CHAPTER-III

THE PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES AND THE METHODOLOGY
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In the present chapter, an attempt has been made to present the statement of the problem, theoretical framework of the study, the objectives, the hypotheses and the methodology and to discuss the design of study in terms of sampling techniques, collection of data and statistical tools and techniques used for the analysis, the constraints of the study. At the end of this chapter, the chapter scheme is also present.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Since the advent of Economic Reforms in India in 1991, the need for social security has assumed greater importance. The fact that the high degree of openness and greater marketization process of the economy has created competitiveness in all the sectors of the economy. This has resulted an apprehension in the minds of the people in general and workers in particular. Especially, the plight of the workers of the unorganized sector is highly deplorable. Realising this situation, need for caring for the workers of unorganized sector has caught the attention of planners, policy makers, the researcher and the concerned people. As a result, it has also been mentioned in the national policy document. Social security comprising of food and nutrition, employment, education, health, and women in a broader sense has to be ensured to the needy people. For this, a comprehensive basis has to be provided for formulation of a
policy with a macro economic and socially sensitive perspective. Keeping this in view, a study of workers of the unorganized sector has been undertaken. The unorganized sector of the economy is primarily labour intensive but less rewarding to the workers in comparison. Therefore, social security measures can play an important role in improving their lots. As such, the role of social security measure has to be examined in relation to the workers of the unorganized sector. For this purpose, workers of the construction activity has been chosen as a case study.

Construction workers in the lower strata of the society who are virtually in the absence of stable and permanent nature of employment, look around for jobs in the labour market. Poverty results in a situation where workers take up any kind of available work. Construction industry is the biggest employer of these workers.

The construction industry covers a wide range of activities such as building of dams, houses, bridges, public and private buildings, apartments, railway tracks, docks and roads, spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. Construction is not only important because it provides infrastructure for socio-economic development but also provides employment to millions of people. This is an industry in which workers' employment is permitted and encouraged from the olden times and in modern days the ratio and number have increased phenomenally. Workers in large numbers work on construction sites in appalling condition throughout the country. The unprotected state of
construction site calls for serious attention of the planners, government and concerned citizens.

In the unregulated and unorganized nature of construction industry, the labour moves from one employer to another employer and from one site to another site for seeking job. The majority of workers in this sector work not only with backward technologies but also solely with the aid of muscle power. Works in the construction sector are subject to innumerable hardships. They are forced to work as unskilled labourers and opportunities are also denied to them to improve their skills or wages. Due to heavy manual work and exhaustion, the construction workers suffer from frequent illness. Lack of amenities such as drinking water, sanitation facilities, and canteen facilities, besides, denial of maternity benefit for women workers, social security benefits health care, pre-natal and post natal care facilities severely handicap the construction workers in general. In particular, accidents and injuries are very common in this sector. If social security measures are made available to them, they can improve their living standards. Hence, the present study examines the extent of the benefit of social security availed by the construction workers.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY:

The present study of social security in relation to unorganized sector workers assumes greater significance in the process of growing marketisation and globalization of our economy. Though there has been a concern towards the workers over the years, the seriousness of the issue
of the workers in the work place and the need to cover them under social security schemes has been focused only rather recently.

This study, thus, based on the recent emphasis on the need for social security measures for the workers of the unorganized workers in the rapid globalization of developing countries like India. Focus has also been laid on this aspect of the study at the national policy document.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

The major objectives of the study is the role of social security measures in improving the living the standard of workers of unorganized sector in general and construction workers in particular. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the sample respondents.
2. To find out the reasons for opting for the job and to ascertain pattern of employment of the respondents.
3. To assess economic status of the respondents by analyzing factors like income, asset, indebtedness, expenditure pattern and savings.
4. To study the mode of recruitment, wage payment, transportation, level of job satisfaction and involvement towards trade unions.
5. To study the awareness about the social security measures available in the area for the benefit of workers in general and construction workers in particular in the study area.
6. To assess the extent of benefits of social security schemes availed by the construction workers of unorganized sector in the area under study.

7. To analyze the factors which are more beneficial for the construction workers of the unorganized sector in the area and

8. To suggest suitable measures which emerge from the research for policy purposes, exclusively for the benefit of workers in unorganized sector.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

1. It is hypothesized that workers of the unorganized sector, in particular, of construction workers in the study area are not fully aware of the existing schemes of social security.

2. There are no exclusive associations being formed for the benefit of the workers excepting membership of trade union.

3. The workers of the unorganized sector have not availed the benefit of existing social security schemes to a large extent.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study on social security and the workers of unorganized sector with special reference to construction workers is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The former sources are generated through field investigation. The later was collected from several sources such as District profile, Policy documents, Survey Report etc. The case of workers of organized sector has been attended to with all seriousness and concern by the governments of all the nations world over. However, the
plight of the workers of unorganized sector was never heard for quite a long time. The need for it arose only recently with some seriousness when the policy changes have taken place in the context of developing counties. It is against this background, the researcher felt to have undertaken a thorough investigation in this area of study.

For this purpose, social security measures of unorganized sector and in general and construction workers in particular are selected.

CHOICE OF THE STUDY AREA:

The study area viz., Kolar district, is one of the districts of Karnataka State. In the past decades, Kolar district had developed a lot; many construction activities have been undertaken, mostly residential houses, schools and hospitals. The present study is an attempt to examine the socio-economic conditions of unorganized workers in construction sector in Kolar district and their coverage in terms of social security. The workers in this district attempt to get additional income through some economic activity, as the income of the family is too low for their subsistence. To get work in organized sector where wages are relatively high is still more difficult. Therefore, they take up whatever work is available in informal sectors like trading, vending, domestic services and construction work. They largely take up construction work, which is easily available in the nearby areas. They form the largest group of unorganized sector in this area. This indicated their low status despite the fact that they perform a variety of jobs under different conditions.
requiring different skills. The primary purpose of this study is to gain some insights into the lives and working conditions of these workers, their socio-economic background and their occupational hazards and the extent of the benefit availed from the existing social security measures.

The role of contractors as middlemen between the building owners and the workers is crucial. They have to work from dawn to dusk. The need for the study is to single out the difficulties associated with unorganized workers in construction sector and suggested the possible measures. The scope of this study is confined to the construction workers in Kolar district.

**SAMPLING DESIGN:**

This study is exclusively based on empirical data. The present study covers the eleven taluks in Kolar district viz., Kolar, Srinivasapur, Bangarpet, Malur, Gauribidanur, Gudibande, Bagepalli, Chikkaballapur, Chintamani, Mulabagal and Sidlagatta. To ensure that the sample is statistically representative of every 100 respondents, from each taluk, the investigator has selected 35 sample respondents on random basis and a total of 385 samples are taken. The relevant data have been collected through an interview schedule. The interview schedule has been finalized on the basis of a pilot study conducted by the investigator. Then, it was finalized by incorporating certain aspects which were found wanting during the pre-test interviews. Besides the interview schedules, observation techniques have also been used to gather more informations.
Personal observation has confirmed some information obtained through interviews.

**Period of Study:**

The study area covers a period of one year from April 2003 to March 2004. Data relating to this period have been collected from the sample respondents. Since there is no source to reveal the actual number of construction workers in Kolar district, the investigator approached some relevant persons connected with it to know the appropriate number of persons involved in this work. For this purpose, the investigator met a few noted construction supervisors, masons, trade union leaders and building contractors.

**COLLECTION OF DATA:**

For the present study both primary and secondary data are used. Regarding the primary data an interview schedule was designed to collect the data relating to the sample respondents' socio-economic background, the method of recruitment, migration, their occupational hazards, the nature of exploitation, wage gap, job satisfaction, year of experience, contribution to family income and other aspects relating to the overall objectives of this study.

The schedule was canvassed for collection of information by personal interview method. The sample respondents were informed about the objectives of the study and their co-operation was sought. Most of the
respondents were not maintaining any records pertaining to the monthly income, the extent of loan, the quantum of asset and the amount of expenditure. However, they were able to recollect from their memories and furnish the information without any difficulty. To check the consistency in their replies cross checkings were also made.

Secondary data relating to the study area were gathered from administrative reports, Census, study reports, district profile of Kolar district, journals, articles, union office records and books. The data thus collected from various reliable sources enhanced the validity, accuracy and reliability of the study.

TECHNIQUES OF ANALYSIS:

For this study, employment, income, education level of the workers and their relations with social security measures have been considered for analysis purpose and thereby to understand the conditions of the workers and the extent of social security benefits availed.

STATISTICAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES:

The various statistical tools used in the present study are furnished below. Information collected through field survey was analysed by using different conventional statistical techniques like percentages, ratios, averages, classification and tables. Apart from this, simple regression model was used to analyse the factors which play an important role in
their socio-economic conditions and thereby to find out the role of social security measures.

**IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY:**

An analysis of the plight of the workers of unorganized sector through an emphatically investigation would shed light on a policy framework in terms of social security measures which combines of the nature of promotional, protective and preventive aspects. It further stress the need for and urgency of focused attention of the concerned in the context of reform regime of different segments of the economy.

**CONSTRAINTS OF THE STUDY:**

The respondents due to illiteracy and poverty were not able to maintain any records regarding their income expenditure, etc. They were furnishing these informations out of their memories. Therefore, its suffers from a certain degree of recall bias.

Though large number of books are available on labour in general, publications regarding the social security measures benefiting unorganized workers in particular of construction workers in a country like India are not available in sufficient numbers.

The study is confined to workers of unorganized sector particularly of construction activity in Kolar District.
Exploration of the area of research on social security for the unorganized sector workers is still at the stage of infancy and so this study also suffers from lack of systemized body of knowledge.

CHAPTER SCHEME:

This study has been organized and presented in VI Chapters.

Chapter-I deals with introduction in terms of some aspects of social security, unorganized sector, construction activity as a case in point, the need for the study and a resume.

Chapter-II gives the review of literature in terms of social security and its related aspects, unorganized sector, construction workers and an assessment.

Chapter-III presents, the problem, objectives and the methodology.

Chapter-IV describes profile of the area and sample respondents.

Chapter-V focuses on Employment, its related aspects and social security an analysis. Under this heading, it discusses two sections:

Section I : employment and related aspects
Section II : social security measures and their impact

Chapter-VI gives a summary of conclusion, major findings and suggestions.