

A critical analysis of industrial safety practices for women employees adopted by selected manufacturing industries of Aurangabad

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Abstract

Women workers are prone to health problems and accidents in the workplace such as eye infection due to dust (either particulate matter or chemical dust), and wounds due to sharp objects. There were various health problems such as headache, respiratory diseases, skin allergies, and reproductive dysfunctions. These problems were attributed to unhealthy and unsafe work and job conditions, and the lack of facilities such as washrooms and toilets. Certain physical facilities in the workplace were considered essential for health. The lack of washrooms and toilets was not just an inconvenience but posed a hazard. Further, some psychological implications of repetitive work and monotonous jobs are also an area of concern. The present paper throws a light on such problems and analyses the effectiveness of safety practices undertaken by selected manufacturing companies of Aurangabad.

Keywords: Safety, welfare schemes, women

Introduction to labor as a resource

Labour is the main and basic need of any organization and has a positive impact on the performance and efficiency of the organisation. In India, we have several laws that deals with issues regarding labour management, labour welfare, regulation of industrial relations between the management and the workers. The Constitution of India provides that the central government as well as the state government be vested the power to enact and amend rules and regulations related to labor policy in the country. Rules that address worker and their safety in mines and oil fields and Union agencies and institutions for vocational are governed by the central government whereas laws and regulations on trade unions; industrial and labor disputes are governed by central as well as state laws. Labor reforms have long been pending in India. Almost 90 per cent of the labor community is casual and not protected by laws and regulations.

Scenario of Women workers in India

The larger number of women, both in rural and urban areas, entering the labor force and seeking work is an illustration of demand for employment and the need for employment among women. Increases in labor force, workforce and unemployment are a reflection of both increasing demand for women's labor and supply,

expressed through their participation. In spite of some positive changes in the educational attributes of women, a majority of them remain illiterate. Nearly 85 per cent of rural and 59 per cent of urban women workers are illiterate or literate only up to primary level, delimiting gains to the few who have benefited from relatively higher levels of education. These are mostly the better-off sections of the population. Work profiles of women in rural and urban locations are analyzed in terms of employment status, sectors and occupations that provide employment for women and the nature of work undertaken. The reduction in casual employment seems to reflect a general shift to self-employment. Yet it is not clear whether this is a positive development for women or not, especially since bulk of these self-employed women (74 % of rural and one half of urban) are unpaid family workers. Regular employment on the other hand is increasing and is a clear positive development, albeit with inequalities. The higher income quintiles are benefiting more than the poorer households. The women among the latter who have gained regular employment are largely undertaking domestic work with private households. Such employment remains largely informal, with limited, if any, social security benefits and displays gender disparity in wages as well.

Welfare Schemes in Indian companies

Organizations provide labor welfare amenities to their employees to keep their motivation levels high. The labor welfare schemes can be classified into two categories viz. statutory and non-statutory welfare schemes. The mandatory schemes include provisions provided in industrial acts like Factories Act 1948, Dock Workers Act (safety, health and welfare) 1986, Mines Act 1962. The non-mandatory schemes differ from organization to organization and from industry to industry.

Some of employee welfare Laws in India

- Factories Act, 1948
- Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (with latest amendments)
- Employee State Insurance Act, [ESI] 1948
- Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952.
- Payment of Bonus Act, 1965

Statutory welfare benefits

The statutory welfare benefits schemes include the following provisions:

1. **Provision for potable Water:** At all the working places, potable water should be provided.
2. **Provision for seating:** In every organization, suitable seating arrangements need to be provided.
3. **Medical aid kit :** Medical aid kit and corresponding medicines are to be provided and should be readily accessible so that in case of accident initial, first aid help can be provided to the concerned employee.
4. **Washrooms and Urinals:** A good number of washrooms and urinals are to be provided in the office and factory premises and are also to be maintained in a neat and clean condition.

5. **Canteen facilities:** Cafeteria or canteens are to be provided by the employer so as to provide hygienic and nutritious food to the employees.
6. **Lighting and Ventilation:** Proper and sufficient lights are to be provided for employees so that they can work safely during the night shifts. Moreover ventilation arrangements should be such that necessary air must be circulated properly to every corner.
7. **Changing rooms:** Adequate changing rooms are to be provided for workers to change their cloth in the factory area and office premises.
8. **Rest rooms:** Adequate numbers of restrooms are provided to the workers with provisions of water supply, wash basins, toilets, bathrooms, etc.
9. **Maternity & Adoption Leave** – Employees can avail maternity or adoption leaves. Paternity leave policies have also been introduced by various companies.
10. **Med claim Insurance Scheme:** This insurance scheme provides adequate insurance coverage of employees for expenses related to hospitalization due to illness, disease or injury or pregnancy.
11. **Sexual Harassment Policy:** To protect an employee from harassments of any kind, guidelines are provided for proper action and also for protecting the aggrieved employee.

List of protective provisions for women employees:

Some of the important protective provisions for safeguarding the interest of working women are :

Safety / Health Measures

Section 22 (2) of the Factories Act, 1948 provides that no woman shall be allowed to clean, lubricate or adjust any part of a prime mover or of any transmission machinery while the prime mover or transmission machinery is in motion, or to clean, lubricate or adjust any part of any machine if the cleaning, lubrication or adjustment thereof would expose the woman to risk of injury from any moving part either of that machine or of any adjacent machinery.

Section 27 of the Factories Act, 1948 prohibits employment of women in any part of a factory for pressing cotton in which a cotton opener is at work.

Prohibition of Night work

Section 66 (1) (b) of the Factories Act, 1948 states that no woman shall be required or allowed to work in any factory except between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Prohibition of Sub-terrain Work

Section 46 (1) (b) of the Mines Act, 1952 prohibits employment of women in any part of a mine which is below ground.

Maternity Benefit

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 regulates the employment of women in certain establishments for certain periods before and after child-birth and provides maternity benefits. The Building and other Constructions (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 provides for maternity benefit to female beneficiaries of the Welfare Funds.

Need of Industrial Safety of Women Workers

Women form an integral part of the Indian workforce. According to the information provided by the office of Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, As per Census, 2011, the total number of female workers in the India is 149.8 million and female workers in rural and urban areas are 121.8 and 28.0 million respectively. Out of total 149.0 million female workers, 3.9 million females are working as cultivators and another 61.5 million are agricultural labourers. Of the remaining female's workers, 8.5 million are in household Industry and 43.7 million are classified as other workers. So far as the organized sector is concerned, in March, 2017 women workers constituted 20.5 percent of total employment in organized sector in the country which is higher by 0.1 percent as compared to the preceding year. As per the Employment Review by Directorate General of Employment & Training, on 31st March, 2017, about 57.54 lakh women workers were employed in the organized sector (Public and Private Sector). Out of this, nearly 32.14 lakh women were employed in community, social and personal service sector.

Objectives of the Study

- To know the industrial status of skilled and unskilled women workers in selected industrial units of Aurangabad
- To analyze the effectiveness of the industrial safety practices for women workers in the state of Maharashtra.

Hypotheses

1. Industrial safety practices for women workers are not effective in the industrial sector of Aurangabad.
2. There is no significant difference in the safety practices for skilled and unskilled women workers in manufacturing industries of Aurangabad

Research Methodology

1) Collection of data

The secondary as well as primary data has been collected for the study

Primary data is collected by conducting the survey. The survey is conducted using structure questionnaire.

2) Sample Design

The survey is conducted in the selected manufacturing industries located in M.I.D.C., Aurangabad.

The sample size = 700 women workers, selected randomly.

3) Data Analysis

The hypotheses are tested by using Z- test and F- test.

Scope and limitation of the study

1. Selected manufacturing industries of Aurangabad
2. The findings are based on the response given by the women employees.
3. The sample size is small compared to the size of population.
4. Only women employees from manufacturing units are considered for the study

Hypothesis1 : Industrial safety practices for women workers are not effective in the industrial sector of Aurangabad

Assumed Mean = 2

Ho1 is accepted if : Assumed mean > Calculated Mean

Ha1 is accepted if : Assumed mean < calculated mean

Thus Z test (right tailed) has been used to test the hypothesis 1

Table No:- 01

Z- test for effectiveness of the Industrial safety for women workers

Sr. No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Z- Value
1	Management is cautious about the safety of the women workers	2.114	1.26	0.754
2	Management has well written policy for safety of women workers.	2.014	1.27	0.093
3	Management creates the awareness among women about safety and welfare policies the company have.	1.628	1.24	-2.503
4	Management strongly implements the policies they have for women employees.	1.814	1.37	-1.129
5	Management is stringent for using safety equipments	1.714	1.20	-1.983
6	Women workers feel secured about the transportation facility the company is providing.	1.900	1.22	-.681

7	The information about the Anti-sexual harassment committee is displayed in the company premises	1.457	1.03	-4.404
8	Anti –sexual harassment committee is prompt in the action if any complaint by woman worker.	2.042	1.17	.306
9	Workplace safety and security motivates women workers to work in this company	1.814	1.37	-1.129

Interpretations

Acceptance region for the H_0 : $z < 1.645$

Rejection region : $z > 1.645$

The above table indicates the z- Value calculated for each practices related to workplace safety for the women workers in the industrial sector located in Aurangabad M.I.D.C.

All values are smaller than 1.645

Thus we accept the null hypothesis. We can conclude that Industrial safety practices for women workers are not effective in the industrial sector of Aurangabad M.I.D.C

Hypothesis 2 : There is no significant difference in the safety practices for Skilled and unskilled women workers in manufacturing industries of Aurangabad

F-test is used to test the hypothesis 2

Table No:- 02

F – Table :There is no significant difference in the safety practices for Skilled and unskilled women workers in manufacturing industries

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.866	2	.811	.476	.822
Within Groups	73.214	697	1.703		
Total	78.080	699			

Interpretations

F table value (2,697) at 5% of the significance level is = 2.99

F calculated value = 0.822

F calculated < F table value

The hypothesis is accepted and we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the safety practices for Skilled and unskilled women workers in industries.

Findings

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: Z- test has been used to test this hypothesis.

The hypothesis is accepted and we concluded that industrial safety practices for women workers are not effective in the industrial sector of Aurangabad M.I.D.C

Hypothesis 2: F- test has been used to test this hypothesis.

The hypothesis is accepted and we conclude that there is no significant difference in the safety practices for skilled and unskilled women workers in industrial sector of Aurangabad M.I.D.C.

Conclusion:-

Government should invest liberally, rather than withdrawing in government educational institutions, providing technical/professional training; more specifically, training to females. Not only in universities but even at college and school levels, there should be employment exchanges, which provide information regarding availability of jobs.

The focus should be to strengthen policies to empower women to emerge from the poverty syndrome and to increase access to better economic resources by encouraging them to participate in skill-based productive economic activities. Social security still eludes most workers in the informal sector. The problem is more acute for women workers. The lack of capital assets, low and irregular income, sickness and other contingencies, poor working and living conditions and lack of outside linkages and opportunities for skill up gradation- all these interlinked factors drag these women into deprivation, trapping them in the vicious circle of poverty. The success of labour welfare can be achieved through the combined effort of the government, the judiciary, the people, media, NGOs and last but not the least, the labourers themselves, who should be aware of their rights, and of course, their duties also. In the end it is suggested that rather than killing the public sector, its efficiency and performance should be improved. Because quality of employment in formal/organized work is for better than the quality of work/employment informal/unorganized sector. Hence role of government is very crucial to improve quality education which leads to human capital formation, to be used in labour market. Private sector needs to be regulated to generate quality employment opportunities especially for the females.

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