CHAPTER V

ABSENTEEISM IN SILK INDUSTRY
Sericulture is predominantly small scale cum cottage industry in India. It is not an industry in the sense it is spread throughout the country both in the rural and urban areas.

It is carried out by different persons, as. For our purpose we can make a distinction between indigenous mode of silk production and modern method of silk production. In the former silk is produced via charkha and cottage basins. In the latter silk is manufactured with the help of filature system. Both types of production depend on agriculture for the supply of raw silk. Sericulture therefore, acquires importance as a supplier of input to cottage silk industry and modern silk industry.

There are five stages in the production of silk viz:

(i) Cultivation of mulberry.
(ii) Rearing of silk worms.
(iii) Reeling of silk from cocoons.
(iv) Silk twisting and span silk yarn.
(v) Weaving.

Mysore silk is famous throughout India nay in the whole world. Mysore occupies place of pride in silk production. Karnataka State is important for the following
reason. Firstly the total value of rawsilk and byproducts of silk industry in the state comes to Rs. 20/- crores per year. This is due to the fact that Karnataka State takes first place in India in producing more than 75% of mulberry silk.

Secondly it provides employment on large scale. It gives employment directly and indirectly to nearly two million people in the state. The area under mulberry cultivation has crossed two lakhs acres.

Thirdly the industry is important as a foreign exchange earner. There is considerable demand for silk waste and silk fabrics outside India. India stands fourth in the world as producer of silk, the other countries being Japan and China. In 1966 as much as 2 tonnes of silk were exported. India has advantage over other silk producing countries to increase silk exports if the existing cultivation of mulberry is properly organised since cultivation of mulberry constitutes 2% percent of cost of production of silk.

Silk industry is of recent origin in India. But sericulture as a cottage industry in Karnataka State was introduced by Tipu Sultan two centuries back. The industry received setback twice in 1886 and 1914-15 due to outbreak of pebrine disease. The industry remained
undeveloped during the second world war. After the stoppage of world war-II the State Government took keen interest in the promotion of silk industry. The progress of silk industry in State received greater impetus with the setting up of Central Silk Board in 1949. With the emergence of Karnataka State on 1st November, 1956 agriculture areas of the erstwhile Bombay, Madras and Coorg states were merged with the Karnataka State. Upto 30th September, 1956 Karnataka State had only one Govt. silk filature namely The Government Silk Filature, Kanakapura. Six more factories of Messrs. the Mysore Silk Filature Ltd., T.Narasipur were taken over by the Government. With the inclusion of Kollegal Taluka, Govt. silk Filature, Kollegal also came under the control of Karnataka Government. Now silk industry in Mysore State is concentrated in the districts of Mysore, Mandya, Bangalore, Tumkur and Kolar. The following is the list of silk filatures in Karnataka State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Filatures</th>
<th>Private Filatures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Govt. Silk Filatures, Kollegal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1966-68 eight sericulturists co-operative societies were started. The Govt. of Karnataka Govt. spent about Rs.12/- lakhs on the development of scheme during the first Five Year Plan. During the Second Five Year Plan of the Karnataka State an amount of Rs. 80/- lakhs was utilised for comprehensive schemes on modernisation of silk-industry. An amount of Rs.370/- lakh is earmarked for the promotion of sericulture under the fourth Five Year Plan of Karnataka State.

Magnitude

The rate of absenteeism in the silk industry for the period 1966-70 is shown as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Rate of absenteeism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>10.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>10.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>13.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>18.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>17.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evident from the table that the rate of absenteeism in this industry rose from 10% in 1966 to 18%
in the year 1970. This means between 1966-70 rate of absenteeism increased by 7%. Further the rate of absenteeism in the industry concerned shown a tendency of continuous upward trend.

Absenteism in the industry has two significant features. (1) The industry is in the grip of high absenteeism. From the beginning itself, the level of absenteeism is high and what is more important is that there is no sign of decline in the neight of absenteeism up to the last year of the survey. (2) If one considers 5% rate of absenteeism as normal for any industry, by this standard silk industry suffers from excessive absenteeism by 6% in the year 1966 and by 13% for the year 1970. This clearly indicates the seriousness of the problem in the industry under consideration.

This information acquired compels us to investigate into the reasons for the enhanced rate of absenteeism in the silk industry. After a careful probe we have come to know that it is the unauthorised absenteeism which has inflated absenteeism. This becomes obvious if we focus our attention on the break up of rate of absenteeism into authorised and unauthorised absenteeism.
Break up of Rate of absenteeism into authorised and unauthorised absenteeism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Authorised</th>
<th>Unauthorised</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>10.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>10.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>13.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>11.80</td>
<td>18.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>13.68</td>
<td>17.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is crystal clear from the above table that the rate of unauthorised absenteeism which stood at 5% in the beginning (1966), rose to 14% at the end (1970). This is an increased to the extent of 9% during period 1966-1970. This leads us to believe that the main cause of accelerated absenteeism is the high rate of unauthorised absenteeism for two reasons. (1) The level of unauthorised absenteeism is as high as rate of authorised absenteeism for the first two years and unauthorised absenteeism exceeds the level of authorised in case thereafter. (2) The rate of increase in unauthorised absenteeism is more rapid then in the case of authorised absenteeism. For example the rate of unauthorised absenteeism shows a jump of 9% from 1966 to 1970, whereas the jump for the
same period for authorised absenteeism is 2% only i.e.,
authorised absenteeism in 1966 and 1970 was more or less
the same at 2%.

From the foregoing analyses we conclude that silk
industry exhibits high level of absenteeism. The chief
reason for its high level of absenteeism is attributed
to high level of unauthorised absenteeism.

High unauthorised absenteeism owes its origin to
the continuous lack of adequate supply of raw material,
rawsilk or filature to the silk industry, in 1958 the
Tariff Commission assessed the internal demand for rawsilk
to the tune of 4.5 million lbs. Since then the demand for
silk has gone up despite high prices. This is due to
high value attached to use of silk by women folk in the
country at the time of religious ceremonies and marriages.
Therefore the consumption of silk mainly depends on
the price factor. As the per capita income in the country is
rising and expected to rise in future the demand for silk
fabrics may rise by 60% in the next fifteen years. Even
at the current prices of Rs. 45 to Rs. 50 per lb. the annual
demand of rawsilk is to the order of 3.4 million lbs. The
fact finding Committee has shown that even at the going
prices, the deficit in the availability of filature silk
ranged from 2,24,000 lbs. to 5,90,000 lbs. during 1950 and 1960 the deficit of silk filament amounted to 22% to 50% of the domestic demand for silk filament. The GOA estimated the demand rawsilk in 1975-76 to the extent of 6.7 million lbs.

It is but natural that when the industry is working under less than full capacity, the employer finds it difficult to employ all workers. This leads to the emergence of idle machine on large scale. The workers also freely go on leave without information. The equally high authorised absenteeism is also caused by shortfall in the supply of sufficient quantity of filament.

Annual reports of Tariff Commission gives information on the installed capacity and production of silk industry. According to Sixteenth Annual Report the installed capacity of silk industry was fixed at 216 million tonnes for the years 1966 and 1967. The production for the two years came to 165 and 166 million tonnes. This explains the fact that the industry is under utilised. The main reason for the existence of underutilised capacity is due to shortage of filament silk.

The demand for silk in the country is increasing fastly. It will be clear from the table prepared down below:
Estimation of Demand for Silk made by various Commissions in India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tariff Commission</th>
<th>Demand Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>4.5 million lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>3.4 million lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-76 (NCARE)</td>
<td>6.7 million lbs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates that there is huge internal demand for silk but the installed capacity has remained unchanged for two reasons:

Firstly the existing installed capacity is not fully utilized owing to paucity of filament silk. It may be noted that there is great competition in acquiring rawsilk between modern mills and charkha silk method reeling. In this competition more rawsilk is diverted to cottage silk industry and the modern silk industry has to face the shortage.

Secondly the current production of silk from modern mills is not disposed off due to higher prices. Cocoons comprise 60% of cost of producing silk. The Cocoon reavers market them through private agencies as they
receive advance money from them. Lack of proper marketing therefore also creates artificial scarcity of raw-silk for filature silk in the case of modern silk industry.

In view of great interest attached to seasonal pattern of absenteeism, data on authorise and unauthorised absenteeism is divided into four quarters viz., January-March, April-June, July-September and October-December. There is much similarity among the quarters divided and seasons. The first quarter of January-March is associated with cool weather and sunshine. April-June quarter coincides with summer. The third quarter of July-September synchronises with rainy season. The last quarter October-December enjoys mixed climate. Quarterly averages of authorise and unauthorise absenteeism are calculated to assess the seasonal pattern of absenteeism.

Seasonality aspect of authorised and unauthorised absenteeism in silk industry during 1966-70 in percentages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>January-March</th>
<th>April-June</th>
<th>July-Sept.</th>
<th>October-December</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>6.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>7.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>14.55</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>14.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>20.41</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Aut. = Authorised

*Unaut = Unauthorised
During the year 1966 the incidence of unauthorised absenteeism was visible in all the four quarters except the last quarter where it is low by 1%. In all the three quarters the incidence was between 5% and 6%. The phenomenon was quite different in the case of authorised absenteeism. Here the incidence was between 5% to 6% in all the quarters.

During the year 1967 the incidence of unauthorised absenteeism was concentrated in all the four quarters. The percentage of unauthorised absenteeism varied from 5% to 6%. Authorised absenteeism also showed similar tendency in all the four quarters.

In the year 1968, all quarters recorded high incidence of unauthorised absenteeism. Its range varied from 7% to 8%. Authorised absenteeism on the other hand was concentrated in all the four quarters except the quarter of July-September. For the quarter July-September authorised absenteeism came to 4%. For the other quarters it ranged from 6% to 8%.

For the year 1969 the incidence of unauthorised absenteeism was found to be very high in all the four quarters. The incidence of unauthorised absenteeism varied from 10% to 14%. The movement of authorised
absenteeism is found to be great in the first quarter of January-March i.e., 14%. In other quarters the incidence varies from 3% to 5%.

From it one can conclude that the seasonal incidence of authorised and unauthorised absenteeism is high for all the four quarters barring a slight variation in the incidence of authorised absenteeism during the quarter of July-September and three quarters April-June, July-September and October-December of the years 1968 and 1969 respectively.

This disproves the thesis that absenteeism is regulated by seasons such as winter, summer, rainy and autumn. The general belief is that absenteeism registered is greater in the seasons of summer and rainy than the winter and autumn seasons. As far as silk industry is concerned there is no such conditions between absenteeism and seasons. Therefore we can safely conclude that the seasonality aspect of absenteeism is inapplicable to silk industry as we have discovered that incidence of authorised and unauthorised absenteeism is spread out into all the quarters of the year.
Cause-wise Absenteeism

In order to assess the relative importance of causes for absenteeism, the total absenteeism in the silk industry can be broken into various causes:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sickness or Accidents</th>
<th>Social or Religious</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>10.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>10.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>9.55</td>
<td>13.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>16.88</td>
<td>18.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>16.55</td>
<td>17.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Other causes' is a leading factor contributing for increased absenteeism in silk industry. One is convinced looking at the table that the percentage of absenteeism due to other causes has stepped up from 3 to 19 during the period 1966-70. This is an increase of more than six times from 1966 to 1970. The noteworthy feature of other cases is that it accounted for only 3% in the
year 1966. But thereafter it started galloping to 4%, 10% and finally settled down at 16% in the years 1967, 1968, 1969 and 1970 respectively. This behaviour of ‘other causes’ is in conformity with the enhanced unauthorised absenteeism seen in the silk industry. The increase of unauthorised absenteeism through the period 1966-70 is in consonance with increased absenteeism due to other causes.

The next factor in importance causing absenteeism is sickness or accident. Absenteeism due to sickness or accident accounted for 5% in the year 1966. By 1969 it declined to 2%. The special feature of this cause is that absenteeism due to it has continuously declined from 5% in 1966 to 4%, 3%, 2% and 1% in the year 1967, 1968, 1969 and 1970 respectively.

Perhaps the decline in the impact of sickness or accident on absenteeism may be attributed to improvement in medical facilities towards workers and proper safeguards taken to prevent accidents in the industry.

The last but of course not the least factor governing absenteeism is social or religious causes. Absenteeism due to social or religious causes came to 2% in the year 1966. Thereupon it showed a sign of decline to
less than ½ in the year 1969. This decline in the importance of social or religious cause towards absenteeism may be due to two reasons.

1) Loss of control of customs and traditions on the workers employed in silk industry.

ii) Loss of income due to too-high unauthorised absenteeism.

iii) The increase in price-index.

The first reason is not unconvincing. In India the hold or influence of social or religious ceremonies is unlikely to diminish on the people. The more so in case of workers in industries as they are illiterate. Even if the wage-earning class is educated, one doubts the feasibility of decline in importance attached to festivals-social or religious.

The second reason given is sound. Due to plethora of unauthorised absenteeism, workers in silk industry are reduced to the position of paupers. As payment is based on the principle of no work no-pay workers in silk industry have been denied of more wages. Workers therefore could ill-afford expensive social and religious ceremonies. It therefore secures to be a reasonable cause for lack of interest in social and religious functions.
Thirdly the prices of commodities have shot up considerably. This adds fuel to the fire. The general economic conditions of high prices and scarcity of commodities act as a supplementary factor. For reduced interest in social and religious festivals.

**Seasonal Pattern of Cause-wise Absenteeism**

With a view to know the seasonal pattern of causes leading to absenteeism the data is arranged on the basis of quarterly averages calculated in case of each cause.

**Breakup of Rate of Absenteeism Cause-wise and season-wise**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sick</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Sick</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>4.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>8.05</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>23.40</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>22.05</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1966 the incidence of sickness and accident on absenteeism was concentrated in the first three quarters. The incidence varied from 5% to 6%. In the year 1967 the impact of sickness or accident cause was high in the first two quarters i.e., January-March and April-June. In 1968 again the first two quarters showed high level of absenteeism due to sickness or accident. The impact of absenteeism was between 4% to 5%. The year 1969 reflected greater presence of absenteeism due to sickness or accident during the quarters of April-June and July-Sept. The concentration was more or less stable at 2%.

It is obvious from the foregoing analysis that absenteeism due to sickness or accidents was found to be high in the quarters of April-June and July-Sept. The fact of sickness absenteeism being high in the quarters of April-June and July - Sept. should not cause surprise. During the quarter of April-June, scorching sun and increased inside temperature in the factory and scarcity of water lend to many diseases, in any part of India. During this quarter all parts in the country are equally hot except the hill-stations. During the quarter of July-September, due to heavy rainfall the incidence of flu, typhoid infective hepatitis will be on the higher side.
But the concentration of absenteeism due to sickness is not understandable in the quarter of January-March. It may be inferred that during this quarter the number of industrial accidents might have increased.

This analysis supports the seasonal character of absenteeism due to sickness. The high incidence of absenteeism in the first quarter is explained by the increased number of accidents.

Social and Religious Causes

In the year 1966 the incidence of absenteeism due to social and religious factors varied from 2% to 3% in all the four quarters. This means that the incidence of absenteeism due to this factor was not concentrated in any particular quarter. The same picture holds good for the year 1967. For the year 1968 absenteeism due to this factor ranged from 1% to 2% for all the four quarters. For the year 1969 data was available only for the last quarter which stood at less than 1%.

From this one can infer that there was not any significant concentration of absenteeism due to social or religious causes for the period 1966-70. This throws overboard the seasonal character of absentee due to social
and religious factors. Generally the feeling is that the concentration of absenteeism due to social or religious causes is high in the months of May and June. Since there are 15 auspicious days for marriage during these months according to Hindu calendar. The additional reason forwarded is that farmers are ready with cash as they harvest their crop prior to these months. This seasonal character may be true in case of other industries but it is utterly in-feasible to the silk industry. We have seen elsewhere that workers in silk industry have not evinced greater interest in the celebration of Holi or Divali or Dasara, Bakrid or X'mas as their pockets run dry. Absenteeism due to this factor during the last quarter of October-December is low such as 2%, 2% and less than 1% for the years 1966-67 and 69 respectively. The figure for the last quarter of year 1967 is not available. It is during this quarter that major festivals such as Divali, Dasara and X'mas are celebrated.

Other causes

For the year 1966 absenteeism due to other causes remained more or less stable at 3% for all the four quarters. The year 1967 exhibited the characteristic of concentration of absenteeism due to other causes in all
the quarters. The similar picture was repeated for the years 1968 and 1969.

This analysis also goes against the seasonal character of absenteeism due to other causes. Absenteeism due to other causes should increase in slack seasons and decrease in busy season. But the theory of business cycle is hardly valid in case of silk industry as we have already seen that silk industry suffers from perennial shortage of filature silk. The paucity of rawmaterial is experienced throughout the year. This can explain correctly the presence of high absenteeism in all the quarters of the period under review.

**Conclusion**

The seasonal character is found to be valid only in case of sickness. For all other causes there was absence of meaningful relationship with absenteeism.

**Suggestions**

The followings suggestions are made with a view to reduce absenteeism in the silk industry. The suggestions given are based on our findings.
The major suggestion relates to unauthorised absenteeism. One of the findings of our study is that unauthorised absenteeism is rampant in silk industry. We have necessarily to fix our attention on reducing unauthorised absenteeism. The primary reason for high unauthorised absenteeism is shortage of filature silk. To counteract the shortage the Karnataka Government can concentrate attention on the following points:

1. to increase the yield of mulberry leaves,
2. to increase scientific rearing,
and 3. improvement in the reeling methods.

Regarding the first step what is urgently needed in Karnataka State is to properly organize the cultivation of mulberry leaves. There is no need to extend the area under cultivation of mulberry leaves. This may affect the long term crop pattern in the state. The existing prices of cacoona are so high that the farmers are induced to increase the acreage under cultivation of mulberry. What is more deciding factor for shift in crop pattern is the relative prices of crops and not the high prices of cacoona alone. If this occurs, it may lead to unhealthy situation in the state. It may adversely affect the prospects of food grains. Therefore, Karnataka State should take all
precautions to prevent the unhealthy competition among crops and to foster the increased yield of mulberry per acre. There is immense possibility of increasing the yield per acre of mulberry through proper and judicious use of the existing land devoted to the cultivation of mulberry. If the Karnatak Government takes to this proposal there is no reason why the yield in the state of mulberry should not increase by more than four times during the course of a decade without increasing the area under mulberry cultivation.

The State Sericulture Department estimated the yield of leaves between 2,500 and 3,000 lbs per acre in dry areas and about 4,000 lbs to 6,000 lbs per acre in wet areas. The estimates of Central Silk Board for Karnatak State is slightly higher - 4,000 lbs per acre in unirrigated areas and 8,000 lbs per acre in irrigated areas. By any standard these are low yields compared to average yield which is roundabout 10,000 lbs per acre, in West Bengal. In West Bengal the cultivation of mulberry is rainfed. Even in Karnatak State the yield per acre on the Government managed farms comes to 21,000 lbs. This proves beyond any shadow of doubt that there exists great potentialities in increasing the yield per acre in case of privately managed farms cultivating mulberry.
The next measure pertains to increased use of scientific and modern methods for rearing cacoons. The rearing is done through indigenous methods. The cacoons are reared in farmers house which provided unhygienic conditions. There is lack of proper supervision and badly managed. This increases the mortality rate of cacoons. The silk worms require utmost attention during the first two months. In Japan, silk worms are reared through Co-operative Societies upto second mould and then they are distributed to farmers. In Karnataka the home rearing of cacoons is replaced by chowki rearing. This is on the lines of Japan. But the number of chowki centres is only 45 which is less in comparison to the present needs. The rearing houses in Japan are kept very clean. Each rearing house is provided with a thermometer and hygrometer. This required additional investment in the rearing houses. But this is not a correct view. Japan has modernised rearing of cacoons through the process of organisation and rationalisation which are all internal adjustments rather than importing from external side heavy equipament. The Karnataka Government can take a leaf from the development history of silk rearing in Japan. If this is implemented the increase in cacoon output will occur automatically.
There is an urgent need to overhaul and improve the method of silk reeling. At present in Karnataka, silk reeling is performed by both indigenous and modern methods. The indigenous method is known as charakha reeling. The modern method is through filature units. The filature system was first introduced by the Karnataka Government in the year 1920 with 12 French basins. The filature units were basically state owned. The number of filature basins increased from 300 in 1939 to 2,013 in 1945. With the cessation of hostilities of World War II the quality of filature units rapidly deteriorated owing to unstable market, import of raw silk from abroad and cut-throat competition from the cheap charkha silk. The state-owned filature units sustained huge losses owing to bad management and obsolete equipment.

This is a sad state of affairs. It needs quick improvement. One such method is to popularize the use of modern filature system and gradual abandonment of charkha silk. This is quite ubiquitous otherwise the charkha silk will outbid the filature system. Further the number of filature units should increase in the state. It means heavy investment by the Government in supplying filature units to private silk rears. Japan could increase silk output by introducing automation reeling machines on a big scale. One may remember here that these are not new
new suggestions. In past the Fact Finding Committee proposed the gradual reduction of Charkhas from 300 in 1961-62 to 1000 in 1965-66 and an increase in the filature units from 800 to 1500. But all these suggestions are not implemented in earnest way.

The State Government is faced with the problem of finding more resources for investing in filature units. The State Government may encourage the private silk producers to use filature system by supplying filature units to them at cheap price. If this takes place there is no doubt that silk output will increase on an unprecedented scale.

The cost of production of silk can hardly be ignored in suggesting measures for rapid progress of this industry. The internal demand for silk is undoubtedly continuously increasing. But at the same time there is fall in the sale of silk fabrics. This is made known by Sixteenth Annual Report of Tariff Commission.

The chief reason for fall in the sale is the high price charged for silk fabrics. Price factor is very important in influencing the consumption of silk fabrics. It is well known that mulberry leaves account for sixty percent of total cost of production. The mulberry leaves produced through cottage method is low in quality. This
leads to lower price which are unremunerative to the producers. Therefore there is a dire need that the cocoon producers are made quality conscious and that cocoon producers obtain stable and reasonable prices. These cocoons when processed through filament system on a large scale, the average cost of production tends to fall and increase the demand for silk fabrics.

The next finding is that the level of authorised absenteeism varied from 5% to 7% during the period 1966-70. One should not go with the impression that 7% authorised absenteeism is unavoidable. Even here there is scope for curbing absenteeism through the operation of incentive schemes to ensure regular attendance of workers. This consists of introducing attendance bonus scheme shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period &amp; Service</th>
<th>Rate of payment of attendance Bonus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) In a calendar month</td>
<td>One day's normal earning (Basic + D.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) For a consecutive period of six calendar months.</td>
<td>Three days normal earning in addition to the above entitlement, (6 + 3 = 9 days.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) For the next six consecutive period of six calendar months.</td>
<td>Six days normal earning in addition to the above entitlement (9 + 6 = 15 days.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) For full time attendance on all working days for a consecutive period of 12 calendar months as per (1), (ii) and (iii).</td>
<td>6 + 3 + 9 + 6 = 24 days normal earnings.</td>
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This scheme was implemented in four units of industries in Bombay. It worked satisfactorily in reducing the level of absenteeism in those industries. One feels why it should not meet with success in case of silk industry in Karnataka State.

In order to promote regular attendance cash awards may be given to very regular workers. They may be honoured on the Annual days of factories or awarded with merit certificate on festival days.

It has become a fashion to honour filmstars but it is rare that an industrial worker is awarded Padmashri for his all time record output or regular attendance. This is a psychological measure which aims at satisfying the innate desires of workers. Now-a-days lot of researches is conducted to find out the co-relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction. To achieve this goal it is imperative that employers introduce socio-cultural measures. By socio-cultural measures is meant provision of good houses and involvement of workers in industrial production and collective celebration of festivals. This will improve the working condition and give workers a sense of belonging in the factory.

Unauthorised absenteeism may also be due to lack of proper dialogue between the management and the workers.

Many a times workers fail to inform their absence to the management due to fear that they may be harassed or punished for it. This is true in case of a traditional management which believes in the principle of hire and fire. There is nothing wrong in employing the old fashioned management technique from the viewpoint of maintaining discipline in the industry. But if we analyse the psychological effects of theory of punishment, it is more primitive and less democratic method of maintaining control on workers. If a worker is punished for his mistake, it creates scare in his mind and the minds of other workers. They tend to avoid the treachery of undergoing punishment by remaining absent from the work. The management may also not be benefitted, in the way the workers donot put their best in an environment of fear and hostility. This may be disproved by citing the examples of Soviet Union where in strict vigilance has resulted in huge output. One can hardly deny it. Under feudal system also output has increased due to the adoption of whipping system. We are not opposed to the objective of maximising output.

The opposition is to the method used to achieve the end. The U.S.S.R. has achieved miraculous results but it is all the result of forced labour. Is India wedded to philosophy of dictatorship? The same end can be obtained
by employing modern techniques of management. The new approach believes that workers are human beings. They are not mere cogs or cossordi or a factor of production. The fundamental difference between a machine and a man is that the latter has thinking and feeling faculties whereas these qualities are absent in the former. This is the real reason why it is possible to control machines and not workers. This needs improvement in the attitude of management. They should take the lead in considering workers as humanbeings. This human approach can be a panacea for most of the ills of industry concerned.

The old-fashioned technique is also not good from the point of view of industrial relations. The gulf of understanding between the management and the workers is widened. Both have to leave under the climate of conflict and confrontation. Industrial peace which is considered as sheet anchor of industrial development gets disturbed. The modern method pins faith in winning the support of workers by making provisions for greater involvement of workers, in running an undertaking and delegating powers of decision making to them. The crucial point is that industrial disputes occur to-day owing to belief in the theory of class-struggle. Industrial disputes tend to minimise once the old theory of class struggle is replaced by theory of
classless society. In the new society the social ranking as land lords, masters, owners of capital disappears. All are treated on the principle of equality and equity.

To lower unauthorised absenteeism, it is necessary that the management encourages the system of notification. The workers should be supplied with cards wherein complete information is given on the provisions of leave facilities, how to apply for leave etc. This may create an atmosphere of cooperation and realization on the side of workers not to keep the management in dark about their absence. The management too is benefitted by such advance information. The management can immediately take steps to depute a substitute and reduce output loss.

In the west, a practice prevails where in a nurse or a proxy appointed by management visits the house of worker on leave to find out the reason for his absence. We can't recommend the same in case of India as it is an expensive method and the method if adopted may lead to new problems. Such as false reporting etc. This method enables the management know the genuine reason for absence, and subsequently steps are taken to solve the problem facing absentee workers. This method also gives a jolt to the erring worker. He has to be cautious before he
applies for the leave or otherwise he is exposed fully before the management.

What is required is a change in the attitude of management towards workers. This doesn't mean that workers are all angels. There are a few workers who are really not interested in work. They indulge in other practices. But the point is that these workers are exposed before their fellowmen and ridiculed unless the same workers are patronised by the management. The crucial point to identify the chronic absentees of any type, take necessary steps to check them up. This is not going to contribute for strike. What is essential here is the cooperation of trade union leaders. By and large workers listen to the words of their union leaders. If the union leaders assist the management in locating erring workers, action can be taken on their bilateral ways. Strike occurs if the management unilaterally dismisses a worker. Therefore, bilateral negotiation between the management and trade union is a golden approach towards the attainment of goal of industrial democracy.

Another and successful way of reducing unauthorized absenteeism is to regularize them if found genuine. It may so happen that workers have exhausted all leave facility. During an emergency or urgent call, he remains absent
uninformed. If the cause of absent is found to be real, then it may be regularised though not paid. This will improve human relationship between workers and management. Workers will look towards management with eyes of friendship.