

“Industrial Relation Practices in Tea Industry of Assam” With Special Reference to Charaideo District

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Abstract – This paper aims at discussing various practical aspects of industrial relation of a selected three tea garden of Charaideo district. To make the discussion systematic, entire paper is divided into three parts. The first part entitles the theoretical approach includes an introduction, meaning of industrial relation, objectives, methodology, location and limitation of the study. The second part entitled “Industrial relation practices of tea industry of Assam” provides a comprehensive study on various aspects of industrial relation of three selected tea Garden of Charaideo district. In this permanently attempt will be take to discuss union management relation, worker participation in management, negotiating, collective bargaining, grievances handling procedure, disciplinary action, settlement of industrial dispute etc.. Third part entitled to conclusion where some major suitable suggestions will be put forwarded with a view to removing the problems and to make the position of industrial relations of the selected three tea gardens sound.

Keywords : Personnel Policies and Practices, Industrial Relation, Worker Participation in Management.

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PART – I

Theoretical Approach

1.1 INTRODUCTION :

Tea industry is the backbone of Assam's economy. Tea is not only the oldest industry of Assam; But also the important only one alongwith oil and is a major source of revenue and employment for the state. Assam's biggest contribution to the world it's tea. Assam is famous all over the world for tea .The tea labours of Assam originally brought by British from various parts of India, viz Bihar, Orrissa, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal etc. with fabulous offer to work in the tea garden in Assam. They are now part and parcel of the tea industry. The permanent settlement of workers in and around the plantation is mainly because recruitment of workers in the initial stages was family base. Workers were encouraged to migrate the plantation with their families. Each served three purposes – No.1 Planter wanted sheet labour who permanently settle in the plantation and this could be achieved by encouraging families to migrate rather than individuals. The entire family male, female and children work on the plantation at wages determined by the planter. No.2 family migration ensure that labour could be reproduced which would ease the problem of further recruitment in the future. No. 3

there is no special training to plantation on the tea garden. Inspite of having a lot of rules to be played by the industrial relation of these selected tea garden under study in increasing productivity of the aggregate as well as labour, it is observed that existing industrial relation of this garden is not upto the satisfactory mark. It is because of illiterate labour, weak labour unions, insufficient management and poor industrial environment all these problems make the garden under developed and de-moralised the labours. Ultimately management owner of the garden and labours are suffering a lot of problems. That is why carefull research work is needed which will give some suitable guidelines to redesigned various policies , procedures and methods of industrial relation activities. The study will helpful to the owner of the tea garden as well as management and labour community considering this benefits the present study aims at discussing various important aspects of industrial relation as mentioned earlier in abstract.

1.2 MEANING OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS:

The term industrial relation commonly denotes “Employee – Employer relation” in both organized and un organized sector of the economy. Industrial relation (also known as Labour Management Relation or Labour Relation) will be treated here as

the study of employee –employer relationship and the outcome of such relationship.

Industrial relation also involve the study of condition conducive to the labour , management co-operation as well as the practices and procedure required to elicit the desired co-operation from both parties . Industrial Relation also study the law, rules, regulations, agreement as well as policy framework laid down by the government co-operation between labour and management and defining rights obligation of both the parties.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

To examine the various aspects of Industrial Relation Policy.

To identify problem areas and formulated suitable recommendations to improve the pattern of industrial relation in Charaideo, Assam.

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN:

The tea industry of Assam is divided into two sectors, viz. organized and unorganized (small growers). The study covering a period of 2018 to 2019 subject to the availability of data refers only to the organized tea estates of Assam, which consists of private, public and government own tea estates of the District. However, one of the best methods of the study would have been to make a survey of all the tea estates of the district but since this is a very large and time consuming project, it was decided to use the case study method. Thus, a sample of three tea estates (selecting one from each sector) has been considered as the modest number from the point of view of feasibility of cost and time.

The field investigation is based on a sample of 300 respondents selected through simple random sampling technique with a precision of +/- 5 percent. Out of this, 100 respondents of each sector have been selected to ascertain their reactions towards different labour issues and to locate the problems. While choosing respondents, efforts have been made to ensure that all categories of employees are interviewed. The analysis is based mainly on the responses received from them. The study has been conducted in the following three tea estates:

Public Sector: A case study of Jaboka Tea Estate, Charaideo, Assam.

Private Sector: A case study of Borahi Tea Estate, Charaideo, Assam.

Government Own Tea Estate: A case study of Deeping T.E.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The choice of sampling design and various tools of analysis are based on the specific objectives fixed to the study. Data pertaining to the study are collected both from the primary and secondary sources. Primary data have been collected mostly by direct contact method and prepared questionnaires and schedules to carry out the investigation for this purpose.

All the information based on primary sources has been collected from the personnel departments of the selected tea estates of Assam and through personal interviews with the workers , union leaders, and officers on the basis of pre-structured questionnaires eliciting information on a number of major aspects of labour relations like personnel policies and practices, trade unions, strikes, procedure for settlement of disputes, redressal of respondents' grievances and taking disciplinary action, workers' participation in management etc. to authenticate the research and arrive at genuine conclusions.

A major chunk of the portion based on the secondary information is obtained from the megazines, newspapers, journals, books, unpublished thesis, annual reports of the companies and various other publications of the Government of India and Government of Assam. Finally, all the information and data collected are analyzed and important inferences have been drawn from them.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

In the present study, an attempt has been made to cover all important aspects of tea labourers in the tea industry of Assam with the maximum degree of thoroughness. But in this earnest endeavor, various difficulties of a serious nature at all stages of the enquiry have been experienced.

The study, however brings within its fold almost all vital issues relating to the labour relations in the tea industry of Assam. But it is pertinent to mention that as these are case studies, results and findings presented in it may not strictly apply to the tea industry of Assam as a whole.

An attempt has been made to highlight the empirical part of the work. The respondent's views were taken on a number of common aspects relating to labour relations practices of their respective three tea gardens.

TEA GARDEN AT A GLANCE

Name of Tea Garden	Area of Tea Garden			Employee						Total No of Creche House	Labours						Quarters			
											Permanent			Temporary						
	Plantation	Non-Plantation	Total	Officers	Medical staff	Clerk & Mohori	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Manager	Staff	Labour	Total			
Borahi T.E.	360 hecter	285 hecter	645 hecter	04	05	24	33	02	364	314	678	450	610	1160	5	22	664	691		
Jaboka T.E.	55.34 hecter	226.91 hecter	782.25 hecter	04	05	26	35	03	455	505	960	100	500	600	3	31	856	890		
Deeping T.E.	246.65 hecter	335.41 hecter	582.6 hecter	03	04	25	32	01	618	449	1117	Nil	Nil	Nil	3	31	856	890		

PART – II

Practice of Industrial Relations of tea garden labour

2.1 AN ASSESSMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATION PRACTICE:

In this part of the study an assessment is made to examine their prevailing industrial relation of selected tea gardens. In doing so, a survey has been conducted by hundred numbers of labour respondents. Accordingly various questions have been put to this labour different aspects of industrial relations of their respective tea gardens as follows :

2.2 UNION AND MANAGEMENT RELATION:

Union and Management Relation occupies a significant position in Industrial Relation. In the three tea gardens as mentioned above, it is observed that there union management relations is not found to be very fair. It is dnealurdenrecn because of various reasons such as illiterate of majority labours so they are not very much aware of the concerned rule and regulation and related labour Act. Taking this opportunity, management has been depriving for various reasonable facilities. Moreover almost all labours are financially weak. So, they cannot stand against misparticipation of management by the help of legislative measures. Consequesntly, the labour community measurable fail to establish a good industrial relation. In addition to observe factor lack of coordination and co-operation among labours of single garden and all gardens.

2.3 WORKER PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT :

It is observed that in case of three tea gardens, all labours related decisions are taken by management without considering attitude participations of labour. So, most of the labours are not motivated and among them there is no commitment to give effort at their level base. Moreover by virtue of independent decisions, the management also satisfied the workers and also failed to obtaining high productivity of labours. It is again observed that due to negligence of worker participation in management, the gap between management and labour community has been increasing which destroy the industrial relations and overall development of tea garden labour communities. Generally worker participation in management is designed in various forms such as –

- A) Works Committee
- B) Joint Management Council
- C) Joint Council
- D) Unit Council

- E) Plan Council
- F) Shop Council
- G) Workers Representative on the Board Management
- H) Workers participation in share capital

2.4 NEGOTIATION:

In these three tea gardens there are different types of agreement between management and labour, but practically it is observed that most of agreements are not in concrete form. So, in many times labour are deprived and misguided.

2.5 COLLECTIVE BERGAINING:

In case of collective bargaining the labours found to be weak. It is because of lack of coordination and co-operation of labours, lack of efficient leadership, illiterate labours, financially weak.

2.6 GRIVANCE HANDLING PROCEDURE:

Generally for grievance redressal procedure in case of large industry, there is a grievance redressal community as in case of medium and small industry, a particular officer is responsible for this purpose. As per procedure an employee having complain can place this complain to his immediate Boss and thereafter boss forwarded complain to the head concerned department and head of the department forwarded for necessary action to the head of industry (including managing director and general manager). But in case of this three selected tea garden of Charaideo is no systematic procedure of submitting any grievances of labour even there is no stipulated time is prescribed officially with in which time the grievance to be settled.

PART – III

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation

From the far going summary of the in-depth, research study the following suggestions and recommendations emerged to give future direction for development of the tea industry of Assam, and to help to formulate policy measures on the basis of its growth pattern and strength and weakness evaluate over a long period of time. The Tea Estate should undertake necessary actions so that the laboures feel that they are an integral part of the industry. Joint efforts of management and labour are necessary increase productivity and improve quality.

1. There has been a mark differences in the level of satisfaction of the respondent of the

three tea estate chosen for the study with regard to existing labour relations personal policy and industrial system. The level of satisfaction in government owned T.E. are very low as compared to the tea estate of private and public sector. This is because of mis management bureaucratic red tapism and also failure of government to pump sufficient capital to this tea estate. From a joint committee between existing management and tea labour and abolished bureaucratic system of T.E.

2. The activity of existing trade union in the sample tea estates are found below the desired level. This is due to failure on the part of trade union in developing a sense of belonging and building trust among the workers by taking a pro-active role. Trade union and tea estate labour union jointly discuss the various problems of T.E. and necessary statement of existing management of T.E.
3. The government of Assam should strengthen the existing directorate of Tea, Assam with necessary power and resources to be responsible for monitoring the development of tea industry.
4. Sivasagar major tea growing district of Assam. There should be special emphasis for closer interaction between district administration and T.E. management in this district. Separate schemes should be formulated by the central government to assis weaker T.E. (Deepling) to increase productivity and improve quality.

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