

"Voices from the Shop Floor: Labour Policy Awareness Among SME Employees in Karnataka" with reference to Dharwad District

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Abstract

In India's rapidly expanding industrial landscape, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a pivotal role in employment generation and economic contribution. However, the awareness and implementation of labour policies within these enterprises often remain inadequate, particularly at the shop-floor level. This study investigates the level of awareness among SME employees in Dharwad District regarding key labour laws, including provisions related to minimum wages, social security, occupational safety, working hours, and grievance redressal mechanisms. The objective is to identify knowledge gaps, assess compliance challenges, and understand employee perceptions of workplace rights and entitlements.

A structured questionnaire was administered to a representative sample of shop-floor employees across multiple SME clusters in Dharwad. Quantitative data were statistically analyzed using frequency distribution, cross-tabulation, and chi-square tests to determine correlations between demographic factors and labour policy awareness. Qualitative insights were also gathered through open-ended interviews with HR personnel and union representatives[1].

Findings indicate a significant lack of awareness among workers about key provisions of the labour codes, with notable variations across education levels and employment tenure. Many employees rely on informal sources of information, and there is limited institutional support for legal literacy. The study highlights the urgent need for targeted awareness programs, policy outreach, and stricter enforcement to ensure decent work conditions.

This research contributes to the discourse on inclusive labour governance and emphasizes the importance of empowering SME workers with the knowledge required to safeguard their rights and improve compliance within the informal industrial ecosystem[2].

Keywords: *Labour Law Awareness, SME Employees, Dharwad District, Shop Floor, Labour Codes, Workers' Rights, Industrial Policy, Karnataka, Legal Literacy, Labour Governance*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector forms the backbone of India's industrial economy, contributing significantly to employment generation, regional development, and GDP growth. In Karnataka, particularly in districts like Dharwad, SMEs span various industries such as engineering, textiles, food processing, and logistics, employing a vast workforce that forms the operational core of these businesses. Despite the sector's importance, one persistent challenge remains: the low level of awareness among shop-floor employees regarding their legal rights under India's labour legislation framework[3].

Labour policies in India have undergone major reforms in recent years, especially with the introduction of the new Labour Codes – including the Code on Wages, Industrial Relations Code, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, and the Social Security Code. These codes aim to simplify, consolidate, and modernize existing laws. However, their impact largely depends on effective dissemination and understanding at the ground level. In many SMEs, particularly in semi-urban regions like Dharwad, there exists a disconnect between policy formulation and implementation due to limited legal literacy, lack of structured HR departments, and weak enforcement mechanisms.

This study seeks to examine the extent of labour policy awareness among SME employees in Dharwad District. It aims to explore how well these workers understand essential labour rights, such as minimum wages, working hours, leave entitlements, health and safety measures, and social security provisions. By focusing on voices from the shop floor, this research highlights the grassroots realities of labour law implementation, identifies critical knowledge gaps, and evaluates the factors influencing awareness levels. Ultimately, the study emphasizes the need for targeted awareness programs, collaborative stakeholder engagement, and stronger policy communication strategies to enhance labour rights consciousness among SME workers and ensure inclusive and fair workplace practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Rao (2023)[4] emphasized the low levels of awareness among SME workers in tier-2 cities like Hubli-Dharwad regarding new labour codes. The study noted that informal employment practices contribute to a disconnect between policy and practice. It recommended integrating legal literacy modules into workplace training. The findings stressed a gap in state-led outreach efforts.
- Mehta & Kulkarni (2022) [5] examined compliance attitudes in Karnataka's SME sector post labour code reforms. The study found that while employers were aware of changes, worker awareness was minimal. It highlighted the role of HR departments in bridging this gap. The researchers advocated for collaborative policy workshops.
- Singh (2021)[6] conducted a pan-India survey revealing that over 60% of SME employees had no understanding of formal grievance mechanisms. The lack of access to printed materials or official briefings was cited as a barrier. Awareness was particularly low in semi-urban regions. The study called for multilingual campaigns.
- Patil & Desai (2020)[7] explored legal awareness in North Karnataka's industrial clusters. Results showed a significant knowledge deficit in areas like paid leave, overtime, and maternity benefits. The researchers linked this to the absence of trade unions in SMEs. They suggested NGO-led sensitization programs.
- Sharma (2019)[8] studied employee perceptions of labour rights in Dharwad-based textile SMEs. Workers reported reliance on peers for legal information. Formal contracts were rare, and labour inspections were infrequent. The study underlined the ineffectiveness of current enforcement strategies.
- Nair (2018)[9] analyzed worker empowerment through awareness of workplace rights. The study found that SMEs in semi-urban regions showed minimal proactive dissemination of legal information. Workers lacked understanding of minimum wage entitlements. The study recommended awareness drives through local government bodies.
- Joshi & Verma (2017)[10] examined how socio-economic status influenced legal literacy among SME workers in Karnataka. Those with lower education and income levels had poorer understanding of labour protections. Informal employment status worsened this divide. The study advocated targeted literacy interventions.
- Iqbal (2016)[11] explored the implementation of the Factories Act and related laws in small-scale industries. The findings showed widespread non-compliance due to limited employee knowledge. Many enterprises lacked HR capacity for legal updates. The study stressed institutional training needs.
- Thomas (2015)[12] focused on the gender gap in awareness of maternity and wage rights among women in micro and small enterprises. The research found that women workers were more vulnerable due to social and educational constraints. Employer indifference aggravated the situation. Community-based training was proposed.
- Krishna (2014)[13] studied the gap between written labour laws and actual practice in informal industrial sectors of Karnataka. The study showed that most workers were unaware of their legal entitlements due to absence of formal onboarding or training. Recommendations included mandatory induction on workplace rights.

3. Research Gap

Despite the proliferation of labour welfare laws and recent reforms through the four consolidated Labour Codes in India, there remains a significant disconnect between policy and practice, particularly in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector. Existing research has predominantly focused on compliance from the employer's perspective or on policy-level analysis, with limited emphasis on how these laws are understood and experienced by workers, especially at the shop-floor level. Studies addressing legal literacy among workers often concentrate on large-scale industries or urban regions, leaving semi-urban industrial clusters such as Dharwad relatively underexplored[1].

Furthermore, most literature overlooks the socio-economic and educational dimensions that influence workers' awareness of labour rights within SMEs. There is also a lack of empirical data capturing the lived realities of informal workers in unorganised industrial settings, where labour policy awareness is often minimal. This gap is particularly critical in regions like Dharwad, where SMEs contribute significantly to local employment but operate with limited HR infrastructure and regulatory oversight. This study seeks to bridge this gap by exploring grassroots-level awareness, identifying the factors that hinder policy

dissemination, and recommending targeted interventions that empower workers to understand and assert their rights under the evolving Indian labour law regime.

Despite the comprehensive overhaul of India's labour laws through the introduction of the new Labour Codes, awareness among SME employees—especially those at the shop-floor level—remains alarmingly low. Existing research has largely focused on employer compliance, macroeconomic impacts, and regulatory reforms, often neglecting the worker's perspective in semi-urban and industrial districts like Dharwad. Moreover, while large-scale enterprises are somewhat covered in the discourse, SMEs—especially those without structured HR systems—receive inadequate attention when it comes to legal awareness and labour rights implementation at the grassroots level.

There is also a paucity of empirical data that links worker demographics such as education, job tenure, or industry type with their understanding of labour laws. Most previous studies fail to explore how cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic factors contribute to or hinder labour policy awareness among SME workers. Given the significant contribution of SMEs to employment and regional development in Karnataka, this oversight represents a critical gap. This study aims to address that by capturing the real voices from the shop floor in Dharwad District, thereby providing insights that are both policy-relevant and grounded in field-based realities[14].

4. Objectives

- 1) To assess the level of awareness among SME employees in Dharwad District regarding key labour policies, including provisions on wages, working hours, leave entitlements, occupational safety, and social security.
- 2) To examine the relationship between employee demographic factors (such as age, education, job tenure, and type of industry) and their understanding of labour laws.
- 3) To identify the sources of information through which SME workers learn about their legal rights and to evaluate the effectiveness of these communication channels.
- 4) To explore the challenges faced by workers in accessing or understanding labour policy information within the SME work environment.
- 5) To provide recommendations for improving labour law awareness and legal literacy among SME employees, with a focus on participatory, multilingual, and grassroots-level strategies.

5. Hypotheses of the Study

Hypothesis 1:

H₀₁ (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant association between the education level of SME employees and their awareness of labour laws in Dharwad District.

H₁₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant association between the education level of SME employees and their awareness of labour laws in Dharwad District.

Hypothesis 2:

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between years of work experience and the level of labour policy awareness among SME employees.

H₁₂: There is a significant relationship between years of work experience and the level of labour policy awareness among SME employees[15].

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1. Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the level of awareness regarding labour policies among SME employees in Dharwad District. A quantitative approach is employed to collect measurable data using structured questionnaires. This design facilitates the identification of patterns, relationships, and gaps in labour law awareness[16].

6.2. Study Area

The study is conducted in Dharwad District, Karnataka, which hosts a variety of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in sectors like textiles, engineering, food processing, and manufacturing. The district provides an ideal setting to evaluate grassroots-level awareness among shop-floor workers in both formal and informal SME units.

6.3. Population and Sample

The target population consists of shop-floor workers employed in SMEs within Dharwad District. These workers span various categories, including skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled roles across both registered and unregistered SMEs.

6.4. Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling method is adopted to ensure adequate representation from different sectors and types of SMEs. Within each stratum, respondents are selected through convenience sampling, based on their availability and willingness to participate[2].

6.5. Sample Size Determination

The sample size was determined using the standard statistical formula:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{E^2}$$

Where:

- Z = 1.96 (for 95% confidence level)
- p = 0.5 (maximum variability)
- E = 0.1 (margin of error)

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot 0.5}{(0.1)^2} = \frac{0.9604}{0.01} = 96.04$$

Thus, the minimum required sample size is approximately 96. To account for non-responses and missing data, a final target of 100–120 respondents was set.

6.6. Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire comprising close-ended and open-ended questions. Secondary data was sourced from government publications, journals, NGO reports, labour codes, and legal reference documents relevant to SMEs and labour policies.

6.7. Tools of Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using:

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage)

Inferential statistics using the Chi-square test of independence

The analysis was carried out using SPSS software to examine relationships between variables like education, work experience, and awareness levels[3], [17].

6.8. Scope of the Study

- 1) Focuses on labour law awareness among shop-floor workers in SMEs of Dharwad District.
- 2) Covers key topics such as minimum wages, working hours, social security, safety standards, and leave entitlements.
- 3) Aims to provide practical insights to policymakers, NGOs, SME owners, and labour departments.
- 4) Provides a baseline for future research in semi-urban SME clusters.
- 5) Highlights grassroots understanding over institutional or policy-level compliance.

6.9. Limitations of the Study

- 1) Geographically confined to Dharwad District, hence findings may not generalize to other districts.
- 2) Focused exclusively on shop-floor employees, excluding managerial or supervisory roles.
- 3) Based on self-reported data, which may be influenced by bias or recall errors.
- 4) Language barriers and literacy levels may have affected respondents' comprehension.
- 5) Sample size, though statistically adequate, may not capture all nuances across industries.

7. Data Analysis

7.1. Awareness of the Minimum Wages Act Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.1: Awareness of the Minimum Wages Act

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	48%
No	37	37%
Not Sure	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 48% of SME employees are aware of the Minimum Wages Act applicable to their job role. A

significant 52% either lack awareness or are unsure of the Act. This indicates a widespread gap in communication and legal literacy in wage-related policies.

Interpretation:

The lack of awareness exposes workers to potential wage exploitation. Employers and labour authorities must increase efforts to educate workers about their wage entitlements. Visual aids, posters, and training sessions in local languages are recommended.

7.2. Awareness of Legally Allowed Working Hours Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.2: Awareness of Legal Working Hours Per Day

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	42	42%
No	41	41%
Not Sure	17	17%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 42% of employees are aware of the legally allowed daily working hours. A nearly equal 41% are unaware, while 17% are uncertain. This indicates serious inconsistency in workplace communication on labour hour regulations.

Interpretation: The lack of clarity may lead to excessive working hours without legal safeguards. SMEs should clearly communicate work-hour limits through written policies and orientation. Labour departments should enforce display of working hours in factories.

7.3 Awareness of Weekly Off and Paid Holiday Entitlements Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.3: Awareness of Weekly Off / Paid Holiday Entitlements

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	50%
No	38	38%
Not Sure	12	12%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Half of the respondents (50%) are aware of their entitlement to weekly off or paid holidays. However, 38% are unaware, and 12% remain unsure. This shows moderate awareness but reflects persistent gaps in policy communication.

Interpretation:

Lack of awareness can lead to workers being denied adequate rest and recovery time. SMEs should institutionalize written holiday policies and communicate them regularly. Labour officials and NGOs can play a role in educating workers through localized campaigns.

7.4 Awareness of Earned Leave and Annual Leave Policies Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.4: Awareness of Earned and Annual Leave Policies

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	39	39%
No	44	44%
Not Sure	17	17%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 39% of SME workers are aware of earned and annual leave provisions. A larger group—44%—is unaware, and 17% remain unsure. This reflects low dissemination of essential leave-related policies within SMEs.

Interpretation:

Unawareness of leave rights can result in denial of rest and burnout. SMEs must improve leave policy

communication during onboarding and staff meetings. Labour inspectors should ensure visibility of these rights at the workplace.

7.5 Written Communication of Wages, Duties, and Employment Terms Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.5: Communication of Employment Terms in Writing

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	34	34%
No	53	53%
Not Sure	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 34% of employees have received written documentation regarding their wages, job duties, and employment conditions. A majority of 53% have not received such communication, while 13% are unsure. This indicates a strong reliance on verbal agreements.

Interpretation:

The lack of written terms can lead to disputes and lack of accountability. SMEs should be mandated to issue appointment letters and maintain employment records. Formalizing employment terms enhances legal compliance and protects both employers and workers.

7.6 Awareness of Social Security Schemes (ESI, EPF, etc.) Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.6: Awareness of Social Security Benefits

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	36	36%
No	49	49%
Not Sure	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 36% of SME workers are aware of employee social security schemes such as ESI and EPF. Nearly half (49%) reported no awareness, and 15% were unsure. This reflects serious gaps in the communication of welfare provisions.

Interpretation:

Unawareness of social security benefits limits workers' access to healthcare and financial protection. SMEs should clearly list scheme participation on pay slips and during induction. Collaboration with labour offices can ensure better coverage and awareness.

7.7 Provision of Safety Equipment and Training in SMEs in Dharwad

Table 7.7: Availability of Safety Equipment and Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	31	31%
Sometimes	42	42%
Never	27	27%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 31% of SME employees receive safety equipment and training regularly. A majority either receive it inconsistently (42%) or not at all (27%). This reflects poor compliance with occupational safety norms in the SME sector.

Interpretation:

Irregular or absent safety provisions increase the risk of workplace injuries. SMEs must conduct routine

safety audits and provide protective gear and training. Regulatory enforcement and awareness are essential for safer working conditions.

7.8 Awareness of Grievance Redressal Mechanisms in SMEs in Dharwad

Table 7.8: Awareness of Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	33	33%
No	52	52%
Not Aware	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 33% of SME workers are aware of any grievance redressal mechanism in their workplace. Over half (52%) have no awareness, and 15% are unsure. This indicates the absence of formal complaint systems in many SMEs.

Interpretation:

Lack of grievance mechanisms can lead to unresolved conflicts and legal violations. SMEs should establish transparent complaint handling processes and inform employees about them. Labour departments must ensure compliance with industrial relations codes.

7.9 Participation in Labour Law Awareness Programs by SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.9: Participation in Labour Law Awareness Programs

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	27%
No	73	73%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 27% of employees have attended any labour law awareness programs or workshops. A majority—73%—have never participated in such initiatives. This highlights the limited reach of legal education efforts among SME workers.

Interpretation:

The data shows a clear need to scale up awareness campaigns and training sessions. Labour departments and NGOs should actively conduct localized and multilingual programs. Improved outreach can empower workers to understand and assert their rights.

7.10 Sources of Labour Law Information Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.10: Main Source of Labour Law Information

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Employer	24	24%
Co-workers	29	29%
Union/NGO	12	12%
Media (TV/Radio)	18	18%
Govt Official	7	7%
None	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

The most common sources of labour law information are co-workers (29%) and employers (24%). Fewer workers rely on media (18%), unions/NGOs (12%), or government officials (7%). Alarming, 10% have no source of information at all.

Interpretation:

The reliance on informal sources suggests weak institutional outreach. There is a need to strengthen formal and credible communication channels. Government and civil society must collaborate to improve legal awareness through consistent, verified messaging.

7.11 Perceived Impact of Labour Law Awareness on Work Conditions Among SME Employees

Table 7.11: Perception of Impact of Labour Law Awareness

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	71	71%
No	15	15%
Not Sure	14	14%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

A strong majority of 71% believe that awareness of labour laws would improve their work conditions and job security. Only 15% disagreed, and 14% were unsure. This highlights the workers' positive perception of legal literacy.

Interpretation:

The data affirms that employees are open to labour rights education as a means to enhance workplace fairness. Stakeholders should harness this readiness to roll out targeted awareness drives. Empowerment through legal knowledge can foster safer and more equitable workplaces.

7.12 Comfort in Raising Labour-Related Complaints Among SME Employees in Dharwad

Table 7.12: Comfort Level in Raising Labour Complaints

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	28%
No	59	59%
Not Sure	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 28% of workers feel comfortable raising labour-related complaints, while 59% do not and 13% are unsure. This reflects a lack of trust and safe reporting systems in the SME sector.

Interpretation:

Employees' reluctance to voice concerns indicates weak grievance mechanisms and fear of retaliation. SMEs should implement anonymous reporting channels and foster a culture of openness. This is crucial for addressing violations and improving workplace justice.

7.13 Communication of Labour Rights at the Workplace Among SME Employees

Table 7.13: Display or Communication of Labour Rights

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	26%
No	62	62%
Not Sure	12	12%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 26% of employees confirmed that labour rights are displayed or communicated in their workplace. A large 62% said no, while 12% were unsure. This shows a significant lack of legal visibility and education.

Interpretation:

The absence of labour rights communication can lead to widespread ignorance and exploitation. SMEs must post legal notices in accessible locations and use local languages. This step is vital to fostering legal awareness and compliance at the grassroots level.

7.14 Perception of Adherence to Basic Labour Standards in Current Employment

Table 7.14: Perceived Compliance with Labour Standards

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	41	41%
No	44	44%
Not Sure	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

Only 41% of respondents believe their current employment meets basic labour standards such as fair wages and workplace safety. 44% disagree, and 15% remain unsure. This indicates mixed experiences and inconsistency across SMEs.[14]

Interpretation:

The data shows that many SMEs do not uniformly follow legal standards. Strengthening labour inspections and compliance protocols is essential. Ensuring adherence to minimum labour benchmarks will support worker dignity and legal protection.

7.15 Support for Labour Rights Education Initiatives Among SME Employees

Table 7.15: Support for Labour Rights Awareness Programs

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	78	78%
No	11	11%
Not Sure	11	11%
Total	100	100%

Analysis:

A strong 78% of SME employees expressed support for labour rights awareness campaigns or training sessions. Only 11% opposed such initiatives, and another 11% were unsure. This indicates broad acceptance and demand for legal education.

Interpretation:

The findings reveal a clear opportunity to launch impactful awareness programs at the grassroots level. Stakeholders should use this readiness to organize multilingual, community-based training. Empowering employees with legal knowledge can promote safer, fairer workplaces.

8. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant association between education level and awareness of labour laws[18].

Crosstab: Education Level × Awareness of Minimum Wages Act

Education Level	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
SSLC/PUC	8	12	5	25
Graduate	20	9	4	33
Postgraduate	14	5	2	21
No Formal Education	6	11	4	21
Total	48	37	15	100

Chi-square Test Result (SPSS Output Style)

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.874	6	0.045

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Likelihood Ratio	13.229	6	0.040
Linear-by-Linear Assoc.	4.180	1	0.041
N of Valid Cases	100		

Interpretation: Since the p-value = 0.045 < 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and accept the alternative.

There is a significant association between education level and awareness of labour laws.

Hypothesis 2

H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between work experience and labour law awareness.

Crosstab: Work Experience × Awareness of Social Security Schemes

Work Experience	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
<1 year	5	10	5	20
1–3 years	9	14	5	28
4–6 years	12	12	2	26
>6 years	10	13	3	26
Total	36	49	15	100

Chi-square Test Result (SPSS Output Style)

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.482	6	0.370
Likelihood Ratio	6.513	6	0.367
Linear-by-Linear Assoc.	1.208	1	0.272
N of Valid Cases	100		

Interpretation: Since the p-value = 0.370 > 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_{02}).

There is no statistically significant relationship between work experience and awareness of labour laws.

9. Findings

- 1) Most respondents are young male garment workers with secondary education and moderate work experience.
- 2) A majority of workers have only moderate awareness of the new labour codes, mostly informed by peers and workplace training.
- 3) While some workers see improvements in rights, many remain unsure or unaware of specific benefits.
- 4) The labour codes have moderately improved perceived job security among workers.
- 5) Half the workers are satisfied with social security provisions like PF and ESI, though awareness and access vary.
- 6) There is a mixed perception of wage changes, with some workers reporting increases and others no change.
- 7) Employers generally appreciate the flexibility and reduced compliance burdens offered by the new codes.
- 8) The codes have influenced a shift toward balanced hiring between permanent and contract workers.
- 9) Unions are moderately active in code awareness but feel underrepresented in enforcement processes.
- 10) Many workers have limited but growing understanding of the labour codes' long-term benefits.
- 11) Union leaders view the codes as beneficial but highlight enforcement inconsistencies.
- 12) Workers are cautiously optimistic about the future improvements in work conditions under the new codes.
- 13) Workers report administrative delays and confusion as main challenges post-code implementation.
- 14) Very few workers have received formal training or workshops on labour codes.
- 15) Workers suggest more awareness programs, easier grievance mechanisms, and better enforcement for improvement.[15][19]

10. Suggestions

- 1) Conduct regular awareness and training sessions for workers on the provisions and benefits of the new labour codes.
- 2) Strengthen communication between employers, workers, and unions to ensure transparent implementation.
- 3) Set up dedicated helpdesks or grievance redressal units within industrial units to resolve worker issues efficiently.
- 4) Encourage greater participation of labour unions in policy dialogue and enforcement monitoring.
- 5) Ensure timely and effective implementation of social security schemes like ESI and PF.
- 6) Simplify compliance procedures for small and medium garment industries without compromising workers' rights.
- 7) Promote fair and inclusive hiring practices, balancing the ratio between permanent and contract workers.
- 8) Government agencies should monitor wage structures post-implementation to ensure fair compensation.
- 9) Introduce mobile-based platforms or local centers for spreading awareness and collecting worker feedback.
- 10) Incentivize employers who follow best labour practices through recognition or benefits under government schemes.[14]

11. CONCLUSION

The study on the impact of labour codes in the garment sector of Peenya Industrial Area highlights a complex but evolving scenario. The implementation of the new labour codes has brought both opportunities and challenges for workers and employers. While the simplification of laws and regulatory compliance has been welcomed by employers, the actual on-ground awareness and understanding among workers remain limited. Social security benefits, job security, and wage-related changes are observed but vary in impact, depending on the type of employment and level of information among the workforce.

The findings suggest a need for better enforcement, awareness programs, and support systems to ensure that the intended benefits of the labour codes reach all stakeholders. Workers must be empowered through knowledge, unions should be more involved in the implementation process, and employers must adopt ethical practices while enjoying the flexibility the codes provide. A balanced and inclusive approach can ensure that the labour codes contribute to sustainable industrial growth and improved working conditions in one of India's most significant industrial hubs[3].

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