



## Migrants in urban informal sector: A case study of construction workers in Bhubaneswar

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### Abstract

Liberalization of economy has indeed opened up the opportunities for the whole world in various segments of the corporate sector. They provide valuable service to the society. The Informal Sector is an important sector for the development of Indian Economy. Rapid urbanization has been an integral part of the developing economies during past couple of decades. This process has motivated the rural people to come to the cities in search of employment. This rural-urban migration has made phenomenal increase in urban population and urban workforce as well. In most Indian cities, the urban poor survive by working in the Informal Sectors. The main thrust of the study is to examine the demographic and socio-economic profile of street vendors and hawkers in the college square area of Bhubaneswar City. This study is mainly based on primary survey. A sample of 400 migrant construction workers has been collected with the help of a structured questionnaire and data has been collected by personal interview.

**Keywords:** informal sector, permanent migrants and seasonal migrants

### 1. Introduction

Urbanization has played a pivotal role in the process of economic development in a country. A large part of urban growth in the less developed countries has been linked with the agrarian economy. The Growth rates in agricultural production and income have generally been noted too low and unstable, across regions in under-developed country over the past decade and result in lack of livelihood opportunities in rural areas. This has led to out-migration of poor from backward rural areas to urban area in search of bread and butter. Most of these people are absorbed to engage in Urban Informal Economy. This led to the rise in poverty, growth of slums and social deprivation in large cities which act as major obstacle for development in less developed region.

The process of urbanization provides extremely limited space and resources for the poor people. Only resource that the poor can access to improve their economic condition is education and skills. The skill and education in the labour market is leading to a wage premium on skilled jobs. However, it reveals that there are increasing disparities and urban informal workers are least able to access the coveted jobs. Thus, the self-employed workers in the urban scenario face specific problems of access to credit, markets and also face various hidden costs that reduce their net income.

### 2. Objectives of the study

The main thrust of the study is to analyze the socio-economic condition of migrant-construction workers in urban informal sector, taking Bhubaneswar as a case study. The objectives are as follows:

- To examine the demographic and socio-economic profile

of migrant construction workers in Bhubaneswar.

- To identify the problems of migrant construction workers in Bhubaneswar in terms of employment, income and living conditions.

### 3. Hypotheses of the study

The hypothesis of the study is to analyze the migrant-construction worker in urban informal sector taking Bhubaneswar as a case study which is as follows:

- Construction workers engaged in Informal Sector are mainly, the Inter-District and Intra- District migrants.
- The number of male construction worker is more than the female construction workers in the study area.

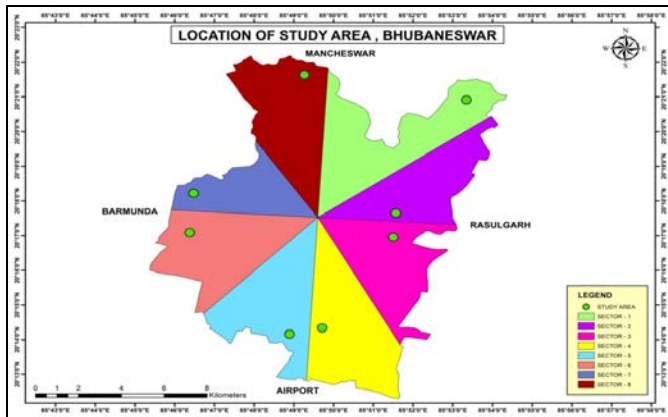
### 4. Database and Methodology

The present study is based both on primary as well as secondary source of data. The main sources of secondary data are as follows:-

#### 4.1 Primary Data Sources

This study is mainly based on primary survey and therefore the socio-demographic and economic profile of the migrant construction worker in Bhubaneswar has been discussed using data generated by primary survey. Primary survey becomes essential due to lack of published and reliable data on the characteristic and economic parameters of the Informal Sector. Though NSSO provides some data on Informal Sector, an analysis of the socio-economic and demographic correlates of migrants workers in construction require data generated in field survey. Of all activities under Informal Sector, construction work has become very important activity in large

and metropolitan cities. Bhubaneswar, as the capital city and one of the smart cities in India has become the center of attraction for many unemployed aspirant. So, construction work has become an important economic activity in the city. Construction work in the city is classified into two types: (i) residential construction and (ii) nonresidential construction. As it is obvious, the Non-Residential construction works include various forms catering to the need of Heavy Industries, Railway Bridges, Fly-over, Highways, Water treatment plants, Institutional and Commercial Centre.



Map 1: Location of study area

For the selection of construction sites, the city has been divided into eight sectors with the help of two sets of orthogonal lines. The orthogonal lines are drawn accordingly to the distribution of construction sites. So each of the sites eight sectors have roughly, equal number of construction sites. From each of these sectors, two construction sites were selected arbitrarily giving equal representation to residential and non-residential or commercial construction site. A sample of 50 migrant workers from each construction site has been selected. Data were collected using interview method personally using a well-structured questionnaire. Prior to the final collection of data a pilot survey was conducted. The results of which has form on the basis of finalization of questionnaire. The main analysis has been depending on various statistical techniques percentages, maps, bars, charts and diagrams.

**5. Demographic Aspects**

The Administrative Jurisdiction of the BMC spreads over an extent of 135 sq. km. The entire Municipal area is divided into 47 administrative divisions called ‘Wards’. The city had a population of 843402 in 2011, with a growth rate of 29.27 percent during the period 2001-2011. It was observed that the city always had a population growth rate higher than that of the State. As per 2011 Census the density of the Bhubaneswar City is 6228.4 persons per sq. km. The Sex Ratio of the city is 890 and the child sex ratio is 904 whereas the literacy rate is 91.87 percent. The male literacy rate is 94.66 percent and female literacy rate is 88.73 percent. The percentage share of Scheduled Caste population and Scheduled Tribe population is 8.27 percent and 5.04 percent. The total slum population of Bhubaneswar City is 19.5 percent. The Workforce participation rate is 35.55 percent.

In the present study a sample size of 400 workers has been taken who are engaged as Construction Worker in Bhubaneswar City. These 400 workers or interviewer constitutes 2308 populations out of which male population constitutes 53.4 percent and female population constitutes 46.6 percent. The Sex-Ratio of the study is 873 which is less than the National Average. The Child Sex Ratio is 917. Sex Ratio is found to be less may be due to the presence of seasonal workers constitutes 33 percent of the population. Generally Seasonal workers are those who have migrated without family for a short span of time. They use to leave their family members at their native place and come to the cities for working as a construction worker.

In the present study, Migrants can be mainly classified into two type, seasonal migrant and permanent migrant. Seasonal Migration is those migrant during different season for different business purpose. For example, Seasonal Migrants are those people who come to the cities to work in the non-agricultural season. During summer they come for three months i.e. March, April and May and again go back to their native place for cultivation. These workers are mainly work as labourer in this sector. Seasonal Migrants are the workers who migrate without their family.

Table 1: Percentage Share of Migrants to the Total Population, Sex-Wise.

Migrants	Total		Male		Female	
	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)
Total	2308	100.0	1232	53.4	1076	46.6
Seasonal	868	37.6	484	21.0	384	16.6
Permanent	1440	62.4	748	32.4	692	30.0

Source: Primary Survey

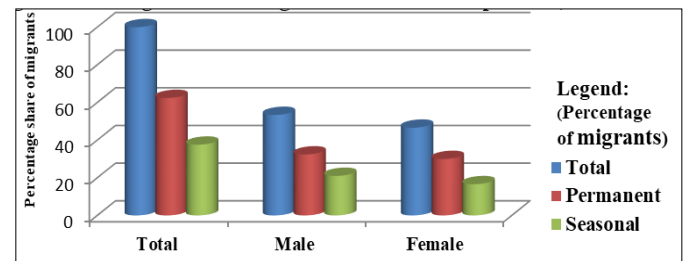


Fig 1: Percentage Share of Migrants to the Total Population, Sex-Wise

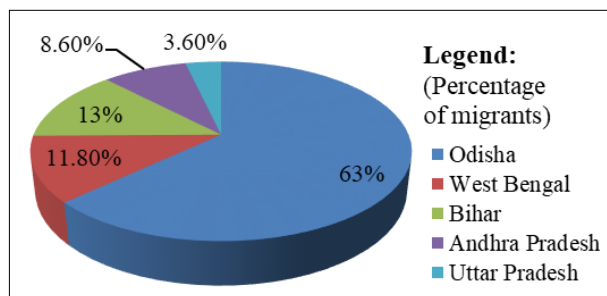
The above table depicts that the percentage share of seasonal and permanent migrants, sex-wise. The table shows that percentage share of male migration is more than the female. It is revealed that the percentage share of permanent migrants 62.4 percent is more than the seasonal migrants which is 37.6 percents only. It is also observed that the percentage of male migrants in higher than the female migrants both in case of seasonal as well as permanent migrants. It is because the workers engaged in the Construction Sites are those who have migrated without family. They use to leave there family members at their home town and come to this place to sell the items as per requirement. Therefore the male percentage of migrants is 53.4 percent whereas the women migrant is 46.4 percent. Male percentage of both the Seasonal and Permanent Migrant is 21 and 32.4 percent is higher than the women

Seasonal and Permanent Migrant which is 16.6 and 30 percent respectively.

**Table 2:** Percentage Share of Migrants, State-Wise.

State-Wise	Migrants						
	No. of HH.	Total		Males		Females	
		Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)
W.B.	44	272	11.8	160	6.9	112	4.9
U.P.	16	84	3.6	48	2.1	36	1.5
Bihar	36	300	13.0	156	6.8	144	6.2
A.P.	40	200	8.6	84	3.6	116	5.0
Odisha	264	1452	63.0	784	34.0	668	29.0
Total	400	2308	100.0	1232	53.4	1076	46.6

Source: Primary Survey



**Fig 2:** Percentage Share of Migrants, State-Wise.

In the study area the migration forms to be more from neighboring states i.e. Bihar, U.P. Andhra Pradesh West Bengal and within the state i.e. Odisha. Odisha shares highest share of migrants of 63 percent whereas 13 percent of workers belongs to Bihar, 11.8 percent workers migrate from West Bengal, 8.6 percent of the workers migrate from Andhra Pradesh and 3.6 percent of worker migrates from Uttar Pradesh. Out of total migration percentage share of Inter-State migration is 37.1 percent while the rest 62.9 percent is Intra-State migration. The study depicts that the people from the neighboring states like Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh have been migrated to Bhubaneswar City in search of job. The migration from the state Bihar and West

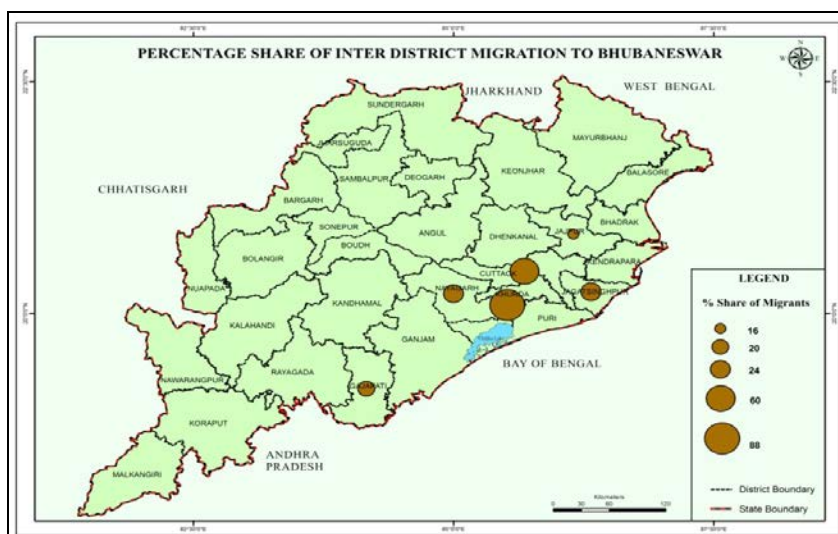
Bengal is the most compare to other two States like Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Comparatively the intra-state migration is more rather than inter-state because other major state, like Kolkata, Vishakhapatnam, Raipur and Hyderabad attract more construction worker than Bhubaneswar. But the Workers from Odisha prefer Bhubaneswar compare to other major city.

**Table 3:** Percentage Share of Inter District Migrant to Bhubaneswar, Districts-Wise.

Districts	Migrants						
	No. of HH.	Total		Males		Females	
		Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)
Gajapati	20	136	5.9	68	2.9	68	2.9
Nayagarh	24	112	4.9	64	2.8	48	2.1
Jagatsingpur	24	120	5.2	60	2.6	60	2.6
Jajpur	16	92	4.0	48	2.1	44	1.9
Cuttack	60	372	15.9	188	8.2	180	7.8
Khorda	88	456	19.8	272	11.8	184	8.1
Others	32	164	7.3	84	3.6	84	3.6
Total	264	1452	63.0	784	34.0	668	29.0

Source: Primary Survey

If we look at the over-all picture of migration in the study area. The study area experience migration from different districts of Odisha like Khorda, Cuttack, Gajapati, Jagatsingpur, Nayagarh, Jajpur, etc. 19.80 percent of workers are from Khorda, 15.9 percent workers are from Cuttack, 5.9 percent workers are from Gajapati, 5.2 percent workers from Jagatsingpur, 4.9 percent workers from Nayagarh, 4 percent workers from Jajpur, and rest of the 7.3 percent are from other districts. Khorda shares the highest number of percentage of Construction Worker followed by Khorda, Cuttack, Gajapati, Jagatsingpur, Nayagarh, Jajpur, etc. The Ravenstein’s Law of Migration is applicable for the inter-district migration. It has been observed in the study that the people from the neighboring districts have migrated more than the others districts of Odisha.



Source: Primary Survey

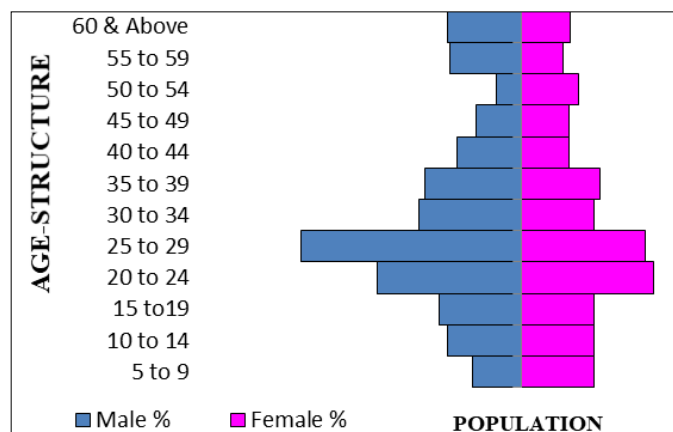
**Fig 3:** Percentage Share of Inter District Migrant to Bhubaneswar, Districts-Wise.

**Table 4:** Age Sex Structure of the Family Members

Age Sex Structure	Population					
	Total		Males		Females	
	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)
0-4	164	7.0	56	2.4	108	4.6
5-9	136	5.9	56	2.4	80	3.5
10-14	164	7.1	84	3.6	80	3.5
15-19	172	7.5	92	4.0	80	3.5
20-24	308	13.4	160	7.0	148	6.4
25-29	386	16.7	246	10.7	140	6.0
30-34	196	8.5	116	5.0	80	3.5
35-39	196	8.5	108	4.7	88	3.8
40-44	124	5.4	72	3.1	52	2.3
45-49	102	4.5	50	2.2	52	2.3
50-54	92	4.0	28	1.2	64	2.8
55-59	128	5.5	80	3.5	48	2.0
60 & Above	140	6.0	84	3.6	56	2.4
Total	2308	100.0	1232	53.4	1076	46.6

Source: Primary Survey

From the above table of age-sex structure it have been noticed that the concentration of males are more in 25-29 age group. But in the case of female the concentration is more between 20-24 age groups. The working age group is more compared to the children and the old age group. Therefore we can say that dependency ratio is moderate, neither too high nor too low. There had been an exception in the age group of 60 and above where we can find out that there sudden increase in population. It is because of the classification criteria of the age-group.



**Fig 4:** Age Sex Structure of the Family Members

**6. Social aspects**

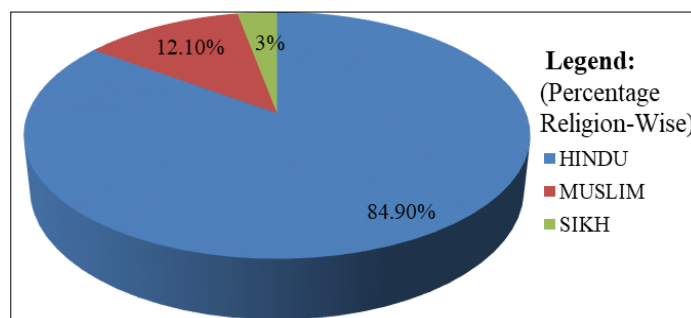
Social indicators are defined as statistical measures that describe social trends and conditions impacting on human well-being. The social indicators cover the full range of issues that matter for individual, community and societal well-being. The social indicators are levels of poverty, religion, education levels, caste, etc. Out of 400 samples of migrant construction workers in Bhubaneswar 340 samples are males whereas rests of the 60 sample are women.

**Table 5:** Percentage Share of Households, Religion-Wise

Types of Religion	No. of HH.	Migrants					
		Total		Males		Females	
		Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)
Hindu	340	1960	84.9	1032	44.7	928	40.2
Muslim	48	280	12.1	160	6.9	120	5.2
Sikh	12	68	03	40	1.8	28	1.2
Total	400	2308	100.0	1232	53.4	1076	46.6

Source: Primary Survey

From the above table the Hindu religion constitutes of 84.9 percent of population, followed by Sikhs and Muslims which are 12.1 and 3 percent respectively. Most of population belongs to Hindu, in which male comprises of 53.4 percent and female comprises of 46.6 percent.



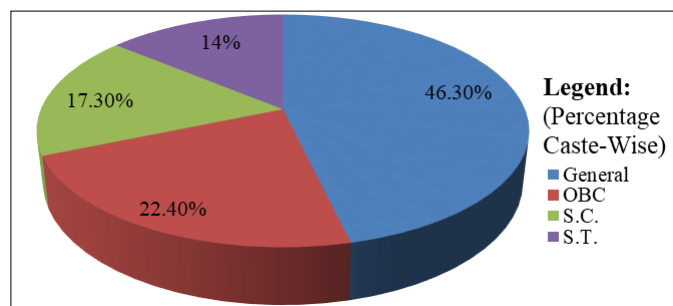


**Fig 5:** Percentage Share of Households, Religion-Wise

**Table 6:** Percentage Share of Households, Caste-Wise

Castes	No. of HH.	Migrants					
		Total		Males		Females	
		Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)
General	172	1068	46.3	596	25.8	472	20.5
S.C.	72	400	17.3	220	9.5	180	7.8
S.T.	56	324	14	152	6.6	172	7.4
OBC	100	516	22.4	264	11.5	252	10.9
Total	400	2308	100.0	1232	53.4	1076	46.6

Source: Primary Survey



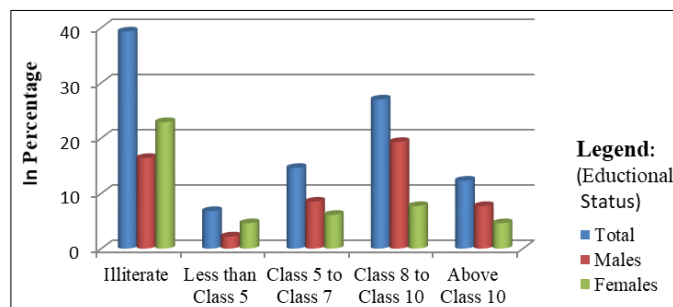
**Fig 6:** Percentage Share of Households, Caste-Wise

As per the collected data, General Category constitutes 46.3 percent, 17.3 percent belongs to SC, 14 percent belong to ST and remaining 22.4 percent are OBC. The percentage share of different category of the people is well distributed.

**Table 7:** Levels of Education of the Family Members, Sex Wise

Levels Of Education	Total		Males		Females	
	Abs. No.	(In %)	Abs. No.	(In %)	Abs. No.	(In %)
Illiterate	852	39.3	356	16.4	496	22.9
Less than Class 5	148	6.8	48	2.2	100	4.6
Class 5 to Class 7	316	14.6	184	8.5	132	6.1
Class 8 to Class 10	588	27	420	19.3	168	7.7
Above Class 10	268	12.3	168	7.7	100	4.6
Total	2172	100	1176	54.1	996	45.9

Source: Primary Survey



**Fig 7:** Levels of Educational of the Family Members, Sex Wise

From the above table the education among migrant

construction worker in Bhubaneswar is generally low. Out of total, around 39.3 percent of workers are illiterate, 6.8 percent of the vendors have only primary level of education, 14.6 percent of population has upper primary level of education, 27 percent of population studied up to matric and only 12.3 percent of population has studied up to high secondary level and above. It is also revealed from the above tables that most of the female section of the society is illiterate i.e. 22.9 percent whereas male illiterate is 16.4 percent. In all the levels of education it found that male population is having more education than female except in the primary level. In primary education male comprises of 2.2 percent and female comprises of 4.6 percent. Other than that from class 5 to class 7 male literacy-rates is 8.5 while the female literacy-rate is 6.1 percent. In the next level of education the study reveals that 19.3 percent of male population has studies till matric while 7.7 percent of female studied till matric. Similarly in the higher secondary level the literacy rate among the male is 7.7 percent while in female it is 4.6 percent only.

**7. Economic Aspects**

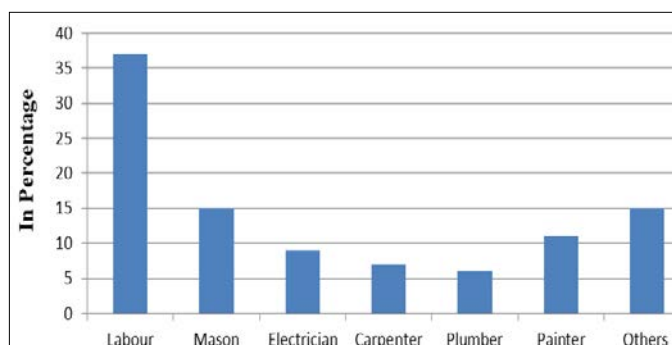
Total population in the study area is 2308, out of which only 992 are working population. Work Force Participation Rate (WFPR) of the 400 samples in the study area is 42.98 percent. Male Work Force Participation Rate (MWFPR) refers to the ratio between the total number of male workers to total male population is expressed in percentages. Migrant construction workers are mainly male worker in the study area. The total male population found to be 1232, out of which 876 are working populations and which constitutes the male workforce participation rate as 71.1 percent of male workers to the total population. The total number of female population in the study area is 1076, out of which the female workforce is 116. So, the Female Workforce Participation Rate (FWFPR) is low i.e. 10.8 percent. In the study area 652 of dependent population found to be from the age group of 0 to 15 years and above 59 years in contrast to independent population from the 15 to 59 years of age group found to be 1656. The Dependency Ratio is 39.4 percent of total populations. Analysis clearly reveals that dependency ratio of the study area is found low which is good. But most of the population in the study area stops their education after matric because they want to join the family business and provide income and a way of livelihood to their family. It will provide smile to their family.

The migrant construction workers in the informal sector are versatile and dynamic sector, which includes a variety of economic activities. The Informal Sector is seen in our daily life including daily labour, mason, electrician, plumbers, etc. In the study area variety of migrant construction worker are like daily labour, mason, electrician, plumber, carpenter, painter, marble-cutters, etc. The average working hours of the workers in the study area examined and found to be 9 hours per day approximately.

**Table 8:** Worker with types of occupation and average working hour

Types of Workers	Total Workers		Males		Females		Average Working Hours Per Day (In Hrs.)
	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	Abs. Pop.	(In %)	
Labour	148	37	88	22	60	15	8.43
Mason	60	15	60	15	-	-	8.60
Electrician	36	09	36	09	-	-	8.77
Carpenter	28	07	28	07	-	-	10.42
Plumber	24	06	24	06	-	-	8.66
Painter	44	11	44	11	-	-	9.00
Others	60	15	60	15	-	-	9.60
Total	400	100	340	85	60	15	9.07

Source: Primary Survey



**Fig 8:** Worker with Types of Occupation

The above table reflects the types of occupation, numbers of workers and their working hour per day. Finding reveals that 37 percent of the workers are daily labour and their working hours are 08 per day, followed by Mason which has 15 percent and they works for 8 hours per day. 9 percents of the workers are engaged as electrician and they work for 10 hours per day whereas 7 percents of workers are Carpenter and their working hour is 10 hours per day. Plumbers comprises of 6 percent of total worker and they work for 7 hours per day, 11 percent of the workers are engaged as a painter and the total working hours is found to be 8 hours. The rest of the workers like welders, tiles workers, fabrication etc comprises of 15 percent of the total workers and they works for 9 hours in an average. The average working hours for all the workers is 8.57 hours. This proves that the workers from the informal sector The construction worker comes to the city in search of jobs. But involving in the formal sector is a very difficult because of high competition. These workers lack experience as well as high educational qualification. So forcefully they have to join the work in informal sector which is very easy to entry. The income provide livelihood to their family. In Bhubaneswar the daily wages are same for each group. But wages changes from group to group. The migrant workers get their salary from the contractor when they go back to their home at the end of the month or at the end of three months. It varies from worker to worker. But the worker like plumber, electrician, painter, etc gets their payment at the end of their contract or some of them also get their payment at the end of the weeks. The volume and terms of trade of this construction workers depends on timing of their work and their families typically relies on daily wages as their primary source of household income. The Informal Sector provides low and irregular wages for the occupants. Still they work hard for their livelihood.

**Table 9:** Income Status of the Respondents

Class Interval of Monthly Income (in Rs.)	Number of Individual Workers	Number of House-Holds
4000-7999	96	20
8000-11999	248	48
12000 – 15999	40	72
16000 & Above	16	260
Total	400	400

Source: Primary Survey

The above table presents the individual and family income of workers engaged in Informal Sector. 96 samples of worker come under the individual income range of rupees 4,000-7,999 whereas 248 workers are categorized under individual income range of rupees 8,000 to 11,999. On the other hand 40 workers come under individual income range of rupees 12,000 to 15,999 and 16 workers come under the range of 16,000 and above. Finding shows that majority of individual income of the workers in the study area is mostly earning between the ranges of rupees 8,000 to 11,999 of individual income because most of the construction worker. But if we consider the family income 20 samples represent the family income range between the rupees 4000-7,999, the next 48 samples represent the range of rupees 8000-11,999 while the next 72 samples represent the range of rupees 12,000-15,999 and the last range 16,000 and above comprises of 260 sample. The most of the family income sample represent the group the range of 16000 and above. This prove that though there income is low still but workforce in the family is more that is why 260 house-hold have the total family income which is more than 16000 and above.

**8. Miscellaneous Aspects**

From the above table it can be revealed that the percentage share of house-hold using the tap water is more compare to well and tube-well. The population using tap water is 68 percent, whereas the population using well and tube well is 4.3 and 27.7 percent respectively. Most of the sources of tab water are either provided by municipality or by company. The water is in not safe for drinking water because they directly consume the water. They don't use any method of filtration to the water. So there is a chance of facing the health problem like jaundice, diarrhea, hepatitis b, etc. From the above table it can be revealed that the percentage share of house-hold is using the sources of electricity provide more by the Municipality compare to Company. Municipality provides

61.3 percent of the electricity whereas 38.7 percent of electricity is provided by Company. In the study area most of the house-hold uses LPG i.e. 39.2 percent, whereas kerosene stove is used by 30.5 percent, wood is used by 21.1 percent and electric heater is used by 9.2 percent.

### 9. Conclusion

Most of the people engaged in Construction Work have permanently settle in most of the nearby the nearby slum or any low cost residential area. They have brought their family members from their native place and make them engaged in the different other jobs. Some of the bachelor workers are also provided with tents or asbestos house. Generally, the male prefer to this sector but female are only used as a labour. This kind of job is very laborious because heavy weight has to carry form one place to another.

The social security initiatives of the Centre, State and NGO's implemented during the past indicated that the needs are much more than the supports provided and the efforts must be targeted and vast enough to cover the growing Construction Workers. It is argued that the major security needs of the informal workers are food security, nutritional security, health security, housing security, employment security, income security, life and accident security, and old age security. In sum, the study calls for a Comprehensive, Universal and Integrated Social Security System for the Construction Workers in India.

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