CHAPTER - IX

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Material Carriers
CHAPTER – IX

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction
9.2 Major Findings
9.3 Recommendations
9.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, an attempt has been made to analyse the influence of natural and human conditions on the development of construction workers as well as construction industry in Kolhapur city. The objective was two fold, namely to know the working conditions of house construction workers and to understand the wage methods of construction sector.

That construction labours are indebted and significantly depends on advance provided by their site contractors to meet their consumption productive needs. It means they continue to live in the midst of poverty which calls for suitable strategy to protect those sections from the victims of poverty.

With a view to achieving the specified objectives and also to test the hypothesis the entire investigation was carried out with the help of sample survey through questionnaires, on the spot observation, discussion and analysis, of the collected data. From the preceding the following findings have emerged.

9.2 MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Majority of construction labour belongs to backward communities and on the other hand most of them have been migrating year after year, yet they do not enjoy employment rights to the same contractor / owner. Most of them still live in mudstone and thatched houses. They remain unemployed for more than 100 days in a year on an average. The average income of most of the construction worker households is below the poverty line and hence they are subject to large extent of economic exploitation. The average expenditure of constriction worker households is low and major share of expenditure has been spent on food.
2. Operational aspects of the construction industry in the study area suggest that the construction industry concentrated in the hands of private contractors and builders.

3. The construction industry is seasonal in nature and runs 8 to 9 months in a year. It required manual labour and hard work is predominant.

4. Construction workers comprises of vulnerable section of the society mostly women and children. In urban settings poor families often send their children to work in the informal sectors to increase household income and ensuring family survival.

5. The contribution of child workers to their families was in no way negligible. It is observed that in the economic spheres the status of most of the child workers was similar as that of other members in their family.

6. There were running five house construction permission departments in Kolhapur Municipal Corporation. An average number of permissions granted per year by all the permitting departments are 1140.

7. All caste community workers were engaged in construction work activity.

8. Process of house construction is lengthy and tedious. It begins with the findings of a open plot or site and ends with the entering in home.

9. The total construction industry in the study area is fragmented and unorganised in nature. Mason, centring foreman, plumber, carpenter and fabricator are the major skilled workers and remaining labours were either semi-skilled or unskilled.

10. Out of 328 sample construction worker households, 178 (54.26%) families were under the category of skilled workers and 150 (45.73%) families under the category of unskilled workers.

11. Maximum number of unskilled worker households were immigrant families from Dhule, Beed, Belgaum, Dharwad, and nearby district, while maximum number of skilled worker families were local or native families.
12. It is found that out of 1702 total persons 819 (48.12%) were females and 883 (51.88%) were male.

13. It is observed that out of total 178 skilled worker households 34.26 per cent households are among open category, remaining are from SC (28.66%), NT (7.87%), ST (1.12%) Muslims (6.67%) and OBC (21.92%) were engaged in house construction while 23.34 per cent of the sample 150 unskilled worker households belonged to SC category, Muslims are 4.00 per cent, OBC (16.66%), open category persons were 40.00 and ST and NT were 2.66 per cent and 13.34 per cent respectively were engaged in construction activity.

14. Out of total 328 sample worker households 63.00 per cent were from backward community and only 37.00 per cent general households involved in house construction activity in the study area. Observation further denotes that all castes community persons were engaged in construction field.

15. Out of total 328 sample households it is observed that 43.31 per cent possessed an average family size of 5-6 members, whereas 38.77 per cent households had an average size of 3-4 members per households, 10.97 per cent of the households had an average number of 7 and more persons in a family and only 7.01 per cent of the sample households had an average number of 2 persons per family.

16. An average family size of sample unskilled worker households was 5.25 persons per family and an average family size of sample skilled worker households was 5.13 persons per households. An overall average family size found to be 5.19 persons per family, which is looking to be excess.

17. In the sample labour unskilled households main workers constituted 32.67 per cent, marginal workers constituted 29.96 per cent and non workers depending on working population constituted 37.36 per cent of the total population. In regard of skill worker families, 34.68 per cent households constituted as main workers, 30.86 per cent households constituted as marginal workers and 34.75 per cent households constituted as non workers depending on working population. The overall picture clearly denotes that dependent population was more than independent or working population.
18. It is observed that maximum workers (32.84%) has an income in the range of Rs. 30,001 to 40,000, only 1.52 per cent population was having an income level of Rs. 60,001 and above. The percentage number of population falling in an income range of Rs. 20,001 to 30,000 was 31.49 per cent. It means majority of sample population was falling under low income size group.

19. It is observed from the literacy status of the sample households that out of total population 31.20 per cent population was totally illiterate, 21.15 per cent population was just aware about 3 R’s, 30.84 per cent population had only primary level of education, 11.51 per cent population received secondary level of education and only 5.28 per cent population receives higher or other education accordingly. Male and female literacy ratio constituted 74.41 per cent and 63.60 per cent respectively.

20. It is found that though some samples labour households possessed some land, they were mostly dependent on wages earned from construction activity. The total irrigated area of sample households was 8.10 hectors while area of total barren land was 33.24 hectors.

21. Out of 328 households, 31 (9.45%) households were residing in the huts prepared on sites. 79 (24.08%) families were living in mud brick huts and 80 (24.39%) Asbestos houses. 93 (28.35%) families were passing their life in mud stone houses. Again there were 35 (10.67%) households residing in load bearing houses and only 10 (3.04%) families had their R.C.C. buildings. R.C.C. buildings were built up only by skilled house construction workers.

22. An average value of an house was Rs. 14663 Maximum number of migrated households were living in huts on fields prepared by their contractors.

23. Out of the total 1702 persons 529 were children in the age group of 0-14, number of youths were 325, number of adults were 458. The number of middle-aged and 60+ senior citizens were 250 and 140 respectively. Out of total 1702 persons 758 (44.53%) were bachelors, 855 (50.23%) were married persons and only 89 (5.22%) were widow / widower. Among the total population number of married persons were slightly higher than the bachelors.

24. It is observed that house construction labourers both skilled and unskilled found their major source of income from the wages they
earned from house construction work. It means house construction workers (80.0%) were thoroughly dependent upon the house construction activity.

25. Pattern of expenditure denotes that major proportion of 51.23 per cent of expenditure goes on food expenditure. Next remarkable item of expenditure was habits like bidi, cigarette, chewing tobacco and drinking liquor etc. It contributed 11.00 per cent, where as payment of debts and interest on loans sharing 7.54 per cent in total expenditure. It is also observed that there was no significant divergence in the percentage of expenditure on many items between sample house construction skilled and unskilled worker households. They were spending very small amount on the education to their children and acquiring of assets.

26. It is observed that out of total 328 households maximum (40.55%) households saved money for purchase of livestock and marriage and social ceremonies. 28.35 per cent families saved their money for future course security. 12.19 per cent households done savings for repayment of their previous debts and only 9.45 per cent households done saving for educating their children. Saving pattern denoted that, both skilled and unskilled house construction workers had a tendency to save money. But unfortunately, they had a very little amount in their hand to save.

27. Information regarding extent of indebtedness shows that only 4.49 per cent skilled labour households and 1.33 per cent unskilled house construction worker households had no debts. All the other remaining households form both the category were deeply involved in loans and advances.

28. Facilities available on construction site’s survey points out that the basic facilities like latrines, washing, first aid and free transport were not founded on more than 95 per cent of the construction sites. Facilities like electricity / light, water were available on near about all sites.

29. The respondents were badly affected by the use of cement. It was founded that some health related problems like skin diseases, asthma increased with age and number of years work.

30. Pattern of health problems revealed that 73.38 per cent construction workers were suffering from body aches, 70.06 per cent suffered
from bronchial diseases, 69.83 per cent were restless from heat exhaustion, 41.64 per cent suffering from malaria, 36.67 per cent were going through various injuries, 30.27 per cent were troubled from skin diseases, 5.68 per cent having accidental problems and all the others had faced health problems due to inhalation of dust.

31. It is also observed that most of the migrated labour households were migrated because of poverty (25.00%) indebtedness (14.00%), search of better wages (14.70 %), lack of other work at native place (12.00%), continuous work (10.50%) and due to family problems (10.00%).

32. It is observed that the daily schedule of house construction workers for hours of work was not less than 9 hour a day. Commencing from early 8.30 a.m. in the morning and ending with 6.30 p.m. in the evening. Only one hour break for lunch was to be taken.

33. An average daily wage rate for a male unskilled worker was Rs. 117.50 and for a skilled male worker was Rs. 200 a day. An average daily wage rate for a female unskilled worker was Rs. 95 which was lesser than unskilled male worker who were doing the same job. Here we found the wage differentiation and the genetical devaluation of female workers.

34. Working status of sample households suggest that there was a total absence of hired full time child labour workers in the house construction. They were only helping hands. It is also observed that percentage of non workers was higher than full time working population.

35. It is observed that there was a considerable unskilled female labour workforce engaged in the study area. More than 10,000 females were working in the construction field. Researcher had studied 150 unskilled female worker households as the representatives of overall female workers.

36. The age distribution of sample house construction female workers denotes that 38.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to the age group of 15-30 years, 40 per cent respondents were in the age group of 31-45 years, 17 per cent were in the age group of 46-60 and only 5 per cent female workers were in the age group of 60 and more. Observation further reveals that maximum young and energetic females were engaged in construction work. The need of
young and energetic females indicates the hard and hectic nature of construction work.

37. Age and sex composition of female construction worker households denotes that out of total 792 persons (52.02%) were the males and 47.98 per cent persons were the females. The sex ratio of sample households was as per the all India census results.

38. Caste wise distribution of female construction worker households denotes that 34.66 per cent of female worker respondents were from the schedule caste, 14 per cent female workers respondents were from the other backward class communities, 6.66 per cent were from Muslims and 24.66 per cent and 17.33 per cent female worker respondents were from the Nomadic Tribes and from open category accordingly. Observation further reveals that maximum number of female construction workers were from the poor, backward and downtrodden classes of the society.

39. It is observed that among the total 792 persons 19.94 per cent were totally illiterate, 20.32 per cent were just understanding the reading, writing and simple arithmetic, 29.68 per cent members completed their primary level of education, 20.96 per cent persons reached up to secondary school education and only 9.10 per cent population got the higher or other education. Literacy status of sample female workers denotes that they were careless about the education of themselves and their children.

40. Working status of the sample female headed respondent households indicates that most of the labour households (26.77%) falling under the income level of Rs. 20,001 to 25,000. Only 14.90 per cent female households were having an income range of Rs. 30,000 and above. Close examination of working status reveals that there was a gradual increase in the ratio of main workers with the increase in income, while there was a gradual decrease in the ratio of marginal and non workers at the time of increase in income was found.

41. An information about language of the sample female respondents suggest that 32.5 per cent females used Kannada and Hindi accordingly as their language. Again 10 per cent women were using the Chatisgadi language in their routine life. Only 25.00 per cent female workers respondents were using Marathi as their
language. It means most of the women workers were migrated and they were using their own native languages at the time of work.

42. It is observed that most of the female worker respondents (92.00%) were having only temporary job. Nobody was permanent, 8 per cent female workers worked as occasional labourers. Observation further clears that 82 per cent women workers worked as helpers. They were doing the job like, water feeding, mall supplying and brick and stone supplying etc. It means that near about all of the women workers were engaged themselves in coolie type of work.

43. It is observed that 72 per cent female construction workers were migrated workers. Poverty, Illusion of better wages, Indebtedness, illeness and husband’s desire etc. are some of the important reasons of their migration. Few of the female construction workers were widows or deserted women.

44. It is found that 80 per cent of the female construction worker respondents were not satisfied with the construction work. Their opinions cleared that the work was very hard and tedious as well as inconvenient working environment make them apathetic towards their work.

45. It is observed that 30 % female workers were suffering from bronchial diseases, 23 % women workers had women specific problems, 14 per cent were suffering from heat exhaustion. Only 3 per cent women workers were free from any diseases. Most 97.00 % women workers were working with one or more diseases.

46. Husband attitude towards respondents female workers indicates that 50% were co-operative, 29 per cent female respondents were having the suspicious nature of husbands and 21 per cent female workers got the husbands who did not comment on them and their work. It shows the necessity of there earnings for running the cart wheel of family life.

47. It is observed that most of the female construction workers were worried about their future security. Hence, 42.53 per cent females were maintaining savings for purchasing the livestock and households commodities, 29.89 per cent were doing savings for repayments of their previous debts and only 6.10 per cent sample female families properly maintained their savings for educating their children. This show the indifferent attitude of female
construction workers towards education. Most of the female worker respondents (57.00%) prefer to save their money with their contractors.

48. It is observed that most of the female construction workers were unaware about the various schemes of benefits administered by the government. Only 26.66 per cent female workers knew about maternity benefits, 13.33 per cent knew about health insurance, 20 per cent aware about ‘Samagra Awaas Yojana’, 10 per cent had information about ‘Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana’ and ‘Old Age Pension Scheme’ accordingly. 13.33 per cent female respondents were completely unaware about any of the Government Schemes, whereas 99 per cent female workers did not know the full name of any government scheme.

49. It is important to note that none of the construction workers viz. skilled male, unskilled male and women construction workers were covered under the social security schemes. Separate provision regarding social security to the workers working under unorganised sector is made by the government. Nobody was serious about social security schemes in construction sector.

50. Another important observation is that there was an absence of labour welfare programmes, labour policies like sanitary and hygiene facilities, washing facilities, drinking water facilities, first aid box, rest shelter, canteen and crèches were either not provided or very weak and poor. Hence, all labour relieved themselves at the nearby places on sites.

51. An important observation is that workers were totally unaware of Government legislations made in favour of workers working under unorganised sector by time to time. It is because of their ignorance and illiteracy about laws that contractors can openly exploit them.

52. It is another important observation that Government and semi-government agencies Self Help Group and private agencies were taking hard efforts for spreading an awareness of workers about various rules and regulations and for better working conditions at on the sites at the time of work.

53. Considering the tremendous economic scope of the construction sector government should look after the workers engaged in the house construction activity sympathetically and must allot a
favourable package in favour of the said workers. To sum up it would be interesting to note that out of total workers and builders / contractors 95 per cent, were visualised with bright and prosperous future for construction industry.

9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the early 1970, the world is becoming increasingly aware of the ill-effects of smoke, acid rain, desertification, ‘Green House Phenomenon’, extinction of rare species, disintegration of ozone shield and many more on our environment. Today ‘sustainable development’ is becoming the buzzword of the day. In line with this taking all long term developments in our house construction field are expected to be influenced by the principle of sustainability alone. Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising with the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In this context some important recommendations are made for improving the performance and prospects of the house construction sector in the study area. These are as under –

(A) Recommendations on Operational Aspects

1. An efforts should be taken for relieving the construction activity from the hands of private big builders and contractors.

2. Adoption of techno-commercial viability will result in better utilisation of fixed assets and increasing profitability of the business.

3. Year round operations will provide yearly employments to workers and will improve their living conditions.

4. Permission taking process should be easier and cheaper, so that a small potential owner of an house could complete it in time and shortly begin his process of house construction.

5. Considering the scope of house construction activity in the study area, the number of house permission departments should be increased.

6. The nature of the construction industry in the study area is fragmented and unorganised. It should be organised and labour centralised.
7. Use of cement, steel and burnt bricks in house construction should be reduced, so that it will fruitful in protecting environment and will result in economical use of valuable natural resources.

8. The vulnerable identity of construction workers should be erased and child labours should be prevented as much as possible. So that they can turn towards their educational career.

(B) Recommendations on Social Aspects

I. Concerns to All Workers

The society is said to be developed if the social status of the people is improved. In this context, in the study area the social status of the sample construction workers is not found to be satisfactory. The recommendations for improving the social status of sample skilled, unskilled and women house construction workers are made specifically as under –

1. The literacy percentage in the study area was found to be low. To improve the literacy percentage, the special attention to be given. The implementation of adult education campaign is essential in the study area and creation of night schools with all facilities on the field sites will result in increasing / improving of literacy rate.

2. Living conditions of the construction workers are very poor it must be improved.

3. Evidence of child labours were the common phenomena of the construction sector in the study area. OBC, SC and ST castes child labour were found. Therefore, the implementation of child labour prohibition and regulation Act should be implemented strictly.

4. Essential and adequate health service at their residential areas should be provided. The health care must be supplied by the house owners or the building contractors or the labour contractors.

5. No social security schemes were implemented by the owners or contractors, so it is the need of time to implement. Social security schemes may be provided by the Government and give the assurance of work to the employees.

6. So far as working conditions are concerned it must be carefully seen that rest shelter, safe drinking water and first aid facilities are
invariably provided by the employers at the work site at their own cost.

7. Government should make obligatory to all the construction sector players to follow all the Government rules and regulations regarding protection and conservation of environment.

II. **Recommendations Concerned to Female Workers**

1. The number of women workers engaged in house construction activity is considerable, but they are only engaged in coolie type of unskilled work. They must get effort to engaged themselves in skilled job.

2. Women workers are getting low wages as compare to their male co-workers for the same type of unskilled work. Hence, ‘equal wages for equal work’ principle should be followed.

3. Women workers are performing ‘Triple Duties’ viz. as a housewife, as a mother and as a worker. Yet they are not getting an honourable status in their respective families as well as in the society. This pity picture should be changed with the Self Help Group.

4. Most of the working women were habitual with bad habits like chewing tobacco, taking alcohol etc. It is harmful to their health. Hence, steps should be taken for preventing them from such bad habits from social activits and Self Help Group, etc.

5. Maximum women workers keep their savings with their contractors, they must be made aware about keeping their small savings with the local Mahila Bachat Gat or with the nearby banks. The awareness should creates by the representatives of banks, saving groups and co-operative societies.

6. Most of the women workers were unaware about maternity benefits, child care benefits and health care benefits. So they must be made aware about all of these benefits by Municipal Councils.

7. The steps should be taken for providing social security schemes to female workers. Facilities like crèches, drinking water, restrooms and bathrooms should be avail on sites. The coverage of general health insurance should be given.
8. A flexible, autonomous Childcare Fund may be set up at the state level. The Fund can be drawn upon to provide child care facilities to all working women, regardless of income, number of children or other consideration.

(C) Recommendation on Economic Aspects

Many of the social scientists and economists considered that economic improvement is prerequisite for improvement in social status. Therefore, the economic status of the people must be improved to achieve our broad objectives of social welfare. In this context on the basis of the study, the following recommendations are made –

1. Provision for fair wages should be made for workers in the house construction. Government should take lead for the appointment of wage fixation committee for the workers working in construction sector.


3. The formation of common welfare fund for construction workers is essential and it should be formed as follows. The nature of common welfare fund amount will be as –
   
   Constructor : 50 %
   Owner : 25 %
   Government : 25 %

   The District Labour Officer should look after this scheme.

4. District Labour Welfare Officer should carefully observe the implementation of legal provision and social security schemes in the construction field.

5. Provision of an emergency fund for overcoming on unexpected calamities like accidents is essential.
6. Contributory Pension Scheme should be introduced in the construction sector and workmen’s contribution should be collected per week or on the payment day.

7. To improve an economic and social status of the construction workers, proper implementation of Public distribution System, with the help of fair price shop is essential; Government authorities should take the necessary action in this regard.

8. Co-operative institutions of house construction workers should be formed; this will give them an essential financial support.

9. The scheme of Contributary Provident Fund (C.P.F.) should be applied to house construction sector. At the same time the coverage of LIC and pension schemes should be given.

10. Child care needs to be made the responsibility of the state. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), is the best known government programme which aims at the total development of young children. A flexible autonomous child care fund should also be created in case of construction workers.

Some of the above suggestions may increase the cost of house construction but will definitely improve the socio-economic conditions of house construction workers in the study area.