

Manual database *Textile Wages_India_February 2024**

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1. CODE BOOK

Variable	Variable name	Description
A	YEAR	The year in which the observed wage was earned.
B	LOC_1	First level indication of location (country).
C	LOC_2	Location as listed in the source
D	LOC_3	Location level aggregated to the level of a city
E	TYPETEX	The type of textile (e.g. wool, cotton, flax, etc.).
F	OCCSOURCE	The occupational title as written down in the source.
G	OCCSTAN	The standardized occupational title (interpretation of the author of the database). If possible, the author used the occupational title as given by HISCO.
H	TECH	The type of machine/technology the labourer used. The kind of technology used is rarely listed.
I	WAGE_SOURCE	The wage as listed in the source (Rupees Anna Paise). The vertical line was used in the database as to not cause confusion in excel. In the original sources there usually was a space between rupees, annas, and paise.
J	WAGE_RUPEE	Wage in rupees (calculation by the author of the database). NB: NB: 1 Rupee = 16 Anna; 1 Rupee = 192 Paise. Where wage range is mentioned, this column takes a simple average.
K	WAGE_RUPEE_PD	Daily wage in rupees (calculation by the author of the database). NB: NB: 1 Rupee = 16 Anna; 1 Rupee = 192 Paise. Where wage range is mentioned, this column takes a simple average.
L	WAGE_TYPE	The type of wage (piece or time). NB: often when piece wage were included in the source, these were not the piece rates, but rather the total wage a piece labourer earned on average in a given amount of time.
M	WAGE_TIME	The time unit in which the wage was earned (day/week/month/year).
N	WAGE_HOURS	The number of hours that was worked in the period specified under WAGE_TIME.
O	LAB_AGE	(Indication of) the age of the labourer / group of labourers. Exact ages were rarely listed.
P	LAB_CH/AD	Indicates whether the labourer was a child or an adult. NB: when someone was labelled a child differed between sources and even between boys and girls within the same source.
Q	LAB_SEX	Sex of the labourer.
R	LAB_N	The number of labourers on which the average wage listed in the source (WAGE_SOURCE) was based.
S	SOURCE	Reference to the original source including page number.
T	REMARKS	Any additional remarks.

2. SOURCES

2.1. List of sources

Wage Census Reports Bombay (including Sind), 1911-1916, The British Library, India Office Records, V.14.116.

Labour Office. 1923. *Report on an Enquiry into the Wage and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry, 1921*. Bombay: Government Central Press.

Labour Office. 1925. *Report on an Enquiry into the Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry, 1923*. Bombay: Government Central Press.

Labour Office. 1930. *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry, 1926*. Bombay: Government Central Press.

Labour Office. 1934. *Wages and Unemployment in the Bombay Cotton Textile Industry: Report of the Departmental Inquiry*. Bombay: Government Central Press.

Labour Office. 1937. *General Wage Census, Part I; the Perennial Factories: Report on the Wages, Hours of Work, and Conditions of Industry in the Textile Industries (Cotton, Silk, Wool and Hosiery) in the Bombay Presidency (Including Sind), May 1934*. Bombay: Government Central Press.

Government of India. 1940. *Report of The Textile Labour Inquiry Committee, 1937, Vol II – Final Report*. Bombay: Government Central Press.

Government of India. 1945. *Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in the Woollen Textile Industry in India, 1944*. Labour Investigation Committee. Simla: Government of India Press.

2.2 Description of the sources, Wage Census, 1911-16

These surveys covered wages in a number of skilled and unskilled occupations in urban and rural regions of Bombay Presidency in the two years, and were thus not specifically an investigation of the wages prevalent in the textiles. Despite being termed a 'census', these wage rates were based on a small sample. While no clear method of enquiry was applied to the urban regions, rural wage rates were based on a selection of sample districts that were chosen as *typical* of the region. Within these sample districts, 12 villages were further chosen for the collection of statistics. The figures entered for these two years are approximations, and may not be representative, as district collectors, circle and district inspectors, agricultural officers etc. were the chief respondents. These wage-rates moreover apply to hand weavers, while the subsequent reports deal entirely with the mechanised textile industry.²

The information available is as follows:

- Year
- Region and district
- Occupation
- Wage rates (range)

This report does not provide any other detail regarding the number of observations on which these data are based, the gender of the operative, or the type of payment. Often wage ranges are provided.

2.3 Description of the sources, 1921-1940

During the interwar years, the Labour Office and independent committees investigated working conditions and wages of textile operatives in the mechanized cotton mills of Bombay Presidency, and as a result the coverage of wage data of textile mills improved substantially. These reports differ in their extent of coverage of different textile centres in the Bombay Presidency, but the wage rates are representative. The first two years – 1921 and 1923 – provide details on occupations in the textile industries of the three main centres covering firms employing between 68 to 90 per cent of all textile

² In one case, even in the mechanized industry, handweaving is mentioned.

operatives. The 1926 survey instead employed a sampling method selecting firms employing 30 per cent of operatives. This report is more detailed in terms of the number of occupations covered and the varieties of wage payment methods prevalent in the textile centres of the presidency. The reported data from the 1920s covers representative of the three main textile centres of Bombay Presidency – Bombay City and Islands, Ahmedabad, and Sholapur. The 1934 and 1937 surveys were censuses and hence covered 100 per cent of the operational mills in the presidency. The last two reports also substantially improved their coverage of other smaller centres operating in the presidency.

Apart from these, another smaller departmental level enquiry was undertaken by the Labour Office. This survey was carried out in 1933 to ascertain levels of wages and unemployment prevalent in the cotton textile industry due to the increasingly restive conditions among working classes. The scope of this survey was much smaller covering a sample of 10 occupations in six important department of 30 per cent of the mills in Bombay, Ahmedabad, and Sholapur. Across all these surveys, the response rates of the millowners was reported to be high.

All six reports provide details on the following aspects:

- Region/district
- Occupation and department
- Number of hours of labour
- Average number of days worked in a month
- Time or piece rated wages
- Gender
- The number of employees on which these figures are based
- Average daily/monthly earnings

2.4 Description of the sources, 1944

This is the only data source that covers the woollen textile industry and pertains to important centres of this production in British India. Over 90 per cent of all operational mills were covered during the survey and the data collected was similar to the description under 2.3 above.

3. IMPORTANT NOTES

1. For the year 1926, where the entered values in the LAB_N (see codebook above) is marked 'xxx' relate to aggregate summary figures for some main occupations and for all operatives.
2. The entered values under SOURCE column corresponding to 'Average daily earnings' is the same as *Report of The Textile Labour Inquiry Committee, 1937*.
3. Labour Office. 1937. *General Wage Census*: This report covers wages for other industries besides cotton textiles – like silk, hosiery, and bleaching and dyeing factories. We have, however, only entered the data pertaining to the Cotton textile industry.
4. In general, none of the reports mention the age of the operatives. Children, according Factories Act XII of 1911, were classified between ages 9 to under 14 years. The Indian Factories Amendment Act 1922 (II of 22) then amended this classification. Children were then classified as persons between over 12 and under 15 years of age. Whereas male children between ages 14-18 were classed as 'Big lads', female operatives over 14 years of age were automatically designated as 'women' – as they reached maturity "earlier than in colder climates".³

³ *Textile Labour Enquiry Report, 1923*, p. 7.