

LABOUR PROBLEMS IN MARBLE INDUSTRY OF RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

Marble is labour intensive industry; lot of activities depends on labour work. The loading and unloading of marble slabs is done manually in small and medium enterprises. Even the full truck load is filled and unfilled by labour. The measuring work, cutting work and polishing work is done by the labour with the help of advanced machines. Skilled workforce is required to execute these tasks efficiently else there will be extra time and wastage that will lead to additional cost. So it is very essential to have the skilled work force in marble enterprises. But it is not easy to get right type of workers in required numbers. There is always a scarcity of skilled and devoted workers. Absenteeism is again a problem among marble labour. They are quite whimsical and come as per their convenience and take holidays as and when they wish. They go to long holidays of week or two that disrupt lot of business activities. In this research work an effort was made to study the problems specially related to the skilled labour availability and the problem of absenteeism in marble industry workers.

Key words: Marble, labour problem, skilled labour, absenteeism

1- Introduction:

Marble units have to work all the seven days of a week because the nature of business is such that the production can't be stopped. Market trend is such that one can't close business for few days else one will lose customers. In order to maintain the regularity of customers it is imperative to open the factories and outlets of marble throughout the year. But the labour is not available all round the year. It goes on long vacation at the time of *Holi*, *Raksha Bandhan*, *Deepawli*, *Gavri* and

other local festivals. They are not worried about the wage loss. Labour is not all that sincere and devoted towards the work. They are not having close association and bonding with marble unit for where they are working. Besides that it is also very difficult to get skilled labour at reasonable remuneration. People are not ready to do hard work. They wish to do the office worker or the work which require less physical activity. In this situation it is quite difficult to get skilled marble employees.

There were so many problems discussed by several researchers earlier related to marble industry but two specific labour problems are very pertinent in the context of Rajasthan and need to be studied in detail so this research was taken into hand.

Multi functioning workers are required in small marble units. If a polishing machine breaks down the operator will be idle for 3-4 days so he should be able to do other tasks e.g. cutting, measuring, filling, loading, etc. Resin applicator must also know other work as resin require 72 hours to dry and fix (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2009).¹

Regular attendance is an issue difficult to manage. Many employees are not aligned with the organizational objectives. Work is not their central life interest so they irregular and not on time. They avail leave as per their wish and don not think about urgency of work lying undone.²

Absenteeism is a multifold problem that needs to be managed skillfully. There is no single way to solve this problem which causes big loss to the industry. It is important to develop clear and motivating policy related to leave to curtail absenteeism.³

It is very important to identify the core skills of a person before appointment. Skills need to be nurtured and that is possible when person is placed at right place and position. For the growth of industry every worker must perform upto the potential.⁴

Shortage of skilled manpower is due to socio-economic conditions, external forces, job non-attractiveness, job dissatisfaction, industry limitations and personal attributes. Employees' skill need to be encouraged through work training and attitude change workshops.⁵

2- Research objectives:

- a) To study the level of skilled labour problem in marble industry of Rajasthan.
- b) To study the level of absenteeism problem in marble industry of Rajasthan.

3- Research hypothesis:

H1. There is no significant problem of skilled labour in marble industry of Rajasthan.

H2. There is no significant problem of absenteeism in marble industry of Rajasthan.

4- Research methodology:

120 marble units owner (small and medium scale units) opinion related to the availability of skilled labour and absenteeism was collected through structured questionnaire on 5 point scale ranging from 0 to 4.

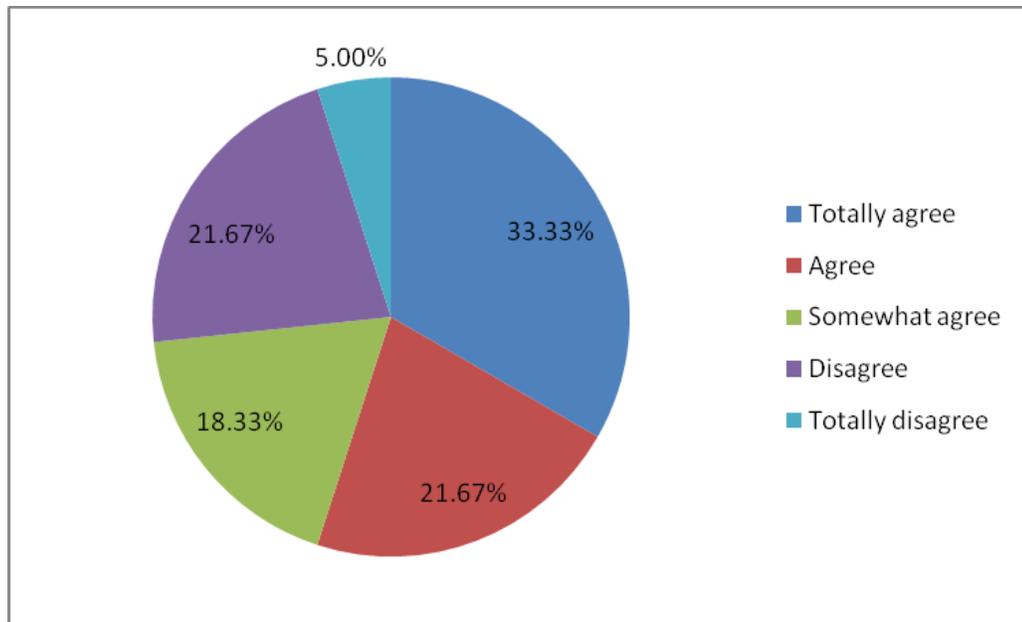
5- Research analysis:

As far as the availability of skilled workforce is concerned it is quite difficult as per the opinion of marble unit owners. 55% felt that availability of skilled labour is a big problem while 18.33% consider there is some problem of skilled labour. 26.67% felt there is no problem of skilled labour.

Table 1: Problem of skilled labour faced by marble enterprises

Category	Marble businessmen	Points	Score
Totally agree	40	4	160
Agree	26	3	78
Somewhat agree	22	2	44
Disagree	26	1	26
Totally disagree	6	0	0
Total	120		308

Chart 1: Problem of skilled labour faced by marble units



When we consider overall opinion of all the 120 marble businessman; skilled labour problem exist at a level of 64.17% which is quiet high and need to be given due consideration. To assess whether this is significant T test was done at a test value of 60% that is 2.4.

T Test

N	df	Mean	SD	t	Sig (2-tailed)
120	119	2.57	1.29	1.42	0.16

*Test value = 2.4

At 5% level of significance the t value was 1.42 which is less than 1.96 table value so the first hypothesis is rejected and it can be concluded that skilled labour problem is not significant though it is there but it is not all that much significant.

As far as the problem of absenteeism was concerned in marble enterprises, 76.67% businessman had an opinion that absenteeism is a big problem whereas 20% businessman were somewhat agree with it while 3.33% had an opinion that absenteeism is not a problem in marble units.

Table 2: Problem of absenteeism faced by marble enterprises

Category	Marble businessmen	Points	Score
Totally agree	46	4	184
Agree	46	3	138
Somewhat agree	24	2	48

Disagree	2	1	2
Totally disagree	2	0	0
Total	120		372

When will look at the overall opinion of all 120 marble businessmen it was found that the score for the problem of absenteeism is 77.50% which is quite high and bothering a lot to the businessman.

T Test

N	df	Mean	SD	t	Sig (2-tailed)
120	119	3.1	0.89	8.59	0.00

*Test value = 2.4

To assess whether this problem is significant T test was done at a test value of 2.4 i.e. 60%. At 5% level of significance the t value was 8.59 which is more than 1.96 table value so it can be inferred that the absenteeism is a significant problem and hence the second hypothesis is rejected.

6- Research conclusion:

Problem of skilled workforce is an area of concern. People are not easily available in good numbers so marble business associations must spend on organizing workshops for the labour to develop their skills.

It is also advisable to intermingle skilled and unskilled workforce so that the under skilled workforce workers may learn gradually through the observation and under the guidance of skilled work force thereby the problem of skilled labour can be overcome.

As far as the absenteeism problem is concerned it is desirable to develop a sense of responsibility among workers, make them more responsible and increase their engagement in the business.

Besides that little more number of workers needs to be appointed so that the work may be done smoothly without any interruption in the productivity.

One need to understand that absenteeism will be there to some extent. It is likely to happen as human being also have some personal needs so they will resort to some leaves but one has to arrange the alternative workforce whenever required on daily wages.

With additional payment to the work force is made. Whenever there is a shortage of labour, the existing labour will cover work to be done by the absent laborers this may resolve the absent problem to some extent and developed the productivity.

7- References:

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