Research Paper Management

A Study on Socio Economic Status and Working Environment Among Flour Mill Workersin Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand

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ABSTRACT

: Social class influences socio economic status which may be determined by various factors like age, sex, education and income etc. and these socio-economic characteristics are included in the present study for the assessment of social background of the respondents. The present study was conducted to know about the working conditions of flour mill workers and problems existing in their work environment. The present data was carried out in Uttarakhand at Udham Singh Nagar districts, Kichha and Lalpur. The results indicated that maximum workers were between the age group of 18-25 years and it was also found that most workers were doing loading unloading job in the mill. Workers were working in shifts and they were getting rest period only once a day.

KEYWORDS Social class, Loading- unloading, Rest period

Introduction

India is a vast country with a surface area of about 3.3 million square km. Total population of India according to Census 2001 was 1.025 billion. About 72% of the population lives in rural area. India is a developing nation and presents the demographic features similar to the other developing nations of the world. Growing population is the major concern of the government and is considered as the principal obstacle to the economic growth of the country. Emerging occupational health problems are to be tackled along with the existing traditional public health problems like communicable diseases, malnutrition, poor environmental sanitation and inadequate medical care. Globalization and rapid industrial growth (about 7% annual economic growth) in the last few years have further complicated the occupational health related issues. The agro food processing industry is one of the largest in India, employs around 18 % of the country' industrial work force and is ranked fifth in terms of production, consumption, export and expected growth (Merchant, 2008). India also produces a variety of temperate to important role in the conservation and effective utilization of fruits and vegetables. India's strong agricultural base, variety of climatic zones and accelerating economic growth holds significant consumers. Strength , Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis is used to highlight opportunities and threats facing the food processing industry and consider strategies to develop markets worldwide for processed food products.

According to Occupational Safety and Health Administration **(Osha, 2005)**. Personal protective equipment must be provided as last resort, when other measures cannot provide enough protection. The employer is required to first make efforts to eliminate or minimize adverse working conditions. It is the equipment worn by a worker to minimize exposure to specific occupational hazards. Using PPE is only one element in a complete variety of strategies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment. It does not reduce the household hazards itself nor it guarantee permanent or total protection (Mackenzie et al. 2000).

According to **Bredger (1995)** ergonomically designed workplaces must also be flexible if postural fixity, with its resultant static loading of the musculoskeletal system, is to be avoided. Flexibility implies that the worker can carry out the task, at least some of the time, in more than one working posture with a workspace design to accommodate both postures. **Tongergen et al**. **(1995)** developed a protocol which was based on the results for systematic workplace investigation in Dutch rubber industry. The protocol based on the results and experiences of an industry-wide hygiene study. It made possible to evaluate and control hazardous working conditions in rubber manufacturing factories. The emphasis on survey was placed on the assessment of exposure to particulates, solvents and noise, dermal exposure to contaminants, but also exposure to vibration, extreme climatic condition, deleterious working postures, accident risks and unhealthy working habits. **Hammer et al. (1990)** identified that all technical measures to develop machines and implements must remain incomplete, unless they are adapted to human factors. This involves man's body dimensions, his work posture and motion along with his behavior. Thus an ergonomic workplace is a major prerequisite of a safe workplace. As stated by **Verma and Oberoi (2000),** the height of working surface should be given careful attention because comfortable work surface height suited to the work permits good working posture. Good standing posture is possible only when the height of the work surface is built according to the anthropometric reaches of the worker. The vertical and horizontal distances in the kitchen should be such that are easy to reach. Women's vertical reach is of critical significance for the layout of cupboard space and shelves, water taps or electrical sockets. Therefore the present study was conducted to Study Socio Economic Status and Working Environment among Flour Mill Workers in Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand.

Materials and methods

The descriptive data was collected from all 120 respondents personally using the precoded interview schedule. A visit was made to all the selected respondents, prior to data collection in order to establish a rapport with the respondents as well as with owners to ensure full cooperation from them. The respondents were interviewed personally and helped to understand clearly the term used so as to avoid misinterpretation of words and elicit reliable data. A socioeconomic status scale **(Singh and Vinay, 2012)** was adapted to find out the background information of the respondents. To obtain data about

working conditions like type of job, type of MMH tasks etc. the work environment questionnaire was developed and used.

Results and Discussion

Socio economic characteristics: It was found that maximum number of respondents were between the age group of 15-25 yrs followed by thirty four per cent workers were between the ages of 25-35 yrs. Only one mill worker was found between age group of 55-65 years.

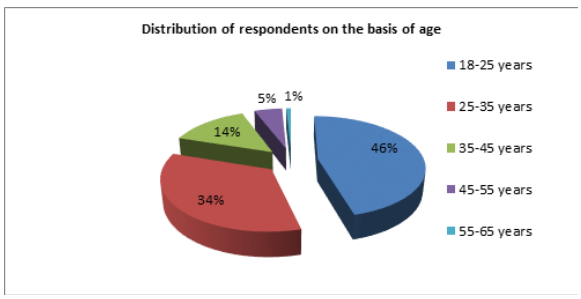

Fig: 1

The graph given below depicted family type of the flour mill workers in which 47 per cent respondents belonged to 2-4 members family type, 25 per cent members were those whose family consisted of 4-6 members, 6-10 family members belonged to only 16 per cent respondents, 10 -15 members were of 10 per cent and only 0.83 per cent respondents were of 15-20 members family type.

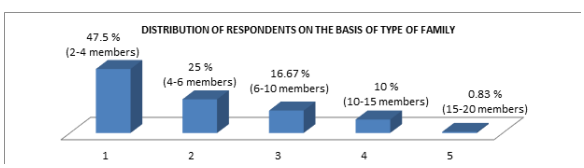

Fig: 2

It is clear from the graph below the total income of the flour mill workers. It was observed that maximum (52.50%) of flour mill workers were having their monthly income range between Rs. 8000-9000 followed by respondents having their monthly income range of Rs. 5000-6000 were (18.33 per cent), 4.16 per cent of respondents were having their monthly income Rs. 6000-7000.

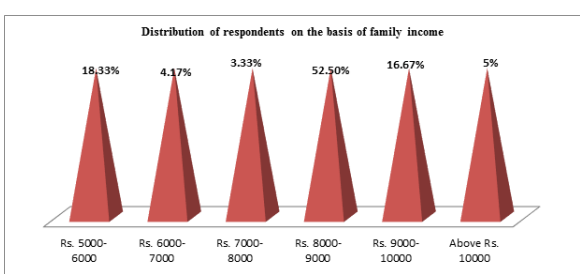

Fig: 3

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their work environment of flour mill

Work Environment			
S.No.	Years Working in Flour Mill	Frequency	Percentage
1	1-5 years	93	77.50 %
2	5-10 years	17	14.17 %
3	10-15 years	10	8.33 %
S.No.	Wages dependency	Frequency	Percentage
1	Loading-unloading	53	44.17 %
2	Packing	31	25.83 %
3	Washing	25	20.83 %
4	Cleaning	11	9.16 %
S.No.	Mode of load transport	Frequency	Percentage
1	Load carried on shoulder	52	43.33 %
2	Pushing the load by wheel barrow	68	56.67 %

(Values in parentheses indicate percentage)

Work environment: The data about the work environment of the flour mill workers revealed that they had to do their job since morning to late night and it was also found that their work was divided according to shift periods. Most workers were found to be working in the mill since 5 years followed by those who mill workers who had started their job since 10-15 years. They were working in the mill for eight hours and their mode of payment was according to their daily performance in the flour mill. The flour mill was found to be licensed and majority of workers were involved in the loading-unloading section followed by workers involved in packing. It was also found that were not getting any leave from their work except national holidays. Workers involved in loading unloading section were maximum (44.17%) whereas workers who were doing packing were (25.83%) and workers involved in washing section were found (20.83%) followed by cleaning purpose of the workers who were (9.16%). In the present study the mode of load transport was also studied and it was revealed that the workers who carried their load on shoulder were (43.33 %) and the workers who were found pushing the load by wheel barrow were maximum (56.67%). It was also found that the lighting and ventilation facility was appropriate in the mill for workers so that they could their work properly without any difficulty.

Conclusions

Finding reveals that flour mill workers were mostly young and their family income was not sufficient to fulfill their needs. They have to work daily without any holiday for more than eight hours with a short span of rest.

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