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## A study on problems faced by women construction workers in the Gaya district

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### Abstract

An unorganised sector can be defined as the sector which is not organised for its common interests, temporary nature of employment, illiteracy, and comprises of unregistered establishments as per national commission on labour.

The workers employed in the unorganised sectors suffer from seasonal nature of employment, lack of social security etc. Majority of women construction workers face problems like low wages, sexual harassment, gender discrimination etc. Data was collected from 30 construction workers in Gaya district. The data for this study was collected through primary source i.e. interview schedule and questionnaire. The secondary data was collected from periodical, magazines and online available sites.

**Keywords:** Women workers, low wages, sexual harassment, gender discrimination etc.

### Introduction

An unorganised sector can be defined as the sector where workforce is not organised for their common interest and are in the set up of temporary nature of employment, or illiterate and mostly working with unregistered establishments. Such unorganised sector has no employee employer relationship, lack of social security discrimination in terms of wages, no minimum wages, lack of basic facilities at work place, ill-treatment, intense physical work and sexual exploitation etc.

In today's 21st century, there is too much focus on infrastructure development and construction workers are the backbones for the development of buildings, skyscrapers such as housing societies, schools, hotels and hospitals, colleges etc. They play a major role in the development of roads and highways, big skyrocket buildings, railway tracks and airports. In short construction workers play active role in order to upgrade the economic development of the country. Most of the migrant workers are engaged in construction industry and most of these workforce constitute women labourers. These women are forced to lead a very tough life. They are engaged in scaling buildings at sites and at home front these women labourers are engaged in raising children and taking care of household expenses. Researcher has adopted descriptive research design and data was collected from 20 women construction workers working at different sites in Gaya district. The researcher has adopted a simple random sampling method and data was collected from primary as well as secondary source. The primary data was collected from interview schedule. This paper attempts to analyse the working conditions, wage discrimination, gender discrimination, physical and oral harassment and other problems of such women workers in the construction industry in the Gaya district.

### Literature review

Literature review focuses on married working women and unmarried working women in this industry.

Saradmoni (1995) <sup>[14]</sup> State that women workers of construction industry are often subjected to risk of sexual harassments.

Breman (1985) <sup>[15]</sup> study these construction workers and finds out that they are exposed more to last stage of pregnancy and have to resume soon after childbirth which leads to both mother and child to risks of death.

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Tikko (2013) conducted a study on the construction women workers where they are at high risk of operating heavy machineries in extreme temperature and noisy condition. Aruna Solanki (2014) <sup>[1]</sup> conducted a study for difference in wages due to the location of working place, working conditions and other factors.

### Problems of women workers in construction sector

#### 1. Low wages as compare to men workers

The ongoing per day wages of a female worker was less than male worker but the amount of work done both by unskilled male and female worker was same yet the female worker got less per day wage than the male workers.

2. **Exploitation:** Women workers wear at risk of getting exploited by male workers physically and economically.
3. **Family problems:** Domestic violence, raising of children, managing household chores and other general family problems were common for female construction workers next paragraph
4. **Illiteracy:** Many women construction workers are illiterate and they don't know simple arithmetic. Hence they are subject to economic exploitation.

Research methodology the aim of this study is to understand the level of problems faced by the women construction workers in the Gaya district.

### Objective

1. To know the Socio economic characteristics of women workers.
2. To identify the problems faced by these workers and analyse the factors responsible for it.
3. To make women workers aware about their rights through government initiatives.

### Hypothesis

1. There is a significant relationship between problems of women workers and their literacy level.
2. There is a significant relationship between mental and physical health of women workers and the problems faced by them at work sites and the family.
3. There is a significant relationship between amount of wages paid and marital status of women workers.
4. There is a significant relationship between Wages paid to women workers and their age.

### Research design

The researcher has used the descriptive design to study about women construction workers. Size of the sample is of 20 respondents in the Gaya district. The researcher has collected primary data with the help of standard interview schedule from the respondents.

**Table 1:** Socio-economic status of women construction workers

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
20-25	3	15%
25-30	5	25%
30-35	4	20%
35-40	3	15%
40-45	3	15%
45-50	2	10%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	12	60%
Un married	5	25%
Widow	3	15%
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindus	12	60%
Islam	5	25%
Christian	3	15%
<b>Income</b>		
5000-7000	12	60%
7000-9000	6	30%
9000-10000	2	10%
<b>Type of family</b>		
Nuclear	12	60%
Joint	6	40%

### Analysis of interview schedule based upon responses from 20 women construction workers

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Health issues</b>		
Urinary infection	10	50%
Respiratory	6	30%
Skin disease	4	20%
Illiteracy	15	75%
Low wages	12	60%
Old age	5	25%
Exploitation	15	75%

### From table 1 and table 2 researcher draws inferences which are as follows

1. 60% of women construction workers are above the age group of 30 years.
2. Among 20 construction workers, 50% have urinary infection, 30% have respiratory problems and 20% have a skin problems.
3. Maximum number of workers (60%) are married and go through verbal and physical abuse (75%).
4. 75% of women workers are illiterate.

5. Maximum number of women construction workers (60%) get low wages as compared to unskilled men workers.

From the above results we can conclude that our hypothesis was correct about their low wages, literacy level and exploitation incidents which can be attributed to their poor mental and physical health and family problems altogether.

### Conclusion

Majority of women construction workers face difficulties like absence of social security, low wages, sexual harassment, gender discrimination etc. The problems can be attributed to ignorance, illiteracy and small size establishments. Apart from this these, workers develop health issues.

### Suggestions

1. Implementation of social security act like social security act 2008 for unorganised sector should be mandatory for all establishments.
2. To make awareness of health insurance cover for BPL families (a unit of five) for unorganised sector among such working women.
3. To encourage the workers from the unorganised sector to voluntarily save for their retirement

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