

A Study On Women Workers In Construction Industry

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ABSTRACT

The level of living of a people is reflected in their economic qualities. More chances for both skilled and unskilled labourers exist in India's unorganised economy. Workers in the construction industry are often physically demanding. The impact of female workers will outweigh that of male workers. The economic condition of female construction sector workers was examined in this study through the following variables: occupation, work category, wages, working hours, savings, etc. The researcher has used convenience sampling in this study. Fifty female construction workers from the city of Tirunelveli were the subjects of this research. Secondary data comes from sources such as journals, websites, government notices, and well-structured interview schedules, while primary data is gathered through other ways. The data for this study was analysed using SPSS statistics, which included tests like t-tests, ANOVA, and percentage analyses. According to our research, the majority of these workers are in their middle years and have a lower literacy rate. The majority of employees have spouses and live in their own homes as nuclear families. Therefore, the data regarding the financial situation of female construction workers provided by this study is quite relevant.

Keywords: women construction workers, working conditions, wage pattern, migrant women, Construction sector, industrial employees



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1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a reality for the vast majority of people in underdeveloped countries. Health, education, home, food, security, job, equality, and justice are some of the fundamental necessities that they lack. In developing countries, the most pressing issues are those pertaining to disadvantaged populations' ability to maintain a sustainable standard of living and their lack of representation in society and politics. Right from the start, governments have failed to protect citizens' rights. Members of marginalised communities lack the resources necessary to secure and exercise their legal rights. With 7% of the global workforce and 28% of all industrial jobs, the construction industry easily ranks as the top industrial employer worldwide. In order for a nation's infrastructure and manufacturing to progress, construction must be ongoing.

1.1 Employment in the Informal Sector

There are many ways to characterise the informal sector, but one common theme is the unseen workers who carve out a special place for themselves in tiny businesses. Small businesses in the informal economy often depend on family labour and have fewer than ten employees.

People who work in the informal economy often have to put in long hours for little pay, and their living conditions are particularly bad. As a result, they often struggle to meet their most basic necessities. People in this category include those who are self-employed, those in apprenticeships, those who work as industrial outworkers, those who are unpaid family members, and those who have neither income nor social security. Gaining control of assets and making provision for contingencies is also a longer-term effort for them. The prevalence of the informal sector is a significant factor influencing the quality of employment in India. The great majority of jobs in India's economy are for individuals working in informal or unorganised settings.

The building sector has made a significant impact on the country's economy and society. In addition to creating a large number of jobs, the construction industry also stimulates the expansion of related industries via both direct and indirect links. Therefore, for the economy to flourish healthily, it is crucial to support this important activity. Nearly 93% of India's workers are either self-employed or engaged in the informal economy, according to the country's 2010 Economic Survey. While there have been some positive developments, the most recent report

from the International Monetary Fund titled "Women, Work, and the Economy" reveals that efforts to equalise the playing field for women have stopped and might amount to 27 percent of per capita GDP in certain nations. The organised sector, which offers better wages and more stable employment, is tiny, making up less than 6% of the workforce in 2004–2005.

The public sector employs around two-thirds of the whole organised sector workforce. The organised sector's slower growth in employment compared to the overall employment rate over the years is a reflection of the unorganised sector's quicker growth in employment. This has led to a gradual but steady rise in the formalisation of employment. When it comes to formalisation, this effect has been especially noticeable for female employees. When looking at the workforce as a whole, 91% of men and 96% of women work in the informal economy. Between sixty-five and seventy percent of the workforce is unorganised in metropolitan regions. Although not all of them are impoverished, rough estimations indicate that about half of this group requires immediate occupational upgrading. Migrants from rural regions often have low levels of education, training, and skills, and they often find low-paying, semi-skilled or unskilled employment in the urban unorganised sector.

Most of the businesses aren't very productive or profitable, and the jobs they do offer aren't usually full-time. Workers endure long hours in an unpleasant setting with few or no perks that would be considered acceptable in a decent workplace (such as paid time off, a pension, a bonus, health insurance, maternity leave, compensation in the event of an accident, etc.). Furthermore, one of the most pressing matters to attend to going forward is raising the percentage of organised sector employment. The global gender gap in the workforce is widening; only over 50% of women of working age have jobs. Most unpaid labour is done by women, and even when paid, they are disproportionately found among the impoverished and in the informal economy.

They still earn less than men do for equivalent work, even in OECD nations where the gender pay gap averages at 16%. Furthermore, women face obstacles to achieving parity in wage and advancement opportunities due to discrimination and market distortions in many nations. There would be tremendous benefits to having more women in the workforce. There would be a 34% increase to Egypt's GDP if the number of women employed were equal to that of males. The United Arab Emirates would see a 12% increase in GDP, Japan a 9% increase, and the United States a 5% increase. There are 865 million women throughout the globe who have untapped economic potential; of these, 812 million reside in developing and emerging nations, according to a new study based on statistics from the International Labour Organisation.

1.2 Empowerment of Women Construction Workers

One of the main goals of empowerment is to promote social justice by levelling the playing field for all

members of society. The goal of women's empowerment is to increase gender parity both inside and beyond social groupings by reshaping gender and social interactions in a way that benefits women. People who are formerly helpless start to take charge of their own life as they go through the empowerment process. Due to the high percentage of single or abandoned women in the construction industry, the ability to support oneself financially is crucial for these women. Even inside households, it is common for husbands to have extramarital affairs and for the money to be divided. Most of them have debt and a few of them drink excessively. Husbands frequently take their wives' wages against their will, and their complete reliance on these careless males. Only by gaining economic independence will they be able to escape the cycle of poverty and illness. A healthy diet, healthcare, education, housing, and social security are some of the many direct and indirect advantages that can result from financial independence.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Sundari's study (2020), women's employment has not increased over time, either quantitatively or qualitatively, because of economic structural reforms. In India, women's work is weak, according to the report. Women are particularly vulnerable and concentrated in the agricultural sector due to economic inequality, low literacy rates, large-scale informal employment, poor wages, and the fact that majority of these women are self-employed and work for free. A nation's progress is dependent on women's labour force participation. It is also important to empower working women economically and take advantage of population dividends.

In order to address their fundamental requirements, women who work as construction site employees are the focus of Kumar, Babu Praveen's (2019) research. The emotional and mental health of female building employees was the primary emphasis of the thesis. Countless individuals, both with and without specialised training, find work in the construction business. Construction workers have a lot of issues while on the job. Fitness, sadness, and workplace accidents are some of the subjects that the researchers are interested in. The women in Nellore's workforce are the focus of this study. Specifically, this study aims to uncover critical site characteristics for female construction workers. In comparison to men, women face a number of additional obstacles and are often unqualified to work as workers. Women face a number of challenges in the workplace, including sexual harassment, gender discomfort, and salary inequalities. Women maintain their status quo even after many years in the workforce.

Based on her research, K. Rajanna (2015) concludes that the construction industry is a significant employer. Included in it are a wide variety of activities. This industry is crucial to the development of our physical infrastructure, including buildings, roads, and bridges. Women who labour for low wages are mostly unskilled

workers. Women and children make up almost a third of the workforce. Sector workers confront a number of issues in the course of their employment, including sexual harassment and discrimination, unsafe working conditions, and inadequate pay. Horrifying working conditions are endured by women in the construction industry.

In her 2012 book "Women Construction workers in Delhi," Dalmia studied the weakened bodies and hushed voices of strong women who worked as construction workers in Delhi. The purpose of this research is to learn about the female workforce migrants in a dynamic city and to share their stories and experiences. Living conditions for women working in Delhi are extremely challenging. Lack of knowledge and understanding about women's rights and the city, as well as a lack of financial control (which is actually an earning control), put women in a vulnerable and burdensome position.

P. Jayalakshmi (2016) set out to investigate the economic and social issues faced by Visakhapatnam's female employees. Investigating and documenting concerns related to gender bias, pay, living circumstances, and economic position (savings, loans, etc.) on a construction site is the primary goal of the study. Questionnaires were administered to 160 female construction workers in Visakhapatnam to collect the data. Low wages, gender discrimination, terrible working conditions, and no social security are just a few of the problems that women workers face, according to the report. Government and real estate officials, she said, should make an effort to comprehend the plight of female workers.

The purpose of Tikoo's (2013) study was to identify the extent to which certain workplace environmental factors affect the occupational health of female workers and to ascertain whether or not these factors are acceptable to female workers. For the most part, female construction workers had it rough on the job site due to exposure to toxic fumes, intense sunlight, animal attacks, mushroom dirt, gloomy and wet weather, and electric arcs. The sufficiency of environmental workplace standards has been significantly correlated with the prevalence of occupational health issues in different districts.

Agarwala (2009) shows how the characteristics of the informal sector and the social and political life of its members have been impacted by an economic sociology of labour in the context of a globalised workplace. The free flow of goods and services is something that every nation is in favour of. In instance, the "relational" informal economy is defined comprehensively by the grounds of economic sociology. When we look at the informal economy via a relational lens, we can see how informal workers are connected to the formal economy, society, and the state, as opposed to being defined by modernization and neoliberal conceptions about isolated economies. Workers in the informal sector, particularly those whose jobs straddle the line between the two

economies, are sure to be included in labour surveys after operationalizing the relational definition.

Kapur et al. (2014) aims to bridge the gap between the organised and unorganised sectors by investigating the living and working situations of workers in the former. Seasonality and the prevalence of contractual work arrangements are hallmarks of the unorganised industry. There is a lack of welfare and social security laws. Employees in this industry confront a number of challenges, including but not limited to: unsafe working conditions, inadequate housing, excessive hours, inadequate health care, harassment on the job, inadequate safety measures, and a lack of educational opportunities for workers' children. Government intervention and appropriate action are required to enhance working conditions in this industry.

In their 2014 article, "Slum People's Stories," Patnaik et al. detailed the many social and economic challenges that slum dwellers encounter. This quantitative study examines the effects on three different slums. The majority of the population works in the unofficial economy and struggles to make ends meet. Their socioeconomic situation is being severely affected by their low degree of earning. One obstacle preventing people from having access to good healthcare and education is the lack of opportunity to earn money. According to the research, these are the primary issues plaguing the majority of slums. To address these issues, proper preparations must be made.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To acquire knowledge on the demographics of women employed in the construction industry.
- ❖ To determine if these women are currently employed in the city of Tirunelveli.
- ❖ As a means of researching the financial situation of female builders in the city of Tirunelveli

4. METHODOLOGY

There is a descriptive bent to this research. Data was gathered from primary and secondary sources using these sites. The interview schedule served as the principal data collection tool. The information gathered from secondary sources, such as books, journals, websites, etc.

4.1 TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher utilised SPSS software to conduct statistical analyses such as percentage analysis, ANOVA, and t tests for this investigation. In light of this, researchers in Tirunelveli set out to determine the socioeconomic standing of women who work in the construction industry.

4.2 HYPOTHESE OF THE STUDY

There is no significant relationship between age wise classifications of the respondents with respect to their improvement of economic conditions.

4.3 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1.1 Demographic Profile of Female Construction Workers

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age wise classification		
18 – 28	10	16.0
28 – 38	8	22.0
38 -48	14	18.0
48 – 58	10	36.0
Above 58	8	8.0
Total	50	100
Educational Qualification		
Illiterate	8	5.0
Primary	30	60.0
Middle	6	20.0
SSLC /HSS	6	15.0
Total	50	100.0
Type of Family		
Nuclear family	34	78.0
Joint family	16	22.0
Total	50	100
Type of Residence		
Owned house	33	76.0
Rented house	17	24.0
Total	50	100.0
Monthly Income		
Up to Rs. 3000	10	40
Rs.3000 – Rs6000	12	10.0
Rs.6000 – Rs.9000	18	38.0
Above Rs. 9000	10	12.0
Total	50	100
Saving Habit		
Chitt fund	10	36.0
Gulu	14	24.0
LIC	10	18.0
Post office / Bank	8	10.0
No savings	8	12.0
Total	50	100
Know /Aware of TNCWWB		
Aware	34	54
Not Aware	16	46
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data.

According to table 1.1, it can be deduced that 28% of the workforce is within the 38-48 age bracket. When asked about their level of education, 66% of the workers said they had completed elementary school. Most people who work in the construction industry have their own homes and belong to nuclear families. The vast majority of

workers in the construction industry have the potential to earn between 6,000 and 9,000 rupees per month. However, many of these individuals are unaware of the Tamil Nadu Construction Workers Welfare Board and instead save their money.

Table 1.2 Employment Status of Female Construction Workers

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Experience in Years		
1 -3 years	12	34
3 -5 years	18	42
Above 5 years	20	24
Total	50	100
Type of work		
Mason	0	0
Helper / Chital	50	100
Plumber	0	0
Carpenter	0	0
Total	50	100
Working days in a month		
Up to 10 days	5	8.0
10 – 15 days	15	18.0
15 – 20 days	18	38.0
20 – 25 days	12	36.0
Whole days in one month	0	0
Total	50	100
Mode of Payment		
Daily	18	42
Weekly	32	58
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data.

Among the sample group, 42% have worked for more than five years, and 48% put in between fifteen and twenty days a month. Female workers in the construction industry are disproportionately employed by unskilled

labourers. Therefore, they are classified as chitals, or helpers. A total of 68% of the workforce gets their paychecks every week, and the average daily compensation for women is Rs. 400.

Table 1.3 Work Place - Welfare Measures of Construction Workers

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Refreshment		
Yes	37	84.0
No	13	16.0
Total	50	100
Work place condition		
Good	31	36.0
Fair	10	30.0
Bad	9	34.0
Total	50	100
Benefits - After the completion of work		
Cash	4	24.0
Material	21	34.0
Both (Material & Cash)	10	12.0
No	15	30.0
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data.

Refreshment is provided by 94% of workers, according to the table above. Out of fifty workers, twenty-two think their working conditions are fair, and the majority of

them receive clothing supplies from their building owners once their jobs are done.

Table 1.4 T Test - Workers Opinion about Reasons for Working in Construction

Particulars	t	SD	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Level	
					Lower	Upper
Reduce debts	26.149	1.054	.00	3.90	3.6003	4.1997
To meet the family expenditure	25.548	1.084	.00	3.92	3.6117	4.2283
Poor education	24.134	1.119	.00	3.82	3.5019	4.1381
Improvement of economic condition	23.063	1.152	.00	3.76	3.4324	4.0876
Strengthen the family	22.804	1.147	.00	3.70	3.3739	4.0261
Children's education	22.092	1.158	.00	3.62	3.2907	3.9493
In and around there is no heavy wages	21.38	1.250	.00	3.78	3.4247	4.1353
Pay	20.338	1.147	.00	3.30	2.9739	3.6261
To increase savings	20.24	1.173	.00	3.36	3.0264	3.6936
Self-interest	18.835	1.081	.00	2.88	2.5727	3.1873
Continuous work	18.529	1.167	.00	3.06	2.7281	3.3919
My friends are working in construction sites	14.206	1.343	.00	2.70	2.3181	3.0819

Results from the t test show that, with a t value of 26.149, the statement "reduced debts" ranks highest, followed by "to meet the family expenditure," Lower levels of education, Bettering economic circumstances Fortify the household, Educating children, There are a lot of factors contributing to low salaries in the area, including: pay, self-interest, continuous work, and the fact that friends of workers often find employment on construction projects. Reducing debt has a high mean (3.90) and a low value (270) on the other hand, worker friends working on construction sites have a high standard deviation (1.343) and decreased debt has a low value (1.054). The p-values for all of the study's claims are 0.00, which is less than the conventional 0.05 threshold, as seen in the preceding table. Thus, it is determined that the reasons behind female workers' participation in the construction sectors impact all factors.

4.4 OPINION REGARDING THE AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION OF FEMALE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR IMPROVEMENT IN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A wide range of female workers from various age groups are employed in the construction industry. One goal is to learn how much of a difference there is in the economic situations of female construction workers based on age groups. Testing the null hypothesis of "there is no significant difference between the age wise classifications of female workers with respect to their improvement of economic conditions" was done in an ANOVA. Table 1.5 shows the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) for opinions on the categorization of female workers by age in relation to their economic condition improvement.

Table 1.5 Opinion regarding the Age wise classification of Female Worker with respect to their Improvement of Economic Conditions

Particulars	Age wise classification	Sum of square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Improvement of economic conditions	Between groups	.205	4	.051	.209	.932
	Within groups	11.015	45	.245		
	Total	11.220	49			
The Grand Mean : 1.34						

Source: Computed data.

At the 5% level of significance, with a p-value of .932, the ANOVA test reveals that, in relation to the age-wise categorization of female construction workers, the F-value is .209. Accordingly, we can say that the null hypothesis is not true. Based on the data, it seems that the age distribution of female construction workers is significantly correlated with their economic well-being.

5. SUGGESSTIONS

- ✓ Most of the women who work in construction are unaware of the TNCWWB, according to this study. Therefore, measures are being taken by the government or NGOs to raise awareness and make membership in TNCWWB mandatory.
- ✓ It was shown that the majority of female construction workers have completed elementary school. The

supervisor or specialist should be trained on their own rights and given ideas on how to employ technical equipment.

- ✓ The bulks of the female employees in this survey have considerable experience, although they are also working as chital or helpers. From unskilled to skilled workers, workers can develop a positive mindset through upgrading.

6. CONCLUSION

A large number of female workers in emerging nations find employment in the informal sector. Fifty female construction workers from the city of Tirunelveli participated in this study. Married middle-aged people with poor literacy rates made up the bulk of the sample, according to the researcher. To pay off their debts, most

people are getting into the construction industry. The study's authors draw the following conclusion: there is a statistically significant correlation between different age groups in terms of the workers' ability to better their economic circumstances. The working circumstances, nature of the work, family type, and housing of female construction workers all contributed to an improvement in their economic status. Having a positive experience is common among female construction workers, and individuals who are eager to learn and grow have also seen a marked improvement in their skill levels. Consequently, this research is useful for gauging the financial situation of female construction workers, which in turn helps to empower them and bring about substantial improvements to their financial situation. Relation between age groups in relation to workers' economic well-being? The working circumstances, nature of the work, family type, and housing of female construction workers all contributed to an improvement in their economic status. Having a positive experience is common among female construction workers, and individuals who are eager to learn and grow have also seen a marked improvement in their skill levels. Consequently, this research is useful for gauging the financial situation of female construction workers, which in turn helps to empower them and bring about substantial improvements to their financial situation.

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