

PROBLEMS OF LABOURS ON CONSTRUCTION : A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

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Modernization, industrialization and Globalization has paved a good way to the construction industry. Small towns and cities become more urbanized and, the construction sector too has got a boost. Apart from old/traditional urban/industrial centres, new industrial/urban centres have appeared on the map where construction works are going on large scale. Expanding and fast growing construction sector and, in general, shortage of greater employment opportunity elsewhere has attracted large number of workers in this sector. There are more than 20 million of construction workers in India at present. City, like Indore alone has around more than 10-12 thousand of them. Migration from different states to other states in India and also from rural to urban areas has now become so common that it impact on every aspect of life. Migration become a way of life to many, who are unskilled and semi skilled and find difficult to get better jobs within their natives and locality. Construction labours are labours who are migrated from different regions and states leaving their native villages in search of daily job. These people in general are nomadic in their life and usually do not return to their birthplace. They travel from one area of work to other area along with their families and live in a place, which is either provided by the owner or temporary shelters prepared by labours.

They have maximum mobility because of the nature of their work. These laborers are engaged in huge industrial constructions, residential flat constructions, road constructions, city beautification works. These construction laborers, as a part of unorganized work force remain the most exploited ones even after six decades of independence. Most of the construction laborers migrate to cities and metros are from poor families and are illiterate. Their lack of education and skill make their choice very limited. When they come to big cities, they have to face number of problems because of their inexperience and lack of skill. They become easy victim of exploitation and have to work for their day today sustenance. In indore city many labourers come from tribal belts like Jhabua,

Dhar, Kukshi, Manawar etc. The present study is to analyse the extend of construction labourers problem in Indore (M.P), in which the construction business is booming fast and there is greater migration of business class people, blue collar officers, IT employees, students etc. Since need of accommodation is essential, the construction industry also finding their business in its highest level. Sahara home city, Orbit home city, Parsavnath Developers, Shalimar Township, BRTS Projects, Singapor township, Road Construction sites and many more are making their way in construction industry.

Research Methodology-This particular research follows the qualitative research methodology. An Interview Schedule was prepared and direct personal interview technique is used to collect data from the construction labourers. 5 big construction sites in Indore considered for the study and from these sites near about 200 labours are taken for study. The data thus generated is subjected to classification and grouping since the study is qualitative nature. No statistical tool implemented for analyzing the data since the purpose of the study is to understand the severity of the problems alone.

S.No.	NAME OF SITE	NO. OF LABOURS TAKEN
1	Residential Building Construction Sites	70
2	Road Construction Sites (BRTS Project and others)	60
3	Shopping Malls Construction Sites	70

Review of literature-Deshkal Society in their article (2004) it is reported that:

(1). Being part of *unorganized sector of labourers*, they lose in bargaining for fair wages. They are not paid minimum wages; even the agreed wages are not paid in time. Even after the construction work is over, substantial due remains with the builders or the contractors, who are always on the look for to use these due wages. (2). Moreover, their working time and hours are not well regulated. They do not get

overtime rates for excess work. They work under very hazardous conditions. The working conditions and the facilities provided at the sites are not satisfactory. Safety conditions and measurers are hardly met. In case of accident, there is, in general, no provision for financial and medical aid. In the extreme cases like death, no body owns the responsibility. (3) Apart from these, there is no recreational facilities, no availability of drinking water, toilets, canteens, etc. (4) If the workers are female, the problems at work site and while commuting gets compounded and multiplied. More so if they are pregnant or having small children. There is no system at all to take care of these children at work site. (5) The living conditions are no way better than the working conditions. It will not be entirely wrong to say that the situation is still worse. They are destined to live in slums where one does not get proper (at all) civic amenities. The surroundings are totally unhygienic. There are no proper facilities for drainage, toilet, water, electricity, recreation etc. There are no local medical facilities, hospital, school and fair price shop. (6) Besides the problems discussed above, the construction workers have no social security & benefits in terms of labour welfare measures & provisions. They don't have provisions like pension and insurance schemes, maternity leave, accident and death claims, concession loans and financial aid for children's education and medical needs.

Major Findings of the Research :- Major findings of the study can be stated as follows:

1. 61% of construction companies consist of 100-150 labourers. For constructions of malls, multi storied buildings and Road constructions.
2. Majority of construction labourers are living in Tin shed (51%), Plastic sheet shed (17%) and Kuccha Huts (32%).
3. A majority percentage of labourers (66.0%) are living in self-constructed temporary sheds near by construction site.
4. A considerable percentage of labourer's are having temporary sheds (71%) haven't any electricity provision.
5. The sanitation and hygiene of the construction site and the temporary shed are very poor (68%).
6. 67% of sites do not have any toilets or toilets having substandard quality.
7. A considerable percentage of labourers have to depend on various sources like Bore well (34%), Tanker Lorry water (31%), public water supply (15%) etc.
8. Majority construction labourers have to take open bath (63.3%), as there is no adequate provision for bathrooms.

9. 72.2% of the companies do not pay medical cost incurred to the labourers.
10. 64.2% construction companies pay only 100-150 Rs. Per day to their labourers.
11. 38.4% of the construction companies pay 150-200 Rs. Per day to the skilled labourers.
12. The Majority of construction companies (75%) pay only 100-125 Rs per day to the unskilled labourers.
13. 10% of companies are making provision of maternity leave.
14. 15% construction companies are making provision of holidays to their labourers.
15. While considerable percentages (66.8%) of companies doesn't provide holidays to their workers.
16. 77.2% of companies are not making provision of insurance benefits.
17. Majority of construction companies (55%) do not make provision of helmets to their workers.
18. While a considerable percentage (40%) make provision of helmets to their workers.
19. Majority of construction companies (42.0%) make provision of Hand Gloves and Shoes to their workers.
20. While a considerable percentage (39.0%) does not make provision of Hand Gloves and Shoes to their workers.
21. 55.4% of construction companies do not make provision of 'eye wear for cutting iron road to their workers.
22. In majority construction sites (66.2%) labourers have to work 8 hours having a spread over of 10-11hr in a day.
23. 79.7% of construction companies are not making provision of 'Crèches' to the labourers' children.
24. 74.2% of construction labourers' children are illiterate. They are either at home or wandering here and there in the site when their family members engaged in work.

Discussion- The study indicates the problems of the construction labourers in Indore district in M.P. state. Majority of construction labourers are migrated from different regions from M.P. The construction sites have more than 100-150 labourers. The living conditions are so poor and the labourers are staying in tin shed, Plastic shed and kuccha houses. Some construction companies are making provision of accommodation facilities to the labourers. While majority of labourers have to build temporary huts by themselves, near by the site.

The construction company is not making provision of any electricity, sanitation facility to the construction labourers. The sanitation condition at the construction site and the labourer's houses found poor. Majority of sites do not have any toilets and if the sites have it is of substandard quality. There is limited provision of drinking water and the labourers have to depend on bore well, tanker lorry water and

public water supply. Majority of construction site doesn't have any bathroom facility. Labourers have to depend on open bath. Health of labourers is not at all matter to construction companies. Majority companies do not pay medical cost incurred to the labourers. While a considerable number of site labourers and company jointly meet the expenses incurred for the medical treatment. The women labourers are not eligible to get the maternity benefits. More over the companies are not ready to compensate with employee's having partial and full injuries and are not covered by life insurance. They do not have adequate accident relief equipments like helmets, hand Gloves and shoes, safety belts, protection eye wear etc like safety materials and equipments to the construction labourers.

The wage structure of the construction labour is also found inadequate considering their labour. Majority labourers are getting a wage in between 100-150 Rs/day. Here the study observed differential wage system for the skilled and unskilled labourers. For the unskilled labourers the wage comes arround 100 Rs/day. Leave facilities are not available for the construction labourers. Some companies unofficially give medical leave and maternity leave to the construction labourers. No holiday policy is found in majority construction sites. The working hours of the construction labourers varied considerably. While majority construction sites are making provision of 8-11 hour a day.

The labourers do not get healthy food from the

construction site. Majority of children are wandering around the site while parents working in the site. No one to look after these children and ensure their better health, education and care in their tender age. Many factors like frequent migration from one area to another; economic problems etc, cited by the construction labourers in making provision of better education to their children.

Suggestions-1. Create awareness of construction labourer's rights and set up mechanisms of redressal. 2. Ensuring decent working conditions and proper contract systems and providing basic health care for construction labourer's. 3. Adequate intervention from the government authorities required ensuring the health, safety and welfare of the construction labourers. 4. Effective implementation of the labour laws that making provision of better health safety and welfare of the construction labourers. 5. NGO's working for child welfare should consider the difficulties of the construction labourers and plan strategies to ensure free education of these children. 6. Organize public medical camps where constructions sites are located 7. Constant inspection from the government part is required to reduce the problems of the construction labourers. 8. Constructive support from the trade unions to the construction labourers to be ensured where the government and management couldn't support. 9. Encourage the construction labourers saving habit by initiating banking awareness. 10. Ensure adequate insurance facilities for the construction labourers

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