

Facilities provided to the workers at micro, small and medium scale food processing enterprises of Punjab

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■ **ABSTRACT :** Workers are considered as the backbone of any kind of enterprises. For better productivity of enterprises, workers should be provided with several facilities so that they could work with enthusiasm. Present study was planned with the objective to study the physical, safety and security related facilities and miscellaneous facilities provided to the workers of micro, small and medium scale food processing enterprises of Punjab. For the purpose of study, six micro, three small and two medium scale food processing enterprises were selected randomly from the procured list of enterprises. From each type of enterprises 50 respondents were selected randomly making a total of 150 respondents. An interview schedule was developed to note the facilities provided to the respondents by the enterprises. Results revealed that only three forth (72.72 %) of enterprises were having first aid facilities. It was surprised to observe that fire extinguisher was not available in any of the micro scale enterprises which could be a major safety risk and may lead to any miss-happening.

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Every worker spends about 8-10 hours a day in the workplace which is a great part of their life. Traditional labour oriented markets are changing towards automation and mechanization. However, at the same time general awareness about the occupational health and safety is not being spread to the society. Under the current scenario of unemployment, workers are scared of loss of their job; hence they are ready to work in even hostile conditions and without health and safety consideration. This has made them more susceptible to the hazards of technology than their counterparts in developed countries. Industrialization in India is primarily focused on production, whereas health and safety have

a very low priority (Jaiswal *et al.*, 2006). Except a few major reputed public and private industries, other industrialists are insensitive towards the importance of occupational health and safety. The employers of small scale units are totally lagging behind in providing occupational health and safety to the workers (Singh *et al.*, 2010). In the light of above the present study was conducted to study the facilities provided by micro, small and medium scale food processing in Punjab with the following objective

– To study the physical, safety related, security related and other facilities provided to the workers in micro, small and medium scale food processing

enterprises of Punjab.

RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was conducted in six micro, three small and two medium scale enterprises randomly selected from the procured list. From each type of enterprises, 50 respondents were selected randomly making a total of 150 respondents. An interview schedule was developed with the list of facilities that should be provided to the workers in food processing enterprises. Respondents were interviewed about the facilities provided to them by the enterprises and their answers were recorded. Obtained results were further analysed and tabulated to draw the meaningful inferences.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads :

Facilities provided at workplace :

Facilities play a major role in attracting the workers. It increases the ease of working. More the facilities provided by enterprises, more the worker will be eager to work in that enterprise. This section covers all type of facilities that were provided to the workers by the enterprises. A total of 11 enterprises were selected for the study among which micro scale, small and medium scale enterprises were 6, 3 and 2 in number, respectively. The results obtained about facilities provided by the enterprises are presented in three categories viz., physical facilities, safety and security related facilities and

miscellaneous facilities.

Physical facilities :

It includes the general as well as Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) related facilities provided by the enterprises to their workers. It is presented in Table 1 that the physical facilities provided to the workers in the enterprises were filtered drinking water, separate room to have meals, canteen/tea stalls, separate toilets for women, storage cabinet, parking and HVAC facilities like exhaust fan, fan and air conditioners. Table 1 shows that among 11 enterprises, maximum number of them were providing the facility of filtered drinking water (63.64%) followed by separate toilet for women and parking, storage cabinet (36.36%), separate room to have meals (27.27%) and canteen/tea stall (18.18%). In micro scale enterprises, no general facilities except filtered drinking water (33.33%) was provided. All small scale enterprises were providing filtered drinking water (100.00%), parking (100.00%) and separate toilets for women (100.00%) but none of them had canteen/tea stall within the premises of enterprises and only 33.33 per cent had separate room to have meals. In medium scale enterprises, all the general facilities were provided by all the enterprises. Among HVAC facilities, fan was present only in micro and small scale enterprises and air conditioner was present only in medium scale enterprises. Exhaust fan was present in all the small and medium scale enterprises but in micro scale enterprises it was present in only 33.33 per cent of them. Micro scale enterprises were lacking in maximum number of general facilities which puts the workers at the risk of several

Table 1 : Physical facilities provided at workplace				(n=11)
Physical facilities	f (%)			Total
	Micro (n=6)	Small (n=3)	Medium (n=2)	
General facilities				
Filtered drinking water	2 (33.33)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	7 (63.64)
Separate room to have meals	0 (0.00)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	3 (27.27)
Canteen/tea stall	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (18.18)
Separate toilets for women	0 (0.00)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	5 (45.45)
Storage cabinet	0 (0.00)	2 (66.67)	2 (100.00)	4 (36.36)
Parking	0 (0.00)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	5 (45.45)
HVAC (Heating ventilation and air conditioning)				
Exhaust fan	2 (33.33)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	7 (63.64)
Fan	6 (100.00)	3 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	9 (81.81)
Air conditioner	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (18.18)

health related and other general problems.

Safety and security related facilities :

Safety and security is a basic ergonomic feature of any enterprise which helps in reducing the accidents and allows the workers to work safely in a secure environment. It broadly includes the safety features, Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and safe practices adopted at workplace. Different safety features provided at the workplace are presented in Table 2 which shows that nearly three fourth (72.72 %) of enterprises were having first aid facilities and 45.45 per cent of them were having vehicle for any emergency and fire extinguisher in the enterprises. Whereas, one third of them (36.36 %) were having railings on all elevated platforms to prevent any fall. In micro scale enterprises, the safety features were very poor as only half of the micro scale enterprises were providing the first aid facility to its workers, only 12.50 per cent of the enterprises were having vehicle for any emergency and only one third (33.33 %) of the enterprises were having railing on all elevated platforms to provide safety to the workers. In all of the small scale enterprises, first aid facility and fire extinguishers were provided and 40 per cent of enterprises had vehicle. Only 33.33 per cent of enterprises were having railing on all elevated platforms. Whereas all medium scale enterprises were providing first aid facility, emergency vehicle and fire extinguisher but railing on all the elevated platforms was present in only half of

enterprises. It was surprising to observe that fire extinguisher was not available in any of the micro scale enterprises which can be a major safety risk and may lead to any miss happening.

Table 2 shows that regarding provision of PPE, it was found that only medium scale enterprises were providing apron, gloves and face mask to the workers but it was also observed that none of respondents of medium scale enterprises were using all the PPEs at a time. Lack of PPE directly affects the health and performance of workers. Similar finding was reported by Singh (2016) that 78 per cent of workers were not wearing the PPEs while working. The main reason behind not wearing the PPEs was that they feel uncomfortable after wearing the available PPEs.

Safe practices are adopted to avoid any accident or to be prepared to deal with the situation if any accident happens. Every enterprise should provide the safety and security related facilities to their workers. It includes regular inspection of tools and machineries, regular training about fire safety, first aid, and methods of preventing injury and illness. The respondents were interviewed about safe practices adopted by them in their respective enterprises. It was found that safe practice which was followed in micro scale enterprises were regular inspection of equipment and immediate cleaning of any spills. Whereas, all the small scale enterprises were following the safe practice of regular inspection of equipment and two among three small enterprises were

Table 2 : Safety and security related facilities provided at workplace				(n=11)
Safety and security related facilities	Micro (n=6)	Small (n=3)	Medium (n=2)	Total
Safety features				
First aid facility	3 (50.00)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	8 (72.72)
Availability of vehicle for emergency	1 (12.50)	2 (40.00)	2 (100.00)	5 (45.45)
Fire extinguisher	0 (0.00)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	5 (45.45)
Railing on all elevated platforms	2 (33.33)	1 (33.33)	1 (50.00)	4 (36.36)
Personal protective equipment (PPE)				
Aprons	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (18.18)
Gloves	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (18.18)
Face mask	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (18.18)
Safe practices				
Regular inspection of equipments	4 (66.67)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	9 (81.81)
Regular training about fire safety	0 (0.00)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	3 (27.27)
Regular training about first aid	0 (0.00)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	3 (27.27)
Training for preventing injury and illness	0 (0.00)	2 (66.67)	2 (100.00)	4 (36.36)
Immediate cleaning of spillage	5 (83.33)	2 (66.67)	0 (0.00)	7 (63.63)

providing training for preventing injury and illness. Immediate cleaning of spillage was also done in two small enterprises out of three. It was further noticed that in medium scale enterprises, all the safe practices except immediate cleaning of spillage were followed. Singh (2016) said that lack of proper training of the workers may lead to poor workmanship, which results in rejection and rework. Losses may also occur in the form of material wastage by such untrained workers. In the line of present study, Jaiswal *et al.* (2006) felt that industrialization in India is primarily focused on production, whereas health and safety have a lower priority. Ahasan (2002) also said that the industrial development potential for small and medium enterprises and the growth prospects of the national economy of a country cannot be achieved without health and safety practices in the work place.

Miscellaneous facilities :

Facilities related to recreational, family support and autonomy related facilities provided to the workers by the organization gives emotional and psychological enrichment to the workers and works as reinforcement to them. In Table 3 it is observed that only medium scale enterprises were providing recreational facilities like taking for movies (50.00 %) and excursions (100.00%) to their workers.

Under family support among the total enterprises, 86.67 per cent were providing free medical treatment facility to the workers in case of injury at the workplace. Around half of them (53.33%) were providing bonus on festivals but only 13.33 per cent of them were contributing

to the worker’s children’s education and only 6.67 per cent of the enterprises were providing the advance payment and free medical facilities to the workers and their family. In medium scale enterprises, advance payment (50.00%) and free medical treatment to the workers along with family (50%) were provided by half of the medium scale enterprises whereas rest of the family support facilities were provided by all of the medium scale enterprises. It was further noticed that micro and small scale enterprises were only providing free medical treatment if injured during work (66.67% and 100.00%, respectively) and bonus on festivals (33.33% and 66.67%, respectively).

Under autonomy related facility only 26.67 per cent of enterprises and only 13.33 per cent enterprises were providing the committee to deal with women’s complaint and feedback box, respectively. All of the medium scale enterprises were providing both the autonomy related facilities but some of the small scale enterprises were providing committee to deal with women’s complaints (13.33%) and feedback box (66.67%) and none of the micro scale enterprises provided any of these facilities.

Conclusion :

Regarding provision of physical facilities, maximum number of enterprises were providing the facility of filtered drinking water (63.64%) followed by separate toilet for women and parking (45.45%), storage cabinet (36.36%), separate room to have meals (27.27%) and canteen/tea stall (18.18%). Micro scale enterprises were lacking in almost all the basic facilities which put the workers at the risk of several health related and other

Table 3 : Miscellaneous facilities provided at workplace				(n=11)
Miscellaneous facilities	Micro (n=6)	Small (n=3)	Medium (n=2)	Total
Recreational facilities				
Take for movies (monthly)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (50.00)	1 (6.67)
Holidays for excursion/family trip/movie	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (13.33)
Family support facilities				
Contribution in children’s study	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (100.00)	2 (13.33)
Advance payment	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (50.00)	1 (6.67)
Bonus on festivals	2 (33.33)	2 (66.67)	2 (100.00)	8 (53.33)
Free medical treatment if injured during work	4 (66.67)	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	13 (86.67)
Free medical treatment for worker and family anytime	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (50.00)	1 (6.67)
Autonomy				
Committee to deal with women’s complaint	0 (0.00)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	2 (13.33)
Feedback box	0 (0.00)	2 (66.67)	2 (100.00)	4 (26.67)

general problems. Regarding safety and security related facilities, nearly three fourth (72.72 %) of enterprises were having first aid facilities and 45.45 per cent of them were having vehicle for any emergency and fire extinguisher in the enterprises. Whereas, one third of them (36.36 %) were having railings on all elevated platforms to prevent any fall. It was surprised to observe that fire extinguisher was not available in any of the micro scale enterprises which could be a major safety risk and may lead to any miss-happening. Medium scale enterprises were providing almost all the miscellaneous facilities but it was noticed that micro and small scale enterprises were providing only free medical treatment if worker is injured during work (66.67% and 100.00%, respectively) and bonus on festivals (33.33% and 66.67%, respectively).

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