ABSTRACT

1. Introduction

As we step into the dawn of the new millennium, it is evident that the way we live and work will change to a script that is still being written. In the future, knowledge workers will drive commerce. The workplace, styles of management and leadership, work processes and everything else related to work would undergo a change. World over, there is the recognition that the employee is their most valuable asset and their development is the organisational necessity to cope up with the needs of growth, technology, turbulence and transition of change.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM & NEED FOR THE STUDY:

In the wake of increased competition and opening up of the Indian economy, people have become the pivotal around which successful organisation rotates. "While Capital, with a lot of help from the Indian state, has clearly positioned itself for maximising growth and efficiency in the economy- that is, for increasing accumulation. Unlike capital, one cannot categorically say that Labour as a class has positioned itself for this task. One may even say that Labour in India finds itself much less stronger than it was during the first two decades after Independence" (The Indian Journal of Labour Economics- Oct.-Dec. 1999, p - 753.)

Labour welfare is relatively a neglected area in terms of both research and policy in India. Labour welfare here indicates not only 'protective' type of labour but also 'promotional' type of labour. There is a need to document and analyse the concepts, problems, policies and effectiveness of the programmes relating to labour welfare for Indian labours.
Globalisation is fast changing labour markets all over the world. The organization faced with challenges of globalisations need to be flexible; but policies that promote labour flexibility may reduce the protection of workers. Trade union and free collective bargaining, the two institutions “supposedly wielding the sword of justice” are threatened with extinction. State socialism and welfare state capitalism, the two stars that beckoned many of us in the third world have lost their luster.

Since the early 1980s, there has been an unstated ban on the recruitment of core labour in many enterprises. A Survey of 21 manufacturing enterprises in Bombay shows a reduction in their labour force by as much as 43% in the course of 12 years... The consequence of all this was a decline in the share of the organised sector in total employment, which was small to start with. (The Indian Journal of Labour Economics-oct-dec-1999, p.786)

From the middle of 1980s Voluntary Retirement has become the favored route to reduce the number of laborers in the organised sector. Some claimed that V.R.S is a backdoor policy of the Exit Policy. It is an expensive method dependent on a parting package that is attractive enough to induce a secure worker to quit. The process has gained further momentum with the advent of Globalisation

(Recently our Prime Minister inaugurated the 38th session of the Indian Labour Conference on 28th September 2002. Impact of Globalisation on labour was discussed along with the problem of employment at a time when the second National Labour Commission has submitted its report to the government.)

Human Resources are not available as per specified standards. The management has to train and make them show continuous improvement in job knowledge and skills. Hence this study makes an attempt to analyse the labour welfare measures both in terms of ‘protective’, that is employees’ safety and health measures along with work environment as well as ‘promotional’ type of labour welfare.
The United Nations Development Report also concluded that labour problems could be tackled by improving the working condition, expansion in the skills of the workforce through training, benchmarking in the form of TPM & TQM (The popular Benchmarking tools in India) to improve the quality of work and to provide job security.

World Class Manufacturing (WCM) refers to a level of manufacturing excellence that enables a manufacturer to compete with a global player. Benchmarking being a management tool for diagnosis and innovation helps a manufacturer to reach above world-class level.

The spread between an organisation's excellence and customers' satisfaction referred to as 'quality' of the product. Concepts like Quality Control (QC), Quality Assurance (QA), Zero Defects (ZD), Quality Circles (QCs) and the Japanese Company Wide Quality Control (QWQC) have all merged into newly evolved strategy of TQM, along with TPM (popularly known as 'benchmarking') have been followed by the sample units.

Caring for employee and his job satisfaction and providing for their development has been one of the objectives of enlightened business enterprises.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The primary objective of the study is to find out the existing Protective Labour Welfare measures in selected auto component industries in Chennai in the context of globalisation. The other specific objectives are,
- To study the HR training given to the employees in the research units
- To study the Benchmarking in the form of TPM and TQM
- To study the job satisfaction of the employees
- Findings and to make suggestions and conclusions

Hypotheses

The following are some of the major hypothesis formulated for the study:

- There is no significant difference among direct employees and indirect employees in their levels of satisfaction (null hypothesis)
- There is no association between age and employee's level of satisfaction
- There is no association between employee's service and level of satisfaction
- Better H.R. will promote I.R.
- Good functioning of Benchmarking will build WCM. (World Class Manufacturing)

Sampling Design

Globalisation along with privatisation in India brings with it a lot of structural changes in many industries including Automobile industries. Declaration of New Industrial Policy in 1991 pushed the auto industries into a liberalised and fiercely competitive market, where the acid test of survival and growth was excellence in management rather than preferred market conditions or protectionist policies of government. Auto industries responded to these challenges by expanding in-house training facilities and introducing the tools of benchmarking like TPM, TQM etc.

Only the best endures. To ensure quality in work, every employee undergoes extensive training in auto industries. The automobile is fast becoming a computer on wheels and the industry is quite a good mechanism for developing counter to create employment, technical capability and export potential. India may become an automotive industrial hub for exports to South Asia. Besides, the auto component industry is making rapid strides towards achievement of World Class
Manufacturing by imbibing Benchmarking in the form of TPM, TQM. It is in this context that auto industries are significant.

The study necessitates data from different types of workers from auto component industries in Chennai. The following auto component units have been taken for study:

1. Lucas TVS
2. Sundaram Fastener Limited
3. Wheels India Limited
4. Brakes India Limited
5. Sundaram Brake Lining
6. Sundaram Clayton
7. Rane (Madras) Limited
8. Rane Engine Valves

On the whole 8 auto component units were taken as study units to find out the nature of labour welfare and to analyse the Human Resource Training, Benchmarking and Job satisfaction.

9. Methodology

In the above said 8 units, where on an average more than 500 workers are employed, only 10% of the employees in each unit were selected by using random sampling method for the purpose of filling the questionnaire as part of the collection of primary data. The survey results after necessary qualification has been analysed and tested using statistical tools.

To get a clear picture certain theoretical literature pertaining to Labour welfare measures and Labour Legislation have been reviewed. Records and reports of the sample units have been perused as part of secondary data.

- **Data Collection:** Since data are the fundamental, one has to exercise great care in gleaning them. Therefore the researcher
has taken great care and precautions in collecting data without bias.

- **Secondary data from the sample units:** Most activities of an organization are recorded in written documents - annual reports, memorandum of settlements etc. All necessary and relevant reports from the above said units have been collected.

- **Primary data:** Primary data includes questionnaire, personal interview and interview schedule.

- **QUESTIONNAIRE:**
  
  When a large number of employees have to be contacted, the most efficient and convenient method is to collect data through questionnaire. Hence questionnaire has been issued. Two types of questionnaires have been issued and circulated. The first one contains 60 statements regarding (1) statutory labour welfare measures like safety, health and work environment etc. (2) Human Resource Training and (3) Benchmarking. The second questionnaire contains 15 job related variables to measure (4) the level of job satisfaction. Out of 615 questionnaires issued, 576 questionnaires (93.65%) were used for final analysis.

- **PERSONAL INTERVIEW:**
  
  After breaking up the significant components of the objectives, the researcher carefully prepared a set of questions covering all the aspects of the objectives mentioned earlier. After fixing up an appointment before calling on employees, the researcher visited the study units and interviewed the employees in order to supplement information collected through questionnaire.

- **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:**
  
  The main tool of data collection was the pre-coded Interview Schedule. Hence Interview Schedule has also been conducted with HR departments, Quality Control/Maintenance departments. This was done to find out (a) the functioning of benchmarking, that is,
the functioning of TPM and TQM, and (b) the Human Resource training given in the units.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS:

Tables: One-Way and two-way tables.
Tests: Chi-Square test.
Analysis: Correlation Analysis.

FINDINGS

To survive in a competitive business environment, the units have thrived hard to compete globally through 'benchmarking' and through 'Human Resource Training'.

The sample units have allotted time, effort and money for training the employees and to improve the 'multiskill' of the employees.

'Cellular' and 'Module' systems of manufacturing were introduced and the benchmarking in the form of TPM & TQM had found a better role to play.

The management of the research units initiated a social dialogue covering aspects of productivity, work culture, quality consciousness, multiskilling, occupational health, safety etc.

As for as welfare amenities were concerned, majority of the employees were highly satisfied.

For Human Resource Training they felt that an increased investment could be made on training.

For benchmarking, the employees expect an increased incentive payment. Money was the prime motivating factor and this has been proved more than once in the analysis.
Most of the respondents replied positively for the need for Human Resource Training and for the application of benchmarking, to compete globally.

Thus the analysis of protective as well as promotional labour welfare measures and job satisfaction of the employees revealed that the sample employees were moderately satisfied with regard to Human Resource training, benchmarking and job satisfaction while they had high level of satisfaction regarding protective labour welfare measures like safety, health and work environment.

The labour welfare of tomorrow will demand updated training and education and more cutting edge knowledge accumulation. To survive in a competitive business environment, organizations make all possible efforts to produce the products, which satisfy their customers to the maximum extent.

In the light of the conclusions reached a number of suggestions have been given for promoting the medium level of satisfaction to high level of satisfaction.

Right type of welfare includes both protective and promotional labour welfare measures, which would bring industrial peace and better industrial relations. Better industrial relations promote labour productivity and thereby promote the development of the organization and the labour at large. Thus what is good for the employees is good for the employers and what is good for the employers is good for the Nation.

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