last process of brick making is carrying the fired bricks to the storage for future sale. Workers involved in this process are locally known as ‘Pakkareja’ or ‘Nikashi’.

Table 3: Engagement of workers in different types of works in Rangia block of Kamrup(R) district:

Block	Types of works	Local name of the workers	Number of workers engaged in selected industries			Mode of payment
			GKK	ABI	MBI	
Rangia	Preparing raw bricks	Pathera	200	100	75	Per 1000 of bricks
	Carrying the sun dried bricks into the storage	Kessareja	60	22	18	Per 1000 of bricks
	Arranging the bricks in the line	Loadermistry	8	6	5	Monthly
	Covering the arranged bricks with material like sand	Rabbishman	5	4	3	Monthly
	Supplying coal for firing bricks from the coal storage	Coylaman	3	2	2	Monthly
	Firing of bricks	Fireman	7	6	5	Monthly
	Opening the stack of bricks and carrying the ready bricks for storage	Pakkareja	17	10	12	Per 1000 of bricks or Per line

Source: Field survey

Table 4: Engagement of workers in different types of works in Hajo block of Kamrup(R) district:

Block	Types of works	Local name of the worker	Number of workers engaged in selected industries			Mode of payment
			ASB	PKB	MKB	
Hajo	Preparing raw bricks	Pathera	170	80	70	Per 1000 bricks
	Carrying the sun dried bricks into the storage	Kessareja	40	20	18	Per 1000 bricks
	Arranging the bricks in the line	Loadmistry	6	6	5	Monthly
	Covering the arranged bricks with material like sand	Rabbishman	4	3	3	Monthly
	Supplying coal for firing bricks from the coal storage	Coylaman	2	2	2	Monthly
	Firing of bricks	Fireman	6	4	5	Monthly
	Opening the stack of bricks and carrying the ready bricks for storage	Pakkareja	22	25	17	Per 1000 of bricks or Per line

Source: Field survey

VII. Payment structure of the workers in Brick industry

From the survey, it is found that the payments made to the workers are not uniform at all. The structure of payments differs from district to district, from block to block and even from industry to industry within the same block. However regarding the payment structure of the women workers, from the survey it is also found that though the women workers are involved in different types of works and help the male partners, women are not provided separately. Payments to the women workers are combined with their male partners.

Table 5: Structure of payments made to the workers in different types of works in 3 selected industries of Rangia block:

Block	Types of works	Local name	Payment structure	Average wage
Rangia	Preparing raw bricks	Pathera	Rs400 - Rs 500 per 1000 bricks	Rs. 450 per 1000 bricks
	Carrying the sun dried bricks into the storage	Kessareja	Rs150 –Rs200 per 1000 brick	Rs. 175 per 1000 bricks
	Arranging the bricks in the line	Loadmistry or Nikashi	Rs10000 -Rs 12000 monthly	Rs. 11000 monthly
	Covering the arranged bricks with material like sand	Rabbishman	Rs 9000- Rs 10000 monthly	Rs. 9500
	Supplying coal for firing bricks from the coal storage	Coylaman	Rs. 8000- Rs. 10000 monthly	Rs. 9000 monthly
	Firing of bricks	Fireman	Rs. 12000- Rs. 15000 monthly	Rs. 13500 monthly
	Opening the stacks of bricks and carrying the ready bricks for storage	Pakkareja	Rs.120-Rs.150 per 1000	Rs. 135 per 1000

Source: Field Survey

From the above table, it is clear that the average wages provided to the ‘pathera’ in all the 3 selected industries in Rangia block is Rs. 450 per 1000 bricks, Rs. 175 per 1000 bricks to the ‘Kessareja’, Rs. 11000 monthly to the ‘Loadmistry’, Rs. 9500 monthly to the ‘Rabbishman’, Rs. 9000 monthly to the ‘Coylaman’, Rs. 13500 monthly to the ‘Fireman’ and Rs. 135 per 1000 bricks to the ‘Pakkareja’.

Table 6: Structure of payments made to the workers in different types of works in 3 selected industries of Hajo block:

Block	Types of works	Local name	Payment structure	Average wage
Chenga	Preparing raw bricks	Pathera	Rs 450- Rs550 per 1000	Rs. 500 per 1000
	Carrying the sun dried bricks into the storage	Kessareja	Rs 130-Rs200 per 1000 brick	Rs. 165 per 1000 bricks
	Arranging the bricks in the line	Loadmistry or Nikashi	Rs 9000-Rs 10000 monthly	Rs. 9500 monthly
	Covering the arranged bricks with material like sand	Rabbishman	Rs 8000- Rs 10000 monthly	Rs. 9000 monthly
	Supplying coal for firing bricks from the coal storage	Coylaman	Rs. 8000- Rs. 10000 monyhly	Rs.9000 monthly
	Firing of bricks	Fireman	Rs. 10000- Rs. 12000	Rs.11000 monthly
	Opening the stacks of bricks and carrying the ready bricks for storage	Pakkareja	Rs.120- Rs.140 per 1000	Rs. 130 per 1000

Source: Field Survey

From the above table, it is clear that the average wages provided to the ‘pathera’ in all the 3 selected industries in Hajo block is Rs. 500 per 1000 bricks, Rs. 165 per 1000 bricks to the ‘Kessareja’, Rs. 9500 monthly to the ‘Loadmistry’, Rs. 9000 monthly to the ‘Rabbishman’, Rs. 9000 monthly to the ‘Coylaman’, Rs. 11000 monthly to the ‘Fireman’ and Rs. 135 per 1000 bricks to the ‘Pakkareja’.

VIII. Working conditions of the workers

In brick industries, it is found that working hours of the workers are very long. They start working in the field from morning 6 A.M. They work from 6 A.M to 9 A.M. After 9 o clock, they take rest for 1 hour and continue the work from 10A.M to 12 P.M. Thereafter they take rest from 12 to 2 P.M In this time; they take their meal and star the work from 2 to 5 P.M. Those workers who are involved in firing the bricks, they continue their work after 5 P.M also. So, in brick industries, working hour is found to be very long and it is because of the continuous working in the field, workers suffer from various health related problems such as eye problem, headache, back pain, neck pain, skin problem, respiratory disorders and so on.However, it is also found that the environment around which the workers work is very dusty and unhygienic. Generally, the migrant workers live in the industry site. They are constructed the small huts by the owners which do not have any facilities like electricity, proper drinking water, proper bathrooms etc.

IX. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the brick industries are generating sufficient employment opportunities to a large number of unemployed persons and also helping them in generating some income. But in the name of earning, the workers are neglecting their health. Their health condition is deteriorating. As labour is the most important aspect of brick industry, so government should also take each and every possible step for the well being of the labour class.

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