

A Study on the Perception and Awareness Level of Employees Regarding Labour Laws

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Abstract: - In order to safeguard employee rights and advance ethical workplace practices, labour regulations are essential. Employers, workers and trade unions are governed by these rules, which guarantee fair treatment, secure working condition and the defence of workers rights. However, employee's knowledge and comprehension of their legal rights are crucial to the efficiency of these regulations. This study uses a quantitative approach that compines survey and interviews to investigate how employees perceive and are aware of labour regulations. The results show notable gaps in knowledge, with variations depending on industry type, education and work experience. In order to bridge these knowledge gaps, the report highlights the need for enhanced legal literacy programs, employer-led initiatives and legislative measures.

Keywords: *perception, awareness level, labour laws*

Introduction

Labour laws consist of a set of rules and regulations that define the relationship between employers, employees, and trade unions, ensuring fair treatment, safe work environments, and the safeguarding of worker's rights. Despite their significance, many employees are not fully aware of their rights and obligations under these laws. This lack of awareness often results in exploitation, unsafe working conditions, and disputes between workers and employers. The Industrial Revolution led to widespread worker exploitation, primarily due to employers right to hire and fire at will. Early legal frameworks were based on master-servant relationships and common law principles, disadvantaging workers. Labour laws emerged to address industrial injustices, focusing on sector-specific challenges and social justice principles for fair treatment.

Labour laws emerged to protect workers from exploitative capitalist practices and shift the unequal power dynamic between employers and labour. They emerged in response to the harsh conditions of early industrialisation, including long hours, low wages, and hazardous environments. The Industrial Revolution played a key role in the establishment of labour regulations, as legal protections for workers were minimal at the time. Labour laws are categorised into individual employment laws, collective labour laws, social security laws, anti-discrimination laws, and enforcement and compliance laws. These laws govern employer-employee relationships, collective rights, and financial protections. They also prohibit workplace discrimination based on gender, race, religion, age, and disability. These laws ensure a fair balance of power and promote equality in employment. India's labour laws evolved due to worker's demands for better working conditions and the right to organise, while employers sought to limit these rights to keep costs low. The history of labour laws in India is closely tied to British colonial rule, with their influence still evident today. The study mainly focused on the following labour laws. Employee State Insurance act -1948, Employee Provident Fund act – 1952, The Gratuity act-1972, Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace act -2013.

1. Objectives

- To evaluate employee's awareness levels regarding labour laws.
- To examine employee's perceptions of labour laws in the workplace.

- To understand the role of employee training and induction programs in enhancing awareness of labour laws.
- To propose recommendations for improving employee's perception and awareness of labour laws.

2. Methods

The study aims to understand employees' awareness of labour laws and provide recommendations for improving knowledge and compliance. It will enhance employee empowerment, workplace productivity, harmony, and corporate social responsibility. The findings will help organisations assess compliance, improve employer-employee relations, and promote legal and social justice, preventing exploitation and ensuring fair treatment.

A pilot study was conducted to gain insights into the research area, potential responses, and challenges. This involved reviewing books, journals, and articles to build knowledge on the topic. Discussions with the research supervisor also helped refine the research design.

This study follows a descriptive research design, which aims to systematically describe characteristics, behaviours, or phenomena without manipulating variables. The goal is to provide a comprehensive and accurate representation of employees' awareness and perceptions of labour laws. The unit of the study 250 employee who are working at ITI Limited Palakkad, Kerala. 60 samples are selected randomly from the employees who are working at ITI Ltd Palakkad. The study utilizes simple random sampling, ensuring that every employee has an equal probability of being chosen. This method is selected due to its practicality, cost efficiency, and ease of execution. This study uses primary data from respondents through surveys and questionnaires and secondary data from books, published literature, online resources, and academic journals to gather meaningful insights.

The study primarily employs percentage analysis for data interpretation. Percentage analysis is a statistical approach that transforms raw data into percentages, facilitating easier interpretation and comprehension of the collected information. This method involves constructing contingency tables from frequency distributions to present data in a well-organized and structured format.

3. Results

Most respondents (90.0%) have attended an HR induction, are aware of the PF Act, EPF, PF contributions, partial PF withdrawal, and the long-term advantages of EPF and are aware of labour laws safeguarding workplace rights. Awareness of PF contributions, partial PF withdrawals and the significance of EPF for future financial stability, however, needs to be raised. With a reasonable level of awareness, most respondents are aware of the ESI Act.

According to the survey, 70.0% of participants are aware of ESI benefits, 65.0% comprehend ESI contributions and 66.67% are aware of the ESI salary cap. Additionally, 60.0% are aware of the process for obtaining ESI benefits and 35.0% have an ESI card. According to reports, 55.0% of people are aware of the Gratuity Act, however 46.67% are unaware of the requirements for receiving a gratuity. Even though the majority are aware of the gratuity claim procedure, 38.33% are not, which could make it difficult for them to get their benefits.

The study showed that 73.33% of respondents recognise gratuity as a bonus for longterm work, whereas 70% are aware of the POSH Act, 70% are familiar with the ICC, and 73.3% comprehend the complaint-filing process. Nonetheless, a sizable percentage (41.7%) lack POSH Act training, and 38.33% are ignorant about sexual harassment in the workplace. Although the majority (71.67%) are aware of the IPC's legal ramifications for sexual harassment, 28.33% are not. The results also highlight the importance of labour law education, even if 26.67% of respondents do not think it is required.

4. Discussion

To improve awareness of work methods, organizations can implement webinars, seminars and guidance programs. Professional campaigns can further highlight the importance of these regulations. The HR department can implement initiatives related to POH-ACTS to minimize workplace misconduct. Performing annual training for labour laws, ESI, PF and tips could encourage employee loyalty and sales withdrawal. Employers should also notify personnel of the ethical use of these benefits and the consequences of misconduct. Furthermore, effective mechanisms and consulting services can contribute to handling complaints, resolve workplace questions and prevent legal disputes. The study highlights the need for increased employee awareness about labour laws,

revealing that while employees have basic knowledge about penalties and benefits, they lack detailed knowledge about penalties, contributions, and benefit claim processes, indicating the need for effective training.

References

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- [5] Cameron (2019) examined the gig economy, revealing that many gig workers are unaware of their legal rights and protections. This lack of awareness has led to calls for better education and legislative updates to address the sector's unique challenges.