

**Socio Economic Conditions and problems of Construction Workers -
A Case study in Chittoor District**

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Abstract

The present study is aimed to explore socio-economic conditions and problems of construction workers in Chittoor District in construction sites in working environment and to document issues like gender bias, living conditions, vulnerability and slackness, wages, their economic status by finding out their savings, loans etc. The study concentrates on the construction workers who are working in the construction sector and how they are facing problems in the work place. Majority of the construction workers are facing lots of problems like absence of social security, low wages, gender discrimination, unhygienic conditions at work place etc. Data was collected from 450 sample construction workers from three revenue divisions of chittoor District. The data for this study has been collected through interview schedule. The secondary data was collected from the library, articles, journals and websites.

Construction activities are an integral part of the Indian economy and have attracted considerable amount of finances in both the public and private sectors. Investment in construction industry is very high and it is a flourishing industry. During the course of their work they are exposed to a wide variety of hazards on the job, including dusts and vapors, asbestos, awkward working positions, heavy loads, adverse weather conditions, work at heights, noise, vibration from tools, among many others. The causes of accidents and ill-health in the sector are well known and almost all are preventable.

Keywords: Construction sector, Construction workers, employment, wages, income, savings, economic status etc.

INTRODUCTION

The construction sector is an important sector of the economy and contributes significantly to Gross Domestic Product. According to the NSSO estimates in 2015-16, nearly 7.9 percentage of workers are engaged in building and other construction works. There are around 20,00,000 construction workers in Andhra Pradesh state alone. The construction industry is one of the largest and oldest industries to be generating employment in India, next to the agriculture sector. The construction workers are regarded as the prototype of extremely

demanding jobs tagged as 3-D: Dirty, Dangerous and Difficult. They have scarcity of money to cater to the needs of their family members. The local construction workers suffer from chronic unemployment due to the availability of large number of migrant workers who are, willing to work at lower wages.

The construction industry is a global industry known for its generation of jobs at different skill and professional levels. In terms of value of its output, its global market is reported to be around \$ 1.5 Trillion as on today. But only a small portion of it is distributed among its workers. Migrant workers constitute a large section of construction. Work is often carried out under hazardous conditions with high accident rates compared to the manufacturing sector. Safety consciousness is yet to percolate at the actual construction sites. There are many small firms/contractors less disposed towards compliance of labour laws and safety requirements. India is well accepted to have reached the stage of rapid economic growth, but not rapid social development. Poverty, Unemployment and Inequality constitute the major problems that India faces, especially from Equity and Social Development point of view. India's labour force is predominantly unorganized and unskilled. Among the various sections of unorganized labour, the labour in the construction industry is a large section suffering from poor working conditions and adverse terms of work.

Construction industry provides job opportunity to large number of skilled as well as unskilled work force. The workforces employed in the industry have to face several difficulties at the work place. Several issues related to health, job stress and injuries at work place are the major problems. The focus of the study is to identify the key factors related to the socio-economic conditions of construction workers in Chittoor district. India will become the world's third largest Construction Market by 2025 and thereby the Infrastructure Sector is a key driver for the Indian Economy. Especially the road sector profits from the Government's efforts and initiated policies to ensure time-bound creation of world class infrastructure in the country.

Construction is different from other industries in a number of aspects. First, the products of the construction industry are produced or assembled at the point of consumption implying that the workforce has to be mobile. Secondly, the role and responsibilities of each participant in the process have to be legally defined. The institutional framework of the industry is largely unique to each country or State, giving local firms an edge in bidding.

There is a widespread use of the contracting system in construction sector. Workers are employed on a project basis, with no insurance against periods of unemployment or

sickness, insecurity of employment and lack of social protection. In addition, the industry exploits many migrant workers from less developed countries. Most often illegal, their wages and conditions of work are far from decent.

CLASSIFICATION OF WORKERS

As stated earlier the workers in the house construction industry were broadly classified into two categories viz. Skilled workers and unskilled workers. Mason, centering foreman, flooring foreman, plumber, carpenter/fabricator are the workers incorporated in skilled workers. Whereas all the male and female helping hands are included in unskilled workers.

Classification of construction workers

| Skilled workers | Unskilled Workers |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Mason, Centering Foreman, Flooring Foreman, Plumber Carpenter and Fabricator, Painter | Male and Female Helping hands |

Classification of Workers

The total number of sample construction workers were 450. The classifications of those constructions workers were made broadly into following groups.

Skilled workers:

The workers who require some minimum skill for their job are known as skilled workers. Mason, centering foreman, Flooring foreman, plumber, carpenter and fabricator are the skilled workers in the construction activity. They are performing major jobs in building houses.

Unskilled workers:

The workers who only do the job as helping hands and do not be are any skill of work are known as unskilled workers. Number of male and female workers are doing this job in construction industry.

NEED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

In Andhra Pradesh very few studies have been undertaken on construction workers. After studying the earlier literature and some reports at national level on construction workers, an intensive need for research in the construction workers in Chittoor district has

been identified. The main aim of the present research work on the “Socio Economic Conditions of Construction workers: A Study of Chittoor District” is to fill the various gaps as well as to probe in the neglected economic status of the construction workers.

The construction worker faces many problems in Chittoor district. It is essential to find relevant causes for the problems faced by construction workers in Chittoor district and solutions to these problems with a view to promote overall development of construction workers.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The Present research of Socio Economic conditions of construction workers in Chittoor District is the first study of this kind in the study area. It is very necessary to understand the nature of construction activity and its socio economic impact on construction workers and to assess their problems. Construction workers contribute in building up the high class buildings, bungalows and the housing for poor. Yet they do not receive much respect in the eyes of people. The study concerns on various aspects of construction Workers, and will put the focus on future prospects.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the Socio economic status of the Construction workers in the study area.
2. To examine the wage levels between male and female workers in the study area.
3. To highlight the major problems of the construction workers in the study area.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data collected from the construction workers in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Structured interview schedules were used for data collection from the respondents during the year April 2018 to March 2019. The data has been collected from 450 construction workers in Chittoor district by using Quota Sampling Technique. Chittoor district is selected for study area because it is very fast developing in many aspects particularly the construction activities.

It consists of 3 revenue divisions viz., Chittoor, Tirupati and Madanapalli with 66 revenue mandals. The present study is restricted to 12 mandals from three revenue divisions. From each revenue division 4 mandals are selected. The sample was intended to select by using multi stage sampling technique. For each revenue division a quota of 150 construction

workers was fixed taking into account the cost, time and management of sample by an individual researcher .It is learnt from the pilot survey that for each skilled worker approximately two unskilled workers are necessary in the construction activity. Hence the total quota of 150 sample units fixed for a revenue division was divided between skilled and unskilled workers in this ratio and individual samples were taken accordingly.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF DATA

The collected data was tabulated and analysed with the help of appropriate Statistical tools. Baesd on the analysis and interpretation work conclusions were drawn regarding the conditions of construction workers in the Chittoor District.

Table -1: Gender Wise Distribution of Sample Respondents

Sex wise distribution of sample respondents is shown in table 1 reveals that total 50.20 per cent of males and 49.80 per cent are female respondents. In Tirupathi division male respondents are 51.30 per cent present and 48.70 per cent and 48.70 per cent is females. In the Madanapalli division is females are high than Male sample which is 51.30 and 48.70 per cent.

| S.No | Gender | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Male | 77 (51.30) | 76 (50.70) | 73 (48.70) | 226 (50.20) |
| 2. | Female | 73 (48.70) | 74 (49.30) | 77 (51.30) | 224 (49.80) |
| | Total | 150 (100) | 150 (100) | 150 (100) | 450 (100.00) |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 2: Age Wise Distribution of Sample Respondents

The age wise distribution of sample is shown in table 2 reveals that total 59.80per cent of respondents were 31-45 years age group, and 3.10 per cent were 0-14 years age group. In the all three revenue divisions majority of sample respondents were age group of 31-45 years. In the Tirupathi division more than Madanapalli and Chittoor division sample respondents of 31-45 years age group. After that, total 20.00 per cent respondents were 15-30 years age group. More than 75 per cent respondents were between 15-30 years and 31-45 years age groups. Aged workers will not able to sustain the hard work.

| S.No | Age group | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | 0-14 Years | 7 (4.70) | 5 (3.30) | 2 (1.30) | 14 (3.10) |
| 2. | 15-30 years | 24 (16.00) | 26 (17.30) | 40 (26.70) | 90 (20.00) |
| 3. | 31-45 years | 101 (67.30) | 91 (60.70) | 77 (51.30) | 269 (59.80) |
| 4. | 46-60 years | 18 (12.00) | 28 (18.70) | 31 (20.70) | 77 (17.10) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 3: Caste Wise Distribution of Sample Respondents

The caste wise distribution of sample respondents is shown in table 3 reveals that, out of the total 450 respondents 159 (35.30 per cent) workers are scheduled caste were engaged in construction work. In this table shows that, 52 respondents are (11.60 per cent) open caste people were engaged in this work. It is lowest percentage of people worked in this field. In the Tirupathi division, Other Backward people were majority in this filed compared to SC, ST, and others. In the Madanapalli division schedule caste respondents more than chittoor and Tirupati division. In the Tirupati division. OBC respondents more than Chittoor and madanapalli divisions. In the Chittoor division schedule Tribes respondents more than the Tirupati and Madanapalli division.

| S.No | Caste | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | SC | 48 (32.00) | 55 (36.70) | 56 (37.60) | 159 (35.130) |
| 2. | ST | 22 (14.70) | 38 (25.30) | 25 (16.70) | 185 (18.90) |
| 3. | OBC | 60 (40.00) | 39 (26.00) | 55 (36.70) | 154 (34.20) |
| 4. | OC | 20 (13.30) | 18 (12.00) | 14 (9.30) | 52 (11.60) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 4: Educational Status of Sample Respondents

Literacy rate of the sample Respondents of construction workers were observed by the researcher. The education level is categorized as illiterates, literates, primary, secondary and

higher education. Following table will put the focus on it. The educational status of sample respondents table reveals that, among the 450 total number of sample workers 43.00 per cent were totally illiterate persons. The number of construction workers who knows only three ‘R’ i.e., Reading, Writing and Simple Arithmetic were 15.80 per cent (71 respondents). The population having primary level of education were 28.20 per cent (127) and number of secondary level of education were 12.00 per cent (54 respondents). The construction workers having higher education was only 0.20 per cent (1 respondent). It clearly indicates that majority of the workers in both the category were having less education. It also indicates that the Tirupathi and Chittoor revenue divisions having majority of construction workers are illiterates, and Madanapalli division having Illiterates less than primary education in the three revenue divisions were less percentage of level of secondary education.

| S.No | Education | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Illiterate | 78 (52.00) | 71 (47.30) | 48 (32.00) | 197 (43.00) |
| 2. | Literate | 22 (14.70) | 33 (22.00) | 16 (10.70) | 71 (15.80) |
| 3. | Primary Education | 39 (26.00) | 38 (25.30) | 50 (33.30) | 127 (28.20) |
| 4. | Secondary Education | 11 (7.30) | 8 (5.30) | 35 (23.30) | 54 (12.00) |
| 5. | Higher Education | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 1 (0.70) | 1 (0.20) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 5: Economic Status of Sample Respondents

The Economic status of sample respondents table reveals that, total 51.80 (233 respondents) per cent of respondents are under below poverty line, and 32.20 (145 respondents) per cent of respondents are Anthodaya card holders and lowest 16.00 per cent of respondents are comes under Above Poverty Line (APL). In the Tirupathi and Madanapalli revenue divisions, majority of the Respondents are Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, and chittoor division, majority of the respondents are Anthodaya card holders. In these three revenue divisions APL card holders very low percentage of respondents.

| S.No | Economic status | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------|
| 1. | BPL | 108 | 57 | 68 | 233 |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| | | (72.00) | (38.000) | (45.00) | (51.80) |
| 2. | APL | 11 (7.30) | 33 (22.00) | 28 (18.70) | 72 (16.00) |
| 3. | Anthodaya card | 31 (20.70) | 60 (40.00) | 54 (36.00) | 145 (32.20) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 6: Working Hours of Sample Respondents

The working hours of sample respondents table reveals that, total 79.30 (357 respondents) per cent of sample respondents are working for a day in 8 to 9 hours and 19.30 (87 respondents) per cent of sample respondents are working for a day in 9 to 10 hours. In the all three revenue divisions majority of construction workers are working in 8 to 9 hours. More than 9 hours in working under construction below 20 per cent of population.

| S.No | Working hours | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1 | 8-9 hours | 95 (63.30) | 135 (90.00) | 127 (84.70) | 357 (79.30) |
| 2 | 9-10 hours | 54 (36.00) | 14 (9.30) | 19 (12.70) | 87 (19.30) |
| 3 | 10-11 hours | 0 (0-00) | 1 (0.70) | 2 (1.30) | 3 (0.70) |
| 4 | 11 hours and above | 1 (0-70) | 0 (0-00) | 2 (1.30) | 3 (0-70) |
| | TOTAL | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 7: Wage Rates of Sample Respondents

| S.No | Wage rate | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Male Rs.300-400 | 1 (0.70) | 0 (0.00) | 4 (2.70) | 5 (1.10) |
| 2. | Male Rs.400-500 | 15 (10.00) | 7 (4.70) | 14 (9.30) | 36 (8.00) |
| 3. | Male Rs.500-600 | 41 (27.30) | 25 (16.70) | 10 (6.70) | 76 (16.90) |
| 4. | Male Rs.600 and above | 27 (18.00) | 47 (31.30) | 47 (31.30) | 121 (26.90) |
| 5. | Female Rs.200-250 | 0 (0.00) | 36 (24.00) | 17 (11.30) | 53 (11.80) |

| | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 6. | Female Rs.250-300 | 26 (17.33) | 28 (18.70) | 38 (5.30) | 92 (20.44) |
| 7. | Female Rs.300-350 | 10 (6.66) | 7 (4.70) | 20 (13.30) | 37 (8.22) |
| 8. | Female Rs.350-400 | 30 (20.00) | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 30 (6.70) |
| | TOTAL | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

In above the table reveals that, wage rate of sample respondents table reveals that, total 26.90 per cent of male construction workers are getting wage for a day Rs.600 and above and Rs.16.90 per cent of male respondents are getting wage for a day Rs.500-600 Rupees. In the 1.10 per cent of respondents are getting wages for a day Rs.300-400 Rupees. In the other hand, total 20.44 per cent of female workers are getting wages for a day Rs.250-300 Rupees and only 6.70 per cent of female workers are getting wage for a day Rs.350-400 Rupees. In this context, an overview that, Male and female wages are not similar in three revenue divisions.

Table – 8: Average Monthly Income of Sample Respondents

The average monthly income of sample respondents table reveals that, total 77.80 per cent of sample respondents are their monthly income between Rs. 20,000 – 30,000 and 18.90 per cent of sample respondents are their getting monthly income between Rs.10,000 – 20,000 only 1.10 per cent of sample respondent are their monthly savings below Rs.10,000. In the all three revenue divisions majority of sample respondents their monthly income between Rs. 20,000 – 30,000.

| S.No | Monthly income | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Below Rs.10,000 | 2 (1.30) | 1 (0.70) | 2 (1.30) | 5 (1.10) |
| 2. | Rs.10,000-20,000 | 7 (4.70) | 15 (10.00) | 63 (42.00) | 85 (18.90) |
| 3. | Rs.20,000-30,000 | 131 (87.30) | 134 (89.30) | 85 (56.70) | 350 (77.80) |
| 4. | Rs.30,000 and above | 10 (6.70) | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 10 (2.20) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 9: Average Monthly Savings Of Sample Respondents

The average monthly savings of sample respondents table reveals that total 85.60 per cent of sample respondents are their monthly savings between Rs.10,000-20,000 and 8.90 per cent of sample respondents are their monthly savings only below Rs.10,000. Only few percentage of sample respondents are their monthly savings in between Rs.20,000-30,000 Rupees only. In the all three revenue divisions majority of sample respondents are their savings between Rs.10,000-20,000 only.

| S.No | Monthly savings | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Below Rs.10,000 | 21 (14.00) | 11 (7.30) | 8 (5.30) | 40 (8.90) |
| 2. | Rs.10,000-20,000 | 106 (70.70) | 137 (91.30) | 142 (94.70) | 385 (85.60) |
| 3. | Rs.20,000-30,000 | 21 (14.00) | 2 (1.30) | 0 (0.00) | 23 (5.10) |
| 4. | Rs.30,000 and above | 2 (1.30) | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 2 (0.40) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 10: Debt Position of Sample Respondents

The debt position of sample respondents table reveals that, total 72.90 per cent of sample respondents are their debt position is more than Rs. 30,000 and 19.10 per cent of sample respondents are their debt position is between Rs. 20,000 – 30,000. More than 90.00 per cent of sample respondents are their debt position is very serious condition. In Tirupathi and Chittoor revenue divisions debt position more than Madanapalli division. In the all three revenue division majority of sample respondent are their debt position is more than Rs. 30,000.

| S.No | Debt Position | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Below 10,000 | 5 (3.30) | 0 (0.00) | 5 (3.30) | 10 (2.20) |
| 2. | Rs. 10,000 – 20,000 | 5 (5.30) | 6 (4.20) | 15 (10.00) | 26 (5.80) |
| 3. | Rs 20,0000 – 30,000 | 23 (15.30) | 27 (18.00) | 36 (24.00) | 86 (19.10) |
| 4. | Rs. 30,000 and above | 117 (78.00) | 117 (78.00) | 94 (62.70) | 328 (72.90) |
| 5. | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 11: Food Expenditure of Sample Respondents

The food expenditure of sample respondents table reveals that, total 89.30 per cent of sample respondents are spending their money on food between Rs.51-100 and 9.80 per cent of sample respondents are spending their money on food below Rs.50. In the all three revenue divisions of sample respondents are spending their money on food between Rs.51-100.

| S.No | Food expenditure | Tirupathi Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Below Rs.50 | 19 (12.70) | 10 (6.70) | 15 (10.00) | 44 (9.80) |
| 2. | Rs.51-100 | 127 (84.70) | 140 (93.30) | 135 (90.00) | 402 (89.30) |
| 3. | Rs.100 and above | 4 (2.70) | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 4 (0.90) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

Table – 12: Medical Facilities for Sample Respondents

The Medical facilities for sample respondents table reveals that, total 83.10 per cent of sample respondents are depending on the Govt. Hospitals and 13.30 per cent of sample respondents are depending on the primary health centers and 1.30 per cent of sample respondents depending only private hospital. In the three revenue divisions, majority of sample respondents are depending on the Govt. Hospitals and least percentage of sample respondents are depending on the private hospitals.

| S.No | Type of Medical Facility | Tirupati Division | Chittoor Division | Madanapalli Division | Total |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. | PHC | 13 (8.70) | 9 (6.00) | 38 (25.98) | 60 (13.30) |
| 2. | Govt. Hospital | 121 (80.70) | 141 (94.00) | 112 (74.70) | 374 (83.10) |
| 3. | Private Hospital | 6 (4.00) | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 6 (1.30) |
| 4. | Govt. and Private Hospital | 10 (6.70) | 0 (0.00) | 0 (0.00) | 10 (2.20) |
| | Total | 150 | 150 | 150 | 450 |

Source: Field Survey

PROBLEMS OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Casual nature of Employment

Workers in the construction field are scattered in nature and unorganised. Most of them were migrated and poor. The strength of employer is superior. Hence, the nature of

employment in construction sector remains casual and uncertain. No one either contractor or owner gives an assurance of job to the workers.

Construction activity is in slack in rainy season, which results in less demand for workers. Again when there is a shortage of water in summer season, the construction work falls in danger, which ultimately turns into unemployment of workers required. As such, the nature of employment in construction sector remains causal and uncertain.

Ignorance and Illiteracy

Most of the construction workers are illiterate or literate-Therefore, they are very much unaware about the rules and regulations of their working conditions. As they are scattered in nature, they are totally helpless in pursuit of their common interest. Most of the workers are ignorant about market conditions and labour market variations.

Low Wages

Low wage is another important problem of construction workers. Minimum Wage Act is not applicable in unorganised sector. Skilled and unskilled construction workers work for low wages. Construction workers are supplied by the labour contractor on commission basis. Naturally commission of the contractor is cut-off in the wages of labour Construction workers does not get any overtime payment, as there is no provision of such payments in any Act. In this way problem of low wages is an important and unsolved problem in construction field.

Lack of Stability or Durability

The nature of work in construction field is causal and uncertain. Hence, there is a complete absence of stability of work regarding staying in a single work or same place. Sometimes, workers themselves change their work or contractor dismiss them. Skilled workers as well as unskilled workers are very unsure about their durability of work. They are working under unsecured environment or work culture.

Absence of Social Security

The concept of social security is derived from the provision of Article 38 of the Constitution of India. The workers in the house construction are far away from the benefits of social security as well as labour welfare programmes run by Government. Workers work under the conditions like, uncertain work, no medical facilities, unsafe working place, no pension and lack of fair wages, insurance etc. In short there is a total absence of social security schemes in construction sector.

Uncertain Working Hours

Hours of work are not fixed in construction sector- They are totally elastic and depend upon the mood of foreman or contractor. Long working hours does not mean the extra payment. Daily work schedule commence at 8.30 a.m. and ends at 6.30 p.m. some time it is

extended up to 8.30 p.m. Every worker have to follow the daily work schedule, nobody have an excuse.

Unhygienic and Unsafe Working Conditions

The working conditions are very bad and harmful to the health of workers on the construction sites, contractors are not paying attention towards any improvement in working conditions. There is no provision about accidents and emergencies. There are several occasions of accidents with the workers especially working in construction of multi-storied buildings.

Vulnerability to Occupational Diseases

Construction workers work in stone, mud, cement, steel nails, sand, bricks and water etc. Masonry work and centring work depends upon cement mix material. The workers who prepare cement mix material and who operate that material did not wear socks or shoes, hence they were suffering from various occupational diseases. Body ache, craches, asthma, bronchial diseases, heat exhaustion and malaria are the common diseases of these workers. One can identify these workers with one or more of the above said diseases. In another words, vulnerability to various occupational diseases is one of the identification mark of construction workers.

Serious Injuries

Construction workers work in difficult conditions. They have to go up and down on several floors taking the brick, sand and cement. Workers are doing all these things very easily as they are habitual with them. But, sometimes accidents happen due to break down of foundation and slab failure, etc. The nature of accidental injuries depends upon the seriousness of an accident. Many times workers die in such accidents and several times they have to loose their limbs. Thus, workers are facing the problems of serious injuries.

Lack of Social Security

It is obligation on contractors to provide social security to their workers. Labour insurance, first aid box, accidental benefits, canteens, restrooms and pensions etc. are some of the important social security schemes. But, unfortunately construction workers are far away from all these social security schemes. They have to work in an unsecured environment with the accepting the life risks.

Improper Implementation of Labour Laws

Government has made number of legislations for the workers working in unorganised sector. The government intention behind legislations is to provide full protection to unorganised labour class. Minimum Wages Act-1948, Contact Labour Act-1970, Building and

other Construction Workers Act-1996, Payment of Wages Act-1936, Workmen's Compensation Act-1923 and the Unorganised Sector Worker Bill-2005, etc, are the important regulation made by the government. But experience regarding implementation of these Acts in practice is not satisfactory. Helpless and scattered workers cannot change the situation, rather he bears and suffers, Unlimitedly.

Lack of Labour Welfare Activities

Labour welfare is an extension of the term welfare and its application to labour. In India, labour welfare started in its broader meaning, has gradually become narrower in its outlook. The workers in India works for long hours under unhealthy surroundings and afterwards have no means to remove the drudgery of their Lives.

Removed from the village community, and thrown into a strange and uncongenial environment, they are liable to become easy victims of alcoholism, gambling and other vices, which tends towards their demoralisation and ruin. Hence, the labour welfare is now beyond the stage of debate. Well sanitary and hygiene facilities, medical facilities, educational facilities, recreational facilities, rationing facilities and transport facilities etc, will create good feeling about work amongst workers.

No Holidays

Construction workers have to work continuously. There is no provision for holiday and payment of holiday. They could get wages only after work. "No Work No Wage" is the rule of unorganised sector. Construction workers take weekly off on their bazaar day without wages,

Absenteeism

This is one of the common Phenomenon of Indian workers that they have a tendency to bunk off from work without any reason. They are very whimsical and capricious that they do not attend their work. Many times they give reasons about their ill health or local ceremonies. Absenteeism of workers results in low productivity and low earnings, which ultimately results in their poverty.

Addition of Various Habits

Construction workers have an addiction of various bad habits. Chewing tobacco, smoking, eating Gutkha, drinking alcohol at the time of work are the major drawbacks of construction workers. Some of them are involved in adultery and always indulge in family quarrels. All these bad habits badly effect on their body as well as their working efficiency.

Thus, construction workers are facing all the above problems. These unsolved problems are the basic causes of poverty, ill health and Unsatisfactory low living standard of labours.

Problems of Female Workers

Large number of female worker engaged in construction sector. In Chittoor District more than 20,000 female workers are engaged in house construction activity. At the time of their personal interviews, we were well aware about their several problems. The basic problems of female house construction workers are as under.

Exploitation

Working women are always in danger of physical and economic exploitation by their male co-workers. Physically females are supposed to be gentle and weaker than males,

Family Problems

Women are playing multiple roles in the society. Hence, they are also facing multiple problems. Every member in a family expects a lot from women. As expectation increases number of family problems increases. Domestic violence, betting, and divorce etc. are the general family problems, which occurs only with women. All these family problems put female workers into trouble.

Temporary Work

The nature of employment in construction activity is seasonal and uncertain. No one, either contractor or owner is ready to give an assurance of work. In rainy season construction sector take a halt, which results in shrinkage the demand of unskilled workers. Maximum (99 per cent) women engaged in construction work are doing unskilled work / job. Hence, the first axe of unemployment falls on women, at the lime of depression in construction sector. Temporary nature of work always push female workers in chain of problems like no work no wages, low earnings, poverty, low social status and dirty living environment.

Poverty

There are several low wage seasonal occupations. Poverty is the curse to casual workers in this occupation. Women in construction work suffer a lot from this course. As they are not getting full time and continuous work, they are liable to get low earnings. Low earnings results in low income and low income ultimately push them into an abyss of poverty.

Negligence towards Children

Female construction workers are long hours away from their home. As there are no fix timing of working hours, they have to work for long hours. Early in the morning when they leave their home, their children are in .sleep and again when they returned at late night, most of the children are in sleep. Remaining all the time their children are on the mercy of God, Hence, very few times they came into the contact with their children.

Lack of Social Security

Social security is a basic need of all people regardless of employment in which they work and live. It is an important form of social protection. It should be begun with birth and should continue till death. In general sense social security refers to protection extended by the society and State to its members to enable them to overcome various contingencies of life.

The basic social security need in the construction women workers are the maternity benefits, health care, child care, nutritional food, drinking water shelter and education at site. Unfortunately, nobody including Government and non-government bodies are paying proper attention in providing social security schemes to women construction workers.

Gender Discrimination

Women experience gender discrimination in labour market due to many reasons. Women have lower accessibility than men to productivity argumentation, opportunities like schooling, required training and experience continuity in career regional mobility. Women receive less favorable jobs than men or they will not get any job because of their lower education and experience. Women get lower wages than men for the same job.

Outside The Reach of Various Laws

Government has made various laws and directive principles for securing the women workers in unorganised sector. Unfortunately women labourers are outside the reach of most of laws and regulations, which seek to protect labourers, security and living conditions. They are exposed to various exploitations and discriminations, Indian women constituting nearly half of the total population, play a crucial role in the domestic sphere. Yet, our traditional attitude is to treat women as second class citizens. Their contribution is given due credit.

Dirty Environment

Women workers are living in slum areas of the city. The living environment in these slums are very dirty. Lack of civilized culture turn them towards bad habits. All in all, women workers are living in a very bad and adverse situations.

Productivity of Labour

Construction labour productivity is having importance to check the output for given input in the form of payment, social security schemes. By doing micro-measures of construction labour productivity indicate improvement and some macro-measures indicate otherwise, the opportunity for improving construction labour productivity clearly exists. The way to find opportunities for construction labour productivity improvement is to identify which factors are affecting it. Factors which are the construction labour productivity is related to these variables management, labour. Government, contracts, owner characteristics and

financing.

Similarly the American Association of Cost Engineers defines productivity as a relative measure of labour efficiency, either good or bad, when compared to an established base or norm, and rectified the factors affecting labours productivity in construction planning. It is difficult to calculate absolute value of labour productivity by analyzing the information from various sources. And the outcome is adequate coordination, union agreements restrictive work practices, absenteeism. delays, social characteristics, environment rules, climate and fixed price, unit cost i.e. payment to the labour.

Nature of Working Profession

Now we are in the twenty-first century, many of us would dispute that the construction industry has a poor image. In the scenes of devastation as building collapse, numbers of accidents on construction sites, corruption in the compensations and corruption in construction itself. All of these problems contribute to the poor image of the industry in the eyes of its clients and the public at large also contribute to the poor image of the industry in the eyes of its workforce, or potential workforce.

The poor image of in the construction industry is generally thought to stem from the nature of the work, which is often described as dirty, difficult and dangerous. But the real reason why construction work is so poorly regarded has much more to do with the terms on which labour is recruited than the Nature of the Work Itself. For many construction workers around the world the duration of employment have always been a problem. And it has been temporary in nature which cause instability, insecurity in labour.

The outsourcing of labour through sub-contractors and other intermediaries is now the fad in our country. It means that work in construction has become increasingly temporary and insecure, and workers' protection has been reducing at large numbers are excluded from social security schemes. The increase in the practice of employing labour through subcontractors has also had a profound effect upon occupational safety and health and it has undermined collective bargaining agreements and training provision.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

1. The construction work in Chittoor District is dominated by male workers. They play a major role in total construction activity. Only few women workers are found in the activity. This may be due to the strenuous physical work involved in the construction sector.

2. More than two- thirds of the construction workers in Chittoor District are observed to be in middle age group i.e. 20 to 45 years. This is because the construction firms prefer young working individuals for undertaking the hard physical activity.
3. Most of construction workers have migrated from rural areas to urban areas. There are workers from outside the district and the state. This shows the growing opportunities of employment in construction sector of the Chittoor District.
4. More than three - fourth of the construction workers in Chittoor District are educated. The numbers of illiterate construction workers are 43 per cent to be found in Chittoor District.
5. More than two- thirds of the construction workers in Chittoor District are SC, ST and OBCs. The numbers of OCs construction workers are 43 per cent to be found in Chittoor District
6. Nearly 80 per cent of construction workers are working in 8 to 9 hours in a day.
7. Nearly 95 per cent of construction workers are getting between Rs. 10000 to 30000 per month. The income is not sufficient for better living as the average rate inflation in the country is more than 7 per cent. So this negatively influences the socio – economic condition of the construction workers.
8. The construction workers in Chittoor District have middle class families. They spend most of their earnings on providing basic needs.
9. The construction workers in the city are self trained. The employer or government role in workers training is observed to be nil.
10. The builders or construction firms in Chittoor District do not take the responsibility of accident cost of workers.
11. The survey reveals that the contractors also fail to provide basic amenities for workers at the construction site.
12. More than two- thirds of the construction workers in Chittoor District are observed to be in BPL and antyodaya card holders this is because the construction workers were weaker sections of the society.
13. Most of the construction workers need financial support for family development (for example: house repairing payment of others, for medical cost etc.). They do not get financial support from contractor.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Participation of Women in all types of construction work should be increased. Wherever women workers are willing they should be given a chance to become masons, plumbers, painters etc.
2. Construction Workers are getting low wages in Chittoor District, especially for women. So wages given to workers need be to increase as per the rate of increase in general prices.
3. Formal training for construction workers is important. The employer and government should take the lead in this aspect.
4. The government should give wide publicity to its different health schemes for construction workers.
5. The literacy percentage in the study area was found to be low. To improve the literacy, special attention programmes such sakshara bharat, night Schools etc., for construction should be undertaken.
6. Living conditions of the construction workers should be improved. Low cost housing facilities with all amenities could be provided by the construction firms or the government.
7. Care should be taken to strictly apply of various labour laws. The District Labour Welfare Officer should carefully observe the implementation of legal provision and social security schemes in the construction sector.
8. There is the need of formation of separate cell to look after, execute and safeguard the provisions of the Building and Construction Workers Welfare Act.
9. There is requirement of workers representative, to oversee the implementation of regulations and willingness of the state government for execution.
10. Usage of safety equipments should be encouraged by builders as well as government.

CONCLUSION

The workers are at least able to feed their families though may not be in a decent way. This is mostly true in the case of unskilled workers. But there are some constraints in entry into construction sector. The workers are largely dependent on labour contractors to get the access. Moreover there is abundant labour even in terms of skilled labour. This has the tendency to pull down the wage. There is no security after a certain age in this sector. However, the workers in the city have no security from the random shocks.

The construction workers are totally unaware about healthcare schemes of government. Women workers in this sector need to receive more attention. Neither any

facilities nor any scope for skill development is available for them in this sector. Like other sectors they face more difficulties than male workers. Majority of construction workers have acquired skill informally under the guidance of their co-workers. So they don't know how to use the safety measures properly.

The social amenities like canteens, toilets are found nil on most of the worksites in Chittoor District. Negligence of workers organization to connect this large segment is thinkable. The initiative from the state government to constitute a welfare board has been tardy. Either getting the employment opportunities in this sector construction workers are failed to get the high social status and living standard. Near to half of the construction workers are under B.P.L. category.

The socio-economic conditions of construction workers are not so well. So the plight of construction workers and their socio-economic security is yet to receive attention in Chittoor District. Builders too are disappointed with government negligence towards this sector. In summary we can conclude the much needs to be done by the employers and the government to improve the plight of construction workers in Chittoor District.

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