

## **AWARENESS OF WELFARE BENEFITS AMONG CONSTRUCTION WORKERS - A STUDY IN MANGALORE CITY**

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**Abstract:** *Welfare is anything done for the improvement of the conditions of human resources. It has gained prominence in the present day, that every worker working in a particular industry expects some of the welfare activities in favour of them by the employer. A welfare activity includes benefits given for the overall improvement of workers socially, economically and financially. When workers feel that the employers are interested in their happiness, their tendency to grouse and grumble will steadily decrease and that will promote industrial peace. The present study is focusing on the welfare benefits available for construction workers and its awareness among construction workers of Mangalore city.*

*Key words: Welfare benefits, Employer, Workers, Industrial peace, Construction industry*

### **Introduction**

Industrialization plays an important role in a country's growth by incorporating newly developed technologies. In the current rapidly changing work environment, the human resource is recognised as the most valuable asset of any industry. The role of human resources should not be overlooked despite technological advancements, as the success of any industry or work environment directly depends on the successful use of human resources (Chaubey & Rawat, 2016). As all wealth comes from natural assets and is a cornerstone of the growth of the country, labour is considered to be the most important part of a nation. The use of any resource depends mainly on the efforts and the value of the labour assets of the country. Labour is important as they need to operate the machinery and equipment. They have responsibilities and modernise new procedures to enhance the operation's efficiency and enable a nation to develop industrially (Chandrasekaran & Ganeshprabhu, 2020).

Welfare means a wide term which refers to an individual's or a group's living condition in a favorable context with the overall economic and social-ecological environment. It aims at social transformation through social law, social policy, social care, social work and social work. Welfare is a conceptual and practical field of social welfare. It covers a wide range and

includes well-being, happiness, satisfaction, preservation and human resources growth. The fundamental aim of welfare facility is to improve and preserve the lives of workers. Welfare policies can, in addition to salaries and wages, be both statutory and non-statutory regulations, require employers to extend those benefits. The goal of the labour welfare is to improve the whole individuality of workers in order to make them better employed (Poonagavanam, Prasad, R.Srinivasn, & Rengamani, 2017)

Building construction is the basic of industrial developments(Tiwary et al., 2012) According to the Indian government the construction sector accounts for 9% of GDP and hires 44 million employees. India's construction sector is an important growth indicator because it generates investment opportunities across several related sectors. The construction industry is regarded as the unorganized field of vast temporary and casual labour involving financial operation after agriculture in India. Such industries need both skilled and semi-skilled labour forces.(Chandrasekaran, 2020) Construction workers, are inherent to the loss of vital components, are an intrinsic danger to life and bodily harm. The role is informal and temporary in nature and there is also no consistency in the employer-employee relationship. (Poonagavanam et al., 2017) According to the ILO, work in the construction industry is laborious, with maximum manual or physical work involved in the construction work. The role is pretty risky and filthy. Healthy welfare programmes help preserve their health and thereby increase their effectiveness(Gopalakrishnan & Brindha, 2017)

Under the 1996 Act on Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of employment and Conditions of Services), the State Government must ensure that the intended benefits and benefits are reached to the construction workers at the earliest and to the fullest extent by the welfare boards set up in each State to track the benefits of these workers' protection, health and welfare initiatives(Poonagavanam et al., 2017) Suitable and sufficient amenities at work sites can have a significant impact on the productivity and profits of workers. However, if employees are dissatisfied with inadequate facilities, it can lead to decreased output as well as lost profit(Dok Yen & Tabi, 2018). Since 2006, the Karnataka state government has been implementing and extending the benefits and amenities of the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Act 2006 planned welfare packages for the workers(Prasad, Rao, & Nagesha, 2011) .With this background, the current study was performed to learn about the benefits available to construction workers under the Act and to gauge the level of awareness among Mangalore construction workers.

### Literature Review

**Nithin Prasad and Vittal Rao et.al (2011)** done a study on building and other construction worker welfare schemes and amenities in Karnataka. It focused on issues that construction workers confront, such as temporary work, inherent risk to life, a lack of basic amenities, and insufficient welfare services. It also focused on determining the welfare scheme's appropriateness, the amount to which it has been implemented, and the regions where it has run into problems. The study used 189 respondents as samples, and the results revealed that 92.5 percent of the 14 lakh workers were denied social payments. It was also shown that only 24% of the respondents were aware of the social programmes.

**Shanmugam and Mahadevan (2019)** did a study in the Salem area of Tamil Nadu on the awareness of labour welfare and social security policies among non-negotiable sector employees. According to the report, India's unorganised sector employs roughly 92 percent of the country's workforce. These workers were socially ostracised and lived in constant deprivation, which was linked to low living standards and social insecurity. The authors attempted to analyse the level of awareness and its relationship to the socioeconomic background of Salem's unorganised employees in this context. Using a judicial sampling procedure, Study collected 210 samples from 14 welfare boards. According to the findings of the study, age, type of dwelling, family size, time of work, and years of receiving labour welfare aid are all positively associated with awareness of labour welfare board facilities.

**Nuhu Abba et al. (2019)** did a study in Malaysia to determine the prevalence and knowledge of welfare amenities on building sites. It distributed 35 sets of structured survey questionnaires to contractors at random construction sites in Johar Bahru, Malaysia. The study's findings revealed that the welfare facilities were sufficiently stated in the preliminary section of the contractors' documentation. The majority of the respondents were also aware of the site welfare amenities, which are required by Malaysian law.

**Shamala and Rajendra Prasad (2020)** conducted research on Karnataka's migrant construction worker welfare programmes. According to reports, erratic rainfall, fragmented land holdings, and a profit-less agricultural sector have prompted rural youngsters to migrate to urban areas in search of work. The majority of migrants are drawn to the construction industry, which is primarily unregulated and informal. Researchers chose 107 respondents from various construction sites in Bangalore as samples. The bulk of workers were discovered to be unorganised because they were not enrolled under any plan. Furthermore, the majority of the employees were uninformed of the applicable protections.

According to the available literature, workers in the construction industry face a variety of issues, and their working conditions are deplorable. It has been identified that studies were conducted in different cities in India about different aspects of construction workers, but none of the studies focused on the benefits available under the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006. So, it is necessary to know the benefits available for construction workers at a micro level. This study will be focusing on the benefits available to construction workers and their awareness level about the benefits in Mangalore city.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the welfare benefits available for construction workers in Mangalore city.
2. To analyse the awareness about welfare benefits among construction workers in Mangalore city

### **Methodology**

Primary data was collected from construction workers working on construction sites in Mangalore using the interview schedule. The study selected three working construction sites in Mangalore and from each site, 10 respondents were interviewed. So, the number of respondents was 30. The data collected were analysed using the percentage method. Secondary data was acquired from a variety of periodicals and research papers.

### **Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006**

In India, construction labourers are considered a low-cost resource. They comprise a class of unorganised labourers who are forced to work in dangerous situations and with insecure employment, resulting in poor and deplorable working conditions. The stakeholders frequently ignored their health and safety concerns (Gupta, Hasan, Jain, & Jha, 2018). In order to safeguard the lives of construction workers Government of India introduced Building and Other Construction Workers Act in 1996. The Act's major goal is to govern the employment and working conditions of building and other construction workers, as well as to provide for their safety, health, and welfare, as well as other related issues. The Karnataka government enacted the act's guidelines in 2006, and they went into effect immediately (Shamala & Prasad, 2020).

Under the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006 following benefits are available for registered construction workers,

1. Pension scheme which includes disability pension and old age pension.
2. Accidental death benefits, permanent disability benefits and ex-gratia for death.
3. Marriage assistance to the beneficiary or to his two children.
4. Educational Assistance for children.

5. Loan facility for construction of house.
6. Medical assistance for treatment of major ailments and disease.
7. LPG connection and BMTC bus pass.
8. Assistance of pre-school educational and nutritional support of the child of the registered women construction workers.

To receive the benefits of the welfare scheme, workers must first register under the Karnataka Building and other Construction Workers Act 2006, after which they will be issued an identity card with their photo permanently affixed(Prasad et al., 2011). Construction work is strenuous, requiring a great deal of manual or physical labour. The welfare benefits assist them in maintaining their health and, as a result, improving their efficiency(Ananda & Siddegowda, 2020). It is the contractor's responsibility to take the lead in registering the workers under the legislation and ensuring that the benefits are available when needed.

### Analysis and discussion

This part of the study consists of profiles of respondents and the level of awareness about the benefits available under the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006. A detailed discussion of the study is analysed as follows:

**Table.1 - Personal profile of the respondents**

Variables	Classification	Frequency n =30	Percentage
Gender Distribution	Male	24	80
	Female	6	20
Age of the respondents	Less than 25	3	10
	26-35	7	23.33
	36-45	13	43.33
	Above 45	7	23.33
Nature of occupation	Mason	6	20
	Concrete worker	12	40
	Painter	1	3.33
	Helper	11	36.66
Type of work site	Small	5	16.66
	Medium	21	70
	Large	4	13.33
Registered Under Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006	Yes	20	66.66
	No	10	33.33

Source: Survey data

**Table.1.** Consists of personal profile of the respondents chosen for the study. A random sample of 30 people was chosen from the various building sites in Mangalore City. Among them, 24 (80%) were male respondents, and 6 (20%) were female. This means that a greater

proportion of male workers are employed in the construction industry. The reason behind it is that construction work is a riskier one, which makes fewer female workers do some helper work at the working site. Further, respondents belonging to the age group of 36–45 reported that 13 (43.33%) were high in number and 7 (23.33%) belonged to the age group of 26 to 35 years. 3 (10%) were under the age of 25, and 7 (23.33%) were over 45. The third variable in the table is the number of respondents who work in various occupations; a maximum of 12 (40%) worked as concrete workers, and 11 (36.66%) worked as work site helpers. 6(20%) and 1 (3.3%) were working as masons and as painters. These workers work in different sizes of work sites; among them, 21 (70%) were working in medium-sized work sites, and 5 (16.66%) and 4 (13.33%) were working in small and large-sized construction sites in various worksites in Mangalore city. From the survey, it has been identified that the maximum number of respondents 20 (66.66%) were registered themselves under the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act-2006. The remaining ten (33.33%) were aware of the act but did not register as members.

**Table.2 Awareness of workers about the benefits available under Building and Other Construction Workers Act-2006**

Sl.No	Items of the Interview Schedule	5-point Scale	Frequency n=30	Percentage
1	Pension	Fully Aware	1	3.33
		Aware	6	20
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	1	3.33
		Fully Unaware	22	73.33
2	Disability benefit	Fully Aware	1	3.33
		Aware	1	3.33
		Neutral	1	3.33
		Unaware	2	6.66
		Fully Unaware	25	83.33
3	Tool- Kit cum training programme	Fully Aware	-	-
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	2	6.66
		Fully Unaware	28	93.33
4	Housing Loan	Fully Aware	2	6.66
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	1	3.33
		Unaware	3	10
		Fully Unaware	24	80
5	Maternity Assistance	Fully Aware	1	3.33
		Aware	2	6.66
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	2	6.66

		Fully Unaware	25	83.33
6	Funeral Expenses	Fully Aware	2	6.66
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	-	-
		Fully Unaware	28	93.33
7	Medical Assistance	Fully Aware	3	10
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	1	3.33
		Fully Unaware	26	86.66
8	Accidental Death benefits	Fully Aware	2	6.66
		Aware	1	3.33
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	2	6.66
		Fully Unaware	25	83.33
9	Treatment of major ailments	Fully Aware	3	10
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	2	6.66
		Fully Unaware	25	83.33
10	Marriage Assistance	Fully Aware	5	16.66
		Aware	5	16.66
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	1	3.33
		Fully Unaware	19	63.33
11	LPG connection	Fully Aware	2	6.66
		Aware	1	3.33
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	1	3.33
		Fully Unaware	26	86.66
12	BMTC bus pass	Fully Aware	1	3.33
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	-	-
		Fully Unaware	29	96.66
13	KSRTC bus pass	Fully Aware	3	10
		Aware	1	3.33
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	-	-
		Fully Unaware	26	86.66
14	Assistance of Pre-school educational and nutritional support of the child of the registered women construction workers-Rs.6,000 per month	Fully Aware	1	3.33
		Aware	-	-
		Neutral	-	-
		Unaware	-	-
		Fully Unaware	29	96.66

Source: Survey data

From the above table, study has identified that, though maximum number of respondents were registered under the act but they were not aware of the benefits available under the act. About the pension benefit 22(73.33%) of the respondents were fully unaware which is higher than the respondents 6(20%) were aware and 1(3.33%) of the respondents fully aware and aware of the benefit. Only 1(3.33%) were fully aware of the disability pension, while 25(83%) were completely unaware. For the Tool-kit cum training programme, 28(93%) were completely unaware. In the case of housing loans, 2(6.6%) were fully aware, which is lower than the 24(80%) who were fully unaware of it. For the maternity benefit only 1(3.33%) of the respondent were unaware which is lower than the those 25(83.33%) were fully unaware. Of the funeral expenses, only 2(6%) were fully aware of them, while 28(93%) were fully unaware of them. Medical assistance for workers at a site is a much-needed benefit; the maximum number of workers is unknown. 3(10%) were fully aware, which is lower than the 26(86%) who were fully unaware of the benefit. Only 2(6%) were fully aware of the accidental death benefits available under the act, which is lower than the 25(83.33%) of the respondents who were fully unaware of it. About the major ailments, only 3(10%) were fully aware of them, and about 25(83%) of the respondents were fully unaware of them. In the case of marriage assistance, around 5(16%) were fully aware, another 5(16%) were aware, and 19(63%) were fully unaware of it. In the case of LPG connection, only 1(3%) were aware and 2(6.66%) were fully aware, which is less than the 26(86%) who were completely unaware. the BMTC bus pass, only 1(3%) were fully aware and 29(96%) were fully unaware of the benefit, and for the KSRTC bus pass, only 3(10%) were fully aware, which is less than the 26(86%) of those who were fully unaware of it. In the case of assistance of pre-school educational and nutritional support of the children of construction workers, only 1(3%) were fully aware and 29(96%) were fully unaware of the benefit.

### **Major Findings of the study**

The study has found that respondents had little knowledge of the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006. This Act is meant for the construction workers' welfare aspects, where it covers all the pension benefits, medical assistance, educational assistance, etc. to improve the lives of the workers working at different construction sites. But the major drawback is that the maximum number of the respondents were unaware of the benefits available under the act and fewer knew but didn't know how to claim those benefits. Because there has been no improvement in the lives of construction workers in the study area, the fund has remained unused. Many live in huts where if they don't work, they don't have any other alternative to earn their bread. It was also discovered that most people were



injured at work and did not receive any medical assistance for treatment; those who had worked for many years on the construction site did not receive pension benefits; and those who were disabled did not receive a disability pension. The provisions that are available to them are not being distributed effectively. As a result, it is critical to make them aware of the benefits available to them. More than 1 lakh construction workers are working in Mangalore city, the most of whom are migrant workers, and they are uninformed of the advantages given under the Building and Other Construction Workers Act-2006.

### Conclusion

Construction workers are the backbone of the country's development efforts. It is vital to provide perks in order to improve the lives of construction workers. People must be made fully aware of the benefits provided by the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Act 2006. It is the employer's responsibility to make them aware of the act, register them under it, and take the appropriate measures to avail the benefits. According to the poll, people who registered under the Act did not receive any benefits other than the Rs.3,000 granted by the government during the lockdown time. It is vital to educate them on how to avail the benefits available for them. It is the duty of the contractors, employers, and labour officers to provide sufficient information about the act and make them register under it.

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