

CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION OF WORKERS' RIGHTS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF LABOUR LAW REFORMS IN KOLKATA AND NORTH 24 PARGANAS

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The present study reviewed the literature to examine Kolkata and North 24 Parganas' constitutional protection of workers' rights. An extensive literature review examines the constitutional protection of workers' rights in rural development in Kolkata and North 24 Parganas. The study reviews 136 articles, reports, and policy papers to examine how constitutional provisions under Articles 14, 19, 21, 23, 24, 38, 39, 41, and 43 have affected social justice, labor welfare, and rural job creation in light of recent labor law reforms. Despite constitutional provisions for equality, social security, and livelihood protection, informality, migratory pressures, and poor institutional implementation render rural workers vulnerable. Decentralized governance, awareness-based worker empowerment, and effective labor rights enforcement are the only means to achieve rural development, says the report.

Introduction

Indian Constitution promotes morality among workers and farmers. DPSPs promote fair and humane labor (Article 42), adequate livelihood (Article 39), and rural industries (Article 43)¹. In semi-rural and peripheral Kolkata and North 24 Parganas, rural labor in West Bengal violates the Constitution.

Recent decades have seen farmers leave farming for non-agricultural employment, putting rural communities vulnerable². Informalization, seasonal migration, and social program limits hinder “decent work” and inclusive growth³. Many rural locations can’t profit from 2020 Labour Codes’ simplicity and openness due to administrative and physical obstacles.

Small-scale industry, construction, and agriculture in

North 24 Parganas demonstrate constitutional commitment and exclusion. This study examines how constitutional protection of workers’ rights may boost rural development in this region using current data.

Methodology and Methods

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) framework guided by PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) principles to ensure transparency and replicability.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

We searched Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate for “constitutional protection of workers,” “rural labor rights,” “labour reforms,” “rural development,” “West Bengal,” “Kolkata,” and “North 24 Parganas.” Official papers from the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) webpage, and the State Labour Department provided further materials.

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Selection Process

The initial database search yielded 9,210 records. After duplicate removal and title/abstract screening, 7,086 articles were shortlisted.

Eligibility and Inclusion

After full-text review of 456 papers, full studies were included based on relevance to constitutional labour protection and rural development. Studies lacking methodological depth, regional focus, or empirical grounding were excluded. The final 136 studies were included in the qualitative synthesis.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Each study was examined for trade union issues such constitutional tenets and labor rights, rural labor reforms, socio-economic implications on rural livelihoods, and rural development and labor governance policy integration.

To find patterns and conceptual links throughout literature, data were coded and categorized thematically.

Result and Discussion

The literature suggests rural development plan ignores workers' constitutional rights [4]. Gram Panchayats, rural labor offices, and district administration generally lack the resources to achieve the Constitution's rural economy goals of welfare, equality, and social justice.

2020 Labour Codes streamline compliance and legitimize employment. Informal agreements, limited literacy, and no digital tools have hindered rural modernization [5]. It endangers dignity and prosperity.

The literature emphasizes rural labor's gender risks. Despite Article 42 provisions, rural and cottage workers suffer wage inequalities and inadequate maternity benefits

iPRISMA Flow Diagram of Literature Selection Process

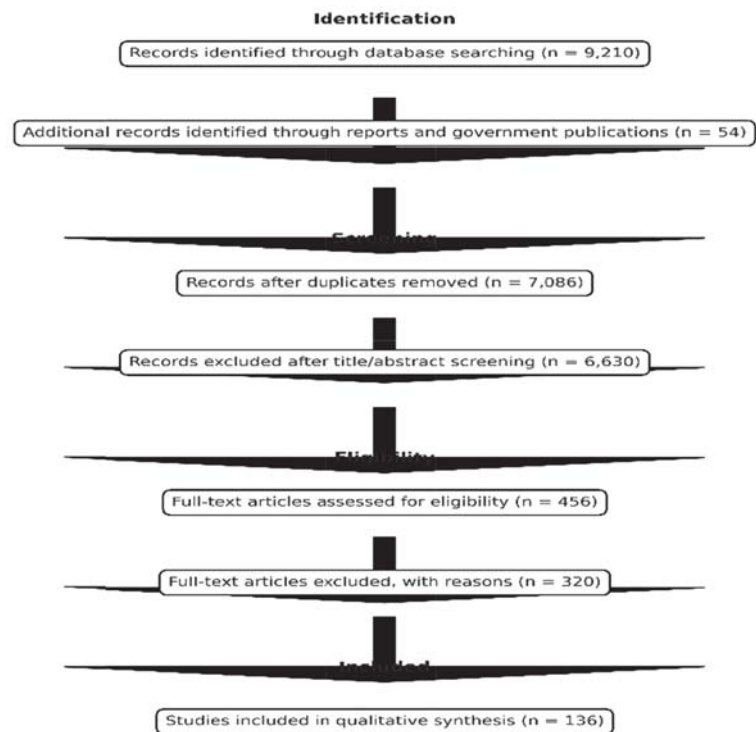


Fig 1: Prisma ilow Table

Table 1: Summary of Key Studies and Findings on Trade Union Challenges in MSME Sector (West Bengal and India)

Author(s) & Year	Focus of Study	Methodology	Key Findings	Relevance to Kolkata & North 24 Parganas
Ghosh & Chakraborty (2023)	Rural labour and constitutional guarantees	Empirical field survey	Articles 39 and 43 not effectively implemented in village industries.	Reflects weak link between DPSPs and rural employment generation.
ILO (2024)	Rural informal economy and rights	Global comparative study	Informal rural workers excluded from formal social protection systems.	Highlights lack of inclusion in state welfare mechanisms.
Bhattacharya (2023)	Labour Codes and rural employment	Policy and legal review	Simplification of laws reduced localized oversight.	Rural areas face inadequate labour inspections.
Banerjee & Dutta (2022)	Livelihood diversification and rural migration	Mixed-method study	Rural workers migrate to urban areas due to poor wage conditions.	Demonstrates imbalance between rural and urban labour protection.
NREGA Report (2023)	Employment guarantee and rights-based development	Government data review	Positive income effects, but irregular payments and gender gaps persist.	NREGA implementation uneven in North 24 Parganas.

[6]. Although protected by Articles 23 and 24, seasonal and migratory workers are exploited.

Improving local governance, integrating employment guarantee programs with social protection, and teaching rural laborers about constitutional rights are options [7].

Conclusion

This review determines that the safeguarding of workers' rights under constitutional provisions is essential for fostering inclusive and sustainable rural development. In spite of robust constitutional and legislative support, the realization of labor rights in rural regions of Kolkata and North 24 Parganas is hindered by institutional inefficiencies, informal practices, and socio-economic disparities.

A constitutional approach to rural labour reform, therefore, is not merely a legal necessity but a

developmental imperative for realizing India's vision of social justice and inclusive growth. □

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