

## **An Economic Analysis Of Seasonal Migration Workers In Brick Kiln Industry, Tamilnadu,**

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper examines the an economic analysis of seasonal migrant workers in brick kiln industry Tamil Nadu as a case study to highlight the extreme vulnerability of circular migrants workers while stressing the diversity of circulation. Unemployment is the major cause of economic development and it is too severe in the rural are and urban areas. Agriculture is also affected due to monsoon failure and various economic factors. The people migrate to various places for searching their livelihood and to clear all their debts. The people migrate for to brick kiln industry for their survival and to overcome indebtedness. In brick kiln industry is only half season 8- 9 month (November to July). The Brick kiln industry both male and female is engage in works. Before starting the works in brick industry, majority of the workers get advance amount from the employers to clear all their debts. Thereafter, they start working in the brick industry and face various issues. In order to overcome their debts in brick industry, they work beyond the usual work hours more than 12 to 16 hours wherein they undermine the poor living arrangements provided. In particular, the female workers are highly affected due various health hazards, the present study analyses the migrant workers of brick kiln industry in, Tamil Nadu.

**Keywords:** brick kiln, migration, debt bondage, economic condition, working condition

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### **I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT PROBLEM**

In India Unemployment is the major cause of economic development and it is too severe in the rural areas. Agriculture is also affected due to monsoon failure and various economic factors. The people migrate to various places for searching their livelihood and to clear all their debts. The present study emerges with all those above mentioned and the people migrate for to brick kiln industry for their survival and to overcome indebtedness. In brick kiln industry is seasonal work; both male and female are engage in works. Before starting the works in brick industry, majority of the workers get advance amount from the employers to clear all their debts. Thereafter, they start working in the brick industry and face various issues. In order to overcome their debts in brick industry, they work beyond the usual work hours wherein they undermine the poor living arrangements provided. In particular, the female workers are highly affected due various health hazards and indebtedness rise as a vicious circle and trap them under bondage. The present study analyses the seasonal migrant workers of brick kiln industry in, Tamil Nadu.

### **II. SEASONAL MIGRATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE BRICK KILN WORKERS**

Reasons for migration, socio-economic status of migrated brick kiln workers and selection of brick kiln industry as a source of livelihood are critically reviewed and presented below.

John and Nasir (1998) studied the migrant labour in the brick kilns of Punjab. Brick kiln workers in Punjab are from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and they are seasonal migrants as individual, family and groups from a place. From the study, the workers do not have any identity or contracts registered with the authority. The workers face problem and they are quite often enquired by the police and they face problem from local *gundas*. They suffer due to health problems and enough health amenities are not provided by the employer. The report that migration is due to local debt and advance amount from the contractors pushes them into bondage. As a result, they are forced under the debt trap and suffer years to gather.

Ravi and Sasikumar (2003) explains the internal and external migration and their impact on poverty reduction in different part of India. In case of internal migration, this paper has used the Survey of National Council of Rural Labour data base. According to the data base, there were about 10 million periodic migrants in the rural areas only. Of the 10 million, 4.5 million were inter-state migrants and their major source of

employments are brick kilns, quarries and construction sites. Due to mass migration towards the brick kiln and other industries migrants were getting lower wage rate and they were worked hard.

Naresh Kumar and Sidhu (2005) tried to identify the push and pull factors which influence workers' inter-state migration according to the viewpoints of workers. In Punjab, major brick kiln industrial region which comprises three district and 25 brick kilns were covered by survey with 200 workers. It identified that industrial development, employment opportunities and higher wages are the major attracting or pull factor towards Punjab. On other side, low development, agricultural failure, poverty in their native place were the dominant push factors for migration towards Punjab. In addition to the above mentioned facts, the role of economic factors was vital to led the migration than non-economic parameters. However, study recommended that the Govt. has to make steps to absorb the brick kiln workers to other sectors.

Shah (2006) has analyzed the seasonal migration from Jharkhand to the brick kilns of other States in India. The author expresses that extreme poverty in rural areas has forced the workers to move away from their state. Mostly they migrate for six months during the summer at the time of off-season. The workers feel that the migration is a temporary solution to their economic problems.

Guérin Isabelle et al (2007) analyzed brick kiln labours in Chennai through case study. For the purpose of case study, 20 focus group discussions were conducted among the laborers and brick kiln owners during 2004. The problems of poverty and unemployment problems in their native place forced the workers to migrate and select the brick kiln as major source of employment. After joined in the brick kiln, the workers slightly relieved from the problems hail to their native place but their position in brick kiln is miserable in terms of social and economic outcomes.

Aajeevika Bureau and ODI (2008) tried to understand the situation of migrated brick kiln workers form Kotra, south Rajasthan. This has selected three villages from kotra block based on the incidence of migration. There were primary data collection selected male and female labours and FGDs were also conducted among the workers and owners. Outcome of the study reveals that there were lot of opportunities for accidents and higher level chances for health problems. Therefore, interventions are required in the area of health, accommodation and training and placement.

Kainth and Guru Arjan (2010) studies push and pull factors of migration with special reference to brick kiln migrant worker in Panjab. From different part of Panjab state, 200 respondents were randomly selected and surveyed with comprehensive interview schedule. Results of the survey revealed that the migrated workers social and economic status comparatively better than their native place and the workers wage rate was satisfactory and more or less close to the Govt.'s minimum wage act.

Guérin Isabelle et al (2012) examine the brick kiln industry in Tamil Nadu with special focus on deficit in decent work and migrant workers. This used both qualitative and quantitative data for the study purpose. It underlines the great susceptibility of circular migrants while stressing the variety of flow networks and how these are moulded by and opens of dissimilar eco-type schemes and village economies. It also displays how owners and recruiters exploit many different forms of agrarian failure, and how they stimulus and take advantage of workers' constraints, expectations and aspirations.

Roy Swapan Kumar (2012) analyzed the socio-economic Conditions of women workers in some selected brick kilns in West Bengal. Women workers come from Hindu, Muslim and Christian families most of them belong to scheduled tribe community. Migrant workers are large in number. Family sizes of them are large. Annual family incomes of the workingwomen are not adequate to maintain for their livelihood. Most of the workers live in huts. Women workers work in the kilns due to severe poverty. They are involved in brick carrying and brick making activities. Majority of the women workers claim for wage hike as the wage they earn is not sufficient to feed the members of their families. Workingwomen generally take advance from brick kiln owners. The paper suggests that since the brick kiln workers live in poverty, the government has to bring and inform about different poverty alleviation programmes adopted by the Government from time to time. Due to lack of information and ignorance, they suffer from poverty.

Das Rabin (2013) has analyzed the socio-economic conditions of female workers in brick kilns Khejuri CD Blocks in Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. The author found that poverty of the workers has put them under brick kiln industry. The female workers report that they are exploited at the work place and discrimination could be seen among the male and female workers. Male workers enjoy more freedom and privileges while female are not attained with. Most of the workers and their children's are illiterate since they are migrants.

Santha and Athena (2013) analyzed the socioeconomic status of brick workers in Coimbatore. The living conditions of the brick workers are very basic and shanty-like. There is a need to provide adequate housing facilities at the brick kilns. By increasing the access to microfinance, brick workers can be empowered and their exploitation can be avoided. There is a need to provide some useful skills to the women like tailoring, needlecraft, poultry raising and dairy farming which can supplement their income especially during off season. Worker friendly technology can be introduced to reduce the hardships associated with brick work. The growth in India's economy and population, coupled with urbanization, has resulted in an increasing demand for

residential, commercial, industrial and public buildings as well as other physical infrastructure. Building construction in India is estimated to grow at a rate of 6.6 per cent per year between 2005 and 2030. The brick production process is mainly based on manual labour. One of the special features of the brick kiln workers is that they may be one of the most vulnerable and excluded workers-communities of Indian society. Hence, there is an urgent need for social concern to frame measures to improve the living and working condition of brick kiln workers for inclusive growth.

Das Mayuree (2014) analyzed the inter-relationship between employment, income generation and brick kiln industry in Barpeta Dt. of Assam. This study has used both primary and secondary data sources. For the primary data collection, 90 workers were randomly surveyed from 3 brick kiln industries of Mandia Block of Barpeta Dt. of Assam. Results and discussion of the paper explains that the brick kiln is source of large amount of employment opportunities and assisting them in making income, but workers are still lagging behind in few areas. Workers health status was worsening and their living condition is not at all inspiring etc. So the Govt. as well as the NGOs necessity pay care for the wellbeing of labour class.

### **III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The studies about brick kiln workers revealed that the poverty, vulnerability, family and social expenditures forced the rural human resources to work under the bondage condition. Few of the studies explores that the local social pressures and economic motivation thrust forces the migration of rural manpower towards brick kiln work (Shah, 2006 and Guerin et al., 2009). The economic motivation and local societal pressures forces the migration of labor force to the brick kiln industry through the advance payment. Further, they received the loans from the brick kiln owner for their family and societal expenditures (marriage and other functions). In this context, low wage, unlimited work hours and poor standard of living pays the serious health problems to workers and unfavorably affect the loan repayment capacity of the brick kiln workers. It put the brick kiln workers and their family into the line of indebtedness and debt bondage. It has been underlined by few of the empirical studies (Guerin et al., 2012).

#### **Objectives**

1. To study on seasonal migration and the purpose of selecting brick kiln industry in Tamilnadu.

### **IV. METHODOLOGY**

In Tamil Nadu, there are nearly 3000 brick kilns employing around 3 lakhs workers. These workers migrate either within the district or state in order to earn their livelihood by working in brick kilns from November- July. They usually stay in their work places for 7 to 9 months every year. Around 3000 brick kilns are located in Tamilnadu state, Thiruvallure Kanchipuram, Thiruvannamalai, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Dindugal and Thirunalvelly and approximately 3 lakhs workers are employed in these brick kilns. The Studies indicates that more than 90% of the migrate workers in brick kilns in Tamilnadu.

#### **Brick kilns**

In brick kiln industry which also employs large numbers of poor people circular migrants. There are 50,000 brick kilns all over India, Brick-kiln workers often migrate with their, the number of brick kiln workers in India an agent who gives the family in the village a wage advance of Rs 20-50,000. This is a substantial piece sum and is wrongly perceived by the workers and their families as a cheap loan because there is not interest. The money has to be paid back through work and the wages paid are well below the legal minimum effectively making the arrangement a kind of debt-bondage. The entire family comprising the husband, wife and children live on the site and work as one unit for the full season. The overall situation is exploitative as everything necessary to manage daily needs is sold by the employers and agents (at higher rates than the market) on credit and subsequently deducted from actual wages. Each couple earns between Rs 70-130 a day and many are cheated out of their full payment. They spend heavily on country liquor and usually come home with a saving of not more than Rs.1000- 2000 at the end of the season. Some are perpetually in debt and migrate again the following year so that they can get a lump sum to repay outstanding debts. This kind of migration appears to be the domain of the poorest migrants. Two streams of brick kiln workers are discussed here: the migration of tribals from Western Orissa and the migration of musahars in Bihar. While both involve inter-state migrants they differ in the level

#### **Seasonal Migration**

Seasonal Migration for brick kiln workers is from November to June Brick kilns work usually begins every year after Deepwali, in the month of November-December, and continues till before the onset of the monsoon in June. A large group of people those migrate from their remote village in search of employment. The factors that determines the physical mobility is unemployment, debt and better wage.

Migrants work on a few brick kilns, coming back home after work is over at one brick kiln, staying for some time at home and then again move to another brick kiln. When the laborers return home, in between the brick production cycles or after “retiring”, they either till their lands or take up other short-term wage employment locally or migrate for short duration to other brick kilns.

**1. Reasons of Migration**

Seasonal migration has long been seen as a practice in the rural part of the society as a contingency livelihood option. There were number of reasons behind migration which compelled

**Economic Reasons**

1. Poverty and poor economic conditions
2. Unemployment in agricultural
3. Alternative job opportunities during agriculturally lean season
4. Irregularity of payment in MGNREGA
5. Indebtedness
6. Comparatively high wages at brick kilns particularly in Tamilnadu

**Economic condition**

The economic conditions most of the workers of brick kilns are migrants and they belong to deprived community. Poverty is the major cause of brick kiln workers and their poor economic status forces them to work by eliminating other drawbacks of brick kiln industries such as poor environment and health hazards.

**Economic Factor**

The economic factors of indicate that migration is primarily motivated by economic factors. In large number of developing countries, and under developing countries, low agricultural income, agricultural unemployment and underemployment are considered basic factors pushing the migrant workers job opportunities. The rural people affected to as one of the important reasons of poverty and rural out migration. Thus, almost all studies analysis that most of the migrants have moved in search of better economic opportunities. . The basic economic factors which motivate migration may be further classified as ‘Push Factors’ and ‘Pull Factors’. The people migrate in brick kilns.

**The push factors**

The economically push factor a person, due to different reasons, to leave that the people movement of one place and go to some other place. For instance, low productivity, unemployment and sundered elopement, poor economic conditions, lack of opportunities for advancement, exhaustion of natural resources and natural calamities may compel people to leave their native place in search of better economic opportunities.

**The Pull factors**

The pull factor refers to those factors which attract the migrants to an area, such as, opportunities for better employment, higher wages, facilities, better working conditions. The brick kiln industry for seasonal work sector.

**Working condition**

Poverty is the major cause of brick kiln workers leads to advance loan from the employer and by a long tenures relationship, which turn as forced women workers. All categories of brick kiln workers said they work between 12 and 14 hours. The brick kiln workers has to work for 12 to 14 hours a day and they have to live in temporary sheds, which does not have proper drainage, toilet/bath rooms and ventilation. Even for drinking water they have to walk miles and the working conditions are very tough and they face various health

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**Brick kiln Working Hours Schedule**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Working condition</b>
1 to 3 pm	Preparation of clay
4 to 6 pm	Cleaning of ground
10 to 7 am	Molding
9 to 11 am	Arranging
Separate work	Lording
Separate work	Firing of bricks

Source; of Primary Data

**Wage status of workers**

The wages are paid after weakly Sunday. In case of brick making or manager the wage are given to the family head. For example, brick making of 1000 Bricks, get for money Rs.400 ,Loaders/unloaders 10000 Bricks, get money Rs.500 ,Bullock driver and Tractor driver 10000 bricks arranged get for money Rs.600&650And final Firemen workers for get money Rs700. The brick kiln industry wage structure and get for money then following show Table.

**Brick kiln Working Wage Schedule**

Employment status	Weekly wages in
Molders of bricks	400/1000(bricks)
Loaders/un loaders	500/10000(bricks)
Bullock cart driver	600/10000(bricks)
Tractor driver	650/10000(bricks)
Firemen	700

Sources of field work & NGO Report

**V. CONCLUSION**

The brick kiln industry is only seasonal work. Poverty is the major cause of migrate to various places for searching their livelihood and to clear all their debts. Brick kiln workers that push them to migrate and work under poor working conditions. After entering into the brick kiln industries, the economic status of the workers does not change due to their poor economic background. To overcome the economic problems, get advance amount from the employer makes them as bonded labor. As a result, the brick kiln workers fall into the trap of vicious circle of low wage, poor health and indebtedness and ultimately bondage.

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