

Job profile of workers engaged in food processing enterprises of Punjab

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■ **ABSTRACT :** Food processing enterprises are one of the leading enterprises in India. It employs around 17.41 lakhs people in registered food processing sector whereas 47.90 lakh in unregistered sector. Most of the workforces employed in food processing sector are female. They have to work both in the home as well as in the enterprises due to which they overburden their body and are at high risk of developing work related musculoskeletal discomforts. In the light of above present study was planned to study the personal as well as job profile of workers engaged in food processing enterprises of Punjab. For conducting the study, six micro, three small and two medium scale food processing enterprises were selected. From each type of enterprises 50 respondents were selected making a total of 150 respondents. An interview schedule was developed to assess the job profile of respondents. Results revealed that 98 per cent respondents in medium scale food processing enterprises were working for more than eight hours daily with a weekly off. Moreover, the work in medium scale food processing enterprises was highly repetitive and monotonous as all respondents performed same task whole day. High difference was observed in the wages of micro, small and medium scale enterprises. It can be concluded that food processing is a job requiring highest manual involvement with less focus on the human factors of workers engaged in the enterprises. The main motive of enterprises was high productivity and workers comforts were highly neglected.

■ **KEY WORDS:** Food processing enterprises, Job profile, Work related musculoskeletal discomforts

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Workers are directly related to the system's productivity, therefore, they are considered the backbone of any type of industry. Production of any industry is directly proportional to the skills, ability, performance and productivity of the labour employed in it (Chaudhary and Singh, 2013). Organized food processing industries have such a vast employment opportunity that for every Rs. 1 million investment, it

provides 18 direct and 64 indirect jobs (Anonymous, 2011). Every worker spends about 8-10 hours a day in the workplace which is a great part of their life. It is also noteworthy that most of the workers employed in food processing sectors are female. They have to work both in the industry as well as at the home to meet their family's daily need. Moreover, the work pattern in food processing industries is very repetitive and speedy and the workers

are exposed to several health risks. It was also recorded that maximum number of workers were facing musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) which are the most prevalent occupational health hazards in India (Ansari and Sheikh, 2014). Workers of food processing industry faces several health problems like musculoskeletal disorders, work related stress, rhinitis, dermatitis (Smith, 2004), respiratory problems (Swiderska *et al.*, 2005) poisonings and hearing loss (Bhushan, 2011). The world health organization (WHO), estimates occupational health risks as the tenth leading cause of morbidity and mortality (Pingle, 2011). Wherever the poor working conditions exist, there are the potentials of hazards to worker's health as well as their safety. To work in such a difficult condition workers get very few wages and incentives. Present study was planned with the following objectives:

- To study the work related information of respondents
- To study the rest and accessibility related information of respondents
- To study the economic profile of respondents.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

For the purpose of conducting present study, six micro, three small and two medium scale food processing enterprises of Punjab were selected. From each type of enterprises, 50 respondents were selected making a total of 150 respondents. An interview schedule was developed to interview the respondents regarding their job profile.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Job profile included the information regarding the respondents' type of job, tenure of work, duration of work, holidays per week, breaks per day, pattern of work, distance of workplace from home, mode of transportation, personal and total family income. All of these factors were recorded by asking the respondents about their opinion and present conditions. The results obtained by analysing the obtained data are presented in Table 1 and discussed as under:

Regarding type of job, it was found that maximum number of respondents (86.00 %) were working on daily paid basis (Table 1) and 14.00 per cent were employed on contractual basis. Highest number of daily paid workers were found in medium scale (96.00 %) enterprises followed by micro scale (86.00 %) and small

scale (76.00 %) enterprises. As food processing was a seasonal job and depended on the availability of raw material at the lowest cost in market so the workers were employed on daily basis as per the requirement of the enterprises. Work tenure means the number of years for which the worker is working in a particular enterprise. Although the job was not permanent but the employers used to call the same workers in every season or whenever they have some work in the enterprises. The main reason to call the same workers was the expertise they gained in the same enterprise. Regarding work tenure of respondents it was found that more than half of respondents (52.67%) had work tenure of 1 to 5 years followed by more than 5 years (42.6%) and less than 1 year (4.67 %). The average work tenure irrespective of enterprise category was 5.16 years (Table 1). Work duration means total working hours per day and is presented in Table 1. Result shows that nearly half of total respondents (51.33 %) were working for 6 to 8 hours daily and less than half of respondents (41.33%) used to work for more than 8 hours. Only 7.33 per cent used to work for less than 6 hours. In medium scale enterprises majority of respondents (98.00%) were working for more than 8 hours and only 2.00 per cent of them worked for 6-8 hours. In small scale enterprises nearly three fourth of respondents (74.00%) were working for 6 to 8 hours followed by more than 8 hours (26.00%). In micro scale enterprises, majority of them (78.00%) were working for 6 to 8 hours and none of them were working for more than 8 hours. On an average, respondents were working for 7.82 hours per day *i.e.* 46.92 hours per week which was nearly equal to the recommended working hours of 46 hours per week as per the Indian Factory Act (Singh, 2016). In medium and small scale enterprises, workers were working for 53.88 hours per week and 48.48 hours per week, respectively which was higher than the recommendation whereas in micro scale enterprises workers were working for 38.40 hours per week which was within the recommended value. Therefore, it can be said that workers were engaged for long working hours in medium and small scale enterprises. Dembe (2008) suggested that long working hours may perhaps result in increased risk of cardiovascular, respiratory and hearing impairments along with musculoskeletal disorders and injuries.

Holidays are essential for breaking the monotony

of work and performing some recreational activities. Long holidays are always good but weekly holidays rejuvenate the workers and increase their interest in work. Holidays on weekly basis was recorded in the study. It is evident from Table 2 that irrespective of enterprise category, all respondents were getting only one holiday per week. Holidays on different major festivals like Dussehra, Diwali, Holi and Lohri were also provided to them. Rest break is a form of allowances in which relaxation allowance is taken in a specific activity. Instead of making a standard way to indicate the required rest pauses, normally a work activity is allowed to give 10-15 minutes tea break time. Rest breaks increases work efficiency, reduces boredom and reduces fatigue (Singh, 2016). Table 2 displays that nearly half of respondents (46.67 %) were getting one break per day but more than one third of them (37.33 %) replied that the number of

break was dependent on the workload and varied from day to day basis and only 16.00 per cent of them responded that they got two breaks daily. Among the two breaks, first break was the tea break which was optional whereas second break was the lunch break which was mandatory. Average duration of 1st break given to the total respondents was 12.63 min. Whereas, the average duration of second break for the total respondents was 27.20 min. Generally frequent short breaks are better than long non frequent break. It was observed that nearly half of respondents (53.33 %) were getting two breaks per day.

Respondents were asked about the distance that they cover between their homes and the workplace. Table 3 shows that maximum number of respondents (68.00 %) were living at a distance of 1 to 3 km from workplace followed by less than 1 km (28.67 %) and very few of

Table 1 : Work related information of the respondents (n=150)

Job characteristics	Category	f (%)			Total
		Micro scale (n=50)	Small scale (n=50)	Medium scale (n=50)	
Job type	Contractual	7 (14.00)	12 (24.00)	2 (4.00)	21 (14.00)
	Daily	43 (86.00)	38 (76.00)	48 (96.00)	129 (86.00)
Work tenure (years)	<1	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	7 (14.00)	7 (4.67)
	1-5	16 (32.00)	26 (52.00)	37 (74.00)	79 (52.67)
	>5	34 (68.00)	24 (48.00)	6 (12.00)	64 (42.67)
Average work tenure		6.78	5.68	3.02	5.16
Work duration (hour)	<6	11 (22.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	11 (7.33)
	6-8	39 (78.00)	37 (74.00)	1 (2.00)	77 (51.33)
	>8	0 (0.00)	13 (26.00)	49 (98.00)	62 (41.33)
Average daily work duration (hr)		6.40	8.08	8.98	7.82
Weekly work duration (hr)		38.40	48.48	53.88	46.92
Pattern of work****	Same task whole day	9 (18.00)	28 (56.00)	50 (100.00)	87 (58.00)
	Irregular work pattern	46 (92.00)	35 (70.00)	18 (36.00)	99 (66.00)

****Multiple responses

Table 2 : Rest and breaks related details of the respondents (n=150)

Rest related parameters	Category	f (%)			Total
		Micro scale (n=50)	Small scale (n=50)	Medium scale (n=50)	
Holidays per week	1	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Breaks per day	1	22 (44.00)	22 (44.00)	26 (52.00)	70 (46.67)
	2	5 (10.00)	10 (20.00)	9 (18.00)	24 (16.00)
	Depends on workload	23 (46.00)	18 (36.00)	15 (30.00)	56 (37.33)
Duration of 1 st break (min)	10	14 (50) **	17 (60.71)**	7 (29) *	38 (47.5)***
	15	14 (50) **	11 (39.28)**	17 (70.83) *	42 (52.5)***
Average duration of 1 st break		12.50	11.96	13.54	12.63
Duration of 2 nd break (min)	20	10 (20)	17 (34)	15 (30)	42 (28)
	30	40 (80)	33 (66)	35 (70)	108 (72)
Average duration of 2 nd break		28.00	26.60	27.00	27.20

*(n=24), ** (n=28), *** (n=80)

them lived at a distance of more than 3 km (3.33 %). In micro scale enterprises, maximum number of respondents (64.00 %) were living within the distance of 1 km whereas in small (78.00 %) and medium scale enterprises (90.00 %) maximum number of respondents were living at a distance of 1-3 km. Irrespective of enterprises, an average distance between workplace and home was 1.16 km. There were mainly female workers in the food processing enterprises so they preferred to work in the nearby enterprises. Based on the distance between workplace and home, respondents adopted different mode of transportation which was further related to the time spent in travelling. Since the medium scale food processing enterprises were far away from the main road hence some of them provided vehicle to their workers. It is shown in Table 3 that maximum number of respondents reached to the workplace by walking (44.00%). In micro scale enterprises more than three fourth respondents (80.00%) and in small scale enterprises more than half of the respondents (52.00%) used to walk to reach to their respective workplace. Whereas, in medium scale enterprises maximum number of respondents (80.00%) was getting the transport facility from industry whose fare was deducted from their wages.

Wages or personal monthly income of the respondents was the payment or remuneration made by the employer for the efforts put in by the worker. Table 4 portrays that majority (98.00%) of total respondents belonged to the personal income group of Rs. 3,000 to 5,000. Among the three enterprises, maximum number of respondents (94.00%) working in medium scale enterprises belonged to the higher personal income group of Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 9,000. Whereas, in small scale enterprises maximum number of respondents (94.00 %) and in micro scale enterprises all of the respondents belonged to the personal income group of Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 5,000. Highest average wage was given to the workers of medium scale enterprises (Rs. 7,636.92) followed by small scale (Rs. 3,718) and micro scale enterprises (Rs. 3,066). According to the ministry of labour and employment, Govt. of India the daily wage for unskilled and semi skilled workers in agriculture sector are Rs. 308 and Rs. 315 per day (Anonymous, 2017). If four non working days are eliminated the monthly wage becomes Rs. 8008 and Rs. 8190 for unskilled and semi skilled workers, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that none of the enterprises were providing the wage according to govt. of India norms. Regarding

Table 3 : Information regarding accessibility of respondents to the workplace (n=150)

Accessibility related parameters	Category	f (%)			
		Micro scale (n=50)	Small scale (n=50)	Medium scale (n=50)	Total
Distance between workplace and home (km)	< 1	32 (64.00)	11 (22.00)	0 (0.00)	43 (28.67)
	1-3	18 (36.00)	39 (78.00)	45 (90.00)	102 (68.00)
	>3	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	5 (10.00)	5 (3.33)
Average distance		0.67	1.09	1.72	1.16
Mode of transportation	Own vehicle	5 (10.00)	15 (30.00)	8 (16.00)	28 (18.67)
	Vehicle by industry	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	40 (80.00)	40 (26.67)
	Public transport	5 (10.00)	9 (18.00)	2 (4.00)	16 (10.67)
	Walking	40 (80.00)	26 (52.00)	0 (0.00)	66 (44.00)

Table 4 : Income related information of respondents (n=150)

Income related parameters	Category	f (%)			
		Micro scale (n=50)	Small scale (n=50)	Medium scale (n=50)	Total
Personal monthly income (Rs.)	3,000-5,000	50 (100.00)	47 (94.00)	0 (0.00)	147 (98.00)
	5,000- 7,000	0 (0.00)	1 (2.00)	3 (6.00)	4 (2.67)
	7,000-9,000	0 (0.00)	2 (4.00)	47 (94.00)	49 (32.67)
Average personal income (Rs.) ± SD		3066 ± 104.22	3718 ± 1187.98	7636.92 ± 1154.39	4806 ± 2237.95
Total family income /month (Rs.)	6,000-11,000	47 (94.00)	32 (64.00)	21 (42.00)	100 (66.67)
	11,000-16,000	3 (6.00)	12 (24.00)	22 (44.00)	37 (24.67)
	16,000-21,000	0 (0.00)	6 (12.00)	7 (14.00)	13 (8.67)
Average total family income (Rs.) ± SD		7780±1798.98	10700±3839.91	12920 ±3256.64	10466.7±3723.08

total family income, in most of the cases, total family income was the total earning of husband and wife and if the elderly are getting pension that was also included in it. Basically it is the income on which the expenditure of whole family is dependent. Table 4 displays that maximum number of respondents (66.67%) belonged to the income group of Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 11,000 followed by income group of Rs. 11,000 to Rs. 16,000 (24.67%) and income group of Rs. 16,000 to Rs. 21,000 (8.67 %). The average total family income of total respondents was Rs. 10,466.7. Maximum total average family income was of the workers engaged in medium scale enterprises (Rs. 12920) followed by small (10,700) and micro scale enterprises (7,780). In medium scale enterprises wage was higher which may be the major reason for higher total family income.

Conclusion :

As far as the work profile of respondents is concerned, it was observed that maximum number of respondents was working on daily paid basis. More than half of the respondents had work tenure of 1 to 5 years. Respondents in medium scale enterprises had the longest work duration (8.98 hr), followed by small (8.08 hr) and micro scale enterprises (6.40 hr). All the respondents were getting only one holiday per week. Highest wages were given to the workers of medium scale enterprises (Rs. 7,636.92 per month) followed by small scale (Rs. 3,718 per month) and micro scale enterprises (Rs. 3,066 per month). Maximum total average family income was of the workers engaged in medium scale enterprises (Rs. 12,920) followed by small (10,700) and micro scale enterprises (7,780).

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