

Socio-Economic Status of Daily Wage Earners in Cuddalore Town

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Abstract

Daily wage earners whose earnings are the primary sources of support for dependents. Unemployment is one of the most crucial problems in India especially Tamil Nadu. In the present scenario, the modern technology has considerably grown in the field of education, communication, transports, medical, engineering, space, administration. However, there is a high unemployment problems in cuddalore town due to poverty and poor education. 2011 censuses reveals that the cuddalore district scored 19th rank in education, it reflects the poor educational status in cuddalore district compared to other states of Tamil Nadu. Majority of the population has been engaged in unorganized sectors as daily wage earners in cuddalore district. The daily wage earners include agricultural labourers, construction laborers, casual labour, meat cleaning worker, fish cleaning workers, porter, sweepers, loading and unloading workers, shop workers, luggage carriers and auto rickshaw drivers in cuddalore town. This study used descriptive design and the 50 samples were collected by using purposive quota sampling. The data were analyzed and presented in the form of single frequency tables, cross tables and charts etc. The study was an attempt to find out the relationship between types of daily wage and saving habits, work satisfaction and future plan for family. The study contributed some of suggestions to respondents, Government, NGO and social workers towards better socio-economic upliftment of daily wage earners in cuddalore town.

Key words: Daily wage earners

Introduction

Daily wage earners whose earnings are the primary sources of support for dependents. Unemployment is one of the most crucial problems in India especially Tamil Nadu. In the present scenario, the modern technology has considerably grown in the field of education, communication, transports, medical, engineering, space, administration.

However, there is a high unemployment problems in cuddalore town due to poverty and poor education. 2011 censuses reveals that the cuddalore district scored 19th rank in education,

it reflects the poor educational status in cuddalore district compared to other states of Tamil Nadu. Majority of the population has been engaged in unorganized sectors as daily wage earners in cuddalore district. The daily wage earners include agricultural labourers, construction laborers, casual labour, meat cleaning worker, fish cleaning workers, porter, sweepers, loading and unloading workers, shop workers, luggage carriers and auto rickshaw drivers in cuddalore town. Daily wage earners are coming from poor families of nearby rural area and urban areas of cuddalore town. They are below poverty line, with no formal education, less awareness and hence, there is no regular job and income. They unable to meet all the needs of the family with the income even though they run their family through this small income. The researcher has observed many such people in cuddalore town and is interested in conducting a scientific study on the daily wage earners in cuddalore town.

Statement of the Problem

In cuddalore town, the daily wage earners are is different categories, which include agriculture cooli workers, auto rickshaw drivers, loading and unloading workers, construction workers, meat cleaning workers, fish cleaning workers, sales assistance in shop etc. There are also people who come from the neighbouring village to the town looking for a job. Though they earn the wage yet there are times when they do not work due to various natural calamities, strike, bandh etc. The daily wage earners are not satisfied with their job due to poor wage, heavy work and poor resting time. The researcher wanted to find out answers to the following research questions. What is the wage work in which the daily wage earners are engaged?,

What are the saving problems of the daily wage earners?, What is their level of satisfaction in their work?, An attempt has been made through this study to get further knowledge on the above-mentioned questions.

Review of Literature

Concept and Meaning of Daily wage earners: The Oxford Dictionary defines work as an expenditure of energy, striving application of effort to some purpose.

Labour / Occupation: It refers to the work with which an individual becomes completely engaged. All the human activities that involve expenditure of energy can't be treated as work. Any activity done towards earning money is defined as occupation. Therefore, the human activity directed to obtaining the sources of sustenance of their life is labour.

Professional Occupation: The occupation, which provides some kind of self-identification and satisfaction. Teaching, contracting, business and agriculture are a few.

Appendage Occupation: The appendage workers are identified as jobs that reduce to the status. The poorly paid occupations of labourers namely, loading unloading, building construction, auto rickshaw drivers, meat cleaning, dry fish preparation, fish cleaning and sales assistance in shop, table cleaning in hotel, Tea shop etc.

Neutral Occupation: Such occupations are neither very helpful nor very pleasurable. They are neither direct one's personal identity nor a major source of identify. These occupations are bankers, Life Insurance employees, high level govt. executive clerks, accounts etc. (Shankar Rao, 2005).

Categories of Daily wage earners: The present study highlighted the following categories of daily wage earners.

- **Auto Rickshaw Drivers:** Auto rickshaw is a mode of mechanical powered transport by which a three wheeled vehicle is driven by the driver which seats three people. The auto rickshaw has been used as a means of transportation of socially elite but, since 1880s, they play a pivotal role in the intra-city transport system, especially in the towns and cities of the third world countries. The streets connecting the roads are very narrow, the motor vehicles cannot be easily driven. Probably the auto rickshaw drivers are only transport system to provide point to point travel (Rajvanshi. 2002).

- **Loading & Unloading:** The loading and unloading work involves carrying things to vehicles on head or trolley or on the back. The loaders and unloaders, carry things like vegetables, irons, plastic items and goods from or to vehicles in any place. The loading and unloading workers who have been working continuously and rendering services to the corporation's Go downs and Railheads as illegal, irregular, arbitrary and seasonal are involved in such against the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act (Bopanna. 1986).

- **Construction workers:** Construction workers include trade persons, labourers or either skilled or unskilled employed in the physical construction of the building and their infrastructure. According to BOCW Act 1996 (Building and Other Construction Workers) a construction worker is a person who is employed to do any skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled, manual, supervisory, technical or clerical work for hire or reward, whether the terms of employment be expressed or implied, in connection with any building or other construction work. There are more than 28 million skilled and unskilled workers engaged in the construction sector in India. The sector is labor-intensive and most of the labourers are unskilled, unorganized and tend to work under inhuman and pitiful conditions (SudiptoMitra 2017).

- **Shop Workers:** Shop workers mean persons who work in a store selling goods to the public, examples of such shop workers are tea shop workers, textile shop workers, departmental store workers, hotel servant and merchant shop workers etc.

- **Meat cleaning workers:** The meat cleaning workers are those who do the cleaning, cutting and removing the waste from the chicken, goat, cow or dry fish preparation at the respective stalls. They are paid wages on daily basis.

Methodology

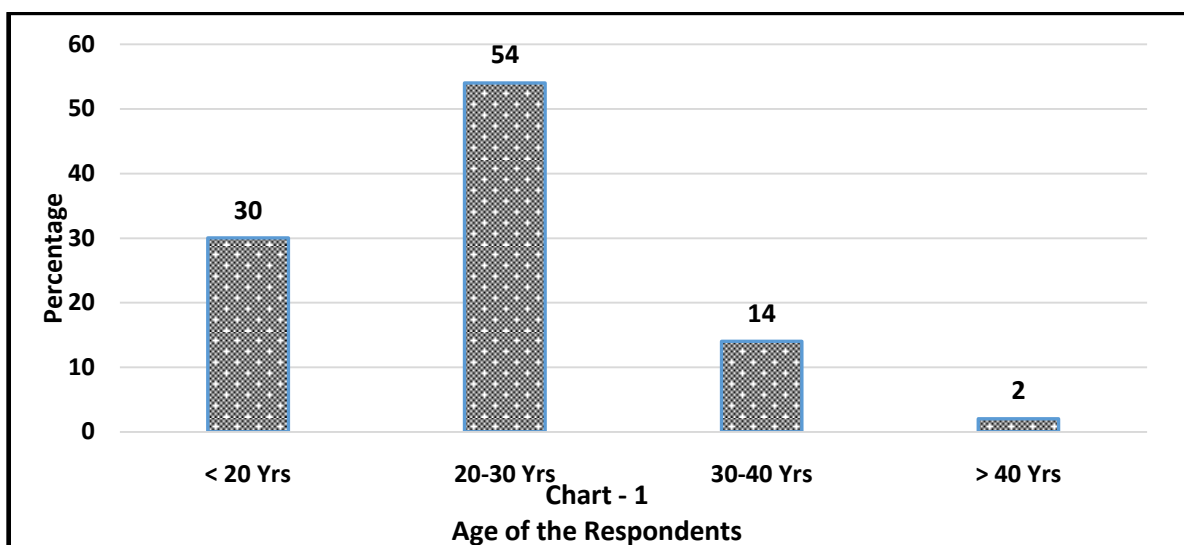
The study is conducted among daily wage earners in Cuddalore Town. The respondents are men and women from cuddalore town and nearby villages. The daily wage earners are auto rickshaw drivers, loading & unloading workers, construction workers, shop workers and meat cleaning workers. This study used descriptive design and the 50 samples were collected by using purposive quota sampling. The data were analyzed and presented in the form of single frequency tables, cross tables and charts. The data collected from the primary respondents were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical package for Social Sciences). The chi-square test was used to find out the relationship between the categories of daily wage earners by their savings habits, work satisfaction and future plan of their family.

Analysis and Interpretation

The SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software was used for analyzing the primary data. The data has been presented in the frequency tables, cross tables, charts and chi-square test.

Age

Age is the unique factor which is playing a vital role. A difference is shown by age of an individual and their ideas, ways of behavior, attitudes, abilities emotional maturity and so on.



More than half 54 percent of the respondents belong to 20-30 years age. The data reveals that more than three fourth (84%) of the respondents belong to the age group 20-30 years. According to National Youth Policy of India (2014), define youth age group between 15-29 years. Therefore it can be concluded that majority of the daily wage earners are at the young age.

Education / Occupation

Education today is considered as one among the indicators of development. Education usually refers to the number of formal years of education completed in the school. Today government emphasizes on compulsory primary education for all and education directly influences awareness.

Table – 1
Educations / Occupations of the Respondents

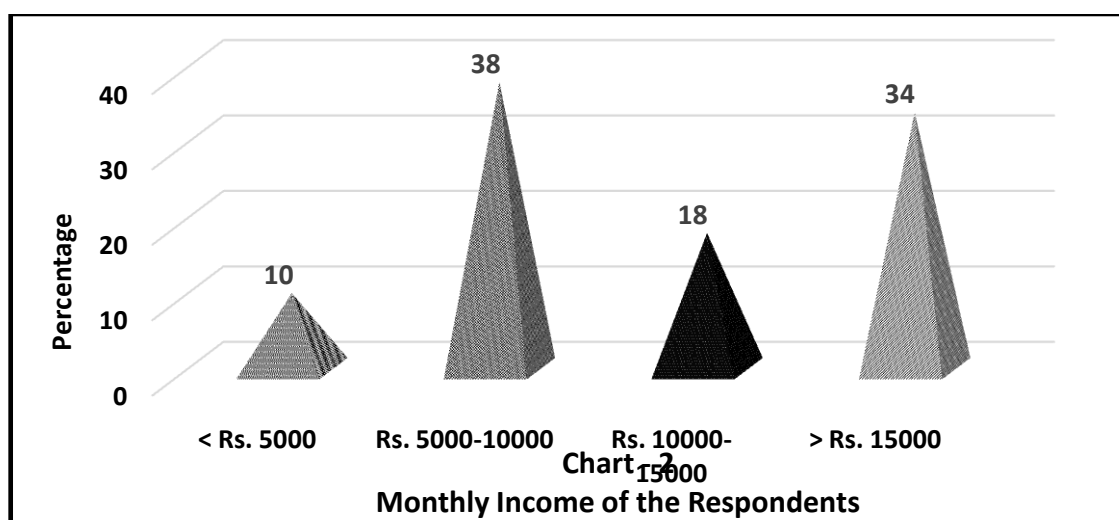
Educations	F / P (%)	Occupations	F / P (%)
No formal Education	17 (34)	Auto Rickshaw drivers	10 (20)
Primary School	20 (40)	Loading & Unloading	10 (20)
High School	8 (16)	Construction Workers	10 (20)
Higher Secondary	5 (10)	Shop workers	10 (20)
-	-	Meat/fish cleaning workers	10 (20)

N=50, (F / P = Frequency, Percent)

The table shows that 40 percent of the respondents possess primary education; 34 percent of the respondents have no formal education. Sixteen percent of the respondents belong to the high school level. And 10 percent of the respondents of daily wage earners possess higher secondary education. Though one third of the respondents had no formal education the other two third had education but such education is not sufficient to go for other kinds of job.

Monthly Income

Income is an important aspect of every family. What is earned by a person and his family members helps to sustain them. Income varies from person to person based on the job being done.



It is evident from the above table that more than one third (38%) of the respondents earn 5000-10,000 rupees per month. At the same time there are also another one third (34%) who earn more than Rs.15000/- per month. The State Government of Tamil Nadu plans to raise the annual income maximum for families to be classified as living below the poverty line from Rs. 11,800 to Rs. 40,000 in rural areas and from Rs. 14,500 to Rs. 50,000 in urban areas (Special Correspondents 2017). Therefore it can be even stated that almost all of the respondents and their families are below poverty which means socio-economically very weak among daily wage earners.

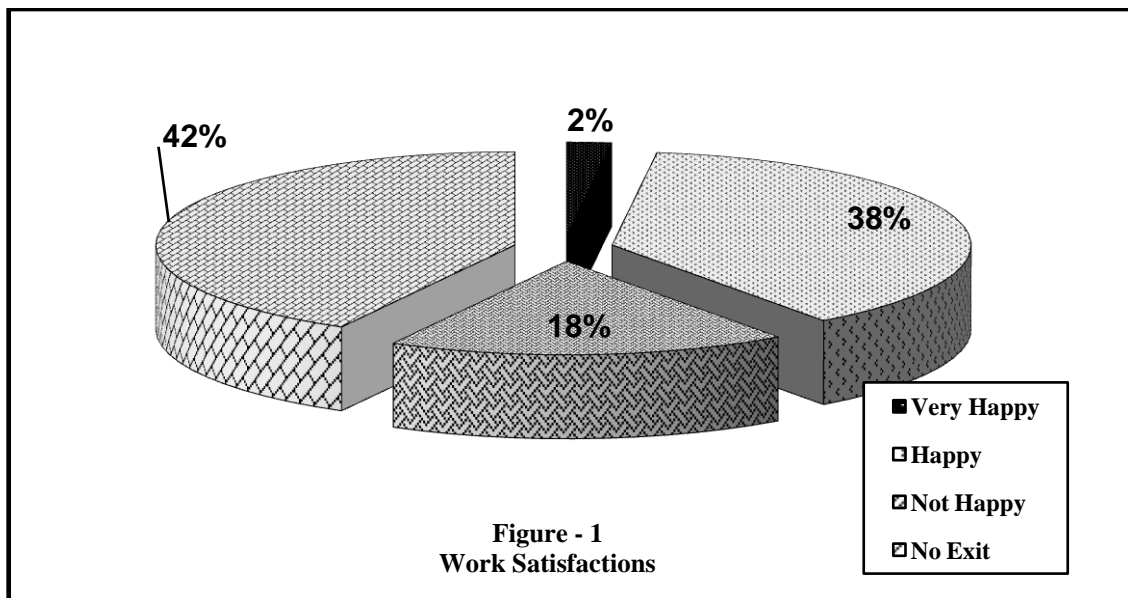
Table – 2
Working Hours per Day

Working Hours	Frequency	Percent
0-5 Hours	3	6.0
5-10 Hours	35	70.0
10-15 Hours	12	24.0
Total	50	100.0

The above table – 6 shows that majority (75%) of the daily wage earners work 5-10 hours a per day, and 24% of the daily wage earners work (10-15) hours per day.

Remaining (6%) of the respondents work less than 5 hours per day. The researcher found that (6%) of the daily wage earners work very less number of hours per day because they are part time workers

Work Satisfaction



The above chart shows that nearly majority (60%) of the respondents are says that they not happy and no exit with their work. More than one third (38%) of the respondents says that happy. It is indicates, their socio-economic status is very poor among daily wage earners.

[Savings Habit of the Respondents

The habits of savings is very important aspect for every human being. The daily wage earners are unable to save money for their future generation. Keeping money in the bank shows saving habit which is not in the minds of the people. Majority (70%) of the respondents do not have saving habit. And about 30 percent of the respondents have saving habit. So the researcher concludes that majority of the respondents are not able to save money due to very poor in socio economic status.

Relationship between Occupation and Savings Habit

Today government is encouraging savings in various ways so as to ensure economic security of people in times of economic difficulty. Generally savings depends on one’s own occupation.

Table – 24

Relationship between occupation and Savings

Occupation	Savings of the Respondents		Total
	Yes	No	
Auto Rickshaw drivers	8 (50.0) 33.3	5 (50.0) 14.3	10 (100) 20.0
Loading& unloading	3 (30.0) 20.0	7 (70.0) 20.0	10 (100) 20.0
Construction workers	2 (20.0) 13.3	8 (80.0) 22.9	10 (100) 20.0
Shop workers	4 (40.0) 26.7	6 (60.0) 17.1	10 (100) 20.0
Meat/fish cleaning workers	1 (10.0) 6.7	9 (90.0) 25.7	10 (100) 20.0
Total	15 (30.0) 100	35 (70.0) 100	50 (100) 100

The above table shows that savings habit among the respondents as per the nature of their work. Majority (70%) of the daily wage earners are not have savings habits. On the whole only 15 respondents (30%) of the daily wage earners have saving habit. Among 10 auto rickshaw drivers, one third (33.3%) of them have saving habits and little more than one fourth (25%) of the shop workers are having saving habits. In the group of construction workers nearly one fourth (22.9%) and little more than one fourth (25.7%) of the daily wage earners do not have savings habit. The daily wage earners 'wage is very less and it is not even enough for their food expenses. The Chi-square Test was used to show relationship between occupations and their savings habit. The chi-square Pearson chi-square value=4.762a, df=4 and p=0.313. Since the level of significant values more than the 0.05 the H0 is accepted. Hence, it could be concluded that there is no relationship between the occupation and their savings habit.

Occupation and Satisfaction over the work

A person should get satisfaction through his work. At times people are under pressure to maintain their life.

Table -

Occupation and Satisfaction of over the work by the daily wage earners

Occupation	Satisfaction over the Work				Total
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Compelled	
Auto Rickshaw drivers	1 (10.0) 100	2 (20.) 10.5	-	7 (70.0) 33.3	10 (100.0) 20.0
Loading& unloading	-	5 (50.0) 26.3	-	5 (50.0) 23.8	10 (100.0) 20.0
Construction workers	-	3 (30.0) 15.8	2 (20.0) 22.2	5 (50.0) 23.8	10 (100.0) 20.0
Shop workers	-	3 (30.0) 15.8	4 (40.0) 44.4	3 (30.0) 14.3	10 (100.0) 20.0
Meat/fish cleaning workers	-	6 (60.0) 31.6	3 (30.0) 33.3	1 (10.0) 4.8	10 (100.0) 20.0
Total	1 (2.0) 100.0	19 (38.0) 100.0	9 (18.00) 100.0	1 (42.0) 100.0	50 (100) 100.00

The above table explains the relationship between occupation and their level of satisfaction at work. One the whole, majority (42%) of the respondents is not satisfied in any way and they do the work out of compulsion. Thirty eight percent of the respondents expressed that they are satisfied with their nature of work. Among auto rickshaw drivers one third (33.3%) said that they do the work (with completion) without any satisfaction. Among shop workers and meat / fish cleaning workers nearly half (44.4%) are not satisfied with their work and among loading and unloading workers more than one fourth (26.3%) of the respondents are satisfied with their work.

Results and Discussion

- More than three fourth (84%) of the respondents belong to the age group 30-40 years.
- Nearly half (40%) are with primary education 34 percent of the respondents have no formal education.
- Nearly two tenth, Sixteen percent of the respondents belongs to the high school level.
- More than one third (38%) of the respondents earn 5000-10,000 rupees per month. Thus, they are socio-economically very week.
- Majority (75%) of the daily wage earners work 5-10 hours a per day,
- More than one third (38%) of the respondents say that they are with happy their work.
- Majority (70%) of the respondents do not have saving habit.
- The construction workers and meat/fish cleaning workers does not have savings habits
- Auto rickshaw drivers one third (33.3%) said that they do the work (with completion) without any satisfaction.

- Among shop workers and meat / fish cleaning workers, nearly half (44.4%) are not satisfied with their work
- Among loading and unloading workers, more than one fourth (26.3%) of the respondents are satisfied with their work.

Discussion

- Public awareness should be raised regarding the vulnerabilities of daily wage earners relating to their social security, dignity and minimum wages.
- It is found that the daily wage earners give less emphasis on education. The reason for less emphasis varies from person to person due to economic difficulty and lack of interest in studies. So, social workers should create awareness on importance of education.
- Government should increase the employment opportunities for daily wage earners to get jobs which will increase their monthly income.
- The owners should give due respect and security to their daily wage earners and fulfill their rights.
- The Government and the society at large should recognize the economic and social contributions that daily wage earners make. And they can also socio-economically sustain.
- The daily wage earners earn less than minimum wage and woefully inadequate to meet daily needs, let alone plan for savings. In the light of the high cost of living seen in the present day and age, it must be ensured that owners pay the legally prescribed minimum wages so that daily wage earners are not exploited and that they may be able have a decent standard of living.

Conclusion

The floating population look for daily wages apart from the regular wage earners in the market area is in a significant size. Evidence leads to conclude that moderate increase in the minimum wage a useful means of raising wages without affecting on employment and hours. This is what one seeks in a policy tool, solid benefits with small costs.

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