

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

People have been on the move since time immemorial. However, in recent years, global change has increased migration considerably. Rapid urbanization and industrialization of the areas have generated more employment opportunities and also created better infrastructure. People migrate to such regions perceiving them as greener pastures. Migration can be hugely effective in improving the income, education and participation of individuals and families and enhancing their children's future prospects. There has been a steady increase in the country in the number of migrants whereas in the 1961 there were about 144 million migrants by place of birth in 2001 census it was 307 million. Further an analysis on the Census 2001 data reveals that among the migrants, 53.3 million had migrated from rural to urban areas, 20.5 million had migrated from urban to rural areas, and 14.3 million had migrated from urban to urban areas.

It is generally believed that the globalization process all over the world has accelerated the migration trend in search of survival, fulfilment and a better life for migrants and their families. It is estimated that about 175 million persons currently live in countries other than where they were born. This constitutes nearly 3 percent of the world population; almost one in 10 persons living in developed countries is a migrant as compared to nearly one in 70 persons living in developing countries. Migration from different states to other states in India has now become so rampant that its impact is felt in every aspect of life. Migration has 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. Most of the poor people migrating to cities and towns join one or another informal sector activity either in wage employment or self-employment.

Construction workers are one of such migratory group. Construction industry is now becoming a way of entering a city for the rural migrants

(Khuntia 2005 p.15). As a result, majority of the workers in the construction industry are migrants. The construction industry has a long tradition of employing migrant labour. In the post global scenario, after 1991, Indian economy has grown satisfactorily and so the construction sector. Residential and commercial complex, roads and power structure, canals and irrigation structure, industrial construction like steel, textile, fertilizer, oil, gas refineries and pipelines etc. are on rise. This has in large created an excess demand of manpower that has led to large scale interstate and intra-state migration of workforce (National Workshop, 2010).

The construction industry had contributed an estimated ₹ 3,84,282 crore to the national GDP in 2010-11 (a share of around 8%). The Planning Commission of India has proposed an investment of around US\$ 1 trillion in the Twelfth five-year plan (2012-2017), which is double of that in the Eleventh five-year plan (Construction Sector Analysis Report, 2010). It is found that construction makes its contribution to almost each of the sub-sectors ranging from almost 12 per cent in the welfare programmes for backward classes to 100 per cent in the housing sector.

Employment in construction is usually interspersed with periods of unemployment of varying duration, mainly due to fluctuating requirement of labour force on each worksite. Unorganized construction workers can truly be described as sweat labour, and violation of laws on minimum wages, equal wages, child labour, contract labour, and interstate migrant home-based occupations. Unionization is not allowed or encouraged, and construction workers like many others in the unorganized sector remain invisible and vulnerable, voiceless and un-unionized. The social safety network of building workers is built around kinship and tradition, and trade unions have not yet found a place in this system.

It is true that construction sector paves the way for the livelihood of migrant workers. But when one looks into the condition in which they live it is not to be a prosperous one. Various studies have shown that low level of wages, inadequate social security measures, unhygienic working condition,

insecurity of job etc are the major problems faced by the construction workers (Sewa, 2000; Winnie et al (ILO) 2003, Kalyan Das 2007). These problems deprive them and their family members' access to basic facilities such as health, education and other welfare provisions, which are needed, for their development. It is against this background, an attempt has been made in the present study to analyze the quality of life of migrant construction workers in Coimbatore city along with their working conditions and the problems encountered by them with the following objectives:

Objectives of the study

- To examine the social, economic and demographic characteristics of the migrants in construction activities.
- To analyse the reasons for migration.
- To study the accidents met by the migrant construction workers at work place.
- To find out the awareness of the respondents on the social security measures available to them.
- To estimate the quality of life index of the migrant construction workers and
- To construct the Human Development Index of the migrant construction workers

Hypotheses

- Inequality prevails in the income / expenditure / assets distribution among the respondents.
- Economic necessity was the major push factor for migration.
- Construction workers are not aware of the social security measures meant for them.
- Quality of life of migrant construction workers is poor.
- There is significant difference in the Human Development Index of the selected migrant construction workers

Methodology

Multistage sampling technique was followed in the selection of the sample respondents. Coimbatore city was selected for the study. To carry out the study, migrants were selected from all the 72 wards in Coimbatore city covering the four zones, viz, north, south, east and west, selecting 68 migrant construction workers from north zone; 109 from south zone; 109 from east zone and 114 from west zone making the total sample size to be 400. The study was based mainly on primary data. A pre-tested interview schedule was administered to the sample migrant construction workers and the required data were collected during June 2010 to December 2010. The secondary data, which includes both published and unpublished sources – Census of India, NSS Reports on Migration, Documents from the District Corporation offices, books and journals have been used in the present study. From the official websites of the Government of India and the Government of Tamil Nadu; statistical data on the sample areas were compiled.

The statistical tools and quantitative techniques used in the current study are measures of inequality; Likerts summated scale, construction of 'quality of life index', multiple regression analysis, human development index, averages, percentages and graphs. SPSS 16.5 version was used.

Major findings of the study

Occupation wise distribution of the migrant construction workers

- Construction is one of the few industries where people can work their way to the top from the bottom level. In the current study, the migrants are classified based on their occupation in which they are placed during the time of interview. Accordingly, the migrants are grouped under eight headings-viz- 'masons', 'load carriers', 'iron and steel workers', 'plumbers', 'electricians', 'carpenters', 'floor finishers' and 'painters'.
- The current study analyses the different facets on migration based on the occupation wise classification of the migrants. Most of the construction

workers interviewed have skills and some further training in their areas of specialisation which are predominantly masonry (33 percent), structural iron and steel work (16 percent), floor finish (10 percent), carpentry (5 percent), plumbing (4 percent), electrical wiring and painting (6 percent). About 25 percent were found to be load carriers who neither possess skill nor training. They clean the building sites, and they serve the skilled men workers by carrying materials as head load and doing tasks directed by them.

Social characteristics of the migrants

- Data pertaining to religion of the respondents unravel the fact that an overwhelming majority (91.5 percent) of the respondents were Hindus followed by Christians (7 percent) and Muslims (1.5 percent).
- Caste wise analysis reveals that the largest single group (41 percent) is from most backward community. About 40 to 50 percent of 'plumbers', 'electricians', 'carpenters', 'floor finishers' and 'painters' were from most backward community.

Demographic Characteristics of the migrants

- Sex wise distribution of the migrants indicates that among the 400 migrant respondents, only 26 are females, with a negligible percentage of 6.5. All the other 374 are males, constituting 93.5 percent of the respondents.
- Majority of the respondents (75 percent) follow nuclear family system and only a least percentage of 25 were in joint families. A noteworthy feature is that joint family system was not seen among the iron and steel workers and floor finishers.
- The analysis of age shows that the maximum number of migrants hails from the age group of 25-40 years (82 percent). Majority of masons (43.18 percent), iron and steel workers (39.1 percent) and electricians

(38.5 percent) were found higher among the age group of 36-40. Load carriers were larger in number in the age group of 41-45

- Information relating to educational attainments of the respondents indicates that sixty percent have completed atleast middle school level followed by primary level of education (20.5 percent). Electricians alone have completed collegiate level of education (3 percent). It is to be noted that only 19 percent are illiterates in which majority of 51.95 percent were load carriers.
- Data relating to marital status of the members in the current study highlights that 70 percent of the respondents are married with only 30 percent unmarried. The data further reveals that unmarried migrants are in large proportion among the painters (92 percent) and iron and steel workers (72 percent).

Economic characteristics of the migrants

- Among the selected 400 respondents, only 173 have savings in different sources such as post office, banks, chit funds and friends and relatives. Among these, chit funds are the major source of savings (67 percent). Among those who saved, 36.99 percent stated that they save to meet the future expenses. It can also be inferred that 69 percent of the migrant construction workers save up to `500 per month. The masons are found to save in a larger amount exceeding `500 per month in the current sample
- It is observed that, except the electricians and painters, more than half of the selected sample respondents are found to be in debt. On an average the migrants have a debt of ` 17,356. The average debt is high among the plumbers (` 19,556) closely followed by iron and steel workers (19,070). Debt is the lowest among the carpenters (` 14,571). Of these indebted workers, 56 percent approached money lenders. The

analysis further reveals that migrants, who have debt, have borrowed mainly for meeting health expenses in all the categories of workers.

Household Details of the migrants

- Household details of the migrant workers regarding sex reveals that there are 999 persons with 408 (41 %) males and 591 (59 %) females.
- Information gathered regarding the size of household of the respondent's highlights that the households are following small family norms, the size of the family being less than 5.
- Data pertaining to the age composition of the members of the households of the migrants highlight that about 72 percent are in the active working age group of 15 to 59 years.
- Educational attainments of the members in the households of respondents indicate that majority of them (31.4 percent) have primary level of education followed by middle level of education (20 percent), high school (11 percent) and higher secondary level of education (6 percent). Only about 8 percent are graduates and diploma level of education. Another striking feature is that 24 percent of them are illiterates.
- Data pertaining to marital status of the households reveals that an overwhelming majority of the family members are married (54 percent) followed by unmarried (16 percent), widowed (4 percent) and separated /divorced (2 percent). Further 25 percent with less than 18 years of age are not married.

Occupation of parents

- A look at the occupation of parents of the sample respondents reveals that majority of them are engaged in daily wage earnings and agricultural activities. Only a least percentage of fathers (14 percent) and mothers (3 percent) are found to be in construction activities. It was found that mothers in all the categories of workers are higher in number in performing the duties of house wife (65 percent) only.

Assets owned

- The information about the assets possessed indicates that nearly half of the migrants possess TV (47.5 percent) and this percentage is highest among the plumbers (63 percent), masons (59 percent) and floor finishers (54 percent). A striking feature is that all the migrants possess mobile phones as an important source for their communication.
- The value of the assets distribution reveals that, on an average the assets owned by the migrant households is ` 31187. This is the highest among the plumbers with ` 59251 and lowest among the load carriers (` 14347).

House Details

- It can be observed that only about 27 percent of the migrant workers have their own house, in which majority are masons (44 percent). Remaining 73 percent live either in rented house or accommodation provided in the construction site. About 17 percent of the migrant workers stay at the accommodation provided within the construction site who are floor finishers (41 percent), load carriers (37 percent) and iron and steel workers (22 percent).
- In an attempt to study the living space of the workers, it was identified that excepting iron and steel workers, majority of the workers live in house size between 100-200 sq.ft. A startling fact that arises from the study is, the living space is not even 100 sq.ft for about 12 percent of the workers.
- The economic status of the respondents is measured in terms of their housing condition and availability of basic amenities. In the present study, among the selected respondents, nearly 59 percent of them live in houses in which walls are made up of bricks and for 23 percent walls are made up of stones. About 12 percent live in tents built out of rubber and metal sheets occupied by load carriers (32 percent) and floor finishers

(39 percent). A least percentage of 6 have their houses constructed with mud walls.

- The floors are of cement type for 61 percent of the workers and for the remaining 39 percent are of mud type. For 65 percent of the migrants the roofs are made of asbestos sheet, for 19 percent roofs are concrete, 12 percent of rubber sheet and for a least 4 percent of load carriers the roofs are made up of leaf.
- Only about 62 percent of the migrant workers are living in electrified houses and the remaining 38 percent are using other sources of light in which load carriers (65.35 percent) and floor finishers (65.85 percent) occupy larger share who stay in construction sites. While 62 percent have electricity in their houses, about 15 percent use kerosene and 13 percent use gas light as the source of lighting. An alarming fact is that about 9 percent live in darkness without any light.
- The details regarding the availability of bathroom facility indicate that 47.25 percent of the respondents have bathroom with in the compound. It is also observed that majority of the workers (51 percent) have latrine facility away from their houses. A preponderant majority of the respondents in all categories of workers stated that they use the toilet on sharing basis (49 percent) followed by free public latrine (27 percent) and water closet (21 percent). A notable fact is that only 3 percent of the workers use independent toilets.
- It can also be observed that among all the categories of workers excepting for floor finishers and painters, most of the respondents live in open drainage areas which cause many skin diseases and infections. Interactions with the sample workers regarding the drinking water facility revealed that, while 41 percent of the workers have drinking water facility near the premise 31 percent stated that they have it in their premises and about 28 percent of them reported that they have it away from the premises. On the whole only one-third of the sample respondents enjoy the facilities of drinking water, electricity and toilets.

- The data regarding the type of fuel used for cooking reveals that excepting electricians more than half of the respondents in all the category of workers use kerosene for cooking purposes.

Household income of the workers

- The average family income of the migrants is ` 8,728/-. Excepting load carriers and painters, all others family income exceeds ` 6000/-. Majority of the workers are found in the income range of ` 8001-10000/-.
- The average monthly per capita income of the respondents is ` 2,575. Among all the categories of workers, per capita monthly income of 36.5 percent of the respondents fell in the range ` 2,001-3,000.

Monthly Household Expenditure of the Workers

- The average monthly expenditure of the respondents is higher for plumbers (` 4,813) closely followed by painters (` 4,565) and electricians (` 4,549). It can also be observed from the above table that load carriers spend comparatively lesser amount (` 3,879) towards their monthly household expenditure because of their low earning capacity. On the whole, it can be inferred that the respondents' average amount of spending towards their monthly expenditure is ` 4,143.

Monthly Percapita Expenditure

- It can be inferred that the average monthly per capita expenditure of the respondents is ` 1,254 and it is high among electricians (` 1,482), plumbers (` 1,332) and painters (` 1,306). Among all the categories of workers, majority of 51.75 percent have their expenditure in the range of ` 1,001-1,500.

Inequalities in income, assets and expenditure

To measure the inequality, Gini coefficient of inequality (G) as developed by Angus Deaton (1997) was used.

- It can be inferred that high inequality exists in the income distribution of masons, with income inequality coefficient being 0.93.
- The Gini coefficient of inequality shows that there is not much inequality in the expenditure pattern in all categories of the migrant workers, the inequality coefficient ranging from 0.06 to 0.19. On the whole, it is observed that inequality in the household expenditure is less.
- The calculated Gini coefficient of inequality on the assets distribution among the households reveal that higher inequality is seen among electricians (0.77) and painters (0.74). On the whole, taking all the workers together, there exists higher level of inequality in the income distribution, the Gini coefficient being 0.91.

Details on migration

- It is clear that inter district migration dominates with 77 percent of the migrants coming to Coimbatore city from other districts of Tamil Nadu. A significant 20 percent of the migrants have come from other states. Intra district migration constitutes about 3 percent. Among the migrants who have come from other parts of Tamil Nadu, a majority of 17 percent have come from Krishnagiri and another 12 percent from Salem. About 10 percent of the migrants are from both Dindugal and Madurai. Masons are found to be higher (90 percent) in these four districts.
- Among the inter state migrants of 79, who have come from states other than Tamil Nadu, 29 percent have come from Rajasthan who are floor finishers, 18 percent from Kerala, 14 percent from Andhra Pradesh and 13 percent from Karnataka. A discerning trend is seen in the sense that people not only from South India but also from North India are migrating to Coimbatore, a city in the southern part of India.

Distance from the place of origin

- The data reveals that about 78 percent of the total out migrants migrated to Coimbatore city travelled within 101-500 kms from their places of origin. Short distance migration is preferred among the study group. Hence Ravenstein's (1889) law of migration is validated.

Type of migration

- For a majority of 40 percent of the migrants, it is purely permanent. Next to it, for 30 percent of the migrants, migration is temporary and for 23 it is circular and for 8 percent it is seasonal. Further excepting floor finishers major proportion are seen in permanent type of migration for their better lives.

Period of migration

- About 53 percent of the migration took place during the period 2007-2009, 35 percent of migration during 2004-2006 and the remaining 12 during the period 2002-2003.
- Of the total migrants in the study nearly 88 percent have migrated with their family members, which include their spouse, children, parents and other family members. Only a least percentage of 12 have migrated alone in which floor finishers are greater in number.

Reasons for migration

- Majority of workers (48 percent) have migrated because of 'lack of job' in their place of origin. 22 percent of them reported 'low income' as the reason for their movement, where as 11 percent stated 'indebtedness'. 'Poverty' has been the reason for about 9 percent of workers. While 5 percent of workers mentioned 'marriage' as the reason, another 4 percent stated 'family problem' for their movement. Only a least percentage reported the reasons as 'to be independent' (1 percent). The study reveals push and economic factors as the major reason for migration.

Problems of Migration

- Using Garrets ranking scale method, the average scores for the problems faced by migrants has been calculated. It was identified that the highest average score (96.97) is given for 'High cost of living' in the destination area. Next to this, 'finding shelter' (score has 95.75) has taken the second place. 'Poor living condition' was another major problem stated by the respondents with an average score of 95.24. These three are the severe problems faced by the migrants in their surviving place.

Work Details of the respondents

- The entry to the construction sector is mainly through labour contractors. This percentage (44.5 percent) is the highest in all categories of workers except for load carriers and iron and steel workers.
- A noteworthy feature is that only in the case of load carriers 25 percent enter the construction work as they could not find any other work.
- A significant 35 percentage are working in this sector for over five years. It is also reflected that there is no recent entry. Skilled workers in all the categories of workers are in the activity for more than 3 years.
- Majority of 41 percent of the workers directly approach the employers for job who engaged them in construction activity. About 29 percent of the workers stated that easy entry is another reason for their movement in this sector. It is also noted that about nine percent reported that friends and relatives motivated them to work in this sector.
- It is inferred that the workers were largely (47 percent) hired by the contractors followed by sub-contractors (24 percent). In the sample, owners hired only 18 percent of the workers and the remaining 12 percent are self-employed.

- A noteworthy feature is that about 55 percent of the load carriers entered through sub-contractors. Excepting iron and steel workers and floor finishers, 29 percent are doing independent works in all the categories of construction work.
- It is observed that more than half of the sample respondents are skilled (62 percent), 25 percent are unskilled, while 13 percent are semi-skilled. Electricians are completely skilled. Excepting load carriers the migrants in other construction activities have acquired skill.
- The survey also found that among the skilled workers most gained their skills through informal apprenticeship, largely trained by people belonging to their own ethnic group.
- The data highlights that a huge majority of the workers (49 percent) work for 8 hours a day. Only 9 percent of the workers reported that they worked for nearly 9 hours a day in which majority was 'floor finishers' carriers.
- The nature of work participation is somewhat seasonal in nature. Just about 12 percent of the total number of workers stated that they work throughout the year. It was found from the sample that altogether 88 percent of the workers did not have construction job during the off season.
- It can be observed that majority of the workers went for casual works or daily wage earnings (43 percent) when they were not employed in their construction work. Next to it, most of the workers were engaged in self employed occupation (30 percent) followed by agricultural works (17 percent). Apart from somewhat seasonal nature of the job, there were some who waited for a call (10 percent) from the worksite.
- In the context of work status, it can be observed that, most of the workers were not employed through out the month. It was found that about 57 percent of the workers could get work for 5 days in a week and a majority of 64 percent managed to work for 22-23 days in a month. Only 9 percent worked for more than 24 days in a month.

Wages

- On an average, the monthly income of the migrant workers was found to be ₹ 7,694. Among all the categories of workers, electricians were earning higher income (₹ 10,075) followed by masons (₹ 9,657). On the whole, excepting load carriers, majority of the remaining workers were earning wages exceeding ₹ 7,000 per month.
- The current study clearly points out that for about 47 percent of the total workers, wages are being decided by contractors, followed by owners (29 percent) and subcontractors (24 percent). Further all the workers stated that they receive only cash payment as wages.
- Majority of the workers in all categories stated that they had their payment weekly (89 percent) and 10 percent were getting daily wages. It is also observed that some got their due at the end of the month (1 percent).
- It can be inferred that among the total respondents, majority of the construction workers in the sample were travelling a distance within 5 kms (32 percent) to their worksites. Around 26 percent of them were located at a distance of more than 10 kms to their workplace in which majority of them were masons (37 percent).
- When the workers were asked to specify how they get to work, majority of 36 percent stated that they used public modes of transport, whereas 16 percent used bicycles, 9 percent travelled by mopeds and 8 percent stated that they used to go by walk.
- In assessing the working condition, a startling fact that arises from the study is no single individual has stated 'very good' on their working environment. Only about 27 percent opined of 'good' working conditions. While 44 percent reported it to be average, for 30 percent of the workers the working conditions were either 'poor' (22 percent) or 'very poor' (8 percent).
- Using 5 point rating scale, assigning value of two for 'very good'; one for 'good'; zero for 'average'; minus one for 'poor' and minus two for 'very poor', the average scores on working conditions were calculated.

- It can be inferred that to a certain extent only the painters and the electricians considered their working condition to be lying between 'average' and 'poor'. For the iron and steel workers, plumbers and carpenters the working condition was average. For the masons, load carriers and floor finishers it was poor. On the whole taking all the respondents together, it was inferred that the respondents felt the working condition to be poor.

Construction is a hazardous occupation. The current study has highlighted that accidents at worksites do not come into the rare category and are infact quite common.

- Among the total respondents surveyed, about 30 percent of the migrant workers had reported accidents at worksites and most of the accidents were due to workers falling off (42 percent) from tall buildings while at work. Next to it, 31 percent met accident because of pricking/poking by sharp objects or metals followed by slipping from a ladder (25 percent) and falling objects on workers (3 percent).
- About 47 percent of the workers had been out of work for a month because of the accident they met at the worksite. Similarly 35 percent stated that they suffered for 15 days. Altogether the remaining 18 percent of the workers reported that they were sick for a long period of 2-4 months because of serious injuries they faced at the workplace.
- Excepting few workers (7 percent) all the other workers reported that in case of accidents the builders and contractors bear the medical expenses of the workers
- Among the total respondents surveyed; only about 33 percent were aware of the existence of trade union and only 5 percent possessed knowledge about the union benefits they could avail and masons were higher among them. None of the workers was aware of other social security measures such as children's education facilities, welfare activities, pension benefits and crisis support. A startling fact that arises from the study is no worker was utilising such social security measures

meant for them and this could be attributed to lack of information, awareness and education about their conditions of work.

- Only about 10 percent of the migrant workers were availing PDS benefit. Load carriers and floor finishers did not have access to this facility. Among the respondents, 22 percent of the migrant workers were sending their children to government schools.

Quality of Life Index (QLI)

- The estimated average quality of life index values reveal that among the selected migrant construction workers, masons, electricians and painters are comparatively better off with an average QLI in the range 3 to 3.5. The others are in a less privileged group with average QLI in the range 2 to 3. The QLI was the lowest for load carriers.
- The estimated linear and nonlinear models with annual percapita income as the dependent variable and quality of life index as the explanatory variable reveal that there is a statistically significant relationship between the annual percapita income and the quality of life index. The results are in conformity with the theory having the expected sign. By increasing the quality of life index, the per-capita income increases. The estimated parameters are also statistically significant. Hence quality of life index was used to measure the relative poverty status of the individual households.
- Using linear estimated model of per-capita income with quality life of index as the predictor variable, break even QLI values were estimated for various classification of poverty lines. None of the migrant construction worker belongs to the poor category.
- Among the four hundred respondents, 4 percent belong to vulnerable group, 15 percent belong to the middle income group and the remaining 81 percent in high income group. Among the migrant construction workers about 11 percent of the 'load carriers' and 12 percent of the 'floor finishers' fall in the vulnerable group. Among the 15 percent of the middle income group category, load carriers and iron

and steel workers are higher in number. Majority of the respondents lie in the high income group families.

Human Development Index

- The calculated values reveal that 100 percent of the migrant households have their life expectancy index and education index less than 0.50, on an average being 0.166 and 0.005 respectively. Excepting load carriers, majority of all others have their income index lying between 0.50 and 0.799. While 34 percent of the migrant workers have their income index less than 0.50, for the other workers it exceeds 0.50. None of the households have their income index being 0.80 and above.
- As in life expectancy index, in educational index also, the average distribution of households based on index values did not exceed 0.50. With regard to income index, it can be seen that the average income index is the highest for the 'electricians' (0.58), closely followed by the 'masons' (0.57). Further none of the households among the migrant workers have their income index being 0.80 and above.
- Based on the calculated average HDI value, it can be inferred that none of the households have their human development index value more than 0.50 which implies low human development among the sample workers.

Conclusion

The current study shows economic factors as the major cause for migrants to leave their places of origin, seeking for better jobs with wages adequate enough to lead a life satisfying their basic necessities. Short distance migration is preferred among the study group validating Ravensteins law of migration and that people move from an area of low

opportunity to areas of high opportunity. Construction sector is predominant with males occupying skilled activities and females only as load carriers, a non-skilled work. The institutional credit availability is less in this sector and that even after six decades of independence the migrant construction workers still depend on money lenders and chit funds for borrowing which is mainly for meeting their health expenditure.

The living conditions of the migrant construction workers are no way satisfactory. Nearly two-thirds of the sample respondents have limited living space with inadequate drinking water, electricity and toilet. The working conditions of the respondents are also not satisfactory. These workers are not aware of the social security measures meant for them. None of the respondent is a member of trade unions to ask for their rights. Further the study shows that none of the sample respondents has got very good or good quality of life index. Though the income index of the construction workers is 0.53, they lag very much behind in their average life expectancy index and education index with the values being 0.17 and 0.005 only respectively. The study thus concludes that the stakeholders viz- the Governments, the construction sector and the individuals should ensure decent working condition and proper contract system providing social security and basic health care for the families of the migrant construction workers.

Suggestions

The suggestions that emerge from the study are given below.

- ✧ The Government of India has to initiate a nationwide Human Resource Development Programme for the Construction Sector at all levels. An exclusive legal provision must be made to administer the construction business and to provide adequate legal measures for the protection of migrant construction workers. It also must implement a national plan for training and certification of construction personnel at all levels.

- ✧ With the importance of construction sector in providing employment opportunities, the central and state governments should initiate steps for the speedy implementation of the welfare provisions and social security measures for construction workers.
- ✧ As the migrant construction workers are not sure of their employment, there is a need to examine the Employment Act. Generally, the workers do not have adequate information on market needs which limits their opportunities in the job market as well as their ability to bargain for better terms. So establishing focal points for accessing market information has a potential of improving employment with in the sector.
- ✧ Even after six decades of independence, the migrant construction workers are dependent of the unorganised credit market, which brings out the need for strengthening the formal credit availability to the workers in the unorganised sector.
- ✧ The informal construction sector must get organised to ask for other rights and to represent the workers' interest in areas relating to insurance, training, wages, terms and conditions of work and healthy working environment.
- ✧ There is a need to expose migrant construction workers to the benefits of belonging to associations which have the potential to engage in advocacy and to influence policy.
- ✧ As most of the construction workers are exposed to many physical hazards there is a need to devise a means of enforcing the occupational health regulations in informal construction operation to reduce the exposure of workers to workplace hazards. As most of the construction workers are subject to occupational health risks such as hypertension, skin diseases, muskulo skeletal conditions, it is better to have a Health Promotion Programme that addresses these aspects. The employers in the

construction industry must ensure appropriate health care provisions to its workers. This approach will bring positive impact for the industry.

- ✧ Appropriate measures are to be taken by the urban local body to provide the basic minimum services, especially by making provision for safe drinking water, subsidized housing, toilet and electricity facilities for the workers.