CHAPTER – VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1. INTRODUCTION

The harmonious relationship that exists between the management and the workers has a vital role to play in the establishment of industrial discipline, industrial democracy and industrial peace and it has a far reaching impact on productivity. A sound system of industrial relations and the maintenance of industrial peace is an important pre-requisite for our developing economy. The scene of industrial relations in India, for quite a long time, had been marked by industrial conflicts, militant, trade unions and authoritarian employers. This is mainly due to the enactment of various labour laws with the belief that legislation can solve all the problems connected with industrial relations. Plantations in India have a long and chequered history. It is basically labour intensive. There are a number disputes between planters and the workers in the Rubber plantations. The major important causes for the discontent in the rubber plantations are revision of wages, dearness allowances, bonus, house rent allowance, granting the increments and the like. Kanyakumari is the smallest district of Tamil Nadu and it is the only district where rubber
plantations exist on large scale and the country’s best rubber producing plants are available only in this district. Hence, the present study is an attempt to analyse wage management and industrial relations is the rubber plantations in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu. The specific objectives of the study are

(1) To study the individual relations in the rubber plantations in the period of the minimum wage regulations

(2) To assess the labour management relations during the period of the wage board recommendations

(3) To analyse the various negotiated settlements which were meant to promote industrial relations.

(4) To study the workers’ opinion regarding industrial relations in the rubber plantations.

(5) To study the opinions of the trade union leaders regarding industrial relations in the rubber plantations.

(6) To analyse the opinions of the employers or planters is regard to individual relations and

(7) To offer suggestions to improve the industrial relations in the rubber plantations.
For the purpose of collecting primary data, 532 workers were randomly selected. All 18 planters and 20 trade union leaders have also been taken for primary data collection. The survey was carried out during the financial year 2011-12. The secondary data covered for a period from 1982 to 2010 which included both minimum wage fixation and wage board award period.

In the foregoing chapter, industrial relations during the period of minimum wage fixation in the rubber plantation, industrial relation during the period of wage board, causes for disputes, negotiated settlement and perception of workers, role of trade unions and perception of planters towards industrial relations in rubber plantation were discussed. In the present, major findings along with conclusions and suggestions are presented.

7.2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In chapter IV, industrial relations during minimum wage fixation period were discussed. The analysis of this chapter has been classified under.

- Wages before the minimum wage fixation
- Concept of minimum wage fixation and minimum wage fixation in India.
Disputes during the period of minimum wage fixation in rubber plantations in Kanyakumai district.

The analysis revealed that the low rate existed prior to the minimum wage fixation. The minimum wages committee considered the concept “Capacity of the industry to pay” as main criteria to the minimum wage rates. During that period, the Government notified rates had been reduced. During the period 1939-46 wage rates were very low since no labour legislation which protects them was focussed on the workers. At that time, plantations workers were absolutely unorganized in their activities.

The main reasons for fixation of minimum wage rates rather was to eliminate the exploiting of plantation labour. The ILO presented. Certain considerations at the time of minimum wage fixation. Further, Royal Commission gave the recommendations in the regard.

The minimum wage Act empowers the central and state government to fix statutory minimum wages. The Act suggested three alternative systems to fix the minimum wage. Accordingly, then Travancore-Cochin state fixed minimum wages for the workers in the rubber plantation in Kanyakumari district.

In order to fix minimum wage rates, principles and procedures to be adopted have been formulated by the minimum wage committee.
The minimum wages committee recommended a higher wage rate for factor workers. The lower rates of dearness allowance recommended both male and female workers compound to their counterparts in factory work. The minimum wage rates were revised with effect from 01.04.1958. Female workers benefited more than men in this revision. But this revision did not give real benefit since the cost of living is neared from 369 points in 1952 to 413 in 1957.

The government had reduced the recommended rates of dearness allowances resulted reduced the wage rates.

The labour union went on strike for nine days from 16.07.1952 to 24.07.1952 because of the stopping of existing concessions and amenities. Eleven days strike for regularisation of services of the field workers from 11.07.55 to 21.07.55 and eight days strike went on from 04.12.57 to 11.12.1957 for demanding gratuity, house rent allowance and promotion.

Compound growth rate was computed to compare the growth of money wages and real wages during minimum wage period. The result revealed that the growth rate of real wages was negative (-11). Further, the maximum wages has been unmeared form Rs.59.22 and Rs. 40.35 for adults and adolescents respectively during 2004 to Rs. 131.69 and Rs. 90 for adults and adolescents respectively during 2010.
In chapter V, industrial relations during the period of wage board award is the rubber plantation in Kanyakumari district were discussed.

The analysis revealed the fact that the Govt.of India appointed a wage board for the rubber plantations industry in 1961.

On the basis of “capacity to pay” rubber wage board has recommended uniform wages rates for the state of Kerala and Tamilnadu. But, the wage board has failed to correctly assess that capacity of the planters. The workers felt that wages and the annual increments recommended by the wage board too low. Then the government had modified the wage rates.

The wage board had failed to implement fair wage rates based on minimum needs of the workers. The minimum needs budget calculated by the board was lower than that furnished by the planters. Ultimately, the workers again suffered a decline of real wages compared to money wages.

In the period of wage board Award, there were form disputes upto 1968 connected with enhancement of wages, demanding bonus, granting increment, making field workers permanent and increasing dearness allowances. All these disputes were settled without any strike except one.

According to staff settlement during 2010, amount of UDA payable has been increased. The new pay of scale has fixed for general workers Rs. 221.30 and for tapper Rs. 228.30 during 2010.

In chapter VI, perception of workers towards industrial relations in rubber plantation, opinion of trade union leaders and planters regarders disputes were discussed. For the purpose of analysis, 532 worked, 20 trade unions and 18 planters were selected.

The analysis revealed that out of 532 respondents, majority of them belong to the age group 35 to 45 years, followed by 45-50 years.

More than 80 percent of the respondents are male and the remaining below 20 percent are female. Majority of them, (85.71 percent) are married followed by unmarried (11.68 percent). Nearly 70 percent of them have studied upto X standard. None of them are illiterate. More than 70 percent of the respondents are having 4 to 6 members in their family. 48 percent have received Rs. 3000 to 6000 as monthly income followed by upto Rs. 3000 (40.23+). Nearly 95 percent of the workers are permanent and only below 5 percent are working temporary.
Regarding the experience of the works, 34.21 percent of the respondent are having 5 to 10 years experience followed by 10-15 years (25.44%) and 15 to 20 years (21.80%).

Regarding the system of wage payment prevailed in rubber plantation worker is piece rate system. Out of 532 respondents, nearly 66 percent have received piece rate system. Only 34 percent have been paid. Time rate system of wage.

The analysis of opinion of the workers regarding the existing wage structure revealed that majority of the respondent are not satisfied with wage structure. Nearly 82 percent opinion that the minimum wage system is poor and not benefited to the workers. Further, more than 87 percent are not satisfied with wage recommended by rubber wage board.

Regarding the bonus, out of 532, 95 percent of them are getting bonus but only 27.82 percent are satisfied. Regarding dearness allowance, house rent allowance and gratuity, more than 85 percent are satisfied with prevailing benefits in the rubber plantation.

In order to identify the important welfare measures, Gurrett’s Rankins Teduigm has been applied. The results revealed that accommodation facilities was ranked first followed by food subsidy and educational facilities.
IN ORDER TO FIND OUT THE VARIABLES WHICH INFLUENCE THE PERCEPTION UNLESS TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS MULTIPLE LOG LINEAR REGRESSION MODEL WAS FITTED.

The computed results revealed that age, education, duration of membership and immense are most significant variables. Except income, all other variables have a regratuity influenced in the perception of workers towards industrial relations.

Hence, the formulated null hypothesis is rejected. Thus it may be included that there is a positive relation between income and good industrial relations.

Regarding the trade union, majority of the trade unions are affiliated to all political parties. Delay in the revision wages are main causes for poor union – management relationship. Most of the problems are identified as representation given by workers followed by direct enquiry by union leaders.

The analysis of opinion of the trade union leaders regarding the various acts revealed that most of the Acts are implanted in rubber plantations industry. The union leaders were asked to give their opinions regarding their achievement. Out of 20 leaders, majority of them opined
that wage hikes is their major achievement followed by better welfare facilities.

Regarding the opinions of union leaders about the causes for disputes, Garrett’s Ranking technique has been used to identify the major cause for disputes. According to Garrett’s results, wages was ranked first and foremost cause followed by bonus.

About 90 percent of the union leaders opined that the minimum wages are not adequate. In the case wage board recommendations 70 percent of the union leaders stated that the recommendation are not good.

Eighty percent of the union leaders opined that collective bargaining is good for negotiation of wage fixation.

Regarding the opinion of the planters, nearly 89 percent of planter are not favoured of payment of bonus Act. More than 66 percent opined that plantation labour Act is not needed.

Views regarding minimum wages, majority of them opined that minimum wage is not correlated to the prices of rubber as well as affected productivity and profitability. In the case of wage board recommendation, they felt that they recommended higher rates of wages and more of fringe benefits.
Majority of the planters felt that the collective bargaining is a suitable measure to improve the industrial relation in rubber plantations. Majority of planters felt that union’s attitude is the major reason for poor industrial relations.

7.3. SUGGESTIONS

The followings are the suggestions based on the findings of the study.

The important and foremost suggestion is “A permanent tripartite machinery for periodical wage revisions should be constituted. This would give the standard norms for wage revisions avoiding under delay in wage negotiations”.

It is suggested that the planters should take all efforts to train the workers in adopting the latest state of the art technology.

Regarding wage fixation, the planters should take into confidence not only the trade union leaders but also the different categories of workers such as field workers, factory workers and tappers.

It is also observed that the welfare facilities provided by the planters to the workers are inadequate and meager. It is suggested that planters should change their attitude towards labour and provide them with other
necessary welfare facilitation namely health care, children’s education and the like.

It is suggested that planters should revise the wage rates and implement dearness allowances according to the govt. notification without any delay.

It is also suggested that the planters should declare the minimum bonus as per the statutory requirements.

It is suggested that the workers should not resort to frequent strikes.

It is observed that there are a number of trade union affiliated to political parties. Attitude of trade union leaders affects smooth negotiation in the suggested that all the plantation workers should come under a single trade union.

It is suggested that the trade unions should also realize their responsibility towards the society at large and the industry as a whole.

7.4. CONCLUSION

The analysis revealed the fact that the mode of wage fixation for plantation workers, demanding bonus, dearness allowance, HRA and other welfare facilities are the major causes for frequent industrial dispute. Trade
union activities had worsen the workers and management relations in rubber plantation industry in Kanyakumari district. Though govt. has enacted various labour Act, periodic and frequent strikes are going on in rubber plantation for upward revisions of money wage rates, revision of dearness allowance linked with cost of living index. Thus, it may concluded that tripartite negotiations will be gained much importance in the settlement of industrial disputes in rubber plantation.

7.5. SCOPE OF FURTHER RESEARCH

The followings are the topics suggested for further research in this field.

(i) Viability and technical efficiency of rubber products.

(ii) Comparative study of plantation workers of Tea and rubber plantations

(iii) Socio-Economics conditions of Rubber plantation workers.

(iv) Health status of plantation workers.
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