Chapter ***Five***

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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CHAPTER - 5
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This fifth Chapter, being the concluding Chapter, of the Dissertation presents the conclusions arrived at on the end of the data analysis and the suggestions emanating therefrom.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

5.2.1 Workforce Profile of the Study Organization

On analyzing the primary data collected from the individual respondents, the following workforce profile of the study organization has emerged.

About half the workforce in the study organization is in the mid-life stage (36-45 years) indicating that they are mature and well-settled in employment mindset. At the same time, about one-third employees belong to the younger age-group of 26-35 years and about one-fourth to the late-life stage age-group of above 46 years.

About one-fourth employees are educated below SSC level and are mostly engaged in menial and unskilled work. The remaining employees' education levels are appropriate to the positions they are holding. Almost all the employees have a long experience in the work they are doing. Still, half of them are willing to receive additional training in their respective work specialization. Only about one-third of the employees, most administrative workers, are members of a trade union.

The distances from the residence to the workplace for each employee vary from upto 1 km to more than 5 km. They use various conveyance means to traverse this distance, own 2-wheeler being the favoured one.

About three-fourth employees' take-home wages/salary ranges between Rs.2,500 and 5,000/-, which is commensurate with their education levels and the nature of work they are doing. Incidentally, almost all the employees are highly satisfied with the wage/salary they receive. About 90% of the employees are also highly satisfied with the treatment they receive from their superiors and the workplace atmosphere. They also generally have a feeling of fulfillment at the end of the workday and also a feeling of commitment towards their employing organization. The combined effect of all these factors indeed have a crucial bearing on their absenteeism behaviour.

5.2.2 Employee Welfare Practices

Sound employee welfare practices have a retarding effect on labour absenteeism. Accordingly, a satisfaction survey about the employee welfare measures in the study organization was conducted among its managerial/

supervisory staff employees through a Likert-type stuctured questionnaire. The analysis of the relevant data has returned the following conclusions.

The managerial/supervisory staff of the study organization have expressed **perfect-level satisfaction about 4 employee welfare practices,** namely, (1) Contributory Provident Fund, (2) Payment of Gratuity, (3) Lighting and Ventilation, and (4) Annual Bonus (ex-Gratia).

They have further expressed **superb-level satisfaction about 10 practices,** namely, (5) Annual Bonus (Statutory),(6) Casual Leave (full pay),(7) Employee Credit Cooperative, (8) Production-related Cash Incentives, (9) Earned Leave (full pay), (10) Group Insurance Cover, (11) Attendance Bonus, (12) Counselling for Job Stress, (13) Leave of Absence (unpaid), and (14) Counselling for Addiction-free Life.

The interviewed staff has expressed **excellent-level satisfaction about 9 practices,** namely, (15) First-Aid Provision, (16) Medical Leave (full pay), (17) Accident Leave (full pay), (18) Loans/Advances against Salary, (19) Financial Assistance for Housing, (20) Medical Care for dependents, (21) Educational Assistance for dependents, and (22) Counselling against Absenteeism.

Lastly, they have expressed merely **good-level satisfaction about 2 practices,** namely, (23) Safety Apparel and Equipment, and (24) Medical Treatment for injuries.

Thus, it may be concluded that the average level of satisfaction about the welfare practices amongst the employees of the study organization is **excellent.** Still, the managerial/supervisory have serious reservations about two critical

aspects relating to safety and medical treatment for injuries suffered while on duty. In informal discussions, it also emerged that there is cognizable discontent among the employees regarding the absence of a canteen, separate rest-rooms for different categories of employees and an in-house reference library.

5.2.3 Absenteeism Phenomenon in the Study Organization

A formal interview with the personnel executive of the study organization brought out the following information.

There were around 5% normal daily absences among shopfloor workers due to pre-sanctioned leaves and the absenteeism (unauthorized leaves) did not exceed 1%. Sudden sickness of self and in the family, funeral in the family/ neighbourhood, conveyance problems like vehicle breakdowns, family and social issues were generally reported as being the causes of absenteeism, but these were not routinely verified. Absenteeism was somewhat high during local fairs and festivals seasons. Warning memos, show cause notices, limited period unpaid suspension and occasionally, a departmental enquiry as well as frank discussions with the offender were the effective means for curtailing the tendency towards absenteeism. The loss sustained because of absenteeism was estimated by calculating the man-hours lost and the monetary value of the production lost.

On the analysis of the primary data collected from the respondents, it may be concluded that less than one-fifth of workforce in the study organization is absenteeism-prone and it is only on rare occasions, do they absent themselves mostly for a single day and at the most, for two to three days. Some causes advanced by them, such as sickness of self and in the family, fatigue from

work, forced overtime work and conveyance problems enroute, are really genuine, but some others such as attendance at fairs and festivals and unplanned recreational activities display a tendency towards irresponsible behaviour. It also underlined the need of expert in-house counselling against absenteeism.

Overall, it may be concluded that the absenteeism phenomenon in the study organization is well under control because of the maturity and long work experience of the workforce, and reasonably decent employee welfare practices that have been adopted by the management.

5.3 Suggestions

As a concluding exercise of this research endeavour, the following may be put forward as suggestions:

1. Sickness is an avoidable cause of absenteeism, provided the workers are assured of timely medical help. The organization may make atleast partial re-imbursement of the medical expenditure being incurred by the workers;
2. Fatigue from work and forced overtime work have emerged as significant causes of absenteeism. Against the former, besides undertaking a careful 'job redesign' exercise, the organization may also arrange expert lectures to impart the workers the knowledge about good food habits, mal-effects of addictions such as tobacco and alcohol, and healthy living habits.

   Against the latter, it is the responsibility of the shift supervisor to arrange proper work schedules and ensure that none of his subordinates are forced to work overtime against his wishes.

3. There should also be a regular in-house expert counselling of the entire workforces about the mal-effects of absenteeism, both on the individual and the organization.
4. The organization should provide for canteens as well as staff category-wise rest-rooms at both its plants.
5. The organization may also consider setting up a general and reference library containing newspapers, popular periodicals, trade journals and select books of both general and industry-specific topics.

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