

Perceptions of Mining Workers: Lessons from Odisha

Niranjan Patra

Lecturer (Group-A), Dept. of Economics, M H D Mahavidyalaya, Chhatia, Odisha, India,

Dr. Gitanjali Panda

Asst. Professor, PG Dept. of Social Science, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore, Odisha, India
&

Dr. Sanjib Kumar Majhi

Asst. Professor, PG Dept. of Social Science, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore, Odisha, India

Abstract

Minerals constitute a major natural resource for acceleration of economic development of a country. Odisha is one of the mineral rich states of the country having a special distinction in the country's overall mining sector. The objectives of this paper are to know the demographic characteristics of mining workers and also to examine the perceptions, social integration and cohesion of mining workers. The present research methodology is based on both primary as well as secondary data. It is found that among 722 respondents of mining workers sample taken in Jajpur and Kheonjar districts of Odisha, majority 82.50 percent are males and 17.50 percent are females. Again, the sample distribution of participants with respect to marital status of mining workers, out of the total respondents, majorities are married (90.20 per cent) and few are unmarried (9.80 per cent). The results of information related to important problems faced by the mining workers in Jajpur and Kheonjar district of Odisha. Majority issues are coming related to soil erosion (43.20 per cent) and then coming road transport (38.50 per cent), poor road work (36.10 percent) and pollution (33.80 per cent) respectively. Further, issues are coming related to lack of proper electricity in the local areas (26.60 per cent) and employment (16.60 per cent). It is also found that from social integration and cohesion among mining workers, majority of the respondents' response is coming positive i.e. yes (99 per cent). This reveals that there is a social integration among mining workers in their daily life and livelihood. The mining industry is playing a major role in export promotion as well as earning a huge amount of foreign exchange

Key Words: Mining, Perception, Workers

Date of Submission: 09-02-2022

Date of Acceptance: 23-02-2022

I. INTRODUCTION:

Minerals constitute a major natural resource for acceleration of economic development of a country. The rapid industrialization and infrastructure development has resulted in increased demand and large-scale exploitation of the mineral resources. So exploration of minerals as vital raw material for infrastructure, capital goods and basic industries, emphasizes the need for adoption and use of scientific methods for maximizing mineral extraction and prospecting for mining, beneficiation and economic utilization. It has also identified key priority areas such as enhancing resource and reserve base through exploration and internal acquisition, reducing permit delays, putting in place core enablers infrastructure, human capital, and technology, ensuring sustainable mining and sustainable development around mining; emphasis has been laid on creating information, education and communication strategy to achieve the goal.

Odisha is one of the mineral rich states of the country having a special distinction in the country's overall mining sector. It has also attracted large scale private investments to mining sector in last two decades. Keeping this in view, the article examines the significance of mining for the socio-economic development of mining workers working in Keonjhar and Jajpur district of Odisha.

For a state like Odisha endowed with wide variety of valuable ores and minerals in abundant quantity, systematic and planned development of the mineral resources is essential for economic growth of the state. Odisha continues to be one of the industrially backward states despite its vast natural resources. Though the district under study is rich in mineral and forest resources there is no major large-scale industry.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

No doubt development ventures go hand-in-hand with environmental impact. On the other hand the outcome in the context of benefit can be measured much before the initiation of any project. Some preliminary alertness such as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) can be anticipated as an extent for feasible variations in environment. The mechanization process of opencast mining has a great hand for the deterioration of environmental quality (Ghose & Majee, 2000).

As a result, the local resources such as land, water, livelihood etc. are encountering varied faces of transformation (Bury, 2002)

From the perspective of the mining industries, their thrust is to robustly carry out their monopoly activities without having any attention towards the primitive dwellers of the land. No doubt, mining take a step forward to empower the project affected communities by providing circumstances to avail employment opportunities, alleviated poverty, established new and planned connecting roads, school buildings etc. At the same time, mining also threatened the dominion of the indigenous communities (Mishra, 2012; Turton, 2009).

The study of the social order will be imperfect without paying any attention towards the status and position of its worker. Worker holds significant position all through the archives of Indian history. But with the passage of time a visible decline of her status and position was marked during medieval and modern era (Nandal & Rajnish, 2014).

Mineral resources are considered as the prime prosperity of Odisha. The state has been extraordinarily amplified with an array of rich mineral resources like bauxite, china clay, chromite, minerals, dolomite, fireclay, graphite, gemstones, iron ore, limestone, manganese ore, mineral sand, nickel ore, quartz and quartzite and many more. The richness of these mineral reserves is proving to be beneficial for the industrial development of the state. However, the mining and quarrying sector is not only helping for the growth of GSDP but it also has its credit of generating massive amount of both direct and indirect employment (OES, 2015).

Objectives:

The objectives of this study are:

- (i) To know the demographic characteristics of mining workers.
- (ii) To examine the perceptions of mining workers.
- (iii) To analyse the social integration and cohesion of mining workers.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present research methodology is based on both primary as well as secondary data. The field survey for the present study has been carried out during January 2019 to July 2019 in and around the villages of the mining area of Keonjhar and Jajpur distinct of Odisha. The primary data for this research work has been collected using structured questionnaire from 10 villages from the taken two districts comparing 250 households and 722 respondents. The data is mainly based on random sampling technique. Moreover, the research design followed for this study is exploratory and descriptive in nature. Again, the data is analyzed in both actual and percentage figures. The statistical tools like table, figure, histogram etc. are used for analyzing data.

1. Analysis and Results of Data:

(a) **The demographic characteristic of mining workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha is as follows:**

(i) Gender wise Mining Workers:

The gender wise mining worker of Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha is given in figure-1.

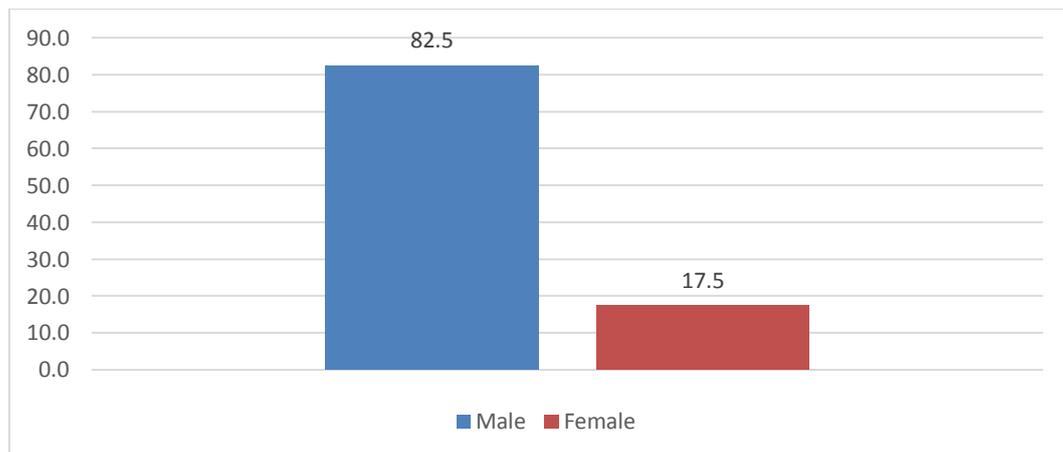


Figure-1: Gender of the respondents (N=722)

Source: Primary data

Figure -1 shows gender-wise distribution of participants. Among 722 respondents of mining workers sample taken in Jajpur and Kheonjar districts of Odisha, majority 82.50 percent are males and 17.50 percent are females.

(ii) Marital Status of Mining Workers:

The marital status of mining workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha is depicted in figure – 2.

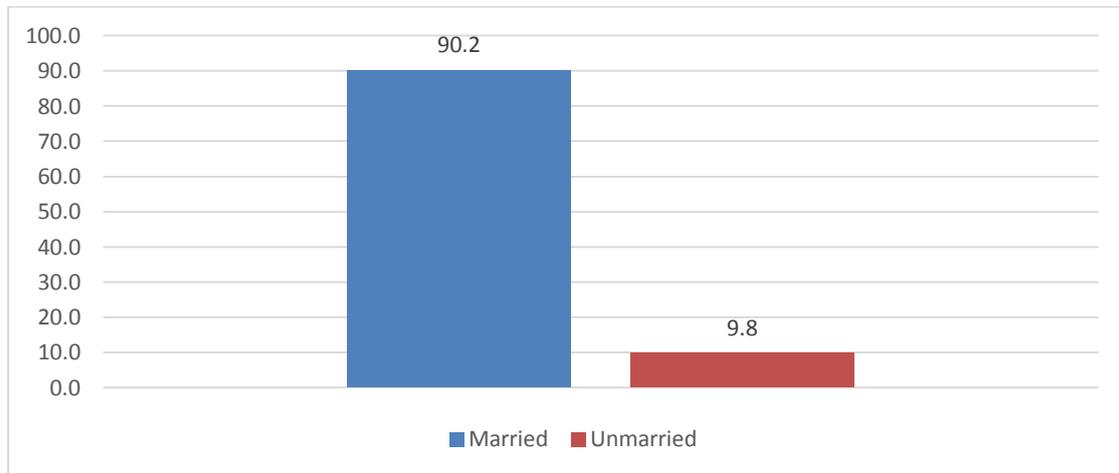


Figure-2: Marital Status of the respondents (N=722)\

Source: Primary data

The above figure - 2 shows the sample distribution of participants with respect to marital status of mining workers. Out of the total respondents, majorities are married (90.20 per cent) and few are unmarried (9.80 per cent).

(iii) Age Composition of Mining Workers:

The age composition of mining workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha is shown in figure-3.

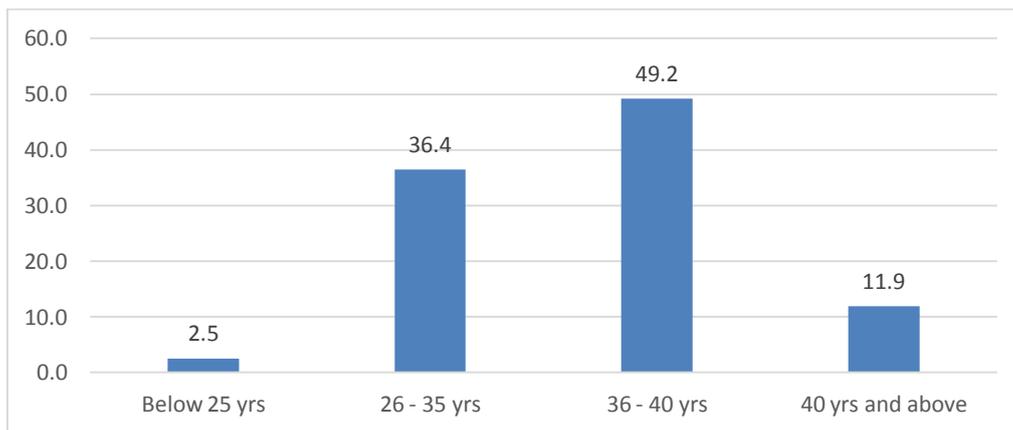


Figure-3: Age of the respondents (N=722)

Source: Primary data

With respect to age of the participants as shown in figure -3, majority of mining workers belongs to 36 to 40 yrs of age (49.20 percent) and then coming 26 to 35yrs age (36.40 percent). Few of the respondents are coming in the age group of 40 years and above (11.90 per cent) and below 25 years (2.50 per cent).

(iv) Educational Qualification of Mining Workers: The educational qualification of mining workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha is found in figure-4

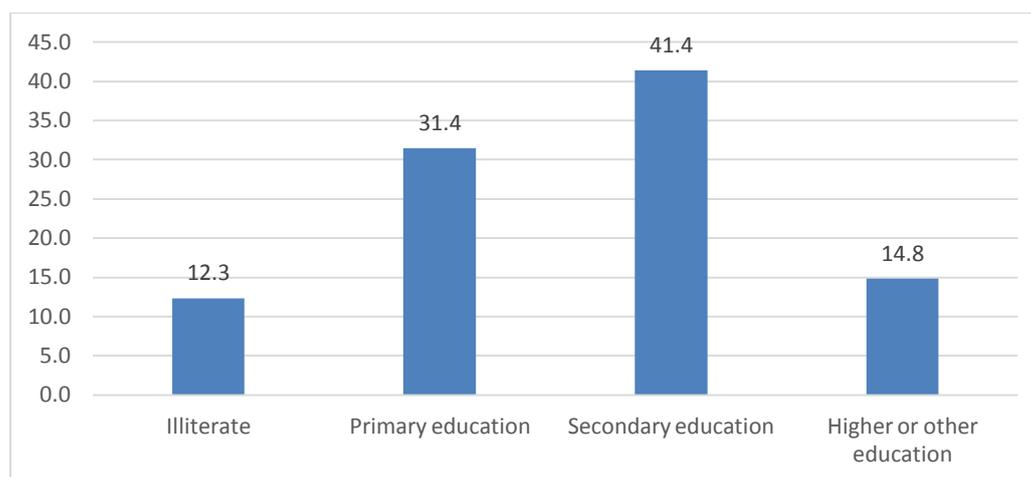


Figure-4 Educational qualification (N=722)
Source: Primary data

In educational qualification distribution of mining workers as shown in figure -4, majority of workers are having secondary education (41.40 per cent) and then coming having primary education (31.40 per cent). Few of the respondents are having higher education (14.80 per cent) and illiterate (12.30 per cent).

(b) Perceptions of Mining Workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar District of Odisha:

Table-1: Perceptions of Mining Workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar District of Odisha

Sl.	Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	Fear of random blasting	17	2.4	2.4
2	Deforestation	52	7.2	9.6
3	Employment	51	7.1	16.6
4	Lack of Proper Electricity	72	10.0	26.6
5	Pollution	52	7.2	33.8
6	Poor Road Work	17	2.4	36.1
7	Road transport	17	2.4	38.5
8	Soil erosion	34	4.7	43.2
9	Water issues	410	56.8	100.0
Total		722	100.0	

Source: Primary data

The table -1 shows the results of information related to important problems faced by the mining workers in Jajpur and Kheonjar district of Odisha. Majority issues are coming related to soil erosion (43.20 per cent) and then coming road transport (38.50 per cent), poor road work (36.10 percent) and pollution (33.80 per cent) respectively. Further, issues are coming related to lack of proper electricity in the local areas (26.60 per cent) and employment (16.60 per cent).

(c) Social Integration and Cohesion of Mining Workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha:

The social integration and cohesion of mining workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha is given in table-2.

Table-2: Social Integration and Cohesion of Mining Workers in Jajpur and Keonjhar district of Odisha

Sl.	Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	Yes	713	99.0	99.0
2	No	9	1.0	100
Total		722	100.0	

Source: Primary data

Regarding Social integration and Cohesion among mining workers, majority of the respondents' response is coming positive i.e. yes (99 per cent). This reveals, there is a social integration among mining workers in their daily life and livelihood.

IV. FINDINGS:

From the above analysis, it is found that among 722 respondents of mining workers sample taken in Jajpur and Kheonjar districts of Odisha, majority 82.50 percent are males and 17.50 percent are females. Again, the sample distribution of participants with respect to marital status of mining workers, out of the total respondents, majorities are married (90.20 per cent) and few are unmarried (9.80 per cent). Majority of mining workers belongs to 36 to 40 yrs of age (49.20 percent) and then coming 26 to 35 yrs age (36.40 percent). Few of the respondents are coming in the age group of 40 years and above (11.90 per cent) and below 25 years (2.50 per cent) whereas from the educational qualification distribution of mining workers point of view, majority of workers are having secondary education (41.40 per cent) and then coming having primary education (31.40 per cent). Few of the respondents are having higher education (14.80 per cent) and illiterate (12.30 per cent). The results of information related to important problems faced by the mining workers in Jajpur and Kheonjar district of Odisha. Majority issues are coming related to soil erosion (43.20 per cent) and then coming road transport (38.50 per cent), poor road work (36.10 percent) and pollution (33.80 per cent) respectively. Further, issues are coming related to lack of proper electricity in the local areas (26.60 per cent) and employment (16.60 per cent). It is also found that from social integration and cohesion among mining workers, majority of the respondents' response is coming positive i.e. yes (99 per cent). This reveals that there is a social integration among mining workers in their daily life and livelihood.

V. CONCLUSION:

It is concluded that mining sector occupies a significant role in the context of industrial development of the state and the country as a whole. Large number of basic heavy and strategic like iron, steel and railways obtain their raw materials from mining industry. The industrial scene of Odisha is dominated by a large number of mineral based industries. The mining industry is playing a major role in export promotion as well as earning a huge amount of foreign exchange.

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Niranjan Patra, et. al. "Perceptions of Mining Workers: Lessons from Odisha." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 27(02), 2022, pp. 32-36.