A Structured Casualness Of Informal Sector Workers In Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu

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ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

The present paper attempts to discuss the nature of employment of informal sector workers in Madurai district, their wage fixation, wage structure, its determinants and working conditions of different categories of informal sector workers. This chapter is organised under the following headings for the purpose of analysis. Nature of employment, Wage fixation and wage structure , Determinants of wage. The informal sector account for more than 90 per cent of the workforce in the country and almost 50 per cent of the national income evolves from this sector. Ever since the initiation of the liberalization policies in the early nineties, informalisation of jobs has become a matter of concern. Growing competition combined with increased market opportunities and limited resources have led to the emergence of an informal economy. The predominance of the informal sector has led to a situation of the benefits of economic growth being concentrated among few with a growing proportion of the population living as working poor. A comparison was made between State-wise distribution of informally employed in the manufacturing sector vis-à-vis the labour reform index which shows that even when the labour reform index is high indicating that even in States like Gujarat where the stringency of labour regulations was lowered by procedural changes, simplifying compliance and limiting scope of regulations, the jobs that were created in the manufacturing sector were informal in nature. Similar is the case with Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Irrespective of labour reforms being a hindrance or otherwise, extent of informal employment was more than 90 per cent in the major industrial States. These findings only indicate that labour reforms alone will not reduce informalisation.

Keywords: Nature of employment, Wage fixation and wage structure, Determinants of wage.

Introduction

The informal sector account for more than 90 per cent of the workforce in the country and almost 50 per cent of the national income evolves from this sector . Ever since the initiation of the liberalization policies in the early nineties, informalisation of jobs has become a matter of concern. Growing competition combined with increased market opportunities and limited resources have led to the emergence of an informal economy. The predominance of the informal sector has led to a situation of the benefits of economic growth being concentrated among few with a growing proportion of the population living as working poor. Though the Government changed its policy strategy to that of inclusive and sustainable growth in the last decade, the fundamental issues leading to growing informalisation are yet to be targeted. In this article an attempt has been made to look at the extent of informalisation of employment and what could be the way out to reverse the trend towards formalization.

Reasons for Informalisation of Workforce

Literature indicates labour market rigidities, poor skill levels, increasing competition from imports as the factors inducing creation of informal employment and decline of formal employment opportunities. Labour

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market rigidity is blamed on the multiple labour legislations that deters the hire and fire policy. A comparison was made between State-wise distribution of informally employed in the manufacturing sector vis-à-vis the labour reform index which shows that even when the labour reform index is high indicating that even in States like Gujarat where the stringency of labour regulations was lowered by procedural changes, simplifying compliance and limiting scope of regulations, the jobs that were created in the manufacturing sector were informal in nature. Similar is the case with Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Irrespective of labour reforms being a hindrance or otherwise, extent of informal employment was more than 90 per cent in the major industrial States. These findings only indicate that labour reforms alone will not reduce informalisation.

The present paper attempts to discuss the nature of employment of informal sector workers in Madurai district, their wage fixation, wage structure, its determinants and working conditions of different categories of informal sector workers. This chapter is organised under the following headings for the purpose of analysis. (i) Nature of employment (ii) Wage fixation and wage structure (iii) Determinants of wage.

Objective of the study

- 1. To study the nature of the employment of informal sector workers in Kanchipuram District of Tamil Nadu.
- 2. To examine the wage fixation and wage structure of informal sectors in Kanchipuram District of Tamil Nadu.
- 3. To analyse the determinants of wage of informal sectors in Kanchipuram District of Tamil Nadu.

	No.of Days of Work								
Drofossio	Below 180 da	ys	181-300 days		Above 301 days		Total days		
r roiessio	No.of		No.of		No.of		No.of		
11	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	
	S		S		s		s		
Constructio	0	12.8	4.4	62.8	17	04.00	50	10	
n workers	9	6	44	6	17	24.29	70	0	
Vegetable	6	0	26	=1.00	<u></u>	10.00		10	
Vendors	0	8.57	30	51.23	28	40.00	70	0	
Street				62.8	1-	01.40		10	
Vendors	11	15.71	44	6	15	21.43	70	0	
Workers in				54.0				10	
shops and	22	31.43	38	54.2	10	14.29	70	10	
Hotels				9				0	
Auto								10	
Rickshaw	15	21.43	33	47.14	22	31.43	70	10	
Drivers								0	
Tailors	11	15 51	16	22.8	40	61 40	70	10	
	11	13./1	10	6	43	01.43	/0	0	
Washermen	8	11 49	97	52.8	25	95 71	70	10	
	0	11.43	3/	9	20	33./1	/0	0	
Hairdresser	F	714	20	41 49	26	E1 49	70	10	
S	5	/•14	29	41.43	30	51.45	/0	0	
Housemaid	11	15 71	97	28 57	22	45 71	70	10	
S	11	13./1	2/	30.37	52	40./1	/0	0	
Loadmen	7	10.0	30	55 71	24	34 20	70	10	
	/	0	57	JJ./1		54.49	/5	0	
Over all	105	15.0	2/12	49.0	252	36.0	700	10	
	-~J	0	UTU	0	-J-	0	,00	0	

 Table .1 NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT AND ANNUAL DAYS OF WORK

Source: Primary Data

Nature of Employment

A study of the nature of employment is essential in order to understand the living and working conditions of the informal sector workers. The study about the nature of employment includes the number of days worked per year, number of hours of worked, sources of employment, working experience of informal sector workers and periodicity of wage payment.

Annual Working Days

The number of working days in a year is significant in deciding the income of the informal sector workers and the details are presented vide Table.1. It is observed from Table .1 that in a year, 62.86 per cent of construction workers had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days, 24.29 per cent for above 301 days and 12.86 per cent of them for below 180 days. In the case of vegetable vendors, 51.43 per cent of them worked 181 to

300 days, 40.00 per cent had worked for a period of above 301 days and remaining 8.57 per cent had worked for a period of below 180 days in the study area.

Regarding the street vendors, 44 (62.86 per cent) respondents had worked for a period between 181 to 300 days. It was followed by 15 (21.43 per cent) and 11 persons (15.71 per cent) working for a period of above 301 days and below 180 days respectively. Among the workers in shops and hotels, the majority (54.29 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days, and it was followed by those working below 180 days and above 301 days constituting 31.43 per cent and 14.29 per cent respectively. In the case of Auto Rickshaw Drivers, 33 (47.14 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days and 21.43 per cent respectively. In the case of Auto Rickshaw Drivers, 33 (47.14 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days followed by those working above 301 days and below 180 days constituting 31.43 per cent and 21.43 per cent respectively. Table 4.1 also shows that of the tailor respondents, the majority (61.43 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days and it was followed by those by 181 to 300 days and below 180 days constituting 22.86 per cent and 15.71 per cent respectively. Regarding the washermen, 37 (52.86 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days, 25 (35.71 per cent) of them had worked for a period of above 301 days and only 8 (11.43 per cent) of them had worked for a period of above 301 days and only 8 (11.43 per cent) of them had worked for a period of above 301 days and only 8 (11.43 per cent) of them had worked for a period of below 180 days.

Among the hairdressers, 36 (51.43 per cent) of them had worked for a period of above 301 days followed by those by 181 to 300 days and below 180 days constituting 41.43 per cent and 7.14 per cent respectively. In the housemaid workers category, out of 70 respondents, 32 (45.71 per cent) of them had worked for a period of above 301 days, 27 (38.57 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days and 11 (15.71 per cent) of them had worked for a period of below 180 days. Regarding the loadmen, a majority (55.71 per cent) of them had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days and followed by 24 (34.29 per cent) of them working for a period of above 301 days and only 7 (10.00 per cent) of them for a period of below 180 days. The majority of the informal sector workers had worked for a period of 181 to 300 days which can be considered stable. As skill level rises, there will be a tendency to enjoy leisure among the workers.

	No.of Days	of Work						
	6 hours		8 hours		10 hours		Total	
Profession	No.of Responde nts	%	No.of Responde nts	%	No.of Responde nts	%	No.of Responde nts	%
Construction workers	15	21.43	44	62.86	11	15.71	70	1000
Vegetable Vendors	10	4.29	41	58.57	19	27.14	70	100
Street Vendors	15	21.43	39	55.71	16	22.86	70	100
Workers in shops and Hotels	17	24.29	28	40.00	25	35.71	70	100
Auto Rickshaw Drivers	11	15.71	33	47.14	26	37.14	70	100
Tailors	8	11.43	43	61.43	19	24.14	70	100
Washermen	13	18.57	35	50.00	22	31.43	70	100
Hairdressers	9	12.86	36	51.43	25	35.71	70	100
Housemaids	10	14.29	29	41.43	31	44.29	70	100
Loadmen	15	21.43	37	52.86	18	25.71	70	100
Over all	123	17.57	365	52.14	212	30.29	700	100

 Table.2 NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT AND NUMBER OF HOURS PER DAY

Source: Primary Data

Hours of Work

Normally a work for eight hours is counted as a day of work. However, depending upon the nature of work, few categories of workers work for 6 hours a day, while few others work as long as 10 hours in a day. For the sample respondents, their distribution by the hours of work is shown in Table 2. It is seen that in the case of construction workers, majority of 62.86 per cent worked for eight hours and 21.43 per cent and 15.71 per cent of workers worked for six hours and 10 hours respectively. As far as vegetable vendors are concerned, 58.57 per cent of them worked for eight hours, 27.14 per cent worked for 10 hours and 14.29 per cent of the respondents worked for six hours. In the case of street vendors, 39 (55.71 per cent) of them worked for eight hours, 16 (22.86 per cent) of them worked for ten hours and 15 (21.43 per cent) of them worked for 6 hours. Regarding the workers in shop and hotels, 28 (40.00 per cent) of them worked for 8 hours, 25 (35.71 per cent) of them worked for 10 hours and the remaining 17 (24.29 per cent) of them worked for 6 hours. Among the Auto Rickshaw Drivers, 33 (47.14 per cent) of them worked for 8 hours, 26 (37.14 per cent) of them worked for 10 hours and 11 (15.71 per cent) of them worked for 6 hours only.

In the case of tailor respondents, 43 (61.43 per cent) of them worked for 8 hours and it was followed by 19 (24.14 per cent) of them working for 10 hours and only 8 (11.43 per cent) of them working for 6 hours. Among the washermen, 50 per cent of them had worked for 8 hours and it was followed by others with 10 hours and 6 hours of work which constituted 31.43 per cent and 18.57 per cent respectively. Regarding the hairdressers, the majority (51.43 per cent) of them worked for 8 hours and followed by those by 10 hours and 6 hours constituting 35.71 per cent and 12.86 per cent respectively. In the case of housemaids, 31 (44.29 per cent) of them worked for 10 hours, 29 (41.43 per cent) of them worked for 8 hours and the remaining 10 (14.29 per cent) respondents worked for 6 hours. 37 loadmen (52.86 per cent) of them worked for 8 hours and it was followed by those with 10 hours and 6 hours of work which constituting 25.71 per cent and 12.43 per cent of the informal sector workers worked for eight hours and it was followed by those working for 10 hours and 6 hours of work which constituting 25.71 per cent and 11.43 per cent of the informal sector workers worked for eight hours and it was followed by those working for 10 hours and 6 hours of work which constituting 25.71 per cent and 21.43 per cent respectively. It is observed that 52.14 per cent of the informal sector workers worked for eight hours and it was followed by those working for 10 hours and 6 hours which constituting 30.29 per cent and 17.57 per cent respectively.

Solf Employment Wage Employment Total								
	Sell Employme	ent	wage Employn	ient	101a1			
Profession	No.of	0/	No.of	0/	No.of	0/		
	Respondents [%] Respondents		70	Respondents	%			
Construction workers	15	21.43	55	78.57	70	100		
Vegetable Vendors	58	82.86	12	17.14	70	100		
Street Vendors	62	88.57	8	11.43	70	100		
Workers in shops and Hotels	12	17.14	58	82.86	70	100		
Auto Rickshaw Drivers	64	91.43	6	8.57	70	100		
Tailors	59	84.29	11	15.71	70	100		
Washermen	66	94.29	4	5.71	70	100		
Hairdressers	57	81.43	13	18.57	70	100		
Housemaids	10	14.29	60	85.71	70	100		
Loadmen	9	12.86	61	87.14	70	100		
Over all	412	58.85	288	41.15	700	100		

Table.3 TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

Source: Primary Data

Types of Employment

The types of employment are classified into two categories such as through self-employment and wage employment. The details are presented in Table 3. The survey results show that the majority of the construction workers (78.57 per cent) were self-employed and the remaining were wage employed. In the case of vegetable vendors, 82.86 per cent were self-employed and 17.14 per cent were wage employed. Among the street vendors, 88.57 per cent were selfemployed and only 11.43 per cent were wage employed. In the case of workers in shop and hotels, the majority (82.86 per cent) were wage employed and the remaining 17.14 per cent were self-employed. Among the Auto Rickshaw Drivers, 64 (91.43 per cent) were self-employed and the remaining only 6 (8.57 per cent) were wage employed. Regarding the tailor respondents, 59 (84.29 per cent) were the selfemployed and the remaining 11 (15.71 per cent) were wage employed. In the case of washermen, 94.29 per cent were self employed and the remaining are wage employed. 81.43 per cent of the hairdressers got employment through self employment and the remaining 18.57 per cent had wage employment. Regarding the housemaids, 85.71 per cent of the respondents were wage employed and the remaining 14.29 per cent were self-employed. In the case of loadmen, 87.14 per cent were wage employed and 12.96 per cent were self-employed. It is evident that a large proportion of employment generation was from selfemployment sources in the informal sector. This was advantageous to the workers because it saved them from the burden of seeking employment elsewhere.

	No.of Years	5						
	Below 5 years		9-10 years		Above 11 years		Total	
Profession	No.of Bospondo	0⁄	No.of Responde	0⁄	No.of Responde	0⁄	No.of Responde	0⁄
	nts	/0	nts	/0	nts	/0	nts	/0
Construction workers	11	15.71	45	64.29	14	20.00	70	100
Vegetable Vendors	14	20.00	39	55.71	17	24.29	70	100
Street Vendors	21	30.00	37	52.86	12	17.14	70	100

Table.4 WORKING EXPERIENCE

Workers in shops and Hotels	16	22.86	31	44.29	23	32.86	70	100
Auto Rickshaw Drivers	13	18.57	37	52.86	20	28.57	70	100
Tailors	17	24.29	41	58.57	12	17.14	70	100
Washermen	11	15.71	38	54.29	21	30.00	70	100
Hairdressers	14	20.00	38	54.29	18	25.71	70	100
Housemaids	8	11.43	39	55.71	23	32.86	70	100
Loadmen	19	27.14	34	48.57	17	24.29	70	100
Over all	144	20.57	379	54.14	177	25.29	700	100

Source: Primary Data

Working Experience of Informal Sector Workers

Workers with long experience are usually skilled workers, because in informal sector industry skill is acquired by experience only. The experienced workers are usually in much demand and the employers have to develop a close relationship with them to keep them in their fold. The work experience of informal sector workers is shown in Table 4. The extent of working experience varies from below 5 years, 6 - 10 years and above 11 years. Of the construction workers, 64.29 per cent had an experience of 6 to 10 years, 20.00 per cent had an experience of above 11 years and 15.71 per cent had experience of below five years. It is evident from the above table, of the vegetable vendors, 39 (55.71 per cent) had an experience of 6-10 years, 17 (24.29 per cent) had an experience of above 11 years and 14 (20.00 per cent) had an experience of below 5 years. Among the street vendors, 37 (52.86 per cent) had an experience of 6-10 years and followed by those with below 5 years of experience and above 11 years of experience constituting 30.00 per cent and 17.14 per cent respectively.

Table.5 PERIODICITY OF WAGE PAYMENT									
	Wage payment								
	Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Total		
Profession	No.of		No.of		No.of		No.of		
	Responde	%	Responde	%	Responde	%	Respon	%	
	nts		nts		nts		dents		
Construction workers	20	28.57	34	48.57	16	22.86	70	100	
Vegetable Vendors	44	62.86	14	20.00	12	17.14	70	100	
Street Vendors	54	77.14	10	14.29	6	8.57	70	100	
Workers in shops and Hotels	15	21.43	41	58.57	14	20.00	70	100	
Auto Rickshaw Drivers	59	84.29	11	15.71	0	-	70	100	
Tailors	47	67.14	17	24.29	6	8.57	70	100	
Washermen	61	87.14	9	12.86	0	-	70	100	
Hairdressers	65	92.96	5	7.14	0	-	70	100	
Housemaids	15	21.43	19	27.14	36	51.43	70	100	
Loadmen	36	51.43	29	41.43	5	7.14	70	100	
Over all	416	59.43	189	27.00	95	13.57	700	100	

Source: Primary Data

Periodicity of Wage Payments

It is observed from the survey that workers who were continuously working with the same contractors or owners were paid on weekly or monthly basis; but temporary workers were paid on daily basis. As far as the study area was concerned, payments were made directly to the workers either by the contractors or owners. Table 5 furnishes the periodicity of wage payment of informal sector workers. It is evident from the Table 4.6 that 48.57 per cent of 34 construction workers, received weekly wages, followed by daily wage payments and monthly wage payments which constituted 28.57 per cent and 22.86 per cent respectively. Of the vegetable vendors, about 62 per cent of them came under daily wage payments because they are employed on casual basis as and when required. The remaining nearly 20 per cent of workers were getting weekly payments and 17.14 per cent were getting monthly payments.

Regarding the street vendors, the majority (77.14 per cent) of them were getting daily wages and 14.29 per cent and 8.57 per cent of the workers earned weekly and monthly wages respectively. In the case of workers in shops and hotels, 41 (58.57 per cent) of them came under weekly wage payments and was followed by the payment of wages to workers on a daily and monthly basis which constituted 21.43 per cent and 20.00 per cent respectively. Among the Auto Rickshaw Drivers, the majority (84.29 per cent) of them came under the daily wage payments and the remaining 15.71 per cent came under the weekly wage payments. There is no monthly wage payments among the Auto Rickshaw Drivers in the study area. In the case of tailor respondents, 47 (67.14 per cent) of them came under the daily wage payments and it was followed by 17 (24.29 per cent) of them coming under the weekly wage payments and only 6 (8.57 per cent) of them came under the monthly wage payments. Among the 70 washermen, the majority (87.14 per cent) of them came under the daily wage payments scheme and the remaining 12.86 per cent were under the weekly wage payments. There was no monthly wage payments among the washermen in the study area.

In the case of hairdressers, the majority (92.96 per cent) of them came under the daily wage payments and the remaining only 7.14 per cent came under the weekly wage payments. There was no monthly wage payment among the hairdressers in the study area. As for the housemaids, 36 (51.43 per cent) of them were on the monthly wage payment roll and followed by 27.14 per cent and 21.43 per cent under weekly and daily wage payments. In the case of loadmen, those under the daily wage payment formed 51.43 per cent and it was followed by those under weekly and monthly wage payment constituting 41.43 per cent and 7.14 per cent respectively.

Determinants of Wages

This section identifies and analyses the several determinants of wages for different categories of informal sector workers. For this, a log linear multiple regression model is used. In this regression model, wage is treated as a dependent variable and the variables namely (i) age, (ii) experience, (iii) hours of work, (iv) standard of living index, (SLI), (v) sources of employment and (iv) season are included as independent variables.

The estimate model is:-

 $\mathrm{Log}\,\mathrm{Y} = \beta\mathrm{O} + \beta\mathrm{I}\log\mathrm{X1} + \beta\mathrm{2}\log\mathrm{X2} + \ldots + \beta\mathrm{5}\,\mathrm{D1} + \beta\mathrm{6}\,\mathrm{D2} + \mathrm{u}.$

Where,

Y = Wage rate (in Rs./day)*,

 $X_1 = Age (in years),$

X2 = Experience (in years),

X3 = Hours of work per day,

X4 = Standard of living index (index developed)

D1 = 1 if workers working under contractor/owner = 0,

otherwise D2 = 1 peak season = 0, otherwise.

U = Disturbance term.

The above model was estimated by the method of least squares separately for different category of informal sector workers.

The estimated regression results for construction workers are presented in Table 6.

Parameters	Regression coefficients	t-value
Intercept	0.7245	
Age	0.0142*	1.0121
Experience	0.4372*	4.0172
Hours of work	0.2104*	2.5761
Standard of Living Index	0.3143*	2.7241
Source of Employment dummy	0.0972	0.0048
Seasonal dummy	0.0075	0.0041
\mathbb{R}^2	0.8142*	
F- value	41.42*	
No.of Observations	700	

TABLE 6 ESTIMATED REGRESSION RESULTS FOR INFORMAL SECTOR WORKERS

* Indicates the co-efficients are statistically significant at 5 per cent level.

The estimated equations show good fit as shown by the high and significant values of the coefficients of multiple determination $-R^2$. In the case of informal sector workers, three out of six variables namely experience, hours of work and standard of living index were found to have positive and significant effects on wage determination. The value R^2 indicates that all the explanatory variables jointly accounted for about 81.42 per cent variation in the wage rate of informal sector workers. None of the dummy co-efficients namely source of employment and seasonal dummy coefficients were statistically significant and it indicated that these two variables had not influenced wage determination of informal sector workers in urban areas. It was seen that one per cent increase in the variables experience, hours of work and standard of living index, would

cause an increase in wage rate by 0.4372 per cent, 0.2104 per cent and 0.3143 per cent respectively. Thus, it may be concluded from the analysis that the hours of work and standard of living are important among informal sector workers in fixing their wages. Experience also had influence on the wage determination of workers.

Problems Faced by the Workers

From the research, it was noted that 'employment was not possible throughout the year'. It was found to be the major problem among the informal sector workers. It was assigned the first rank and followed by 'nonimplementation of welfare measures for non-union workers', 'lesser wages paid to men than women', 'nonimplementation of Minimum Wages Act', 'permanent disability in work' and 'no fixed wage' were assigned second, third, fourth , fifth and sixth ranks respectively. These were the problems faced by the informal sector workers as observed from the research.

Suggestions of the study

Considering the size of the large labour force in the informal sector, a policy framework at the national level on the provisions of social security to different groups of workers and employees may be formulated and adopted. Awareness generation campaigns and dissemination of information to unorganized labourers must be organised to prevent exploitation of these workers. Awareness generation may be raised in close collaboration with Self-Help Groups (SHGs), trade unions and other committed individuals. To improve the efficiency of the delivery mechanism of existing programmes to reach the informal sector workers, local institutions like civic bodies, municipalities should be involved for monitoring the social security programmes. Priority attention may be accorded to those social security covers for the informal sector that can look after medical care, accident benefits, old age pensions, etc. In this connection concerted efforts may be made to enhance the coverage under National Social Assistance Programmes for providing old age pensions, maternity and other benefits to the workers in the informal sector.

Conclusion

It can be stated that, to meet the planned employment goals, the employment strategy for future, is to encourage the use of labour-intensive and capital-saving technology in general and to rejuvenate the growth of the unorganized sector in particular, which at present contributes 90 per cent to the country's employment and enjoys higher labour intensity per unit of production, as compared to the organized sector. Moreover, the informal sector needs to be made more productive to sustain itself against the domestic and international competition by proper choice of programmes and policies. Hence, it is important that all agencies, authorities and institutions must be made aware that helping informal sector enterprises is the surest way to ensure economic growth with distributive justice, which is the prime goal of the country.

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