ANALYSING THE SOCIO - ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF MASON WORKERS IN SPIC NAGAR OF THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

M. Anusiya* and Dr. G. Sumathi

PG Department of Economics, St. Mary's College (Autonomous), Thoothukudi.

Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu, India.

ABSTRACT

Construction workers are the foundation of the nation since they build the infrastructure required for a nation's development. Construction workers construct or repair homes, roads and infrastructure. They engage in strenuous physical labour and frequently work outside in a variety of weather situations. They construct the homes, the streets, bridges, highway, the rivers, dams, shopping centers and parks; etc. By building smart cities, IT centers, complexes, metros, telephony and other infrastructure in the domain of innovation, they are the ones that establish new economic regions. The builders of the economy are often known as construction workers. In fact, majority of people depend on this industry for employment and income. It is important to note that this an unorganized sector which is the basis for economic development. The workers engaged in construction works are socially and economically backward and so that they are unable to organize themselves in pursuit of their common interest. Generally, construction workers face financial problems, health problems, diseases, mishaps and even loss of life. Moreover, lack of social welfare measures and social security and medical benefits affect the construction workers.

Keywords:

Construction sector, Mason workers, Infrastructure, Practitioners, Interlocking bricks, Stone blocks

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Mason workers play a crucial role in the construction industry by building houses, roads, and other infrastructure. However, their socio-economic conditions often remain challenging. This project aims to study the living standards, income levels, working conditions, and social challenges faced by mason workers. Many

mason workers earn daily wages and do not have job security, making their financial situation unstable. They often lack access to health care, education, and social benefits. Harsh working conditions, long hours, and exposure to dust and chemicals also affect their health.

Construction activity is an integral part of a country's infrastructure and industrial development; it includes hospitals, schools, townships, offices, houses, and other buildings, urban infrastructure (including water supply sewerage, drainage) highways, roads, ports, railways, airports, power system, irrigation and agriculture systems, telecommunications etc. The construction becomes the basic input for socio–economic development of country.

Mason work in construction

Mason work, or masonry, is a construction trade that entails building structures out of component parts made of various materials, such as brick or stone. Practitioners of masonry, known as masons, are manual labourers who lay these components together and usually bind them with a substance such as mortar, a paste made with a mixture of cement, lime, sand and water that hardens when dried. Masonry involves skilled labor, as most forms of mason work involve laying individual components in precise arrangements and are thus resistant to mechanization.

Masonry

Masonry is the craft of building a structure with brick, stone, or similar material, including mortar plastering which are often laid in, bound, and pasted together by mortar. The term masonry can also refer to the building units (stone, brick, etc.) themselves.

The common materials of masonry construction are bricks and building stone, rocks such as marble, granite, and limestone, cast stone, concrete blocks, glass blocks, and adobe. Masonry is generally a highly durable form of construction. However, the materials used, the quality of the mortar and workmanship, and the pattern in which the units are assembled can substantially affect the durability of the overall masonry construction.

Limitation of the study

On the basis of the data collection from the respondent, income and expenditure pattern will be studied. The scope of study will be related to the Spic Nagar. Some variables such as Income, Expenditure, Saving and Investment will be calculated from the average number of working days. Since the job is irregular, accordingly the given figure may not denote the exact figure.

Objectives of the study

- To analyze the working conditions of the sample respondents.
- To analyze the skills and techniques used in masonry work.
- To find out the challenges faced by the mason workers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Seenivasan (2023)** investigated women construction workers in Tamil Nadu, identifying issues like gender discrimination, low wages, and lack of social security, calling for governmental intervention
- **Hariharan (2024)** focused on migrant brick-kiln workers in Tamil Nadu, revealing poor wages, inadequate medical facilities, and the necessity for policy interventions to improve their socio-economic status.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

Descriptive research design is being adapted in this study. In the proposed research work, nature of study requires both the quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The proposed study focuses on comprehensive study of primary data which will be collected through surveys, interviews and observation. The necessary primary data will be collected from 120 respondents. And secondary data also used in this study like books, journals, articles, website etc.

Area of Study:

Spic Nagar - Thoothukudi district

Sample Size: Totally 120 respondents were selected in the study area.

Types of sampling: Simple random sampling is adapted for this study.

Scope of the Study: This includes identifying the specific tasks that need to be completed, such as bricklaying, stone veneer installation, or concrete block construction. Additionally, outline any materials or equipment that will be required for the project. Examples of milestones could include completing the foundation, finishing the exterior walls, or installing the chimney.

Need for the study: Masonry is non-combustible, so improves fire protection for the building and its occupants. Fireplaces are commonly made of masonry for the same reason. Masonry offers a high resistance against rotting, pests, weather, and natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornadoes.

Tools of analysis:

The researcher used by table, Pie chart, Bar diagram.

Table 1

Types of Mason workers

S. No	Types of Masons	No. of the Respondent	Percentage
1	Cement Mason	21	18
2	Brick Mason	20	17
3	Tile Mason	26	22
4	Stone Mason	19	16
5	Chithal (helpers)	34	29
	Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

This table shows that types of workers among the 120 respondents. 18 % of the respondents worked as a Cement Mason, 17% of the respondents worked as a Brick Mason,22% of the respondents worked as a Tile Mason, 16% of the respondents worked as a Stone Mason , 29% of the respondents as a Chithal (helpers)respectively.

FIGURE 1

TYPES OF WORK

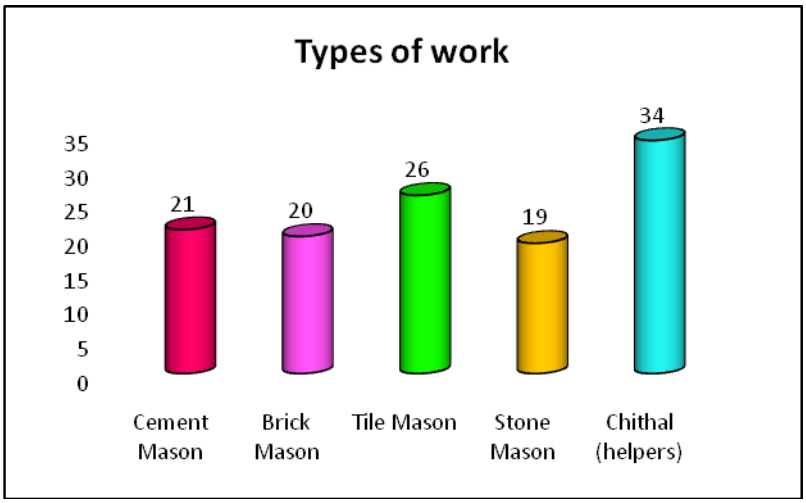


Table 2

Monthly Income of the Respondent

S. No	Income	No. of the Respondent	Percentage
1	Below 20000	15	13
2	20000- 25000	52	43
3	25000-30000	46	38
4	30000 above	7	6
	Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Above the table shows that monthly income of the respondents. Out of 120 respondents 13% of the respondents monthly income is below 20000, 43% of the respondents are 20000-25000,38% of the respondents 25000-30000 and 6% of the respondents are more than 30000 respectively.

FIGURE 2

INCOME OF THE RESPONDENT

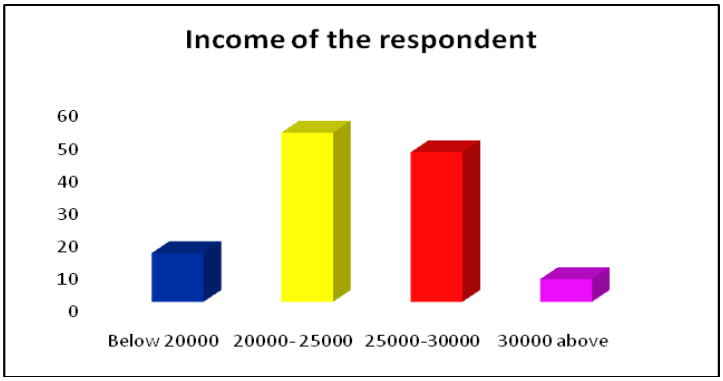


Table 3

Monthly Expenditure of the Respondent

S. No	Expenditure	No. of the Respondent	Percentage
1	Below ₹10000	72	60%
2	₹10000-₹15000	38	32%
3	₹15000-₹20000	7	6%
4	Above ₹20000	3	2%
	Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

This table shows that monthly expenditure of the respondents.60% of the respondents monthly expenditure is below 20000, 32% of the respondents monthly expenditure between 10000 -15000 and 6% of the respondents monthly expenditure between 15000-20000. 2% of the respondents monthly expenditure less than 20000 per month respectively.

FIGURE 3

MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OF THE RESPONDENT

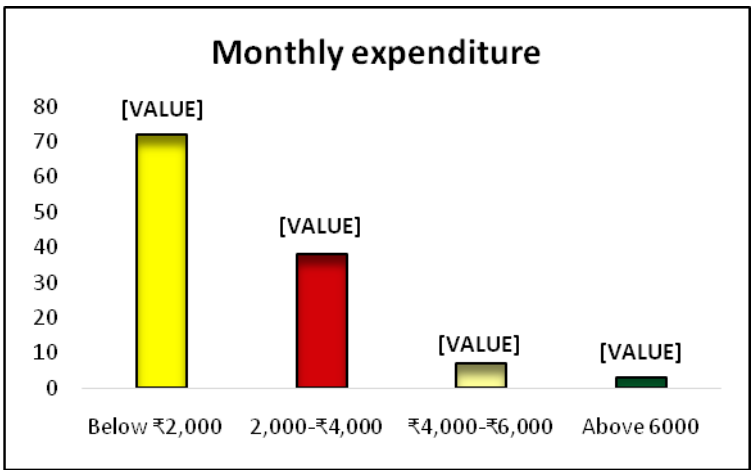


Table 4

Satisfaction of the Work

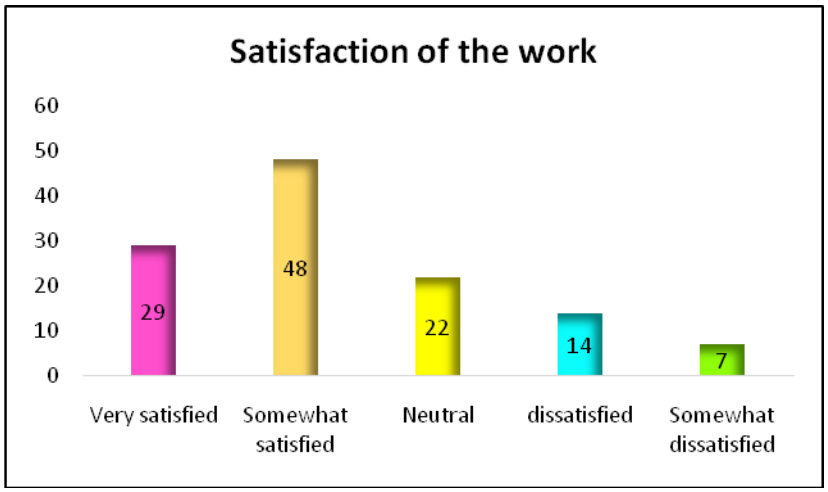
S. No	Satisfaction of the Work	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Very satisfied	29	24
2	Somewhat satisfied	48	40
3	Neutral	22	18
4	Dissatisfied	14	12
5	Somewhat dissatisfied	7	6
	Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Above table shows that worker's satisfaction with their job. 24% of the respondents feel very satisfied, 40% of the respondents feel somewhat satisfied, meanwhile 24% of the respondents feel neutral, 12% of the respondents feel dissatisfied and 6% of the respondents feel Somewhat dissatisfied respectively.

FIGURE 4

SATISFACTION OF THE WORK



CO-EFFICIENT CORRELATION:

To find out the relationship between Income and Expenditure of the respondents. The researcher is using the statistical tool of Co-efficient Correlation. The calculation the following formula is used Pearson's Correlation Formula,

$$r = \frac{n(\Sigma xy) - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma y)}{\sqrt{[\, n\Sigma x^2 - (\Sigma x)^2 \,]\,[\, n\Sigma y^2 - (\Sigma y)^2 \,]}}$$

r = -0.094

RESULTS

There is a negative correlation.

HYPOTHESIS RESEARCHER HAS LAID DOWN THE FOLLOWING HYPOTHESIS:

- That there is a direct relationship between income and Expenditure.
- That the socio-economic condition of mason labours is not good.
- In light of above discussion and present scenario of labours in the mason work, the researcher has selected this topic for the purpose of this research.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

- Maximum 34% of the respondents are working Cement Mason.

- Majority 43% of the respondents getting good salary becoming a mason worker.
- 60% of the respondents monthly expenditure is below20000 per month.
- 84% of the respondents accept their construction provide refreshment during working hours.
- Maximum 24% of the respondents feel very satisfied about their job.

SUGGESTIONS

- Role of Employers & Contractors employers should take responsibility for fair treatment, timely payments, and better work conditions.
- Health & Safety Measures ensure proper safety equipment, medical insurance, and better working conditions.
- Access to Social Security provide benefits like pensions, accident insurance, and provident funds.
- Improved work environment regulates working hours, prevent exploitation, and ensure hygienic conditions at worksites.

CONCLUSION

The socio-economic status of the workers showed that they were poor. They are daily wage earners and maintain their family with small income with difficulty. It was noted that most of them were literate. They were addicted to alcohol, smoking bidi, cigarette. They did not consume adequate amount of nutritious food. In most of the cases it was found that they lived in kacha houses. A good proportion of workers cook their food in the same room in which they leave. They used wood for cooking their food. The source of drinking and cooking water was public tube wells or taps. Latrine facility was available in most cases. Their monthly income was less due to which they had to borrow from relatives or neighbors for fulfillment of their needs. They were not aware of the different social security schemes.

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