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Socio Economic Conditions Of Unorganized Women Construction Workers In Tirunelveli City

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ABSTRACT

The construction industry is the major source of employment for workers in the unorganized sector. The nature of women's work is highly fragmented in the unorganized sector. The unorganized sector has no clear-cut employer-employee relationships and lacks in most forms of social protection. The construction industry provides job opportunities for a large number of skilled and unskilled workforces. This industry is taking an important role in the construction of buildings, roads, bridges and so forth. About one third of their workers are women and children. The workforce employed in the industry has to face several issues related to discrimination, no proper fixed employer, low wages, health issue, insecurity in the job, lack of social protection, sexual harassment and injuries at the work place. The conditions of women workers in the construction sites are very pathetic. So, this research attempts to analyze the socio economic & and family living conditions of women construction workers in the unorganised construction industry of the study area. It also recommends certain policy initiatives for the status of women construction workers.

Keywords: Construction Industry, Unorganized Women Workers, Socio Economic Conditions.

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INTRODUCTION:

The construction industry plays a vital role in the socio - economic sphere of a country. It is closely associated with increasing the nation's Gross Domestic Product. This sector provides employment to seven percent of total world employment. In India, it is the largest employer of unorganized labour next to the agricultural sector. The construction industry is providing a large number of job opportunities to the skilled and unskilled workforce. These construction workers are the backbone of the economy. Mostly these construction workers are migrants, socially backward, unskilled and uneducated with low bargaining power in the society.

Nowadays, more rural and urban workers are going for construction works. The reason for such shift in occupation is reduced agricultural activities due to poor rainfall and increase cost of living. As the living cost is high to make both ends meet women choose alternative jobs. Women have to overcome a number of issues at home and workplace such as health problems, family problems, sexual harassment and social issues. The working and living conditions are very poor and their lifestyle is very much limited by the lack of proper infrastructure. The researcher has noticed many construction workers in hot spots like, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli New Bus stand, Vannarpettai and near Tirunelveli Junction. These women seem to be in pressure to identify the availability of works, distance to be travelled to new workplaces, insecurity about work and reaching home late in the evening. This influenced the researcher to write a research proposal about such women working in the construction field. So this research will attempt to identify the level of socio economic conditions and living status of unoganised women construction workers.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the social-economic conditions of the unorganized women construction workers.
2. To know the status of unorganized women construction workers.
3. To suggest the recommendations to uplift the status of women workers.

HYPOTHESES:

H_o: There is no significant relationship between age group and monthly personal income of the respondents.

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H*o*: There is no correlation between monthly personal income and daily wage rate.

H*o*: There is no correlation between the residential status of accommodation and place of residence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research Design: With the help of this research, the researcher wants to explore the facts and figures related to respondent's socio economic condition and their family living condition status. Therefore this research is exploratory in nature.

Universe of Study: The study is carried out in the state of Tamil Nadu. However, the study area was confined to Tirunelveli City. Population is infinitive in nature.

Sample size: Since the study is carried as a pilot study which represents 50 unorganized women construction workers only.

Data Collection: Data was collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from the unorganized workers .Well-structured Interview Schedule was used for collecting data from the respondents. In addition to this, casual walks into their worksites were conducted in order to understand the factual position at their footsteps. The secondary data was collected from policy documents, published reports of similar projects, journals and Ph.D. thesis, journals and online sources.

Tools for data analysis: Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed in the light of framed objectives. Quantitative data was tabulated and statistically analyzed. Qualitative data were interpreted based on the information collected from the field. The researcher adopted the chi-square test of goodness-of-fit to test the hypotheses formulated.

LITERATURE REVIEWS:

There are numerous researchers who have done research on the socio economic conditions of organized construction workers. But, a very few studies have been conducted on socio economic status of an unorganised construction workers.

Jabir et.al. (2015) made an attempt to analyze the socio-economic conditions of construction workers and to find out the causes of their nature of work in this profession. The

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overall analysis of the study shows that construction workers are the weaker section of the society and live in abysmal conditions, but plays a pivotal role in the infrastructural development of the city. Nearly three fourth of them are married and more than 50 percent of construction workers are illiterates. They work on contract basis and most of them work more than 8 hours daily, but earn only 200 to 250 rupees. They are also unaware about the government schemes for poverty alleviation. Moreover, their accessibility in the basic amenities and infrastructure facilities is also very poor.

Venkataramanappa (2016) undertook a study of unorganized workers in Bangalore City– A Study. Indian Society thrives on contradictions. The field of labour is a bundle of contradictions. Even since Mark Holmstrom, an Australian Sociologist of labour has introduced a dichotomy between organized labour and unorganized labour it has become a persistent source of great deal of discussion, debate and discourse among Sociologists, labour economists, social anthropologists and labour activists. The former has been dubbed as "labour aristocracy" who has used labour unions to gain a wide range of benefits and privileges even at the cost of their less fortunate counterpart the unorganized labour.

Jeyalakshmi (2016) explored the socio-economic problems of Visakhapatnam women workers at construction sites in a working environment and to document issues like gender bias, living conditions, vulnerability and slackness, wages, their economic status by finding out their savings, loan, etc. The author concentrated only on the women workers who are working in the construction sector and how they are facing problems in the work place. The Majority of the women 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 160 women workers from four areas of Visakhapatnam (North, East, West, and South) city. The data for this study has been collected through primary source. The primary for this study was collected with the help of the questionnaire. The secondary data was collected from the library and websites. The major findings of construction women labor facing many problems they asked government security for their jobs.

Amutha and Shenbagaraj (2017) analyzed the economic conditions of women construction workers in Thoothukudi District with the sample of 50 respondents. Women account for half (51%) of the total construction labour force. Women workers are almost exclusively unskilled, casual, manual laborers: carrying bricks, cement, sand, and water

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digging earth, mixing cement, breaking stones. Women are rarely found in male-dominated skilled trades: carpentry, masonry, plumbing, electrical wiring.

Maneesh and Jasna (2017) in an attempt to understand the socio-economic condition of women construction workers and a special emphasis has given to identify the work related problems of women in Kannur district. 100 percent of the workers are dealing with health problems and 82 percent of the workers face financial problems. About 30 percent of the workers are facing other problems such as sanitary facility, drinking water facility, wage problems etc. The main health problems faced by the workers are muscle pain, allergy, cough, asthma problem, etc. About 8 percent of the workers are suffering from all of these problems. The nature of hospital preferred by the construction workers is mainly government hospitals. About 86 percent of the women workers pointed out that their status in the society has been improved by doing construction work.

Raman and Mookiah (2017) attempted to analyses on Status of Construction workers in Tirunelveli district. This study is based on 100 construction workers. Most of the family depends on the construction industry are illiterate, so that their children also involved these work. Construction workers have been facing a lot of problems. They do not have any basic facilities. The welfare scheme for construction workers are not reaching them. They are deprived of ten basic rights and they are exploited by the contractors. So there is an urgent need for the protection of construction workers to overcome in their lives.

Munjam Vinod Kumar (2018) undertook an empirical study on socio economic conditions and problems of women workers in construction sector Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh State to know the socio economic conditions and problems of unorganized women's labour in the construction sector with statistical population of 150 women constriction workers. The results of the study reveal that the majority of workers are facing wage discrimination, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, lower wages, health hazards, safety issues. This study attempts to estimate the economic burden of women's labour.

Yasmeen Sultana (2018) study examines the socio-economic variables and its influence on migration, find out the differences in business operation between two ethnic groups. viz, North Indian and Tamil people, find out the influence of poverty and infrastructure on migration and find out the wage difference between Pre-and Post-migration period among the migrant construction workers. The results show that socio-economic variables strongly influence the Migration of selected respondents in the study area, there is wage distinction found between North Indian and Tamil Nadu Migrants construction workers

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in in the study area. There is an influence of poverty and infrastructure on migration of the selected respondents in the study area. There is wage difference found between pre and post migration periods among the migrant construction workers in the study area.

SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

Table: 1.1

S.No	Factors	Particulars	No. of Respondents (No: 50)	Percentage %
01.	Marital Status	Married Unmarried Separated	40 07 03	80 14 06
02.	Age	Below 20 31-40 41-50 Above 51	01 06 34 09	02 12 68 18
03.	Education	1-5 Std 6-8 Std 9-10 Std 11-12 Std Bachelor's Degree	40 06 02 01 01	80 12 04 02 02
04.	Religion	Hindu Christian	38 12	76 24
05.	Social Category	BC MBC DNC SC ST	08 05 11 22 04	16 10 22 44 08
06.	Place of residence	Rural Urban Semi Urban	36 11 03	72 22 06
07.	Residential Status of accommodation	Owned Rented Others	37 12 01	74 24 02
08.	Type of House	Thatched Partially tiled Aspetta Sheet Concrete	07 12 29 02	14 24 58 04
09.	Toilet Facilities	Yes No	15 35	30 70
10.	Type of family	Nuclear family Joint family	43 07	86 14

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11.	Family members	02 03 04 05 More than 6	01 01 10 20 18	02 02 20 40 36
12.	Male members	01 02 03 04	08 26 12 04	16 52 24 08
13.	Female members	01 02 03 04	03 14 21 12	06 28 42 24
14.	Children in the family	01 02 03 04 05	01 10 18 20 01	02 20 36 40 02

Source: **Primary Data**

The above output depicts that married respondents are employed largely (80%) when compared to unmarried and separated respondents. 60% of the women respondent is between 41-50 age group category which means that economic conditions necessitates the respondents to their job at this age. 80% of the respondents is educated up to 1-5th std only which shows that they are not given much importance to education. 76% of the respondents are from Hindu background since eighty percent of the total population belongs to a Hindu family in the study area. A majority of 44 percent of the respondents are from Schedule Classes.

72% of the respondents are living in the village with their own houses. 58% of them residing in an aspeeta sheet without proper kitchen and bedroom facilities. 70% of them do not have the toilet facilities since, they are majoritly (72%) where hailing from the rural background. The majority of them have are nuclear family system with more than 6 members in a family. Only 52% of the respondents are living with 2 male members in the family whereas 42% of the respondents are living with 3 female members in the family.

STATUS OF SELECTED UNORGANISED WOMEN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS:

Table: 1.2

S.No	Factors	Particulars	No. of Respondents (No: 50)	Percentage %
01.	Type of occupation	Sand Workers Concrete Workers	40 10	80 20

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02.	Years of Experience	1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 Above 21	05 08 24 04 09	10 16 48 08 18
03.	Earning members	01 02 03 04	07 29 12 02	14 58 24 04
04.	Total days of work available in a month	11-15 16-20 21-25	04 35 11	08 70 22
05.	Daily wage rate	Rs. 301-500 Rs. 501-700	40 10	80 20
06.	Monthly personal income	Rs. 5001-10000 Rs. 10001-15000	37 13	74 26
07.	Daily expenses of yours	Up to Rs. 100 Rs. 101-200 Rs. 201-300	39 10 01	78 20 02
08.	Monthly family income	Up to Rs. 10000 Rs. 10001-15000 Rs. 15001-20000 Rs. 20001-30000	02 28 16 04	04 56 32 08
09.	Savings	Yes No	09 41	18 82
10.	Debt	Yes No	34 16	68 32
11.	Types of availed loan	Jewel Loan Educational loan Money borrowed from friends/relatives Money lenders	24 13 7 6	46 25 14 11
12.	Are you working under any contractor?	Yes No	38 12	76 24

Source: **Primary Data**

Majority (80%) of the respondents are engaged in sand workers occupation due to umemployment and inadequate income around their native places. Whereas, 20% of them are employed in concrete occupations. Since, the concrete works are too difficult a few of them employed themselves in this occupation to earn little higher amount than sand workers. 58% of the respondent's families have two earning members. Morever, 76% of the respondents are working under a contractual basis without proper recognition from the contractor.

80% of the respondents are employed in a daily wage basis in between Rs. 301-500. 56% of the respondent's total monthly family income is between Rs. 10001-15000. So the welfare board and labour department have to come forward to take care of them to improve

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their economic status with some sort of monetary and non-monetary benefits. The majority (82%) of them do not have the savings pattern because of the very poor economic status.

Simultaneously, 68% of them are hardly struggling to settle their debt amount with some sort of periodical interest. In addition, 46% of them have availed agricultural jewel loan for the fulfillment of their emergency needs like relative marriage, social ceremonies, children's education, medical and health, etc. Therefore, the economic status of the respondents are very poor in the study area.

Hypothesis testing:

Chi square test is applied to find out the significant relationship between age and monthly personal income of the respondents from construction industry.

H*o*: There is no significant relationship between age group and monthly personal income of the respondents.

H*a*: There is a significant relationship between age group and monthly personal income of the respondents.

Relationship between age and monthly personal income:

Table: 1.3

		Monthly Personal Income		Total
		Rs. 5001-10000	Rs. 10001-15000	
Age	Below 20	1	0	1
	31-40	4	2	6
	41-50	28	6	34
	Above 51	4	5	9
Total		37	13	50

Source: **Primary Data**

Table: 1.4

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	**df**	**Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	5.838[a]	3	.120
Likelihood Ratio	5.614	3	.132
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.910	1	.167
N of Valid Cases	50		
5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .26.			

Source: **Primary Data**

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The observed and expected frequencies are given in the above table. The Chi-square value is 5.029 for 3 *df* and asymptotic significance is 0.120, (i.e., *p*-value) are given in the above table. Since, the *p*-value 0.120 is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), the difference between observed frequencies and expected frequencies is insignificant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0), i.e., there is no difference between observed and expected frequencies is accepted at the 5% level of significance. Finally, it concludes that the age of the sample respondent does not differ significantly with monthly personal income from the construction occupation.

Correlation:

The correlation test is applied to test the below null hypotheses with the spss output.

H*o*: There is no correlation between monthly personal income and daily wage rate.

H*o*: There is no correlation between the residential status of accommodation and place of residence.

Table: 1.5

Correlations						
		Daily wage rate in rupees	Daily expenses of yours	Total monthly personal income	Place of residence	Residential status of accommodation
Daily wage rate in rupees	arson Correlation	1	.382**	.844**	.051	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006	**.000**	.724	1.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Daily expenses of yours	arson Correlation	.382**	1	.278	-.150	.030
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006		.050	.297	.839
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Total monthly personal income	arson Correlation	.844**	.278	1	.123	-.071
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.000**	.050		.396	.622
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Place of residence	arson Correlation	.051	-.150	.123	1	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.724	.297	.396		**.000**
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Residential status of accommodation	arson Correlation	.000	.030	-.071	.528**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000	.839	.622	**.000**	
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Source: Primery Data

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From the above matix table (1.5) the correlations were computed among the five socio economic scales on data for 50 woment respondents. The results were statistically significant, strong positive correlation between monthly personal income and daily wage rate ($r = .844$, $n = 50$, $p < .000$). However, the majority (74%) of the respondents monthly personal income in between Rs. 5001-10000 with the maximum (80%) wage rate of Rs. 301-500 category. Hence, there is strong correlation between the above two variables.

Simultenouly, there is a strong positive correlation between residential stauts of accommodation and place of residence ($r = .528$, $n = 50$, $p < .000$). However, the majority (72%) of the respondents place of residence are coming from rural villages with the maximum (74%) of residential status accommodation owned houses. Thus, there is a strong positive correlation between the residential status of accommodation and place of residence.

SUGGESTIONS:

- The labour and welfare department must intervence to claim about the social security schemes under the Unorganized Social Security Schemes Act 2008.
- Since the majority of the construction workers are not educated, providing the periodical Non formal training programs will help them to develop their skills.
- A comprehensive health policy should be framed by strengthening the public health care infrastructure and designing a new and the overall comprehensive insurance plan including hospitalization.
- Government has to ensure equal numbers of working days as compared to their male counterpart with adequate wages.
- The construction welfare boards have to ensure the providing of safety equipment's with some sort of concessional rate to protect their life from occupational hazards.

CONCLUSIONS:

Among the unorganized sectors, the construction sector is one of the booming sectors with the increase in the population. This study analyses the socio economic conditions of unorganized women construction in Tirunelveli City. There are huge demands on construction works in the Tirunelveli hotspot city to construct bridges, schools and colleges, apartments, offices, etc. The socio economic conditions of them are very pathetic as per the result shown in the analysis. Though the government and other construction welfare board have been already implemented, the majority of the respondents are not aware of the scheme

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benefits. The researcher concludes that the government and welfare board members are anticipated to come forth to enlighten about the social security schemes to unorganized women construction workers periodically.

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