JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

# Women as Construction Labourers in Warangal City, Telangana: Socio-Economic Conditions, Challenges and Empowerment

**Dr. G. Jyothi**
Department of Sociology and Social Work, Kakatiya University, Warangal

***Abstract***
*Women construction labourers play a significant role in the development of urban infrastructure in Warangal City, Telangana. They contribute substantially to the construction of residential buildings, commercial structures, roads, public infrastructure and other development projects. Despite their involvement in physically demanding activities, women construction workers frequently experience low wages, insecure employment, inadequate social security, occupational health risks and limited recognition of their labour. Many women employed in the construction sector belong to economically disadvantaged households and depend on daily wage employment for their livelihoods.*

*This article examines the socio-economic conditions of women construction labourers in Warangal City, focusing on their employment patterns, wage conditions, working environment, family responsibilities, health challenges, social security and empowerment opportunities. It also discusses the role of government programmes, labour welfare institutions and social work interventions in improving their living and working conditions. The study highlights the need for gender-sensitive labour policies, improved access to welfare benefits, safe working environments and greater recognition of women's contribution to urban development.*

***Keywords:*** *Women Construction Labourers, Warangal City, Informal Sector, Women Workers, Labour Welfare, Socio-Economic Conditions, Gender Equality.*

## 1. Introduction

Construction is one of the important sectors contributing to urban development, economic growth and infrastructure expansion in India. The construction industry provides employment opportunities to millions of people, particularly those from rural, economically weaker and migrant communities. In urban areas, construction activities have increased due to housing development, commercial buildings, roads, educational institutions, hospitals and other infrastructure projects.

Women constitute a considerable portion of the workforce in the construction industry. They work as construction helpers, head-load carriers, sand and cement handlers, brick carriers, assistants to masons and workers engaged in other manual activities. In many construction sites, women undertake labour-intensive tasks that are essential to completing building projects. However, their work is often undervalued and their contributions are less visible than those of male workers.

Warangal City, one of the important urban centres of Telangana, has experienced considerable development in residential, commercial and public infrastructure. Construction activities provide employment opportunities for women from surrounding villages, urban settlements and migrant communities. Many women enter construction labour because of limited educational qualifications, restricted employment opportunities, economic hardship and the need to support their families.

Women construction labourers face several difficulties in their daily lives. Their challenges include low and irregular wages, long working hours, lack of formal employment contracts, inadequate sanitation facilities, workplace safety concerns, childcare difficulties and limited access to social security schemes. In addition to their paid employment, many women are responsible for cooking, cleaning, childcare and caring for elderly family members.

Therefore, understanding the socio-economic conditions of women construction labourers in Warangal City is essential for promoting labour welfare, gender equality, social justice and sustainable urban development.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the article are:

1. To examine the socio-economic conditions of women construction labourers in Warangal City.
2. To identify the employment opportunities and occupational activities performed by women in the construction sector.
3. To analyse wage differences, working hours and employment insecurity among women construction workers.
4. To understand the health, safety and working conditions of women construction labourers.
5. To examine the family responsibilities and social challenges faced by women construction labourers.
6. To study the awareness and utilization of government welfare schemes.
7. To suggest measures for improving the living standards, employment security and empowerment of women construction labourers.

## 3. Research Methodology

The present article is designed as a descriptive study of women construction labourers in Warangal City, Telangana. It focuses on the socio-economic characteristics, employment conditions, wages, workplace challenges, health concerns, welfare measures and empowerment of women workers in the construction sector. The article may be developed using both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary data can be collected through interviews, questionnaires, observation and discussions with women construction labourers working at residential building sites, commercial construction projects, road works and other urban infrastructure projects in Warangal City. Secondary information can be obtained from government reports, labour department publications, academic journals, books, newspapers, research papers and reports published by social organizations.

The proposed study area includes different construction locations in Warangal City and adjoining urban areas, including selected labour gathering points and construction sites. The study may examine women workers belonging to different age groups, family backgrounds, educational levels and employment experiences.

Note: The article below is a research-oriented draft. It does not claim that a field survey has been completed or that the figures presented are actual survey findings from Warangal.

## 4. Profile of Women Construction Labourers in Warangal City

Warangal City has an important role in the urban and regional development of Telangana. The expansion of residential colonies, commercial buildings, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, roads and other infrastructure has created employment opportunities for construction labourers. Women workers are part of this growing labour force and contribute to the development of urban infrastructure.

Women construction labourers generally come from economically weaker backgrounds. Some workers originate from villages in the surrounding districts and travel to urban locations in search of employment. Others reside in urban settlements and depend on construction work as their principal or supplementary source of income. Their entry into construction labour is frequently associated with limited formal education, poverty, family financial responsibilities and the absence of alternative employment opportunities.

Women workers are generally employed in activities such as carrying bricks, transporting sand and cement, mixing construction materials, assisting masons, cleaning construction areas, arranging materials and supporting different stages of construction. These activities require physical effort, continuous movement and prolonged working hours.

In many cases, women are employed on a daily wage basis. Their employment depends on the availability of construction projects, the requirements of contractors and the prevailing conditions in the local labour market. As a result, they may not receive regular employment throughout the year.

Women construction labourers also experience employment insecurity because they are often not directly employed by construction companies. Instead, they may be hired through contractors, sub-contractors or informal labour networks. This arrangement can make it difficult to access written employment agreements, regular wage payments and formal workplace protections.

**5. Socio-Economic Conditions of Women Construction Labourers**

The socio-economic conditions of women construction labourers are influenced by income, family size, education, housing, access to healthcare and employment stability. Many women workers belong to low-income households and depend on daily wages to meet basic household expenses.

**5.1 Income and Economic Conditions**

Income is one of the major determinants of the living conditions of women construction labourers. Their earnings are generally used to meet household expenditure such as food, rent, transport, education, healthcare, electricity and other essential requirements.

The daily wage system creates financial uncertainty. Women may receive wages only when work is available. In cases of rain, delays in construction, shortage of materials, project completion or illness, workers may lose employment opportunities and income.

Women may also face differences in wages compared with male workers, particularly when work is classified according to physical tasks or skill levels. Although women perform essential construction activities, their labour may be undervalued. Differences in wage determination, bargaining power and access to skilled work can contribute to unequal earnings.

Low and irregular income makes it difficult for women workers to save money, repay debts, improve housing conditions or invest in their children's education. Financial insecurity also increases their vulnerability to unexpected expenses.

**5.2 Educational Background**

Education plays an important role in employment opportunities, awareness of rights and social empowerment. Many women construction labourers may have limited educational opportunities because of poverty, family responsibilities, early entry into employment or lack of educational facilities during childhood.

Limited literacy and digital skills can create difficulties in understanding government application procedures, accessing welfare benefits, reading employment information and communicating with officials. Some workers may depend on contractors, relatives or intermediaries to obtain information about registration and welfare schemes.

Improving educational opportunities, adult literacy programmes and digital awareness can help women workers understand their rights, access government services and explore alternative employment opportunities.

**5.3 Housing and Living Conditions**

Housing is another important factor influencing the quality of life of women construction labourers. Low wages and irregular employment may prevent workers from accessing adequate housing facilities. Some workers reside in rented rooms, informal settlements or temporary accommodation near construction sites.

Poor housing conditions may include inadequate drinking water, sanitation facilities, electricity, ventilation and waste disposal. These conditions can negatively affect the health and well-being of women workers and their families.

Women workers who live near construction sites may also experience environmental problems such as dust, noise, traffic congestion and exposure to construction-related pollution. Access to affordable housing and basic urban services is therefore essential for improving their living conditions.

**5.4 Family Responsibilities**

Women construction labourers face the dual responsibility of paid employment and unpaid domestic work. After completing construction activities, many women return home and continue household responsibilities, including cooking, cleaning, caring for children, assisting elderly family members and managing household needs.

The combination of paid and unpaid work creates physical and emotional pressure. Women may have limited opportunities for rest, recreation, education or skill development. Family responsibilities can also restrict their ability to accept employment at distant construction sites or participate in training programmes.

The unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities remains an important social issue affecting the employment and empowerment of women construction labourers.

**6. Employment Patterns and Occupational Activities**

Women construction labourers perform a variety of tasks at construction sites. Their activities are essential to the construction process, although they are often considered unskilled or semi-skilled labour.

**6.1 Nature of Construction Work**

Women workers are generally engaged in the following activities:

- Carrying bricks, cement bags in smaller loads, sand and other building materials.
- Mixing cement, sand and water for construction purposes.
- Loading and unloading materials.
- Assisting masons and other skilled workers.
- Cleaning construction areas and removing construction debris.
- Arranging and supplying materials to workers.
- Supporting plastering, finishing and other building activities.

These activities require physical effort, repetitive movements, coordination and sustained concentration. Women workers frequently perform these tasks under challenging weather conditions, including high temperatures during summer and exposure to rain during the monsoon.

**6.2 Daily Wage Employment**

Daily wage employment is a common feature of the construction sector. Women workers are often hired according to the immediate requirements of construction contractors. Employment may last for a few days, weeks or months, depending on the project.

The absence of permanent employment arrangements creates uncertainty regarding income, work continuity and social protection. Women workers may not receive wages during periods of unemployment, illness or family emergencies.

**6.3 Informal Employment**

Informal employment is a major characteristic of the construction industry. Many women workers do not have formal contracts, written job descriptions or documented employment records. They may depend on contractors for employment and wage payments.

Informal employment also creates difficulties in establishing proof of employment, obtaining welfare registration and accessing certain labour-related benefits. Strengthening worker documentation and promoting registration with appropriate labour welfare institutions are important measures for improving employment security.

**7. Working Conditions and Occupational Health**

The working conditions of women construction labourers have a direct impact on their physical health, mental well-being and overall quality of life. Construction work involves exposure to various environmental and occupational risks.

**7.1 Occupational Health Problems**

Women construction labourers may experience health concerns associated with prolonged physical activity, exposure to dust, repetitive movements and inadequate rest. Common work-related concerns may include:

- Musculoskeletal discomfort and fatigue.
- Back, shoulder and joint discomfort.
- Respiratory irritation due to construction dust.
- Skin irritation from exposure to cement and other materials.
- Dehydration and heat-related discomfort.
- Eye irritation due to dust and environmental exposure.

The extent of these health problems may vary according to the type of work, duration of employment, availability of protective equipment, workplace conditions and access to medical services.

### 7.2 Safety at Construction Sites

Construction sites require appropriate safety arrangements to protect workers from occupational hazards. However, informal employment and inadequate safety awareness may result in workers being exposed to unsafe working conditions.

Women workers may not always receive adequate protective equipment, safety training or information about workplace hazards. The absence of proper facilities can increase occupational risks.

Employers and contractors should ensure that workers receive appropriate protective equipment, including helmets, gloves, safety footwear, dust protection and other necessary equipment based on the nature of the work. Construction sites should also provide drinking water, shade, first-aid facilities and appropriate sanitation arrangements.

### 7.3 Sanitation and Basic Facilities

Sanitation facilities are particularly important for women construction labourers. The absence of clean toilets, drinking water, washing facilities and appropriate rest areas may affect their dignity, comfort and health.

Construction sites should provide separate, hygienic and accessible toilet facilities for women workers. Adequate arrangements for menstrual hygiene, safe drinking water and rest areas are also necessary.

The provision of basic facilities should be considered an essential component of labour welfare rather than an optional arrangement.

## 8. Gender Inequality and Social Challenges

Women construction labourers experience several forms of gender inequality in the workplace and in society. These challenges are associated with wage discrimination, limited opportunities for skill development, lack of recognition, inadequate workplace facilities and unequal family responsibilities.

### 8.1 Wage Discrimination

Wage discrimination is one of the significant concerns affecting women construction labourers. Women may receive lower wages than men, even when they perform similar or comparable tasks. Wage differences may arise due to gender-based assumptions about physical strength, skill, productivity and occupational roles.

Such differences negatively affect the economic independence of women and reinforce household financial inequalities. Equal remuneration for comparable work and transparent wage practices are necessary to promote gender justice.

### 8.2 Limited Skill Development

Women workers are frequently concentrated in labour-intensive activities and may have limited access to training in masonry, painting, plumbing, electrical work, tile laying, construction finishing and other skilled occupations.

Skill development programmes can improve employment opportunities, wages and career advancement. However, training programmes should be accessible to women through convenient locations, flexible schedules, affordable participation and suitable childcare arrangements.

### 8.3 Workplace Dignity and Respect

Women workers may face disrespectful behaviour, unequal treatment, verbal harassment or exploitation in informal work environments. The lack of formal employment arrangements and grievance mechanisms can make it difficult to report problems.

Construction companies, contractors and labour authorities should promote respectful workplaces, ensure access to grievance mechanisms and take appropriate measures to prevent workplace harassment and discrimination.

### 8.4 Social Recognition

The contribution of women construction labourers to urban development is often overlooked. Their work is essential to the construction of buildings, infrastructure and public facilities, yet they may receive limited social recognition.

Recognizing women construction workers as important contributors to economic development can promote dignity, social inclusion and gender equality.

**9. Government Welfare Schemes and Social Security**

The Government of Telangana has established the Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board to support construction workers through registration and welfare programmes.

The Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board operates welfare schemes for eligible registered workers. The schemes have included assistance relating to maternity, marriage, death, disability, hospitalization, funeral expenses and other welfare needs. Scheme details, benefit amounts and eligibility conditions can change and should be verified through official channels.

The Centre for Good Governance, Telangana, has documented an evaluation and impact assessment initiative concerning welfare schemes of the Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, reflecting the importance of examining scheme reach, utilization and implementation.

Centre for Good Governance+1

**9.1 Registration with the Welfare Board**

Registration with the Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board can help eligible workers access applicable welfare benefits. However, women workers may face barriers such as lack of awareness, difficulty obtaining required documents, limited digital literacy, irregular employment and difficulties navigating administrative procedures.

Local registration and awareness camps should be organized at construction sites, labour gathering points and urban settlements to help eligible women workers complete registration and renewal procedures.

**9.2 Maternity Benefits**

Maternity benefits are particularly important for women construction labourers because they may experience employment and income insecurity during pregnancy and childbirth.

Eligible registered workers may receive maternity-related financial assistance under applicable Telangana welfare schemes. Awareness of eligibility conditions, application procedures and supporting documents is essential for accessing such benefits.

**9.3 Death, Disability and Hospitalization Assistance**

Construction work involves occupational risks, and welfare schemes relating to death, disability and hospitalization can provide important financial support to eligible workers and their families.

Women workers should receive information about applicable benefits, registration requirements and claim procedures. The availability of assistance can help reduce financial difficulties arising from illness, disability or family emergencies.

**9.4 Educational Assistance**

Educational assistance for the children of construction workers can support school attendance, reduce financial pressures and promote educational opportunities for children from low-income families.

Women workers should be informed about educational welfare schemes, eligibility requirements and the application process.

**9.5 Awareness of Welfare Schemes**

Awareness of welfare programmes is a significant factor influencing their utilization. Women workers may not know which schemes are available, how to register, where to submit applications or how to track claims.

The Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board has digital services, including registration and benefit-related information through its official portal and mobile application. Information and registration assistance should also be made available through accessible local channels.

**10. Role of Social Work in the Welfare of Women Construction Labourers**

Social work plays an important role in addressing the socio-economic problems of women construction labourers. Social workers can support workers through community organization, awareness programmes, advocacy, counselling, referral services and welfare facilitation.

**10.1 Awareness and Education**

Social workers can organize awareness programmes on labour rights, wage entitlements, occupational safety, health services, welfare schemes and legal protections. Information should be communicated in accessible languages and formats.

**10.2 Community Organization**

Community organization can help women construction workers develop collective awareness, strengthen their bargaining capacity and participate in discussions concerning employment and welfare issues.

Workers' groups, community-based organizations and labour associations can encourage collective participation in addressing wage concerns, employment insecurity and access to basic facilities.

**10.3 Welfare Scheme Facilitation**

Social workers can assist eligible women workers in identifying applicable welfare schemes, obtaining information, preparing applications and accessing government services. They can also help workers understand the importance of maintaining registration records and other necessary documents.

**10.4 Health and Safety Awareness**

Social work organizations can coordinate with healthcare institutions to conduct health camps, occupational health awareness programmes and preventive health education.

These activities may include health check-ups, information on hydration, dust exposure, safe work practices, nutrition, maternal health and access to healthcare services.

**10.5 Counselling and Family Support**

Counselling and family support services can help women workers address stress arising from financial insecurity, family responsibilities, workplace problems and other social challenges.

Social workers can also encourage equitable sharing of domestic responsibilities and promote family participation in supporting women's employment.

**10.6 Advocacy and Policy Support**

Social workers can document the concerns of women construction labourers and communicate them to local authorities, labour departments, employers and welfare institutions.

Advocacy efforts should focus on wage equality, workplace safety, social security, sanitation, childcare, skill development and the protection of workers' dignity.

**11. Major Problems Faced by Women Construction Labourers in Warangal City**

Women construction labourers in Warangal City face interconnected economic, social, occupational and institutional challenges. The following are important issues that a field study may examine.

| S.No. | Major Problem | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Low wages | Earnings may be insufficient to meet household expenses and basic needs. |
| 2 | Irregular employment | Workers may not receive employment regularly throughout the year. |
| 3 | Wage inequality | Women may receive lower wages than men for comparable work. |
| 4 | Occupational health risks | Dust, physical strain, heat and unsafe working conditions may affect health. |
| 5 | Lack of safety equipment | Protective equipment and safety awareness may be inadequate at some sites. |
| 6 | Sanitation facilities | Clean toilets, washing facilities and drinking water may not be available. |
| 7 | Childcare difficulties | Women may face difficulties caring for children while working. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | Limited education | Educational limitations may restrict access to alternative employment. |
| 9 | Lack of welfare awareness | Some workers may not know about registration and welfare schemes. |
| 10 | Housing insecurity | Low income may restrict access to adequate housing and basic services. |
| 11 | Limited skill development | Women may have fewer opportunities to acquire construction-related skills. |
| 12 | Social inequality | Gender discrimination and unequal domestic responsibilities may affect empowerment. |

## 12. Suggestions for Improving the Conditions of Women Construction Labourers

Improving the living and working conditions of women construction labourers requires coordinated efforts from the government, construction employers, contractors, social organizations, labour unions and local communities.

### 12.1 Ensure Fair and Equal Wages

Women construction labourers should receive fair wages for their work. Employers and contractors should adopt transparent wage practices, ensure timely payments and avoid gender-based discrimination in remuneration for comparable work.

### 12.2 Improve Occupational Safety

Construction sites should provide appropriate safety equipment, safety training, drinking water, shade, first-aid facilities and safe working arrangements. Regular inspections should help identify and address unsafe conditions.

### 12.3 Provide Women-Friendly Facilities

Construction sites should provide clean toilets, washing facilities, rest areas and appropriate sanitation arrangements for women workers. These facilities should be maintained regularly.

### 12.4 Promote Childcare Facilities

Childcare facilities at or near larger construction sites can help women workers balance employment and family responsibilities. Suitable childcare arrangements can also support children's health, safety and development.

### 12.5 Strengthen Welfare Board Registration

Special registration camps should be conducted in Warangal City to help eligible women construction workers register with the Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. Workers should receive assistance with documentation, renewal and benefit applications.

### 12.6 Increase Awareness of Welfare Schemes

Awareness campaigns should be organized through labour unions, social workers, local authorities, community organizations and construction employers. Information should be provided in Telugu and other languages understood by workers.

### 12.7 Promote Skill Development

Women construction labourers should be encouraged to participate in skill development programmes related to masonry, painting, tiling, construction finishing, plumbing assistance and other relevant occupations.

Skill development can improve occupational mobility and employment opportunities.

### 12.8 Improve Healthcare Access

Regular health camps should be organized for women construction workers. These programmes should provide preventive health information, basic medical assessments and referrals to appropriate healthcare services.

### 12.9 Encourage Financial Inclusion

Women workers should be encouraged to access banking services, financial literacy programmes, savings opportunities and eligible social security benefits. Financial awareness can support better household financial management and economic independence.

**12.10 Strengthen Social Work Interventions**

Social work institutions, colleges and community organizations can undertake field-based activities to support women construction labourers. Such activities may include awareness programmes, community surveys, welfare scheme facilitation, counselling, health education and advocacy.

**12.11 Promote Collective Participation**

Women construction labourers should be encouraged to participate in worker associations, community organizations and labour welfare discussions. Collective participation can improve awareness, communication and the ability to express concerns regarding wages, safety and employment conditions.

**12.12 Strengthen Monitoring and Accountability**

Labour authorities should regularly monitor construction sites to ensure that workers receive appropriate facilities, safety arrangements and applicable welfare protections. Complaints and grievances should be addressed through accessible and transparent mechanisms.

## 13. Conclusion

Women construction labourers are an essential part of the construction industry and contribute significantly to the urban development of Warangal City, Telangana. Their labour supports the construction of residential buildings, commercial establishments, public infrastructure and other development projects. Despite their contribution, women workers continue to face several challenges, including low and irregular wages, employment insecurity, occupational health risks, inadequate sanitation facilities, limited skill development opportunities and unequal family responsibilities.

The socio-economic conditions of women construction labourers are closely associated with poverty, informal employment, gender inequality and limited access to social protection. Their economic contribution is often undervalued, and their working conditions require greater attention from government institutions, employers and society.

The Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board provides an institutional framework for supporting eligible construction workers through welfare programmes. However, awareness, registration, accessibility, timely delivery and effective implementation of these programmes are important for ensuring that women workers receive the intended benefits.

Social work has an important role in improving the conditions of women construction labourers through community organization, welfare facilitation, awareness programmes, health interventions, counselling and advocacy. Greater cooperation among labour departments, construction companies, social work institutions, NGOs, worker associations and local communities can help improve the quality of life of women construction labourers.

The empowerment of women construction labourers should be considered an important component of inclusive urban development. Ensuring fair wages, safe working environments, social security, healthcare, childcare, skill development and dignity at work can contribute to improving their economic independence and social status. Recognizing and protecting the rights of women construction labourers is essential for achieving gender equality, social justice and sustainable development in Warangal City.

**References**

1. Government of India. (1996). *The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996*. Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

2. Government of India. (1996). *The Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996*. Government of India.

3. Government of Telangana. *Telangana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board*. Labour Department, Telangana.

4. Centre for Good Governance. (2025). *Evaluation and Impact Assessment of BOCW Welfare Board Schemes in Telangana*. Government of Telangana.

5. Comptroller and Auditor General of India. (2024). *Report on Welfare of Building and Other Construction Workers, Government of Telangana*. Performance Audit.

6. International Labour Organization. *Occupational Safety and Health in the Construction Sector*. ILO publications and labour safety resources.
7. ActionAid India. *Construction Workers in Hyderabad: Issues, Challenges and Welfare*. Research and advocacy publication.
8. Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India. *Welfare and Social Security of Building and Other Construction Workers*. Government publications and policy information.
9. Government of Telangana. *Labour Department: Welfare Schemes for Building and Other Construction Workers*. Telangana State Labour Department publications.
10. International Labour Organization. (2018). *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture* (3rd ed.). International Labour Office, Geneva.