

# Covid 19 Outbreak: The Cascading Impact On The Workers Of The Unorganized Sector

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## Abstract

In India, unorganised sector accounts for a large percentage of total employment. The global Covid-19 pandemic has attacked the unorganised sector with a health shock and an economic shock. The purpose of the study is to identify the cascading impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector. The findings of the research revealed that through exploratory factor analysis five areas have been identified where COVID-19 is having a very cascading impact on the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector. There exist significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life of the workers in the unorganised sector based on their type of occupation but does not exist any significant difference with respect to gender, age and income of the workers in the unorganized sector. The analysis of the survey reflected that construction workers are worstly hit by this pandemic. The paper has also reflected the measures adopted by the Centre and the State Government towards the upliftment of the workers in the unorganized sector.

**Keywords:** Unorganized, Cascading, COVID-19, Upliftment, Construction.

## Introduction

Every labourer is a father, his labour is his child. Choose your project carefully and achieve it worthily.

## Haile Selassie

Workers are the architect of any nation. Human civilization has been founded on labour, with many billions of people working to build the towns, fields, factories, armies, and infrastructure that have defined our time on the earth. The evolution of the role of labour and the upgradation of different kinds of tools has changed the human civilisation from more primitive primates into a civilized society. COVID-19 has badly affected our business environment irrespective of all sectors. In India, it has a very harsh effect on the employees employed in unorganized sector. The informal sector employs over 90% of India's total workforce.

According to a survey undertaken by a wing of the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) that the ongoing lockdown to avoid the spread of COVID-19 has damaged the quality of life for more than 90% of people working in the unorganized sector and their families (A.S.Jayanth, 2020). Daily wage workers were the hardest hit, with 94 percent losing their source of income or seeing a drop in it (A.S.Jayanth, 2020). In the aftermath of one of the world's worst economic crises, India's informal sector jobs face an uncertain future, with job losses looming high (Kumar, 2020). Unorganized sector workers, in particular, are under a lot of stress and are struggling for their basic survival as they lose their jobs and return to their hometowns. The International Labour Organization (ILO) predicts that the COVID-19 crisis will drag India's 40 million informal workers deeper into poverty. (Srivastava, 2020).

The Indian labor sector, which is covered by the MGNREGA of 2005, is the hardest hit because it is unable to find work due to the lockdown; most of the labor sectors are affiliated with construction firms and daily wage earners as well as travel bans and quarantines that have impacted hundreds of millions of people have left Indian factories short on labor and parts, disrupting just-in-time supply chains and causing sales alerts throughout the electronics, automotive, consumer goods, pharmaceutical, and other industries (Tanisha Mukherjee, 2020).

COVID-19 has shown the susceptibility of urban casual workers, most of them are migrants and they are the one who are very badly shaken by the lockdown measures as the economic activities of the country was halted leading to the closure of many small urban units and jobs of these workers were threatened (Walter, 2020). The acute unemployment had forced the workers in unorganised sector to vacate their accommodation (Walter, 2020).

According to a survey conducted by Action Aid at the end of May 2020, more than three-quarters of respondents said they had lost their jobs as a result of the lockdown. Nearly half of the respondents said they had not earned any wages, and about 17% said they had only received partial wages. Approximately 53% said they had accrued additional debt as a consequence of the lockdown (ActionAid, 2020). Women jobs, who are still at a disadvantage in a tight labour market, were hit harder than their male counterparts. Domestic employment, construction work, the beauty and fitness industry, and sex work are all overrepresented in women's occupations, all of which have seen significant job losses since the lockdown (ActionAid, 2020). This pandemic has ruthlessly spoiled the career of the workers employed in Indian unorganised sector. It has a very negative impact on their quality of work life. The footprints of this pandemic in the unorganized has drawn the attention of the researcher to identify the underlying effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the Quality of work life of the workers in the unorganized sector and reflecting the measures adopted by the

Government at the State as well as at the Central level to support this sector.

### **Review of Literature**

According to the International Labour Organization, COVID-19 is expected to result in the loss of up to 25 million workers (Vipasha, 2020). This poses a serious challenge to the Indian economy, which is characterized by a large number of people working in the informal or unorganized sectors. This industry hires 93 percent of the world's 400 million jobs (Vipasha, 2020). The First Indian National Commission on Labour (1966- 69) defined, unorganised sector workforce as –“those workers who have not been able to organize themselves in pursuit of their common interest due to certain constraints like casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, small and scattered size of establishments” (D'souza, 2013).

According to India's National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS), informal jobs accounts for 98 percent of agricultural employment, 75 percent of industrial employment, and 72 percent of service employment (A.Sengupta, 2009).

The migrants were forced to return to their villages due to their precarious condition. Many migrants returned home by walking or cycling because they lacked income, food, and transportation. Physical separation was difficult due to the large number of people traveling. Over 300 migrant workers died from a variety of causes, including malnutrition, accident, and a lack of timely medical treatment. As the states relaxed their lockout limits, an influx of refugees arrived. The pains and hurdles which the workers in the unorganized faced cannot be defined with a pen and paper. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) assumed that COVID-19 crisis pushed 40 crore informal sector workers in India deeper into poverty (Srivastava, 2020).

The "aversion behavior" accounts for a large portion of the COVID-19's economic effect on the informal trading market (Mansoor., 2020). Aversive behaviors are acts people do to avoid being infected with the virus, such as limiting their outings and the government banning “non-

essential” stores, among other things. These activities have an effect on all sectors of the economy, resulting in lower incomes on both the supply and demand sides. In many situations, employees lose wages as a result of business closures, particularly in the informal economy where there is no paid leave.

The countrywide lockdown has brought all economic activities to a standstill. Thus COVID-19 has a very cascading effect on Indian Economy. The disbalance of demand and supply forces are continuing after the lockdown is lifted. During the lockdown, daily wage workers and other informal workers are the hardest hit, and they are continually harmed during the first and second wave of COVID-19. The first and second wave of COVID-19 has led to no economic activity particularly in urban areas. The lockdown has led to large scale losses of jobs and incomes in the urban areas leading to unemployment of 40 to 50 million seasonal migrant workers in India. These workers are mainly employed in the construction of urban buildings, roads, factory production and participate in several service activities. During this pandemic many firms in the informal sector are forced to shut down. The role of the urban informal sector in absorbing rural migrants (Benjamin, 2014)

### Statement of the problem

This crisis has drawn the attention of the researcher to conduct a study focussing on the cascading impact of Covid-19 on the quality of life of the workers in unorganized sector in Kolkata and North 24 parganas district. Observation and extensive literature review has reflected that Covid -19 has devastated the life of the workers in the unorganized sector. Very few studies has been conducted in this aspect. Moreover, the study also aims to highlight the aid provided by the state and central government for the upliftment of the workers in the organized sector.

### Research Objectives

More precisely the study makes an earnest attempt by highlighting on the following objectives :

- To study the various cascading impact of Covid-19 on the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector.
- To evaluate whether there exists any significant difference of the quality of life of the workers with respect to the type of workers ,age , gender and income group and also with respect to various impact of Covid-19.
- To study the various welfare and social security provisions provided by our government to the workers in the unorganized sector for improving their quality of life during this pandemic.
- To highlight some suggestive measures to uplift the unorganised sector.

### Research Methodology

The study is based on Saunders Onion Model of research (2012) referred by (Omotayo, 2015). Referring to the different peels of the research ,the research philosophy is based on Positivism followed by “Deductive research approach”, the methodological choice of the research is “Mono Method Quantitative Design”, the strategy for the research is “ Survey” and Time Horizons is cross-sectional. The primary data is collected through structured questionnaire based on Likert-5 point scale and secondary data is collected through newspapers, websites, journals , books , periodicals etc. Exploratory Research design has been considered as a part of the research. Convenient Sampling is used for data collection. The sample size is 180 (Auto drivers=54,Construction workers =42,Hawkers = 45, Rikshaw pullers= 39). Reliability of the questionnaire to measure the cascading impact on the quality of life is 0.757 . The data is analysed through SPSS-21.

### Analysis

The data is analysed through frequency analysis and descriptive statistics is stated below in Table:1

Demographic Variable	Demographic Characteristics	Autorickshaw		Construction Workers		Hawkers		Rickshaw pullers	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	46	85.2	26	61.9	36	81.8	39	100
	Female	8	14.8	16	38.1	8	18.2	0	0
Age	≥20 years and < 30 years	10	18.5	4	9.5	2	4.5	5	12.8
	≥ 30 years and < 40 years	22	40.7	16	38.1	15	34.1	19	48.7
	≥40 years and < 50 years	17	31.5	14	33.3	18	40.9	8	20.5
	≥50 years	5	9.3	8	19.0	9	20.5	7	17.9
Income	< 5000	6	11.1	6	14.3	10	22.7	7	17.9
	≥ 5000 & < 10000	20	37.0	20	33.3	12	27.3	16	41.0
	≥ 10000 & < 20000	16	29.6	16	35.7	15	34.1	10	25.6
	≥ 20000	12	22.2	12	16.7	7	15.9	6	15.4

- **Objective-1:** To study the various cascading impact of Covid-19 on the quality of life of workers in the unorganized sector.

sector is analysed through Exploratory Factor Analysis. As reflected from the Table:2, the KMO value=0.851 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity signifies Approx. Chi-Square value = 1830.252 which states that the data is fit for Exploratory Factor Analysis.

### Analysis

The various cascading impact of Covid-19 on the quality of life of workers in the unorganized

**Table:2 KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.851
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1830.252
	df	171
	Sig.	.000

Based on the Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalisation, five areas of quality of life have been identified where COVID-19 is having a very cascading impact. The 19 variables have been clubbed into five areas that is Economic impact, Social impact, Psychological impact, Impact on health and Cultural impact which are explaining 67.385% of the variance. Impact on Health (Factor 1) is explaining 25.730 % of the

variance. Economic Impact (Factor 2) accounts 13.124% of the variance. Psychological impact (Factor 3) accounts 10.610% .Social Impact (Factor 4) accounts 9.852% of the variance and Cultural impact (Factor 5) accounts 8.070% of the variance.

According to the Table:3 ,the cascading impact of COVID-19 on five areas of quality of life of the unorganised workers is explained by variance.

**Table 3: Eigen Values- Total Variance Explained with respect to all the areas of Quality of life.**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.037	37.037	37.037	7.037	37.037	37.037	4.889	25.730	25.730
2	2.030	10.683	47.720	2.030	10.683	47.720	2.493	13.124	38.853
3	1.531	8.057	55.777	1.531	8.057	55.777	2.016	10.610	49.463
4	1.213	6.386	62.163	1.213	6.386	62.163	1.872	9.852	59.315
5	.992	5.222	67.385	.992	5.222	67.385	1.533	8.070	67.385
6	.831	4.373	71.759						
7	.757	3.987	75.745						
8	.689	3.624	79.369						
9	.588	3.096	82.466						
10	.533	2.805	85.270						
11	.475	2.499	87.769						
12	.420	2.208	89.977						
13	.407	2.142	92.119						
14	.366	1.928	94.047						
15	.349	1.837	95.884						
16	.304	1.599	97.483						
17	.239	1.258	98.741						
18	.194	1.020	99.761						
19	.045	.239	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

**Table: 4-Identification of the Core Factors (Rotation Component Matrix)**

	Component				
	Social Impact	Economic Impact	Psychological impact	Impact on health	Cultural Impact
Scarcity of Livelihood		0.594			
Poverty		0.754			
Unemployment		0.626			
Underemployment		0.584			
Social rejection				0.636	
Lack of educational facilities				0.682	
Abandoned Family				0.978	
Child Labour				0.979	
Stress Burnout			0.715		
Mental Disbalance			0.719		
Lack of hospitals and isolation wards	0.763				
Lack of medicines	0.550				
Lack of vaccines	0.765				
Lack of infrastructure facilities	0.744				
Lack of doctors	0.656				
High Mortality Rate	0.834				
Practising unethical practices					0.829
Joining political parties					0.807
Superstitious					0.730

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

### The Cascading impact on the Quality of Life

**Impact on Health-** Impact on Health (Factor 1) is explaining 25.730 % of the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector. Health is one of the major concern of Covid-19 pandemic. The disease is very deadly. The second wave of this pandemic has shaken our nation. Most of the hospitals in rural and urban areas are lacking in isolation wards, shortage of oxygen, lacking medicines, vaccines , doctors and other infrastructure facilities. Even the patients who are

suffering from other diseases are not getting treatment in time. This has led to high mortality rate.

**Economic Impact-** The Economic Impact (Factor 2) explaining 13.124% of the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector. The Covid- 19 pandemic has pushed India's economy into a recession, with unorganised sector workers and semi-skilled workers losing their jobs (Tanisha Mukherjee N. R., 2020). The casual workers with little education who labour for low pay are the ones who suffer the most. The

economic impact includes scarcity of livelihood , poverty, unemployment and underemployment.

**Psychological impact-** The Psychological impact (Factor 3) is explaining 10.610%. The Covid-19 infection and the country-wide lockdown has affected the psychological well-being of the workers in the unorganised sector. Scarcity of income, burden of families has led stress burnout and mental disbalance among the workers. Many reports stated that suicide cases have been highly noticed.

**Social Impact-** The Social Impact (Factor 4) accounts 9.852% of the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector .This Covid-19 disease is highly communicable which includes social rejection. The covid victims and their families are highly neglected by the society. Children in these sector are not so much technical updated and economical sound to afford online education. According to Press Trust of India (May,2021) in Maharashtra ,due to Covid-19 infection , as many as 2,290 children have lost either one or both parents. According to the sources in the state Women and Child Development Department nearly 2,183 children have lost one parent, 107 lost both the parents. This has led to the increase of abandoned family.

This abandoned family, acute poverty has led to the increase of child labour.

**Cultural Impact-** Cultural impact (Factor 5) accounts 8.070% of the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector. To earn livelihood, sometimes workers in this sector practising some unethical practices which may be against their value system. Thus having a very negative impact on the cultural aspect of the organization. Sometimes, they are joining political parties to support their livelihood and attending many meetings violating the protocols of covid-19 pandemic. Lack of awareness is leading the workers in a superstitious world. Disobedience of covid protocols and fear of vaccination has helped them in spreading this disease.

- **Objective-2:** To evaluate whether there exists any significant difference of the quality of life of the workers with respect to the type of workers ,age , gender , income group and also with respect to various impact of Covid-19.

To substantiate the objective 2 ,the following hypothesis are framed:

**Table-5: Analysis based on Independent Sample T-test and One-Way Anova**

Hypothesis		Remarks
<p><b>H0a:</b> There exists no significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the type of workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1a:</b> There exists significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the type of workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>F=3.900;p-value=0.010&lt;0.05 (significance value) ( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	<p>H0 Rejected H1a Accepted</p>
<p><b>H0b:</b> There exists no significant difference of the</p>	<p>F=1.012; p-value=0.389&gt;0.05 (significance value)</p>	<p>H0 Accepted H1b Rejected</p>

<p>cascading impact on the quality of life based on the age of the workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1b:</b> There exists significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the age of the workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	
<p><b>H0c:</b> There exists significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the gender of workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1c:</b> There exists no significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the gender of workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>t= 0.488; Sig (2-tailed)=0.626 &gt; 0.05 (significance value) (<b>Independent Sample Test</b> )</p>	<p>H0 Accepted H1c Rejected</p>
<p><b>H0d:</b> There exists no significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the income of workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1d:</b> There exists significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the income of workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>F=0.493;p-value=0.688 &gt;0.05 (significance value) ( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	<p>H0 Accepted H1d Rejected</p>
<p><b>H0e:</b> There exists no significant difference based on economic impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1e:</b> There exists significant difference based on economic impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>F=3.599; p-value=0.015 &lt; 0.05 (significance value) ( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	<p>H0 Rejected H1e Accepted</p>
<p><b>H0f:</b> There exists no significant difference based on</p>	<p>F=1.228; Sig=0.301 &gt; 0.05 (significance value)</p>	<p>H0 Accepted H1f Rejected</p>



<p>social impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1f:</b> There exists significant difference based on social impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	
<p><b>H0g:</b> There exists no significant difference based on psychological impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1g:</b> There exists significant difference based on psychological impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>F=3.161; Sig=0.026 &lt; 0.05 (significance value) ( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	<p>H0 Rejected H1g Accepted</p>
<p><b>H0h:</b> There exists no significant difference based on impact on health among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1h:</b> There exists significant difference based on impact on health among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>F=2.175; Sig=0.093 &gt; 0.05 (significance value) ( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	<p>H0 Accepted H1h Rejected</p>
<p><b>H0i:</b> There exists no significant difference based on cultural impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p> <p><b>H1i:</b> There exists significant difference based on cultural impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.</p>	<p>F=0.772; Sig=0.511 &gt; 0.05 (significance value) ( <b>One-way Anova</b>)</p>	<p>H0 Accepted H1i Rejected</p>

**Interpretation-** There exists significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the type of workers in the unorganized sector. But there exists no significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on gender, age and income of the workers in the unorganized sector.

Besides, there exist significant difference based on economic impact and psychological impact but there exists no significant difference based on impact on health, social impact and cultural impact among the workers in the unorganized sector.

- **Objective 3-**To study the various welfare and social security provisions provided by the government to the workers in the unorganized sector for improving their quality of life during this pandemic.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the COVID-19 Economic Response Task Force, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in a live speech to the nation on March 19, 2020. On March 25th, Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced the world's largest food security scheme, touching 80 crore (800,000,000) people across the country. On March 26, the Finance Minister revealed a package of economic aid measures for the poor. With Rs 170,000 crore, the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) would provide both cash transfers and food security, with the goal of ensuring that no one goes hungry during the closure especially for those who have been worse affected by the Covid-19 lockdown i.e. the unorganised sector workers, especially daily wage workers, and urban and rural poor (Sengupta, 2020). Under this Yojana, additional 5 kg of wheat or rice at no cost for each person, one kilogram of free pulses, 200 million female Jan Dhan account holders will receive Rs.500 every month, Ujjwala beneficiaries will receive free LPG for a period of three months, MGNREGA salary increased to Rs.202 from Rs.182, 200 million female Jan Dhan account holders will receive Rs.500 every month, Poor senior citizens, widows, and disabled people receive an ex-gratia of Rs.1000, Loans of Rs.20 lakh to women's self-help organisations with no collateral, the construction workers' welfare fund will be used to the tune of Rs.31 crore by the states, States will be able to spend the district mineral fund for medical purposes (Sengupta, 2020). Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package, more than 33 crore poor individuals have received direct cash support totalling Rs 31,235 crore financial assistance (as of April 22, 2020) (PTI, 2020). On April 3, 2021 the central government distributed Rs 17,287 crore to several states to aid in the fight against coronavirus (Bureau, 2020).

Some relief measures for construction workers given by the government (Jeemol Unni, 2020).

- Under the BoCW, direct benefit transfers from cess revenues to registered workers are made.
- Government contracts that have been halted as a result of COVID-19 will be given a six-month extension to finish.
- According to a center advice, 18 states transferred Rs 1,000–5,000 from specified cess money under the BoCW Act to bank accounts of registered construction workers affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- States paid a total of Rs 2,250 crore in one-time cash benefits to nearly 18 million construction employees who were in financial hardship.
- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) would receive an additional Rs 40,000 crore, according to the government, MNREGA salaries would be enhanced by Rs 2,000 per worker as supplementary revenue to assist daily wage workers.
- These are positive steps for construction workers and other migrants who have lost their jobs as a result of the shutdown and have gone home.

The following are some of the relief initiatives that directly or indirectly aided street vendors (Jeemol Unni, 2020):

- 50 lakh street vendors will receive Rs 10,000 in working capital under a special liquidity scheme.
- Under the Ujjwala scheme, families living below the poverty line (BPL) will receive free cylinders for three months.
- 20 crore Jan Dhan women account holders will be benefited with a compensation of Rs 500 per month for the forthcoming next three months entitled to all women with accounts.

According to the instruction of the Supreme Court ,the Centre and states must accelerate the registration of workers in the unorganised sector by developing a portal with the help of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) for providing them the benefits of welfare schemes till July 31,2021. The Supreme Court has given all states and union territories until July 31 to adopt the "one nation, one ration card" programme for migrants. (India, 2021).

According to data received from the states, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) reported that 9,346 children had lost at least one of their parents to the fatal illness, with over 1,700 having lost both parents. The states has been given instruction to prepare a database of children in distress and upload the data on the Track Child portal (Trust, 2021).Dependent family members of such people (who died of Covid) will be entitled to a pension equivalent to 90% of the worker's average daily income, as per current regulations with effect from 24.03.2020 and for all such cases till 24.03.2022. Children who have lost parents to Covid will receive a monthly stipend after they age18, as well as a fund of ten lakh rupees from PM-CARES when they turn 23. (Akhilesh Sharma, 2021).

The honourable chief minister of West Bengal has implemented a scheme for the poor by distributing 5 kilograms of food grain per person, per month implemented in April 2020 and till continuing to cover 10 crore beneficiaries. To help both the migrant and informal workers, Ms. Mamta Banerjee has started health scheme called Swasthya Sathi and the financial assistance given under the Prochesta Prokolpo scheme. (Anuja, 2021).

## Findings

The Covid-19 has very badly affected the life of the workers in the unorganised sector. The condition of these informal workers is very perilous as they are not appropriately protected by the state or their employers. They work for minimal wages, under terrible working conditions, and without legal protection. In the

middle of the horrific images of India's migration crisis, West Bengal is not far behind. As the main transit point for migrants from various districts in West Bengal and Northeast India, Kolkata's principal inter-state rail terminus, the Howrah Station, has evolved into a pit of stranded migrant laborers. They don't have enough food, water, or sanitary facilities. The crisis has wreaked havoc on West Bengal's rural economy, since rural wages are expected to plummet following the lockdown due to an abundance of unskilled labor, when migrants return to their villages.

Bengal's Chief Minister wrote to 18 state governments on March 26th, requesting that they develop a coordinated method to rescue migrants across the country. The crisis will wreak havoc on West Bengal's rural economy, since rural wages are expected to plummet following the lockdown due to an abundance of unskilled labor when migrants return to their villages. Despite initiatives such as the opening of 27 night shelters for stranded migrants in Kolkata, stringent directives to employers not to withhold salaries, the distribution of food, and so on, a huge portion of migrant hardship, particularly in rural Bengal, remains underreported.

Again the facilities provided by the State and Central regarding free supply of food is received by the rural community. The daily income of the rickshaw pullers and auto drivers has dropped highly due to lockdown and covid protocols. The meagre income has drastically affected their quality of life. The sudden stoppage of trains and buses landed many hawkers jobless.

Based on the survey the five areas of quality of life have been acknowledged where COVID-19 is having a very cascading impact that is the 19 variables have been clubbed into five areas that is Economic impact, Social impact, Psychological impact, Impact on health and Cultural impact which are explaining 67.385% of the variance. Impact on Health (Factor 1) is explaining 25.730 % of the variance. Economic Impact (Factor 2) accounts 13.124% of the variance. Psychological impact (Factor 3) accounts 10.610% .Social

Impact (Factor 4) accounts 9.852% of the variance and Cultural impact (Factor 5) accounts 8.070% of the variance.

The analysis based on **Table:5** reflect that there exists significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on the type of workers in the unorganized sector. But there exists no significant difference of the cascading impact on the quality of life based on gender, age and income of the workers in the unorganized sector. Besides, there exist significant difference based on economic impact and psychological impact but there exists no significant difference based on impact on health ,social impact and cultural impact among the workers in the unorganized sector. According to the analysis, the quality of life of the construction workers is badly affected, reflected from the mean value=37.36 highest among all the workers. All workers are equally threatened with this pandemic irrespective of their age, gender and income. Considering the impact, the pandemic has severely affected the economic stability of the construction workers which is reflected from the mean value= 8.62 highest among all the type of workers as most of the construction workers have migrated from different states and are jobless. Scarcity of jobs and source of earning has landed them under extreme psychological stress depicted from the mean value=4.24.

Thus the life of the construction workers is badly affected by this pandemic compared to auto drivers, hawkers and rickshaw pullers.

Considering the medical facilities, the workers in the unorganized sector are not having proper facilities in this respect i.e. covid test is very expensive, free vaccine is out of stock in West Bengal, there is a huge rush in the free vaccination centre ,not following the covid protocols, people are standing in the queue from late night and paid vaccine is highly expensive .Without vaccine construction workers are not allowed to join their work.

The children of the workers in the unorganized sector are completely away from this hybrid mode of education. They are neither financially sound nor technically upgraded to go for

technical gadgets to continue their children online mode of education. This is creating a huge gap in the dissemination of knowledge in the country.

### Recommendations

This paper has reflected the various cascading impact on the quality of life of the workers in the unorganized sector. To cope up with this situation our central and state governments has declared several measures. But still their quality of life has not improved. The government is lacking in execution part. The intermediaries who are involved in the execution of these measures are black-marketing the free supply of food. As a result , the needy people are not getting the adequate food supply. Thus the researcher highlights certain points which can bring some change in the quality of life of the workers.

Firstly, the government should implement strict rules towards dispensing the food supply to the end customers. Any type of black marketing should be punished. The government new policy i.e. registration of workers in the unorganised sector and "one nation, one ration card" programme for migrants is a great initiative.

Secondly, to continue in online mode of education, the children in the unorganized sector should be provided with appropriate technical gadgets. All the schools in the urban and rural areas will be entitled to distribute these gadgets to the students by maintaining the covid protocols. The school authorities should also train and monitor the students and the guardians their teaching pedagogy through these gadgets. Child labour has been stimulated highly by this pandemic. Not only the Government but every citizen of the India should take initiative to prohibit this unethical practice. The decision of the Supreme Court to the states to prepare a database of children in distress and upload the data on the Track Child portal for financial assistance can really improve their condition of living.

Thirdly, the prime concern is regarding the healthcare facilities. Adequate free vaccination centre should be organized by maintaining the Covid-19 protocols .The price of Covid-19 test

kit should be minimized. The government hospitals and isolation centre should be increased with adequate medicine and oxygen facilities. The Covid treatment should be given free of cost. More initiatives and strict protocols should be undertaken to make awareness among the workers in the unorganized sector about the severity of the pandemic.

Fourthly, as responsible citizens, we must promote community kitchen, free distribution of

masks and sanitizers, collaborating with NGOs in distributing free food packets, grocery products, copies and stationaries to the underprivileged children. Thus, it is the responsibility of both the government and us to uplift this sector for the development of Indian economy.

## Conclusion

**“No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”**

an architect of the nation. The Covid-19 pandemic has devastated the life of the workers in the unorganized sector. Policymakers must be prepared to scale up their response as events develop in order to reduce the shock's impact on both the formal and informal sectors and pave the way for a long-term recovery. The livelihoods of informal labourers must be rebuilt as soon as possible. In both rural and urban areas, these efforts should be focused on establishing decent work with decent minimum salaries. To combat resource poverty, it is also necessary to guarantee that marginalized groups have secure access to land, water, and forests, as well as access to adequate credit, insurance, and other financial services. Improved living conditions for informal workers, particularly in metropolitan areas, must be prioritized through social housing and workers' hostels. It is also important to enhance their working conditions by tightening and enforcing labor laws and putting in place appropriate safeguards, such as those that allow for safe movement and limit the risk of human trafficking and slavery. Finally, all workers must have adequate social security and access to inexpensive and high-quality public services, such as education and healthcare.

These lines clearly signifies that every labour whether from organized or unorganized sector is

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