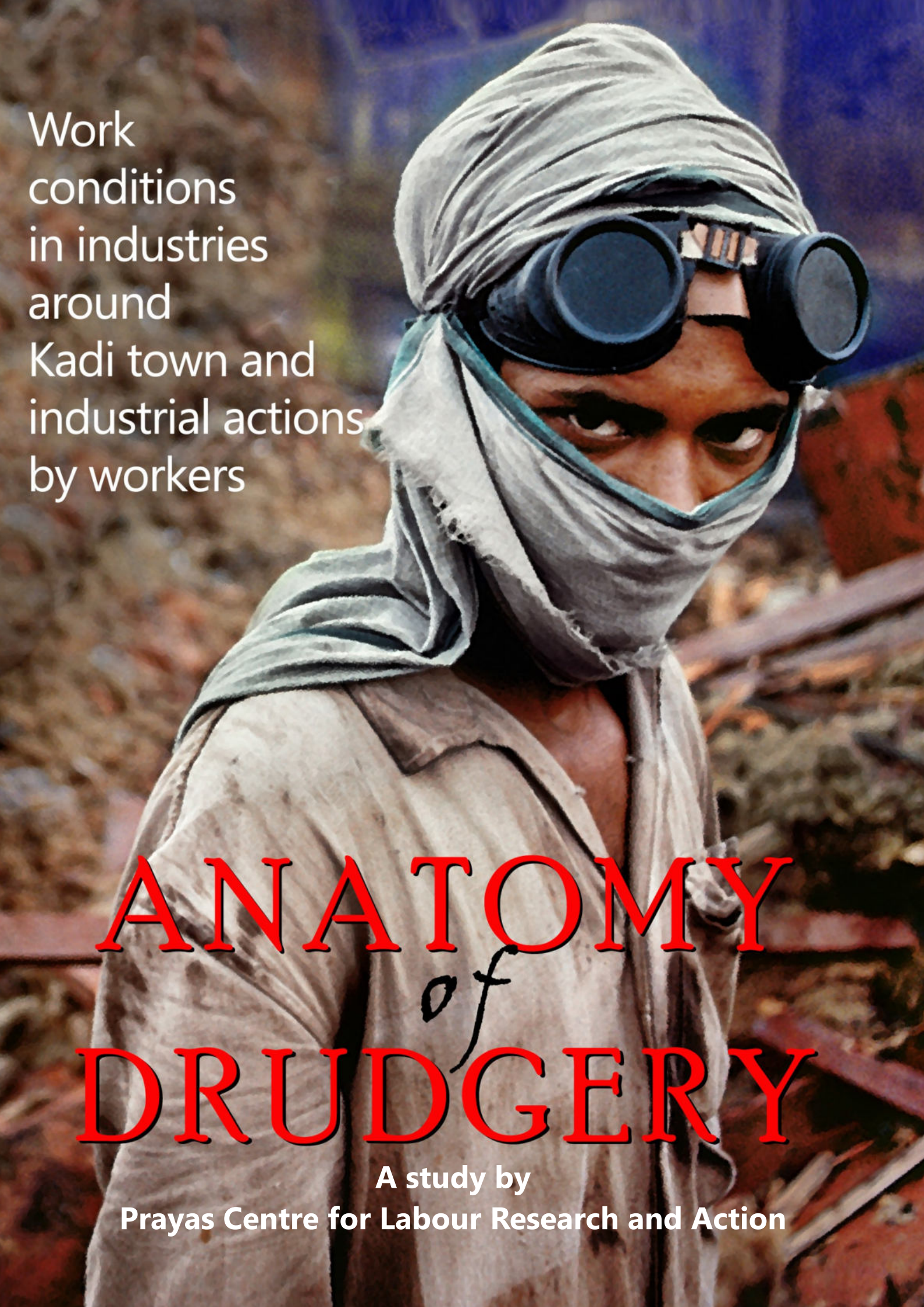




Prayas Centre for Labour
Research and Action (PCLRA)



Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

A photograph of a worker in an industrial setting. The worker is wearing a light-colored, possibly white or grey, headscarf or turban that covers their head and neck. They are also wearing large, black, round goggles with a strap across their forehead. The worker's face is partially visible through the opening of the headscarf. They are wearing a light-colored, possibly white or grey, shirt. The background is a blurred industrial environment with various structures and materials.

Work
conditions
in industries
around
Kadi town and
industrial actions
by workers

ANATOMY *of* DRUDGERY

A study by
Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action

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CONTINUANCE OF PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION: INDUSTRIALIZATION IN KADI AND KALOL

Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action



**Prayas Centre for Labour
Research and Action (PCLRA)**



Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Industrial Development in India has been fostered by the formation of industrial clusters in hitherto unindustrialized areas. While these have aided economic growth, they have, at the same time provided the industrialists with cheap, unorganized labour as labour laws are not strictly enforced in these new industrial areas. The present study of the condition of industrial labour was undertaken in two such industrial areas in Gujarat. One is in Kadi Taluka in Mehsana district and the other in Kalo Taluka in Gandhinagar district (close to the traditional industrial city of Ahmedabad). The objectives of the study are as follows:

- 1) Enumeration of the various industries operating in the study area along with the workforce that is employed in them in various operations.
- 2) Documentation of the profile of industrial labour in the study area in terms of geographical area of origin (migrant versus local), caste/ community, language, education and gender.
- 3) Evaluation of the Working conditions: wages, hours of work, contractual relationship, conditions of work, social security and the level of unionization in these areas.

The data for this study comprises of secondary research of government and industry data and primary research through case studies and a questionnaire survey.

The study establishes that labour laws are not being implemented in the study areas and there is immense scope for organization of the work force that would help them demand their rights. The main conclusions are as follows:

- i) The firms in which the respondents of the study work are mostly doing fairly well as far as growth in income, profit after tax and balance sheet statements are concerned but they are not giving the benefit of this growth to their workers.
- ii) Most of the workers are not being paid minimum wages, statutory benefits or other facilities
- iii) Most of the workers are employed on contract either by the company itself or by contractors without any formal agreement.
- iv) Union formation is actively discouraged by the employers and the administration and police side with the management in cases of strikes. So, there is considerable fear among the respondents that their jobs will be taken away if they organize. This is despite the fact that they are aware that they are being exploited by being given almost half the wages as compared to what they need to lead a dignified life.
- v) Women are mostly given packaging work and are paid less than men. They do not get maternity leave and other statutory gender benefits.
- vi) The general caste workers get considerably more in wages compared those from the SC, ST and OBC categories.
- vii) There are a large number of migrant workers, but their living conditions are not proper as they are housed within the factory premises. They are warned by the employers to not interact with local people. Consequently, very few among them agreed to participate in the survey.

It is not just the smaller companies but even big companies like Adani, Arvind, Nirma, Torrent, Hitachi and the like in the study area are flouting labour laws at will and employing workers on contract without giving them proper wages and other statutory benefits. The labour bureaucracy is not fulfilling its mandate to monitor these factories and see to it that all the labour laws are being implemented. They do not even have proper data on the labour working in these factories.

Marx's concept of primitive accumulation – wherein labour is displaced from agriculture to create an industrial reserve army that depresses wages in the absence of unionization – is very much in evidence in the study area. Even though Marx had introduced this concept to explain the process of initial capital accumulation in the early stages of capitalism, the neoliberal economic development from the 1990s onwards has created a milieu wherein outsourcing of work to smaller factories in newer industrial areas where there is no unionization has led to the continuation of the process of primitive accumulation. The state, too, is supportive of this process to the detriment of the rights of the workers. This is very much in evidence in the study area.

FOREWORD

Gujarat is one of the states with high economic growth. It is known as 'industrial friendly' state, providing tax holidays, credits with low interests, cheap electricity, water and other subsidies to industrialists so that they can maximize their profit. Of the 121 billionaires in the country, 58 are from Gujarat. And, among the ten richest, four are Gujaratis. According to the government of Gujarat socio-economic survey the value of output at current prices of all registered factories on an average increase of around ten per cent every year. At the same time, on the human development index, Gujarat's rank is 19th among Indian states, indicating social and economic condition of the vast majority. Exploitative condition of the working class of formal and informal sector, who toil to produce wealth, is pathetic.

The present micro empirical study of two industrial locations of north Gujarat highlights the vulnerable working condition of the labourers. The study is based on interviews with 404 workers of 81 medium, small and micro manufacturing industries. Besides quantitative data, the monograph presents four case studies of industries focusing on work condition of the workers, incidents of protests and strikes by labourers against low wages, inhumane working condition and for social security. On the basis of balance-sheet of medium scale industries, the study shows that these industries, except four earn profit.

Though the workers work in factories which are considered as an organised formal sector, many of them are employed on contract either by the company itself or by contractors without any formal agreement. Besides them, there are a number of migrant workers who are housed within factory premises under surveillance and the research team could not talk to them. The study shows that most of the workers are not being paid minimum wages. They do not get benefits like maternity leave, weekly paid holiday and other facilities as per labour laws. The average monthly wage of women is Rs 7227 while that of men is Rs 9942. One-fourth of the workers get less than Rs. 7000 per month. Only a very tiny number, less than four per cent get twenty thousand or more per month. They are largely from upper castes. The workers belonging to the deprived communities such as SC, OBCs and STs generally get less wages than that of the upper castes. Women experience discrimination. They are paid less than men, even for similar work. On an average a labourer works for more than eight hours a day. Some of them work for ten hours, and also sometimes for sixteen hours a day. All of them do not get weekly paid holidays. The companies do not file reports regularly to labour and social welfare departments of the government regarding their compliance of various laws. This is the mandatory. But the labour department whose responsibility is to look after the welfare of the workers neither pressurize the factory owners to get the mandatory reports nor monitor the working condition of the factories.

The case studies record that labourers live under the fear that if they raise their voice and put demands and/or get organised and join trade union they would lose their job. Hence, the workers of most of the factories are unorganised. But, their working condition and low wages compel them some times to raise their legitimate demands for more wages

and statutory benefits. Once in a while, they gather courage and resort to strikes. The study documents briefly a few strikes in the factories under the case studies. Because of their vulnerable economic condition, internal social differentiation among workers, lack of leadership, a pro-management attitude of some unions and also management's manipulative tactics in connivance with the state machinery, many strikes do not sustain for long period. Notwithstanding this, a few strikes have also succeeded. They resulted in pay hike, improvement in working conditions, enhancement of social and infrastructure benefits and also enhancement of their legal status from casual/contract/temporary to permanent workers.

I congratulate Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action for undertaking this study. I hope the dissemination of the findings of the study would sensitize the middle class about the plight of the labourers. One also hopes that social activists would not only deliberate the findings of the study and its conclusion but also discuss ways and means to develop working-class consciousness, their unity to struggle for justice and rights.

Prof. Ghanshyam Shah



anatomy

of

a*rudgery*

1 Introduction

Industrial development in the country has been fostered by the government by the creation of industrial clusters in hitherto non-industrial areas by providing some basic amenities like roads, subsidized plots of land, electricity and the streamlining of administrative processes for setting up factories (Roth, 1970). These industrial clusters have, over the years, indeed contributed to economic growth (Narayana, 2014). However, in this process they have also benefited the entrepreneurs setting up their units there, by freeing them from the need to negotiate with organized labour in the traditional industrial areas in the cities (Industrial Union, 2018).

Consequently, many established industries also shifted their factories out of the cities to such industrial areas because they provided greater possibilities of surplus extraction from unorganized labour. Thus, not only is the condition of labour working in these industrial areas poor but the exodus of industries has led to the weakening of the trade union movement in the cities.

This is the context in which the present study of the condition of industrial labour was undertaken in two industrial areas in Gujarat, one in Kadi Taluka in Mehsana district and the other in Kalol Taluka in Gandhinagar district, which is close to the traditional industrial



Figure 1: Map of Gujarat Showing the Study Area
Source: Adapted from Maps of India

2 Objectives and Methodology of the Study



filed with the Labour Departments in Kadi and Kalol but apart from a list of factories this did not elicit any information regarding the type and number of workers and whether labour laws were being implemented. It appears that the factory owners are not filing the mandatory labour returns (given in Annexure -1) and neither is the Labour Department insisting that they do. The industry department, too, does not have much data and whatever little data has been garnered is from the research publications of commercial economic and market research companies.

Primary data collection was hampered by the reluctance of workers to give any information, fearing that it may be used

against them if the factory management came to know of it.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Enumeration of the various industries operating in the study area along with the workforce that is employed in them in various operations.
2. Documentation of the profile of industrial labour in the study area in terms of geographical area of origin (migrant versus local), caste/ community, language, education and gender.
3. Evaluation of the working conditions: wages, hours of work, contractual relationship, conditions of work, social security and the level of unionization.

Secondary research was done by reviewing various government documents and industry publications. A questionnaire survey was administered to 404 factory workers selected at random by the enumerators, who were themselves local workers with high-school level education. There is very little data on the industrial and labour situation in the study area with the government. Applications under the Right to Information (RTI) Act were

Even though there are substantial numbers of migrant labourers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha, only a few among them were surveyed. These workers are made to live in quarters built in the factory premises. Even when they come out during the weekly off days, they are warned not to interact with the local people. Thus, even though a list of factories had been selected on the basis of the secondary research, from which ten workers each were to be surveyed, this could not be done and so labourers were surveyed on the basis of whoever was prepared to answer the questionnaire. Four case studies were also prepared of strike actions that had taken place in the study area (see Annexure-3).

3 Demographic and Industrial Profiles of the Study

The demographic and industrial profiles of the two districts of Mehsana and Gandhinagar in which the study area is situated are given as follows.

Mehsana district is divided into 10 talukas, namely, Mehsana, **Kadi**, Visnagar, Vijapur, Unjha, Becharaji, Vadnagar, Kheralu, Jotana and Satlasana. Asia's second largest diary "Doodh Sagar Milk-Cooperative Diary" and largest market yard, 'Unjha', are located here. The district has witnessed substantial industrial development over the years, especially in engineering and food processing sectors. Large companies like Nirma, Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) are present here. McCain Foods, a large multi-national food processing firm is operating in this region. Approximately 70 medium and large-scale industries across engineering, chemical, pharmaceutical, dairy products, agro-

processing, oil and textile sectors are present in the district. These are mainly concentrated in Kadi, Mehsana, Visnagar, Vijapur and Becharaji talukas. Some of the major corporations are: Hitachi, Torrent, Hester Pharma, Nirma, McCain, Ashima Fabrics, Vimal Oils and Foods and Apollo Engineering. The demographic characteristics of the district are given in the Table 1 and Table 2.

The literacy level is quite high and has increased substantially over the decade between 2001 and 2011. The sex ratio, too, has improved over the decade and the decadal growth rate is fairly low.

Clearly, there is a substantial proportion of industrial workers in Mehsana district, which is almost equal to the combined proportion of cultivators and agricultural labour. The work participation rate of main workers is considerably

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Mehsana District

District	Population 2001			Sex Ratio 2001	Lit. (%) 2001	Population 2011			Sex Ratio 2011	Lit. (%) 2011	Density / Sq. Km		Decadal Growth (%)
	(in '000)					(in '000)					2001	2011	
Mehsana	Persons	Male	Female			Persons	Male	Female					
	1,838	954	884	927	75.2	2,028	1,053	974	924	83.6	419	462	10.3

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011

Table 2: Classification of Workers for Mehsana (2011)*

Mehsana	Total Population	Main Workers					Marginal Workers
		Cultivators	Agricultural Labour	Household Industrial Worker	Other Workers	Total	
Persons	2,028	179	193	7	320	812	113
Proportion (%)	100.0	8.8	9.5	0.3	15.8	40.0	5.6

* All Figures in '000. Source: Census 2011

Table 3: MSME Units Registered in Mehsana District

Mehsana	Only 2006-07	Upto March '08*	Upto March '09*	Upto March '10*	Upto March '11*	Upto March '12*	Upto March '13*	Upto March '14*
Number	129	530	813	1,013	1,345	1,579	1,801	2,049
Growth Rate (%)		310.9	53.4	24.6	32.8	17.4	14.1	13.8

*Cumulative figures, Source: Department of MSME, Gujarat

Table 4: Distribution of Units, Investment and Workers for Different Categories (2014)*

Mehsana	Micro			Small			Medium			Total		
	Units	Invest.	Emp.	Units	Invest.	Emp.	Unit	Invest.	Emp.	Units	Invest.	Emp.
Amount	1,308	261.45	12,586	683	1,286.85	17,332	58	517.92	5,306	2,049	2,066.23	35,224
Proportion	63.8	12.7	35.7	33.3	62.2	49.2	2.8	25.1	15.1	100	100	100

*Investment in Rs Crores, *Source:* Department of MSME, Gujarat

Table 5: Large Units Under Implementation in Mehsana (1983–2014)*

Mehsana	Rs 0–10 Crore			Rs 10–50 Crore			Rs 50–100 Crore			>Rs 100 Crore			Total		
	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.
Amount	46	110	2,535	16	351	6,503	6	433	1,234	7	2,335	2,982	75	3,229	13,254
Prop.(%)	61.3	3.4	19.1	21.3	10.9	49.1	8.0	13.4	9.3	9.3	72.3	22.5	100	100	100

*Investment in Rs Crores, *Source:* Department of Industries, Gujarat

higher than the Indian average of 30.4 percent.

The data regarding the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in Mehsana district which have been registered as per the provisions of the MSME Act are given in Table 3 and Table 4.

The growth rate in the number of MSME units in the district is very impressive, with a compound annual growth rate of 25 percent for the six-year period from 2007–8 to 2013–14. The distribution of units across various categories is given in Table 4, as follows.

Small enterprises contribute most to investment and employment even though their number is less than that of the micro enterprises. Micro enterprises contribute the least to overall investment. The investment to employment ratio is Rs 2.1 lakhs per worker for micro enterprises, Rs 7.42 lakhs per worker for small enterprises and Rs 9.76 lakhs per worker for medium enterprises. The average investment per worker for the whole MSME sector is Rs 5.9 lakhs. Thus, micro enterprises require the lowest investment per employment generated. The investments and subsequent employment in large units of with varied investment levels is presented in Table 5.

Table 6: Number of Registered Factories and Number of Workers in Mehsana (2008–11)

Mehsana	Year			
	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of Factories	1,522	1,577	1,626	1,662
Number of Workers	69,588	73,353	76,928	80,208
Workers per Factory	46	47	47	48

Source: Office of the Chief Inspector of Factories, Ahmedabad

Once again, we see that the smaller enterprises among the large units are greater in number and contribute more to employment creation. The investment is Rs 4.3 lakhs per worker for units of less than Rs 10 crores investment while it is Rs 5.4 lakhs per worker for units of size worth Rs 10 to 50 crores, Rs 35.1 lakhs per worker for units of 50 to 100 crores and 78.3 lakhs per worker for units of 100 crores and above. The average investment is Rs 24.4 lakhs per worker. Thus, as is the case with MSMEs, it is the smaller units that require less investment per employment created. The total employment in factories in Mehsana district is given in Table 6. The growth in employment is very low with a compound annual growth rate of just 5 percent over the three years. Moreover, the total number of factory workers in the district constitutes

Table 7: Demographic Characteristics of Gandhinagar District:

District	Population 2001 (in '000)			Sex Ratio 2001	Lit (%) 2001	Population 2011 (in '000)			Sex Ratio 2011	Lit (%) 2011	Density / Sq. Km.		Decadal Growth (%)
	Persons	Males	Females			Persons	Males	Females			2001	2011	
Gandhi- nagar	1,335	698	637	913	76.6	1387	722	665	921	84.2	617	660	3.9

Source: Census 2001, Census 2011

Table 8: Classification of Workers in Gandhinagar (2011)*

Gandhinagar	Total	Main Workers					Marginal workers
		Cultivators	Agricultural labourers	Household industrial workers	Other workers	Total main workers	
Persons	1,387	98	97	6	251	535	83
Proportion (%)	100.0	7.1	7.1	0.4	18.1	38.6	6.0

* All Figures in '000, Source: Census 2011

just 25.1 percent of the 'other worker' category in the Census 2011 data. This means that as much as 74.9 percent of other workers are either self employed or casual workers in Mehsana, despite considerable industrialization. Thus, there is an uncertain livelihood situation, which, along with the lack of unionization, serves to keep wages low in the district.

Gandhinagar is the administrative capital of Gujarat and therefore the district has received significant investments from the state government. There are four talukas in the district, namely, Gandhinagar, **Kalol**, Mansa, and Degham. Traditionally, the sectors such as food processing, electronics and textiles have dominated the industrial scene in the district. Recently, the district has also been targeted by information technology and information technology-enabled services sector companies for opening of their offices and service units here. Ceramics and office stationery units have come up in the recent years due to the access to the urban localities of Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad. Due to its proximity to the agricultural districts such as Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Banaskantha, Kheda, Anand, etc., it has received significant administrative push for

establishing food processing units here. There were 330 medium and large-scale industries in Gandhinagar in 2007, most of which were located in Kalol (203 units). In the last decade, though, the state government has shown interest in establishing dedicated industrial parks in other parts of the district. The demographic characteristics of the district are given in Tables 7 and 8.

The literacy level is quite high and has increased substantially over the decade between 2001 and 2011. The sex ratio has improved slightly over the decade and the decadal growth rate is very low.

The proportion of industrial workers in the district is more than the combined proportion of cultivators and agricultural labour. The work participation rate of main workers is also higher than the Indian average of 30.4 percent.

Data regarding MSME in the district which have been registered as per the provisions of the MSME Act are given in Tables 9 and 10.

The growth rate in the number of MSME units in the district is very impressive with a compound annual growth rate of 31 percent in the six-year period

Table 9: MSME Units Registered in Gandhinagar

	Only 2006-07	Upto March '08*	Upto March '09*	Upto March '10*	Upto March '11*	Upto March '12*	Upto March '13*	Upto March '14*
Units	109	547	902	1,252	1,653	2,114	2,496	2,862
Growth Rate (%)		401.8	64.9	38.8	32.0	27.9	18.1	14.7

* Cumulative figures, Source: Department of MSME, Gujarat

Table 10: Distribution of Units, Investment and Workers for Different Categories (2014)*

Gandhi-nagar	Micro			Small			Medium			Total		
	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.
Amount	1,879	388.89	19,662	921	1,612.87	26,168	62	556.77	4,823	2,862	2,558.54	50,653
Prop. (%)	65.7	15.2	38.8	32.2	63.0	51.9	2.2	21.8	9.5	100	100	100

*Investment in Rs Crores, *Source:* Department of MSME, Gujarat

Table 11: Large Units Implemented in Gandhinagar (1983–2014)*

Gandhi Nagar	Rs 0–10 Cr.			Rs 10–50 Cr.			Rs 50–100 Cr.			>Rs 100 Cr.			TOTAL		
	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.	Units	Inv.	Emp.
Amount	38	78	4,352	25	576	2,830	4	241	3,303	3	539	8,584	70	1,434	19,069
Prop (%)	54.3	5.4	22.8	35.7	40.2	14.8	5.7	16.8	17.3	4.3	37.6	45	100	100	100

*Investment in Rs Crores, *Source:* Department of Industries, Gujarat

between 2007–8 and 2013–14. The distribution of units across various categories is given in Table 10.

Like in the case of Mehsana, even in Gandhinagar it is the small enterprises that contribute most to investment and employment, even though their number is less than that of the micro enterprises. The micro enterprises contribute the least to overall investment. The investment to employment ratio is Rs 2.0 lakhs per worker for micro enterprises, Rs 6.2 lakhs per worker for small enterprises and Rs 11.5 lakhs per worker for medium enterprises. The average investment per worker for the whole MSME sector is Rs 5.1 lakhs. Thus, like in the case of Mehsana, in Gandhinagar also micro enterprises require the lowest investment per employment created. The investment and employment in large units of various investment levels is given in Table 11.

As in the case of Mehsana in Gandhinagar too, the smaller enterprises among the large units are greater in number and contribute more to employment creation. The investment is Rs 4.3 lakhs per worker for units of less than Rs 10 crore, while it is Rs 20.4 lakhs per worker for units of size Rs 10 to 50 crores, Rs 6.3 lakhs per worker for units of 50 to 100 crores and 7.3 lakhs per worker for units of 100 crores and above. The average investment is Rs 7.5 lakhs per worker. Unlike for Mehsana in Gandhinagar the units with higher investments in the large category have less

Table 12: Number of Registered Factories and Workers in Gandhinagar (2008–11)

Gandhinagar	Year			
	2008	2009	2010	2011
No. of Factories	351	353	404	429
No. of Workers	25,886	26,326	29,441	30,981
Workers/Factory	74	75	73	72

Source: Office of the Chief Inspector of Factories, Ahmedabad.

investment per worker and the average investment per worker is also much less. The total employment in factories in Gandhinagar district is given in Table 12 below. The growth in employment is very low with a compound annual growth rate of just 5 percent over the three years like in the case of Mehsana district. Also even more so than for Mehsana, in Gandhinagar, the total number of factory workers in the district, constitute just 12.3 percent of the other worker category in the Census 2011 data. This means that as much as 87.7 percent of the other workers are self employed in Gandhinagar despite even greater industrialization. Thus, overall there is considerable livelihood insecurity in the study area as a whole which along with the lack of unionization serves to keep wages down in the district. The number of workers per factory at 73 is higher in Gandhinagar than the 47 in Mehsana district.

4 Inter-State Migration in

Gujarat and Migrant Workers' Profile in the Study Area

Interstate migration for work is a major phenomenon in India. It arises from the unequal development and disparities among the Indian states and the propensity of employers in the developed states to employ migrant labour instead of local labour so as to avoid unionization and keep wages down. A fast growing and urbanising state like Gujarat which has huge investments, is a favourable destination for migrants after Delhi and Maharashtra. It received 4.2 percent of all in-migrants in India in 2008 (MoSPI, 2010). Most of

the migrants are from the state of Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar. Surat, Vadodara, Ahmedabad and Rajkot are the main destinations in Gujarat and this extends to Gandhinagar and Mehsana districts which are close to Ahmedabad. As mentioned earlier most of these migrants are housed in quarters within the factory premises and prevented from unionization.

5 Strikes by Unions in the Study area

There have been some major strikes by unionized workers in the study area over wages and working conditions in the past which have been reported in the press in the following companies:

Arvind Limited (*Times of India*, 2015)
Sintex Industries (*Business Standard*, 2013)
Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (*India Today*, 2013)

There have been more strikes in recent times and case studies of these have been conducted including the one that took place in Arvind Mills. The brief summaries of these case studies are presented here the details of which are given in Annexure- 2.

Cengres Tiles Limited: This company manufactures vitrified ceramic tiles of various kinds. It employs 190 workers directly but paying less for longer hours of work and another 200 workers through a contractor. The directly employed workers aligned with the KamdarBiri Union and began half day work stop protests once a week demanding higher wages and lesser working hours, full medical assistance in case of accidents and timely payment of salaries. While some demands were met the rise in wages was minimal. So

the workers joined the Gujarat Mazdoor Sabha and went on a 3-day strike in March 2019. The management initially gave in to the demands and signed an agreement for wage increases, bonus and subsidised food in the factory canteen. However, from May 2019 onwards they barred the 190 workers from entering the factory. The workers then sat on a hunger strike in front of the factory but the police intervened on being informed by the management and the strikers were dispersed. Eventually the workers have filed a case in the labour court which is pending but they have not yet been able to regain employment in the company which has reduced production and is instead sourcing tiles from other units to sell under its brand name. The majority of 190 workers were local people and had been working for close to a decade in the case of some workers. These protesting workers were replaced by migrant sub contracted workers. This replacement has led to a fall in the production.

Johnson Controls-Hitachi Airconditioning India Limited: This company is a multinational company of repute that manufactures airconditioners and other cooling equipment. There were some 300 skilled



workers who had been working for more than a decade on contract. The management decided to enrol about 100 of them as permanent employees in 2012. The workers went on strike demanding that all of them be employed as permanent workers. After a protracted struggle of five months under the banner of the Gujarat Mazdoor Mahasabha the striking workers succeeded in reaching an agreement with the management for the employment of all as permanent workers. While this strike was successful another launched in 2015 by temporary contract workers was not and it is still continuing. These workers are employed only during the summer months when the demand for air conditioners is more. During the strike of 2012 by the other workers these workers were employed for more time but once the strike was over and the striking workers employed as permanent employees, the temporary workers were laid off and engaged only for temporary work in summer. These 600 workers are on strike since 2015 for employment as permanent workers but the management is not heeding their demands.

Arvind Limited: This company is one of the largest in the area and employs 15,000 workers. It is the largest textile company in India and is associated with major international brands. However, it employs much less workers than is required by the work and so the pressure of work on the workers is high. The management clamps down heavily on any dissent by workers. The dissenting workers were punished by being made to sit in front of the Human Resources Managers office. Workers who have been working for many years have not been made permanent and continue to work on contract. There is a union in the factory affiliated to the Mazdoor Mahajan. However, the union was not addressing the problems of the workers. This caused unrest that resulted in a flash strike in 2015 that was initiated by anonymous phone messages and pamphlets. The strike went on for three days as thousands of workers struck work and remained adamant. Eventually a settlement was reached but instead of the Rs 3,000 hike in monthly wages demanded by the workers only Rs 800 per month increase was granted. The union was

formalised and 45 leaders were nominated as representatives of workers in various departments. However, later the company began victimising the strike leaders in various ways and then terminated their employment. These leaders then went to court but their cases are still pending.

Gemstone Glass Private Limited: This company manufactures mosaic tiles. There are 350 workers with women being more in number and involved in the production processes of designing and sheet making in addition to the traditional work of packaging and housekeeping that women do in most factories. The workers are all on contract and are given stints of only 5 or 6 days followed by 2 to 3 days off before being employed for another stint. The workers went on strike in April 2019 demanding continuous employment instead of the arbitrary off days in between. 100 workers who were contracted by the company and 50 workers who were contracted through a contractor participated in the strike which continued for 45 days. They sat in front of the factory gate demanding a rise in basic pay, various allowances, recognition as employees of the factory so that they could get social security benefits and bonus. The workers were aligned with the Gujarat Federation of Trade Unions and this bolstered their strike action so that eventually they were able to get the management to agree to giving uniforms, work for 26 days a month, a rise in basic pay of Rs 800 month and travel allowance of Rs 1,000 per month. They also got provident fund and gratuity benefits, eight hour shifts and bonus payments.

Thus, even though there have been a few strike actions by the workers they have not yielded much in terms of secure well paid employment in most cases. Apart from the Gujarat Federation of Trade Unions, the other unions have not fought for workers' rights consistently. Consequently, there is not much faith among workers in the study area that unionization can improve their working conditions without jeopardising their jobs altogether. Very few workers were prepared to talk to the enumerators in front of their factories and so most of the workers were interviewed in their homes. Even so, they said that their names should not be revealed to anyone.

6

Characteristics of the factories studied

Though data specific to Kadi and Kalol with regard to the number of factories and workers is not available, it can be roughly estimated from the data for Mehsana and Gandhinagar districts that has been mentioned earlier that there are upwards of 2000 factories and 50,000 workers in the study area. This is a fairly large universe that can be considered to be a normal distribution and so statistically the sample size required is $n = t^2 \times p(1-p)/m^2$, where t = confidence level at 95% (standard value of 1.96 for a normal distribution), p = prevalence of factory workers in the total workforce which is 0.1, m = margin of error which is 0.05 (FAO, 1990). Thus, for

the present study $n = 1.96^2 \times 0.1(1-0.1)/0.05^2 = 138$. Allowing for design effect $D=1.5$ due to stratification the required sample size is 207. A total of 404 respondents were surveyed from 81 factories of which 23 are in Kalol and the rest 58 are in Kadi and so this satisfies the sample size requirements. The industry cluster wise distribution of these factories is given in Table 13. It is noteworthy that overall 37.5 percent of the registered factories in the study area are closed with the proportion being highest for textile industries are 60.1 percent. This high rate of closure is also a cause for the insecurity of workers in the study area.

Table 13: Distribution of Respondents and Factories by Industry in the Study Area

INDUSTRY		No. of Factories	Prop. of Sample (%)	Prop. of factories in this industry in the Study Area (%)*	Prop. of Factories that are closed in this industry in the Study Area (%)*	No. of Respondents	Prop. of Sample (%)	Prop. of Workers in this industry in the Study Area (%)
Plastic & Rubber	Plastics	6	7.4	7.2	45.1	41	10.1	4.1
	Rubber	1	1.2			6	1.5	
Non-Metal	Glass	3	3.7	7.3	31.5	31	7.7	7.8
	Ceramics	6	7.4			21	5.2	
Chemical	Pharma.	18	22.2	17.1	36.3	100	24.8	20.1
	Soaps	1	1.2			10	2.5	
	Paints	1	1.2			1	0.2	
Metals and Machinery Manufacturing including Electrical and Electronics	ACs	2	2.5	11.5	45.2	17	4.2	115.6
	EC & E	9	11.1			23	5.7	
	Elevators	1	1.2			5	1.2	
	Metal & Engg.	11	13.6			49	12.1	
Food	Food & Oils	8	9.8	17.2	24.4	49	12.1	12.7
Wood & Allied	Ply-wood & Lam.	9	11.1	3.2	28.3	31	7.7	1.8
Textiles	Textile	4	4.9	6.2	60.1	19	4.7	15.1
Paper & Board	Paper & Board	1	1.2	4.6	28.9	1	0.2	2.9
Total		81	100.0	100.0	37.5	404	100.0	

Source: Based on data with the Office of the Chief Inspector of Factories, Ahmedabad.

Table 14: Number of Respondents Per Factory

Variable	Value										Total
Number of Respondents/ Factory	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	3	2	1	404
Number of Factories	4	10	6	6	6	4	6	4	15	20	81
Proportion of Factories (%)	4.9	12.3	7.4	7.4	7.4	4.9	7.4	4.9	18.5	24.7	100

Chemical and Food industries have the most number of units at 17.1 and 17.2 percent of the total respectively. The study sample has good representation from these industries but it has better representation from engineering and wood industries due to the constraints in getting respondents mentioned earlier. That is why more respondents have been surveyed than was statistically required so as to get a proper representation from all industries. As shown in Table 14 below, the proportion of factories with eight or more respondents each is 32 percent, while there are as much as 24.7 percent factories that have only one respondent in the survey.

The online databases of the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy** and **The Emerging Markets Information System** were accessed to get data on the companies whose workers have been surveyed. As the data available on these companies was inadequate, detailed data could be found only for 37 out of the 81 companies and these have been given in Annexure-3. The summary of information for the 37 companies is as follows and it is only a rough indicator, as the values for various parameters are for different years for different companies:

- i) 19 of these companies are public limited while the rest of the 18 are private limited companies.
- ii) The average Annual Income of these companies is Rs 1,879 crores, with Adani Wilmar being the largest at Rs 26,437 crores (all of this is not from production in the study area though).
- iii) The average Balance Sheet value of these companies is Rs 1,604 crores, with Torrent Pharmaceuticals being the largest at Rs 12,895 crores.
- iv) The average Profit after Tax is Rs 89 crores, with Torrent Pharma being the largest at Rs 745 crores.
- v) Five companies have suffered a -100 percent compound annual de-growth in their Annual Income, Balance Sheet and Profit after Tax.
- vi) Five other companies have suffered erosion of

their Annual Income, Balance Sheet and Profit after Tax at a compound annual de-growth rate of between -10 and -30 percent.

- vii) 20 companies have shown an average compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for Annual Income of 12.5 percent with Piccolo Mosaic being the highest at 102.8 percent.
- viii) 20 companies have shown an average CAGR in their Balance Sheet value of 12.9 percent, with Torrent Pharmaceuticals being the highest at 19.9 percent.
- ix) 20 companies have shown an average CAGR in their Profit after Tax of 85.7 percent, with Apollo Carmix Equipments highest at 542.1 percent.

There is not enough data for all the companies regarding their expenditures on salaries of workers and management except for two companies for which the returns filed by them to the Registrar of Companies could be accessed. In the case of Plastene India Pvt. Limited, in 2017-18 the total employee benefit compensation at Rs 22.4 crores was only about 6 percent of the total costs of the company. Also, the liability for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was Rs 9.16 lakhs on a net profit of Rs 4.58 crores, but the company spent only Rs 2.07 lakhs. For another company, Shako Flexipak Pvt. Limited, the Directors took a remuneration of Rs 10.2 crores, whereas the employee expenses were only Rs 5.02 crores. The CSR expenditure was only Rs 4.5 lakhs against a liability of Rs 18.9 lakhs on a net profit of Rs 9.5 crores for 2018-19. Thus, overall the economic situation for the factories is fairly good as their incomes, balance sheets and profit after tax are all growing at a healthy average CAGR. However, this is not translating into better wages and working conditions for the workers, primarily due to the lack of unionization of labour.

7

Demographic characteristics Of respondents

Table 15: Age of Respondents

Age in Years	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	26	6.4
20-25	86	21.3
25-30	88	21.8
30-35	71	17.6
35-40	56	13.9
40-45	41	10.1
45-50	24	5.9
50-55	8	2.0
55-60	3	0.7
> 60	1	0.2
Total	404	100

Table 16: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	83	20.5
Male	321	79.5
Total	404	100

Table 17: Religion of Respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	402	99.5
Muslim	2	0.5
Total	404	100

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are provided in detail in this section.

Workers between the ages 18-35 years constitute 67.1 percent of the sample. There is a tendency among the employers to lay-off older workers who are getting higher wages and replace them with younger workers on lower wages and often without benefits. This is the reason why the workforce is younger, with only 8.8 percent of workers above 45 years of age.

The workforce is dominated by men who constitute 79.5 percent of the sample.

There are only 2 Muslim respondents. Muslims in the study area are mostly self employed or work in very small units outside the purview of the Factory Act.

The Other Backward Classes constitute the largest category of workers at 55 percent. This is followed by the Scheduled Castes, General Category and the Scheduled Tribes.

The largest proportion of workers is of those who have been educated between the middle and secondary level, followed by those between the primary and secondary level. There were only 3.7 percent workers who were either graduates or had an industrial training diploma.

Most of the workers (70.5 percent) are married. This combination of being young and married makes the

Table 18: Social Classification of Respondents

Caste Category	Frequency	Percentage
Scheduled Caste	151	37.4
Scheduled Tribe	7	1.7
Other Backward Classes	222	55.0
General	24	5.9
Total	404	100

Table 19: Education of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Non-Literate	5	1.2
Primary or Less	27	6.7
Middle or Less	107	26.5
Secondary or Less	193	47.8
Higher Secondary or Less	57	14.1
Graduation or Less	7	1.7
Industrial Training Diploma	8	2.0
Total	404	100

Table 20: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital	Frequency	Percentage
Married	285	70.5
Unmarried	119	29.5
Total	404	100



Table 21: Number of Dependants in Respondent's Family

Number of	Frequency	Percentage
2	8	2.0
3	25	6.2
4	111	27.5
5	119	29.5
6	76	18.8
7	29	7.2
8	17	4.2
9	9	2.2
10	10	2.5
Total	404	100

workers vulnerable and averse to taking the risk of organizing and losing their jobs because of it.

65.2 percent of the respondents have 5 or fewer dependants in their families. Therefore, the families are mostly small and thus there is a possibility that given proper leadership and support the workers can sustain strikes in pursuit of better wages and working conditions.

Most of the workers (82.2 percent) are from Kadi Taluka and 7.7 percent from the other parts of Mehsana district. This bias is because of the difficulty in getting workers to take the survey. Only those workers who were known to the enumerators and who were from Kadi agreed to take the survey. That is why there are only 13 migrant workers from outside the state in the sample, even though there are thousands of workers mostly housed within the factories.

Table 22: Place of Origin of Respondents

State	District	Taluka	Frequency	Percentage
Gujarat	Ahmedabad	Ahmedabad	9	2.2
	Mehsana	Mehsana	31	7.7
		Kadi	332	82.2
	Gandhinagar	Kalol	15	3.7
		Chhatral	2	0.5
	Kachh		2	0.5
Bihar	Muzaffarpur		1	0.2
Uttar Pradesh	Farukhabad		2	0.5
	Pratapganj		2	0.5
	Allahabad	Phulpur	5	1.2
Madhya	Katni		1	0.2
Rajasthan	Banswara		1	0.2
Jharkhand	Hazaribagh		1	0.2
	Total		404	100

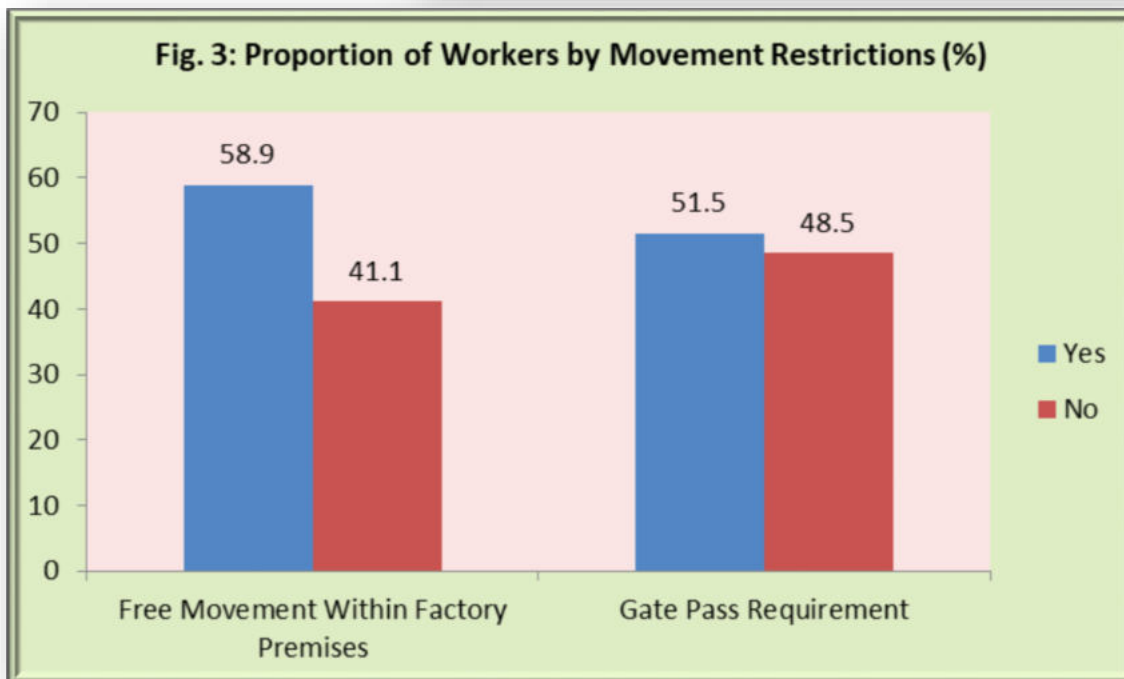
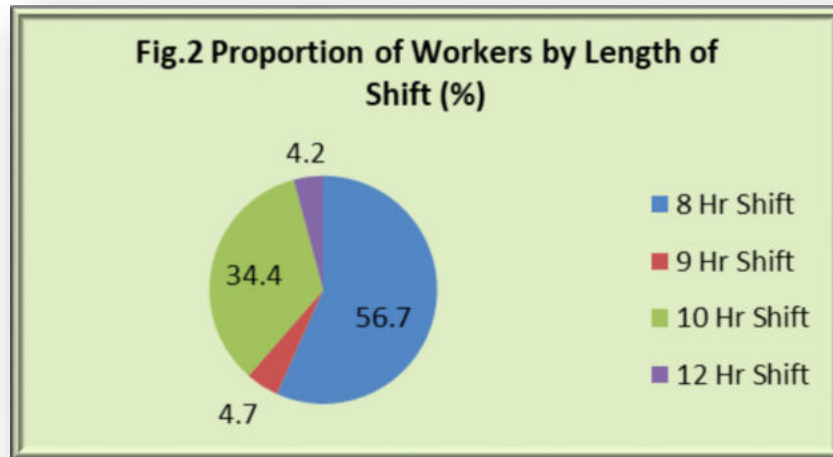
Accessing workers living within the premises was difficult. The reasons were:

- a. The guards would not allow the enumerators to enter the premises;
- B. Migrant workers were hesitant to meet the enumerators due to the constant fear of losing their employment.

8 Work conditions

The working conditions reported by the workers are dismal. 229 (56.7 percent) do 8-hour shifts while 175 (43.3 percent) don't. 19 people reported working 9 hours. 139 respondents work 10 hours, while 17 respondents work 12 hours.

369 respondents get weekly offs but without pay. Only 12 respondents (3



percent) said that they get a paid weekly off. The rest 23 get unpaid offs only when they ask for it.

Only 5 respondents reported the employment of 5 underage workers. These companies mostly hire young-freshly out-of-school youth as seasonal workers-most of whom are below the age of 18 years.

238 respondents (58.9 percent) said there is free movement inside the factory while 166 (41.1percent) said there wasn't. 208 (51.5 percent) respondents said that gate pass was demanded by the security staff for going out of the factory premises.

369 respondents get weekly offs but without pay. Only 12 respondents (3 percent) said that they get a paid weekly off. The rest 23 get unpaid offs only when they ask for it.

9 Type of work And payments

The distribution of respondents by gender and type of work is given in Table 23.

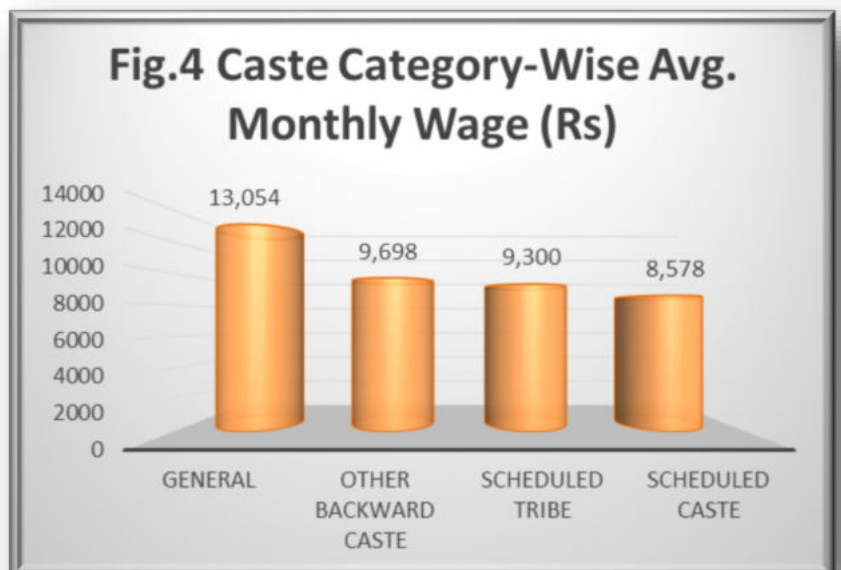
The biggest category of work is that of Machine Operator with 115 workers (28.5 percent). Sorting and packaging which has as many as 107 workers (26.5 percent) comes second. This is also the category that has the highest proportion of female workers at 44.9 percent. The next highest category of workers is that of Helper with 13.6 percent of the respondents and this category has the second highest number of women. Only one woman is there as a computer operator and another as a machine operator. Overall only 83 women (20.5 percent) are there in the sample. This is primarily because of adverse working conditions. Only 37 respondents (9.2 percent) said that women get paid maternity leave and this too is given only to the permanent workers in the administrative section and not to the workers on the factory floor. There are no provisions for creches and other facilities for women apart from separate toilets.

The distribution of wages paid to the workers is provided in Table 24. These are the in-hand wages that the respondents actually receive.

The general category respondents have by far the highest average monthly wage, while the scheduled caste respondents have the lowest average monthly wage. There is no clear difference in terms of education between the various castes, so this significant difference in wages seems to indicate caste discrimination.

Table 23: Distribution of Respondents by Gender and Type of Work

Type of Work	Sex			
	Female	Percent	Male	Percentage
Boiler Technician	0	0	3	100
Canteen Worker	0	0	2	100
Chemist	0	0	2	100
Cleaning	10	30.3	23	69.7
Computer Operator	1	16.7	5	83.3
Electrician	0	0.0	3	100
Gardening	0	0.0	3	100
Helper	14	20.3	55	79.7
Lab Technician	1	33.3	2	66.7
Machine Operator	1	0.9	114	99.1
Parts Assembly	8	25	24	75
Quality Control	0	0	13	100
Sorting & Packaging	48	44.9	59	55.1
Supervisor	0	0	7	100
Trainee	0	0	3	100
Transporting Products	0	0	3	100
Total	83	20.5	321	79.5



10 Management & workers relations

Table 24: Monthly Wage Received by Respond-

Monthly Wage	Frequency	Percent
≤5,000	8	2
5,000-6,000	42	10.4
6,000-7,000	58	14.4
7,000-8,000	97	24.0
8,000-9,000	61	15.1
9,000-10,000	44	10.9
10,000-11,000	16	4.0
11,000-12,000	17	4.2
12,000-13,000	4	1
13,000-14,000	8	2
14,000-15,000	12	3
15,000-16,000	6	1.5
16,000-17,000	9	2.2
17,000-18,000	6	1.5
18,000-19,000	1	0.2
19,000-20,000	1	0.2
> 20,000	14	3.5
Total	404	100

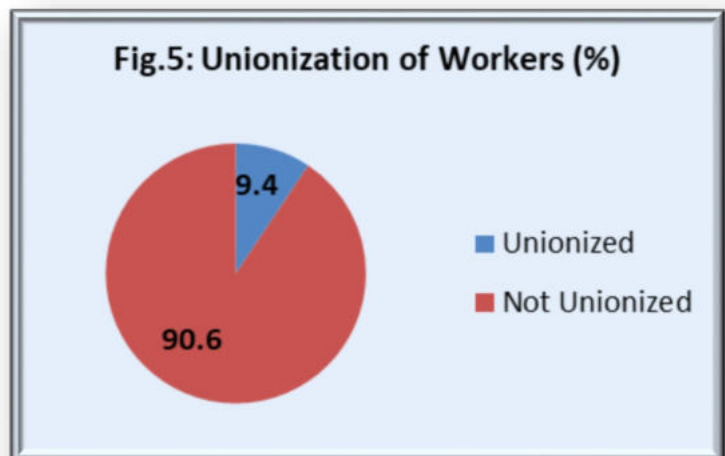
308 respondents (76.2 percent) said that they received their wages on time. 128 respondents (31.7 percent) said they do not get bonus, which is generally a month's salary for those who do get it. Only 12 respondents, which is a miniscule number (3%), said that they get some other benefits like subsidized food apart from the wages. Only 33 respondents (8.2 percent) said that they are paid for overtime at the statutory rate. Only 13 respondents (3 percent) said that the wage they get is enough to fulfill their livelihood needs. **According to the respondents, the average monthly net wage that will fulfill livelihood needs is Rs 17,416, whereas the average basic wage being actually received is Rs 9,472.** Only 13 respondents (3 percent) said that they are given incentives like small gifts. 78 respondents (19.3 percent) said that they are penalized for not performing well, often by receiving a cut in their day's wages or by a break in work. **83 respondents (20.5 percent) said that they have to do other jobs, either by working as contract labourers or on their own farms as the wages they receive are not adequate.**

135 respondents (33.4 percent) said there is obstruction from the management for observing religious festivals like Janmashtami within the factory premises.

388 respondents (96 percent) said there was no persecution by the management while 16 (4 percent) said that there was persecution, like clicking their photos secretly.

72 respondents (17.8 percent) said they make complaints to their contractor, whereas 330 (81.7 percent) said they complain to supervisors, managers or HR department staff.

2 respondents said that they have not had any cause for complaint. 218 respondents (54 percent) said that they file complaints individually, while 176 (43.6 percent) said that they file complaints in a group. 10 respondents said they used either of the two methods, depending on the situation. 38 respondents said there is a union in the factory, while 366 said that there is none. This is represented in proportional form in the following Fig. 5.

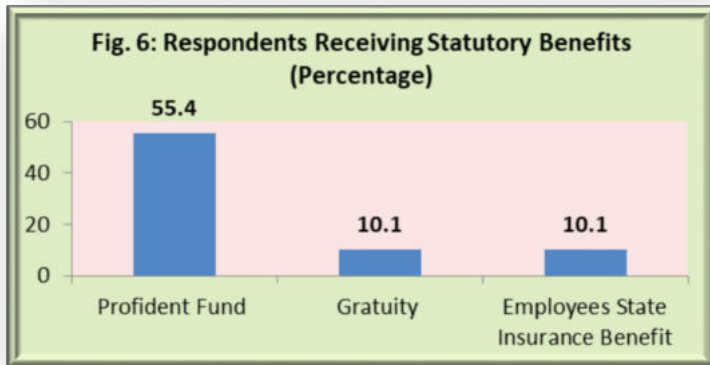


26 respondents (6.4 percent) said that the union has been established by the workers. 33 respondents (8.2 percent) said they are members of unions and make complaints to the union. Only 8 respondents said that the management allowed meetings of the union during the working hours. The issues raised by the unions are wages, bonus, working conditions, exploitation and the opposition of the management to the establishment of unions. 38 respondents (9.4 percent) said the police interfered when the union started some action. Thus, it is clear from these responses and the case studies

11

Other

Facilities and benefits



described earlier, that the management of the factories in collusion with the police actively discourage unionization of workers and this is

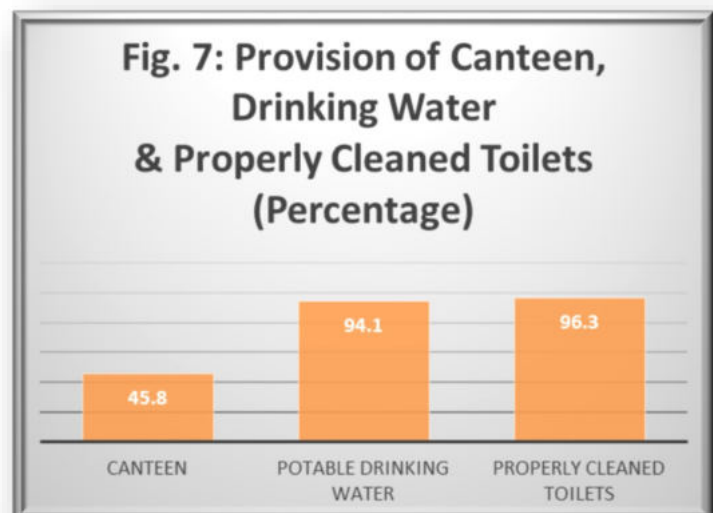
why there is so few of the workers surveyed who are organized into unions.

The situation with regard to statutory benefits is equally dismal as shown in Figure 6.

224 respondents (55.4 percent) said that Provident Fund Deductions were being made from their wages but even these respondents did not know their Provident Fund Unified Account Number or were afraid to provide them to the enumerators. Thus, it is difficult to know as to whether the employers are actually depositing the workers' contributions and the matching contributions with the Employees Provident Fund Organization. Only 41 respondents (10.1 percent) said that there was provision for Employees State Insurance and Gratuity. **Only 39 respondents (9.7 percent) said that they had signed on a written employment agreement with the employer or contractor when they joined the factory. 19 were with the company and 20 were with the contractor.** This is despite the fact that 331 respondents (71.9 percent) are employed by the companies and only 73 (18.1 percent) by the contractors. 11 respondents (2.7 percent) said they were seasonal workers. 86 respondents (21.2 percent) said that apprentices work in their factories for less pay.

The provision of other facilities and benefits to the workers is also not adequate. 227 respondents (56.2 percent) said there were health facilities available like clinics, first-aid boxes and ambulances for treatment in case of illness or accidents. Only 142 respondents (35.1 percent) said they are provided with protective clothes, head gear, gloves and boots at work. 312 respondents (77.2 percent) said they are given an orientation session before starting their work. Only 130 respondents (32.2 percent) said they received on-the-job training from time to time. 85 respondents (21 percent) said there are provisions for taking care of workers in case of accidents. 41 respondents (10.1 percent) said there were cases of occupational diseases that they knew of. 147 respondents (36.4 percent) said they are given uniforms, aprons and other such protective clothing.

The unsatisfactory situation with regard to provision of canteen facilities, drinking water and toilets is shown in Fig. 7. 185 respondents (45.8 percent) said there was a canteen in their factory with only 11 saying that the food is subsidized. 380 respondents (94.1 percent) said that good drinking water is available in the factory premises. All respondents reported that there toilet facility was present within the establishment's premises, however, of the total sample 96.3 percent (389 workers) reported that the toilets were adequately clean for use 334 respondents (82.7 percent) said that there are no limits to the number of times they can visit the toilet.



12 Continuing Primitive accumulation

A seminal contribution of Karl Marx is the concept of Primitive Accumulation (Marx, 1990). Marx, through the concept of primitive accumulation, focused on the historical processes that gave birth to the preconditions of a capitalist mode of production. As opposed to Adam Smith, who said that these preconditions were the incipient division of labour and the hard work of some of those who were involved in artisanal crafts (Smith, 2018) Marx argued that the main process of creating a labour force was that of depriving the peasants of their lands and driving them out of agriculture. This created a section of population with no other means of livelihood but their labour power which they were forced to sell in the labour market as there was no unionization then to increase their bargaining power vis-a-vis the factory owners. This led to the accumulation of capital that fuelled the growth of industrialization. The adjective "primitive" here corresponds to the initial stage of capitalist accumulation when there

was neither unionization of labour nor was their large scale factory production. This is contrasted with the process of accumulation in established capitalism where the surplus is appropriated from production after providing labour with the means of reproducing itself for further production, including resources to fulfil needs such as education, health and housing, in addition to food under the pressure of unionism and liberal democratic labour laws.

In India, too, the little industrialization that took place during British rule was brought about in this way by displacing peasants from land. This was enhanced after independence at the behest of the nascent capitalist class. This class drew up a plan for economic development of India that is known as the "Bombay Plan" after the industrialists from Bombay who conceived of it (Thakurdas et al., 1944). This plan envisaged the rapid development of basic infrastructure through heavy state spending garnered from exploitation of the labour of the masses and the vast natural resources. It specifically mentioned that the state must intervene to maintain law and order and restrict individual freedoms, given the possibility

of dissent from the masses against such a policy.

Consequently, the new Indian Constitution adopted in 1951 did not give fundamental rights status to the rights of education, health and employment and instead put them into the section on Directive Principles of State Policy which are non-justiciable. In fact, the constitution was largely a copy of the colonial Government of India Act of 1935 and mirrored its anti-people provisions. So much so that GD Birla the doyen of the Indian capitalists gloated at the time, "We have embodied large portions of the 1935 Act, as finally passed, in the Constitution which we have framed ourselves and which shows that in the



1935 Act was cast the pattern of our future plans"(Birla, 1968). Thus, right from the time of independence, people have been displaced from their land and have been forced into increasing the industrial reserve army. The state has actively promoted this policy. As a result, the unionization of labour has always been weak in India and has been restricted to a

few big private firms, government departments and the public sector enterprises.

There is a school of thought that says that primitive accumulation is not only a phenomenon of early capitalism but is a continuing phenomenon that can be seen in advanced capitalism too (De Angelis, 2005). Late capitalism by virtue of technology and outsourcing is able to break up the factory and reduce the need for skilled labour and spread out production to other areas where there is un-unionized labour who have been displaced from agriculture. This is the case throughout the world and especially so in India in the post-liberalisation era from the 1990s onwards. On the one hand, new industrial areas have been developed like the ones studied here in Kadi and Kalol and industrial production has been spread out on the other subsidies to and investment in chemical agriculture have been reduced, devastating it and leading to large scale displacement of people from agriculture seeking employment in industries. This has created a great scope for continuing primitive accumulation in India.

CONCLUSION

The study establishes that labour laws are not being implemented in the study area and there is immense scope for organisation of the work force to demand their rights. The main conclusions are as follows:

i. The firms in which the respondents of the study work are mostly doing fairly well as far as growth in income, profit after tax and balance sheet is concerned but they are not giving the benefit of this growth to their workers.

ii. Most of the workers are not being paid minimum wages, statutory benefits, or various other facilities.

iii. Most of the workers are employed on contract, either by the company itself or by contractors without any formal agreement.

iv. Union formation is actively discouraged by the employers and the administration and police side with the management in cases of strikes. So, there is considerable fear among the respondents that their jobs will be taken away if they organize. This is despite the fact that they are aware that they are being exploited by being given almost half the wages as compared to what they need to lead a dignified life.

v. Women are mostly in packaging jobs and are paid less than men. They do not get maternity leave and other statutory gender benefits.

vi. The general caste workers get considerably more in wages than those from the SC, ST and OBC categories.

vii. Migrant workers are there in large numbers but are housed within the factory premises. They are warned by the employers to not interact with local people. Consequently, very few among them agreed to participate in the survey.

Thus, not only the smaller companies but even big companies like Adani, Arvind, Nirma, Torrent, Hitachi and the like in the study area are flouting labour laws at will and employing workers on contract without giving them proper wages and other statutory benefits. The labour bureaucracy is not fulfilling its mandate to monitor these factories to see that all the labour laws are being implemented. As mentioned earlier, they do not even have proper data on the labour working in these factories. In this way the state, too, is supportive of continuing primitive accumulation by the employers to the detriment of the rights of workers in the study area.

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A n n e x u r e - 1

Mandatory Compliance Reports to be Filed by Companies Under Various Statutes

Name of the Statute	Form	Name of Return	To Be Sent To
The Employment Exchanges (CNV) Act, 1959 & Rules	ER-I	Quarterly Return for each quarter	Local Employment Exchange
The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961	LMNO Rule 16 (1)	Annual Returns and details of payment ending 31 Dec.	Competent authority under the Act
The Minimum Wages Act, 1948	III Rule 21 (4A)	Annual Return	Inspector of the area concerned
The Payment of Wages Act, 1936 & related Mines Rules	IV	Annual Return	Concerned Labour Commissioner
The Contract Labour 9 (R&A) Act, 1970 & Rules	XXV	Annual Return	Concerned Licensing Officer
The Apprenticeship Act, 1961	APP-2	Half yearly return March ending	Concerned Regional Director/ Apprenticeship Advisor
The Employment Exchange (CNV) Act, 1959 & Rules	ER-I Rule 6	Quarterly return for quarter ended 31 Dec.	Local Employment Exchange
The Employment Exchanges (CNV) Act, 1959 & Rules	ER-I Rule 6	Quarterly return for the quarter ended	Concerned Employment Officer
The Factories Act, 1948	Refer to State Rules	Half yearly return	Concerned Director/Inspector
The Apprenticeship Act, 1961	APP-2	Half yearly return Sept, ending	Dy. Apprenticeship Adviser
The Employment Exchanges (CNV) Act, 1959 & Rules	ER-I Rule 6	Quarterly return for the quarter ended	Concerned Employment Officer
The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 & Rules	D Rule 5	Annual Return– Bonus paid to the employees for the accounting year ending	Concerned inspector/under the Act
The Factories Act, 1948 & Rules	Refer to State Rules	Application for renewal of licence	Director/Inspector of Factories

A n n e x u r e - 1

Annexure-1: Mandatory Compliance Reports to be Filed by Companies Under Various Statutes

Name of the Statute	Form	Name of Return	To Be Sent To
The Contract Labour (R&A)	VII Rule 29 (2)	Application for re-nwal of licence	Concerned Inspector
The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948	Challans	Remittance of Contributions	Concerned Regional Office
The Employees Provident Funds & MP Act, 1952	Challans	Remittance of Contributions	Concerned Regional Office
The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948	16	Accident Report	Concerned local office/ dispensary of ESI
The Apprenticeship Act, 1961	Printed Format 4 Rule 14 (4)	Bill for reimbursement within seven days of joining of Apprentice	Apprenticeship Advisor, Regional Director/ state Apprenticeship Advisor
	1A Report containing record of basic training etc.Rule 14 (5&6)	Report of Training	Regional Director/ State Apprentices
	6 Rule 8	Record of work done and the studies taken by Graduates, Technicians etc.	Regional director/ State apprenticeship Advisor
The Factories Act, 1948	Refer to State Rules	Notice of accident/ dangerous occurrence	Inspector/ Director of Factories
The Factories Act, 1948	Refer to State Rules	Report of Accident	Director/ Inspector of Factories
the Workmen's Compensation act, 1923	EE	Report of serious bodily injuries/ fatal accidents	Concerned Commissioner of Workmen's compensation

S *Case*
Studies



**Fall
in
line
or
face
the
music**

Cengres Terminates Workforce for Demanding Legitimate Entitlement

Mr. Kaushik Patel is native to Linch village in Mahesana district. He is 32 years of age and has graduated in the technical subject of diesel-mechanic. He lives with his wife, two children and parents and is the only earning member in his family. They do have some agriculture land, but since he lives in a rain deficient region, farming is a seasonal activity. The main source of income had been from his job at Cengres Tiles Limited, a company that he had joined in 2013. We visited him and other workers of this company during September and October 2019 to learn about its work conditions and the present situation. Several workers volunteered to give information and some of the leaders could give deeper insight into what they underwent during the past few months. Major interviewees include Mr Deepakbhai Patel, who worked as a Mechanic from 2018 to 2019; Mr. Rajubhai Rabari, a Machine Fitter, who worked from 2012-19; Mr. Manubhai Thakor, who worked as Production Manager during 2016-19. All these workers lost their jobs on a single day, on May 3, 2019 without receiving any communication of notice or justification.

Company Profile

Cengres Tiles Ltd., founded in 2008 in Nandasan, District Mehsana in Gujarat manufactures more than 500 premium quality designs of tiles, with work spanning twenty-four hours a day across three shifts. Product range includes Multi Charge Vitrified Tiles, Digital Glazed Vitrified Tiles, Digital Wall Tiles, Full-Body Vitrified Tiles, Elevation Tiles and Exterior Parking Tiles. We had accessed the company's website during the end of September for fetching this information and learnt that the quality of their tiles are in compliance with global standards and are fortified by ISI Marking for vitrified tiles and CE Certification. The company's initial production capacity of 7,000 sq. metres per day has now been increased to 16,000 sq. meters per day. Its website boasts of a 400-plus workforce strength and network of 450 dealers as well as distributors. It has presence in more than 10 countries. Its corporate headquarter is in Ahmedabad, 'flanked by six branch offices combining as enviable display centres in Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Cochin, Chennai and Hyderabad'.

Approach Changed with the Management

Respondents stated that work conditions were satisfactory till the year 2016. The management people was accessible. In events of any challenges faced at work, they could bring it to the management's notice and things were sorted out. Mr Bharatbhai Patel, a partner in the company, was handling Nandasan plant during this era. Mr Ashishbhai Patel and Mr Niravbhai Patel were handling the marketing department. The marketing department sidelined Bharatbhai and took over the company's control in 2016. This change led to deterioration in work conditions.

Nature and Strength of the Workforce

It was heartening to learn that children were discouraged from working in the company and nobody below 18 years was permitted to work in the plant. Equality in gender representation is also seen in workforce, though women employees were limited to the housekeeping department. They were hired under subcontract with daily-wage of Rs 250, without any other benefits. Women, if found pregnant, were terminated from the job.

The Company has a turnover of Rs 15 crores and has more than 400 people in its workforce. About 200 of them are hired under subcontract and around 190 had been in direct-contract with the company. None of them, though, receives any social security entitlements as a company's employee should. It is noteworthy that workers can receive pay slip and provident fund slip, if and when they would request for the same. However, there have been few workers of a privileged category who receive social security entitlements. These are either highly skilled in their jobs or are working closely with the management personnel.

The management ensured that workers under subcontract category do not get organized. They formed about 50 percent of the total workforce and were allotted different nature of contracts. Workers were selected from different regions with the intent that they would not know each other from before. Apart from Gujarat, workers were brought from Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.



Work Conditions

It was possible to alter some of the work conditions till 2015. In those days, 10 hours of daily work and one holiday in a month was the company's norm. Workers registered their protest against such a system during 2015–16 and it resulted in 8 hours of daily work and four holidays in a month.

Change in management in 2016 was visible in the way the workers' representatives were handled. The management was inaccessible for workers. Nobody was permitted to voice their concerns, regardless of the gravity of the issue they raised.

Several Workers Took Lead and Organized the Workforce

Quite a number of workers were leading in voicing out problems in work conditions since 2016. Kaushikbhai, Deepakbhai, Rajubhai and Manubhai along with their other colleagues have been a part of this lead. Few more joined them, including Mr. Hiteshbhai Patel, Mr. Dilipbhai Patel, Mr. Hareshbhai Panchal and Mr. Gautambhai Kar. Around 190 workers under direct-contract with the company joined hands, regardless of being local or migrants. However, workers under subcontract were never a part of any of these representations or protests and this time too, they did not join this exercise. Linking with 'KamdarBiri Union' became a part of organizing the workforce, with around 190 direct-contracted workers joining this union with Mr Amitbhai Dave as advocate.

Organizing helped improve the strategy for protest

A strategy for protest was carved out. Workers decided to hold half-day protest during working hours and within the factory premises. On a designated protest day, everybody would report on duty and work till lunch time. Post lunch, they would abandon work and gather at a spot within premises to stage peaceful protest. It was decided that the management would not be kept in the dark about the protest. Therefore, once the protest day was finalized, they would meet the general manager on the previous day and inform them about the same.

The first protest was held in February 2019 and resulted in a total of five of them till April 2019.

Protests Helped

Protests were held for making three major demands:

- 1) To provide complete medical assistance in cases of accident; earlier only 50 percent of total medical assistance was provided, and salary was deducted for number of leaves availed.
- 2) To ensure timely disbursement of salaries each month; many times salaries were delayed for more than 2-3 months.
- 3) To revise contract in such a manner that facilitates rise in wages and allowances.

Regulations of working hours and weekly offs were possible due to such protests. Even wage increase was realized due to such protests. However, only the basic-pay was increased. Entitlements like dearness allowance and house rent have been missing since the beginning.

Forced to Take the Form of a Movement

Workers soon realized that Amitbhai of Kamdar Biri Union had become a mere mouthpiece of the management. Therefore, protesters switched their union and established linkages with 'Gujarat Majdoor Mahasabha', a union of Mr Amrishbhai Patel. When salary was delayed for more than two months in beginning of 2019, Amrishbhai suggested that half-day protest would not yield desired results anymore. So, workers decided to go for a longer strike. Impact was strike was undoubtedly diluted because, as already discussed, entire workforce refrained from joining.

The workers went on a 3-day strike in March 2019 and it disrupted production. This led the management to give in to their demands. Workers, now vigilant, desired assurance and ended their strike when the management gave an assurance of accepting the following demands in writing on their letter-head:

- 1) Ensure date for disbursing salaries to workers
- 2) Revise contract in such a manner that facilitates wage-rise
- 3) Provision for paid leaves and casual leaves
- 4) Pay Diwali bonus
- 5) Improve food quality in canteen
- 6) Improve accessibility to washroom according to the workers' requirement (respondents shared that only one toilet was installed for 300 workers. Time and again they brought this to the notice of the supervisor, management and new owners; but no corrective measures were taken)

Workers Paid a Heavy Price

The management probably could not digest such a development. They came down heavily on the workers who were on strike. The management was aware of the food habits of workers. Most of them used to leave premises during lunch time. They

shrewdly used this information. On Friday, May 3, 2019 when workers returned from lunch, they found the main gate closed. Upon inquiring, they were given the option to sign a fresh contract and join as new recruits, or else their job stood suspended. However, five of the respondents who had the taken lead in the protests were barred from such options and were irrevocably suspended.

Since then, security persons manning the main gate were replaced. Bouncers, some of them equipped with guns, are a new addition for 'enhanced security'. Around 190 workers kept arriving at the gate every day for a month with the intent of joining duty, but were not permitted inside. They received letters from



the company asking them to come to work as soon as possible, but the gate was never opened for them.

Deteriorating Situation Led to Hunger-Strike and Refuge with Government

Three weeks passed by. Five workers sat on a hunger strike in front of the gate; Mr Dilipbhai Patel, Mr Mahendrabhai Patel, Mr Jitendrabhai Parmar, Mr Chirabhai Thakore and Mr Dilipbhai Thakore. Workers' families also started gathering at the gate. After a week, by May 30, the management sensed trouble, so they sought assistance from police and removed everybody from there. This step not only ended the hunger strike but fear of the police also diluted the crowd at the gate.

At this stage, workers followed the suggestion of



Amrishbhai and approached the District Labour Officer. Mahesana Labour Officer directed the local Government Labour Officer (GLO) to visit the company site.

Workers Sense Government Lethargy and Approach Court

Each step was time-consuming. Workers were sitting idle with no income since more than a month. Migrants had no local linkages to generate any income. Therefore, it was agreed that migrants should go back to their native villages to hunt for a livelihood. They would remain in contact with local colleagues, who will continue to maintain pressure on the company's management. Thus, the strength of striking workers had further reduced.

The GLO arrived on July 1, 2019 and 80-90 workers were waiting at the company's gate to put forward their case. Respondents recall the event with dismay when the GLO left the company premises; it was evident that she was arguing on behalf of the management.

The workers then decided to take the help of Gujarat Majdoor Mahasabha to represent their case to

the Labour Commissioner, Gandhinagar. They visited the office of Commissioner on August 02, 2019 and later filed a case in the labour court.

Losses Might be Faced by Both, But Workers Lost their Livelihood

In this whole episode, the company too, did not really gain. They suspended around 190 workers, about 50 percent of their workforce, who were experienced and had acquired expertise in designated tasks. These skilled workers were replaced by a new workforce, on subcontract basis, and were expected to deliver. The company might have saved money, but lost heavily on production output, which was down to one-third when compared with its earlier capacity. They are now outsourcing for meeting their regular demands.

The company would eventually manage to pull itself out of such a crunch. However, around 190 workers, having steady jobs that supported their families, have lost their livelihoods and are rendered jobless.



C a s e s t u d y - 2

ONCE IS ENOUGH

Hitachi Concedes Once, Declines another Dissimilar Demand

Name 'Hitachi' rings a bell and reminds one of a celebrated corporate identity from Japan. At the ground level in Mahesana district of Gujarat, this company is 'Johnson Controls-Hitachi Air Conditioning India Limited'. In 2012, the first major workers' unrest was reported in the plant at Kadi; this was followed by unrest in 2015. My interaction during September-October 2019 to learn about the workers' plight made me visit several activists behind these unrests. During fieldwork, I interacted with Mr. Govindbhai Balaji who joined company in 2011, immediately after clearing his Higher Secondary schooling. He was relatively young and new during 2012 but led from front in the unrest of 2015. I also had deliberations with a group of seniors who gave deeper insight on their struggle in 2012. Mr Cham-pakbhai Makwana and Mr Bhikhubhai Singh Vaghela



had been with company since 1996; Mr Khegarbhai Vaghela and Mr Ankitbhai Patel had been working since 2004; Mr. Sanjaybhai Rabari had been employed since 2006. While noting down their information, I have also mentioned the responses of other workers I met during fieldwork, though their interviews were not so structured. The case study seeks to elaborate experiences of two separate industrial struggles within a time span of half a decade at the same plant but with varying results.

Profile of the Company

Hitachi Cooling & Heating is the global brand of premium air conditioning solutions from Johnson Controls-Hitachi, a joint venture between Hitachi Appliances Inc. and Johnson Controls Inc. Its website, accessed during fieldwork in late 2019, indicated each of these companies having their own heritage that goes back more than 100 years of history and culture. Together they form a leading global brand in premium cooling and heating solutions. Their purpose is eye-catching, as in the website it is claimed: 'We want to create a world in which through our high Japanese technology people live in harmony with themselves, with their families and the environment that surrounds them'. Its official address in the local, which is the manufacturing unit at Kadi, is spelt 'Johnson Controls-

Hitachi Air Conditioning India Limited' but is popular as "Hitachi" in this region. My fieldwork experiences of visiting several industries of this region unreservedly indicated Hitachi standing tall in legal as well as moral commitment towards the well-being of its workforce.

Despite a somewhat sour past, respondents appear attached and proudly described their employer, Hitachi, as not only the largest operating plant amongst industrial towns in and around Kadi, but also the prominent employer of the region. While interacting with other sections of workers, I realized that it was one of the most sought-after employers in this region.

Nature and Strength of Workforce

Back in 2012, the company already had more than 600 employees, local as well as migrants, on their payroll. This included management personnel as well as skilled workers. As demands for air conditioners, one of their major products used and bought during summer would escalate and required much larger workforce during this season; the company additionally hired around 2,200 to 2,500 more workers on a temporary basis.

Workers on temporary basis were hired locally for



three to four months, usually from March to June. This peak season coincided with summer vacation in local educational institutes. Thus, young student were easily accessible for short-term recruitments. The company hired them through subcontractors.

Work Conditions

Hitachi is a renowned name here. It often crops up while discussing work conditions and labour law implementation. Senior respondents shared that Hitachi happens to be one of the few factories in Kadi that complies with labour laws. Eight-hour shifts, stipulated lunch and tea breaks, decent canteen and double the wage for overtime. Their safety protocols are in line with the laws; all mandatory safety equipments are in place and everyone is effectively trained for safety measures. There are adequate facilities for drinking water and sanitation, no restrictions on frequency of washroom visit (important feature, when such visits are restricted in this region). These are unique features when compared to the situation of workers in other industries of this region. In case of grievances, the management had always been responsive to the workers—and there had been no need for workers to either agitate or go on strike before 2012.

Some respondents are aware of a company's legal

obligation to permit workers collective and provision their meetings within their premises. Hitachi has been provisioning such facilities and I have held few interviews in a room designated to workers within factory premises. Respondents noted that most factories here discourage such activities not only within premises, but also outside of it, by intimidating the workers involved.

However, the company hired about 2,200 to 2,500 temporary workers. Majority of them have been regulars in as temporary seasonal workers. They were hired during summer vacation and the work conditions were totally different for them; being recruited only for 3 to 4 months with daily working hours of fourteen to seventeen hours. Each group of persons was assigned a particular task. They first underwent a three-day training on their deliverables and then embark on their assigned task. The company aimed to extract maximum output through their presence. This helped the company achieve their six months' production target in merely four months.

Industrial Actions

While one industrial struggle continues to provide workers of other industries and factories a semblance of hope, the other struggle presents a frus-

trating experience that many workers across the Kadi GIDC identify with. So, what happened in 2012—that led the workers to seven months’ strike followed by another one in 2015—a struggle that is continuing till the end of 2019-?

2012 –A Watershed in history of Kadi’s industries

50 percent of the 600 odd workforce was on subcontract category and others were on full-time employment with the company. All workers had accepted this without discontent. All was well till the company offered permanent jobs to around 100 subcontracted workers, whereas there were more than 300 of them. All of them had been with the company since a long time; some of them had completed more than a decade here. The selection criteria for identifying workers for permanent employment were not clear. Additionally, it created a probability of fissuring unity among workers. Therefore, workers unanimously decided to oppose this. They demanded permanent employment for all subcontracted workers. The management was in no mood to agree with such a demand.

All subcontracted workers declared a strike on June 8, 2012. The strike went on for months and during that phase several factors worked in their favour: leaders were committed, workers trusted their leaders, each department had its leader and it resulted in strong coordination, this also helped calculate the approximate labour cost so as to arrive at an optimum wage-rise, social media communication was accessible for all. Strike continued for long and could have adversely impacted people’s livelihoods, but it did not, mainly because more than 70 percent of them were bachelors. Others having family or migrants were encouraged to take up an alternative occupation.

The workers had been continually seeking guidance from Ahmedabad-based union ‘Gujarat Majdoor Mahasabha’ led by lawyer Mr Amirshbhai Patel. Their collective strength was backed up by several external factors. The strike began in June, when the peak season had just concluded and temporary short-term recruits had already left. Thus, the company was left with only permanently employed workers and they were not enough for routine production. Furthermore, it was challenging to replace so many workers at a short notice, especially when all of them had a long



standing experience in this company as well and many of them having much-needed skills. A not-so heartening incident took place during the course of this strike. An electrical short-circuit in the factory premises resulted in fire that led to considerable loss.

The strike was entering its fifth month. Workers were holding tight. The management contacted a group of their temporary workers, asking them to join the work on a temporary basis, with a promise to absorb them on permanent basis in due course. However, it was difficult for the company to withstand so many dynamics for a long time. Therefore, the management conceded to workers’ demands in October 2019. Around 300 workers were eventually on the direct payroll of the factory with all the employee benefits.

2015: A promise evaded

The company had engaged around 600 of their temporary workers when the strike was on during 2012. The workers were initially reluctant to join owing to solidarity with striking workers. So, the management offered them an olive branch by promising permanent jobs in due course. This sounded reasonable. So, the workers joined on a temporary basis, even when the strike was on. They had eyes on permanent employ-



Dissimilarities

Unlike 2012, this struggle lost steam. Major divisive force had been differences in seniority of striking workers; there were several seniors working since more than half a decade and then there were some new joiners, having joined only few weeks back. The former felt that the latter had no right of permanence, given the short duration of their service. Another important factor was company's dejection because most workers lacked required skills as well as experience; therefore were dispensable and hence replaceable. In addition, majority of them had families to support and were desperately looking for alternatives. Such workers were soon absorbed by Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., an automobile company new in this region. Thus, an inherent fragmentation among the workers, coupled with heavy reduction in their strength further diluted their case. Around

ment in Hitachi, a renowned industry.

Once the strike was over, they were relieved. However, they requested the promised permanent jobs. The management asked them to hold fort for few more months. They waited for more than a year. They were now back to the previous category of temporary workers, working for a few months a year in Hitachi. Their wait till the beginning of 2015 yielded no results. Thus, they decided to follow suit, and do what was done in 2012.

The temporary workforce of about 600 people went on strike in February 2015, under the leadership of Mr Govindbhai (one of the respondents), Mr Bharatbhai Parmar, Mr Roshanbhai Solanki and Mr Kanubhai Nadiya. They had been regularly working as short-term workers since the last six to eight years. Striking workers were banking on the processes of the 2012 struggle and were also hopeful because of its positive outcome. Their strike, being in Hitachi, was news enough to draw attention in this region. Police became aware of this development as well. However, despite all sorts of publicity, the company was not interested to concede to their demands.

300 people are now maintaining their struggle to gain a steady job in Hitachi. Their only probable hope rests on the outcome of the pending court case, filed with help of Amrishbhai.

Some win, some lose

The workers involved in 2012's protest received permanent job status. They continue to raise grievances through the union formed during the protests. Amrishbhai guides them in articulating their demands and strategically placing them with management. All is not so well for protesting workers of 2015. 24 year-old married man Govindbhai is jobless since four years. He has started a *pan-bidi* shack in the vicinity of his house while continuing his struggle. Soon his child will be ready for schooling and his parents would require more medical attention. Unless he gets a decent income, he will be forced to succumb to such pressures and slog long hours in inhuman conditions in local factories. For now, he only hopes and prays on behalf of all protesting for a permanent job with Hitachi.



C a s e s t u d y - 3

VOICES DEBARRED

Arvind Ltd. Discourages Workers-friendly Leaders

Mr Popatbhai Parmar is 39 years old and hails from Banaskantha district of north Gujarat. He lives in Vadsar town in Kalol taluka of Gandhinagar district with his wife and two teenage children, a daughter and a son. He shifted here for livelihood and supports his parents who live at their native place. He had been working in Arvind Ltd. for the last 13 years, since 2006. He joined as a loader. After four years, he became a Machine Operator in production process of the shirting department. He had completed seven years when he was suspended in 2018. Other respondents include 35 year old Mr Sureshbhai Thakore and Mr Vishnubhai Nayak who is 38 years old; having worked for 12 and 10 years, respectively. These respondents were suspended during 2016 to 2018. However, all of them played their part in organizing and mobilizing workers to collectively seek wage-rise, better work conditions, social security benefits and paid leaves.



Company Profile

Arvind Limited was once known as Arvind Mills Limited. Its garment plant at Santej is their largest manufacturing unit. The company's websites acquaints their diversification over the years in production of various fabrics. Financial Results for Quarter 2 as ended on September 2019 indicates that Arvind Limited is the largest textile company in India with revenues of USD 1 billion (more than INR 7 crores) and the company is end-to-end supply chain partner to world's leading fashion brands. They are gratified in partnering with international brands that include Arrow, Calvin and Klein, Gap Inc., Gant U.S.A., Tommy Hilfiger, Ed Hardy, Izod, Cherokee, Mossimo, US Polo Assn., Nautica, and Aeropostale.

Nature and Strength of Workforce

Arvind Limited has several manufacturing units dedicated to specialized fabrics scattered across the district of Mehsana and Gandhinagar. Their Santej Garment Plant was set up in 1998. It is the major one employing more than 15,000 migrant and local workers. The company has also other manufacturing plants in and around the Santej plant. They are smaller in comparison, but specialize in

producing varieties of synthetic fabrics.

Work Conditions

Their required workforce was always less than what is optimally required for the routine workload. Therefore, even on regular workdays, production workers face immense work pressure to keep machines constantly running. Thus, they would compromise in frequencies and durations for washroom visits as well as breaks for tea and lunch. In events of acute workers' shortage, the company made existing workers continue for 16 hours in a day. Compensations for such overtimes were as per regular wages, and not compliant with labour law. The management also declined paying extra wages while burdening more capable workers with additional responsibility. Moreover, in the event of any accident, they made concerned workers responsible for that. In addition to these, the management circumvented several mandatory rules. Workers were penalized for seeking lawful entitlements. In 2009, a respondent discovered that the monthly wage he received had been much lesser than his entitled amount and brought this to notice of his manager. The manager reprimanded him for raising such a petty issue and said that he had to complete five years of service for receiving full salary. He was further asked to sit outside the manager's office for 15 days. The respondent recalls such observable punishment aimed at humiliating while also setting an example to forewarn others. The worst was not yet over for him. Such an incident was repeated twice; when he raised the issue after completing five years, the management offered another excuse to extended the timeline and his punishment was to sit outside the manager's office for 9 days. This increased to 20 days in yet another such instance. Though, the wages did comply with pay package in the last phase.

Punishment posting, with added harassment

The workers could not take such treatment for long. Discontent was brewing within. A 2015 strike resulted in several changes. Not all changes were so virtuous. The strike in 2015 was a call from some unknown sources. The management, though, put the blame on Sureshbhai, who was most vocal of them all and suspended him for two weeks. This did not dampen his spirit and he continued to join the striking workers at the company's main gate. Union leaders were in place after 2015's strike. Respondents were among several leaders in this union and the management started offering them monetary benefits. However, when they refused to accept any such favours, they were shifted to a department having burdensome



work. Such intimidation continued even in 2016, when the management identified more leaders who addressed workers' gathering for deciding the future roadmap. There is a grave incident when a supervisor asked Vishnubhai, one of the respondents to check a faulty machine during night shift. Vishnubhai said he had no knowledge of even handling such machines, but the supervisor stood over his head and instructed him to push the part where a fan had stopped rotating. Vishnubhai had no choice but to slide his hand inside. The fan suddenly started rotating when his hand was still inside. Vishnubhai was injured. However, later on the management took care of the expenses in treatment and even extended compensation.

Industrial Activity

Sporadic confrontations were usual

Respondents used to confront whenever other colleagues were treated badly. Vishnubhai had once confronted his

superiors when a female co-worker was unfairly dismissed because her height was not high enough to handle bobbing work. In another instance, his supervisor once slapped a worker. He took up the case with management and the supervisor was suspended. Such confrontations were almost routine and respondents remained vigilant to confront whenever they happened.

Three-day strike in 2015

Lack of required numbers of workforce, coupled with pressures on meeting targets were among major reasons for the three-day strike in 2015. Unrest among workers had led 15,000 local and migrant workers to come together for the strike. The strike was a surprise call from an unknown source. Wall paintings and social media messages suddenly surfaced from nowhere, asking everyone to stop working from October 24, 2015. Neither workers nor management could trace their origin. The strike ended after three days when the management agreed to raise the wages. However, wage-rise was very marginal; demand for a raise of Rs 3,000 resulted in rise of



Rs 800 only.

Unionization followed this strike. 'Majoor Mahajan Sangh' (MMS) came to aid. Representatives from every department were elected. Thus, 45 workers representing all departments were elected as leaders. MMS has been intervening in workers' grievances, though their stance has not been pro-workers every time.

Acts of Management

Sureshbhai's suspension was the first casualty in 2016 for industrial actions. It was initiated in dubious manner when his supervisor told him that he was being laid-off for a couple of months and he can join again with a renewed contract. This never happened. He later learnt the company had blacklisted his name and he lost all his hopes to be back in Arvind Limited. Vishnubhai was next, who was suspended in August 2016. It so happened that Vishnubhai was on his way to the company and his colleague logged in his name before his actual arrival. This was enough an excuse for management to dismiss him. The management was quick enough to settle all his dues

the very next day to ensure his immediate exit. Popatbhai's suspension in June 2018 was not so immediate. He was served a suspension order but he refused to accept it. MMS took up the matter and asked Popatbhai to cooperate in an inquiry, which went on for three months. Nevertheless, MMS handed him the letter when inquiry ended. Popatbhai sighs, '*Majur Mahajan khana to humara khata hai, lekin management ke saath mein khada raheta hai*' (Majoor Mahajan thrives on us but supports the management).

Current Situation

Respondents confided that the region has age-related biases. Companies prefer young blood and refrain from hiring people in late thirties or forties. So, Popatbhai had to settle for whatever job was available. Once having respectable job title of Machine Operator, Popatbhai was hesitant to reveal his present occupation. He just indicated being a security guard in a unit at Kodasan; that entails him to work for thirty days a month, 12-hours in a day, sometimes expected to cover for the next shift. His wife sought employment when Popatbhai was suspended from Arvind Limited. Being not literate, she had to settle for lesser-paid jobs in a packing section of a small unit. Vishnubhai is native of Mehsana and lives with his homemaker wife, children and his parents. He has agricultural land having enough income to support family. He used his accident compensation and provident fund to establish a grocery outlet in his village. He is sad that the accident left him with a defective hand.

Sureshbhai is struggling financially. He kept waiting for long in anticipation that Arvind Limited would live up to the promise and absorb him. He kept running trivial errands to make ends meet. He started looking for serious jobs only when he found that the company had blacklisted him. His longest stint till now had been at a factory in nearby Sanand town. It lasted 9 months, from April to December in 2018, which paid him monthly salary of Rs.16,000 for 8 hours daily work. He had been trying to get in Arvind Limited and had approached local legislator. This helped him get an appointment letter in the beginning of 2019, but it turned out to be that of a trainee. So, Sureshbhai is reluctant; but still wants to hold on to that job because of the current economic slowdown.

Stay Contracted

Gemstone Refuses to Regularize Decade-Old Workforce

Mr Dashrathbhai Thakore is 37 years of age from Kadi in Mehsana district of Gujarat. He lives with his wife, a homemaker, and their two children. He is a welder in maintenance department of Gemstone Glass Private limited. He has been working since more than a decade in this company. He was part of the workforce that protested against the management in April-May 2019. This case study seeks to elaborate on the experiences of 150 subcontracted workers who protested for 45 days in mid-2019.

Company Profile

Gemstone Glass Private limited at Kadi, Gujarat, was established in the year 2000. The plant has ISO 14001: 2004 certification to its credit. Gemstone manufactures mosaic tiles and markets it under the brand name of PINO mosaics. Its website claims to have the largest manufacturing capacity of glass mosaic in the country. It further claims to be committed to protect the environment in which they operate and to ensure the health and safety of its employees, the community and interested parties; beyond the statutory requirements. However, one wonders to what extent the company fulfils its obligation towards the rights and entitlements of its workforce.

Nature and Strength of Workforce

Gemstone's glass mosaic plant is spread over an area of more than 26,000 square metre and they claim to provide employment, directly or indirectly, to more than 500 people. Respondents believe that about 350 workers are under the contracted category and most are from within Gujarat, mainly from nearby areas. Women are more in number among workers and are involved in the processes of designing, sheet-making, packing and housekeeping.

Work Conditions

Respondents consider Gemstone as one of the few establishments that employ women in the process of production. Most women workers in this region are confined to only housekeeping tasks. They are also underpaid due to gender-based wage discrimination and hardly given other monetary entitlements. In addition to this, women workers are often left outside the ambit of much-needed workplace benefits of maternity leaves and crèches. Furthermore, in the event of pregnancy, women were asked to leave immediately.

Gemstone has been a 'foreign company' that exports specialized glazed designer tiles, a respondent sighs. They employ a majority of the workforce under subcontractual agreement, while ensuring that each of them get 3-days off after a stint of six to eight work-



days. Thus, each subcontracted worker received 18 days per month of casual employment. Nobody could earn more than about Rs 8,000 in a month, not a sufficient amount to support a family. There was no likelihood to increase their income because long working hours coupled with erratic off-days made it difficult to seek supplementary or alternative employment. They did not receive any additional entitlements or social security benefits. Many of them had not received any wage-rise since the last one decade.

Industrial Activity

More than the half workforce has been on contract. Many of them do not receive work every day and that results in wage-losses. There are also instances of delayed wage payments. Major unrest by contracted workers began in April 2019. It was a 45-day strike for demanding optimum workdays each month and rise in wages that were last regulated in three years back in 2016. 150 workers joined the strike; 100 were under contractual agreement with the company and 50 were under the subcontracted category. They stopped work, sat at the company's gate and demanded to be enlisted as company's employees; thereby receiving benefits entitled under The Factories Act. The following were their major demands:

- ◆ Recognized as employees of the company and be paid wages accordingly
- ◆ Rise in the basic pay of the workforce
- ◆ House allowance, conveyance allowance, leave travel allowance, education allowance, attendance allowance, shift allowance
- ◆ Canteen facilities
- ◆ Casual and paid leaves
- ◆ Annual bonus
- ◆ Facility for loans

- ◆ Recognize the union of workers as formed under GFTU

Although these were demands that the workforce made, and the company did sign a Collective Labour Agreement with the representative of workers—Mr. Amrishbhai Patel of Gujarat Federation of Trade Union (GFTU) in the presence of the representative of the Labour office—the company did not comply with all the demands of the workers.

The workers' demography was visible during protests; locals led and migrants, being minuscule in number, joined them. Women, being the majority of workforce, played a vital role in leading the protest. Ms Pushpaben Parmar, Ms Ritaben Prajapati, Ms Raseedaben and Ms Niruben Patel were among the several who led from the front. Majoor Adhikar Manch (MAM) and GFTU played critical roles. MAM helped articulate and collate demands and Mr Amrishbhai Patel of GFTU helped negotiate with the management.

Workers were able to get a uniform wage hike of Rs1,800 (Rs 800 on the rise in basic pay and Rs1,000 for travelling allowance) and the commitment to employ workers for about 26 days in a month. Other benefits received were of casual leaves, paid leaves, PF, Gratuity, wage slip, 8-hour shifts, overtime payment, safety equipment, allowance for shoes and health and safety training of workers. However, the company did not recognise them as their employees.

On the one hand the struggle was successful—because it was able to get the workers a wage hike—something that happened for the first time in Gemstone's history. On the other hand, the most important demand of the workers was not fulfilled by the company—the demand to be recognized as the employees of the company.

A n n e x u r e – 3

Characteristics of Factories in the Case Study Area

Data Year	Company Name	Entity type	Incorporation year	Industry Group	Main product/service group	Total Annual income		Total Annual Expenses		Profit after Tax		Balance Sheet		Employees	
						Value (Rs)	CAGR (%)	Value (Rs Cr.)	CAGR (%)	Value (Rs Cr.)	CAGR (%)	Value (Rs Cr.)	CAGR (%)	Number	CAGR (%)
2019	Alps Technologies Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1993	Diversified non-financial	Non-financial services	1.01	-24.1	1.02	-23.8	-0.01	-56.6	19.16	19.2		
	Apollo Carmix Equipments Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	2013	Mining & construction equipment	Concrete, mortar mixers	42.73	26.7	40.08	17.8	0.17	542.1	17.17	16.3		
	Arvind Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1931	Cloth	Cotton fabrics	6645	10.8	6442.31	10.8	199.44	14.4	7300.01	6.8	7486	
	Cengres Tiles Ltd.	Private Ltd.	2007	Ceramic product	Ceramic tiles	105.34	-16.3	102.86	-15.6	0.39	-41.1	174.25	0.7		
	Deco-Mica Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1988	Plastic tubes, pipes, fittings & sheets	Sheets, films, etc. of plastic, not reinforced	53.4	7.0	54.86	7.6	1.42	5.8	51	11.0		
	Electrotherm (India) Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1986	Other ferrous metal	Ferrous metals & products	3493.6	5.5	3423.43	5.7	140.79	10.1	2227.45	-2.5	2352	2.4
	Gujarat Ambuja Exports Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1991	Processed foods	Food products, beverages	4038.3	10.9	3794.69	10.7	198.15	12.7	1751.3	8.6	4564	
	Hester Biosciences	Public Ltd.	1987	Drugs & pharmaceuticals	Vaccines	174.28	16.6	137.67	14.5	43.85	21.9	240.24	11.5	448	
	Johnson Controls-Hitachi Air Conditioning India	Public Ltd.	1984	Air-conditioners & refrigerators	Air conditioning machines / systems	2256.7	12.4	2273.23	12.5	85.94	6.4	1775.83	14.6	4265	22.6
	Kansai Nerolac Paints Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1926	Paints	Paints	5235.5		4431.6		467.4		4305.9			
Lincoln Pharmaceuticals	Public Ltd.	1995	Drugs & pharmaceuticals	Drug formulations	359.63	11.2	305.66	9.3	46.64	23.2	379.71	13.2	1245		

2019	Milton Industries Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1985	Plastic tubes, pipes, fittings & sheets	Sheets, films, etc. of plastic, not reinforced	55.53	1.0	51.13	0.3	1.96	9.0	62.85	7.7			
	Nirma Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1980	Other chemical products	Chemicals & chemical products	6373.3	6.5	5801.35	84.2	621.43	10.1	12501.24	10.7			
	Plastene India Ltd. 2018	Public Ltd.	1998	Commercial Industrial	Plastic Sacks and Bags	464.73		460.77		2		439				
	Scoda Tubes Ltd.	Public Ltd.	2008	Steel pipes & tubes	Stainless Steel Seamless Tubes	48.3		44.3		6		47.3				
	Shako Flexi Pack Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1992	Plastic Products	Plastic Products	127.1		114.9		9.1		78.5				
	Shree Nidhi Trdg. Co. Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1982	Other fund based financial services	Non-banking financial services	0.43	-20.5	0.46	-19.9	-0.03	-36.9	10.86	-1.3	9		
	Suraj Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1994	Steel pipes & tubes	Tubes & pipes	179.83	-0.4	182.56	-1.2	1.41	-12.1	197.82	0.7			
	Torrent Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	Public Ltd.	1972	Drugs & pharmaceuticals	Drug formulations	6151.3	15.4	5410.81	15.6	745.42	13.6	12895.06	19.9	15390	8.3	
	Trio Elevators Co. (India) Ltd.	Public Ltd.	2006	Business services & consultancy	Technical consultancy & engineering services	104.48	15.8	99.85	14.9	4.52	192.1	80.3	15.0			
2018	Maxim Tubes Co. Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	2006	Steel pipes & tubes	Seamless tubes & pipes	340.54	-	100.0	342.52	-	100.0	3.85	-100.0	125.19	-	100.0
	Mccain Foods (India) Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1996	Processed foods	Semi processed foods nec	604.13	-	100.0	593.59	-	100.0	17.73	-100.0	710.39	-	100.0
	N K Proteins Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1992	Vegetable oils & products	Cotton seed oil	3573.4	7.1	2	3530.3	6.8	26.1	10.9	476.39	6.5		
	Piccolo Mosaic Ltd.	Public Ltd.	2000	Ceramic products	Mosaic tiles	43.23	102.8	39.38	97.8	4.26	223.0	58.36	16.8			
	Sandvik Asia Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1960	Machine tools	Machine tools for drilling, boring, milling.	3061.7	8.8	2830.4	7.8	288	413.5	2502.4	9.0			

2018	Maxim Tubes Co. Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	2006	Steel pipes & tubes	Seamless tubes & pipes	340.54	100.0	342.52	-	100.0	3.85	-100.0	125.19	-100.0		
	Mccain Foods (India) Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1996	Pro-processed foods	Semi pro-processed foods nec	604.13	100.0	593.59	-	100.0	17.73	-100.0	710.39	-100.0		
	N K Proteins Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1992	Vegetable oils & products	Cotton seed oil	3573.4	7.1	3530.32	6.8	26.1	10.9	476.39	6.5			
	Piccolo Mosaic Ltd.	Public Ltd.	2000	Ceramic products	Mosaic tiles	43.23	102.8	39.38	97.8	4.26	223.0	58.36	16.8			
	Sandvik Asia Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1960	Machine tools	Machine tools for drilling, boring, milling.	3061.7	8.8	2830.4	7.8	288	413.5	2502.4	9.0			
2015	Abaris Healthcare Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	2009	Drugs & pharmaceuticals	IV fluids	51.44	20.9	62.48	22.6	0.58	65.5	54.18	20.3			
	Ambuja Intermediates Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1988	Dyes & pigment	Dyes	349.41	20.6	308.34	18.7	39.84	64.0	272.51	22.9			
	Apex Formulations Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1998	Drugs & pharmaceuticals	Pharmaceuticals	10.42	13.6	9.54	12.3	0.16	-8.7	7.69	15.6			
	Apollo Infratech Pvt. Ltd. 2015	Private Ltd.	2007	Mining & construction equipment	Mining & construction equipment	29.58		26.89		3		31.85				
	Gemstone Glass Pvt. Ltd. 2016	Private Ltd.	2002	Glass & glassware	Glass products, nec	44.77		42.9		0.39						
	Jainson Cables India Pvt. Ltd.	Private Ltd.	1992	Electricals and Electronics	Electronic & Electric Wires &	70.5		65		0.77		37.5				
	Kitchen Xpress Overseas Ltd. 2014	Public Ltd.	2007	Other agricultural products	Spices & Condiments	156.93	20.1	152.85	19.4	4.6	9.3	102.76	21.1			
	Raajratna Ventures Ltd. 2015	Private Ltd.	2004	Other ferrous metal products	Ferrous metals & products	193.86	100.0	189.26	-	100.0	4.52	-100.0	104.17	-100.0		
2009	Italia Ceramics Ltd. 2009	Public Ltd.	1991	Ceramic products	Glazed ceramic tiles, paving & flags	27.74		32.82		-2.65		28.5				

A n n e x u r e - 4

Questionnaire

Researching Labour Conditions and Labour Law Standards in the Industrial Town of Kadi, Gujarat, India

By Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action, 243 Baronet Complex, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad.

Schedule :Details of the workers

Name of the enumerator:.....

Date of the interview:

1.Biographical Data:

Name of the respondent:

Name of the factory where the respondent works:

Code:

Age of the worker:

Sex: Female/ Male/ Others

Religion:

Caste:

Level of education:

Marital status: Married ____ Unmarried____

Number of children or dependents in the family of the respondent:

Original residence of the respondent:

Respondent's (nature of) work in the factory:

2. Duration of work hours and freedom of movement of the worker:

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	Further Comments
2.1	Do you work 8-hours shift?			
2.2	If no, how many hours do you work____? Do you receive overtime?			
2.3	Do you get stipulated weekly off?			
2.4	Are there any restrictions to enter and leave the factory area?			
2.5	Do security guards prevent you from freely entering and leaving the factory premises?			
2.6	Further question(s)			

3. Prohibition on Child Labour

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	Further Comments
3.1	Are there any child workers of less than 15 years in your factory?			
3.2	Can you estimate how many of them work in factory? _____(number)			
3.3	How many hours are they required to work?			
3.4	Do you know of young workers between 15-18 years who work at night?			
3.5	Further question(s)			

4. Prohibition of Discrimination in Employment

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	I do not know	Further Comments
4.1	Do pregnant women receive maternity leave with wages? If not, then what kind of discrimination they face, please describe them.				
4.2	Do women receive same wages as men for the same (kind of) work?				
4.3	Do the women workers in your factory face caste based discrimination or harassment? If yes, please describe.				
4.4	Are workers prevented from performing their religious rituals?				
4.5	Do you suffer from physical or verbal abuse by the management or security forces? If yes, please describe.				
4.6	What is the nature of work within the factory that is specifically done by women and specifically done by men?				
4.7	Further question(s)				

5. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	Further Comments
5.1	In case of any grievances, who do you go/approach to in the factory?			
5.2	Do you share your grievances individually or collectively?			
5.3	Do you have union in your factory? If yes, who formed it? Workers_____ Management_____			
5.4	How many members are there in the union?			
5.5	What are the main issues or concerns of the union?			
5.6	In case of any grievances, do you approach the union?			
5.7	Are you a member of the union?			
5.8	If yes, why did you join the union? Do you face threat because of your membership in the union?			
5.9	Does the factory management allow union meetings during working hours?			
5.10	Does the factory management abide by the Collective Labour Agreement?			
5.11	Is there any union repression in your factory? If yes, describe the forms of union repression:			
5.12	Did the police or security forces interfere in cases of labour conflicts?			
5.13	Further question(s):			

6. Living Wages

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	I don't know	Further Comments
6.1	Do you regularly get properly documented pay slips?				
6.2	How much is your basic monthly wage?				
6.3	Is your wage less than the official minimum wage?				
6.4	Do you receive wages on time? When are your wages paid? Weekly/ monthly/ at the end of the season.				
6.5	Do you receive bonuses, and benefits, etc.?				
6.6	Besides wages, do you receive any part of your wage in terms allowances such food or travel allowance?				
6.7	Is your overtime paid according to the legal prescription?				
6.8	Is your total monthly wage enough to meet your basic needs including some discretionary income?				
6.9	How much should a living wage be in order to meet your basic needs including some discretionary income?				
6.10	Are you forced to not take holidays or leaves in order to meet the targets?				
6.11	Are you penalized if you are unable to meet your targets or commit mistakes while working? If yes, please describe.				
6.12	Do you have to work somewhere else (for instance in the agricultural fields) besides the factory to supplement your wages?				
6.13	Further question(s):				

7. Health and Safety

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	Further Comments
7.1	Is there medical care in your factory?			
7.2	Please name the Occupational Health and Safety tools/measures in your factory?			
7.3	Before starting work, were you oriented or informed about possible dangers regarding the work?			
7.4	Did you receive any safety training to mitigate the dangers involved in the work?			
7.5	Have you ever had an occupational accident in your factory or do you know of colleagues who suffered an accident? If yes, please describe it:			
7.6	Do you or any of your colleagues suffer from any occupational disease? how many? If yes, which kind?			

7.7	Are you covered by the social security system of the government? PF ESI/Insurance Gratuity Any other:			
7.8	Does your factory have a provision for canteen or mess?			
7.9	Do you have access to clean drinking water in your factory?			
7.10	How many toilets are there? Are they clean? Are there any instructions on how often a worker is allowed to go to the toilet during one shift?			
7.11	Does your factory provide to you with safety gear or clothes?			
7.12	Further question(s):			

8. Legally Binding Employment Relationship

No.	Wording of questions to the worker	Yes	No	Further Comments
8.1	Did you sign a written contract of employment?			
8.2	If yes, did you sign it with the factory or with a labour agent?			
8.3	If your work is seasonal in nature, how long does a season last?			
8.4	How many seasons have you been working for?			
8.5	In your factory, are workers employed for long duration on low wages on the pretext of training (apprenticeship program)? If yes, please share the details:			
8.6	Did you have to pay any fee to get the job in your factory?			
8.7	Further question(s):			

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Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action

PrayasCentre for Labour Research and Action (PCLRA) promotes workers' rights in the vast informal sector economy of India. It undertakes research to document work conditions in the informal sector followed by policy advocacy with the state so that workers receive their due entitlements. The Centre has done pioneering work in documenting the seasonal migration streams that feed labour to labour intensive industries like agriculture, brick kilns, and construction. Its work has facilitated development of an alternative paradigm of organizing workers that factors in the constant movement of workers, the critical role of middlemen, the nature of production process, and the socio-economic profile of workers.

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS) is a German-based foundation working in South Asia and other parts of the world on the subjects of critical social analysis and civic education. It promotes a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic social order, and aims to present members of society and decision-makers with alternative approaches to such an order. Research organisations, groups working for social emancipation, and social activists are supported in their initiatives to develop models that have the potential to deliver social and economic justice.

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