

The Socioeconomic Background of Women Construction Workers in Tamil Nadu: A Study

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Abstract: India's construction sector is among the fastest growing in the world, ranking in the top five global construction markets. Everywhere it operates, the construction sector has issues and obstacles. However, these obstacles and challenges coexist with a generalised state of socioeconomic stress, ongoing resource shortages, institutional flaws, and an overall incapacity to address the fundamental problems of developing nations like India. Millions of women who work in the construction industry are the pillars of economic development. In addition to earning far less than men, they demand equal pay for equal work and a good working environment in the workplace. The study explores the socio-economic status of women construction workers in Tamil Nadu to assess the prevailing conditions in the study area. The study's empirical data came from a primary survey conducted in a few Tamil Nadu districts. It should be acknowledged that workers must be provided with decent working conditions, a minimum salary, and access to a minimal level of social security. The study concludes that one of the industries that is essential to ensuring that people live well is the construction sector and socioeconomic development is inevitable.

Keywords: Construction Workers, Women, Welfare and Security, and Tamil Nadu.

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite having the skills and resources necessary to engage in profitable economic transactions, most people on the planet live and work in informal economies and are not entitled to the rights of workers. Although the unorganised sector provides a significant portion of women's employment, little is known about the issues these women face and how they contribute to the process of generating revenue. The primary cause of this is the lack of pertinent data. The unorganised sector's most vulnerable groups include labourers in the construction industry, farmers, migrant labourers, women and children, and impoverished landless labourers. Because of the surplus labour situation and the fact that many workers are employed in unorganised

sectors of the economy, abhorrent social practices have emerged. Women and children are the two worker groups in the Indian unorganised economy that are most negatively impacted. Women make up a sizable portion of these segments in the Indian labour force.

An essential component of the Indian labour force is women. The Registrar General of India's data indicates that in 2001, women's work participation rate was 25.63 percent. Comparing this to 22.27 percent in 1991 and 19.67 percent in 1981, there has been an improvement. The government has made a number of efforts to foster a friendly workplace for female employees. A variety of safety measures have been included in the different labour laws. Table 1.1 lists the workforce by area and gender based on the 2001 Indian census.

TABLE – 1.2 WORKERS BY GENDER AND AREA

S. No.	Area	Total Workers			Main workers		
		Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
1	India	40,22,34,724	27,50,14,476	12,72,20,248	31,30,04,983	24,01,47,813	7,28,57,170
2	Tamil Nadu	2,78,78,282	1,81,00,397	97,77,885	2,37,57,783	1,63,03,310	74,54,473
3	Chennai	14,88,364	12,01,152	2,87,212	13,80,757	11,26,429	2,54,328
4	Coimbatore	19,77,612	13,75,765	6,01,847	18,28,629	13,08,312	5,20,317
5	Cuddalore	9,73,066	6,36,911	3,36,155	7,29,764	5,27,108	2,02,656
6	Trichy	10,55,580	6,84,117	3,71,463	9,18,920	6,25,362	2,93,558

Source: Census of India 2001

Women work in every aspect of the economy. Women constitute 48 percent of the population but their participation in economic activity is only 34 percent.

II. LITERATURE REVIEWS

The prospects and barriers to the legal empowerment of informal construction workers in Tamil Nadu, South India, are examined by Annika (2010) concludes that in order to significantly increase the legal empowerment of informal construction workers in Tamil Nadu, legislative framework modifications, the enforcement of existing laws, and the expansion of social protection programmes are necessary. This article uses empirical research done in Ahmedabad to identify the opportunities and challenges experienced by female construction workers in urban India. The author passionately supports the role that certification and training can play in giving qualified women access to high-quality job opportunities, but she also highlights the need for more extensive state and federal policy intervention to guarantee that these programmes produce results that are replicable, long-lasting, and gender equitable (Baruah, B. (2010)). Hemalatha and Suryanarayana concluded—through a study of role interventions of married working women—that the

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

A. Statement of the Problem

In India, the building sector is laying the groundwork for women to play a larger part in the development of society. Women who work in construction have grown to be a significant part of competitive markets, especially in Tamil Nadu where state planning has given way to market economics. Nonetheless, in a market-driven economy, there is little concern for the safety of female construction workers. Their socioeconomic background has a significant influence as well. Considering this, this research project aims to investigate Tamil Nadu's female construction workers with the following goals.

The impact of women's socioeconomic backgrounds as construction workers in particular districts is also covered in the study. Two sections make up the interview schedule, and each one collects data on the socioeconomic background used in this study. The socioeconomic background of female construction workers in the research area is examined at the next level. A total of twelve socio-economic factors have been established for the examination of the socio-economic background. These socioeconomic factors include: i) Age; ii) Experience; iii) Education; iv) Marital status; v) Family type; vii) Nature of house ownership; viii) Reason for entering the workforce; ix) Distance from work location; x) Mode of conveyance; xi) Problems in conveyance; and xii) Travel time.

B. Analysis

Findings from the analysis indicate that 17.2 percent of respondents are between the ages of 16 and 20, 29.7 percent are between the ages of 21 and 30, 31.3 percent are between the ages of 31 and 40, 19.2 percent are between the ages of 41 and 50, and only 2.6 percent are between the ages of 51 and over. The fact that most responders are between the ages of 21 and 30 and 31 and 40 further supports this conclusion. According to analysis, 23.5 percent of respondents had between one and five years of job experience, while 32.3 percent had between six and ten

age and socioeconomic status of working women, as well as the type of husband, the age and number of children, the type of family, and the nature of work and work hours, all had a significant impact on the problems faced by women. After 60 years of independence, India's economy is still mostly based on agriculture, according to Abdul Mazeeth's (2006) research, which leads to the majority of the country's population being impoverished, particularly in rural areas. The gains of progress in the post-independence era have not been equitable at all for women, it is discovered. The urban group is the only one that gains when benefits are extended to women. The majority of government programmes fundamentally favour men. It is clear that "low rates of literacy and low economic status stress the need for greater attention to the economic advancement of women" and that "using women's resources to their fullest potential" is essential to improving the socioeconomic status of women. The construction industry in India was one of the top recipients of foreign direct investment in 2011 (Fayaz Ahamed 2011).

years. Of the respondents, 22.2 percent have worked for 11 to 15 years, 17.8 percent have worked for 16 to 20 years, and 4.2 percent have worked for 21 to 25 years. Due to their early entry into the workforce following their marriage and their recent failure in agriculture, the majority of respondents had less than 15 years of experience. Results of the analysis indicate that 84.7 percent of respondents are married, 6.2 percent are single, and just 9.1 percent are widowed. According to the analysis, 8.2 percent of respondents live in a combined family and 91.8 percent of respondents live in a nuclear family. Further, indicates that 11.7 percent of respondents have a family of one to two people, 33.5 percent have a family of three to four people, 51 percent have a family of five to six people, and 3.8 percent have a family of more than six people. It reveals that 49.5 percent of respondents live in their own homes, while 44.7 percent live in a rental. Additionally, 5.8% of the respondents live in housing supplied by their company, which is free of charge. It demonstrates that the primary motivator for respondents—which accounts for 70 percent of the responses—is their financial need. While 21 percent of respondents only work because their spouses force them to, 9 percent of respondents desire to be financially independent. It reveals that 35.4% of the respondents travel between 13 and 16 kilometres to go to work. To get to work, 14.8 percent, 19.3 percent, 18.5 percent, and 12 percent of the respondents, respectively, travel 1 to 4 km, 5 to 8 km, 9 to 12 km, and 17 to 20 km. To get to their place of employment, 69.7 percent of respondents take the bus, 20.3 percent commute by minivan or truck, and 10 percent walk. 11.8 percent of respondents think using public transport takes a lot of time. Eleven.9 percent of the respondents said they thought public transport was running late. 76.4 percent of the respondents believe that in order to get to their place of employment, they must deal with the issue of crowding in public transportation. To get to their place of employment, 31.7 percent of respondents said it took less than 30 minutes, 18 percent said it took between 31 and 60 minutes, and 49.3 percent said it took between 61 and 90 minutes.

IV. CONCLUSION

Since 1994, the state has maintained a welfare board for construction workers. The workers' socioeconomic standing demonstrated their dire circumstances. The present study suggests that the responsible authorities may offer financial assistance to female employees for their children's education, as well as health insurance for enrolled workers, maternity benefits, a pension after 55 years of age, and scholarships for their offspring. Access to restrooms should be provided in the workplace. The schemes should be

designed to honour women workers for their unwavering, unselfish work throughout their lives, to end poverty by supplementing their income with an annual grant, and to further assure their self-respect and raise their standard of living in society. A scheme supporting the welfare at work is a concern for female construction workers. An impending technological revolution is expected to impact the construction industry. The technologies have the potential to increase productivity, reduce mistakes, and enhance the welfare and safety of construction workers.

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