Construction industry occupies a pivotal position in the Nation’s development plans. It is the second largest contributor to the Gross Domestic Products after the agricultural sector. Construction workers constitute one of the largest categories of workers in the unorganized sector. The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the UPA Government was to “enhance the welfare and wellbeing of farmers, farm labourers and workers, particularly those in the unorganized sector and assure a secure future for their families in every respect.” The CMP further states that:

“The UPA government is firmly committed to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of all workers, particularly those in the unorganized sector who constitute 93% of our workforce. Social security, health insurance and other schemes for such workers like weavers, handloom workers, fishermen and fisherwomen, toddy tappers, leather workers, plantation labour, beedi workers, etc will be expanded.”

According to the sample survey conducted by the NSSO eight million workers are employed in construction activities. Construction jobs are highly labour intensive and also highly mechanized. It provides substantial employment and growth inputs to other manufacturing industries such as cement, chemicals, bricks, paints etc. Construction workers are those who work predominantly on construction sites and are typically engaged in the regular aspects of the industry, other than design and financing. They are comprised of both local and migrant work force. The daily wage labour and members of specialist trade such as electricians, carpenters and plumbers are also included under the segment as construction workers. The work in the construction sector is most vulnerable
because of the poor employment conditions. The employment is permanently temporary and the relationship between the employer and the employee is very fragile and short lived. The work is exposed to risk. The lack of safety, health and welfare facilities, coupled with uncertain working hours acts as bane to the workers. Above this, the workers face threat from the interstate migrant workers who tentatively snatch off the local workers’ employment opportunities. These unique characteristics of the construction industry make it difficult to implement labour welfare measures in this sector compared to the other industries. Although the provisions of various Labour Laws and Central Acts like Minimum Wages Act 1948, Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act 1970 and Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Services) Act 1979 etc., are applicable to the building and other construction workers, a need was felt for a comprehensive and separate legislation for this category of workers. Consequently, Kerala Construction Workers’ Welfare Fund Board, a welfare fund for the construction workers, the first of its kind in India was formed in 1989, which came in to effect from 1.1.1990. Based on the Central legislation, The Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act 1998 and The Kerala Building & Other Construction Workers’ Welfare Cess Rules were enacted by the Government of Kerala in 1998.

The present study is an evaluation of the effectiveness of labour welfare measures provided by the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund. It is formed, managed and controlled by the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board which has been constituted in accordance with the, The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of
Introduction


1.1 Research Gap

From the review of available literature, it can be seen that ‘Labour Welfare Measures Among Unorganised Construction Workers’ form a new area of study and it has not yet been covered anywhere in the earlier studies. The literature review indicates the study of unorganized construction workers in a detailed manner. But the study of labour welfare measures provided by the Kerala Building and Other Construction workers Welfare Fund Board among unorganized construction workers in Kerala is uncovered and untapped by the researchers. Therefore, the present study is a virgin area. The factors affecting this defined area are examined in detail by applying appropriate statistical tools.

1.2 Scope of the study

The study covers the entire state of Kerala. The functions of the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund are performed through 14 district offices. For collecting primary data 3 districts were selected representing 3 regions of Kerala, southern, central and northern. The scope of the study is confined to the evaluation of the labor welfare measures provided by KBOCWWFB. The study also attempts to assess the effect of the welfare board on the socio-economic conditions of construction workers in the unorganized sector and to evaluate the extent of awareness of workers about the welfare benefits.
1.3 Statement of the Problem

Workers are exploited because they are socially backward, unorganised, uninformed and poor. Workers mostly comprise landless labour that move to cities in search of work, where they are exploited by the middlemen and contractors. The social protection is virtually non-existent due to the reasons such as its casual nature, temporary relationship between employers and employees, lack of basic amenities and inadequacy of welfare facilities. The extent of unionization in the construction industry has been very low due to migratory, seasonal nature of workers and scattered location of work sites. The above conditions of the construction workers deserve consideration - 'extensive and intensive’ studies. One of the measures usually initiated to give relief to the workers is the labour welfare measures undertaken by the society and the government. The labour welfare activities are being implemented in the state of Kerala through the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board. No serious studies have been undertaken to assess the labour welfare measures undertaken by the Government in this sector so far. In this context, it is imperative to undertake a serious study to assess the effectiveness of labour welfare measures among construction workers in Kerala.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To assess the existing labour welfare measures implemented by Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board

2. To study the extent of awareness on the part of workers’ about welfare measures provided by Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers
Welfare Fund Board.

3. To study the workers’ opinion regarding the welfare benefits provided by Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board.

4. To evaluate the working of Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board and.

5. To examine the effectiveness of the labour welfare benefits provided by Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board among unorganized construction workers in Kerala.

1.5 Hypotheses

Based on the available secondary sources and the objectives, the following hypotheses are framed for analysis.

**H1:** There is no significant difference in the awareness level about the various benefits of the Welfare Fund Board among the different categories of workers.

**H2:** There is no significant difference among the beneficiaries regarding the opinion about the welfare benefits.

**H3:** There is no significant region wise difference in the opinion among construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on personal factors.

**H4:** There is no significant difference in the opinion among different categories of construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on personal factors.
H5: There is no significant region wise difference in the opinion among construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on social factors.

H6: There is no significant difference in the opinion among different categories of construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on social factors.

H7: There is no significant region wise difference in the opinion among construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on economic factors.

H8: There is no significant difference in the opinion among different categories of construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on economic factors.

H9: There is no significant region wise difference in the opinion among construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on political factors.

H10: There is no significant difference in the opinion among different categories of construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on political factors.

H11: There is no significant region wise difference in the opinion among construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on employer-employee relationship factors.
H12: There is no significant difference in the opinion among different categories of construction workers regarding the effects of welfare benefits on employer-employee relationship.

1.6 Research Methodology

The study is descriptive and analytical in nature. The study attempts to describe the evaluation of labour welfare measures among unorganized construction workers in Kerala, to analyze the effect of labour welfare measures and to examine the various factors that influence them.

1.7 Sources of Data

1.7.1 Primary data

The study was conducted by organized survey, executing a structured interview schedule for registered unorganized construction workers. Personal telephone interviews were also conducted for first hand information from officials and experts engaged in the construction industry.

1.7.2 Secondary data

For the successful completion of the study, secondary sources of information are collected from peripheral sources such as journals / E-journals of reputed organizations in India and abroad, closely associated with construction industry, and also from newspaper files. The relevant government and non government organizational websites in Kerala and other states are also referred for completing the study.
1.8 Research approach

Survey research using a well structured interview schedule for selected categories of unorganized construction workers is adopted in this study.

1.9 Period of the study

A preliminary opinion survey for a period of two months in 2011 was conducted among registered unorganized construction workers, contractors, trade union members and welfare fund board officials to identify the key variables relating to factors influencing effectiveness of labour welfare measures among registered unorganized construction workers in Kerala. A pilot study was conducted among fifty registered unorganized construction workers in Thiruvananthapuram with a preliminary interview schedule for a period of one month in the year 2012. After testing the reliability and fixing the sample size, the final interview schedule was administered to 560 selected categories of registered unorganized construction workers. The final sample survey was conducted during February 2013 - August 2013.

1.10 Research Instrument

A well structured interview schedule was prepared with the objective of getting the information about labour welfare measures provided by KBOCWWFB among unorganized construction workers in Kerala. The interview schedule was administered after conducting a pilot study and consultation with experts in applied statistics. Detailed discussions with contractors, trade union members and workers and the preliminary opinion survey conducted among the workers also helped to include relevant variables relating to the factors affecting the problem.
1.11 Population

The population of the study comprises all the registered unorganized construction workers with the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board. According to the official estimate of the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board 16 lakhs workers were registered under this board.

1.12 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted by using the preliminary interview schedule with the help of identifying variables from review of literature, obtained from fifty unorganized construction workers. The collected data from the fifty respondents were studied in detail with the variance reported, to incorporate changes in the preliminary interview schedule. Thus the reliability analysis was done on the response pertaining to the factors affecting the effect of labour welfare measures on unorganized construction workers in Kerala. Finally, a final interview schedule was framed on the basis of the reliability and validity test.

1.13 Sample size

The modified data after reliability analysis, collected from the fifty respondents, were studied in detail to identify the extent of variations in the responses. It may be stated that the sample size was proportional to the level of variation and the assumed level of errors of estimate of the population parameter of the study variable. The sample size is selected under proportional allocation method. The calculated sample size is 560.
1.14 **Method of sampling**

Multi stage simple random sampling technique was applied for collecting data from registered construction workers. For the purpose of the study the state of Kerala has been divided into three regions - south, central and north on the basis of the geographical division. Out of the 14 districts 3 districts were selected on random basis - Malappuram from northern region, Ernakulam from central region and Thiruvananthapuram from southern region. These districts were selected on the basis of number of workers registered under the Welfare Fund Board. Sample for each district were selected on simple random method (200 from Thiruvananthapuram 200 from Ernakulam and 160 from Malappuram). The Board classified the workers into 26 categories, for the purpose of this study; the categories of workers selected are 7 - masons, technical worker, concrete workers, tile workers, fabrication workers, casual workers and sand workers.

1.15 **Type of analysis**

Bivariate and Multivariate Analyses were done for establishing the relationship among the variables under study. Moreover different statistical modelling was applied for proving the Multivariate relationship among the relevant variables under study.

1.16 **Tools used for analysis**

1. Cross – Tabulation Tables

Cross – Tabulation Tables represent the joint frequency distribution of two discrete variables rows and columns corresponding to the possible values of the
first and second variables, the calls contain frequencies (numbers) of occurrence of the corresponding pair of values of the first and second variables. Cross-Tabulation Tables were used for more than two variables.

2. Chi-square Test

Chi-square test is a parametric test used for testing the given population variance, by comparing with variance of the sample.

3. MANOVA

The MANOVA (Multivariate Analysis Of Variance) is a type of analysis used to analyse data that involve more than the dependent variables at a time. MANOVA allows us to test the hypotheses regarding the effect of one or more independent variables. It may be noted that some variables may not be significantly different among groups when considered individually, but become significant when considered along with other variables. In this study, the MANOVA Model was used to test the variation of the mean score of the responses of the construction workers on the combined effect of two or more factors affecting their opinion on labour welfare measures provided by KBOCWWFB.

4. One-Way ANOVA

The ANOVA was used for studying the differences among the influence of various categories of independent variables on a dependent variable. In One-way classification, observations are classified into groups on the basis of a single criterion. In such a classification, there are K samples, one from each of K normal populations with common variance.
5. Binomial Test for proportion

The Binomial Test of significance is an exact probability test based on the rules of probability, was used to examine the distribution of single dichotomy when the researcher has small samples. The Binomial Test of significance tests the difference between a sample proportion and a given proportion, for one-sample tests.

6. Multidimensional Scaling Alscal Model

Multidimensional Scaling Alscal Model is a technique used to determine a dimensional space and corresponding co ordinates for a set of objects, strictly using matrices of pair-wise dissimilarities between these objects. When using only one matrix of similarities, this is a Kin to Eigenvector or Singular value decomposition in linear algebra and there is an exact solution space. When using several matrices, there is no unique solution, and the complexity of the model commands an algorithm based on numerical analysis. The algorithm finds a set of orthogonal vector dimensions in an iterative fashion, slowly transforming the space to reduce the discrepancies between the inter-object distances in the proposed space, and the corresponding scaled original pair wise dissimilarities between these objects. In this study, the MDS Alscal Model is applied to identify the most influential or significant element relating to the labour welfare measures among unorganized construction workers in Kerala.

1.17 Variables of the study

1. Socio-economic factors

Region
Introduction

Sex
Age
Marital status
Community
Category
Educational qualifications
Monthly work available for workers
Daily wage of workers
Daily expense of workers
Monthly income of workers
Factors attracted the worker to the job
Trade union membership of workers
Are workers working under contractor?
Who initiate the worker to the construction work?
Attitude of family members towards the job

2. Particulars about family members, house and house holdings

3. Particulars about savings and debt of the worker

4. Source of information about the schemes

5. Extent of awareness about the welfare schemes

6. Number of welfare benefits received by the worker

7. Worker’s opinion regarding welfare schemes

8. Effect on personal factors

Family relationship
Participation in festivals and entertainment programmes with family members

Power to make decisions related to family matters

Children’s education and their wellbeing

Ability to take care of their parents and their wellbeing

9. Effect on social life

Social interaction

Social status

Social relationship and public activity participation

Positive social outlook

10. Effect on economic factors

Income of workers

Savings of workers

Workers’ debt

Income stability and household financial support

Changes in physical assets, and contribution to family members’ income.

11. Effect on political factors

Attitude towards payment of contributions to trade unions

Participation in political activity

Response to the directions of trade union leaders

Trade union interference in workers work related matters

Favourable action from trade unions to solve problem in delay in getting welfare benefits
Introduction

12. Effect on employer-employee relationship

Services provided by the employer

Financial assistance for treatment of work related diseases

Additional wages for additional work

1.18 Important Terms and Concepts

Labour welfare

Voluntary efforts of the employers to establish, within the existing industrial system, working and sometimes living and cultural conditions of employees beyond what is required by law, customs of the industry and the conditions of market.

Unorganized labour

Those workers who have not been able to organize themselves in pursuit of their common interests due to certain constraints like casual nature of employment, ignorance and literacy and small and scattered size of establishments.

Construction industry

Construction Industry work covers work on new or existing commercial, industrial or domestic buildings or structures.

Construction Worker

Any person who is employed for wages to do any work in connection with a construction work and who gets his wage directly or indirectly from an employer or from a contractor including supply of materials for construction works.
**Building or other construction work**

The construction, alteration, repairs, maintenance or demolition of or, in relation to, buildings, streets, roads, railways, tramways, airfields, irrigation, drainage, embankment and navigation works, flood control works (including storm water drainage works), generation, transmission and distribution of power, water works (including channels for distribution of water), oil and gas installations, electric lines, wireless, radio; television, telephone, telegraph and overseas communication dams, canals, reservoirs, watercourses, tunnels, bridges, viaducts, aqueducts, pipelines, towers, cooling towers, transmission towers and such other work as may be specified in this behalf by the appropriate Government, by notification but does not include any building or other construction work to which the provisions of the Factories Act, 1948 (63 of 1948), or the Mines Act, 1952 (35 of 1952), apply.

**Building worker**

A person who is employed to do any skilled, semiskilled or unskilled manual, supervisory, technical or clerical work for hire or reward, irrespective of the terms of employment be expressed or implied, in connection with any building or other construction work.

**Fund**

The Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Fund of a Board constituted under sub-section (1) of section 24.
The Board

The Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board, constituted as per the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulations of Employment and Conditions of Service) Kerala Rules1, 1998.

Member

A construction worker who has enrolled himself to the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board

Welfare Fund Scheme

Welfare Fund Schemes under the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers’ Welfare Fund Board for the construction workers.

Appropriate Government

In relation to an establishment which employs building workers either directly or through a contractor in respect of which the appropriate Government under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (14 of 1947), is the Central Government.

Contractor

A person who undertakes to produce a given result for any establishment, other than a mere supply of goods or articles of manufacture, by the employment of building workers or who supplies building workers for any work of the establishment; and includes a sub-contractor.

Employer

The individual, or more usually, a legal entity such as a partnership, company, statutory authority, or the crown, who hires an employee under a
contract of employment.

**Trade union**

A representative or member organization of workers that exists to protect and advance the interests of working people.

**Wage**

Payment for work within an employment relationship. The wage can consist of a number of elements including the basic wage or salary, supplementary payments, and bonus.

**Pension**

A regular payment to those who have retired from work due to age or ill-health paid by the state or an employer.

**1.19 Limitations of the study**

1. The construction industry is a vast industry having a lot of players. Even though the Board classified the workers in 26 categories, for the purpose of this study, only seven categories of workers were selected such as masons, technical workers, concrete workers, tile workers, fabrication workers, casual worker and workers engaged in collecting sand.

2. Reluctance on the part of workers to disclose their problems, freely and frankly.

3. The sample units were scattered throughout the State which proved time consuming.
1.20 Organization of thesis

The study report is spread over six chapters as mentioned below:

**Chapter 1** – The chapter introduces the study focusing on the problem, Scope of the study, Statement of the problem, Objectives of the study, Hypotheses, Research methodology, Sources of Data, Research approach, Period of the study, Research instrument, Population, Pilot study, Sample size, Method of sampling, Type of analysis, Tools used for analysis, Variables of the study, Important terms and concepts, Limitations and Organisation of thesis.

**Chapter 2** – The chapter contains the review of available literature.

**Chapter 3** – The chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study.

**Chapter 4** – The chapter contains evaluation of the functions of the KBOCWWF.

**Chapter 5** – The chapter presents analysis and interpretation.

**Chapter 6** – The chapter contains summary of findings, conclusion and suggestions.

**REFERENCES**


