

## Labour Absenteeism in Powerloom Units of Ichalkaranji

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### Introduction And Research Methodology

#### • Introduction

It is universal fact that labour absenteeism has direct bearing on the productivity of the firm. Loss of work-man days lead to increase the cost of production per unit. It adds considerably to the cost of industry. Increasing rate of labour absenteeism is an indicator of indiscipline in the organization as well as a reflection of supervisory ineffectiveness. The uncontrolled and over absenteeism results in loss of labour-man days, hampers or at least slows down the production, increase in labour cost, delay in execution of party's orders and so forth. Therefore, the problem of absenteeism is required to be detected in the beginning before it becomes chronic. The chronic absenteeism, if not taken seriously, may lead to loss and some time closure of business.

Absenteeism signifies the absence of an employee from work that is unauthorized, unexplained, avoidable and willful. An employee is to be considered as scheduled to work the employer has work available for him and the employee is aware of it and the employer has no reason to expect, well in advance, that the employee will not be available for work at the specified time. The term 'Labour Absenteeism' has been defined as follows.

- **Encyclopedia of Social Sciences:** Absenteeism is the *'time lost in industrial establishment by the avoidable or unavoidable absence of employees.'*
- **Webster's dictionary:** *'Absenteeism is the practice or habit of being and 'absentee', and an 'absentee' is one who habitually stays away.'*
- **Labour Bureau, Simla:** *'Absenteeism is the total man-shifts lost because of absences as a percentage of the total number of man-shifts scheduled to work.'*

#### • Causes of Labour Absenteeism

Very often, the causes of labour absenteeism are debated from the firm level to the macro level. Workers may be absent from their job because of either their own or another family member's sickness, because of death in the family, or for other personal reasons. But there are also working-environment factors that determine absence from work, such as job involvement and satisfaction and a culture with strict attendance norms etc. Broadly speaking, the workers remain absent from job due to following reasons, among other. These are revealed by earlier studies.

- a) Maladjustment with factory conditions
- b) Social and religious ceremonies in the family or relatives or friends
- c) Unsatisfactory housing conditions which are unsatisfactory for healthful habitation
- d) Industrial fatigue due to laborious work or over work
- e) Low wages which compel a worker to seek some part-time job to earn some side income.
- f) Unhealthy, irritating and intolerable working conditions like excessive heat and moisture at work place, noise and vibrations in the factory, bad lighting condition, dust, fumes and over-crowding etc.
- g) Habit of alcoholism and resultant hangover
- h) Indebtedness and harassment by private moneylenders.

i) Improper and unrealistic personnel policies of the firm

- **Power looms business in Ichalkaranji**

Textile is the backbone of the economy in Ichalkaranji, which is the fastest growing industrial area in western Maharashtra. Earlier, Ichalkaranji was famous for cotton cloths, dhoties and sarees. With the changing market scenario, it produces not only cotton but also suiting, shirting, denim cloth, canvas, cambric, etc. as it has made a remarkable development in terms of technology. Ichalkaranji boasts of approximately 2 to 2.5 lakh powerlooms and 50,000 semi-auto looms. There are 7 yarn Spinning mills in and around Ichalkaranji. In 2006, the city was sanctioned under the Textile Cluster scheme of central government and today it is well equipped with all the amenities and facilities required for the textile industry. It also has 4 textile parks coming-up in its vicinity. Ichalkaranji surely has obtained a place in the textile map of the World. Because of all these ventures, Ichalkaranji is proudly known as the 'Manchester City' of Maharashtra.

Due to the encouragement of the Jaghirdar, a large number of village artisans from Rabhakavi, Banahatti, Mahalingpur, Budhagaon, Belgaum, etc. migrated to Ichalkaranji having formerly worked on handlooms, they got easily adjusted to work on powerlooms. With the help of these skilled weavers, it became possible to produce different varieties of good quality fabrics according to the changing tastes, habits and fashions of the consumers. Besides, a large number of poor people migrated to Ichalkaranji to find work.

In the beginning, there existed handlooms. Due to the increased productivity of powerlooms, handlooms were replaced by powerlooms. As a result, the weavers now began to produce more cloth, earn more and further invested their savings for expansion of the additional business.

- **Review of Literature**

The review of latest studies on the problem of labour absenteeism is taken, some of which are presented herebelow.

1) **Mohan Lal and Jayeb Biswas (2006)** found that absenteeism of Class-D workers is closely related to their health issues as well as their personal and social life.

2) **K. Raviprakash (2007)** revealed that the absenteeism in automobile sector is largely due to health and sickness problems of employees. He further argued that the temporary employees do not remain less absent than permanent employees in the hope of becoming permanent in job in coming years.

3) **Dr. N. Shanthi, Mrs. D. Maria Angelin Jayanthi and Ms. Hemalatha (2011)** concluded that absenteeism has become a major problem in most of the retail industries. The absenteeism is mainly due to the poor educational background of the workers and the backwardness of the society. The workers are not as committed as Japanese workers but for this worker class alone cannot be blamed but the employer's are also equally responsible. He suggested that absenteeism can be reduced to a great extent if the management takes initiative in making the workers feel responsible towards their job by introducing various motivational schemes.

4) **M. Prabhu (2013)** argued that the high rate of employee absenteeism may signal weak labour-management relations and low productivity.

5) **Barkha Gupta (2013)** said that employee absenteeism is a growing issue in retail sector, however, it can be controlled and minimized by implementing good working condition.

6) **S. Vijaylatha and Dr. G. Brindha (2014)** found that around 65% of the employees are absent due to ill health, 40% due to poor performance appraisal, 60% are absent due to social and religious causes while 58% due to family problems.

7) **Dr. Abhinav Patel and Sanjay Thakkar (2014)** revealed that the absenteeism is one of the ever present problem in the pharma industry. He identified the alcoholism, family disputes, health issues, transportation

problems, religious issues and age factors are prominent factors responsible for labour absenteeism in pharmaceutical industry.

**8) Khushbu Dubey and Dr. Pooja Dasgupta (2015)** found that employees experience a higher level of stress since their work is heavy and tiresome, which makes them to be absent. Most of them feel that they are underpaid because they feel that for the same qualification other companies give them better compensation. Further, female employees remain absent as they do not feel comfortable with all the shifts, mainly the night shifts. He said that lack of the recreation and personal needs due to work pressure encourage them to take leave.

**9) Habeebur Rahman T (2016)** found that the working condition greatly influences the level of absenteeism in textile shops. The routine health problem has been identified as one of the important causes for frequent absenteeism. Salary is found to be a non determinant in influencing level of absenteeism. Hence the employees are very well aware that frequent absenteeism will lower their take-home salary.

- **Statement of the Problem**

In order to avoid the potential loss of work-man days due to chronic absenteeism in the power loom units, its owner has to take the timely steps to detect the problem of absenteeism. The total number of loss of work-man days would reveal the magnitude of financial loss of the unit. There may be a variety of reasons behind labour absenteeism which can be classified as **personal** and **organizational** reasons. It is important for the owners / management of power loom units to understand the magnitude of labour absenteeism and also to analyze the reasons behind it.

In the light of foregoing discussion, the researcher undertook an exploratory and analytical study of labour absenteeism in power loom sector of textile industry of Ichalkaranji and attempted to address the following pertinent questions.

- (i) What is the magnitude of labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji?
- (ii) What are chief causes behind labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji?

- **Objectives of the study**

The following objectives were set as for the study.

- 1) To study the problem of labour absenteeism in the select power loom units of Ichalkaranji
- 2) To analyze the reasons / factors behind labour absenteeism.
- 3) To investigate the correlation between various factors and magnitude of labour absenteeism,

- **Hypotheses**

For the present study the following hypotheses were set.

- 1) There is no significant difference between magnitude of labour absenteeism of observed sample units.
- 2) There is no significant association between 'personal and organizational factors' and 'magnitude of labour absenteeism'

- **Significance of the study**

The proper investigation of factors behind labour absenteeism in power loom units of ichalkaranji would hopefully be useful for monitoring and evolving the long-term policy to eradicate the problem of labour absenteeism or at list to make it less intense.

The study would also be significant for the academicians and researchers in the field of human resource management.

- **Scope of the study**

The topical scope of the study is confined to labour absenteeism in power loom units. The geographical scope and chronological scope are restricted to Ichalkaranji and one calendar year respectively. The functional scope is confined to analyzing the reasons (factors) behind labour absenteeism and investigating the association between personal and organizational factors of absenteeism and the magnitude of absenteeism.

- **Sample Selection**

It was decided to incorporate 10 power loom units operating in Ichalkaranji which were selected by using Tippet's Random Numbers and 5 workers from each selected unit were randomly selected as sample respondents from the list of workers provided by unit owners. This is how the total sample workers arrived at is 50. The care was taken to incorporate all categories of workers like machine operator, jobber, mender & folder, candiwala and wahifunny workers. The following table shows the sample powerloom units and number of workers selected for the study.

**Table-1**  
**Sample Respondents Selected for the Study**

Unit No.	Name of Powerloom Unit	Estd.	Product Range	Number of Workers Selected
1	Laxminarayan Textile	1988	<i>Jakard butta, butta sadi, dhoti</i>	05
2	Sunil Textile	1999	<i>sari, dhoti</i>	05
3	Pruthviraj Textile	2008	pure cotton sari	05
4	Vishal Textile	2001	<i>big border dhoti, sari, uparna</i>	05
5	Rahul Textile	2000	<i>dhoti, sari, uparna</i>	05
6	Sanskriti Textile	1990	<i>Grey dhoti, Malmal</i>	05
7	Shri Balaji Textile	2005	<i>super patti, chemeric</i>	05
8	Shri Balaji Textile	2003	chemeric, big border dhoti	05
9	Ganesh Textile	2007	big border dhoti, sari	05
10	Mehata Textile	1998	<i>sari, uparna</i>	05
Total Sample Respondents				<b>50</b>

- **Data Source and Instrument of Data Collection**

The entire study is based on primary data that are collected from office records of sample power loom units. The data regarding factors behind absenteeism are collected from the sample respondents through a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured to collect the data from respondent regarding reasons responsible for their absence from duties, which included two parts as follows:

**Part-I : Personal factors (Ex-plant factors)**

This part included ten factors describing personal reasons responsible for absenteeism.

**Part-II : Organizational factors (In-plant factors)**

This part included seven important organizational factors describing the unit related reasons responsible for absenteeism.

The questionnaire was translated into Marathi language considering the education level of the workers. The selected respondents were personally visited as per their duty-time and convenience. Each question in the questionnaire was made understandable to them and the data were collected. The data so collected are tabulated systematically and analyzed with the help of selected statistical tools.

- Analytical tools**

For data analysis, the statistical tools like mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation are used and One-way ANOVA (F-test) is employed for testing of hypotheses.

**Data Analysis And Hypotheses Testing**

- Personal and Organizational Factors responsible for Labour Absenteeism**

Ten personal and six organizational factors were identified as the probable causes for labour absenteeism, the survey result whereof is presented in the following table.

**Table -2.1**

**Frequency Distribution of Personal and Organizational Factors responsible for Labour Absenteeism (N =50)**

Code No.	Personal Factors (Ex-plant Factors)	f	%	Code No.	Organizational Factors (In-plant Factors)	f	%
P1	<b>Gender</b>			O1	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		
	Male	42	84		Satisfied	07	14
	Female	08	16		Not satisfied	43	86
P2	<b>Age (Years)</b>			O2	<b>Relationship with Employer</b>		
	20-40	26	52		Harmonious	17	34
	41-50	22	44		Strained	33	66
P3	<b>Marital Status</b>			O3	Harmonious	36	72
	Married	45	90		Strained	14	28
	Unmarried	05	10	O4	<b>Working Hours</b>		
P4	<b>Dependents (Members)</b>				8	12	24
	2 -4	36	72		12	37	74
	> 4	14	28	> 12	01	02	
P5	<b>Education</b>			O5	<b>Working Conditions</b>		
	College Level	06	12		Satisfactory	18	36
	School Level	36	72		Not Satisfactory	32	64
	Illiterate	08	16	O6	<b>Distance from Residence</b>		
P6	<b>Mode of Transport</b>				< 5 k.m.	48	96
	Cycle	21	42		> 5 k.m.	02	04
	Bike	05	10				
	Transportation of Firm	00	00				
	Walk	24	48				
P7	<b>Health Status</b>						
	Good & Strong	04	08				
	Moderately Good	30	60				
	Frequent suffering from illness	16	32				
P8	<b>Indebtedness</b>						
	Indebted	36	72				
	Not Indebted	14	28				
P9	<b>Personal Habits</b>						
	Drinking (Alcoholism)	13	26				
	Tobacco Chewing	07	14				
	Smoking	11	22				

	All	15	30
	Not at all	04	08
P10	<b>Mental Worries</b>		
	Family Problems	20	40
	Financial Problems	26	52
	Worried about future	04	08

*Source: Primary Data*

• **Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism**

In order to know the extent of labour absenteeism in power loom sector of Ichalkaranji, the unit-wise and month-wise labour absenteeism is taken into account. The following tables present the mean values (Grand Mean) of month-wise labour absenteeism in the sample study units and its summary.

**Table 2.2**  
**Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism in Power loom Units of Ichalkaranji**

Month	Unit-1	Unit-2	Unit-3	Unit-4	Unit-5	Unit-6	Unit-7	Unit-8	Unit-9	Unit-10	Grand Mean	Skew	Kurtosis
Jan	3.6	4.8	4.4	3.8	5.0	4.0	2.6	3.2	4.8	4.2	4.04	-0.58	-0.27
Feb	3.0	4.6	3.6	5.2	6.2	2.2	3.4	4.0	4.8	4.6	4.16	0.03	-0.06
Mar	3.4	4.6	3.6	4.0	6.2	4.6	5.0	3.2	5.0	4.4	4.40	0.57	0.42
Apr	4.8	4.6	5.4	3.0	4.6	5.6	4.4	4.0	4.2	5.8	4.64	-0.45	0.42
May	7.4	8.0	6.6	6.0	7.2	6.6	7.0	6.8	4.2	5.2	6.50	-1.00	0.92
Jun	5.6	2.8	2.6	3.0	3.0	2.4	3.8	3.6	5.8	3.8	3.64	1.12	0.14
Jul	2.8	4.6	3.0	4.4	3.4	3.6	4.4	4.2	3.2	3.0	3.66	0.21	-1.85
Aug	5.2	3.6	4.2	6.0	3.6	5.6	4.6	4.8	4.2	4.4	4.62	0.41	-0.61
Sep	2.4	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.2	2.6	3.0	1.2	2.0	2.0	1.78	0.52	-1.29
Oct	4.6	6.0	3.8	3.6	6.2	4.0	3.8	5.6	3.8	4.6	4.60	0.73	-1.20
Nov	5.6	5.8	5.2	4.8	3.0	6.2	3.8	5.2	5.2	4.0	4.88	-0.71	-0.21
Dec	4.6	4.2	6.8	8.2	5.0	5.0	4.6	4.0	5.2	4.0	5.16	1.61	2.20
Grand Mean	4.41	4.56	4.2	4.41	4.55	4.36	4.2	4.15	4.36	4.16	4.34		
Skew	0.49	0.02	0.02	0.29	-0.31	-0.08	1.22	-0.18	-1.06	-0.73	-0.53		
Kurtosis	0.05	1.63	-0.10	1.02	-0.51	-1.21	2.88	1.42	1.47	1.58	2.85		

*Source: Office Records of concerned units*

One-way ANOVA (F-test) is computed to know the mean differences between magnitudes of labour absenteeism across sample units during the study period.

**Table 2.3**  
**ANOVA for Mean Differences of Labour Absenteeism**

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F (Critical Value)	p-value
Between Groups	0.0001	1	0.0001	0.00013	4.35	.9911
Within Groups	13.7082	20	0.6854			
Total	13.7083	21				

*Source: Values computed by the Researcher*

As the F- value is 0.00013 and the *p*-value is .9911, ( $F = 0.00013 < F_{0.05, 1,20} = 4.35$ ), the null hypothesis is accepted, which indicates that there is no significant difference between the magnitudes of labour absenteeism in the power loom units of Ichalkaranji.

**Table 2.4**

**Summary of Average Labour Absenteeism in Power Loom Units of Ichalkaranji**

Unit No.	Name of Power Loom Unit	Minimum (Average Absent Days)	Maximum (Average Absent Days)	Mean Labour Absenteeism	Standard Deviation	C.V. (%)
1	Laxminarayan Textile	2.4	7.4	4.41	1.44	32.58
2	Sunil Textile	1.2	8.0	4.56	1.68	36.76
3	Pruthviraj Textile	1.2	6.8	4.20	1.62	38.57
4	Vishal Textile	1.0	8.2	4.41	1.83	41.40
5	Rahul Textile	1.2	7.2	4.55	1.75	38.46
6	Sanskriti Textile	2.2	6.6	4.36	1.49	34.10
7	Shri Balaji Textile	2.6	7.0	4.20	1.13	26.90
8	Shri Ram Textile	1.2	6.8	4.15	1.39	33.49
9	Ganesh Textile	2.0	5.8	4.36	1.03	23.56
10	Mehta Textile	2.0	5.8	4.16	0.98	23.50

*Source: Values computed by the Researcher*

Table 2.4 reveals the degree of variability in the labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji. There is abrupt variations in absenteeism at Vishal Textile (CV =41.40%) while Mehta Textile has minimum volatility in absenteeism (CV = 23.50%)

- **Magnitude of Lost Work-man Days**

It is interesting to understand as to how many work-man days have been lost due to unauthorized absenteeism. Table No. 2.5 speaks about the total lost work-man days in sample power loom units of Ichalkaranji.

**Table 2.5**

**Total lost work-man days in power loom units of Ichalkaranji  
(No. of workers per unit=5)**

Unit No.	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Lost Work-Man days	Total Available Work-man Days	% of Lost Work-Man days to Available Work-man days
1	18	15	17	24	37	28	14	26	12	23	28	23	265	1450	18.28
2	24	23	23	23	40	14	23	18	6	30	29	21	274	1450	18.90
3	22	18	18	27	33	13	15	21	6	19	26	34	252	1450	17.38
4	19	26	20	15	30	15	22	30	5	18	24	41	265	1450	18.28
5	25	31	31	23	36	15	17	18	6	31	15	25	273	1450	18.83
6	20	11	23	28	33	12	18	28	13	20	31	25	262	1450	18.07
7	13	17	25	22	35	19	22	23	15	19	19	23	252	1450	17.38

<b>8</b>	16	20	16	20	34	18	21	24	6	28	26	20	249	1450	17.17
<b>9</b>	23	24	25	21	21	29	16	21	10	19	26	26	261	1450	18.00
<b>10</b>	21	23	22	29	26	19	15	22	10	23	20	20	250	1450	17.24
<i>Total Lost Work-Man days</i>	<b>201</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2603</b>	<b>14500</b>	<b>17.95</b>
<i>Working Days</i>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>290</b>		
<i>Total Available Work-man Days</i>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>14500</b>		
<i>% of Lost Work-Man days to Available Work-man days</i>	<b>16.08</b>	<b>16.64</b>	<b>17.60</b>	<b>18.56</b>	<b>26.00</b>	<b>14.56</b>	<b>14.64</b>	<b>18.48</b>	<b>7.12</b>	<b>30.67</b>	<b>19.52</b>	<b>20.64</b>	<b>18.14</b>		

*Source: Values computed by the Researcher*

In all out of total available work-man days (14,500), 2,630 days have been lost due to labour absenteeism, which amounts to 18.14% The problem of labour absenteeism is becoming sever in Sunil Textile and Rahul Textile as revealed by increasing percentage of lost work-man days 18.90 and 18.83 respectively, followed by Laxminaranyan Textile and Pruthviraj Textile (18.28%) There is more loss of work-man days in the months of October (30.67%), May (26%) and December (20.64%)

• **Personal and Organisational Factors and Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism**

After all, workers are human beings, who due to personal reasons may remain absent from assigned duties. Ten such personal factors and six organizational factors are studied in respect of labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji and the results are exhibited in Table No. 2.6.

**Table 2.6**  
**Association between Personal and Organisational Factors and Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism**

Code No.	Range* of Personal Factor	Code No.	Range* of Organizational Factor	Mean Labour Absenteeism (Unit-wise)	Mean Labour Absenteeism (Month-wise)
<b>P<sub>1</sub></b>	0.68	<b>O<sub>1</sub></b>	0.72	4.41	4.04
<b>P<sub>2</sub></b>	0.86	<b>O<sub>2</sub></b>	0.32	4.56	4.16
<b>P<sub>3</sub></b>	0.80	<b>O<sub>3</sub></b>	0.44	4.20	4.40
<b>P<sub>4</sub></b>	0.44	<b>O<sub>4</sub></b>	0.95	4.41	4.64
<b>P<sub>5</sub></b>	0.64	<b>O<sub>5</sub></b>	0.28	4.55	3.64
<b>P<sub>6</sub></b>	0.66	<b>O<sub>6</sub></b>	0.92	4.36	3.66



<b>P<sub>7</sub></b>	0.76	--	--	4.20	4.62
<b>P<sub>8</sub></b>	0.44	--	--	4.15	1.78
<b>P<sub>9</sub></b>	0.58	--	--	4.36	4.88
<b>P<sub>10</sub></b>	0.73	--	--	4.16	5.16
<i>Mean</i>	<b>0.659</b>	--	<b>0.605</b>	<b>4.356</b>	<b>4.098</b>
<i>S.D.</i>	<b>0.141</b>	---	<b>0.299</b>	<b>0.148</b>	<b>0.953</b>

*Source: Primary Data*

\* *Coefficient of Range = Highest value minus lowest value divided by highest value plus lowest value*

\*\* *Mean values of labour absenteeism were taken into account except the months of May (in which month most of the migrant workers prefer to go to their nature place) and the month of the October (in which Diwali vacation is given)*

**Table 2.7**

**ANOVA for Association between Personal and Organisational Factors and Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism**

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F (Critical Value)	p-value
<b>Between Groups</b>	111.7225	3	37.2408	128.57	2.9223	.00001
<b>Within Groups</b>	8.979	31	0.2896			
<b>Total</b>	<b>120.7015</b>	<b>34</b>				

*Source: Values computed by the Researcher*

F value is 128.57 and *p*-value is < .00001 ( $F = 128.57 > F_{0.05, 3, 31} = 2.9223$ ), which indicates that the result is significant at  $p < .05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected which leads to conclude that there exists the significant association between the personal and organizational factors and the magnitude of labour absenteeism in power loom units at Ichalkaranji.

**Findings And Conclusion**

The findings and conclusions drawn therefrom are presented hereunder.

• **Findings:**

- i. It is found the majority of the power loom workers are male (84%) and most of them belong to young age group of 20 to 40 years.
- ii. It is observed that 90% of the respondents are married and 72% of them have around 2 to 4 dependents. 28% sample workers are found to be having 5 or more dependents.
- iii. Seventy two percent of respondents have school level education while 12% of them have acquired the higher education too.
- iv. It is found that out of 10 sample power loom units, none of them provides the transportation facility to their workers, the prominent reason being the small size of the firm.
- v. Majority of sample respondents (48%) every day come to their duties on foot, while 42% of them use cycle. Only 10% of them have their own bikes.
- vi. It is somewhat disturbing to find that a big chunk of power loom workers (60%) have 'moderately good' health status and 32% of them reported that they had been frequently suffering from this or that type of illness. This may be due to over strained work or the effect of cotton dust on their lungs. During interview, some sample respondents reported that they have frequently suffered from cough, bronchitis and other lungs related diseases.
- vii. Most of the respondents (72%) are indebted. During interview, they reported that they have taken loan from urban co-operative banks, credit co-operative societies and even from private money lenders.

- viii. It is very shocking to note that 30% of sample power loom workers are addicted to drink, tobacco consumption and smoking. Only 8% of them have kept themselves away from addiction. More specifically, it is found that 26% respondents have the habit drinking wine and 14% of them have been addicted to tobacco chewing. 22% of sample respondents are smokers.
- ix. 52% of sample respondents have been trapped by 'financial problems', while 40% are having 'family problem'. This finding read with finding no. 6 above, it is clear that due to severe financial problems, the power loom workers have taken loans even at the exorbitant rate of interest.
- x. It is worrisome to find that majority of power loom workers are 'unhappy' with the job they have been doing presently and their relationship with their owners are mostly 'strained' (Score: 66%) however, the 'harmonious' relationship is found among co-workers.
- xi. Sixty four percent of sample respondent reported that the working conditions in the units are not desirable. Good working conditions can abstain the worker from remaining absent from their duties. However, here it is found that only 36% power loom owners have provided desirable working conditions.
- xii. Sometimes the distance of work place from residence may become the prominent cause for remaining absent from work. However, the study revealed that majority of power loom units (96%) are situated within 5 k.m. from the place of residence of workers. Only 4% are situated beyond that.
- xiii. On an average, there are around 18 percent lost work-man days in power loom sector of Ichalkaranji, which hampers the productivity and increases the cost of production.

• **Conclusion:**

Ichalkaranji has traversed from hand-loom to power-loom and now from auto-loom to rapiers (shuttle-less-auto looms) and recently to air-jet looms. However, the problem of labour absenteeism has not been fully resolved. Most of the workers in textile business in Ichalkaranji have migrated from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu etc., who have different life styles than natives. Average daily production of textile in Ichalkaranji amounts to Rs. 600 crores, for which growing lost work-man days due to absenteeism is unaffordable. There are around 1, 25,000 loom owners and 35,000 auto-loom owners, which are trapped by fluctuating rates of yarn and increased electricity charges. The absenteeism problem again aggravates the situation. It becomes difficult to control low productivity and high cost of production. On the whole, it is concluded that the problem of labour absenteeism is growing in power loom sector of Ichalkaranji and both personal factors (Ex-plant factors) as well as organizational factors (In-plant factors) are responsible for growing labour absenteeism and proper steps are required to be taken remedy the situation.

• **Suggestions:**

- i. The power loom owners may take the proper steps to change the undesirable habits of their workers through personal counseling and special programs organizing the lectures or slide show of expert doctors on evil-effects of addiction.
- ii. The power loom owners, through their association, may arrange for short-term credit to workers which would relieve them from the burden of indebtedness, especially from taking loan from private money lenders at exorbitant interest rates.
- iii. Comfortable working conditions should be provided and regular health-check-up camps may be organized with the collaborative efforts of Power loom Owner's Association and local doctors or NGOs.

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