

# A Study on Workers Perception about Health, Safety and Welfare Measures in Nilgiris District

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**Abstract**—Workers health, safety and welfare are the measures of stimulating the efficiency of workers. The various health, safety and welfare measures provided by the tea plantation estates and the company will have instant effect on the health, physical and mental efficiency attentiveness, confidence and complete efficiency of the worker and thereby contributing to the higher throughput. Some of the conveniences and amenities which fall within the preview of labour health, safety and welfare includes education on safety measures, waste disposal arrangements, facilities for drinking water, Latrines and urinals, availability of medical aids and check-ups, adequate canteen facilities, accommodation arrangements, recreational facilities, medical facilities transportation facilities for traveling from & to the tea plantation estates.

The research of the study highlights the health, safety and welfare measures provided to the tea plantation workers in the tea plantation estates, the workers' satisfaction level, and to identify the level of benefits given to the tea plantation workers by the tea plantation estates and the unions. The Data collection was done through schedule basis. A sample size of 245 tea plantation workers has been selected for this study covered around 20 tea plantation estates and 12 tea plantation unions. Convenient Sampling technique is applied and descriptive type of research is undertaken to determine the cause and effect of the tea plantation workers in Nilgiris District.

**Keywords**—Workers perception; welfare measures; health and safety in Nilgiris district.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of labour health, safety and welfare are flexible and extensively varies with respect to the period, area, industry, country, public value and taxes, degree of development the general socio economic development of the people and political beliefs prevailing during a specific time frame. It is also, blinded according to the gender, age, marital status, working experience, educational level of workers in various tea plantation estates in Nilgiris District.

Anything that can do for the knowledgeable, physical, ethical and financial benefits of the worker is very much essential. Whether by the tea estates, by the government or other interventions over and above what is placed down by law or what is usually predictable of the contractual benefits for which the tea plantation workers have bargained. According to the board on labour welfare services such facilities and services as lunch room facilities, canteen facilities, crèche facilities, availability of drinking water, latrines and urinals facilities, medical facilities, travelling arrangement and for the accommodation of tea plantation worker employed at a distance from their home and such other services. Such facilities and amenities may to enable the workers hired to perform their work in a strong & pleasant surroundings, maintains on providing conveniences conducive to good health and high morale.

In India, labour welfare started in its wider sense but has progressively turn into thinner in viewpoint. The main motive of their labour welfare scheme is to bring a happy firm and worker relations. Mostly, it arrange for an expressively acceptable work atmosphere. To encounter the lawful requirements one must provide labour welfare facilities. The

social restructuring movement of the 20th century included within their scope, the term labour welfare.

Labour health, safety and welfare activities in India are instantly required since India is a business backward country and the employed circumstances are not agreeable in Indian industries. The labours are underprivileged and uneducated. They are normally liable for being irresponsible and lazy. Labour health, safety and welfare activities are essential for educating their employed conditions and their economic and living standards. In contemporary society, economic development of workers plays a vital role in production. Hence, by enriching labour, the economic development of the nation increases evidently which in turn raises the National productivity.

In ancient days, the companies bottled-up the labours by compensating less wages and pull out more work that too in an unacceptable working environment. This has formed conflict between the company and the worker. To safeguard the workers from the ill-treatment of firm, the workers trade unions were formed to resolve their honest problems.

The data collected and analysed in various headers such as health, safety and welfare measures from several tea estates and unions in Nilgiris District. To know the tea plantation workers health aspects, a set of factors are surveyed such as whether the management properly arranged for waste disposal, sufficient drinking water is available in the working unit. Similarly, the latrines and urinals for both genders are properly maintained. Adequate numbers of first aid boxes are available. The number of medical camps is conducted in a year arranged by the union or the management. To identify whether the management taking any further steps after the medical check-up for Anaemic, Tuberculosis, Malaria, Typhoid, Waterborne diseases Gastro enteritis and some harmful diseases. The company runs any garden hospitals inside the tea plantation

unit. General comments about the availability of medicines are received from the tea plantation workers. Safety measures are followed in the company for snake bites or leech bites.

The data collected and analysed to know whether the management providing education on safety measures which is provided to all inside tea plantation unit. Further, the research investigated whether safe environment of provided, motivation is given to participate in safety efforts, prevention of all access to the danger zone. Any restrictions followed by the management for the workers to carry or move heavy load. Gloves, uniforms and weather related clothing are provided periodically. Accidental claims or compensation are properly provided by the company.

Further the data collected and analysed to know the welfare facilities provided by the management or from the union side. List of factors are discussed with the workers such as canteen facilities are provided by the management. Similarly, lunch rooms are provided for the workers. Crèche facilities are provided and Educational facilities for the worker's children. Housing facilities are provided for the workers and whether electrical facilities provided in their residence. Recreational facilities are provided to the workers. The data further discussed about the overall facilities are good. The research further enquired with the workers such as welfare facilities are taken care by welfare officer and availability of any consumer shops such as fair price shops in nearby location. The management launched any movements for the welfare of the plantation workers and their families. Supervised by Government periodically regarding the administration in the management side. The temporary workers are regularized by the management as per the provisions. Occurrence of strikes and lock outs in the tea plantation units. The transport facilities are provided for the administration and operative purpose; and education of the workers' children by the management.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Women tea plantation workers in Munnar organized a nine-day strike regarding the plantation workers' demand for a hike in wages. The issue has been resolved by the Chief Minister of Kerala, Omen Chandy and all the stakeholders, including approved trade unions, representatives of the agitating women and elected representatives of the people, reached an agreement. (NDTV—"Munnar Tea Plantation Workers End Nine-Day Strike", Sep. 13, 2015). Kurian (1999) completed an evaluative study on the socio-economic contextual, working and living environments, consumption pattern and physical excellence of life of women workers in the plantation sector of Kerala. The terms and conditions of work of women workers in plantations are governed by the Plantation Labour Act, 1951, Kerala Plantations Labour Rules, 1959 and other statutory benefits. The study stresses that requirements of these Acts are not applied fully and the physical excellence of life of these women workers are far away from satisfactory.

An attempt has been made to identify the problems faced by the women tea plantation workers, examine the services

offered to them, and determine the satisfaction level of the women workers in tea estates in Nilgiris district. The collected primary and secondary data has been reviewed and various tools have been applied to analyse the collected data. The results were evaluated and identified that there was a significant relationship between the demographic factors and the health related problems faced by the women workers. Major section of the respondents were illiterate, and were debited in the process of plucking the tea leaves, as this activity produces a major portion of the revenue for the tea estates. The results inferred that work allotment and relationship with colleagues, support and reward, safe environment, compensation, and training and development influenced the levels of job satisfaction significantly. Furthermore, it was also found that four factors, that is, Disability, workplace environment, Pay and Conveyance, and Work timings were the highly problematic factors causing dissatisfaction among the women workers employed in the tea estates. (Amsaveni et al., Oct 2013)

Rishi Iyengar (2015) stated that as one of the world's most popular beverages reportedly second only to water, the production of tea is vastly important. But the living conditions of many tea-plantation workers in India - the world's second largest producer of the drink - are not given nearly as much importance, an investigation by the BBC has revealed. The workers, who help supply to massive global brands like Tetley's, Lipton, Twinning's and PG Tips, are paid about \$1.50 a day - far lower than India's already low minimum wage - with many malnourished and prone to diseases as a result of their unclean existence. The BBC also found workers spraying harmful chemicals without using protecting gear, and said that child labor was being used on some estates.

## III. RESEARCH PLAN

### *Objectives of the Study*

- 1) To identify the workers perception about health, safety and welfare measures in Nilgiris district.
- 2) To find out the level of satisfaction of tea plantation workers in Nilgiris District with regard to labour health, safety and welfare facilities
- 3) To study the extent of health, safety and welfare facilities provided by the tea planation companies and the tea plantation unions in Nilgiris District
- 4) To examine the effect of inadequate welfare facilities of worker's health, efficiency and industrial relations in Nilgiris District
- 5) To provide suggestions to the tea plantation estates based on findings and the interpretation evaluated.

### *Scope of the Study*

- 1) To avoid loss of life of the tea plantation workers in Nilgiris District.
- 2) To improve the workers satisfaction who working in tea plantation estates in Nilgiris District.
- 3) To have a better cooperation with the tea plantation workers union and hence to avoid conflicts between them.

### Limitations of the Study

In spite of detailed analysis made in the present study, this study is not free from limitations. The following are the important limitations:

- 1) The study is purely based on the views of 245 respondents only and hence the results may not be generally pertinent.
- 2) The geographical area of this study is confined only to Nilgiris District.
- 3) The study is period specific.
- 4) The survey is collected from various tea plantation estates and union selected using convenient sampling method.
- 5) The limitations of this method are applicable to this study.

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Methodology

In order to reach the objectives of the study, a sample survey was conducted inside the tea plantation estates in Nilgiris District and the responses were collected from the workers of the tea plantation estates in Nilgiris District. A questionnaire was given to the workers and was asked to respond to the questions related to the safety, health and welfare activities of the tea plantation estates in Nilgiris District.

### Sample Size

Sample size of 245 tea plantation workers has been taken in the tea plantation estates through a convenient sampling technique. This technique was adopted due to the fact that the tea plantation estates have several workers and it is difficult to apply a random sampling technique.

### Type of Research

A descriptive type of research is undertaken to determine the cause and effect of the tea plantation workers in Nilgiris district.

### Data Collection Method

Data was collected directly from the respondents through questionnaires, personal interviews and discussions with workers working in tea plantation estates and unions. The responses of the workers towards "safety, health and welfare" measures in the organization is analysed using appropriate statistical tools.

### Analysis of Data

The data collected was analysed using appropriate statistical tools and the results are presented appropriately addressing the objectives mentioned above

### Area of the Study

The method of research which the Researcher have undertaken is based on the analytical (Present position), Historical (previous position), Comparative (comparison with other places), statistical (collection of details and conditions), Critical (finding out the defects and suggestions), The

Researcher has selected the following managements for this study namely

- 1) Forest Dale Estate, Coonoor,
- 2) Graigmore plantation, Coonoor,
- 3) Coonoor Tea Estates, Coonoor,
- 4) Tan-Tea Pandiyaru Division,
- 5) Tan-Tea, Cherangode,
- 6) Tan-Tea, Tiger Hill Division,
- 7) Non-Such Tea Estate, Coonoor,
- 8) Orchidin Estate, Coonoor,
- 9) Dun Sandal Estate, Ooty,
- 10) Glenmorgan Estate, Ooty,
- 11) Stanes Amalgamated Co., Ltd, Lovedale, Ooty
- 12) Kariyabetta Estate, Kotagiri,
- 13) Kodanadu Estate, Kotagiri,
- 14) Kil-Kotagiri Estate, Kil-Kotagiri,
- 15) Manjushri Plantations, Gudalur,
- 16) Rock wood Estate, Gudalur,
- 17) Harrison Malayalam Plantations, Gudalur,
- 18) May Field Estate, Gudalur,
- 19) Silver Cloud Estate, Gudalur,
- 20) Devarsholai Estate, Gudalur

From the above 20 Estates, 170 respondents are selected on Area random sampling method.

The following Trade-Unions are also selected for this research. They are

- 1) Neelamalai Anna Plantation Labour Union [ATP],
- 2) The Nilgiri District Estate Workers Union [INTUC],
- 3) Tamilnadu Plantation Labour progressive Union [LPF],
- 4) Plantation Labour Association [AITUC],
- 5) Nilgiri Estate Workers Union [CITU],
- 6) Anna Plantation Workers Union [APWU],
- 7) Plantation Labour Organization [PLO],
- 8) Plantation Labour and Supervisor Union [IPWU],
- 9) Dr. Ambedgar Socialist Estate Workers Union [ASEWU],
- 10) Anna Government Employees and General Workers Union [ATP],
- 11) Anna M.G.R Plantation Workers Union [ATP],
- 12) Desiya Murpokku Plantation Workers Union [DMDMK].

The researcher has selected 80 members from this union on Area sampling method to conduct his research to find out the solution and to advocate them.

## V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The primary data from 245 respondents collected through questionnaire and were analysed using simple percentage method. It has been interpreted that

*General information:* 0.4 % of the respondents are 'Below 18' years of age, 2% of the respondents are '18-25' years of age, 35.9% of the respondents are '26-35' years of age, 34.7% of the respondents are '36-45' years of age and 26.9% of the respondents are 'Above 45' years of age. 50.2% of the respondents are 'Male' whereas 49.8% of the respondents are

'Female'. 95.1% of the respondents got 'Married' whereas 4.9% of the respondents are 'Unmarried'.

*Working experience and timings:* 1.6% of the respondents working 'Less than 1 year' whereas 6.9% of the respondents working 'Between 1 and 3 years', 30.6% of the respondents working 'Between 3 and 5 years', 60.8% of the respondents 'More than 5 years'. Majority 78% of the respondents working 'Between 7 to 9 hours' per day. 98% of the respondents working 'Six' days per week and majority 68.6% of the respondents getting salary by 'Cash' only.

*Arrangement for waste disposal:* Only 24.9% of the respondents are agree with the waste disposal arrangements made inside the company which implies that the waste disposal arrangements for partially taken care by the management.

*Availability of drinking water:* Only 41.2% of the respondents are agree with the facilities of sufficient drinking water inside the company which implies that the facility of drinking water is not available in many of the tea plantation working areas.

*Maintenance of latrine and urinal for both genders:* Majority 75.9% of the respondents are agree with the latrines and urinal facilities arranged by the management which are properly maintained for both genders in the work area. The result inferred that the maintenance of latrine and urinal for both genders are quite good.

*Availability of first aid box:* Majority 55.1% of the respondents are agree with the adequate number of first aid boxes which are available in the work area.

*Medical camp conducted in a year:* 1.2% of the respondents stated that their company conducting medical camps averagely 'Above 4 times' in a year whereas 20% of the respondents stated '3-4 times' in a year, 69% of the respondents stated '1-2 times' in a year, 9.8% of the respondents stated no medical camps conducting.

*Further medical check-up by the management:* Majority 63.3% of the respondents stated that the management takes further steps while diagnosing any serious health problem after medical check-up results.

*Garden hospital by the company:* 54.7% of the respondents stated that their company running garden hospitals.

*Availability of medicines:* Majority 53.1% of the respondents stated that the availability of medicines is good at their working place.

*Safety measures taken by the company from animal bites:* Majority 52.2% of the respondents stated that the management taking safety measures in company for snake bites and leech bites.

*Education on safety measures:* Majority 55.6% of the respondents are agree with their company providing education on safety measures.

*Under safe work environment:* Only 33.9% of the respondents are agree for the safe work environment is provided by the company.

*Participant motivated by safety efforts:* Only 29.4% of the respondents are agree towards participant motivated by safety efforts.

*Prevention of all access to danger zone:* Only 27.4% of the respondents are agree towards prevention of all access to danger zone

*Respondents not allowed to carry or move heavy load:* Only 13.9% of the respondents are agree towards the workers are not allowed to carry or move heavy load.

*Clothing periodically provided:* Only 29.4% of the respondents are agree towards clothes provided periodically such as Gloves, Uniforms and other resources.

*Accidental claims provided properly by the company:* Only 33.5% of the respondents are agree towards the accidental claims provided properly by the company.

*Canteen facilities:* Only 3.7% of the respondents are agree for the proper provision of canteen facilities inside their company.

*Availability of lunch rooms:* Only 21.2% of the respondents are agree towards the provision of lunch room facilities.

*Availability of crèche facilities:* Only 33.1% of the respondents are agree towards the provision of crèche facilities.

*Educational facilities for their children:* Only 32.3% of the respondents are agree towards the provision of educational facilities for workers' children.

*Housing facilities for workers:* Only 47.8% of the respondents are agree towards the provision of housing facilities for workers.

*Electrical facilities in respondents' residence:* Majority 82.9% of the respondents are agree towards the provision of electrical facilities in their residence.

*Availability of recreational facilities:* Only 42% of the respondents are agree towards the provision of recreational facilities.

*Welfare activities by the welfare officer:* Only 36.4% of the respondents are agree for the welfare officer's care towards the welfare activities.

*Availability of good facilities:* Only 36.4% of the respondents are agree towards the overall facilities are good.

*Availability of fair price shop:* Majority 69.4% of the respondents stated that the consumer shops are available in nearby location.

*Welfare for the family launched by the company:* Majority 56.3% of the respondents stated that no welfare has been given for the tea plantation workers' family launched by the company.

*Willingness of the management to relieve the worker:* Majority 52.2% of the respondents stated that the management will not show any positive sign to relieve the workers if they get a fair job.

*Periodical Government supervision:* Majority 59.6% of the respondents stated that there is no periodical government supervision regarding the administration by the management.

*Regularizing temporary workers as per provision:* Majority 75.9% of the respondents stated \ that the management is not regularizing the temporary workers as per the provisions.

*Often Strikes and Lock Outs:* Majority 81.2% of the respondents stated strikes and lock outs occurs rarely.

*Availability of transport facility by the management:* Majority 94.3% of the respondents stated that the management is not



providing transport facilities for the administration & operative purpose and education of the children of the workers.

#### *Suggestions*

The data collected and reviewed with various tea plantation estates and union in Nilgiris District. With the respondents' opinion about the various health factors, safety factors and welfare factors. It has been observed and inferred from the findings, it has been advised to change or follow some activities which will be more helpful to the management growth as well as the tea plantation workers' health, wealth and safety benefits.

Considering health factors, still now there is no waste disposal arrangement made, the management has to take care of waste disposal arrangements. Similarly, the management has to make arrangements for sufficient drinking water. Considerably, most of the tea plantation workers stated that the maintenance of latrine and urinal for both genders are quite good. Nearly half of the ratio stated that the availability of first aid box is not available in the working areas, necessary action has to be taken from the management side in order to place first aid boxes in the available areas. Significantly, a few of the respondents still not benefited with medical camps yet and it has to be taken care by the management or the union. Similarly, further medical check-up has to be given to the workers while diagnosing any serious health problem after medical check results. The management has to know about the necessity of garden hospital; the garden hospital brings out many health-related benefits to bring pleasant, soothing distraction to the ill. So, little care has to be given to create surroundings that would calm patients or otherwise address emotional needs. Medicine availability in working areas are key indicators of access to treatment and the management has been recommended to keep availability of good medicines at their working place since nearly half of the respondents stated that there is no availability of good medicines for health issues as well as snake bites or leech bites at their working place.

Considering safety factors, the safety measures are the indicators of where the organization is headed; they are measures of future performance. The management has to educate the workers about safety measures and still most of the tea plantation estates are not educating the workers properly about safety measures. The management has to provide safe work environment for the workers since most of the tea plantation units are not providing safe work environment. The company should learn the safety efforts which should be motivated to the participants. Hazard prevention and control in the tea plantation unit should be developed such as keep all access ways clear and mark emergency exits with visible signs, ensure ventilation in work areas, dust explosions in factories. The company should strictly intimate the workers to not carry or move heavy load. The gloves, uniforms and other resources should be periodically provided to the workers and the accidental claims should be given to the workers by the company.

Considering welfare factors, the management of tea plantation unit in Nilgiris district should provide proper

provision of canteen facilities inside their company since most of the workers are suffering without proper canteen facilities inside the company. The management should provide proper lunch rooms and as per the provisions under Section 48 of the Factories Act, 1948 any factory employing 30 or more women workers are required to provide crèche facilities for the use of children under the age of 6 years for the women employees. The company should provide educational facilities for the workers' children and education should be made as part of the labour welfare measures adopted by the employers. The housing facilities for the workers should be made facilitate better than usual. It is advised to take care of welfare activities by the concern welfare officers. Welfare support has to be given to the tea plantation workers' family by the company, in turn the workers will not go and search for a fair job outside. Periodical government supervision has to be organized well to monitor the working area and the administration in the tea plantation estates. The tea plantation union has to take necessary steps to avoid the strikes and the lock outs which occur often in tea plantation units. The management has to made availability of transport facilities for the administration and operative purpose; and for the workers' children education purpose.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

I hereby conclude that the study discloses that there exists quite positive relationship between the levels of satisfaction and the implementation of various labour safety, health and welfare measures, which should be properly implemented to improve so that it might increase workers satisfaction, which in turn may help increase productivity to the tea plantation estates. Fascinatingly, workers in the tea plantation estates usually have a long term commitment towards the tea plantation estates and this commitment goes on for generations. The safety condition in work place is not much satisfactory in the tea plantation estates in Nilgiris district. Health, Safety and Welfare facilities rendered to the tea plantation workers are of good quality but there is a possibility for enlightening safety & welfare measures for the workers to provide full range of facilities that may expand living standards of the workers in the tea plantation estates. The effective and well-organized safety policies and welfare facilities make the worker to perform the job better, which leads to efficiency of the organisation. Finally it can be said that when workers observe that safety is not a priority of the tea plantation estates, their actions and attitudes are undesirably pretentious. This can be a way for disaster foremost to increased workplace injuries, lower self-esteem and reduced success. An investment in a health, safety and welfare facilities that emphasizes on risk identification, training, prevention and valuation will not only help diminish losses and increase overall safety compliance records, but it could be the change among being a head of the tea plantation estates or just another run-of-the-tea plantation estate.

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