

## **A STUDY ON SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE OF WOMEN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The construction industry plays a vital role in the socio economic development of the nation. It is one of the India's fastest growing industry. About one –third of these workers are women. The present study, studies about the invisible women construction workers working in the construction industry whose importance and strength are not visualized to the world. The strength of the building is based upon the iron rod hidden within the columns and beams, likewise the strength and importance of the women workers in the construction industries are unnoticed. Their efforts and pains are concealed like the iron bar within the columns and beams of the constructions. Even they are not recognized and appreciated instead they are cursed and their basic rights are exploited. This study aims to examine the unobserved areas like women construction workers' socio economic status, and find some suggestions and recommendations to lift their socio-economic level from low to medium.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Women construction workers make incredible contributions in a fast-paced world, but their value is not increasing at the rate commensurate with their contributions. Their hands are working for the city and nation's development, but their own development is a big question mark instead, and they are suffering a lot to lead their day-to-day basic needs. Even though women and men are equal in the eyes of the law, men are preferred to women, especially in the construction industry, for various reasons. As regards wages, there exists a wide disparity between men and women in the construction industry. Women are considered inferior and weak compared to men, and the male chauvinistic attitude still persists in the construction industry. The socioeconomic status of women construction workers is revealed in this chapter. In this chapter, the researcher has presented an analysis of socio and economic status of women construction workers. The opinions of the respondents regarding working conditions have been gathered with the help of an interview schedule. The data have been collected and subjected to statistical interpretations. The statistical analysis and interpretations have been made with the help of certain statistical techniques and tools. For this purpose, a field survey was conducted to collect first-hand information from 337 respondents. This chapter discusses the views of respondents on wages, working conditions and work job prospects or career advancement. Thus, this chapter is purely analytical in nature based on the primary data.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The social status of women workers in construction industry namely age group, educational status, religion, community, area of residence, type of family, number of dependents, marital status, area of work, employment status, nature of ownership and type of residence have been analysed and the results are presented below. In the present study the profile of the respondents is taken into

account to provide the background of the respondents. In this paper, analysis gives an insight into the socio economic characteristics of the women construction workers in Tirunelveli district.

#### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to examine the regardless area like women construction workers' socio economic status. The study area is selected as Tirunelveli District where the smart city development programme and more builders and their construction sites are located. The size of the population is unpredictable and unstable, because, the women construction workers are not stable in this occupation, the entry and exit to this occupation is totally free. So the scope of the study is constrained to registered women construction workers in Tirunelveli district only.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The present study was based on primary data as well as secondary data. Interview schedule was used to collect the primary data from the respondents. For this pilot study was made and with that response, final interview was prepared to collect the information required for the study. With a view to identify the women construction workers, the researcher has made an in-depth review of the previous studies undertaken related to the topic of the present study.

Further, the researcher collected the registered construction worker lists from the district labour welfare board and determined the number of respondents. The secondary data were collected from the published as well as unpublished reports, handbooks, action plans and pamphlets of the office of the district labour welfare board and commerce, various books, journals, magazines, websites, etc.,

#### **SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

The study is based on stratified random sampling. The sample size of 337 which consist of 10 percent were selected among the total population 3371 from 8 Taluks. The lists of women construction workers maintained by district labour office were used to identify the women construction workers. The present study focuses on registered women construction workers only.

#### **PERIOD OF THE STUDY**

The study is a field work relying largely on primary data. Data collection was carried out from November 2020 – October 2021. Therefore, conditions prevailed during that period should have determinative effects on the study.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- ❖ The primary objective of the study is to evaluate the socio-economic status of the women workers working in the construction industry in Tirunelveli district.
- ❖ Some valuable suggestions and recommendations can be made to meet their basic requirements by the government and the local bodies.

#### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- ❖ The study is restricted to women construction workers in the Tirunelveli district only.
- ❖ While collecting the data at the worksite, the women workers are not free and comfortable disclosing all information in front of the contractors and other co-workers, so some of the responses may not be accurate.

#### **TOOLS OF ANALYSIS**

In this study, Percentage is one of the essential components of data analysis which helps to find a value from a huge amount of data and information. It is used to analyze and interpret the collected data in a simple manner.

#### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS**

To understand the respondents in a lucid manner the researcher has analysed the Socio-Economic Profile of the respondents. Socio- Economic Profile consists of age, gender, educational qualification, marital status and number of children, family income of the respondents. The table shows about the Socio- Economic Profile of the respondents. Socio – economic status is usually described as low, medium and high. People with lower socioeconomic status usually have less access to financial, educational, social, and health resources than those with a higher socioeconomic status.

**Table No. 1**  
**Socio- Economic Status the Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>No.of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age</b>	Below20years	19	5.6
	20-30years	60	17.8
	31-40years	84	24.9
	41-50years	128	38.0
	Above50years	46	13.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educationalqualifi cation</b>	Noformaleducation	214	63.50
	PrimarySchool	59	17.51
	MiddleSchool	37	10.98
	SecondarySchool	18	5.34
	Higher Secondary School	9	2.67
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Hindu	239	70.9
	Christian	98	29.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Community</b>	BC	180	53.40
	MBC/DNC	39	11.6
	SC	118	35.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>AreaofResidence</b>	Rural	187	55.5
	Semi-Urban	99	29.4
	Urban	51	15.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>TypeofFamily</b>	Joint family	69	20.5
	Nuclearfamily	268	79.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>No.ofDependents</b>	Nil	14	4.2

	1-2	253	75.1
	3-4	49	14.5
	Above4	21	6.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>MaritalStatus</b>	Married	294	87.2
	Unmarried	15	4.5
	Divorced	6	1.8
	Widowed	10	3.0
	Separated	12	3.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>No.Children</b>	Nil	16	4.74
	1-2	256	75.96
	3&Above	65	19.30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>MonthlyIncome</b>	BelowRs.5000	88	26.1
	Rs.5001-7000	110	32.6
	Rs.7001-10000	98	29.1
	AboveRs.10000	41	12.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

**MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

- ✓ Table 1 reveals that 38 per cent of the respondents are in the age group between 41 to 50 years, 24.9 per cent of the respondents are in the age group between 31 to 40 years, and only 5.6 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of below 20years. This is because women construction workers in the 41–50 age group have more commitments, like their children's education and marriage, they act as the supportive system to their family. It is inferred that the majority of the women construction workers (62.90 per cent) belong to the age group of 41–50 years and 31 to 40 years. As a result, women construction workers are more numerous in this age groups.
- ✓ It is evident that 63.50 per cent of the respondents have no formal education. Educational qualification is not the basic requirement in construction industry, instead their skill and physical fitness is very much essential. It is inferred that as the qualification increases they started finding easiest job and avoid doing this laborious construction work. Thus the majority 63.50 per cent of the respondents have no formal education. As their qualification increases their participation rate decline. There is a negative relation between their educational qualification and their participation rate
- ✓ It could be seen that 70.9 per cent of the respondents belong to the Hindu religion. This is because in Tirunelveli district, people belong to the Hindu religion are proportionately high. Thus it reflect in the Religion of the respondents. Only recent times the Christians are also started working in construction sector. Christian trend to educate themselves that may be the reason for lesser participation in construction work. And most of the Muslims women are not allowed to work

outside the home because most of the men are working aboard and the Muslim women are ask to manage their family and if possible they work within their residence like Beedi Rolling, masala powder preparation etc. so their participation rate is nil. Hindus most of them work on farms and fields in agricultural work and in addition to that they involved in non-farming activities in the off-season theywork as construction work. This reflects in the study.Thus the majority 70.9 per cent ofthe respondents belongtotheHindureligion..

- ✓ It is observed that 53.40 per cent of the respondents belong to BC category. And nextmajority 35.0 per cent belong to SC category. It is clear that majority respondentscomeunder theBCcommunitybecauseallChristiansareconsideredasBCinadditionto that Hindu Nadar and Yadav are also come under the same category. Thus theMajority53.4percentofthe respondentsbelongtoBC community.
- ✓ It shows that 55.5 per cent of the respondents reside in rural area, 29.4 per cent of the respondents reside in Semi-Urban areas. It is evident that respondents in rural areas contribute little more comparatively to the urban area. Thus, the majority 55.5 per cent of the respondents reside in rural areas.
- ✓ It clearly shows that out of 337 respondents, 79.5 per cent of the respondents belong to nuclear family and 20.5 per cent of the respondents belong to joint family. Thus themajority79.5ofthe respondents belong to the category of nuclearfamily.
- ✓ It depicts that out of the 337 respondents, 75.1 per cent have 1-2 dependents in the family, 14.5 per cent have 3-4 dependents in the family, and only 4.2 per cent have no dependents. It is clear that the increased awareness of family planning and government schemes and the need to manage the cost of living reflect on the dependents of the family. It is inferred that, majority (75.1 percent of respondents have up1-2dependentsinthefamily.
- ✓ The table 4.8 indicate that 87.2 per cent of the respondents are married, and 1.8 percent of the respondents are Divorced. It is inferred that majority 87.2 per cent of the respondents are fall in the category of married.
- ✓ It reveals that among the total number of respondents, 75.96 percent of the respondents have 1-2 children and 19.30 per cent of the respondents have 3 & Above children. Thus majority of 75.96 percent of the respondents have 1-2children.
- ✓ It is cleared that out of 337 respondents 32.6 per cent of respondents monthly income was between Rs.5001-7000, 29.1 per cent of the respondents monthly income was between Rs.7000-10000,. Hence, it is inferred that most of the respondents' monthlyincomefallsbetweenRs.5001-7000andRs.7000-10000range.

#### SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ Government must take necessary action to enroll each and every women construction worker as Registered Construction Workers.
- ❖ Create Awareness about the benefit of registered construction workers.

#### CONCLUSION

Women are still battling the pressure to do everything and trying their best to do it well. As we know, the construction industry is the second largest industry, but still, the challenges faced by the women construction workers go unnoticed and are taken for granted. The construction industry has traditionally been a male-dominated one. Inherent gender bias and male dominance in the construction industry ignore the value of the army of invisible women, who always remain the backbone of the workforce, and are in a pathetic condition. The hard working hands need some helping hands from the Government and society as a whole. They play a vital role in helping us live in our dream house and in the development of our country's infrastructure and economy, but their basic needs and requirements for safety and a healthy working environment are still unattainable. This emphasizes the need for this present study to highlight their position in society, the factors that force them to go for this work on poor working conditions, and the problems and challenges that need to be addressed. At least the women construction workers with lower socioeconomic status must lift themselves to medium level. Usually, they have less access to financial, educational, social, and health resources than any other workforce.

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