



EXPLORING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN TIRUPATTUR TALUK

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ABSTRACT :

In India construction industry plays a vital role and support to the India's economic growth, providing employability with 50 million workers are engaged in this construction work, mostly from the marginalized and economically weaker sections and the construction labours are comes under the organized and unorganized sector both were suffered in this society due to the poor working nature and treated by this society. Despite contributing significantly to infrastructure development, the construction labours are migrant workers who as experienced with economic instability due to seasonal employment, lack of formal contracts and exploitation by the middlemen or contractors. Even the construction labours are often facing low wages, irregular employment, hazardous working conditions, lack of healthcare facilities, and limited access to social security schemes. In this study investigates the socio-economic conditions of construction labour in Tirupattur Taluk.

Keywords: Construction labour, Wages, Employment, Income, Welfare

INTRODUCTION :

The term "labour" refers to the physical and mental efforts exerted by individuals in the process of production. The individual task and activities are performed in various sectors and different industries. In the economic context the labour is one among the factor of production along with capital, land, organizations. It has been input provided by workers in the production process and converting from raw materials into goods and service. The construction labour refers to the workforce involved in various aspects of the construction like building industry and infrastructure projects. These workers are performing in the wide range of tasks from the manual labour to skill workers and they were helpful to the completion of construction works and projects. The construction labour has been categorized into two type's skilled and unskilled labour; the unskilled labourers who handle tasks like digging, carrying materials and cleaning up debris and skilled labours are handling carpenters, electricians, plumbers, masons and HVAC technicians, including site preparation, material handling, masonry, carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, and more. These workers are the backbone of the building construction industry, ensuring that projects are completed efficiently and safely. Their contributions are essential for the growth of economies, urban development, and modernization. In India as per the 2023 the construction sector in India are the second largest employment created in the country. During the pandemic in India the construction industry was poorest sectors and this construction work is one of the major migrant workforces has been find employment. According to the National statistical Survey Office NSSO (2016-17) there are totally 74 million workers are engaged in the construction works.

In Tirupattur taluk there are 25 non-contract builders and 15 skilled civil engineers organized contract builders was presented. In each contractor under there are 60 to 70 labours was working. Totally 5200 unorganized construction labours were presented in the Tirupattur taluk, among the labour force, nearly 1800 are female construction labour and 3400 male construction labour was presented. The construction labours are migrated from the rural are to urban for the construction work in the Tirupattur taluk. The construction labours are unskilled labour. They were working for minimum wage and higher working hours as well as their children are also engaged in the construction work due to the family economic constraints. Due to the working nature of the construction labours and hexavalent chromium was presented in the cement will create health issues like skin irritation, eye problem and allergy in lungs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

Guddi Tiwary (2012), the *socioeconomic conditions* of construction workers, revealing that *financial struggles force many into the industry despite poor working conditions and health risks*. Long hours and strenuous labour lead to *injuries and illnesses*, while *lack of awareness about labour laws* leaves workers vulnerable. Many laborers *develop addictions to alcohol and tobacco* due to stress and inadequate living conditions. The *government intervention* to ensure fair wages, proper shelter, and improved working conditions for construction workers.

Thewodors Bekele Tolera (2016), author examined occupational hazards among construction workers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, using a cross-sectional design with 75 participants. The research found that due to the financial constraints and unsafe working environment leads to frequently result in injuries such as punctures, hand injuries, and back pain, and concluded that effective safety measures in the workplace are essential to reducing these health risks.

Subha et. al, (2018), authors highlighted on the *occupational health hazards* among construction workers in Coimbatore city. The study identified musculoskeletal disorders, hearing loss, vision problems, and skin diseases as common health issues. The research emphasized that occupational hazards have a *direct impact on the personal, economic, and social lives* of construction workers owing to to unsafe work environments, long working hours, and poor health protection measures.

Suhail Alam & Khan (2020), focused on *occupational health and working conditions* of construction workers in *South Delhi*, highlighting the industry's role in employing *unorganized laborers*. The study found that *lack of awareness led to poor workplace conditions*, with workers *unaware of first aid and lacking insurance*. Migrant laborers faced *inadequate food, housing, and sanitation*, while *gender disparities* resulted in *lower wages for female workers*.

Sushree Sanghamitra & Kailash Chandra Mishra (2023) observed that despite the *physically demanding and risky nature* of construction work, laborers *choose this job out of economic necessity* and *earning low wages*. The study also points out the *challenges faced by unorganized construction workers*, including *job insecurity, poor living conditions, and lack of social welfare benefits*. So, the *government and companies must create better job opportunities and implement welfare schemes* to improve workers' economic stability and overall well-being.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM :

More than 5200 construction labour were engaged in the construction industry by both female and male due to their family financial constraints. The construction labour are plays an important role in the construction sector and these workers frequently undergoes different issues in the working place, such as low pay, unstable employment, discrimination, no social security, unfavourable working conditions, and limited access to healthcare. Due to their financial constraint they were engaged in the construction work and they were undergone with various health issues as well as addicted with the alcoholic and smoking habit. The construction labours were not treated well in this society. The socio-economic conditions of the construction labour in the Tirupattur taluk is addressed here.

OBJECTIVES:

- To examine the socio-economic conditions of construction labour in Tirupattur Taluk.
- To compare social security benefits among male and female construction labours in the study area.

METHODOLOGY:

The study was carried out from Tirupattur taluk of Tirupattur district, Tamil Nadu state and the sample were collected from the construction labours. The random sampling method was adopted and the sample size of the study was 144 in all the 36 wards of the Tirupattur Taluk. The SPSS software was used to analysis the data and correlation, frequency table, cross tabulation was utilized.

ANALYSIS :

Age	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Below 25	5	0	5
	(100.0%)	(0.0%)	(100.0%)
	[5.7%]	[0.0%]	[3.5%]
26 – 35	32	14	46
	(69.6%)	(30.4%)	(100.0%)
	[36.8%]	[24.6%]	[31.9%]
36 – 45	28	40	68
	(41.2%)	(58.8%)	(100.0%)
	[32.2%]	[70.2%]	[47.2%]
Above 46	22	3	25
	(88.0%)	(12.0%)	(100.0%)

	[25.3%]	[5.3%]	[17.4%]
Total	87	57	144
	(60.4%)	(39.6%)	(100.0%)
	[100.0%]	[100.0%]	[100.0%]

Source: Computed from Primary Data

In Table 1 represents the age and gender of the construction labours in Tirupattur Taluk. There are 5 (5.7%) male respondents are belongs to the age group of below 25, 32 (36.8%) male respondents are belong to the age group 26 to 35, 14 (24.6 %) Female respondents are belongs to the age group 26 to 35, 28 (32.2 %) male respondents are belongs to the age group of 36 to 45, 40 (70.2 %) Female respondents are belongs to the age group 36 to 45. And 22 (25.3 %) male respondents are belongs to the age group above 45, 3 (39.6 %) female respondents are belongs to the age group Above 4. The majority of the male construction labours are belonging to the age group of 26 – 35 and female construction labours belong to the age group of 36 to 45.

Per Day Income	Per day working hours		Total
	8 Hours	12 Hours	
Below 400 Rupees	10	2	12
	(83.3%)	(16.7%)	(100.0%)
	[8.3%]	[8.7%]	[8.3%]
401 - 600 Rupees	45	10	55
	(81.8%)	(18.2%)	(100.0%)
	[37.2%]	[43.5%]	[38.2%]
601 - 800 Rupees	34	6	40
	(85.0%)	(15.0%)	(100.0%)
	[28.1%]	[26.1%]	[27.8%]
Above 801 Rupees	32	5	37
	(86.5%)	(13.5%)	(100.0%)
	[26.4%]	[21.7%]	[25.7%]
Total	121	23	144
	(84.0%)	(16.0%)	(100.0%)
	[100.0%]	[100.0%]	[100.0%]

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The Table 2 represents the Working hour and Income of the Construction Labours in Tirupattur Taluk. There are 10 (8.3%) of the respondents are working 8 hours per day working hours with earnings of Below 400 Rupees, 2 (8.7%) of the respondents are working 12 hours per day working hours with earnings of Below 400 Rupees, 45 (37.2 %) of the respondents are working 8 hours per day working hours with earnings of 401 to 600 Rupees. 10 (43.5 %) of the respondents are working 12 hours per day working hours with earnings of 401 to 600 Rupees, 34 (28.1%) of the respondents are working 8 hours per day working hours with earnings of 601 to 800 Rupees, 6 (26.1%) of the respondents are working 12 hours per day working with earnings of 601 to 800. 32 (26.4%) of the respondents are working 8 hours per day working with earnings of above 801 Rupees. 37 (25.7%) of the respondents are working 12 hours per day working with earnings of above 801 Rupees. The majority of 8 hours per day working with earnings of 401 to 600 and 12 hours per day working with earnings of 401 to 600.

Income	Engaged in secondary work		Total
	Yes	No	
No income	1	98	99
	(1.0%)	(99.0%)	(100.0%)
	[14.3%]	[71.5%]	[68.8%]
Below 5,000 Rupees	3	11	14

	(21.4%)	(78.6%)	(100.0%)
	[42.9%]	[8.0%]	[9.7%]
5,001 - 10,000 Rupees	2	22	24
	(8.3%)	(91.7%)	(100.0%)
	[28.6%]	[16.1%]	[16.7%]
Above 10,001 Rupees	1	6	7
	(14.3%)	(85.7%)	(100.0%)
	[14.3%]	[4.4%]	[4.9%]
Total	7	137	144
	(4.9%)	(95.1%)	(100.0%)
	[100.0%]	[100.0%]	[100.0%]

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The Table 3 represents the engaged in secondary work and income from the secondary work of the construction labours in Tirupattur Taluk. There are 1 (14.3%) of the respondents are secondary work engaged with earnings of No Income, 98 (71.5%) of the respondents are secondary work not engaged with earnings of No income. 3 (42.9%) of the respondents are secondary work engaged with earnings of Below 5,000 Rupees, 11 (8.0 %) of the respondents are secondary work not engaged with earnings of Below 5,000 Rupees. 2 (28.6 %) of the respondents are secondary work engaged with earnings of 5,001 to 10,000 Rupees, 22 (16.1 %) of the respondents are secondary work not engaged with earnings of 5,001 to 10,000 Rupees. 1 (14.3%) of the respondents are secondary work engaged with earning Above 10,001 Rupees, 6 (4.4%) of the respondents are not engaged with earning Above 10,001 Rupees. The construction workers are engaged in work like Forming, Driver, Vegetable vendors, Watchman, Work shop, Mill work, Finance, Grocery shop, Water supply, Consulting, Gang work, Land maintenance.

	Income discrimination in your work		Total
	Yes	No	
No discrimination	5	4	9
	(55.6%)	(44.4%)	(100.0%)
	[7.6%]	[5.1%]	[6.3%]
Wage deduction	14	12	26
	(53.8%)	(46.2%)	(100.0%)
	[21.2%]	[15.4%]	[18.1%]
Not providing salary in proper time	23	31	54
	(42.6%)	(57.4%)	(100.0%)
	[34.8%]	[39.7%]	[37.5%]
Delaying of wage	16	26	42
	(38.1%)	(61.9%)	(100.0%)
	[24.2%]	[33.3%]	[29.2%]
Over workload	8	5	13
	(61.5%)	(38.5%)	(100.0%)
	[12.1%]	[6.4%]	[9.0%]
Total	66	78	144
	(45.8%)	(54.2%)	(100.0%)
	[100.0%]	[100.0%]	[100.0%]

Source: Computed from Primary Data

Table 4 represents the status of discrimination and types of income discrimination Tirupattur Taluk. There are 5 (7.6%) of the respondents are surely with no discrimination, 4 (5.1%) of the respondents are never with no discrimination. Among the sample, only 14 (21.2%) of the respondents are surely with wage deduction, 12 (15.4%) of the respondents are never with wage discrimination. Nearly 23 (34.8%) of the respondents are surely with not providing salary for proper time, 31 (39.7) of the respondents stated that the owner never providing salary in proper time. Nearly 16 (24.2%) of the respondents specified that their wage is been delayed for loan, 26 (33.3%) of the respondents are stated that on time was paid on time. Utmost all the construction workers have not provided their salary in proper time and this also force them under economic stress.

Rating	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Good	49	42	91
	(53.8%)	(46.2%)	(100.0%)
	[56.3%]	[73.7%]	[63.2%]
Average	37	14	51
	(72.5%)	(27.5%)	(100.0%)
	[42.5%]	[24.6%]	[35.4%]
Poor	1	1	2
	(50.0%)	(50.0%)	(100.0%)
	[1.1%]	[1.8%]	[1.4%]
Total	87	57	144
	(60.4%)	(39.6%)	(100.0%)
	[100.0%]	[100.0%]	[100.0%]

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The Table 5 represents rate the overall safety measures at workplace in Tirupattur Taluk. There are 49 (53.8%) male and 42 (17.5%) female respondents stated that working place is good, 37 (72.5%) male and 14 (27.5%) female construction labours have stated that working place is average and not bad. Among the sample, only 2 construction labour have states that working place is poor because washroom facilities are not available near the workplace.

Sufficient of Income	Frequency	Percent
Yes	37	25.7
No	107	74.3
Total	144	100.0

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The above Table 6 represents that 107 (74.3%) of respondents believe their income is insufficient to meet basic needs, while only 37 (25.7%) respondents have stated that the given income is adequate only for basic needs. This extensively highlight their financial strain, potentially due to high living costs, low wages and economic instability, fraudulent of contract, high cost of living, owner was not given the proper salary, lack of working opportunity and health related absence. This kind of situation leads to reduce the income of the construction labours.

Benefits	Frequency	Percent
Yes	79	54.9
No	65	45.1
Total	144	100.0

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The above table 7 represents the receiving benefits from the labour organization. There are 79 (54.9%) of the respondents have received benefits from the labour organization and 65 (45.1%) respondents are not receiving any benefits from the labour organization. The benefits of the labour organization of construction labours is clime medical insurance and health security, widow pension, children's educational scholarships, job security, availability of huge working opportunity, salary rights, etc. are not properly facilitated for the workforce.

Table 8: Paired Samples 't' Test of Working Hour & Income								
	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Per day working hours - Per day income from the construction work	-1.549	1.030	.086	-1.718	-1.379	-18.045	143	.000

Table 8 represents that the paired samples t-test shows that the analyse of the difference between per day working hours and per day income from construction work. The results indicate a statistically significant difference between the two variables, as evidenced by a mean difference of -1.549 and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The negative mean difference suggests that, on average, construction workers are working higher hours but they were receiving the same salary due to the income disparities among the construction labours. The absolute value of the t-statistic (-18.045) further supports the strength of this difference is statistically significant.

Table 9: Paired Samples 't' Test								
Pair	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Gender - Rate the overall safety measures at your workplace	-1.000	.802	.067	-1.132	-.868	-14.961	143	.000

Table 9 shows that paired samples test is determine whether there is a significant difference in workplace safety perceptions based on gender. The results indicate a mean difference of -1.000, suggesting that men and women perceive workplace safety differently. The standard deviation of 0.802 reflects some variation in responses. The 95% confidence interval, ranging from -1.132 to -0.868, ensures that the true mean difference lies within this range. The test also produced a t-statistic of -14.961, a highly significant value, and a p-value of 0.000. It strongly indicates that the observed difference in workplace safety ratings meaningful variation between gender groups.

FINDINGS :

- The construction labours are classified into two types organized and unorganized construction labour. There are 59 respondents are from organized and 85 respondents are unorganized construction labours are involved in the construction work.
- The age group of below 25 on 5 respondents and 26 to 35 age group of labours 46 respondents, then 36 to 45 age group of workers are 68 respondents, and above 46 of age group labours are 25 respondents involve in construction work.
- Only 23 construction labour are working more than 12 hours/day. The long working hour leads increase in the income. If the construction labours working more than 12 hours, they were getting only half day salary of minimum 400 rupees additionally and the maximum 1000 rupees.
- Workers are exposed to hazardous materials in their workplace, which can cause skin irritation, eye difficulties, and lung allergies. Many laborers lack official contracts, leaving them open to abuse. Workers commonly experience with injuries, inadequate workplace safety, and a lack of access to healthcare.
- To the overall safety measures at work place to the only a 63 percentage of workers assess workplace safety as outstanding or acceptable, while the 37 percentage of construction labours consider it medium or poor.
- The 66 construction labours are facing challenges of discrimination, wage deductions, payment delays, and unreasonable workloads.
- Moreover, among the samples, nearly 71 construction labours become addicted to drugs like smoking and drinking owing to working conditions, and 73 construction labours are not addict to any alcoholic habits of construction work.

CONCLUSION :

This paper focuses on the socioeconomic circumstances of construction workers in Tirupattur Taluk, namely their challenges with low earnings, long working hours, bad living conditions, and a lack of job security. Many employees lack legal contracts, making them exposed to abuse and unsafe working conditions. Health hazards, such as exposure to chemicals are common, and many employees are uninformed of labour regulations and social security benefits. The study also finds gender income inequalities, with males earning more than women for the same work. Many workers take on additional occupations to overcome their financial insecurity, and others develop using of drugs as a result of occupational stress. To improve their standard of living. The institution and local authority should extend the social welfare programs, workplace safety measures, and labour rights awareness to the categories of labour force. Government and private sector should ensure the minimum wage and other benefits as prescribed by ILO and Ministry of Labour, which will enhance better working conditions for construction employees.

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