

Labour Problems of the Cotton Textile Industries in Sangli District

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Abstract:

Labor is an important input in the process of any production. It plays a very crucial role in achieving the economic efficiency of the capital employed in the company. The cotton textile industry of Sangli District faces a number of labor-related problems. Especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, the industry is confronted with a large number of labor problems. The present investigation has attempted to examine the nature and extent of labor problems faced by the cotton textile industry of Sangli district. The study was conducted from a geographic perspective and an attempt is made to trace the magnitude of the problem across geographic location. For the present study, a total of 11 cotton textile industries, 10 clothing industries, 6 spinning mills, one weaving mill, one knitting mill, one yarn dyeing mill and one knitting mill were taken into account and data was collected through questionnaires and processed in SPSS and GIS. Data was collected in April 2022 and all results are based on the primary data. The results of the study show that the cotton textile industry of Sangli District mainly faces the problem of lack of availability of skilled labor, rising wage rates, rigid labor laws and inconsistent labor supply.

Keywords: Cotton Textile Industry, Skilled Labour, Geographical Distribution.

I. Introduction

Sangli District is one of the most important cotton textile centers in western Maharashtra. Sangli District has 19 cotton textile industries (11 in the cooperative sector and 8 industries are proposed by the private sector) in different stages, of which 11 industries produce various kinds of cotton and cotton goods, 08 textile factories are under construction and next to it a textile mill has recently got a letter of approval from the government agency.

II. Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the present investigation are as below.

1. To examine the labour problems of the textile industries in Sangli district.
2. To study the regional nature and extent of the labour problems.
3. To suggest remedies for the labour problem of the textile industries in Sangli district.

III. Statement of Problem

Labor is a key factor in any production process. In the cotton textile industry, a skilled and trained workforce is an essential element for the smooth functioning and growth of the factory. The irregularity

in the supply of skilled workers not only hinders the smooth operation of the cotton textile factory, but also causes supply chain defects and reduces economic efficiency. So what is the nature and extent of the labor problems in the cotton textile mills and in the geographic region? It is attempted to study through the present investigation. The study proposed means to overcome these problems.

IV. Research Methodology

A questionnaire scheduled was prepared for the cotton textile units and data related to availability of skilled labour, wage hike, and labour laws were gathered from the 31 units out of which 11 are cotton textile mills.

V. Data Analysis

1. Location of the Sangli District

The Sangli district is one of the developing districts of the Maharashtra state. It is located between the 16° 45' N to 17° 33' N latitude and 73° 41' E to 75° 41' E longitude. The total geographical area of the district is 8588 km². The district is divided into five Administrative sub-divisions namely Khanapur, Walwa, Miraj, Tasgaon and Palus.

2. Labour Problems of Cotton Textile Industries in Sangli District

Basically, cotton textile industry has broadly classified as per the sector and industry type. As per the sector, there are three types namely cotton textile, garment industries and spinning mills. The cotton textile industry of Sangli district is facing several issues regarding the labours. The major issues of labours are non-availability of skilled labours, inconsistency, wage hike and rigid labour laws. The details of these labour issues tehsil- wise, sector- wise and industry type wise are studied separately.

a) Non Availability of Skilled Labours

The table 1 indicates the problem of non availability of skilled labours. It has noticed during the fieldwork, almost all the eleven cotton textile mills, ten garment industries, six spinning mills, and weaving industry, knitting and garment industry, yarn dyeing industry and knitting processing industry are facing the issue of non-availability of skilled workers.

Table 1
Sangli District: Non Availability of Skilled Labours in Cotton Textile Industry

Sr. No	Tehsils	Sector wise			Industry Type			
		Cotton Textile	Garment Industries	Spinning Mills	Weaving Industries	Knitting and Garment Industries	Yarn Dyeing Industries	Knitting (Processing) Industries
1	Atpadi	1(9.09)	1(10.0)	1(16.67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
2	Kadegaon	3(27.27)	1(10.0)	1(16.67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
3	Khanapur	1(9.09)	1(10.0)	1(16.67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
4	Miraj	2(18.18)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
5	Palus	1(9.09)	1(10.0)	1(16.67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)

6	Tasgaon	1(9.09)	1(10.0)	1(16.67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
7	Walwa	2(18.18)	1(10.0)	1(16.67)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)
8	Jat	0(0)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
9	Shirala	0(0)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
10	Kavathe Mahankal	0(0)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Total		11(100)	10(100)	6(100)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)

Source: Field work, 2022

b) Wage Hike

With increasing cost of standard of living, inflation rate and other expenses, labours have to pay extra wages, which put high financial burden on the mills administration. It has noticed by the researcher that on an average 10 percent salary hike observed every year in cotton textile industry, which resulted in increasing operational cost and consequently total cost of the mills. The labour’s are also demands wage hike due to their increasing expenses. Thus, it is a challenge to the mill administration and owners to achieve golden path of financial sustainability. The increasing cost on labours, leads into increasing cost and reducing the rate of profit. Since profit maximization and maintain market competitions are the main aims of the mills, they cannot be easily ready to bear the extra expenses, which will occur due to wage hike. Study revealed that 63.64 percent cotton textile units of the Sangli district are facing the issue of wage hike and inconsistency in labour supply.

Table 2
Issue of Wage Hike and Inconsistency in Labour Supply

Sr. No	Tehsils	Sector wise			Industry Type			
		Cotton Textile	Garmen t Industries	Spinnin g Mills	Weavi ng Industr ies	Knitting and Garment Industries	Yarn Dying Industr ies	Knitting (Processi ng) Industrie s
1	Atpadi	1(9.09)	0(0)	1(16.66)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
2	Kadegaon	1(9.09)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
3	Khanapur	1(9.09)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
4	Miraj	1(9.09)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
5	Palus	1(9.09)	0(0)	1(16.66)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
6	Tasgaon	1(9.09)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
7	Walwa	1(9.09)	1(10.0)	1(16.66)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)

8	Jat	0(0.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
9	Shirala	0(0.0)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
10	Kavathe Mahankal	0(0.0)	1(10.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
	Issue not Reported	4(36.36)	6(60.0)	3(50.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Total		11(100)	10(100)	6(100)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)	1(100)

Source: Field work, 2022

It has observed from filed observation through the table 2 that 7 out of ten cotton textile mills are facing the issue of wage hike. These seven mills are located in seven tehsils Viz. Atpadi, Kadegaon, Khanpur, Miraj, Palus, Tasgaon and Walwa. Likewise, 4 garment industries out of 10 are facing the issue of wage hike and these are observed in Tasgaon, Walwa, Jat and Kavathe Mahankal tehsils. Similarly, three out of six spinning mills are facing the issue of wage hike and these are located in Atpadi, Palus and Walwa tehsils. Furthermore, weaving, knitting and garment industries, yarn dyeing industries and knitting processing industries in Walwa tehsil are also facing the issue of wage hike.

c) Labour Laws and It’s Implementation in Cotton Textile Industry

It is revealed from the table 3 and figure 4 that 45.16 percent cotton textile industries are strictly implementing all the labour laws. On the contrast the 25.80 percent cotton textile industries of the Sangli district are never implementing major labour laws. 29.03. Textile industries are unable to implement rigid labour laws like gratuity due their weak financial condition. After the Covid -19 pandemic the overall sale, revenue and profitability of the mills are gradually growing but still the rate of revival is not satisfactory. The government stimulant package is needed to strengthen the mills.

Table 3
Sangli District: Implementation of Labour Laws in Cotton Textile Industry

Implementation of Labour Laws	Frequency	Percentage
Always implementing	14	45.16
Sometime implementing	9	29.03
Never implementation	8	25.80
Total	31	100

Source: Field work, 2022

Often labour resign or leave the job too early because which the mills are unable to implement some legal provisions. The proportion of the irregular labours is significantly high in the mills.

d) Inconsistency in Work

The newly recruited labours and non permanent labours are more frequently taking off which leads to loss of production. Likewise, proportion of the labours taking off without prior intimation is also significant in these mills, because of which mill administration facing the issue of untimely delivery of the output.

E) Improper Duty Joining Time of the Labours

According to the mill administrators some labours are joining their duty later than their reporting time. The mill administration cannot take action against them due to the shortage of the labours in the market. The alternative labours are not available due to which mills are compromising with existing labours.

VI. Conclusions of the Study

Cotton textile industry of the Sangli district is playing a very significant role in employment generation, rural development and overall economy of the district. However, in recent time especially after the Covid -19 pandemic, the industry is facing a severe labour shortage problem. The unskilled and untrained labour are made available in the market but the issue of non availability of the skilled labour is major one. According to the mill administrators, the unskilled labours are demanding more wages than their contribution in production. The irregularity and inconsistency in the labour supply is also hampering to the cotton textile mills of the Sangli district.

VII. Suggestions

The following major suggestions can be helpful to address the labour problems being faced by the cotton textile mills in Sangli district.

1. A district-level training institute for textile workers in cooperation with the government and cotton textile mills is strongly recommended to maintain a steady flow of skilled and educated workers.
2. Incentives and rewards can keep workers in the industry. Therefore, appreciation for good work, rewards and attractive incentives for the hard workers and extra work in the routine practice of textile industry management are strongly recommended.
3. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the industry is experiencing high levels of financial sickness. Therefore, an urgent government stimulus package for the survival of the textile industry is strongly recommended, throughout the present investigation.
4. Other states labours have been relocated to their home state during the Covid-19 pandemic, and Sangli District's textile mills have literally collapsed during that phase. Today, the mills are heavily relied on local labor. Therefore, for the long-term labor supply, it is expected to improve the skills of the local labor force in order to obtain secure labor force in the future.

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