

WORKING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYEES OF TEA INDUSTRY IN NILGIRIS DISTRICT

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Abstract: *Tea is a natural product and virtually calorie-free when drunk without milk and sugar. Over the last few decades, tea has become one of India's most important commodities. The Indian tea industry is about 172 years old. The credit for creating India's vast tea empire goes to the British, who discovered tea in India. Tea is grown in the states viz. Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. However, production in substantial quantities is limited to the first five states. In Tamil Nadu, most of the tea plantations are situated in the Coonoor and Gudalur areas of the Nilgiris along with the Valparai region of Coimbatore district. Tea plantation in Tamil Nadu is mainly concentrated in Nilgiris district due to favourable agro-climatic conditions. Agro-climatic factors like climate rainfall, soil type and economic infrastructural facilities like transport, communication, credit facilities, input supply and marketing affect the production of tea. In tea industry, Employees are played a vital role for production of tea and running the tea industry in a proper way. In that case, the researcher has chosen the working conditions of employees in working tea industries of Nilgiris district.*

Keywords: *Tea Employees, Working Conditions, Working Environment and Welfare Measures*

INTRODUCTION

Tea, the most popular drink in the world after water, is cultivated in over 36 countries in the world. India is the second largest producer of tea, recording more than 900 million kilograms and accounts for about a quarter of world production (Koshy & Tiwary, 2011). The tea industry occupies a significant position in the history of the development of Indian economy in terms of its contribution in exports, income and employment (Sarma, 2015). Tea is the country's primary beverage, with almost 85 per cent of total households in the country consuming tea (Shil & Das, 2012). The tea sector of India serves as major livelihood opportunities for its countrymen; therefore the role of tea industry is significant (Mohan, 2016).

Tea is cultivated in the high ranges of North and South India and the best quality is known as CTC and Orthodox Assam Tea, respectively. The consumption is above the 600 million kg mark per year. The market consists of both leaf and dust teas both in the CTC and Orthodox Grades, with the southern markets consuming more dust teas. Nearly every

part of the country has a tea-growing region. Approximately 4 per cent of the national income of India comes from its tea and India is home to over 14,000 tea estates. The geography of India allows for many different climatic conditions, and the resulting teas can be dramatically different from each other. There are three main kinds of tea produced in India such as Assam, Darjeeling and Nilgiri (Hanspal, 2010).

Nilgiris district as a part of Indian state of Tamil Nadu formerly forms a larger part of a mountain chain recognized as the Western Ghats. An agriculture district has an economy mainly depending on the success or failure of plantation crops similar to tea and coffee. The climatic environment and troposphere of the area make the Nilgiris district an appropriate place in South India for cultivation of tea which result that zones under tea cultivation in Nilgiris are exclusively massive and spread out widely (Krishnamoorthy & Sekar 2017). In Nilgiris district, there are more than 200 Tea Manufacturing firms under both Private and Government undertakings. The TANTEA in Gudalur block and UPASI in Coonoor block are the main Government undertakings (Sivasankaran & Vadivel, 2016).

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The working conditions of workers employed in plantations are governed by the Plantation Labour Act, 1951 and the rules promulgated by the State governments (Government of India, 2008–09). The Plantation Labour Act 1951 (PLA), which regulates the wages of tea-garden workers, their duty hours and amenities (Baishya, 2016). But yet till today it has not been fully enforced and implemented by the planters (Borah, 2017). Tea garden workers are susceptible to a number of hazards in their workplaces due to physical, biological, mechanical, chemical and psychosocial factors (Borgohain, 2013). Tea garden women workers are mostly illiterate and they are not aware of the minimum standard of living (Devi, 2014). Moreover, many of them even today have no idea about what are workers' right. They are also facing various socio economic problems (Borah, 2013).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

India is the largest producer as well as the largest consumer of black tea in the world. It is significant to note that more than 80 per cent of total tea production is consumed within the country. Indian tea commands second position in the world with regard to the area under tea cultivation. India is the fourth largest exporter of tea in the world after Kenya, China and Sri Lanka (Kumar, 2012). Tea is a labour oriented industry as it is agro-based (Sarma, 2013). Tea workers around the world are facing dangerous and degrading working conditions and civil society organisations continue to express their growing concerns (Global Research & India Committee of the Netherlands, 2016). Tea factory workers face similar problems. Despite being entitled to tea and lunch breaks during the day, casual workers are generally denied a lunch break. When harvests are high during the rainy season, overtime is compulsory. Workers can be forced to put in as many as 74 hours a week. Although overtime is paid, payment is determined by management and it is never explained to workers how this is calculated (Hilary & Dromey MP, 2010). Most of the tea garden labourers are backward in all aspects of their life (Purkayastha & Kalita, 2016). Many of the workers of tea industry derive low level of satisfaction on working conditions (Goowalla, 2015). Poor housing, Low wages are not motivated factors to attract the young workers and the youngster are not willing to work in the tea plantation sector (Chandrabose, 2015). Most of the tea estate workers are illiterate so that they have no ideas regarding various labour welfare and other social security schemes which are implemented by the Government and tea estate authority (Debnath & Debnath, 2017).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The followings are the related reviews

Manoharan (1974) concluded that the small planters may work together forming co-operatives so that they would be able to enjoy the returns from the economics of scale. The small growers have been more enterprising in raising production than the large estates whose production is remained stagnant (Bhowmik & Reddy, 1989).

Productivity in plantations has to be increased by new plantation, replantation, new varieties, scientific harvesting and mechanized pruning, etc. Productivity in manufacturing can be increased by improving quality, product diversification, technological advancement, etc. Companies have to adopt professional management system for making the units competitive. In the liberalized regime of world trade, paramount importance has to be given to the marketing of tea. In this aspect government has a very important role in developing a system for strict quality control. Of course certain government support in the form of tax concessions, export promotion, etc., may be helpful for rejuvenating the tea plantation industry (Joseph, 2002).

Nilgiris tea is globally competitive and the available resources are utilized efficiently and effectively and there is a vast scope for Nilgiris tea in terms of export to other countries (Rajaguru, Mandanna, & Achot, 2005). The labour productivity in tea plantation sector has improved after privatisation due to the improvement of labour satisfaction, strict management and application of new techniques of the private companies (Kodithuwakku & Priyanath, 2007).

Vijayakumar, A.N. finds that there is a need for addressing the issues for optimising labour cost at Indian tea plantation sector by reducing labour shortage and enhancing labour productivity. The project energy conservation in small sector tea processing units in South India has been initiated by the tea board to remove barriers to energy conservation and energy efficiency that inhibit the realisation of a large energy saving potential in the tea sector (Nazeem, 2010).

The tea industry should understand that technology is no longer monopoly nor is the availability of money, but what may be monopoly would be the people associated with the business organisation. The tea industry will evolve and develop a mechanism which will help it to enjoy and practice good, sound and timely labour relation activities (Goowalla, 2012). Tea cultivation was the main source of livelihood in which plucking was mostly done by women (Karki, Joshi, Dhingra, & Sandhya, 2012).

Amasaveni, Ilavarasi, and Gomathi (2013) in their study revealed that there was a significant relationship between the demographic factors and the health related problems faced by the women workers. Furthermore, the findings show that the majority of the respondents were illiterate and were employed in the process of plucking the tea leaves, as this activity generates a major chunk of the revenue for the tea estates. From the factor analysis, it was identified that the factors such as work allotment and relationship with colleagues, support and reward, safe environment, compensation and training and development influenced the levels of job satisfaction significantly. In addition, it was also found that four factors, that is, disability, workplace environment, pay and conveyance and work timings were the highly problematic factors causing dissatisfaction among the women workers employed in the tea estates.

Vasanthi (2015) found that the perennial problem is the Tea industry. Due to the decline of the green tea leaf price in Nilgiris all the business in and around had faced huge losses and the economic condition of Nilgiris to very bad condition. People in Nilgiris has lost their purchasing power to go in as they like, this has also affected all fronts of the markets. The Nilgiris tea industry is now in the painful process of positioning itself to meet the emerging competition from India and outside the country. So, it is left to the Government of India to take vigorous step to eradicate this perennial problem existing in Nilgiris. The various problems faced by tea growers such as lack of co-operation, unavailability of loans, lack of transportation facilities. The researcher has suggested that to introduce some promotional campaigns so as to make people aware of the quality of Indian tea abroad and value added products can also be market in International markets (Jeganathan & Palanichamy, 2015).

The safety condition in work place is not much satisfactory in the tea plantation estates in Nilgiris district. Health, Safety and Welfare facilities rendered to the tea plantation workers are of good quality but there is a possibility for enlightening safety and welfare measures for the workers to provide full range of facilities that may expand living standards of the workers in the tea plantation estates (Srinivasan, 2015). Tea industry was contributing 64 per cent of total income of the casual workforce. The permanent workforce was earning 57 per cent more than the casual. Due to more income and privilege of compulsory saving in GPF/CPF or EPF, permanent workforce saves more than the casual workforce (Verma & Gupta, 2015). Plantation sector is labour intensive and hence the productivity depends on the work force (Nirmala & Anand, 2016).

Deepa and Geetha Bai (2016) in their research revealed that problems faced by tea growers at Nilgiri district. The various

problems faced by tea growers such as lack of co-operation, unavailability of loans and lack of transportation facilities (Kavitha & Jamuna Rani, 2014). A separate board has to be established for the welfare of the workers and foreign helpful methods and comparison of the same has to be introduced with immediate effect (Srinivasan, 2016).

Kumar and Jeeva (2017) in their research found that the earning capacity and their saving habits are low. Many of the labourers are in debt due to insufficient income to meet their various ends. Jobs on the tea plantations are traditionally passed from one generation to the next. Having limited access to education or economic opportunity outside the tea plantations, tea workers are highly dependent on their employers. The irony is the condition of tea plantation workers are not less than pathetic they have been keeping away from all the basic needs like drinking water, toilet facility, proper sanitation, clean environment, they also not provided basic health and medical facility (Panwar, 2017).

The socio economic condition of tea labourer is depending upon the tea estate and they also have good knowledge on utilisation of plants in common health care (Pangging and Mandal, 2017).

Roy (2017) found that most of the tea gardens workers are not satisfied with works in tea gardens due to various reasons. Most of the tea gardens workers suffer from the rampant hunger, poverty and unemployment, problems like illiteracy, drop-out, malnutrition, and various incurable diseases and combined with the effect of vulnerabilities of trafficking of children and women in particular.

Hossain et.al. (2017) in their study showed that the high rate of illiteracy, low wage, early marriage, poor dietary intake, high rate of communicable diseases and poor nutritional status are very likely related to each other and one leads to another. Accordingly, the vicious cycle goes on.

Some research studies are related on tea plantation industry. For reviewing these studies they are tentatively categorized as International level, National level and South Indian and Kerala level. In India, limited number of studies and they found to be focusing on different aspects of the tea industry. In Tamil Nadu, few studies are deal with employees of tea industry. This research study aim is to analyse the working conditions of tea industry in Nilgiris district.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives of the Study

The present study aims to analyse the working conditions of employees of Tea Industry in Nilgiris district and to offer suitable suggestions on the basis of findings.

Data Collection

The primary data was collected from the employees of tea industry in Nilgiris district with the help of well-designed pre-tested interview schedule. The pre-test was conducted with 50 respondents. The draft schedule was revised according to the results of the pre-test. The secondary data was collected from the relevant articles published in different journals, magazines, websites and so on.

Sampling Design

There are 154 tea factories working in Nilgiris district. These factories are classified under four different categories. Table 1 shows the classification of tea factories in the study area.

Table 1: Classification Tea factories in Nilgiris District

S. No.	Name of the Tea Industry	Total
1	TAN Tea (Tamil Nadu Tea) Factories	4
2	INDCO (Industrial Co-operative) Tea Factories	15
3	Estate Factories	22
4	Bought Leaf Factories	113
	Total	154

Source: Tea Board, Ooty, The Nilgiris District.

Totally 5030 employees are working in all these 154 tea factories in Nilgiris district. It is not necessary to make the study with all 5030 employees. Therefore, it is decided to apply sampling technique. The researcher has taken 10 Per cent as sample from the universe that is, 5030 employees. To select sample employees in tea industry, proportionate stratified random sampling technique has been used. The Nilgiris district has six taluk in areas covering Ooty, Coonoor, Kotagiri, Gudalur, Pandalur and Kundah. Hence, the population is divided into six strata according to tea industry in Nilgiris district. Then the samples are selected proportionate from each stratum. The strata-wise distribution of employees of tea industry in Nilgiris district is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample Design for Tea Industry

S. No.	Taluk-wise Tea Industry	No. of Tea Industry	No. of Employees as on 31.12.2011	Sample
1	Ooty	25	664	66
2	Coonoor	36	1052	105
3	Kotagiri	58	1165	117
4	Gudalur	18	892	89
5	Pandalur	10	779	78
6	Kundah	7	478	48
	Total	154	5030	503

Source: Official Records of Inspector of Factories, Ooty, Nilgiris District.

Tools and Techniques

In order to analyse the working conditions of employees of tea industry in Nilgiris district, the researcher has used the appropriate statistical techniques such as Percentage analysis and Factor analysis through SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Science Research).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio Economic Background of the Employees

The socio-economic background affects the working conditions of employees of tea industry in Nilgiris district. Under this head, the socio-economic variables such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, place of residence, type of family, family size, number of working members in the family, monthly income, ownership pattern of the tea industry, type of job, category of job, experience, mode of transport and reasons for working in tea industry of the respondents have analysed. Table 3 reveals the results of socio economic background of the employees working in tea industry in Nilgiris district.

Table 3: Results of Socio Economic Background of the Employees

S. No	Socio Economic Variables	Results
1	Gender	67.79% of the respondents are male
2	Age	39.76% come under the age group of 31 to 40 years
3	Marital Status	90.46% are married employees in tea industry
4	Educational Qualification	64 .21% have studied up to school level
5	Place of Residence	64.02% have resided in rural areas
6	Type of Family	71.37% belong to the nuclear family
7	Family Size	47.12% have the family size of four members in their families

S. No	Socio Economic Variables	Results
8	Number of Working Members in the Family	55.87% have two working members in their family
9	Monthly Income	49.90% have earned monthly income from ₹10,001 to ₹20,000.
10	Ownership Pattern of the Tea Industry	66.40% belong to private sector ownership pattern of tea industry
11	Type of Job	63.62% have appointed in permanent basis in tea industry
12	Category of Job	78.53% are engaged in production process of tea industry
13	Experience	28.23% have experienced above 20 years of tea industry
14	Mode of Transport	47.12% are coming by bus to reach from working place to residence place
15	Reasons for Working in Tea Industry	Majority of the respondents have opined that better working condition

Source: Primary Data

Working Profile of Employees Working in Tea Industry

For a common form of a team working in good environment with sufficient workload, welfare facility services like water facility, canteen facility, sanitation facility, lunch-cum-rest room facility, clean and noise free work place, less risk

and lower job related strain cause that will make the team with higher job satisfaction. The working profiles as well as facilities offered by the tea industry are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Working Profile of Employees Working in Tea Industry

S.No	Working Conditions	Results
1	Opinion about the Job	50.10% of the employees feel that the job is secured in tea industry
2	Training by the Tea Industry	72.56% of the respondents have provided initial training after the recruitment in tea industry
3	Types of Training	98.36% have given on job training
4	Number of working hours per day	74.94% respondents are working up to 8 hours per day in tea industry
5	Opinion about the working hours	63.62% feel that the working hours are reasonable
6	Employees opinion about workload	66.60% opine that the employees' workload is medium
7	Drinking water facility	43.74% have got ordinary water facility
8	Availability of lunch-cum-rest room facility	83.70% of the respondents have availed lunch-cum-rest room facility
9	Availability of canteen facility	82.11% of the respondents say that there is no canteen facility
10	Opinion about lighting and ventilation facilities	95.83% have opined that the lighting and ventilation facility is sufficient
11	Opinion about sanitation facility	92.25% of the respondents have availed the necessary sanitation facilities
12	New Skills	75.55% of the respondents say that there is no opportunity to learn new skills
13	Use of modern technology	66.60% of the respondents says that modern technology is not used
14	Distance between Residence and Works Place	87.08% have travelled a distance of up to 10 km from their residence to the working place
15	Noise Conditions in Working Place	52.29% of the respondents have opined that the disturbance of the sound is low in their working spot
16	Lunch time per day	78.13% have one hour for lunch break
17	Leave facilities per year	41.95% have taken leave more than 20 days in a year
18	Sufficiency of leave facilities	93.64% respondents feel that the leave facilities is sufficient
19	Recreational facility	61.03% have opined that recreational facility is provided to the employees
20	Trade union	84.69% of the respondents say that the trade union is not allowed

Source: Primary Data

Working Conditions of Employees in Tea Industry

Working Conditions have a very important influence on the efficiency and morale of the employees. Provision of financial incentives alone will not result in higher efficiency. The efficiency of the employees depends on the environment to a

great extent, in which they have to work. If the atmosphere of the place of work is congenial enough, the efficiency of the worker can be maximized and fatigue, with all its evils, can be minimized, if not altogether eliminated. The researcher has identified 27 statements which are related to the working conditions of employees of tea industry by adopting scaling technique, namely, Linkert's five point scale. Table 5 shows the opinion of employees about working conditions.

Table 5: Opinion about Working Conditions of Employees of Tea Industry

S. No.	Statement	S.A.	A.	N.O	D.A	S.D.A.	Total
1.	Working hours is satisfactory	129 (25.65%)	305 (60.64%)	61 (12.13%)	7 (1.39%)	1 (0.20%)	503 (100%)
2.	Flexibility in overtime work	88 (17.50%)	248 (49.30%)	143 (28.43%)	23 (4.57%)	1 (0.20%)	503 (100%)
3.	Physical working environment is better	82 (16.34%)	251 (49.89%)	140 (27.81%)	30 (5.96%)	0 (0.00%)	503 (100%)
4.	Shift system of the industry is good	102 (20.28%)	276 (54.87%)	83 (16.50%)	36 (7.16%)	6 (1.19%)	503 (100%)
5.	Adequate facilities available to do my work well	76 (15.11%)	180 (35.78%)	135 (26.84%)	102 (20.28%)	10 (1.99%)	503 (100%)
6.	Adequate resources available to do my work well	53 (10.54%)	166 (33.00%)	146 (29.03%)	124 (24.65%)	14 (2.78%)	503 (100%)
7.	Industry provides an exciting work environment	40 (7.95%)	164 (32.60%)	152 (30.23%)	134 (26.64%)	13 (2.58%)	503 (100%)
8.	Working environment is safe	76 (15.11%)	283 (56.26%)	96 (19.08%)	44 (8.75%)	4 (0.80%)	503 (100%)
9.	Working environment is comfortable	74 (14.71%)	261 (51.89%)	103 (20.48%)	56 (11.13%)	9 (1.79%)	503 (100%)
10.	Working environment is appropriately equipped	26 (5.17%)	261 (51.89%)	145 (28.83%)	59 (11.73%)	12 (2.38%)	503 (100%)
11.	Adequate staff available in the industry	60 (11.93%)	308 (61.23%)	85 (16.90%)	45 (8.95%)	5 (0.99%)	503 (100%)
12.	Adequate facilities available for free from dust and fume	40 (7.95%)	315 (62.62%)	101 (20.08%)	33 (6.57%)	14 (2.78%)	503 (100%)
13.	Availability of spittoon boxes	36 (7.16%)	324 (64.41%)	103 (20.48%)	36 (7.15%)	4 (0.80%)	503 (100%)
14.	Firefighting equipment facilities available in the industry	56 (11.13%)	350 (69.58%)	62 (12.33%)	28 (5.57%)	7 (1.39%)	503 (100%)
15.	First-aid appliances facilities available in the industry	49 (9.74%)	354 (70.38%)	62 (12.33%)	31 (6.16%)	7 (1.39%)	503 (100%)
16.	Enough welfare measures available in the industry	36 (7.16%)	197 (39.17%)	209 (41.55%)	46 (9.14%)	15 (2.98%)	503 (100%)
17.	Satisfactory holiday facilities available in the industry	44 (8.75%)	271 (53.88%)	136 (27.03%)	36 (7.16%)	16 (3.18%)	503 (100%)
18.	No stress in my work	30 (5.96%)	213 (42.35%)	192 (38.17%)	53 (10.54%)	15 (2.98%)	503 (100%)
19.	Pay Packages is satisfactory	41 (8.15%)	310 (61.63%)	107 (21.28%)	38 (7.55%)	7 (1.39%)	503 (100%)
20.	There is a possibilities to chance for advancement in the work	32 (6.36%)	137 (27.24%)	205 (40.75%)	120 (23.86%)	9 (1.79%)	503 (100%)
21.	Work achievements are recognized	43 (8.55%)	261 (51.89%)	139 (27.63%)	43 (8.55%)	17 (3.38%)	503 (100%)
22.	I am proud to work in the industry	50 (9.94%)	226 (44.93%)	176 (34.99%)	38 (7.56%)	13 (2.58%)	503 (100%)

S. No.	Statement	S.A.	A.	N.O	D.A	S.D.A.	Total
23	Work gives feeling of personal accomplishment	50 (9.94%)	173 (34.39%)	197 (39.17%)	72 (14.31%)	11 (2.19%)	503 (100%)
24	Work makes use of skills and abilities	50 (9.94%)	262 (52.09%)	143 (28.43%)	37 (7.35%)	11 2.19%	503 (100%)
25	Co-operation received from all other workers	55 (10.93%)	336 (66.80%)	66 (13.12%)	35 (6.96%)	11 2.19%	503 (100%)
26	Well organized work place	46 (9.14%)	272 (54.08%)	135 (26.84%)	32 (6.36%)	18 (3.58%)	503 (100%)
27	Sense of completion with my work	54 (10.74%)	206 (40.95)	198 (39.36%)	26 (5.17%)	19 (3.78%)	503 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

Note: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; N – Neutral; DA – Disagree; SDA – Strongly Disagree

Table 5 revealed that the majority of the respondents stated that they agreed with all the statements about working conditions of employees of tea industry except the statements, such as, enough welfare measures available in the industry, there is a possibilities to chance for advancement in the work, work gives feeling of personal accomplishment.

Application of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA): Opinion about Working Conditions of Employees of Tea Industry

The researcher has used exploratory factor analysis to explore the representative factors available in the sample under study. The results of exploratory factor analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Dimension and Respective Variables	Factor Loadings	Communalities
Working Environment		
Flexibility in overtime work	0.825	0.747
Working hours is satisfactory	0.807	0.671
Physical working environment is better	0.739	0.691
Adequate facilities available to do my work well	0.696	0.788
Adequate resources available to do my work well	0.640	0.752
Industry provides an exciting work environment	0.574	0.734
Shift system of the industry is good	0.545	0.613
Nature of Work		
Well organized work place	0.755	0.713
Co-operation received from all other workers	0.732	0.679
Sense of completion with my work	0.710	0.674
Work makes use of skills and abilities	0.708	0.668
Welfare Measures		
Satisfactory holiday facilities available in the industry	0.737	0.693
Enough welfare measures available in the industry	0.714	0.690
No stress in my work	0.600	0.559
Pay Packages is satisfactory	0.509	0.516
First-aid appliances facilities available in the industry	0.494	0.669
Health Facilities		
Availability of spittoon boxes	0.749	0.764
Adequate facilities available for free from dust and fume	0.722	0.728
Adequate staff available in the industry	0.638	0.688
Firefighting equipment facilities available in the industry	0.489	0.675

Dimension and Respective Variables	Factor Loadings	Communalities
Safety		
Working environment is safe	0.757	0.788
Working environment is comfortable	0.704	0.730
Recognition		
There are possibilities for the chance of advancement in the work	0.714	0.699
I am proud to work in the industry	0.627	0.721
Work achievements are recognized	0.595	0.669
Work gives feeling of personal accomplishment	0.592	0.620
Working environment is appropriately equipped	0.511	0.688

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis; Varimax Rotation Method

Source: Computed Primary Data.

The rotated factor loadings for twenty seven statements have been extracted into six factors. The ratios which have the highest loadings in each factor are grouped, that is the ratios which are more closely related to a particular group

are listed. The last column in the Table 6 is communality (h^2) that is the variance explained by the factor. The factors with identified new names which are important for working condition of employees of tea industry are also presented in Fig. 1.

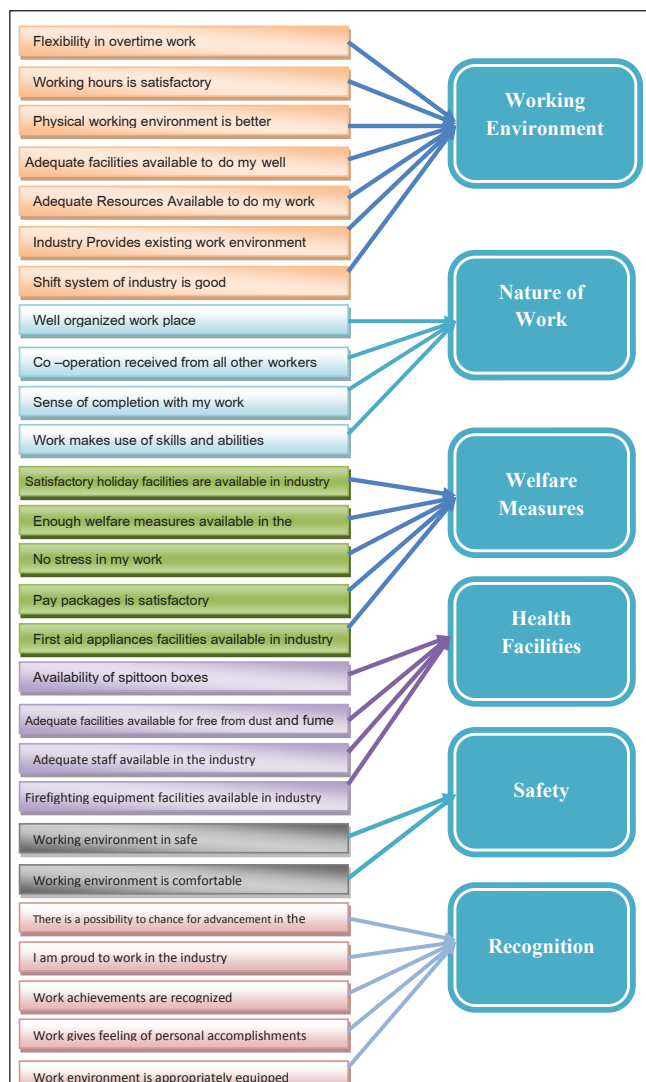


Fig. 1: Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Factors of Working Conditions of Employees in Tea Industry

Table 7 shows the factor influencing the working conditions of employees in Tea industry variables with their standardized regression weights.

Table 7: Variables with the Standardized Regression Weights of Employees about Working Conditions

Factors of Working Conditions	Standardized Regression Weights
Working Environment	1.022
Welfare Measures	0.915

Factors of Working Conditions	Standardized Regression Weights
Health Facilities	0.913
Safety	0.881
Recognition	0.840
Nature of Work	0.810

Source: Computed data

Based on the standardized regression weights, all the six factors are most influencing the working conditions of employees of tea industry. Fig. 2 represents the factors influencing the working conditions of employees of Tea Industry.

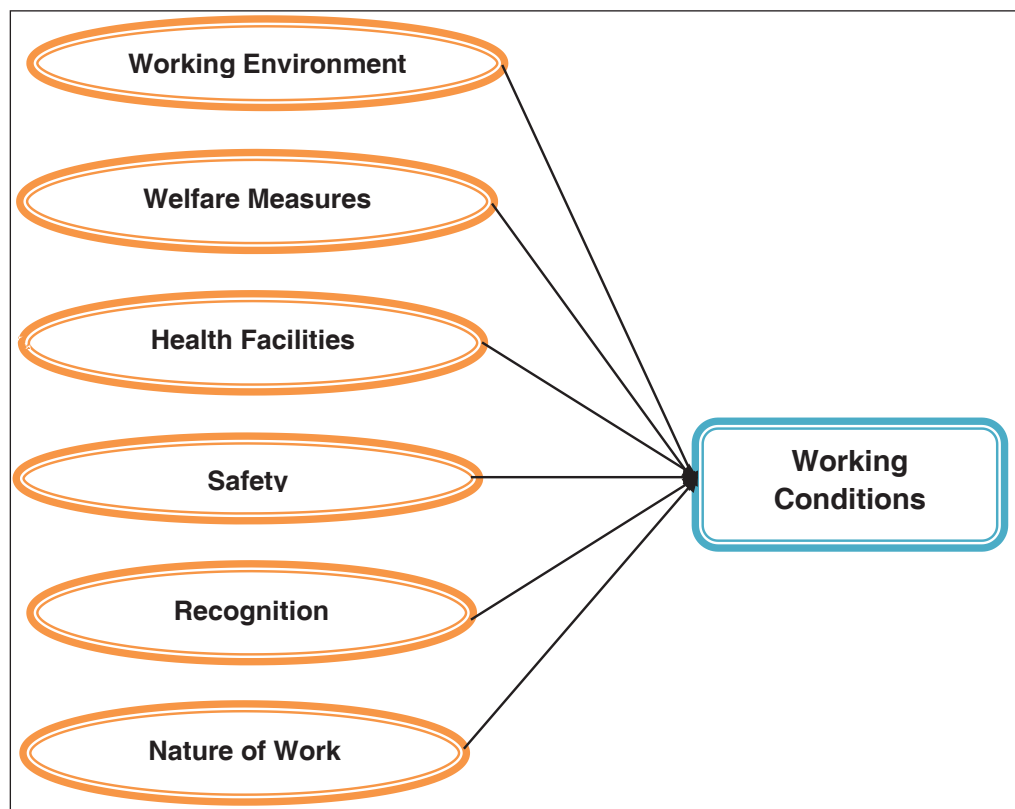


Fig. 2: Factors of Working Conditions of Employees in Tea Industry

CONCLUSION

Tea is considered as imperative crop in India. In India, tea is grown in different regions. So, the tea growers are facing many problems at the time of tea production. The problems are scarcity of labours to work in the tea gardens, the price of the tea leaves, problems created by middleman, economic problems, family problems and problem related to implementation of government schemes faced by tea growers. They are not aware of the facilities of the Tea Board Schemes. On the other hand, Tea growers are facing problems like unaware about the advanced method

of cultivation, ignorance regarding organic cultivation. Besides, they have been facing lot of financial problems as well. The researcher has given some suggestions based on the findings of the study. The tea industry should follow the offered suggestions, which will lead to improve the working conditions of employees working in tea industry in the study area. The following suggestions are given by the researcher:

- Most of the respondents are not provided with initial training after the recruitment. So, the tea industry may provide initial training programmes to the fresher because the training and development as a function

concerned with organisational activity aims at improving the performance of individuals and groups.

- Working time may vary from person to person, depending on location, culture, lifestyle, choice and the profitability of the individual's livelihood. One-third of the respondents in the study area felt that working hours are heavy. So, the industry may change the standard working hours, which will minimize the work load of the employees.
- Majority of the respondents stated that their industry is not adopting any modern technology in their work field. The tea industry will increase its productivity and profitability which gains from the use of modern farming technology, equipment and inputs. Therefore, tea industry can adopt modern technologies.
- Workplace recreation has a positive influence in employee performance; when recreation is well planned and managed, it can significantly contribute towards higher levels of employees' commitment to the organisation. But in the study area, the sample respondents are not provided with recreation facility. So, the industry should provide that facility to help the employees, physically and psychologically well.
- Trade union plays an important role. They are helpful for the effective communication between workers and the management. They provide advice and support to ensure that the differences of their opinion do not turn into major conflicts. In this study, the respondents are not allowed by tea industry to form the trade union. Therefore, the industry may allow the workers to form the trade union for industry peace.
- From the applications of exploratory factor analysis, there are 27 factors extracted into six latent variables. The first factor, 'working environment', is high standardized regression weight compared to other factors. So, the tea industry must concentrate on working environment to improve the job satisfaction of the employees.

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