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**FACTORS AFFECTING WORK LIFE BALANCE OF EMPLOYEES IN NUMALIGARH REFINERY LIMITED, ASSAM**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study finds out that the Work life balance has become a need of the hour, for the organisations and considering the factors affecting work life balance of employees, engaged in different departments with different nature of job, has become more important, as it brings out the differences in their ways of balancing their respective work and life which should enable the HR Policy makers of the organization to come up with tailor made opportunities and provisions for their employees.*

**KEYWORDS**

Assam, work life balance, Numaligarh Refinery Ltd.

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**INTRODUCTION**

**W**ork life balance is one of the core issues for the development of an organizational set up and has been concerned for the last few decades. The idea of work life balance is firstly used in late 1970's in United Kingdom to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life and later on in 1986 in United States of America. The term work life balance was coined in 1986 in response to the growing concerns by individuals and organizations alike that work can impinge upon the quality of family life and vice versa, thus giving rise to the concepts of "family-work conflict" (FWC) and "work-family conflict" (WFC). The former is also referred to as "work interferes with family" (WIF) while the latter is also known as "family interferes with work" (FIW). In other words, from the scarcity of zero-sum perspective, time devoted to work is construed as time taken away from one's family life.

The term Work life balance refers to certain policies and procedures, as adopted by an organization to enable its employees to efficiently do their jobs and at the same time provide flexibility to handle both work and family problems. In this regard various approaches are forwarded to facilitate the employees' participation both at work and home. The present generation of workforce consists of career oriented and promotion seeking people. In order to prove themselves they can even bring their workload to home, which affects their respective family life. Again the unfulfilled demands of family life may in turn affect the employee performance at work. This kind of pressurizing situation can adversely affect the employee efficiency at work. Thus, this calls for the need of studying work life balance of the employees.

**ISSUES CONCERNING WORK LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE EFFICIENCY**

There are a large number of factors affecting employees' work life balance. Researchers have brought about many such factors which have captured the concern of employers, making efforts to facilitate balance in their respective employees' work and life. Factors like work place culture, supportive attitudes and beliefs, flexible working time, telecommuting, variety of leave, health care for dependents (Susi & Jawaharrani 2011), training (Bird & Jim, 2006), qualitative healthy facilities (Mitra, 2012), implementing time off in lieu of overtime pay arrangements, paid leave per year for child care, elder care, having policies around weekend, reduction in the amount of work by hiring new people, reduction in job related travel time, job sharing, reengineering of work (Abercromby Melissa 2007) have positive impact on employees' work life balance. Again, there are certain other factors which brings conflict in work and life, like psychological distress, organizational changes, working hours, managerial style, non job responsibilities, work overload, personal financial problems (Kumari Lalita 2012), amount of time spent at work, job security, support from one's supervisors and co-workers, work-role conflict, work-role ambiguity, job dissatisfaction, extensive use of communication technology (Abercromby Melissa 2007) brings imbalance in employees' work and life.

Employees with balanced life playing multiple roles in the different fields of work and life enables an organisation to have better opportunities of growth and all round development. The present study is an attempt to understand the work life balance of the employees of a particular organization. Therefore, for the purpose of the study, the **Numaligarh Refinery Limited(NRL), Assam** has been selected.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A number of literatures on work life balance are available. For the present study, given literatures were reviewed to come up with the new facets relating to the work life balance.

- Susi and Jawaharrani (2011), has examined the literatures on employee engagement and explores the significance of workplace culture and work-life balance policies and practices in increasing employees productivity and satisfaction. Engaged employees are considered to be the most important asset of an organization. Findings of the study states that right employees with the right programmes increase their commitment and add a competitive advantage in their performance.
- Sur, Mitra and Chakraborty (2012) attempted to understand the perceptions of the teaching professionals, regarding work-life balance, particularly college teachers of North Hooghly district of West Bengal. The objective of the study is to examine their experience regarding the significance of work-life balance policies and practices, analyzing organizational support towards achieving work-life balance, examining the importance of job satisfaction thereby bringing about new inputs for policy making bodies enabling them to design effective Work life balance policies. The results of the study depict that there is a huge significance of work life balance policies for achieving better performance of college teachers. It has been found that organizational support along with government and University policies has a major role to play in achieving work life balance. Mitra (2012), attempted to make a comparison between the attributes like work culture with respect to time spent by the employees', their expectations from their work place and the effect of certain demographic variables like age, marital status on their working efficiency, with a view to identify their role in balancing work and life. Employees' feel that support from

managers, supervisors, colleagues and teamwork provides greater job satisfaction and organizational commitments: Employees' expects and considers flexible working hours, counseling services and qualitative healthy facilities to be helpful in balancing work and life.

- Baral and Bhargava (2011), made an effort to understand the current status of work-life balance programmes in Indian organizations and to identify its future prospects. The paper has discussed the challenges for effective implementation of such policies, which can help HR managers to be cautious before introducing work life balance policies in their respective organizations. The findings of the study suggest that family-friendliness of employers in India have been reflected in various welfare programmes, as a matter of concern for employers since industrialization. These policies are found to be more prominent in new economy organizations such as softwares and service organizations. There is a need to introduce more strategic HR initiatives in most organizations.
- Rangreji (2010) made an attempt to highlight the relevance and importance of Work Life Balance and Emotional Intelligence to leadership, senior management, individual and organizations. The study reveals that there was a significant positive relation between emotional intelligence and work life balance. Enhancing Emotional Intelligence within IT employees will not only enable to give better performance but also helps to maintain WLB. Emotional Intelligence generally increases with long term working experience. This study confirms that both EI and WLB together creates organizational success and develop competitive advantage for IT organizations.
- Satyanarayana and Shanker (2012) examined the work life balance of employees in the Information Technology Enabled Services sector and attempted to identify the association of work-life balance with factors such as age, gender, marital and parental status, income and work experience of employees', introspecting on the three facets of work interference in personal life, Personal Life Interference in work, work and Personal Life Enhancement. The finding of the study reveals that there is a significant association of Work life balances to income and parental status, whereas no significant association between work life balance and other factors such as age, gender, marital status and work experience.
- Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) tries to identify the perceptions of male workers on whether matters related to Work life balance were sources of concern and dissatisfaction; how concern over issues related to WLB was compared to other sources of concern and dissatisfaction; and whether issues related to WLB were linked with withdrawal attitudes and behaviors. The findings emerged that work life imbalance was not only a source of concern, but also that compared to other sources like treatment by the management, pay and general working conditions, WLB was the major source of dissatisfaction for participants. Furthermore, participants made a clear connection between problems with WLB and withdrawal behaviors, including turnover and non-genuine sick absence, which clears out the fact that there is a negative attitude towards the management of the company and also adds to the cost of the organization.

A large number of studies are found to be conducted in sectors like Information Technology enabled service sectors, Software companies, Higher education sector, Banking sector, Sports field and Pharmaceutical sector.

However, there is no such study relating to work life balance carried out in the oil sector specifically in Assam. Therefore, through this study an attempt has been made to study the work life balance of employees in NRL.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are to know the department wise classification of the employees and their nature of engagement in the job. In addition to that the present paper also makes an attempt to assess the factors affecting work life balance of employees.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study is concerned specifically with the Numaligarh Refinery Limited, set up at Numaligarh, in the district of Golaghat, Assam. The aim of the study is to find out the issues of working life and personal life of the employees of NRL.

The study is being undertaken in the oil sector by confining to the Numaligarh Refinery Limited of Assam. The reason for selection of NRL, lies in the fact that it is the refinery with a track record of continuous growth, has been conferred the status of Mini Ratna PSU. The present study has tried to assess whether there is any relationship between employee job satisfaction and their work life balance. Both the executive and workmen level of employees of all the functional departments are taken into consideration. The study is analytical as well as descriptive in nature. The department wise distributions of human resource working in this unit are given below:

**TABLE NO. 1: SAMPLE SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

SL NO.	DEPARTMENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	DIVISION OF EMPLOYEES		TOTAL NUMBER OF SAMPLE EMPLOYEES	
			EXECUTIVE	WORKMEN	EXECUTIVE	WORKMEN
1	Human Resource	37	23	14	12	8
2	Marketing Terminal	79	24	55	13	30
3	Finance	29	20	9	11	5
4	Commercial	41	28	13	15	7
5	Utility	69	22	47	12	25
6	Maintenance	169	58	111	31	60
7	Operation	181	84	97	45	53
8	Fire and Safety	40	18	22	10	12
9	Quality Control	22	8	14	4	8
Total		667			153	208
Sample selected		361				

Source: Field Survey

There are total 15 functional departments in NRL. Out of 15 functional departments only 9 primary departments, along with their respective number of executives and workmen have been considered for the study. The total population of the departments constitute of 667 numbers of employees. In order to determine the sample size for the study, the sample size calculator ([www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm](http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm)) has been used with confidence level of 95%, margin of error 3.5%. The total sample size stands about 361 employees. The sample respondents of both the category will be selected proportionately considering 54% of the employees' strength of each category from all the 9 departments. Moreover, the respondents were selected conveniently.

There are number of factors affecting the work life balance of employees. For the purpose of the present study along with certain factors as applied by earlier researchers some additional criteria's has been developed to bring about new facets in this respective area. 14 factors consisting of nature of job, work place culture, social integration of work, supportive attitude and belief, work and total life space, occupational stress, flexible working time, telecommuting, variety of leave, health care for dependents, training, qualitative health facilities, work place design and management control, affecting work-life balance have been studied.

**METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

In order to collect primary data, personal interviews are taken to understand their views regarding their way of balancing their respective work and life, expectations from the existing work life balance policies adopted by the unit, moreover as to what extent the balance improves their performance. These interviews are taken with the help of structured questionnaire, keeping in view the objectives of the study. There were two sets of questionnaire separately for the executive and workmen for all the 9 different departments. Both open ended and close ended questions are incorporated in the questionnaire. A pilot survey was conducted as per the objectives of the study so as to justify the tools to be used for the study.

Secondary data for the study is collected from journals, reports, books, experts, and other online sources available.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

The study is carried out in the Numaligarh refinery limited, Assam which considers their human resources as assets. They believe to make a continuous approach of creating a workplace where employees can foster professional as well as personal growth. Work life balance is a significant element of Human resource management which plays an important role in developing and retaining the best talent in the organization. With the increasing competitive work environment, it has become very much important that employees must know the various issues concerning their professional life and personal life. In other words, they must be aware of the various facilitating policies and programs as made available by the organization to enable them to balance their work life and personal life, so that they can fully avail and utilize the same to enrich their respective lives. Therefore, the first objective of the study revolves round the same fact, i.e. to understand the awareness of the employees towards work life balance of Numaligarh Refinery Limited, Assam. It is very much important to analyse and understand the demographic and departmental details of the employees as it will enable us to have a detailed classification and a basis of differentiation of the employee groups because these have influences over their thinking towards work life balance. Thus, with the help of the SPSS software, descriptive statistics has been used to analyse the same and a frequency distribution table has been prepared as below:

**DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS WISE CLASSIFICATION**

The demographic classification not only shows the differences between the employee groups, moreover depicts the type of mind set and family worries, with which they work. For this purpose, the demographic details relating to Age, Gender, Marital status, Spouse employment details, Number of children, Type of family, need to take care of, Care taker of children and dependant adults have been studied and the frequency distribution of the same has been shown below:

**TABLE NO.2: DEMOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION**

Demographic Details	Classifications	Executive's Frequency	Percentage	Non-Executive's Frequency	Percentage
Age	25-35 YEARS	38	25	34	16
	36-45	69	45	104	49
	46-55	45	30	73	35
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100</b>
Gender	Male	135	88.8	211	100
	Female	17	11.2	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital Status	Married	140	92.1	196	92.9
	Unmarried	12	7.9	15	7.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Spouse employment details	Yes	40	26.3	31	14.7
	No	112	73.7	180	85.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Number of children	No	48	31.6	49	23.2
	Yes,1	37	24.3	126	59.7
	Yes,2	67	44.1	12	5.7
	Yes,3	0	0	24	11.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Type of Family	Joint family	28	18.4	43	20.4
	Nuclear family	124	81.6	168	79.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Need to take care of	Older people	50	32.9	32	15.2
	Dependant adults	19	12.5	46	21.8
	Children with disabilities	1	.7	10	4.7
	None	82	53.9	123	58.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Care taker of children and dependants	Spouse	75	49.3	157	74.4
	In Laws	0	0	3	1.4
	Parents	2	1.3	5	2.4
	Domestic helpers	25	16.4	20	9.5
	N/A	50	32.9	26	12.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

From the above table, the results reveal that in case of age. In case of Gender, majority of the employees in both the groups are male with 88.8% in executive and 100% in non executive, and only a few i.e. 11.2% are female executives. Maximum of the employees are married, out of which 92.9% are in the non executives' category and 92.1% are executives with 7.1% and 7.9% are unmarried respectively. Majority of the employees' spouse are not employed with 73.7% in executives and 85.3% in non executives where as 26.3% and 14.7% are employed in the respective groups. Majority of the employees are having children out of which 59.7% are having single child in the non executives group where as majority of the executives are having two children with 44.1% whereas both the groups are followed by no children with 31.6% in executives and 23.2% in non executives. In case of family type, majority of the employees have nuclear family with 81.6% in executives and 79.6% in non executives and the rest have joint families. Majority of the employees with 53.9% in executives and 58.3% in non executives need not to take care of older people, dependant adults and children with disabilities followed by 32.9% executives need to take care of older people and 21.8% non executives need to take care of dependant adults and a few with .7% executives and 4.7% non executives need to take care of children with disabilities. Majority of the employees' children and dependants are taken care by their spouse with 49.3% in executives and 74.4% in non executives followed by the domestic helpers i.e. 16.4% and 9.5% in both groups respectively, where as in case of large number employees with 32.9% executives and 12.3% non executives this case doesn't apply.

**DEPARTMENTAL DETAILS OF THE EMPLOYEES**

The departmental classification of the employees is very much significant to understand the work place culture and the nature of job which influences employees' perception towards work life. For this purpose, the departmental classification has been made on the basis of Department name, service experience, weekly working days, overtime work, shift work, working hour satisfaction and work pressure as shown below:

TABLE NO. 3: DEPARTMENT WISE CLASSIFICATION

Department Details	Classification	Executive's Frequency	Percentage (%)	Non-executive's Frequency	Percentage (%)
Department name	COMMERCIAL	15	9.9	7	3.3
	FINANCE	10	6.6	8	3.8
	FIRE AND SAFETY	10	6.6	12	5.7
	HR	12	7.9	8	3.8
	MAINTENANCE	31	20.4	60	28.4
	MARKETING	13	8.6	30	14.2
	OPERATION	45	29.6	53	25.1
	POWER UTILITY	12	7.9	25	11.8
	QUALITY CONTROL	4	2.6	8	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Service Experience	0-5years	23	15.1	33	15.6
	5-10years	29	19.1	2	.9
	10-15years	32	21.1	38	18.0
	More than 15 years	68	44.7	138	65.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Weekly working days	5 Days	69	45.4	22	10.4
	6 Days	77	50.7	189	89.6
	7 Days	6	3.9	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Working Overtime	Yes	91	59.9	173	82.0
	No	61	40.1	38	18.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Work in shifts	General shift/Day shift	121	79.6	71	33.6
	Night shift	0	0	0	0
	Alternative	8	5.3	10	4.7
	Both day and night shift	23	15.1	130	61.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

The above table reveals that majority of the employees both executive and non executives are engaged in the Operations and Maintenance department with 29.6%, 20.4% and 25.1%, 28.4% respectively, followed by Marketing 8.6% and 14.2%, Power & Utility 7.9% and 11.8%, Commercial 9.9% and 3.3%, Fire & Safety 6.6% and 5.7%, HR 7.9% and 3.8%, Finance 6.6% and 3.8% and Quality Control 2.6% and 3.8% respectively. In case of service experience, majority of the employees falls in the duration of more than 15 years i.e. 44.7% executives and 65.4% non executives, followed by 10-15 years i.e. 21.1% executives and 18% non-executives, followed by 5-10 years experience in executives with 19.1% and 0-5 years experience in non-executives with 15.6% whereas only .9% of non-executives have service experience of 5-10 years and 15.1% of executives have experience of 0-5 years of service. In case of weekly working days, it is revealed that maximum employees from both the groups works for 6 days in a week with 50.7% executives and 89.6% non-executives, followed by 5 days of weekly work with 45.4% executives and 10.4% non executive and only 3.9% executives work for 7 days in a week. Maximum employees with 59.9% executives and 82% non-executives work overtime and 40.1% and 18% of the two respective groups do not work overtime. In case of shift work majority of the executives i.e. 79.6% works in general/day shift whereas majority of the non-executives i.e. 61.6% works both day and night shift, followed by 33.6% and 4.7% of non-executives working in general/day shift and alternative shift respectively and 15.1% and 5.3% of executives work in both day and night shift and alternative shift respectively. Notably not a single employee has been found to work in night shift solely.

**FACTORS AFFECTING WORK LIFE BALANCE OF THE EMPLOYEES OF NRL**

In order to find out and understand the various factors affecting the work life balance of the employees of Numaligarh refinery limited, 14 numbers of predetermined factors were considered. Based on the review of literatures, the study has tried to identify the opinion of the employees towards the variables which support in balancing their work and life and the variables which hinders in balancing the same. For this purpose the variables have been divided into supporting variables and hindrances and descriptive statistics has been used to find out the factors which supports or hinders the work life of the employees most, according to their opinion. For the same the following tables have been shown:

**OPINION OF EMPLOYEES TOWARDS WOTK LIFE BALANCE SUPPORTING VARIABLES**

In order to find out and understand the various factors which will support or helps the employees to have a balanced work and life, out of the 14 variables, some of the variables were directly incorporated whereas some of the variables were classified as sub parts and incorporated. Thus, aspects like *flexible working time, work from home/telecommuting, variety of leaves* were directly incorporated and factors like *supportive attitude and belief, social integration of work, health care, qualitative health facilities, training, work place design* ...etc are sub divided and *been incorporated in the study*. The following Exhibit has been shown for the same:

EXHIBIT 1

Supportive attitude and belief	Support from colleagues at work
	Support from family members
Social integration of work	Job sharing
	Career break/sabbaticals
	Holidays/paid time offs
	Time-off for family engagements
	Social functions for families
	Involvement of family members in work achievement reward functions
Health care and qualitative health facilities	Medical facilities
	Master health check up
Training	Internal training
	External training
Work place design	Being able to bring children to work on occasions
	Good career prospects
	Satisfactory compensation package
	Sports facilities

The classification of the factors is shown through the table as follows:

TABLE NO. 4: FACTORS SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES IN BALANCING WORK AND LIFE

Supporting work life balance factors	Responses		Percent of cases	Responses		Percent of cases
	N	Percent		N	Percent	
Flexible working time	32	2.0%	21.1%	48	2.4%	22.7%
Paid time offs	52	3.3%	34.2%	43	2.2%	20.4%
Job sharing	60	3.8%	39.5%	43	2.2%	20.4%
Sabbaticals	20	1.3%	13.2%	18	0.9%	8.5%
Time off for family events	51	3.2%	33.6%	53	2.7%	25.1%
Variety of leaves	30	1.9%	19.7%	40	2.0%	19.0%
Other provisions	38	2.4%	25.0%	17	0.9%	8.1%
Work from home	26	1.6%	17.1%	49	2.5%	23.2%
Bring children to work on occasions	12	0.8%	7.9%	0	0	0
Support from colleagues at work	72	4.5%	47.4%	83	4.2	39.3
Support from family members	70	4.4%	46.1%	100	5.0	47.4
Others	15	0.9%	9.9%	8	0.4	3.8
Involvement of family members in reward functions	53	3.3%	34.9%	104	5.2	49.3
Social functions for families	142	9.0%	93.4%	152	7.6	72.0
School for children	147	9.3%	96.7%	193	9.7	91.5
Career prospects	47	3.0%	30.9%	119	6.0	56.4
Compensation package	119	7.5%	78.3%	104	5.2	49.3
Medical facilities for employees	147	9.3%	96.7%	211	10.6	100
Master health check up	140	8.8%	92.1%	175	8.8 %	82.9%
Sports facilities	147	9.3%	96.7%	201	10.1 %	95.3 %
External training	79	5.0%	52.0%	134	6.7 %	63.5 %
In house training	85	5.4%	55.9%	92	4.6%	43.6%
Total	1584	100.0%	1042.1%	1987	100%	941.7%

Source: Field survey

From the above table it is interpreted that majority of the employees have responded positively towards the variables supporting in balancing work and life. Majority of the employees both executive and non-executive have opined that Medical facilities for employees, followed by sports facilities, school for children, master health check up, social functions for families, external training, career prospects, compensation package, in house training, support from family members, involvement of family members in reward functions and support from colleagues at work, are mostly supportable in balancing work and life. With less number of responses though variables like time-off for family events, job sharing, paid time offs, flexible working time, work from home, variety of leaves, sabbaticals and other provisions are also found to be supportive in balancing work and life. Whereas, it has been found that ability to bring children to work on occasions is not available in case of non-executives and in case of executives also a small number of respondents have agreed to it.

**OPINION OF EMPLOYEES TOWARDS WORK LIFE BALANCE HINDERING VARIABLES**

In order to find out and understand the various factors which will hinder or disturbs the employees’ to have a balanced work and life, out of the 14 variables, variables like nature of job, work place culture, work and total life space, occupational stress and management control are sub divided into various sub factors like *long working hours, compulsory overtime, shift work etc. It is being made clear through the following Exhibit:*

EXHIBIT 2

Nature of job and Work place culture	Long working hours
	Compulsory overtime
	Shift work
Work life space and Occupational stress	Meetings/trainings after office hours
	Technology such as laptops/cell phones
	Frequently travelling away from home
	Issues and demands of family members
Management control	Negative attitude of supervisors/managers

The classification of the factors is shown through the following table:

TABLE NO. 5: FACTORS HINDERING IN THE BALANCE OF WORK AND LIFE

Factors negatively affecting or disturbing the work life balance of the employees	Responses of executive		Percent of cases	Responses of non-executive		Percent of cases
	N	Percent		N	Percent	
Long working hours	32	9.2%	21.1%	59	12.9%	28.0%
Compulsory overtime	20	5.7%	13.2%	40	8.7%	19.0%
Shift work	42	12.0%	27.6%	88	19.2%	41.7%
Meetings/Trainings after office hours	32	9.2%	21.1%	29	6.3%	13.7%
others	54	15.5%	35.5%	24	5.2%	11.4%
Tech like laptops/cell phones	26	7.4%	17.1%	27	5.9%	12.8%
Frequently travelling away from home	4	1.1%	2.6%	18	3.9%	8.5%
Negative attitude of peers at work place	48	13.8%	31.6%	16	3.5%	7.6%
Negative attitude of supervisors	22	6.3%	14.5%	59	12.9%	28.0%
Issues/demands of family members	21	6.0%	13.8%	32	7.0%	15.2%
others	48	13.8%	31.6%	67	14.6%	31.8%
Total	349	100.0%	229.6%	459	100.0%	217.5%

Source: Field survey

TABLE NO. 6: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONSES TOWARDS THE HINDERING FACTORS

Details of the hindering factors	Classifications	Executive's Frequency	Percentage (%)	Non-Executive's Frequency	Percentage (%)
Long working hours	No	120	78.9	152	72.0
	Yes	32	21.1	59	28.0
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Compulsory overtime	No	132	86.8	171	81.0
	Yes	20	13.2	40	19.0
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Shift work	No	110	72.4	123	58.3
	Yes	42	27.6	88	41.7
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Meetings/Trainings after office hours	No	120	78.9	182	86.3
	Yes	32	21.1	29	13.7
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
others	No	98	64.5	187	88.6
	Yes	54	35.5	24	11.4
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Tech like laptops/cell phones	No	126	82.9	184	87.2
	Yes	26	17.1	27	12.8
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Frequently travelling away from home	No	148	97.4	193	91.5
	Yes	4	2.6	18	8.5
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Negative attitude of peers at work place	No	104	68.4	195	92.4
	Yes	48	31.6	16	7.6
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Negative attitude of supervisors	No	130	85.5	152	72.0
	Yes	22	14.5	59	28.0
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
Issues/demands of family members	No	131	86.2	179	84.8
	Yes	21	13.8	32	15.2
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0
others	No	104	68.4	144	68.2
	Yes	48	31.6	67	31.8
	Total	152	100.0	211	100.0

Source: Field Survey

From the above two tables it is interpreted that employees' responses towards the disturbing factors of work life balance are comparatively less than the responses towards supporting factors. In the executive group, majority of the employees feel disturbed by other factors 35.5% and 31.6% which were not incorporated in the study, followed by negative attitude of peers with 31.6%, shift work 27.6%, both long working hours and meetings/trainings after office hours 21.1%, technology like laptops/cell phones 17.1%, negative attitude of supervisors/managers 14.5%, issues or demands of family members 13.8%, compulsory overtime 13.2% and frequently travelling away from home 2.6%. In the non-executive group, majority of them feel disturbed by shift work with 41.7%, followed by others 31.8%, both long working hours and negative attitude of supervisors with 28%, compulsory overtime 19%, issues/demands of family members 15.2%, meetings/trainings after office hours 13.7%, others 11.4%, technology like laptops/cell phones 12.8%, frequently travelling away from home 8.5%, negative attitude of peers at work place 7.6%. Again, the detail classification of the hindering factors reveals that majority of the employees both executive and non-executive have not chosen or opted the hindering options as a reason for an imbalanced work life.

Moreover, attempt has been made to understand the feeling of employees towards the time spent at the work place. And for this purpose the five point scale has been used and the mean value has been found out to assess the highest ranking factor in this respect. The following table shows the mean difference:

TABLE NO. 7

Aspects	Executive		Non-executive		Rank
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
Worry for work	152	3.63	211	2.75	2
Feeling about work time	152	3.76	211	3.82	1
Miss quality time with family due to work pressure	152	3.13	211	2.67	3
Feel tired or depressed due to work pressure	152	2.67	211	2.46	4

Source: SPSS, researcher's Calculation.

In the above table, the ranking has been done on the basis of the mean value, highest the mean value high is the feeling in the positive sense. Thus, it is interpreted that majority of the employees in both the groups are affected by the feeling about the working time i.e. majority of them feel happy about the working time with the mean value 3.82, as happy was ranked high when asked, followed by worry for work 2.75 means they are sometimes or often worried for work, missing quality time with family due to work pressure 2.67 means rarely or sometimes miss the same and employees rarely feel tired or depressed due to work pressure. Thus, we can say that they are very much concerned and enjoy their work.

**FINDINGS**

- **Demographic details:** Majority of the employees considering both the executive and non-executive group falls within the age group of 36-45, followed by 46-55 and 25-35, majority of the employees are male only 11.2% executives are female, majority of the employees are married and their spouse are unemployed, majority of the employees have one or two children, majority of the employees have nuclear family, majority of the employees need not to take care of any dependants, again in respect of majority of the employees their children and dependants where needed is taken care by their spouse respectively. Thus, we can say that most of the employees of NRL are middle aged and in a nuclear family with unemployed spouse, who takes care of the children and other dependents, they are less burdened by the family pressure. So, it is clear that the personal life issues are mostly shared by the spouse.
- **Departmental details:** It has been found that majority of the employees are engaged in the operations and maintenance department, most of the employees' service experience is more than 15 years, most of the employees work 6 days in a week, followed by 5 days and only a few executives have opined to work 7 days weekly, majority of the employees works overtime, where as in case of shift duty difference has been found out, i.e., maximum executives work in

general/day shift whereas maximum of non-executives works in both day and night shift and no employee works in night shift solely, majority of the employees are found to be satisfied with the working hours of the organization, again a difference has been found where it is known that maximum executives have work pressure whereas maximum non-executives have opined that their work pressure is evenly distributed. Thus, we can say that most of the employees are experienced and even though they work overtime and in shifts but they are satisfied with the working hours.

- **Factors affecting work life balance:** In order to find out factors affecting work life balance of the employees 14 pre determined factors were decided and attempt was made to understand which of the factors support and hinders the employees in balancing their work and life. It was found that, employees have forwarded a large number of responses towards the factors which supports or helps in balancing their work and life. Majority of the employees have opined for medical facilities, school facilities, sports facilities, social functions for families, compensation package, both external and in house training, supportive attitude of peers and family members, involvement of family in reward functions, good career prospects, followed by provisions like variety of leaves, job sharing, holidays, telecommuting, paid time off for family events, flexible work options.
- In respect of the Factors hindering or disturbing the employees in balancing work and life it has been found that responses towards the disturbing factors of work life balance are comparatively less than the responses towards supporting factors, it means we can say that factors which were forwarded as negative or disturbing, actually they are not hindering or disturbing the employees majorly. Minimum number of employees have opted the factors like shift work, followed by others, negative attitude of supervisors, long working hours, compulsory overtime, meetings after working hours, family issues and demands, negative attitude of peers and frequent travelling away from home.
- Other factors hindering the work life balance of the employees as per their opinion like occasional meetings after office hours, restricted leave, working on holidays, official commitments after office hours, punching out, uneven distribution of work, lack of coordination among employees, no sharing of knowledge or information, absence from family during festivals, lack of leave opportunity, nightshift, extended hrs duty, shift duty during holiday/social events, long working time and consistency, limited leave, tight duty schedule, shortage of manpower, misbehavior of officials or others in duty hours, plant emergencies, operational responsibility, overtime against leave, but this is the opinion of the minimum number of employees.
- Moreover, the study also brings out the fact that the employees are happy about the working time with the mean value 3.82, as happy was ranked high when asked, followed by worry for work 2.75 means they are sometimes or often worried for work, missing quality time with family due to work pressure 2.67 means rarely or sometimes miss the same and employees rarely feel tired or depressed due to work pressure. Thus, we can say that they are very much concerned and enjoy their work.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, the study of Work life balance has become a need of the hour, for the organisations and considering the factors affecting work life balance of employees, engaged in different departments with different nature of job, has become more important, as it brings out the differences in their ways of balancing their respective work and life which should enable the HR Policy makers of the organization to come up with tailor made opportunities and provisions for their employees.

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## AN ANALYSIS OF POST LIBERALIZATION TRENDS OF FOREIGN TRADE IN INDIA

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**ABSTRACT**

*Foreign Trade has been one of the most significant determinants of economic development in a country. The foreign trade of a country consists of inward and outward movement of goods and services, which results into outflow and inflow of foreign exchange from one country to another country. During present times, International trade is a vital part of development strategy and it can be an effective instrument of economic growth, employment generation and poverty alleviation in an economy. Indian foreign trade has come a long way in value terms from the time of gaining independence in 1947. The total value of India's merchandise exports increased from in 1950-51 to in 2014-15. Under the Central government's campaign "MAKE IN INDIA", new projects will be coming up in the future in our country. The study investigates the trends and pattern of India's foreign trade since 1991-2015.*

**KEYWORDS**

India, post liberalization trends, foreign trade.

**JEL CODES**

F40, F60, P45.

**INTRODUCTION**

India's foreign trade policy was highly restrictive and central to the growth strategy. It was a major factor in India's poor growth performance. After independence in 1947, India's primary task was to end disruptions caused by partition and the establishment of a new government. In 1950-51 period, when the First Five Year Plan (FFYP) was promulgated, consists largely of a listing of infrastructure and other government projects which were under way. Nowadays, role of foreign trade has increased manifold. At present, no country can remain in isolation from rest of world. Every country is exporting/importing goods, services and making different capital transactions with other countries. India's direction of foreign trade has exhibited a structural shift during the last decade. Trade volume and trade share of emerging and developing economies has increased while the share of conventional trading partners has showed a declining trend. India's merchandise exports reached a level of US \$ 312.61 billion during 2013-14 registering a growth of 4.06 percent as compared to a negative growth of 1.82 percent during the previous year. Despite the recent setback faced by India's export sector due to global slowdown, merchandise exports still recorded a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.79 per cent from 2004-05 to 2013-14. The Trade deficit in 2013-14 was estimated at US \$ 137.46 billion which was lower than the deficit of US \$ 190.34 billion during 2012-13. A sharp rise in exports in May-July 2014 more than outweighed the deceleration characterizing subsequent months. Notwithstanding export growth roughly halving in Q2, the overall increase in exports in April- September 2014 was 6.5 per cent, up from 6.3 per cent in April-September 2013. Even though the overall export growth was a shade better in April-September 2014 than the corresponding period of 2013-14, it was concentrated in a few major sectors. Growth impulses mainly emanated from four sectors, viz., engineering goods, petroleum products, readymade garments and basic chemicals and pharmaceuticals which accounted for 58 per cent of the total value of exports. Other sectors, viz., gems and jewellery, electronic goods, oil meals and iron ore contributed negatively to export performance.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To analyze the composition of India's foreign trade and balance of payment.
2. To assess the growth of Foreign Trade in India's in terms of exports and Imports.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study is explanatory and descriptive in nature. It is based on secondary data collected from authenticated sources. The data has been compiled from economic survey of India and yearly economic report of India. The time period of study has been taken from 1991 to 2015.

**ANALYSIS****1. Trends in India's Foreign Trade**

India's total merchandise trade increased from US\$ 467 billion in FY2010 to US\$ 757 billion in FY2015. Exports from India have increased at a CAGR of 11.6% from 179 billion in FY2010, to US\$ 310 billion in FY2015. India's Export to GDP ratio increased from 13.3% in FY2010 to 15.6% in FY2015. Foreign Trade Policy 2015-2020 aims at increasing India's merchandise and services exports to US\$ 900 billion by FY 2020. Table 1 shows the trends of India's foreign trade.

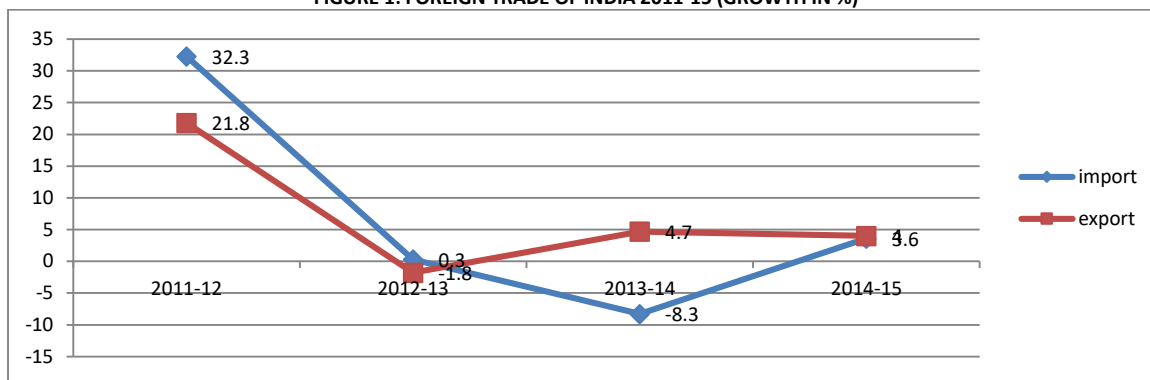
**TABLE 1: TRENDS IN INDIA'S FOREIGN TRADE**

S. No.	Year	Exports	% Growth	Imports	% Growth	Trade
1	2004-2005	83,536	30.85	1,11,517	42.7	-27,981
2	2005-2006	1,03,091	23.41	1,49,166	33.76	-46,075
3	2006-2007	1,26,414	22.62	1,85,735	24.52	-59,321
4	2007-2008	1,63,132	29.05	2,51,654	35.49	-88,522
5	2008-2009	1,85,295	13.59	3,03,696	20.68	-1,18,401
6	2009-2010	1,78,751	-3.53	2,88,373	-5.05	-1,09,621
7	2010-2011	2,51,136	40.49	3,69,769	28.23	-1,18,633
8	2011-2012	3,05,964	21.83	4,89,319	32.33	-1,83,356
9	2012-2013	3,00,401	-1.82	4,90,737	0.29	-1,90,336
10	2013-14(P)	312,610	4.06	450,068	-8.29	-137,458



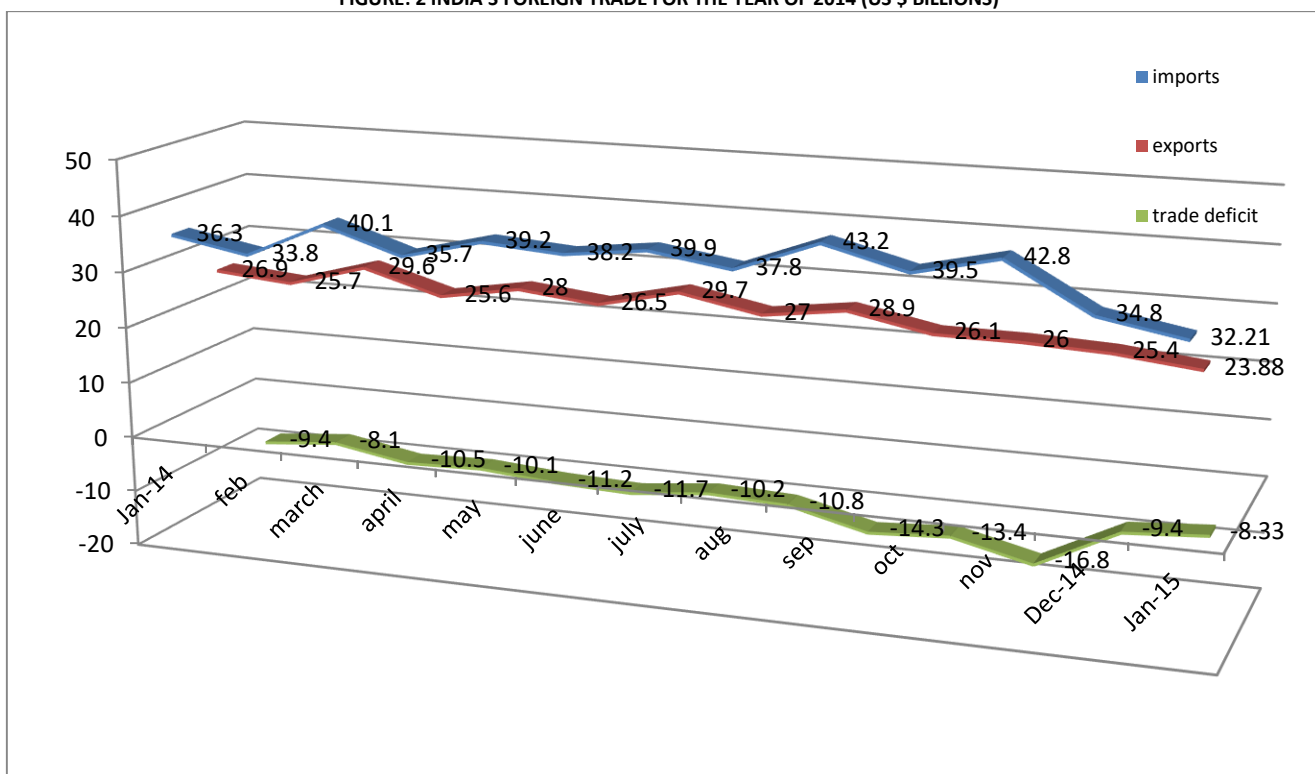
The below given Figure 1 & 2 shows the trends of India's foreign trade:

FIGURE 1: FOREIGN TRADE OF INDIA 2011-15 (GROWTH IN %)



Source: Economic Survey, 2015

FIGURE 2: INDIA'S FOREIGN TRADE FOR THE YEAR OF 2014 (US \$ BILLIONS)



Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2015

**2. Trends in Balance of Trade**

Balance of trade is the different in the value of total exports of visible material goods and the value of total imports of visible material goods. Our imports have continuously been more than our exports, resulting into unfavorable balance of trade. It is clear from table 2 that India's balance of trade has been continuously unfavorable.

TABLE 2: BALANCE OF TRADE (Rs. in Crores)

Year	Balance of Trade (Exports-Imports)
1990-91	(-) 10635
2001-01	(-) 27302
2007-08	(-) 356448
2008-09	(-) 547452
2010-11	(-) 540818
2011-12	(-) 879504
2012-13	(-) 1034843
2013-14	(-) 810423

Source: Economic Survey 2014-15; RBI Bulletin April, 2015.

**3. Trends in Overall Balance of Payments**

Overall balance of payments includes balance of payments on current account and capital account. Through, economic reforms of 1991, efforts were made to attract foreign investment. This resulted in more capital receipts and our overall balance of payments turned favorable. Trends in overall balance of payments are shown in table 3.

TABLE 3: OVERALL POSITION OF BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (Rs. in Crores)

Year	Balance of Payments on Current Account	Balance of Payments on Capital Account	Total Balance of Payments (Current + Capital Account)
1990-91	(-) 17366	(+) 12895	(-) 4471
2001-01	(-) 11431	(+) 39093	(+) 27662
2007-08	(+) 47952	(+) 96042	(+) 143994
2008-09	(-) 180626	(+) 244863	(+) 64237
2010-11	(-) 210100	(+) 269600	(+) 59500
2011-12	(-) 376000	(+) 307500	(-) 68500
2012-13	(-) 479600	(+) 500300	(+) 20700
2013-14	(-) 187750	(+) 283804	(+) 96054

Source: Economic Survey 2014-15; RBI Bulletin April, 2015.

Balance of payments on capital account is positive for the last many years and it has made the overall balance of payments positive and has helped to increase forex reserves of India. In 2011-12, overall balance of payments was negative, because of global recession resulting in slow growth in inflow of foreign investment and slow growth of exports. In year 2013-14, with the global economic recovery and expected future growth of Indian economy, balance of payments on capital account was favorable by Rs. 283804 crore. It has made the overall balance of payments positive. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015, India's forex reserves were US \$ 341.38 billion.

4. Trends in Balance of Payments (Current Account)

India's balance of payments turned unfavorable in the post-independence era. During Second World War India's balance of payments remained favorable. During war time, India exported large quantity of goods to allied nations and imported very small quantity of goods from them. England owned India sterling equivalents to Rs. 1733 crores. But in post-partition period, India's imports far exceeded its exports.

TABLE 4: INDIA'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (Current Account)

Plans	Balance of Payments on Current Account (Rs. in crore)	Plans	Balance of Payments on Current Account (Rs. in crore)
First Plan	(-) 42	Tenth Plan (2002-03)	(+) 19987
Second Plan	(-) 1725	(2003-04)	(+) 47952
Third Plan	(+) 1951	(2004-05)	(-) 12174
Fourth Plan	(-) 2015	(2005-06)	(-) 43737
Fifth Plan	(+) 3082	(2006-07)	(-) 45343
Sixth Plan	(-) 11384	Eleventh Plan (2007-08)	(-) 68914
Seventh Plan	(-) 38313	(2008-09)	(-) 131614
Eighth Plan	(-) 59832	(2009-10)	(-) 180626
Ninth Plan	(-) 62715	(2010-11)	(-) 210100
		(2011-12)	(-) 376000
		Twelfth Plan (2012-13)	(-) 479600
		(2013-14)	(-) 187750

Source: Statistical Outline of India, 2012-13; RBI Bulletin April, 2015.

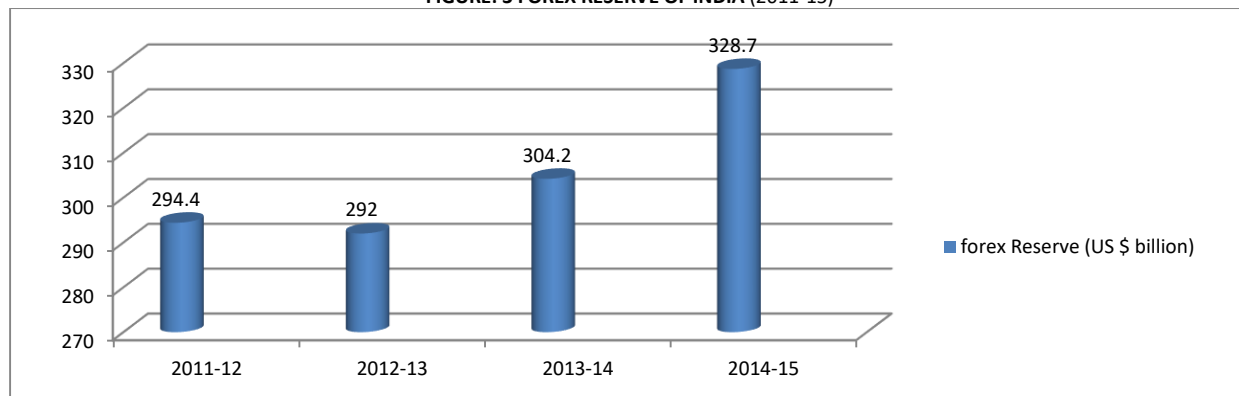
The deficit of balance of payments in each plan is shown in table 4. Deficit of India's balance of payments on current account during the pre-planning period i.e. 1947-1951 was of the order of Rs. 240 crore. In 1949, rupee was devalued but the situation didn't improve. During the first plan (1951-56), it was Rs. 42 crore only. But now in year of 2013-14, this deficit is Rs. 187750 crore.

5. Balance of Payments Crisis

In India, deficit of balance of payments has been rising continuously since 1980-81. For instance, in 1980-81 BOP on current accounts was adverse to the tune of Rs. 2214 crore and it rose in 1990-91 to Rs. 17367 crores. The current account deficit averaged to 2.4% of GDP during the period from 1980-81 to 1990-91. Withdrawal of non-residents deposits also adversely affected the foreign exchange. The gulf crises of 1991, led to an unprecedented crisis in the balance of payments. The immediate impact was the rise in the oil import bill. The remittances from Indian workers in the gulf area were declined. All these resulted in an unprecedented rise in BOP deficit. The foreign exchange reserves declined to the lowest level. Forex reserve was less than even 1 billion US dollars in 1991. In order to meet the payments of essential imports the government was forced to pledge gold reserves of RBI with UK. There was no other alternative before the government but to take loans from international financial institutions. These institutions granted loan on the condition that economic reforms in the form of liberalization, privatization and globalization are to be immediately implemented. This resulted in the emergence of new economic reforms. Consequently, now our overall BOP is in surplus.

The forex reserve is an important component of international finance. Increase in forex reserves of a nation is a healthy sign. These reserves work as safety net in the situation of domestic or global financial crisis. The trends in forex reserves are shown in figure 3.

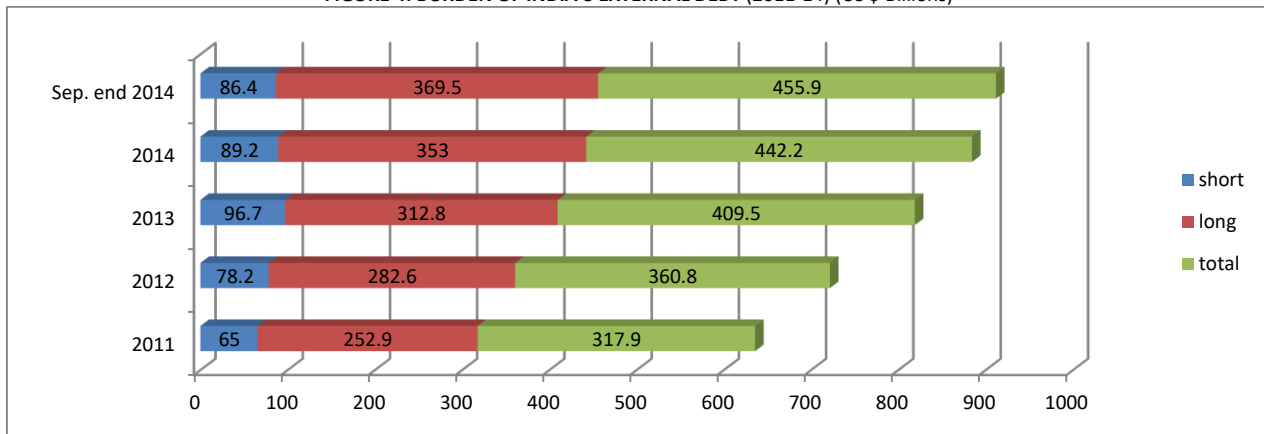
FIGURE 3 FOREX RESERVE OF INDIA (2011-15)



Source: Economic Survey, 2015

External borrowings include loans from foreign governments, loans from international financial institutions, loans from foreign banks and deposits made by non-residents. The external borrowings of developing countries have increased over a period of time. The developing nations raise large amount of external borrowings to finance their development programs. The Burden of India's External Debt is shown in figure 4.

FIGURE 4: BURDEN OF INDIA'S EXTERNAL DEBT (2011-14) (US \$ Billions)



Source: Economic Survey, 2015

### SUGGESTIONS TO CORRECT DISEQUILIBRIUM IN THE BOP

The main factor accounting for disequilibrium in balance of payments is the excess of imports over exports. Two measures are, therefore, called for to correct this disequilibrium. The exports should be promoted and imports be discouraged. For this, import substitution should also be resorted to. To cut down imports and encourage exports, it is essential that agricultural, industrial and mineral production be increased. Jute manufactured products; tea and coffee are important export items of India. Besides, government of India should enter into trade agreements with other countries, encourage foreign investment, develop attractive tourist places for foreigners in the country, impose restriction on non-essentials imports etc. The GOI should set up SEZs to boost exports from these areas. As crude oil is the largest item of our imports, so government should find out alternate sources of energy and should develop efficient mass transport system. It will help reduce the demand of crude oil in India. There must be also promotion of social awareness for less use of gold as status symbol.

### CONCLUSION

The narrowing of India's trade deficit in April- September 2014 argued well for India's overall balance of payments. However, the deceleration in export growth in recent months has heightened downside risks in a difficult international trading environment. On the import side, further softening of international prices of key commodities may help contain the level of imports, although the rising gold imports may offset this advantage and turnout to be the key determinant of overall imports. Besides this, the upturn in non-oil non-gold imports since May 2014 may gather momentum as domestic activity gains attraction.

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## LEGAL COMPLIANCES IN THE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEES: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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YANAM

## ABSTRACT

*One of the essential goals for an enterprise's operation is the effective management of its human resources and labor relations. To achieve this, legal compliance with labor-related laws and regulations is a minimum requirement. As a business grows, the web of laws and regulations to which it is subject becomes increasingly complex. Labour laws governing the employer-employee relationship comprise a significant part of this regulatory burden. The landscape of statutes of labor laws is constantly evolving, and it takes a special agility to keep abreast of all the latest developments and ensure compliance. It is absolutely imperative to comply with all legal and statutory norms for businesses to operate successfully in India. With the ever-changing employment laws, it becomes a challenge for the companies to keep themselves compliant. On this backdrop, an attempt is made to overview the Labour Law compliances in termination of employees in India.*

## KEYWORDS

labour laws, compliance and non-compliance, human resource planning, termination of employees.

## JEL CODE

K30, K31.

*"It's no accident that in a bureaucracy getting fired is called 'termination,' as in ontological erasure."*

- David Foster Wallace

## 1. CONCEPTUAL FALLACY

The landscape of statutes of labour laws is constantly evolving, and it takes a special agility to keep abreast of all the latest developments and ensure compliance. It is absolutely imperative to comply with all legal and statutory norms for businesses to operate successfully in India. One of the essential goals for an enterprise's operation is the effective management of its human resources and labor relations. To achieve this, statutory compliance with labor-related laws and regulations is a minimum requirement. Most of the company's time and money goes into ensuring compliance to these laws. Everything to being compliant needs not just whole lot of time but also experts who can guide on all of these statutory compliance measures. Therefore, dealing with statutory compliance requires for companies to be well-versed with the various labor regulations in India.

Human Resource Management Practices is a term used by many organizations which describes the combination of traditionally administrative personnel functions with performance, employee relations and resource planning. The objective of Human Resources is to maximize the return on investment from the organization's human capital and minimize financial risk. It is the responsibility of human resource managers to conduct these activities in an effective, legal, fair, and consistent manner. HRM has been widely defined as a strategic function that encompasses management of its critical human assets for gaining competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment. HRM is the function performed in organizations that facilitates the most effective use of people to achieve organizational and individual goals.

In order to achieve the effective management of its human resources and labor relations, statutory compliance with labor-related laws and regulations is a minimum requirement. Most of the company's time and money goes into ensuring compliance to these laws. Everything to being compliant needs not just whole lot of time but also experts who can guide on all of these statutory compliance measures. Therefore, dealing with statutory compliance requires for companies to be well-versed with the various labor regulations in India.

In recent years, India has enacted numerous laws and regulations to address labor and employment-related issues. Therefore, a business entity should be well-informed when establishing human resource and labor-related policy and guideline. The word statutory means "of or related to statutes"- rules and regulations. Compliance means adherence. Thus, Statutory Compliance means adhering to rules and regulations. Statutory compliance in Human Resource refers to the legal framework which organizations must abide by with respect to the treatment of their employees. Every country has several hundreds of federal and state labor laws that companies need to align with. A lot of company's effort and money goes into ensuring compliance to these laws which could deal with a range of issues; from the payment of minimum wages to maternity benefits or professional taxes. Therefore, dealing with statutory compliance requires for companies to be well-versed with the various labor regulations in their country of operation.

Even after six decades of getting independence, India is plagued with victimization, non compliance of labour legislations at large. With the Government, time and again, laying down, implementing policies / programmes / schemes / projects for providing social security, welfare measures, regulating conditions of work, occupational health, safety of workers, eliminating child labour from hazardous occupations and strengthening enforcement of labour law etc. The said policies and laws have made compliance of Labour Laws an arduous task at hand. The complexities and the unawareness of labour laws have often wearied an enterprise by persistent litigation, penalties and Fines for Non - Compliance.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a rapid competitive business environment, the procedures of outlining the role, function and process of HRM within a dynamic and uncertain environment are ongoing for many decades. Labour compliance, in Human Resource management refers to the legal framework within which organizations must operate, in the treatment of their employees. The literature review focuses on the essential literature on the concept of labour laws and Human Resource Management practices in India, which ensures the strength to the present study.

The concept of Human Resource (HR) was introduced by Prof. L. Nadler (1969) in American Society for Training and Development Conference. In India, Larson and Tubro Ltd introduced this concept in 1975 in their organization with an objective of facilitating growth of employees, especially people at the lower levels. Mondy and Noe (1993) suggested that activities and practices of HRM can be classified into six domains: Planning and Recruitment, Development and Appraisal, Compensation and Reward, Safety and Health, Labor Relations and Human Resource Research.

Stone (1998) remarked that organizations need to effectively manage their human resources if they are to get the maximum contribution from their employees. Guest (1999) suggested the best Human Resource Practices that included: job design in such a manner that employees have the responsibility and autonomy to use their knowledge and skills. According to Dwivedi (2006), the key to competitive advantage in the modern world is the application of sophisticated HR policies and practices. Murthy (2006) explained that the role of Human Resources is crucial to face the challenges of globalization, liberalization, profit maximization and cost effectiveness. Teseema & Soeters (2006) explained eight HRM practices - recruitment and selection, placement, training, compensation, employee performance evaluation, promotion, grievance procedure and pension or social security practices. Dwivedi (2007) concluded that the survival and growth of today's organization necessitate close linkages between HR and business policy and planning.

Rajendhiran (2007) concluded that the human resource is a very special kind of resource. If it is properly managed the organizational effectiveness can be increased. Bharathi (2009) explained the value of HR functions in business and its impact on higher productivity, enhanced quality, better customer service, good industrial relations and lower cost which influence the profitability of an organization. The sole aim of HRM is to guarantee that the firm human capitals are being used in

the fullest capability to produce the greatest organization results that meets with the firm needs Nadeem Moiden, (2003) and Gilley and Gilley, (2007). When organization recruit the most effective, capable, committed and flexible people; and managed and reward them accordingly their performances, competencies and efficiency would help the firm productivity immensely (Price A., 2007).

Price (2007) inferred that recruitment strategies can be divided in three significant approaches: suitability – the most qualified applicant for the position, malleability – moulded within the cultural norms, and flexibility – the most reliable and versatility employee, which are quite complicating. According to Patel & Cardon (2010) compensation is vital for contemporary organization as it contributes to attract and retain high skilled workers with superior salaries, and it encourages a desired stakeholder behavior regarding recognition and legitimacy. Minbaeva *et al.* (2003) inferred that compensation would enhance motivation among personnel too. Balkin and Swift (2006) suggest a more flexible approach toward the payment issue. Salaries and benefits in the eyes of employees affect their loyalty is one of the important factors. “Money is not the most important, but no doubt a very important” (Cook, 2008).

The Labour welfare addresses, multidimensional socio-economic aspects affecting labour welfare, productivity, living standards of labour force and social security. It attempts to 'raise living standards of the workforce and achieve higher productivity, skill up gradation through suitable training'. The various labour legislations in India can be grouped into four broad areas: (a) Employment security and industrial relations; (b) Income security i.e., wages and other remunerations; (c) Work security i.e., working conditions, safety and occupational health; and (d) Social security and labour welfare (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2010).

It has been argued from the point of view of the employers that labour laws put unreasonable restrictions on the employers to hire persons, terminate employment or deters opening of new business. On the other hand, the pro social security policy groups feel lack of labour laws would encourage exploitation of workers and deterioration in the quality of employment (Ministry of Labour and Employment 2010). Minimum wages are expected to cover the essential current costs of accommodation, food and clothing of a small family (Varkkey and Mehta 2006). In India, wage level, work-life balance, and career opportunities revealed to be particularly important attributes of employer image (e.g., Budwhar, Luthar & Bhatnagar, 2006; Bhatnagar, 2007b as cited in Holtbrugge *et al.*, 2008).

### 3. OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

The Labor law is created to safeguard the rights and interest of workers from any form of exploitation by the factory owners. According to this, factory owners and employers have to guarantee certain working conditions to their employees. HR manager plays an important role in safeguarding the welfare of the employees. The organizations have to abide to some labor laws while Human Resource Management. On this backdrop, present study titled “LEGAL COMPLIANCES IN THE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEES: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE” has been undertaken with the objectives mentioned below:

1. To overview the meaning and importance of Human Resource Management.
2. To analyze the need for Labor laws, particularly in Termination of the Employees.
3. To study the various labor laws and Acts with regard to HRM Practices.
4. To analyze the need and importance of Labour Laws.
5. To analyze the advantages of Labour Laws.
6. To analyze the risks involved in non-compliance labor laws.

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, secondary data from various sources such as reports, publications & bulletins, journals and magazines etc. has been used. Interpretation of data is based on rigorous exercises aiming at the achievement of the study objectives and findings of the existing studies. Interpretation of the data is more on qualitative terms than on quantitative terms.

### 4. ANALYSIS

*“Ignorance of law is not considered in the court of law”*

Labor laws are backbone for the human resource management, without the involvement of labor law there is no human resource management. There is no validity for the human resource management without following the labor laws, sometimes disobey of labor laws may lead to serious consequences like penalization or sometimes imprisonment or sometimes both basing on the gravity of incident. Labor laws were formulated for Labor/employees who are employed under any employment by an employer for the purpose of protection of labor or employees against exploitation by their employer vice versa. Labor laws lays down certain restrictions on labor or employees against their employer, labor or employees must follow the rules and regulations prescribed by the labor laws, if not they are also liable for punishment or penalty by the court.

Every Human Resource manager must know the labor laws of that country where he is working, because most of the core HR functions are linked and according to the labor laws of concerned country. Managing human resources without following labor laws may be illegal and in some cases it may be serious offence which may lead to close down of factory or establishment. There are various functions performed by human resource manager such as - recruitment, selection, training, performance appraisal, compensation, and attending to labor relations, safety & welfare and health concerns. Maintaining the good labor relations improve the productivity and organization overall performance. Hence every human resource manager should know and have thorough knowledge about the labor laws as many of the human resource functions are based on the labor laws and should be implemented in accordance with the labor laws. Critical issues like disputes resolving, women employees' rules and regulations in mining, child labor, and compensation in case of accidents etc. are performed according to the labor laws strictly. When HR manager has proper knowledge on the labor laws, then he can resolve the conflicts according to laws and can save time.

HR laws or human resources law in India are synonymous with the labor laws and industrial laws in India. Labour laws in India govern the relationship between employer, employee and the Government and ensure that the rights and obligations of all parties are satisfied. It is important for all HR personnel to know the laws pertaining to HR practices in India and ensure there is no violation.

#### 4.1. Human Resources Planning and Legal Compliance

- Providing enterprises with human resource planning; drafting and reviewing employment contracts, work rules and work-hour policies; designing and implementing non-competition mechanism, intellectual property management and trade secret protection from the perspective of labor and employment laws.
- Providing legal consultation for the employment of mandated managerial personnel
- Providing legal consultation for gender equality plans
- Providing legal consultation for employee retirement plans and legal analysis of retired employees' rights and benefits
- Planning and implementing employee benefit programs

#### Human Capital Management and Legal Compliance

- Providing legal consultation for human capital management and employee dispatch issues
- Providing legal consultation on human capital strategies in business reorganization
- Providing legal consultation and planning for employee pension reserve funds.

#### Labor-Related Dispute Resolutions

- Assisting businesses in resolving legal controversies related to termination of employment, retirement, and occupational injuries, including settlement, mediation, administrative relief and litigation.

#### Consultation for Collective Agreement Negotiation

- Assisting enterprises and labor unions in negotiating and drafting collective agreements and providing related legal consulting services.

#### Sexual Harassment Prevention Planning

- Assisting in planning sexual harassment prevention measures, managing sexual harassment claims and investigations, and providing legal services during administrative review, petition and litigation for sexual harassment claims.

#### Consultation for Labor Related Issues in Merger and Acquisition

- Providing legal consultation and risk analysis in merger and acquisition.

**Mass Lay-off Planning, Consultation and Legal Compliance**

- Assisting corporations and employees in negotiating mass lay-off issues

**Employee Education and Training Project**

- Workshop for employee education and on-site training.
- Providing on-site training classes related to issues of labor and employment laws.
- ❖ **HR Laws pertaining to Recruitment:** Indian employment laws do not provide any rules or procedures that must be adopted while recruiting a person. But it is important to note that during the recruitment, interviewing or hiring process, the fundamental rights provided to a person like avoiding discrimination or maintaining confidentiality of private information of applicant must be upheld.
- **Recruiting:** The organization must notify the vacancies to the local employment exchange, though there is no requirement to appoint any person forwarded by the employment exchange.
- **Interviewing:** There are no regulations against an employer asking for information about the candidate, including personal questions relating to health, race, religion, case, etc.,. However, asking such questions are deemed unethical and could lead to discrimination, which is an offense.
- ❖ **Pre-employment Enquiry:** There are no regulations or requirement to conduct pre-employment enquiry. However, employers are required to obtain the consent of the employee by fax/email/letter for carrying out a pre-employment enquiry or background check.
- ❖ **HR Laws pertaining to employment offer letters:** Indian employment and labour laws do not mandatorily require an employer to issue an offer letter. In case an offer letter is provided, it is not binding on either party until it is construed as an employment contract and there is a valid offer by one party and an acceptance by another party.
- ❖ **HR Laws pertaining to employment appointment letters:** Employment appointment letters in India usually include; Name and Address of the Employee, Title of Job, Job Description, Place of Work, Date of Commencement of Employment, Wage/Salary Details, Benefits, if applicable, Length of employment contract: fixed or indefinite, leave entitlement, Conditions for termination, Non-compete, Confidentiality, Non-solicitation and other restrictive covenants.
- ❖ **HR Laws pertaining to termination of employment:** Termination of employment could be due to voluntary reason or involuntary reason. Termination of employment must be as per any prior employment contract entered into by the employee with the business and must also follow other laws and regulations, which ensure that employees are not unduly harassed.
- ❖ **HR Laws pertaining to workplace health and safety:** Central and State Governments place certain duties and obligations on the employer to ensure the wellbeing, health and safety of its employees. Hence, it is important for all organizations to maintain a safe and hazard free work environment.

**4.2. Legal Compliances in Termination of the Employees**

The field of human resources management is greatly influenced and shaped by the state and federal laws governing employment issues. Employment laws/labor laws are very support to the human resource management. In the sense to the human resource manager, there are various Labor laws and Acts mentioned below which are commonly used and supported;

Employers are exposed to a number of legal and reputational risks resulting from wrongful termination, or not following due process. Employers should, therefore, plan to construct contracts and human resource (HR) materials to ensure that senior management, HR personnel, and employees are fully apprised of their rights and responsibilities.

There is no standard process to terminate an employee in India. An employee may be terminated according to the individual labor contract signed between the employee and the employer, if the contract defines a process for termination. Employers should be aware, however, that labor laws supersede the provisions of labor contracts – any termination policy or clause outlined within a contract should be checked against the law by a In the case that there is no labor contract, or the labor contract does not define a method of termination, then the employer has to follow the state law. In this scenario, an employer needs to abide by India's distinct, state-specific labor legislation in order to terminate the employee.

**a) Termination under Contract**

In most cases, employment contracts are very specific about the process for terminating employment. This is mostly the case when the termination is by mutual agreement and in particular cases where contractual employment is set for a fixed period. For instance, consultants with international organizations or interns at private organizations often have defined employment periods.

An employee is considered terminated at the conclusion of such a contract, unless a new contract is offered or the clauses in the initial contract are amended. As in most countries, employees that are terminated by employers are often given one-month notice or payment of one month of wages in lieu thereof.

**b) Termination by law**

As previously mentioned, any termination needs to comply with federal and state law because these laws supersede contract provisions. However, state law becomes particularly important when no defined procedure for termination exists. In such scenarios, state law becomes the rule of thumb for terminating an employee. State law itself is dependent on the area of operations of the employer.

**4.2.1. Labor legislation governing termination in Indian states**

In the following are the State laws for termination in several prominent investment destinations in India, including Delhi Union Territory, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.

**State labor law in Delhi Union Territory:** Under The Delhi Shops and Establishments Act of 1954, an employer cannot terminate an employee who has been with the corporation for more than three months without giving the employee at least 30 days of notice or a salary in lieu of such notice. The employer need not give notice if misconduct is the cause for termination. However, the employee, in such circumstances, should have an opportunity to reasonably explain the charge against them prior to termination.

**State labor law in Maharashtra:** Under the Maharashtra Shops and Establishments Act, an employer cannot terminate an employee who has been with the company for more than a year without giving the employee at least 30 days of notice in writing. If an employee has been with the company for more than three months but less than a year, the employer needs to give at least 14 days of notice. The notice is not necessary if the employee is being terminated for misconduct.

**State labor law in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu:** Under The Karnataka Shops and Establishments Act, 1961 and the Tamil Nadu Shops and Establishments Act, 1947, an employer cannot terminate an employee that has been with the enterprise for more than six months, except for a 'reasonable cause'. In addition, an employer must provide a one month notice. If misconduct is the cause for termination, no notice or associated payoff is required.

**4.2.2. Federal labor legislation governing termination in India**

The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 applies to workers who are not working in a managerial or administrative capacity. The Act states that any such employee who has been employed for greater than a year can only be terminated after permission is granted by a suitable government office. Additionally, an employer must provide valid reason for termination and pay a severance amount that is equivalent to 15 days' average salary for each year of uninterrupted employment.

**4.3. Legal protections for employees in India**

Laws in India offer employees a great degree of protection, and both the judiciary and the government tend to have a pro-worker stance in employment-termination disputes. It is, therefore, not unusual for employees who have been dismissed from employment to exercise their right of appeal.

In these cases, employees often challenge their dismissal on the ground that there was no reasonable cause for dismissal or that they had not been guilty of misconduct as held by the employer.

**4.3.1. Termination procedures in India**

**Termination For Cause:** Upon being found guilty of willful insubordination or disobedience; theft, fraud, or dishonesty; willful damage to or loss of employer's goods; partaking of bribes or any illegal gratification; absence without leave for more than 10 days; habitual late attendance; disorderly behavior during working hours; or habitual negligence of work.

- **Ordinary Termination:** This requires a 30 days' notice. The employer will have to notify the relevant government authority of a termination event, and courts may demand a fair hearing for the employee. As a result, these types of terminations can become protracted.

- **Severance Payment Due:** This is in the case of ordinary terminations. It is only owed in terminations where the employee has been with the company for at least two years and the reason for termination is redundancy. The severance package is calculated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the duration of employment, performance, and salary level.

#### 4.4. Impact on employers

Wrongful termination, or not following due process as defined by the respective state laws, will result in legal punitive consequences for the employer. In addition, the courts may order the employer to pay fines and award additional compensation to an employee that was terminated.

Employers that review labor laws and, explicitly, state procedures for terminating employees in their contracts, significantly reduce the potential for labor disputes related to the termination of an employee.

Beyond this, however, employers must ensure that management teams and HR professionals are fully briefed on termination procedures. Contracts can protect employers; yet, management teams and HR professionals must ensure labor law compliance to protect them from any adverse litigation.

#### 4.5. Need for Labour Laws

Every country has its own set of state and central labor laws that companies need to comply with. Dealing with statutory compliance requires companies to be updated on all the labor regulations in their country. It is also mandatory for companies to adhere to them. Non-compliance with these regulations can cause a company a lot of legal trouble such as penalties and fines. That is why every company invests a huge amount of money, effort and time to meet compliance requirements from professional tax to minimum wages act. To help in this, the company seeks expert advice from labour law and taxation law experts.

In order to manage with demanding regulatory environment, every company should be well versed and take notice of all regulations in the labour laws. They need to formulate efficient ways to maintain compliance and minimize risks.

FIGURE 1: NEED FOR LEGAL COMPLIANCES



The complexity of doing business has increased tremendously and it has become very challenging to be in sync with the operational aspect of every business. As discussed earlier, organizations seek the help of statutory compliance experts whose main focus is to be compliant with the ever-changing regulatory environment. Adhering to Labour Laws is necessary for every business organization in the world to keep their businesses safe from the legal trouble. A deep knowledge of statutory compliances is required to minimize the risk associated with the noncompliance of statutory requirements. In today's competitive and legal business world, it is very challenging for employers to manage **statutory compliances** without good management practices. Each country has various kinds of compliance requirements.

#### 4.6. Advantages of Labour Laws

These laws are of great importance because they offer protections to both the employee and employer. On the larger scale, compliance with these laws offers benefits to society as a whole, both on the interpersonal and financial levels.

##### Protection of Employee

In the India, most employees and employers operate under what is known as a master-servant relationship. Employment laws are designed to balance out the master-servant relationship so that the employer cannot abuse or discriminate against the employee. Under these and additional labor laws, workers have the right to fair compensation, an equal opportunity for hire and a safe work environment.

1. Ensures fair treatment of employees
2. Ensure they are paid fairly for the work they have done and their company complies with the minimum wage rate
3. Prevents employees from working for long hours or inhuman condition

##### Protection of Employer

The purpose of most labor laws not to abolish the master-servant relationship, but rather to make it more equal and ensure that all individuals have the same opportunity to enter into such a relationship. These laws ultimately protect the employer's productivity and, therefore, profits, as well as the ability to remain competitive in the marketplace.

1. Avoid penalty or fines because of their timely payments
2. Protects the organization from unreasonable wage or benefit demands from trade unions
3. Prevents legal troubles as the company is fully compliant
4. Mitigate risks and increases awareness about compliance
5. With compliance in place, there is a lower risk of an adverse incident

##### Dual Protections

Labor laws offer some dual protections to both employers and employees. Compliance with labor laws also is financially beneficial to both employees and employers. If an employer is compliant, for instance, he avoids fines stemming from not following the law, as well as potential lawsuits. Similarly, adherence to labor laws means that employees are properly compensated for the work they do and, in many instances, receive benefits such as reduced medical expenses.

##### Value Recognition

Labor laws, similar to any other laws, reflect the dominant values of the society in which people create them. Compliance with labor laws is important because it indirectly preserves these underlying concepts, thereby stabilizing the overall value system of the society. Periods of change in labor laws reflect less stable social norms and a shift in dominant belief systems.

##### Economic Stability

Because labor laws preserve the right of the employer to profit and the right of the employee to compensation that can be spent and invested, labor laws are crucial to a healthy economy. Periods of economic growth reflect healthy businesses with employees who are earning enough to participate as consumers. Changes in employment laws, as well as laws on operating procedures in each industry, often happen during periods of economic recession.

#### 4.7. Risk of Non Compliance of Labor laws

There are a number of statutory requirements for Indian companies and companies have to spend a significant amount of time in HR management to ensure that they are compliant with the legal regulations. If companies fail to adhere to *statutory compliance*, they may have to face heavy penalties, which are several times more than complying with legal guidelines.

If a company does not conform to rules and regulations in labor laws, it will risk:

1. Penal actions and financial losses to the organization
2. Loss of reputation and business integrity
3. Customer loyalty will be impacted severely

#### 4.8. Common employment law issues in India

Common employment laws issues in India can be divided into two areas: the issues faced by employers and the ones faced by employees, though some of these issues are common to both. The summarized key employment laws issues which are most common are mentioned as below;

##### Issues faced by employer:

- (i) Employees joining competing organizations are a common problem faced by employers. As per the Indian Contract Act 1872, non-competition restrictions are deemed restraint in trade and therefore unenforceable post termination of employment irrespective of the covenants contained in the employment agreements. Further, the Contract Act does not recognize the concept of 'reasonable restrictions'. As a result, even reasonable non-competition covenants are unenforceable post termination of the employment.
- (ii) Under the Industrial Disputes Act 1947, in case of termination of workmen by organizations, the organizations are required to follow the last-in first out ("LIFO") rule. It is important to note that unless an employee is actually performing managerial or supervisory duties; such employee will be deemed a workman under the ID Act.
- (iii) Other issues commonly faced by employers include challenges in enforcing recovery of training costs and garden leave clauses post termination of employment, as such clauses are again deemed as restraint in trade under the Contract Act.
- (iv) At present, labour laws like the Factories Act 1948 ("Factories Act") and the shop and establishment laws of different states prescribe working hours, number of overtime hours, etc. This becomes a challenge for employers, where employers have very limited flexibility in managing their workforce to achieve greater efficiency.

##### Issues faced by employees:

- (i) It is common for employees to join similar sector industries which may be competing with their previous employer. As mentioned above, although the non-compete clauses are unenforceable post termination of employment; employees usually receive legal notices from their previous employers regarding alleged violation of non-compete clauses and therefore, need to spend their resources in such legal battles.
- (ii) It is common for employees to receive legal notices from their past employers regarding alleged breach of provisions regarding confidential information. Employees should be extremely careful and ensure that they possess no confidential information of the previous employer and ensure to keep such information highly confidential.

##### Other issues:

Other issues include multiple laws and regulations governing labour matters. Under the Constitution of India, labour falls in the Concurrent List giving power to both the Central and the respective State Government to legislate on such items, with the residual law-making powers vesting with the Centre. This has resulted in a plethora of Central and State laws related to wages, employment, industrial relations, social security, etc. This results in several compliances and regulatory requirements for the employers. As far as employees are concerned, they need to keep themselves abreast of reporting and other requirements prescribed for employees under various labour laws.

The Central Government has been pursuing a pro-reform agenda since they took over three years ago and the overall trend has been to simplify labour regulations. The Ministry of Labour and Employment of the Government of India ("Ministry of Labour") has recently conveyed that the aim is to first concentrate on reforms that are focused on employee welfare and benefits.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The complexity of doing business has increased tremendously and it has become very challenging to be in sync with the operational aspect of every business. The firms have to abide by the labor laws in order to succeed in the competitive world. Labour laws in India govern the relationship between employer, employee and the Government and ensure that the rights and obligations of all parties are satisfied. It is important for all HR personnel to know the laws pertaining to HR practices in India and ensure there is no violation.

Laws in India offer employees a great degree of protection, and both the judiciary and the government tend to have a pro-worker stance in employment-termination disputes. It is, therefore, not unusual for employees who have been dismissed from employment to exercise their right of appeal.

Adhering to legal compliances is necessary for all big and small companies in the world to keep their businesses safe from the legal trouble. A deep knowledge of legal compliances is required to minimize the risk associated with the noncompliance of statutory requirements.

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## A STUDY ON THE CONTRIBUTORS TO GROWTH OF POTATO AND GINGER IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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#### ABSTRACT

*Agriculture continues to be the largest source of employment and livelihood for population in Himachal Pradesh. It contributes to 17 percent of total GDP and employs almost 69 percent of population in Himachal Pradesh. In this manuscript, out of numerous contributors to growth, six principals are identified, and their contribution to growth is analysed. In the past growth of agriculture was driven by the change in agricultural pattern, directly affecting agricultural output and farm income. Things are entirely different today, identifying the factors affecting the growth of ginger and potato can help in clearing the ambiguities regarding growth variables and factors having no impact. The contributions will serve the academic as well as the corporate community. With the tremendous increase in the cost of living over the last few decades, it got difficult to make ends meet with the cultivation of traditional crops; this is the main driving force which made commercial crops overtake traditional farming. Potato and Ginger despite being traditional crops are able to make it to the list of commercial crops in the study area. Farmers in the study area, i.e., Sirmour, Solan and Shimla are primarily small scale cash crop growers and Potato, and Ginger are two of the main cash crops. The study was undertaken to prioritise factors contributing to the growth of cash crops viz. Potato and Ginger in the selected districts. To achieve the objective of the study, a scale has been developed comprising of twenty-eight variables. The statements recorded are measured on a 5 – point Likert scale, i.e. (1) Strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree and (5) strongly agree. By responses of farmers, factor analysis has been done to extract the factors from observed variables which contribute to the growth of potato and ginger in the study area.*

#### KEYWORDS

cash crops, growth, potato, ginger, factor analysis.

#### JEL CODES

Q10, O10, O13.

#### INTRODUCTION

The economy of Himachal Pradesh is agrarian. Despite economic development and industrialisation, agriculture is the life and soul of the state. It is the source of essential crops, including those which feed the human population, produce raw materials for industries and that which feed livestock. Agriculture is the most crucial sector for ensuring sustainable development, nutritional security and for the alleviation of poverty not only in Himachal Pradesh or India but in the whole world. From an agricultural point of view, Himachal Pradesh is a unique state. It has fertile soils, wild climatic variations which are well suited to a wide variety of crops. Agricultural development in the mountain region is circumscribed by mountain specificities namely; accessibility, marginality, fragility, niche, human adaptation, mechanisation etc., created by unique dimensions that distinguish them distinctively from plains.

Farmers in Himachal are primarily small landholders. With the tremendous increase in the cost of living in the last few decades, it got difficult to make ends meet with the cultivation of traditional crops. Agricultural diversification requires a high investment of capital and labour inputs. There is a need for the development of not only appropriate farm production technology but also processing and marketing technology; this is the main driving force which made commercial crops overtake traditional farming. Historically, changes in agricultural patterns have been the main force driving growth in agricultural output and farm income in countries that have modernised their economies (Rozelle et al. 2003). Factors that can account for improvements include changes in technology, institutional reforms, infrastructure development, improvements to human capital and others. A partial productivity measure such as yield may increase over time because of some fundamental change in the production process, or because of increased use of inputs such as labour, fertiliser or water. Trends over time for total factors of production can help clear up the ambiguities about sources of growth (Pingali & Heisey 2001).

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As the commercial importance of horticultural crops is increasing day by day, mainly vegetables are now getting due importance in the national and international agenda. Economic factors drive diversification in favour of fruits and vegetables. The diversification of agriculture from inferior cereal towards high-value crops compatible with the comparative advantage of the region is suggested as a possible solution to stabilise and raise farm income and increase employment opportunities (Vyas, 1996). Another study showed the importance of infrastructure in explaining the extent of diversification. They observed that access to road, market and irrigation determines the scope, success and profitability of diversification through high paying crops (Ashok and Balsubramania, 2006). Some other studies opine that with the progressive shrinking of land holding size it is not possible for farmers to depend on a single crop. Small and marginal holders have, of course, certain advantages from the viewpoint of availability and cheapness of family labour which can be effectively managed in diversifying crops (Joshi et al., 2007 and Pingali et al., 1997). In Himachal, there are four major objectives of agricultural diversification. First is to increase the income of the small households, second to attain fuller employment in the farm household, third to stabilise the farm income over the seasons, and fourth conservation and enhancement of natural resources.

Realising the importance of cash crops, many farmers are diverting their resources to the production of potato and ginger. Not only do these crops can be mixed crops providing farmers with a sense of security as compared to other cash crops which cost high on pocket pre and post-harvest when compared to these crops but as high risks are also involved on farmer part when investing his resources (Pandaraiah and Sashidar, 2015). Production of these crops has vital importance, as these can help strengthen the economy as a whole and farmers who depend on their production for earning their livelihood, alike (Singh et al., 2015). Potato and ginger are in demand round all the year for table use as well as their processed items. Their usage is not only restricted for regular consumption but as alternative medicine for the health benefits they provide as antioxidants (Mehnaz Nikkhaah Bodagh et al., 2019) in the paper tried to summarise the evidence on effects of ginger consumption on gastrointestinal disorders based on clinical trials, (Rashid et al., 2017) study emphasizes on use of natural antioxidants and their mode of action. Natural antioxidants have been preferred worldwide for the past 15- 20 years, because of the trend to avoid or minimise the use of synthetic food additives. Recently, potato peels have found an alternative usage as potato peel contains some antioxidant compounds, not just this also ginger has the most potent antioxidant level among all herbs also it is suggested that the presence of 12 different Phytochemicals make the ginger one of the most potent food sources of antioxidant as stated in the paper.

The previous discussion dealt with the review of existing studies and related topics and was confined to explore the existing research gap which provides valuable information to frame the need, scope and objectives of the present study. After going through available literature on cash crops in Himachal Pradesh and India, it has been observed that substantial work has been done on agriculture, but such work has been confined to apple, seed fruits, food grains and cereals, garlic, flowers, and off-seasonal vegetables therefore, current study has been undertaken on the growth and development of potato and ginger.

**NEED OF STUDY**

In modern times, it is challenging for farmers to make an adequate profit by the cultivation of traditional food crops. Cost of cultivation is on the rapid hike due to depletion of soil, marginal farmland, diseases, change in climate and due to change in the pattern of demand. Farmers have to focus more on cash generation and more revenue creation. Diversification is an integral part of the structural transformation of an economy. The agriculture diversification is not possible without appropriate infrastructural and institutional reforms. Agricultural diversification needs proper credit facilities for purchasing of inputs, high yielding varieties of seeds and fertilisers, insecticides, availability of irrigation facilities for lesser dependence on rainfall. Given the importance of agriculture in the context of the state economy and a large number of changes brought about in agricultural setup, it is necessary to study the growth and trends in the area, production and productivity under crops in Himachal Pradesh. Topography and nature in Himachal Pradesh suit cash crops like Potato and Ginger, and due to fewer requirements of funds, it is easier to grow these crops. As evident from review of literature, there are many issues and problems like limited land, scarcity of resources, shortage of irrigation facilities and lack of awareness; which are inevitably attached to the cultivation of cash crops. IARI and CPRI among others are putting in a lot of efforts, but there is still potential that is needed to be harnessed. The proposed study has been undertaken to study the main factors which contribute to the development and growth of cash crops namely Potato and Ginger in Himachal Pradesh.

**OBJECTIVE**

To highlight and prioritise factors on the basis of their contribution to the growth of potato and ginger in Himachal Pradesh.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION**

For evaluating the objective of the study, primary data was collected through personal interview method with the help of a well-structured and pre-tested schedule for the year 2016-17. A field survey was undertaken to work out the demographic profile of farmers, socio-economics, factors contributing to production and the constraints in production of these crops in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

In order to get the desired information from the respondents, a sample of respondents has been selected; Multistage sampling has been used to conduct the research study:

- **At first stage:** Out of 12 districts of the state of Himachal Pradesh, three districts namely Shimla, Sirmour and Solan have been purposively selected for the study. Two factors influenced the selection of the districts. First, in these districts, the cultivation of high-value crops namely potato and ginger is being practiced since the late sixties and early seventies.

Second, these districts are selected by highest production of potato and ginger, i.e. both potato and ginger are produced in these districts, and the productivity is highest when put to comparison with other districts of Himachal Pradesh.

- **At Second Stage:** 2 administrative blocks from each of district have been selected based on the highest number of ginger and potato growers.
- **At Third Stage:** 3 village Panchayats from each selected block have been selected by maximum average and a minimum average of these cash crops.
- **At Fourth Stage:** 20 potato and ginger producers have been selected from each village Panchayat keeping in view different demographic features.

**TABLE 1: SAMPLE SIZE**

Sr. No.	Districts	Blocks	Respondents
1	Sirmour	Rajgarh	60
		Shillai	60
2	Solan	Solan	60
		Kandaghat	60
3	Shimla	Mashobra	60
		Narkanda	60
Total	3	6	360

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION****GROWTH OF POTATO AND GINGER AS CASH CROPS: A FACTOR ANALYSIS**

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy has been used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. Higher values between 0.5 and 1 indicate that factor analysis is appropriate. The results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO=.882) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity with highly significant value indicates the appropriateness of the use of factor analysis.

**TABLE 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.882
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	10890.911
	df	378
	Sig.	.000***

\*\*Significant at .05 level of confidence

**TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED**

Table 3 shows how many variables can be clubbed together to make a single factor. Eigen value represents the amount of variance associated with the factor. Therefore, only factors with eigen value more than one are retained. Six factors have been derived from twenty-eight variables which show 77.875 per cent variance.

TABLE 3: TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.065	28.805	28.805	8.065	28.805	28.805	5.906	21.095	21.095
2	5.152	18.399	47.204	5.152	18.399	47.204	3.928	14.030	35.125
3	3.089	11.032	58.236	3.089	11.032	58.236	3.875	13.838	48.963
4	2.366	8.450	66.686	2.366	8.450	66.686	3.405	12.162	61.125
5	1.874	6.692	73.378	1.874	6.692	73.378	2.650	9.464	70.589
6	1.259	4.496	77.875	1.259	4.496	77.875	2.040	7.286	77.875
7	.896	3.200	81.074						
8	.774	2.764	83.838						
9	.596	2.130	85.969						
10	.508	1.814	87.783						
11	.470	1.678	89.460						
12	.391	1.398	90.858						
13	.355	1.269	92.127						
14	.292	1.042	93.169						
15	.271	.968	94.137						
16	.246	.880	95.017						
17	.235	.841	95.858						
18	.222	.795	96.652						
19	.218	.778	97.430						
20	.182	.650	98.080						
21	.152	.543	98.623						
22	.129	.460	99.084						
23	.087	.311	99.395						
24	.061	.217	99.612						
25	.035	.126	99.738						
26	.033	.117	99.855						
27	.023	.083	99.938						
28	.017	.062	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Source: Data collected through questionnaire

ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

To refine the study and improve the interpretability, the variables are rotated by using varimax rotation to find the underlying constructs and their relationship. The variables are chosen to represent the various components facilitating the growth of Potato and Ginger. The result of the rotated component from table 4 identifies six essential underlying elements which are most correlated.

TABLE 4: ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX<sup>a</sup>

Statements	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Researchcenters_location_mainreason_forchoiceofcrops	.977	.080	.008	.108	-.041	-.009
Infrastructural_facilities_available	.975	.096	-.005	.119	-.029	-.018
Various_informativecampaigns_timetotime	.974	.084	.000	.139	-.025	-.014
Govtprovides_helpat_subsidised_rates	.973	.100	.020	.119	-.009	-.005
Abundance_ofsubsidies_incentivesfor_thesecrops	.960	.081	-.033	.118	-.038	-.032
Agriexperts_govtemployees_alwaysoperate	.958	.137	.016	.113	.003	.008
Always_beenintrstd_agriculture	.105	.828	.230	.148	-.126	.158
Proud_Tobe_part_ofagricommunity	.112	.828	.295	.150	-.082	.136
Agri_ancestral_occupation	.110	.815	.255	.107	-.206	-.032
Growing_gingerpotatoes_linkedto_traditionalfarming	.116	.795	.047	-.001	-.138	.201
Highsocial_respet_dueto_work	.112	.731	.152	.146	-.036	.038
SelectionCrops_cumbersome_bnkingprocedure	-.024	.052	.895	.070	-.091	.011
Limitedresources_createnoproblem_producingthesecrops	-.008	.105	.887	.099	.003	.034
Can_be_cultivated_asmixedcrop	.086	.293	.840	.069	-.024	.145
Cost_ofproduction_is_less	.069	.331	.824	.116	-.025	.231
Hiredlabour_isnot_alwaysrquird	-.102	.223	.747	.068	-.068	-.109
Soilrich_organicmatter_aprfor_gingerandpotato	.150	.133	.096	.893	.065	.093
Climatic_conditions	.112	.109	.106	.890	.004	.137
Fancystorage_notrequired	.178	.115	.109	.880	-.033	.097
Crops_comparatively_more_tolerantto_droughts_diseases	.204	.149	.079	.831	.009	.212
Cashcrops_provideprospect_higherincome	-.116	-.064	.019	-.020	.879	-.043
Creationof_employment	-.043	-.101	-.108	-.037	.848	.050
Recieve_fairshare_profits	-.138	-.263	.008	-.004	.805	.035
Thesecrops_makepossible_highstdofliving	.146	-.035	-.074	.084	.602	.029
Staplefood	.008	.003	-.015	-.006	-.046	.727
Highdemand_fortable_processeditems	-.126	.302	.121	.215	-.060	.681
Easetoaccess_market_for_theseproduce	-.020	.045	.012	.250	.174	.680
Thesecrops_arealways_demanded	.049	.412	.207	.182	.047	.568
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.						
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.						

The variables are chosen to represent the various factors leading to the growth of commercial crops namely potato and ginger in Himachal Pradesh. The result of rotated component matrix drawn under table 4, identifies six important underlying factors which are most correlated. The first factor, i.e., **help and subsidies by the government** include load on research centers location as a main reason for the choice of crops, infrastructural facilities available, various informative campaigns from time to time, the government provides help at subsidised rates, an abundance of subsidies and incentives for these crops, agricultural experts and government employees always cooperate. It implies that the location of agricultural research centers and provision of **subsidised seeds and other agricultural counselling and help** are the main reasons that result in the selection of these crops.

The second important factor, i.e., **ancestral occupation** represents five variables namely interest in agriculture, proud to be part of the agricultural community, agriculture being traditional occupation, growing ginger and potatoes linked to conventional farming and high social respect due to agriculture as work.

The third factor, i.e., **cost**, finds its identification with variables like the ease in banking procedures, lesser monetary requirements, less production cost, can be cultivated as mixed crop and lower need for hired labour. It is further revealed by the study that the selection of cultivation of any cash crop is very much affected by the requirements of cash and cost of farming i.e., lesser the cost more are the chances of the crop's cultivation.

The fourth category, **favourable climate conditions** is identified with weight on four factors which include organic matter-rich soil suitable for ginger and potato cultivation, suitable weather and climatic conditions, no requirement of fancy storage due to cold weather, cold weather facilitating crop tolerance to diseases and drought. It can be concluded that **cold weather** in hilly and mountain areas along with **fertile soil** provide suitable conditions for the production of ginger and potato.

The fifth factor, i.e., **income generation** includes the prospect of higher income, the creation of employment, a fair share of profits and possibility for a higher standard of living. It can be concluded that the scope for higher income generation from ginger and potato results in their selection for cultivation, particularly in areas under study and hilly area in general.

The sixth factor and the last factor, **Demand and residual management** includes staple food, high in demand for a table and processed items, ease to access market and demand throughout the year. It is further revealed by the study that potato and ginger are selected among various options for cultivation, because of their year-long demand and due to its quality of being staple crop, i.e. if the crop doesn't get any market it can be traditionally stored for self-consumption by farmers.

## CONCLUSION

The result of the rotated component matrix identifies six critical factors which are most correlated viz., help and subsidies by the government, ancestral occupation, cost, favourable climate conditions, income generation, demand, and residual management. The study revealed that the selection of any cash crop for cultivation is affected by the requirements of cash and cost of cultivation, i.e., lesser the cost more are the chances of the crop's cultivation and cultivation of any crop adds to its growth. Also, cold weather in hilly and mountain areas along with fertile soil provide suitable conditions for the production and storage of ginger and potato. These crops also give prospects on higher income and creation of employment which in turn leads to an improved standard of living. Both these crops are a staple food which is high in demand for the table and processed items, readily marketable and are in demand throughout the year. Even if the crop doesn't get any market, it can be traditionally stored for self-consumption as food or seed by the farmers thus reducing risk.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The present study is based on data collected through questionnaire from farmers. Therefore, it suffers from all limitations inherited as it is the case of any study on the perception and viewpoint of the respondents and the possibility of personal bias cannot be ruled out.
- The sample size of the present study is small. It can be attributed to time, and resource constraints and the reluctance on the part of farmers to fill in the questionnaire perhaps because of lack of information and when talking about government policies and experts fear of repercussion.
- Generalisation of the findings may be restricted because of the composition, size of the sample and time period for which data is collected.

## SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Efforts can be made to study the cultivation of commercial crops in context to poverty alleviation.
- There is vast scope to study the process of consultation between policymakers and agriculturists with more systematic and ideological based arguments.

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## RUSSIA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

*After the fall of the Soviet Union (USSR), Russia has developed a prudent approach to multilateralism. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had almost become dysfunctional and there was a need to form new associations both with close neighbours and with the West. The Post-Soviet period saw extreme political and economic instability. The fall of the controlled economic structure led to confusion, chaos and disorder. This paper analyses the involvement of Russia in four main organisations namely Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS, the current scenario and the future aspects.*

## KEYWORDS

Russia, CIS, CSTO, SCO, BRICS, EU.

## JEL CODE

F50

## INTRODUCTION

During 1990s, Russia promoted the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with the idea of maintaining its supremacy on the former Soviet states. However, many member states were disillusioned by it and even Russia felt that it was offering more to the organisation than what it was getting in return. As a result, by the end of 1990s, the CIS has almost faded off and had become defunct. Moscow had chosen to pursue a targeted strategy to influence the near abroad by developing multilateral organisations with nations willing to cooperate with Russia. The two most important and notable organisations formed were the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC). The CSTO was set up as a modified version of the 1992 CIS Collective Security Treaty. Since 2004, EurAsEC has taken over many of the functions of the former CIS especially the development of a Customs Union. Russia has become an active member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a regional organisation formed to promote regional and economic harmony in Central, South and South-East Asia. [8] This organisation is notable for China's membership as this is the only regional organisation where Russia agreed to share the ground with another major external power.

## OBJECTIVES

After the fall of USSR, Russia has undergone drastic changes in its international trade and economic policies. However, it has lost substantial portion of natural resources and economic power. China has taken a leading role in the region by opening up its economy to market forces and this poses a major threat to the erstwhile Soviet power. Russia has realized that the modern world is a multilateral one unlike the post war period. In today's age of globalization, international trade and business forms the backbone for the growth of any nation state. Due to US sanctions, trade in Russia is limited to a large extent and so it seeks to strengthen its position in the eastern part of the world. The paper deals with policies and strategies formulated by Russia to create an impact in world trade and business. It analyses the involvement of Russia in four main organisations in the region namely Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS. It seeks to study the current position of Russia in these trading organisations and also to look into its future prospects. It also focuses on study of strategies formulated to counter China's growing influence in the region and maintain its hegemony in Central Asia and its former Soviet states.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper is theoretical and completely study based. It focuses on Russia's trade relations with some of the most important international organisations. The scope of the study is limited to the following organisations: Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS. Information about origin of these organisations and their current roles and responsibilities has been taken from international articles and papers. CSTO was one of the earliest organisations spearheaded by Russia after the failure of CIS. Russia's membership in BRICS is important because it signifies its relations with nation states of Asia, Africa and Latin America which has a significant scope and effect on global trade and business. The methodology followed was to study about each institution separately and to deal with one institution at a time. Effort has been made to correlate the role of Russia in these organisations and the effect it had in its international relations, for e.g. the Ukrainian crisis. WTO has been considered because Russia is a new member and it highlights its relations with the Western world. SCO is the only organisation where both Russia and China are significant dominant members which help study its relations with Beijing as well.

## COLLECTIVE SECURITY TREATY ORGANISATION (CSTO)

The CSTO consists of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Its focus is on traditional military cooperation with main objective to develop a counter terrorism force, military training activities, sale of defence goods and the centre of formulation of defence strategies. The backdrop for the formation of this organisation was the Ukrainian and Georgian interest in joining NATO. As a result, presence of NATO looming at its borders became a threat. It was recommended that the CSTO Collective Operational Reaction Force (CORF) should be formed with size, technology and effectiveness at par with NATO. The agreement to form CORF was finalized by CSTO in February 2009. As per this agreement, a troop of 16000 is to be formed. Russia would supply 8000 troops, Kazakhstan 4000 and Tajikistan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia 1000 each. [4] This position reflects Russia as the dominant military power in the region and also a major sponsor for the other member states.

However, this dominant position of Russia was not welcome by all members. Some members were apprehensive about committing to a full scale and permanent military battalion under Russian control which further delayed the CORF for many years. For e.g. Uzbekistan had been pretty sceptical. Tashkent only joined in 2005. It also raises voices over Moscow's dominance of the CSTO as Russia's intentions to set up a CSTO camp at Osh in Southern Kyrgyzstan (close to Uzbek border) as it saw the move as a threat to its sovereignty. Belarus initially too refused to ratify but later agreed. Russian dominance of CSTO is fait accompli. There is uncertainty about the other member's willingness to adhere to its policies.

**EURASIAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (EurAsEC)**

It was established in 2001 by Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, having grown out of the failing CIS. In 2005, it simultaneously granted Uzbekistan membership and merged with the Central Asian Cooperation Organization. This organisation was formed with Russia's objective of staying relevant in Eurasian and Central Asian region under the growing influence of China and the West. From 2010, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia formed a Customs Union where a single customs tariff would be regulated by the Custom's Commission in the entire territory. This was a major gain for Russia as this brought two of the strongest Post-Soviet nations into the Moscow controlled economic zone. However, this three state centric policy was one of the reasons why Tashkent suspended its decision of membership.

In a summit held in Moscow in 2009, its members agreed to establish a "Joint Anti-Financial Crisis Fund" to be administered by the Eurasian Development Bank. Russia contribution to EurAsEC represents its efforts to fight the financial crunch in the global coalition. However, some also view its contribution as an effort to impose its influence on the other member states.

**SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION (SCO)**

The SCO was founded in 1990 with the objective of settlement of border issues between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Russia. It was initially known as the "Shanghai 5". Finally, in 2001, with the inclusion of Uzbekistan, it came to be known as the SCO. India and Pakistan joined in 2017. The objective of the organisation have broadened including non-traditional security and also fostering economic, cultural and humanitarian collaboration. However, SCO is primarily driven by China and Russia does not enjoy the same authority as that in CSTO and EurAsEC. However, it did make some notable gains. Moscow has interest in supporting the current regimes of the Central Asian Republics. The SCO is focussed on tackling the problem of "three evils" i.e. terrorism, extremism and separatism. Thus the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist structure and programs against narcotics trade serves Moscow's purpose to a largest extent as well. However, Russia's involvement in SCO is limited, it only restricts itself to large and big investment infrastructure projects and it avoids any movement towards customs coordination. It prefers to play micro-economic coordination only within the EurAsEC community thus excluding China. It fears that given its superior economic capacity, involvement of China in the region can reduce Russia to the second level player, something which obviously Moscow is against. SCO is also an important way in this Russia can assert its presence and value in international affairs.

CSTO and SCO both have common objectives of enhancing national security but there is a difference in their approach. CSTO focuses on traditional military coordination while SCO looks into non-traditional security issues. EurAsEC and SCO both aim at economic harmony and coordination but EurAsEC is more concerned with micro level customs coordination whereas SCO is centered on large scale infrastructure projects and energy cooperation. Russia keeps a balance between EurAsEC and CSTO on one hand and SCO on the other to protect its position in the region and keep a check on China's growing influence.

**WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS**

Even after 25 years since the Collective Security Treaty was signed, the CSTO has failed to address the security issues of the constituent countries. Its anti terrorist activities have mainly remained confined to military training and it could not achieve significant success in the anti drug trafficking trade as well. There is no cooperation with the SCO as well which has almost similar objectives. CSTO member states use the organisation to obtain free military training from Russian Defence Academies with significant value creation. None of the other members participate in Russia's military pursuits nor support Russia's defence policy.

Although an agreement was made for establishing a single unified air defence system in Central Asia, no country except Russia has shown any real interest. All the other member states are concerned with upgradation of their own air defence systems. All the CSTO member states are economically not quite sound and are in no position to fund these projects. Russia instilled a sense of fear among the other states and convinced them that security can only be achieved by submitting to the Russian military and defence system. A CSTO Crisis Response Centre has been established in Moscow for exchange of information among defence personnel. It has been created in line with National Defence Management Centre of Russian Federation. In short, the other member states will look forward to Russia for internal defence issues and work on Moscow's recommendation. The CSTO is simply a covert tool of Russia to assert pressure and control on the post Soviet states but lacks strength of a standalone body.

**RUSSIA-CHINA COMPETITION AND DIVIDE**

The divergent attitudes of Beijing and Moscow regarding the relationship between SCO and CSTO have also resulted in several confusing and competition between the two for gaining supremacy in the region. PRC has always focussed on promotion of economic, cultural and non military security potential of the SCO whereas Russian policymakers have tried to restrain SCO's military potential as a strong presence of PLA in the Central Asian region would pose a threat to Russia's supremacy. But inspite of Russian efforts, China and Central Asian Republics have prevented SCO transforming into a clothe conflict of interest lies in the fact that on one hand Russia sees the possibility to fight another Chechnya like counter-insurgency operation whereas on the other China's main objective is to suppress another Tiananmen like rebellion. China also blocked Russian efforts to establish direct military contacts between CSTO and SCO. Since China is not a part of CSTO, it tries to keep SCO independent of the Moscow dominated institution. Central Asian Republics too prefer working with SCO over CSTO as it is not dominated by a single supreme power and gives them more space for independent action and consultation.

Another reason for SCO's popularity among the Central Asian Republics (CARs) is that unlike that of CSTO, they can consult with China with Russian support rather than directly approaching Beijing on a bilateral basis. China wants to make it clear that it is not seeking any hegemonic role in the region and is only concerned with economic, social, cultural and non military security aspects. But some view Beijing's growing power and presence as threat to the Western interests and values.

However, both China and Russia gains from SCO. Moscow recognises the security role of China in the region and in case of any hostile actions from Beijing, Moscow can depend upon CSTO as an alternate institution in the region which is growing militarily and on which Russia has strong control.

**AFGHANISTAN AS A CRITICAL AREA**

Despite every difference, all the members agree that CSTO and SCO should cooperate with each other to prevent narcotic trafficking and regional terrorism related to Afghanistan. The March 2009 SCO-hosted international conference on Afghanistan endorsed wider cooperation between the SCO, CSTO and CIS on the anti-drug and counterterrorism tracks. The June 2010 Moscow international conference on "Drug Production in Afghanistan: A Challenge for the International Community" had representatives from both institutions in attendance. Even NATO was involved to draft a multi-institutional pact that would combine their efforts under the leadership of the United States to curb drug trafficking and narcotic trading from Afghanistan to Central Asia and then to Russia.[7]

Recent experience shows that no single institution can achieve desirable and improved results on their own. Even a mighty alliance such as NATO has to work in tandem with local institutions such as CSTO, SCO and have to integrate their diverse beliefs, values and objectives to achieve favourable results, reduce wastage of resources and energy and bring stability in the region.

**BRAZIL, RUSSIA, INDIA, SOUTH AFRICA, CHINA (BRICS)**

Moscow had been keen on the establishment of BRICS due to the following reasons:

- Russia was not satisfied with the global economic and financial system and believed that it only benefitted few elite developed nations only.
- All the member states are suffering from similar problems such as "need for infrastructure modernisation, stabilization of currency and large scale poverty". Both India and Brazil have a problem of currency stabilization against dollar. The Rouble too has depreciated considerably since 2013. China is losing its competitive advantage of cheap labour force.

- Although the member countries do not agree on every point however they still have a common point. All of them are dissatisfied with the current global system and questions the same. Since the Post War period, the world remained bipolar. The member states demand a multipolar world order that is gradually taking shape today. BRICS supports the UN Security Council for maintaining global peace and harmony.
- The BRICS nations were wary of the frequent military usage by the US and NATO. Russia stressed on the prevention of the use of the Security Council to cover up for the imposition of unilateral solutions to conflict situations.
- The existing world organizations are extremely skewed towards the West and hence the member states felt that a new organization was necessary to raise their voice in the international discussion forum.
- BRICS had been a platform for Russia to find a stable identity. After the fall of the USSR in 1991, Russia was reduced to a regional power. Integration with the West as an equal member was not an option for Russia. So BRICS provide an opportunity for Russia to reassert its global position and aspirations. Although BRICS portrays itself as a non military organisation, the US still remains unconvinced and still sees it as a threat.
- Russia also believes that BRICS can help prevent drug trafficking, conflict resolution, non-proliferation of mass destruction weapons, piracy, money laundering, illegal migration and others. Thus it can also help in promoting international security and cooperation.

### OBJECTIVES OF RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN BRICS

- To make the international monetary and financial system more stable, equitable and effective which in turn will help development of its own economy and financial system.
- Maintaining peace, security and territorial integrity and sovereignty of Russia and the other member states and non interference in their internal matters.
- To enhance and develop a multi-vector character of its foreign policy.
- To have a widespread linguistic, cultural and informational presence in the other member countries which a part of BRICS. [6]

As Roberts points out, that coordination with the other member countries gives Russia a platform to be heard in the international forum as NATO and G8 did not bring satisfactory results to Russia. BRICS is an imperfect fit for Russia because none of the other countries share any dominant national identity as a great power of European Civilization. None of them have a first world identity. Russia historically had an European identity but it's changing in modern times towards a more Eurasian identity which is a unique amalgamation of both Europe and Asia, a melting pot for various cultures. [5] So BRICS would act like a bridge or "Power Multiplier" for Russia to connect to the Western world and be more relevant in global and international relations.

BRICS also serves the purpose of dual soft balancing. By portraying BRICS as a power alternative for institutions like NATO, Russia can achieve preventing Western hegemony to a considerable extent. This has also increased its transactions with China (In addition to the already existing SCO). This would help Russia keep an eye on China as a growing economic and political power and to keep a check on its international activities.

According to the "Concept of Participation of the Russian Federation in BRICS," published by the foreign ministry in March of 2013, Russia lays out plans for further formal institutionalisation of BRICS but only to an extent which do not hamper bilateral relationships. [2] In fact, Russia's foreign policy is based on bilateral relations and not making formal agreements that would limit the country's sovereignty and independence of designing its own foreign policies. Thus there is a clear underlying message that BRICS is just a tool for Russia to connect to the West to restore its position as a world power.

### IMPACT OF THE UKRAINE CRISIS

The Russian annexation of Crimea led to a decline in Russia's relationship with the West and resulted in sanctions on Russia by the US and the EU. At this point of time BRICS served both political and economic benefits for Russia.

The first was political that none of the member countries supported Russia's annexation of Crimea but none of the condemned the act openly as well. Rather they mildly rebuked the G20 on the ground that no observers of the G20 have the authority to exclude another unilaterally. This silence on the Crimea issue gave Russia an edge and room to maneuver. The agreements reached during the July 2014 BRICS summit in Fortaleza and July 2015 summit in Ufa, Russia; both offer compelling imagery supporting Russia thus preventing the Western efforts to isolate Russia. [1]

Economically BRICS offered great relief to Russia from Western sanctions and also due to its self-imposed ban on import of western agricultural products. Though the sanctions had their own demerits as Russia witnessed inflation in its local economy with the Rouble collapse in 2014. However during this period, it was able to form closer ties with the BRICS member states. Latin America especially Brazil saw the void left by EU sanctions on Russia as an opportunity and tapped the Russian market well.

However, the Crimean crisis had a deep impact on Russia and BRICS in general. As relations with the West froze for Russia, it started to see BRICS as a real alternative to the west. Russia is now attempting to position BRICS as a weapon against western interference in their interests.

### REACTION OF BRICS TOWARDS RUSSIA'S GROWING ANTI-WESTERNISM

BRICS nations have conflicting views on growing Anti-Westernism. All the BRICS have more investments in the US and the west than among themselves. Even though China is the largest trading partner for both Brazil and South Africa, none of the BRICS nations feature in the list of China's main trading partners. All of them continue to have business relations with the US. Hence the BRICS documents emphasize on the point that the organisation is not directed at any third party nor is an Anti-Western bloc.

Further BRICS's goal of reshaping global governance is evolutionary rather than revolutionary. So they will need the help and support of the Western powers in order to achieve their objectives. So being overtly Anti-Western will prove to be counterproductive.

### CURRENT SITUATION AND FUTURE STEPS

Russia's international relations and foreign policy has undergone several changes in the past decade. Its relations with the US are incoherent and cannot be achieved by traditional means. In 2019, Moscow will focus more on international summits. It aims to "Play Trump" capitalizing on his policies. The immediate priority of Russia is to safeguard the US-Russia nuclear arms control regime. It might be forced to accept the Bolton's plan for a symbolic nuclear agreement that would not stop deployment options. However, an advantage for Russia is that the Democrat Congress in the US might not fund Trump's nuclear build up. In Europe Russia is continuing to woo European Union leaders after sanctions were imposed following annexation of Crimea in 2014. Kremlin is cooperating with fringe parties across the EU both in the far right and far left. In 2019, Moscow will need to double its reconstruction efforts in Syria. It has to convince the international community to release funding for the same which will be difficult considering Syrian government's reluctance to reforms. Russia needs a more strategized outlook towards Africa. Initially when Africa needed capitalism or neo-liberalism it tilted towards the West and when it sought socialist development, they leaned towards Moscow. Now in today's age, Russia main objective would be to offer something which is already not made available by China or the West. Russia is building closer relationship with China to counter the economic losses made by US sanctions. However it has to be careful about China's increasing military interests in Central Asia. [3] China's dominance in the region of former Soviet states can pose economic and political challenges for Russia and so its policy towards China has to be a balanced one. It needs to accept China as a complimentary power and the major rival to the US.

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