

Impact of Covid – 19 on Daily Wage Workers

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I. INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 has had an impact in many countries all over the world. It has been shown by World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) that this pandemic has caused extreme poverty and disrupted the economy of the country as well as had an impact on the per capita income. This impact has been extended over to the world markets and caused a great difference in many economies around the globe. India has also suffered greatly in this regard.

The days of freezing/closing affected the entire Indian economy. All types of industries such as hotels, transportation (roads, airways and maritime), automotive sectors, electronics sectors, chemical sectors, IT sectors, tourism, textiles, film industries and even agricultural industries have been affected due to unusual conditions.

There is no doubt that all of these sectors are the lineage of the Indian economy and can be raised with a concrete plan. But very harmful and sad is that these days of closing have completely changed the standard of living of the people who belong to the society of wage workers to the limit of waiting even for a cup of tea at least once day.

Building construction, home maintenance, dry cleaning, rag picking, playing traditional instruments, cooking, hairdressing (barbers), cleaning containers at tea stalls and mini-tiffin centers, waste collection, street vending, mechanical workshops, supermarkets, retail stores, weightlifting in the market offers employment opportunities to wage workers. But the periods of confinement disrupted the functions of all those places and thus totally closed the lives of day workers without food, money, routine medicines and to meet the needs of children.

By day wage workers, it is meant the workers who work in different categories such as contract workers, casual workers and daily wage workers for completing jobs on an hourly / day / week / unit / quantity basis. According to the Apprenticeship Act of 1961, "worker means any person who is employed for a salary in any kind of work and who receives pay directly from the employer, but does not include an apprentice".

ABOUT YEF

Youth Empowerment Foundation is an organization which guides the youngsters and helps in their development, learning and be an example for the upcoming generation.

YEF as an organization gives direction to the youths through their initiatives and programs. Empowering youths to grow, learn and be the torchbearers for the future generation is one of the major impacts that organization wants to create.

YEF is a non-profit organization founded in June 2017 by Mr. Rambabu Sharma. It has been inspired by his own life journey, the founder along with his team has laid a strong foundation to educate the underprivileged children of the society and hence bridge the gap between them and the world. As explained by the founder himself in his story, poverty and education are inextricably linked, because people living in poverty may stop going to school, so they can work which leaves them without literacy that they need for their careers.

Education in all different forms is a key for breaking the cycle of poverty. It increases food security, decreases malnutrition, enhances standard of living and improves gender equality. It teaches children what they can and should expect from adults and in turn also shows adults the benefits of respecting their children's rights.

Apart from helping the daily wage workers and their children through food and cloth distribution, we create posters which emphasizes the importance of education for the youths, create training modules for educational purposes, host webinars on social issues and how to deal with such problems, organize quiz events, provide meaningful and inspirational stories and also offer our gratitude to the frontline workers through writeups.

OUR VISION

We envisage an educated India in which every individual has the opportunity to grow and learn.

ACTIVITIES

- **Poster Making:** - Since our objective is spreading education throughout India, the organization assigned us the task of making posters highlighting what education means. The main theme here is “YEF in action to help the underprivileged”. Education is the most powerful tool which one can use to bring about a change. If we’re not willing to learn, no one can help us but if we’re determined to learn then no one can stop us.
- **Training Module:** - We have groups at the NGO where we create training modules on various topics in order to educate the youth. We prepare in different formats of audios, videos and presentations. Each and every training module is carefully revised to make sure that there is no mistake.
- **Hosting Webinars:** - The organization also hosts webinars on various social issues that are prevailing in today’s society. Especially on the topics of issues faced by wage workers while keeping in mind the situation of the pandemic and how it has impacted their daily lives. The issues of unemployment, lockdown and loss of jobs, being pushed below the poverty line and shifting from formal to informal work. The organization also works towards addressing these situations.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The main observations here included analyzing the impact of covid-19 lockdown on daily wage workers, understanding the reason of daily wage workers, exploring the various livelihood problems of the daily wage workers during the lockdown periods and suggesting some measures to the government, corporates, other voluntary organizations and local authorities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

I learnt a great deal while working at the NGO. It has taught me how teamwork and working together is important. Everyone should try to help others in need not only because it is a responsibility but it also adds a greater meaning to our lives. I had good exposure to different people and environment and learnt dealing with the society and being pragmatic. I learnt through the hard works of the NGO for upliftment of the society and always stepping up to be the first one to lend helping hand.

II. CONCLUSION

The problem faced by the daily wage workers might be difficult to overcome but with the help of the organization and right guidance, things improve for the better. With the correct incentives, it gets much easier to provide aspiring youths with avenues, especially those who want to improve their daily lives. Much often it has been observed that the youths because of lacking vocational skills end up lacking confidence as well and this ultimately creates a series of events which leads to a longer tenure of unemployment. However, when such vocational skills are taught to those who need it, they clearly perform really well at whatever it is they are interested in doing. Under the right supervision and correct guidance, the youths are more seemingly to work well. This way, they are able to manage and improve their personal financial status and daily lives and also contribute to the national economy. When all is said and done, people who are happier make a happier nation and the relief and self-satisfaction flows into various walks of their life. True progress means leaving no one behind.

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