The Social Exclusion of Migrant Labourers  
A Study on Socio, Economic and Health status of Inter-State Migrants working in Construction Sectors in Chennai  

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Abstract:
Background and aim: Migration is the movement of people from one place to another due to several pull and push factors. Pull factors are coming from the urban side like high income, availability of opportunity and accessibility to educational settings. And the push factors are from rural sides like lack of work, low income and scarcity of land. This paper discusses the socio economic condition of inter-state migrants working in the construction sectors in Chennai. As reported in the New Indian Express, it is noted that an estimated number of over three lakhs migrant labours from different States are living in Greater Chennai. “These labourers are largely employed in brick kiln, construction, and limekiln; plastic moulder sectors situated in the adjacent Chennai and Tiruvallur districts. The children of migrant labours did not get formal education. “In the past one and half years as many as 35 labourers have lost their lives in fatal accidents. However, the contractors were least bothered to inform the Government,” The two crucial acts (Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and the Inter-state Migrant Workmen (regulation of employment and conditions of service) Act, 1979) for protecting the rights of migrant labours were not being effectively implemented.  

Objectives: The general objective of this paper is to study the socio economic status of the intrastate migrants working construction sites in Chennai. Specific Objectives are to know the social background of the migrants, to understand the economic condition, to analyze their health status and accessibility to the hospitals, to suggest remedial measures.  

Research Methods: The data collection has been done partially in the construction site i.e., college construction at Padi and others in their residence at Semmanchery Thoppu, in the OMR, Chennai. The researcher takes up the probability sampling for his research. This would give equal number of chances. This will surely be proportionate to the universe. The researcher made use of stratified random sampling, selecting fifty samples in proportion to the local universe of those places. The excluded migrants are clearly identified and are empowered to have access to rights, govt. Provisions and services. It tries to find ways and means to improve their working and living conditions.  

Results: The mean age of the migrants is 27.94 years. A large number of 76 per cent of the respondents are male. A large number of 74 per cent are married people. Equally half of the respondents 50 per cent are residing in the in the rented houses. The half of 54 per cent of the people interviewed depends on corporation drinking water. The mean value of income of the respondents is Rs. 225. The mean value of daily expenses is Rs. 116.1. The mean value of annual saving is Rs. 32,500. A majority of 58 per cent of the people interviewed have the habit of cooking at home. A majority of 48 per cent of the respondents are suffering from minor ailments of fever and cold. Many of the respondents take medicines in the pharmacy itself.  

Suggestions: The government should ensure these vulnerable groups with public distribution cards, voters’ identity cards and caste / community certificate. The government and the construction companies should ensure residence by providing sheds for living. The government also should think of regenerating the sector that could provide sustainable employment opportunities in their own home town and also reduce the migration from source villages.
INTRODUCTION

Human migration is movement by humans from one place to another, sometimes over long distances or in large groups. Historically this movement was nomadic, often causing significant conflict with the indigenous population and their displacement or cultural assimilation. Only a few nomadic people have retained this form of lifestyle in modern times. Migration has continued under the form of both voluntary migration within one's region, country, or beyond and involuntary migration which includes the slave trade, trafficking in human beings and ethnic cleansing. To capture such movements of population census collect information on migration by last helps to understand the current migration scenario better. In India, as per census 2001, about 307 million persons have been reported as migration by place of birth. Out of them about 259 million (84.2 percent), migrated from one part of the state to another, i.e., from one village or town to another village or town. 42 million (two percent) are from outside the country. The data on migration by last residence in India as per Census 2001 shows that the total number of migrants has been 314 million. Out of these migrants by last residence, 268 million (85 percent) has been intra-state migrants, those who migrated from one are of the state to another. 41 million (13 percent) were interstate migrants and 5.1 million (1.6 percent) migrated from outside of the country.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Migration in India is not new, historical accounts show that people have moved in search of work, in response to environmental shocks and stresses, to escape religious persecution and political conflict. However improved communications, transport networks, conflicts over natural resources and new economic opportunities have created unprecedented levels of mobility. The massive growth of urban areas has been associated with a variety of problems ranging from overcrowding, pressures on the environment lack of housing, and increasing inequality between different segments of the population. In addition, rural areas often lack social and economic infrastructures to support their dwindling populations. Here in this paper the researcher wants to study the socio economic status of the inter-state migrants in chennai and the steps that both the govt and civil societies have to take in order to reduce the mass migration due to lack of basic amenities in the rural areas.

OBJECTIVES

- To study demographic details of the migrants.
- To know the social background of the migrants.
- To understand the economic condition.
- To analyze their health status and accessibility to the hospitals.
- To suggest remedial measures.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Migrants in Construction

The construction industry provides direct employment to at least 30 million workers in India. (Chen 2007) but recent expansions (before the economic crisis) had resulted in a higher number: trade Unions estimate that there were roughly 40 million migrant construction workers in India in 2008 (Sarde 2008). Although numbers will have gone down with the recent economic crisis, there will nevertheless be a continuation of urban construction which will attract migrant workers. There is anecdotal evidence that some categories of returnee migrants from the Gulf have been absorbed in construction. Construction attracts both skilled workers (masons, carpenters) and unskilled workers and although there is some scope for upward mobility, poorer and lower caste/tribe migrants tend to remain in low-paid unskilled jobs. This is because of discrimination against them and being excluded from opportunities to gain skills. Women work mainly as unskilled workers.

Migration for construction work has brought economic gains and freedom for many but has also brought incredible hardship and personal risk. Many analysts have concluded that it is coping at best and does not result in any long term accumulation for the poor (Reddy 1990, Srivastava 2003,
Sundari 2005). However the situation has changed in some locations recently as migrants have acquired more confidence and knowledge of the labour market and have begun to negotiate jobs by themselves without depending on agents and contractors. This has led to faster improvements in living standards (for Madhya Pradesh see Deshingkar et al 2008).

STATISTICS ON MIGRANTS ACCORDING TO CENSUS 2001

Migration by Place of Birth

Out of the total population of 1,028.6 million persons in India as at the 2001 Census, about 307 million (or 29.9%) were reported as migrants born outside the village/town of their enumeration. As Statement 1 below would show, out of these migrants about 216.7 million were females, Out numbering their male counterparts (90.4 million), mostly due to change of their residence due to marriage. Those who had migrated to the place of enumeration from within the district or the state were about 181.7 million and 76.8 million respectively. The balance 48.4 million migrants were from other States or Union Territories including about 6.1 million from abroad.

In broad terms, excluding the migration within the states, the total number of interstate migrants was 42.3 million and those who were born abroad account for 6.1 million. In-migrants in one state were actually the out-migrants from other states. Therefore, if one takes into account the in-migrants and out-migrants to and from all the states together, the net migrants as far as the country was concerned were only those who were born abroad (or 6.1 million). comparison of the 2001 Census migration data with 1991 Census shows (Statement 2) high growth (32.9%) in the number of total migrant by place of birth, which is more than the natural growth of the population. Noticeably, the migration of population from across the boundary of the state rose sharply by 54.5% from about 27.2 million in 1991 to about 42.1 million in 2001. The number of migrants by place of birth who were born outside the country dropped by about 11.6%. It may, however, be mentioned here that the data on inter-state and inter-district migration are not strictly comparable as the creation of new districts and states have resulted in former intra-district and intra-state migrants being counted as inter-district and interstate migrants.

Rural to Urban migration is a response to diverse economic opportunities across space. Historically it has played a significant role in the urbanization process of several countries and continues to be significant in scale, even though migration rates have slowed down in some countries (Lall, Selod and Shalizi, 2006). In India, though rural-urban migration has been found to be modest (accounting for around 30 per cent of the total urban growth), in the context of urban poverty, urban slums and informal sector employment a great deal has been talked in reference to rural-urban population mobility. In other words, much of the urban ills are attributed to the rural-spills.

Given the diverse spatial characteristics of the country it is quite natural to expect that rural-urban migration rates will be varied across states and even within the states. The paper analyses the district specific rates and their variability on the one hand and on the other hand examines the impact of certain factors at the place of destination on the male and female population mobility. Since at the district level the reasons for migration have not been listed by the population census – and even at the state level the reasons for migration are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive – we try to examine the associations between migration rates and other variables at the place of destination. Though the literature has assigned a great deal of importance to the factors at the place of origin we find difficulty to include them while dealing with the secondary data on migration. For example, rural migrants in the urban areas of a specific district have originated from different districts located within the state and outside the state. In other words, in relation to one observation, i.e., rural-to-urban migrants in a specific district there is a spectrum of socio-economic characteristics, which then becomes difficult to analyze.

Because of a large initial base of population and a high natural growth of population the annual rate of population growth remains modest, and also the migration rate does not appear to be exceptionally high. However, it implies a phenomenal increase in absolute terms. Hence, we have tried to assess only the influence of factors at the place of destination, i.e., the urban areas of the
districts, on the incoming male and female migrants from the rural areas within the state and outside the state.

NATIONAL POLICY ON MIGRANTS

The government policies have really neglected the villages and rural inhabitants. The national and international investment in agriculture and rural development is decreasing alarmingly. As far as the issue of policy is concerned, the Indian government has concentrated and has set its investment priority in cities alienating the rural areas. A very large migration from the rural to the urban areas is the deliberate reflection of the misplaced development policies from the government. As Dr. Harender puts in, even the little that is spent in villages is wasted in microeconomic interventions to help individual villagers and not the micro economy of the village as a whole. To stop or reduce the migration the villages have to be developed. The government has no employment generation schemes for cities; yet there are plenty of jobs and high payment. Hardly few jobs are available in the rural areas. Agriculture is stagnating and may not be able to provide further jobs.

The fault lies with the institutional and policy environment and not with the migrants themselves. At present, the migrants cannot access to the subsidized food from the PDS which works on residence criteria. And also to the public school, cheap housing and government health care. At the same time the migrants cannot have access to the information of the jobs, wage rates as well as no idea of legal migration.

REASONS FOR MIGRATION

In census 2001, the reasons for migration have been classified into seven broad groups: work, employment, business, education, marriage, moved at birth, moved with family and others. It is observed that employment among males and marriage among females are the main reasons for migration. Associational reasons – movement on account of accompanying parents or any other member of the family is elicited second most important reason among both male and female interstate migrants. Around 44 percent of the total interstate migrants have moved due to marriages. However, it is predominantly led by females as 65 percent of females have migrated owing to their marriages compared to 2 percent among males. Among male migrants, employment has continued to be the main reason for migration with nearly 40 percent of them accounted by it.

There is growing evidence in India to suggest that the country is moving fast in the overall development. Structural transformation in the 1990s has propelled the growth of the economy further. The percentage of people below poverty line has reduced and per capita consumption has improved simultaneously. Although Indian economy is predominantly agricultural, the proportion of work force engaged in agricultural activities has fallen significantly. This reduction is perhaps, a sign of enhanced job opportunities in other sectors.

Nowadays, there are many people leaving their native countries in order to find a better place to live. It could be influenced by push and pull factors. They may also move voluntarily or being forced to move. As we know, the numbers of people who migrate from their native countries is getting higher and keep increasing. And I think it's good for Globalization. For instance, they can share each other' culture and background, but they may also damage the country' culture and environment because the immigrants have a different point of view.

One of the best reasons to move is job opportunities. In developing countries, there is a lot of unemployment because of the lacking of work field. Therefore, much unemployment from developing countries move to any developed countries in order to find a better job. In somehow, in developing countries, people tend to live in urban areas because the living condition is better than in rural areas. But in developed countries, people tend to move to rural areas rather than living in urban areas, because the environment in rural areas is nicer than in urban areas which have a lot of industries and many other working things.

Moreover, people may move to developed countries because the medical treatment and education is much better compared to developing countries. And sometimes the standard of living is much cheaper.
In addition, people may have to move forcibly because of some reasons like natural disaster, wars, crimes, crisis, and any other bad things.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Site / Location</th>
<th>House Holds</th>
<th>Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Semmanchery Thoppu</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mogappair</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Padi</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher has collected data from interstate migrants working in mega construction sites and in mall construction at Velacherry in Chennai. Some construction site labourers are given residence in the site itself and all others are residing in rented houses at Semmanchery, OMR, Chennai. The data collection has been done partially in the construction site i.e., college construction at Padi and others in their residence at Semmanchery Thoppu, in the OMR, Chennai. The researcher wants to take up the probability sampling for his research. This would give equal number of chances. This will surely be proportionate to the universe. The researcher used stratified random sampling. Stratified random sampling is a method of sampling that involves the division of a population into smaller groups known as strata. The researcher has collected the data with the minimum number of 50 respondents from unorganized workers federation. The respondents are mostly the vulnerable interstate migrants. The researcher has chosen a structured questionnaire as the tool of data collection for this Study. The questionnaire was designed based on the objectives of the study undertaken.

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table No. 1 explains the age of the respondents.

From the table, it can be incurred that a good number of 32 per cent are of the age of twenty to twenty five. Also a good number of 32 per cent belong to the age group of twenty five to thirty. A reasonable number of 30 per cent are of the age group of thirty one to forty. And a least number of six per cent are of the age group of forty one to fifty. The mean age of the migrants is 27.94 years.

From the data collected on the age of the respondents, the age group of twenty to thirty are the majority among the migrants interviewed. Most of them, immediately after their marriage migrate to other place because of their family responsibility. The young blood is absorbed by the construction companies. It is very important to notice that the migrants are wanted after the age of thirty.
The above Figure exposes the educational qualification of the respondents. According to this figure, it is well communicated that a good number of 38 per cent of the respondents are of illiterate group. A substantial number of 30 per cent belong to the group who have studied up to primary. A small number of 20 per cent of the respondents have studied up to middle class. And a least number of four per cent have gone to the level of high school education.

At this juncture, anybody can understand that a majority of the respondents have never turned back to the school at all. The migrants interviewed, do not seem to bother about the education. While interaction they never felt guilty of their illiterate status. Among those who have studied up to primary education does not know even to write properly. Almost every respondent feel that education immaterial for them.

SOCIAL STATUS

FIGURE 2

The above Figure No. 4 very clearly manifests us the type of work of the respondents.

According to this figure, a majority of 48 per cent the people interviewed work as masons in construction sectors. A considerable number of 26 per cent work in various works like concrete workers, steps builders, supervisors and so on. A small number of 20 per cent work as helpers or assistants to the masons. And lest number of six per cent work as securities.

While the data collection the researcher noticed that a good number people involve working as masons. All of them are content with the wages paid. They are invariably paid from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But comparing with the masons from Tamil Nadu they get very minimum wage. All those who
work as assistants are women. As usual women are considered as secondary in construction. But their work is very hard.

INCOME
The above Figure No. 10 gives the information on the income of the respondents.

From the above figure it is understood that a good number of 80 per cent of the respondents earn Rs. 200 and above up to Rs. 300. The other 20 per cent earn Rs. 150 to Rs. 200. The mean value of income is Rs. 225.

There are only two categories in this figure regarding the income. This division depends on two reasons. One is the type of work they do in the construction sectors. The second one is gender disparity. All the male ones are invariably earning Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But the females are earning only between Rs. 100 to Rs. 150. But this wage is very low when comparing with the wages given to the people of Tamil Nadu.

INDEBTEDNESS
The above Figure No. 12 reveals the status of indebtedness of the construction workers.

The above figure gives clear knowledge that a considerable number of 38 per cent of the respondents have indebtedness from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000. A considerable number of 36 per cent of the respondents are indebted up to Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000. A small number of 16 per cent have
indebtedness from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000. And a least number of 10 per cent have debts from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000. The mean value of indebtedness is Rs. 12,700.

Indebtedness is common among all employees and labourers. But among migrant labourers it is considered as heavy burdens as they have moved from their place of origin. Unless they have any friends and relatives they find it very difficult to borrow money. Indebtedness among the migrants is because of health reasons. They need to spend more on treatment when they are with ill health.

HEALTH STATUS

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Ailments</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Stomach Pain</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table No. 14 delivers information on the minor ailments of the migrants.

A majority of 48 per cent of the respondents are suffering from minor ailment of fever. A considerable number of 36 per cent are suffering from normal cold. A small number of 12 per cent are suffering from stomach pain. And a very least number of four per cent are various minor ailments like body pain, head ache and so on.

From this table it is well known that the respondents are suffering from various ailments. One important thing to note here is that the respondents are not allowed to take leave from the construction. The migrants will not be paid any wages on leave.

Table 3

MONTHLY MEDICAL EXPENSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Medical Expense in Rupees</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rs. 50 - Rs. 100</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rs.100-Rs. 500</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rs.500-Rs. 1,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rs. 1,000 – Rs. 2,000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table No. 15 shows the monthly medical expenses of the migrated construction workers.

A majority of 42 per cent of the respondents spend from Rs. 100 to Rs. 500 for their medical purposes per month. A considerable number of 26 per cent of the respondents spend from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100. Nearly one fifth of the workers are spending Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000. A small number of 12 per cent spend Rs. 1000 to Rs. 2,000. The mean value of monthly medical expenses is Rs. 475.5.

From the information got through this table, all migrants spend a considerable amount for medical purposes. The amount mentioned by the respondents always varies by every month. There is no constant regularity and fixed expenses.
The above Table No. 16 concentrates on the chronic diseases of the respondents.

From the above table it is derived that a large number of 52 per cent of the construction workers suffer from various numbers of diseases like fever, cold, cough and so on. One fourth (24 per cent) suffer from the symptoms of tuber closes. Some take the dots treatment. One fifth (20 per cent) of the respondents are suffering from diabetics. A small number of four per cent severely suffer from cancer.

The chronic diseases from which the migrants are suffering do not seem to be big problem. They take all these kinds of diseases very lightly. They don’t care for the precautious measures. Once they are affected with major diseases they are left alone in the home. They are employed in construction. Alcoholism is major problem among the migrants. The works in the constructions leads to TB.

MAIN FINDINGS

1. DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS
   The mean age of the migrants is 27.94 years. A large number of 76 per cent of the respondents are male. A large number of 74 per cent are married people. A good number of 38 per cent of the respondents are of illiterate group. A large number of 56 per cent of the people are from state of Andra Pradesh. A substantial number of 44 per cent have the experience of work in Chennai for about 6-10 years. A majority of the respondents have recently migrated during last ten years. A majority of 48 per cent the people interviewed work as masons in construction sectors. A majority of 66 per cent of the respondents have the normal duration of work for eight hours per day.

2. SOCIAL STATUS
   Equally half of the respondents 50 per cent are residing in the in the rented houses. The half of 54 per cent of the people interviewed depends on corporation drinking water. A substantial number of 36 per cent do not send thier children to schools for education. A majority of 58 per cent agree that they have three meals every day. A half of 52 per cent of the people interviewed came with the opinion of strongly agreeing of their accessibility to the primary health centre. The houses of all the respondents are electrified.

3. ECONOMIC STATUS
   The mean value of income of the respondents is Rs. 225. The mean value of daily expenses is Rs. 116.1. The mean value of annual saving is Rs. 32,500. The mean value of indebtedness is Rs. 12,700. A considerable number of 46 per cent of the respondents have migrated with the family. A majority of 62 per cent go back to their homes once in a year.

4. HEALTH STATUS
   A majority of 58 per cent of the people interviewed have the habit of cooking at home. A majority of 48 per cent of the respondents are suffering from minor ailments of fever and cold. Many of the respondents take medicines in the pharmacy itself. The mean value of monthly medical expenses is Rs. 475.5. A substantial number of 46 per cent of the respondents disagree with the opinion on the regularity of the biological clock. The mean value of hours of sleep is 7.6 hours. A majority of 60 per cent of the respondents are not aware about the Inter-State Migrant Act 1979.

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**TABLE 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Chronic diseases</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TB</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Diabetics</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The lack of rights and government services in the source areas is found to be the major push factor in the migration communities to the construction sector. The government should ensure these vulnerable groups with public distribution cards, voters’ identity cards and caste / community certificate. The government and the construction companies should ensure residence by providing sheds for living. The government also should think of regenerating the sector that could provide sustainable employment opportunities in their own home town and also reduce the migration from source villages. A majority, 70 percent of the migrant workers is not covered under any public services, welfare programmes and schemes. The state should evolve migrant friendly policies through which all services and schemes could be made accessible for the migrant workers and they should be able to enjoy the benefits from any location within the country or state or district without any bottlenecks like producing of a local proof of address in availing government services.

A majority 80 percent of the migrant workers earn a weekly wage in the range of Rs.700/- to Rs.1, 250/-. The wages earned is very low when compared to the minimum wages prescribed by the government. The employers should fix wages on par with the minimum wages taking into consideration the hours of work involved. The employers association should also ensure that the wages fixed by them are uniformly followed by all the employers across the sector. The workers could form a workers pool through which their recruitment could be done; this process could be facilitated by the civil society. There should be a written agreement between the employer and worker that would clearly state the conditions of work (advance, wage, hours of work and deductions to be made within the legal framework of the Factories Act and Minimum Wages Act). Apart from providing these facilities employers should take all precautionary measures that would ensure the safety of the workers from fire, heat, hazardous electrical wiring and protection from heat through alternate roofing against asbestos in the shelters. Civil societies should play a greater role in creating awareness among the workers on the working and living conditions based on rights based approach.

In the construction sector none (100%) of the employers have provided any social protection measures like life and health insurance for the workers. The employers should provide these welfare measures so that the workers can protect themselves against life and health risks. The civil societies should start workers’ cooperatives or self help initiatives that would promote savings and in the long run link them with formal financial institutions for their credit needs. This would break the migrant workers total dependency on the employers. Awareness should be created among the workers on thrift habits and productive investment of their savings.

CONCLUSION

In the construction sectors all over Chennai only inter-state migrants are employed due to hard work for indefinite hours at the cost of cheap labour. Migration has ensured their survival but at the cost of greater vulnerability both in their source and but destination areas of work leading to exploitation of labour and neo debt bondage like conditions in the sector. Their living and working conditions are appalling which violates even the most basic human and labour conventions and rights in the country. Further adding to their despair is the total absence of welfare and safety measures from the employers in the construction sectors and the lack the government rights and services that has turned them into the missing citizens of this nation and an invisible workforce in the unorganised sector. The government has a major role to play in ensuring the rights, entitlements and services to this marginalised community through convergence of government schemes and services in their source places. The employers have a greater role of providing decent living and working conditions that uphold the migrant workers rights and dignity. They also should ensure the workers safety and social security through welfare measures and safety mechanisms within the sector. Civil societies should actively engage in right based activities that will empower the workers and help them to organize through which their collective voice could be heard.
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