ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF HOUSE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN KOLHAPUR CITY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Construction activity is an integral part of a country’s infrastructure and industrial development; it includes hospitals, schools, townships, offices, houses, and other buildings, urban infrastructure (including water supply sewerage, drainage) highways, roads, ports, railways, airports, power system, irrigation and agriculture systems, telecommunications etc. The construction becomes the basic input for socio-economic development of country. Besides, the construction industry generates substantial employment and provides a growth impetus to other sectors through backward and forward linkages. Therefore, this vital activity is nurtured for the healthy growth of the economy. The Government of India has done massive investment in creating physical infrastructure during the 10th plan. Therefore, the construction industry would play a crucial role in this regard and it will gear itself to meet the challenges. In order to meet the intended investment targets in time, the current capacity of the domestic construction industry would need to strengthened. According to National Building Organization, India still needs more than 5 lakh houses.

The construction sector has major linkages with the building material industry since construction material account for sizeable share of the construction costs. These costs include cement, steel, bricks/tiles, sand, fixtures/fitting, paints, and chemicals, construction equipment petrol-products, timber, mineral products, aluminium, glass and plastics.

2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present investigation of “Economic conditions of house construction workers in Kolhapur city” is the first study of this kind in study area. It is very necessary to understand the function of house construction activity and its socio economic impact on house construction workers, and to assess their problems.

It is estimated that recently 18.75 million workers were engaged in construction sector in India, and about 50,000 workers were engaged in Kolhapur city. The construction sector employs low technology, manual methods of preparing and providing mall / material, forming of bricks and binding steel etc. Construction sector has slack in rainy season i.e. July to September; otherwise this sector provides year-round employment to the construction workers.

House construction workers have not officially registered, hence they are unorganised in nature. Only engineers and architectures
association is registered. Maharashtra Chamber of Housing Society, Mumbai looks after this industry in general. House construction workers work with the simple tools like shoves, hand gloves, baskets, sponge, trowel, plumb line, water tube, scale, balancing tool, etc.

Construction workers contribute in building up the high class buildings and bungalows. Yet they are not receive much respect in the eyes of people.

The present research work “Economic conditions of house construction workers in Kolhapur city” will analyse the concerning problems of construction workers, like low wages, temporary and uncertain work, lack of social security, exploitation from contractors and degraded social status and will put the focus on future prospects.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Construction sector comes under unorganised sector of an economy. The term unorganised labour has been defined as those workers who have not been able to organise themselves in pursuit of their common interest due to certain constraints like casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, small and scattered size of establishment etc. As per the survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation in the year 1999-2000, the total employment in both organised and unorganised sectors in the country was of the order of 39.7 crores around 2.8 crores in the organised sector and 36.9 crores (about 93%) in the unorganised sector.

Out of 36.9 crores workers in the unorganised sector, 23.7 crore workers (60.00%) are employed in agricultural sector, about 1.7 crore in construction sector(4.00%), 4.1 crore in manufacturing (10.00%), 3.7 crore in transport and communication services (9.00%) and 3.7 crores in trade (9.00%). The need was felt, therefore, to put focus on the problems faced by the workers in unorganised sector with special reference to the workers in construction work. The present topic will describe various problems of construction workers.

Construction business in Kolhapur city is performing well. In all respects it helps to the economy of the district. It provides ample employment and income generation opportunities. It is one of the fast growing sectors in the city as well as district. Apart from all the above good things; construction workers undergoes with the following problems.
3.1 GENERAL PROBLEMS

1. Casual Nature of Employment
2. Ignorance and Illiteracy
3. Low Wages
4. Lack of Stability or Durability
5. Absence of Social Security
6. Uncertain Working Hours
7. Unhygienic and Unsafe Working Conditions
8. Vulnerability to Occupational Diseases
9. Serious Injuries
10. Lack of Social Security
11. Improper Implementation of Labour Laws
12. Lack of Labour Welfare Activities
13. No Holidays
14. Absenteeism
15. Addition of Various Habits

3.2 PROBLEMS OF FEMALE WORKERS

1. Low Wages
2. Double Burden
3. Exploitation
4. Family Problems
5. Low Living Standard
6. Ignorance and Illiteracy
7. Temporary Work
8. Poverty
9. Negligence towards Children
10. Unhygienic Habits
11. Lack of Social Security
12. Gender Discrimination
13. Outside the Reach of Various Laws
14. Dirty Environment
15. Other Problems

Thus, above all and other so many problems are the permanent headache of female construction workers in the study area as well as outside the study area. All these problems are also applicable (less or more) to the female workers working in unorganised sector in general.
4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are as follows –

1. To know the working conditions of the House construction workers.
2. To understand the wage methods of construction workers.
3. To know the wage differentiation on the gender bias and on the skill bias.
4. To know the implementation of various Acts applicable to related construction workers.
5. To study the working of social security scheme in construction sector.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Most of the theories, which are gender related, have been developed only in the twentieth century.

J. S. Mill (1869), however, has made some remarks of generalized nature when he argued for equality between sexes in giving employment. He made a case for the principle of perfect equality between men and women in making availability the employment opportunities and also mentioned that no occupation shall be considered as inadmissible for women. The so-called inability or lesser ability of women, in his opinion, was also a result of male domination and the intention of men to keep women in the sub-ordinate position even in the house. Marxist economists only criticized the capitalism for not allowing the women to participate in work outside the house.

Engels (1884) Maxi has stated that unless the socialism is brought into practice the liberation of women is not possible. Engles also stated later on “The emancipation of women may only be possible when women take part in production on large scale and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time : In 1898, another economist Filman also emphasized upon the necessity of giving employment opportunities to women.

It is only in the twentieth century that theoretical discussion have been contributed by various economists in respect of female labour. There are mainly two types of theories. First, the theories regarding wage discrimination and the second, the theories concerning labour markets.
Choudhari and Choudhari (1984) has published a paper based on their research on the problem of home based piece rate women workers. It discusses the concepts and types of piece rate women worker and also examines their socio-economic problems. Some support schemes have been suggested.

Nirmala Banarjee (1985) has conducted a study of 400 women workers in Calcutta, which brought out low wages, poor working conditions and lack of institutional support for women workers in the unorganised sector.

Anita Dighe’s (1985) study shows that large percentage of women are concentrate in informal sector of urban economy in low-paid, low-skilled jobs. In home based production a large number of women workers are invisible since they work at home in informal manner.

Nandini Azad (1986) examined the patterns, types, nature and constraints or petty trading in respect of working women in the informal sector with the details of date pertaining to fourteen occupations of women workers in Madras city.

Everett and Mira Savara (1988) has described five kinds of works that women workers perform in the informal sector from a study based on data of Mumbai city collected from Fisher Folk Co-operative, Varsova, Khanawalis Women’s Association, Bandra Past, Bometric Servants Union, Dharavi and Subcontract Workers Social Work Agency, Ghatkopar. The study states that all the four occupations can be linked to ‘frame’ based work.

Ela Bhat (1989) for SEWA has conducted a study which presents insight into the working conditions and problems of self employed women and women in the informal sector.

National Commission on Self Employed women and women in the informal sector (1989) a report published by the Shram Shakti gives detail information regarding the working and living conditions of poor women, elaborated their problems and made certain recommendations.

Kaptan, S. S. (1989) has studied the income wages and working conditions of women workers in the unorganised sector of Amaravati city. It focuses on various aspects of women’s employment in small units in construction, oil, and Kumkum industry of Amaravati city.
Another study by Gupta Nirmal K. and Sudan F. K. (1990) consists of micro studies bringing out the position of women in Jammu and their potential for handling complicated tasks. The areas are covered women construction workers, women in industrial employees, female employment and fertility etc.

Second National Commission on Labour (2002) was appointed by the Government of India on October 15, 1999 under the chairmanship of Ravindra Varma, former Minister of Labour, Government of India. The Commission submitted its recommendations in June, 2002. One of the main tasks interested the Commission was for the purposes an ‘umbrella legislation’ for workers in the unorganised sector to ensure at least a minimum protection and welfare to the workers in this sector.

According to 10th five year plan (2002-2007) Vol. II; only four states have set up welfare boards under the Buildings and Construction Workers Welfare Act, 1996. These welfare boards are meant to implement schemes like immediate assistance to beneficiary in case of accident, pension at the age of 60 years, premiums for group insurance scheme for the beneficiary and medical expenses etc. In the absence of such administrative mechanism provided under the Act, resources could not be collected from construction contractors.

Implementation of the Act by the state governments will be pursued in the 10th plan. If necessary giving some incentive to state governments that implement the Act may be considered.

Silvia M. D. Mendonca Noronha (2005): In his thesis of ‘Migrant Construction Workers in Goa’, write that, a significant proportion of the total migrant labour in Goa comprises construction workers from other states who came in large numbers following the construction boom in Goa in the eighties. Goa depends heavily on migrants workers for its construction activity. This paper seeks to examine the socio-economic characteristics of these workers. The causal factors (push and pull factors) leading to migration of these workers in Goa and the impact of the Goan economy.

Darshan Sing (2005) in his study paper, ‘Working Conditions and Problems of Unorganised Sector: A Study of Construction Workers’ analysed that there are more than 20 million people engaged in various construction activities. They are born with indebtedness and poverty, their bodies are weak and they are overwhelmingly illiterate. They are not only discriminated but also exploited by the contractors / employers by
taking benefit of their poor bargaining and socio-economic conditions. They are compelled to work on lower wages and unhygienic conditions without proper facilities of housing, washing, bathing, latrines, urinals and social security measures.

K. Narindar Jetli (Ed., 2006) in the book, ‘India: Manpower, Employment Policy and Labour Welfare 1947 to 2007’ mentions that construction is one of the most labour intensive sector. Also, their exists large unmet demand for housing in both rural and urban areas. The National Building Organisation the urban housing shortage at 8.23 million units in 1991. Similarly in rural areas too there are such shortages. A boost to this sector is necessary to meet the housing demand, which constitute one of the basic necessities. In the process significant employment opportunities can be generated at different skill level, though largely for unskilled labour.

6. HYPOTHESIS

House construction work has wide backward & forward linkages. The basic features of this activity are employment & income generation and there is dominance of private contractors & engineers, and poor working conditions of workers.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present work is based on primary & secondary data. The area of research work is confined to House Construction Business in Kolhapur city. Kolhapur city is selected for research because it is very fast developing, high take, I. T. Park moderate in city. Also it is operationally convenience from the stand point of time and cost factor.

8. SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE WORKERS

8.1 SAMPLE OF SKILLED WORKERS

The selection of sample skilled house construction workers is done on the ground of their total population. The researcher has selected 178 skilled workers i.e. 1.5 per cent of their total population as a research sample. Migrated and native workers were selected as 50 per cent of each as a sample workers from among total of 178 skilled workers.

8.2 SAMPLE OF UNSKILLED WORKERS

Unskilled worker samples were selected randomly. Number of sample worker households were selected for the study purpose. At the
time of personal interviews with the workers, researcher has classify them in two categories viz. migrated and native workers. 75 native families and 75 migrated families were selected for giving equal weightage to both the category.

8.3 SAMPLE OF FEMALE WORKERS

More than 10,000 female workers were working in the study area. Some of them were migrated and some were native. An equal importance to both type of female workers had given.

The number of selected native and migrated female worker samples were 150. Among them 75 female families were native and 75 female families were migrated. They were interviewed as per the objectives of the study.

9. DATA COLLECTION

9.1 PRIMARY DATA

Primary data is collected from personal interviews of the skilled and unskilled construction workers on the site. In view of the objectives of the study the interview schedule was prepared. The researcher has also conducted a pilot survey.

Some minor changes were incorporated in the scheduled after completing the pilot survey. Due case has been taken to have cross checks in the schedules on the level of knowledge of respondents and to ensure the accuracy and reliability of data. All the schedules have been scrutinized so as to apprise the qualitative aspects of data.

9.2 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data has collected from various Government reports, research reports, journals, libraries, internet and various institution.

10. CHAPTER SCHEME

Chapter I: Introduction and Research Methodology

It contains aspects like scope and significance of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, hypothesis, review of literature, research design, limitations and problems of researcher and chapter scheme of the study.
Chapter II: Profile of the Study Area

It deals with the profile of the study area. An attempt has been made to present historical, geographical, socio-cultural and economic features of Kolhapur city.

Chapter III: Nature and Problems of Construction Industry

This chapter related with nature and problems of construction industry, also related with backward and forward linkages of the construction industry and basics in the house construction.

Chapter IV: Socio-Economic Conditions of Sample Construction Workers

Chapter fourth denotes the socio-economic profile of sample house construction workers in the study area to know their status of living.

Chapter V: Employment and Income Pattern of Sample Construction Workers

This chapter deals with the employment and income pattern of house construction labour households. Details regarding with employment conditions and earning were reflected in the topic.

Chapter VI: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Women Workers in Construction

This chapter puts focus on socio-economic profile of sample women construction workers in the study area.


It deals with the labour legislation, social security and labour welfare of the construction workers in the study area.

Chapter VIII: Problems of Construction Workers

Chapter eighth deals with the general problems of house construction workers and puts focus on the problems of female workers.

Chapter IX: Findings and Recommendations

Chapter ninth deals with the major findings and suggestions on the basis of the present study.
11. MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Operational aspects of the construction industry in the study area suggest that the construction industry concentrated in the hands of private contractors and builders.

2. 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.

3. 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 in order to increasing households income and ensuring family survival.

4. 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.

5. 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.

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

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. Maximum number of unskilled worker households were immigrant families from Dhule, Beed, Belgaum, Dharwad, Karveer and
nearby district, while maximum number of skilled worker families were local or native families.

11. It is found that out of 1702 total persons 819 (48.12%) were genetically in the female category and 883 (51.88%) were genetically in the male category.

12. 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%) accordingly 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.

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

14. Out of total 328 sample house construction worker households it is observed that 43.31 per cent of the sample households 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.

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. It is observed that maximum workforce population (32.84%) constituted in the income 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.

18. 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.

19. It is also observed on the income size group that the percentage of illiterates was less than that of the literates in all the income size group, cent percent literate persons only found in the income size group of more than Rs. 60,000.

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. Total value of all type of houses with the house construction workers households was Rs. 4809506 and an average value of an
Out of the total 1702 number of population 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.

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 is revealed from the pattern of income source that, 79.62 per cent income of labourers coming from construction. It means house construction workers were thoroughly dependent upon the house construction activity.

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.

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 families 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.

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 various ranges of 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 diseases 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 acute 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 utilising as the supported workers or
helping hands. It is also observed that percentage of non workers population 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. Observation about family size of female construction workers denotes that 48.00 per cent families had 5 to 6 members, 36 per cent families had 3-4 members, 10 per cent families had 7 and more persons and 6 per cent families had up to 2 members in their families. An average size of family in the female worker households were 5.28 persons per family.

40. 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 dispassionate about the education of themselves and their children.

41. Working status of the sample female 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.

42. An information about colloquial language of the sample female respondents suggest that 32.5 per cent females used Kannada and Hindi accordingly as their colloquial 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 communication language. It means most of the women workers were migrated and they were using their own native languages at the time of work.

43. 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.

44. 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.

45. 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. Hard work, low income, excess working hours, exploitation and bad comments by co-workers at the time of work were the major causes of their apathetic attitude towards work.

46. 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.

47. Husband attitude towards respondents female workers indicates that 50% women got co-operative husband, 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. Maximum husbands were not torturing their wives. It shows the necessity of women earnings for running the cart wheel of family life.

48. 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.

49. 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.

50. The most considerable observation is that all the construction workers viz. skilled male, unskilled male and women construction workers were not 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.

51. 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.

52. 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.

53. 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.

54. 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 prospects.

12. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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 adverse so it must be improved.
3. Evidence of home child labours were the common phenomena of the construction sector in the study area. In few castes child labour were found. Therefore, the implementation of child labour prohibition and regulation Act should be implemented strictly.

4. Programme for protection of health of workers and child workers is to be 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. It should be made obligatory on the part of house contractors or owners to provide free and adequate housing to the workers, especially immigrant workers.

7. 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 on their own cost.

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

9. House construction activity contains high social cost. Hence, due care is to be taken for the compensation of social cost in sense of fees, fines, etc.

II. **Recommendations Concern 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 engaged themselves in skilled job / work like masonry, plumbing etc.

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.

4. Most of the working women are facing the problem of sexual harassment, so the implementation of preventive laws should be done properly.

5. Working women are facing the problem of suspicious attitude of their spouses as well as the society. In changing scenario society and especially husbands should follow the plain, positive and supportive role for encouraging the sprint of working women.

6. 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.

7. Most of the working women were suffering from various health problems, so health care facilities should be improved on sites.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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 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.

2. As stated above, the nature of the house construction activity is seasonal, hence, worker engaged in house construction were unemployed in off season. It is therefore, essential to provide them a year-round employment. Building contractor and Government should do something positive in this regards.


4. Maximum number of workers were economically exploited by their owners or building contractors, hence, strong steps should be taken for eradicating of all type of workmen’s exploitation.

5. 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 %

6. Labour welfare officers should carefully observed the implementation of legal provision and social security schemes in the construction field.

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

9. To avoid migration of rural poor to urban areas new financial aid schemes as well as employment opportunities should be created at their native places which shall discourage migrations.

10. 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.

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

12. The scheme of Contributive Provident Fund (C.P.F.) should be applied to house construction sector. At the same time the coverage of high LIC and pension schemes to the urban working class is essential.

13. 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.

14. An identity card system for construction worker should be introduced and it should be used in contributing pension scheme and payment cutting system.

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.

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