

Problems Faced By the Construction Workers in Thoothukudi City

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Abstract

In India, construction industry is the second largest employer when compared to agriculture. Construction industry is one of the important sectors employing a large number of people on its work force. Construction workers come under the unorganized sector. The form of unorganized sector has been defined as those areas which have no proper means and ways of doing works in a systematic ways of doing in organized way. The unorganized sector has no clear-cut employer-employee relationships and lacks most forms of social protection. Having no fixed employer, these workers are casual, contractual, migrant, home based, own-account workers who attempt to earn a living from whatever meager assets and skills they possess. Skilled and unskilled construction workers work with low wages. They are working under unsecured environment or work culture. Construction industry is the major source of employment for workers in the unorganized sector. Construction workers face a lot of problems such as lack of work security, low wages, lengthy hours of work and lack of social and medical welfare facilities. Generally, construction workers face financial problem, health problems, occupational diseases, injuries, working at high places, even lose of life also.

Keywords: Unorganized sector, Construction industry, Socio economic conditions, Problems

INTRODUCTION:

Unorganized sector was coined by the British Economist Keith Hart in 1971, which emerged as a one of the dynamic and vibrant sector. India's workforce comprises nearly 92% in the unorganized sector, with the entire farm sector falling under the informal category, while only one-fifth of the non-farm workers are found in the organized segment.

Unorganized sector contributed significantly and expanded rapidly in the Indian economy. The contribution of formal activities in the unorganized sector is quite small. High Population, Unemployment and ample nature of degree holders are some of the reasons for self employments. Construction workers come under the unorganized sector. The construction industry plays a key role in India (due to its labour advantage), generating jobs, contributing to social and political stability, and adding high value of employment. Labour is the backbone of industrial growth and economic development of a country. Government of India has enacted several laws giving protection to labour against retrenchment, employment injury, occupational diseases, and economical and social distresses. But the benefits of these laws have reached only to a small section of workers in the organised sector. The well designed social security system for the workers in the unorganised sector will help in improving productivity, contribute to the harmonious labour relations and thus to socio - economic development. It will encourage and propagate the social peace by reducing the frequency of industrial conflicts, increase the willingness to work, make it easier to meet delivery commitments and lead to improved quality product, a better investment climate and thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the economy. State Governments like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have introduced social security schemes providing insurance and other benefits to certain occupational groups in the unorganised sector. Construction labours are labours that are migrated from different regions and states leaving their native villages in search of daily job. They have maximum mobility because of the nature of work. These laborers are engaged in huge industrial constructions, residential and commercial apartments, road constructions, hotel constructions, pool and bridges and infrastructure facility works. These construction workers are from poor families and are illiterates. They have to face number of problems because of their inexperience and lack of skill. They become easy victim of exploitation and gender discrimination for work allocation and wage distribution. Sexual harassment is a serious problem for women construction workers. They faced different health hazards, physical problems and adverse out comes.

OBJECTIVES:

- To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
- To study the reason for choosing construction work.

- To find out the problems faced by the respondents.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

After Globalization, Liberalization and Privatization there is a heavy demand for the infrastructure especially for the residential buildings. Hence, they demand for the labourer in construction works. The House owners, Engineer, Contractor and construction Companies are forced to depend on the construction workers. Construction labours from the most unorganized and neglected section of the rural society who are the victims of the low wages, seasonal unemployment, low incomes, poverty and indebtedness. Hence, the researcher has made an attempt to find out the problems faced by the construction workers.

METHODOLOGY:

Both Primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were collected through the questionnaire. A total of 120 construction workers from the residential area in Thoothukudi city were chosen for this study by using convenient sampling method, secondary data were collected from websites, journals and books, etc. For analysis purpose some statistical tools were applied such as Simple Percentage Method, Ranking Method.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The brief analysis and interpretation discussed below:

Socio-economic profile of the respondents

Table 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

VARIABLES	Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
AGE	Up to 30	28	23.33
	31-40	37	30.83
	41-50	43	35.83
	51 & above	12	10
	Total	120	100
GENDER	Male	72	60

	Female	48	40
	Total	120	100
MARITAL STATUS	Married	90	75
	Unmarried	22	18.33
	Widow	8	6.7
	Total	120	100
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	Illiterate	62	51
	Primary	21	18
	Higher secondary	73	11
	Degree	24	20
	Total	120	100
OCCUPATION	Mason	23	19.16
	Centering	22	18.36
	Plumber	8	6.66
	Carpenter	11	9.16
	Electrician	16	6.66
	Helper	48	40
	Total	120	100
DAILY WAGES	Up to Rs.200	48	40
	Rs.201 - Rs.600	38	31.67
	Above Rs.600	34	28.33
	Total	120	100
FAMILY SIZE	1	18	15
	2	36	30
	3	42	35
	Above 3	24	20
	Total	120	100
POSSESSION OF	Own	13	11
	Rent	83	69
	Lease	24	20

HOUSE	Total	120	100
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Source : Primary data

From the above Table 1 it can be understood that out of 120 respondents , majority of the respondents (35.83%) were coming under the age group of 41-50 and most of the respondents (60%) were male.75% of the respondents were married and 51% of the respondents they are illiterate. Most of the respondents (40%) were working as a helper in construction industry and (38%) of the respondents they are getting a daily wages like Rs.201- Rs.600. Majority of the respondents (42%) they having the family size 3 members and most of the respondents (69%) were possess rented houses only.

Table 2: PROBLEM FACED BY THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

S. No	Weight	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Rank
	Particulars	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X		
1.	Low wages	20	13	20	17	12	13	6	12	6	1		2
		200	117	160	119	72	65	24	36	12	1	806	
2.	Lack of education	16	11	16	13	10	18	15	11	4	6		5
		160	99	128	91	60	90	60	33	8	6	735	
3.	Lack of work security	22	16	12	8	14	10	18	13	6	1		3
		220	144	96	56	84	50	72	39	12	1	774	
4.	Awareness of government scheme & welfare facilities	10	8	6	7	18	13	15	18	14	1		9
		100	72	48	49	108	65	60	54	28	1	585	
5.	Financial	17	18	15	20	10	12	20	4	4	2		1

	problem	170	162	120	140	60	60	80	12	8	2	814	
6.	Seasonal employment	8	22	14	16	5	9	13	12	18	3		6
		80	198	112	112	30	45	52	36	36	3	684	
7.	Gender inequity	4	13	12	15	12	15	20	15	9	5		7
		40	117	96	105	72	75	80	45	18	5	653	
8.	Health Problem	13	10	15	9	9	17	18	18	6	5		4
		130	90	120	133	54	85	72	54	12	5	755	
9.	Lengthy working hours	8	11	12	8	15	20	16	12	13	5		8
		80	99	96	56	90	100	64	36	26	5	652	
10.	Job stress	6	14	13	3	18	13	9	13	9	5		10
		60	126	104	21	108	65	36	39	18	5	413	

Source : Primary data

From the above table 2 shows that the problems faced by the construction workers. The major problem is financial problem it may be get 1st rank. Next one is they getting only low wages 2nd rank and lack of work security placed 3rd rank. The following problems getting continuous rank likes health problem, lack of education, seasonal employment, gender inequity, lengthy working hours, awareness about government schemes and welfare facilities, job stress.

Suggestions:

Through this study the researcher aims to suggest that to minimize the problem of construction worker. That is they faced lot of problems like health problems, lengthy working hours, low wages, awareness about government schemes. The government should take the measures for construction workers related to the government schemes and welfare facilities reached to all workers. The employers give the information about all benefit government

schemes. The employer (construction union) must take interest and should organize periodical medical camp for their workers which ensure a good relationship between the employer and employee. Government should provide some subsidies or alternative work for the construction workers in off-season period. A considerable amount from their income must be taken as savings and be provided to them in their old age.

Conclusion:

Construction industry is one of the stable growing industries of the world and in India it is the largest economic activity after agriculture. Construction workers are at a greater risk of developing certain health disorders and sickness than workers in many other industries. However, the working conditions of the construction worker in this are not by far. This is caused by the wage is not equal to the working hours. The job security is paramount important motivational measure but in this area there is no job security to the workers. It should be taken into account by the labour welfare department. Other welfare measures are also not sufficient to the workers expectation. Most of the construction works they not aware the government schemes as well as the welfare schemes. Therefore the condition of the construction worker in the Thoothukudi is poor. It is high time for the government to the address the grievances of the construction workers in Thoothukudi which will in turn help them to elevate themselves from the present dismal state of affairs.

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