

SOCIAL SECURITY PRACTICES IN CO- OPERATIVE AND PRIVATE SUGAR MILLS OF PUNJAB: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Social security benefits are a distinct part of the social policy of Government of India. Being a welfare state, India has a special social security mechanism for the workers employed in different industries and sugar industry is no exception. All the social security legislations are applicable on sugar industry except the Employees State Insurance Act, 1948 as it not applicable on seasonal industries like sugar industry. Considering the significance of social security benefits for the socio-economic development of the country, the present paper attempts to examine the current state of social security measures as perceived by the workers. With the help of a structured questionnaire data was collected from a sample of 490 workers (280 from co-operative sugar mills and 210 from private sugar mills of Punjab) drawn using referral sampling method based upon proportional representation of total population. The study concluded that co-operative and private sugar mills differ significantly from each other on maximum parameters of social security benefits. Most of workers of the co-operative sugar mill perceived social security measures to be more simple, useful, satisfactory and sufficient in comparison to the private sugar mill workers.

Keywords: Co-operative, Private, Sugar mills, Social security.

1. Introduction

Social security refers to collective care arrangements to meet contingencies and regarded as integral part of industrialisation, economic development and growth (Kanan, 2004). It aims at providing the security to the members against the risks to which they are exposed

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(Sarma, 2011). Specifically, social security systems provide for “basic income in cases of unemployment, illness and injury, old age and retirement, invalidity, family responsibilities such as pregnancy and childcare, and loss of the family breadwinner” (ILO, 2015).

Researchers have advocated different social security mechanisms for developed and developing countries with specific reference to nature of employment and type of beneficiaries (Vaid, 1965; Ahmad, 1991; Xavier and Martin, 1996; Das and Pandey, 2004; Conley, 2008; Gowda and Hanumanthappa, 2011; Puneet, 2012). In context of Asian countries, Kuruvilla and Erickson (2000) and Lee and Kuruvilla (2001) reported that employees’ social security package is dependent upon employment relationship which has witnessed decline over a period of time. Studies have also shown that social security has strong relationship with customer satisfaction and financial perspectives (Fuess *et al.*, 2004; Cerda, 2005).

In the common parlance, social security benefits are intended towards catering to the need and contingencies of the employees (Sarma, 2011). But for some specific Indian industries social security administration has been found as employer centric and privatization had affected its essence (Rao, 2005; Ramakrishna 2009; Poonia, Garg and Prakash, 2006). Majority of working population in India is unable to get the desired level of social security in comparison to their counterparts in developed countries (Misra and Misra, 2009). In this regard, Indian government is focusing on providing social security to labour force in tandem with the process of liberalization (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2017). The social security legislations in India have been enacted by and large as per the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (Mini, 2010). However, for its better applicability, convergence and transparency of legislations is required for organised sector (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2012).

The workers of the sugar mills are authorised to avail the social security benefits available under Workmen Compensation Act, 1923; Employees’ Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952; the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972. Benefits under Employee State Insurance Act, 1948 are not available to sugar mill workers as this Act is not applicable on seasonal factories and sugar mills operate on seasonal basis. The Punjab state has 15 operative sugar mills (Nine co-operative and six private) (Randhawa and Gupta, 2017). These both types of sugar mills are having different ownership structures. The co-operative sugar mills are owned and managed by the members of the co-operative societies including state government, Sugarfed (established under the Punjab State Co-operative Society Act, 1961). On the other hand

private sugar mills are owned and managed by the private managements and the owners of the mills (Randhawa and Gupta, 2014). Being a part of organised sector, the Indian constitution has well defined social security mechanism for these sugar mills, but still the convergence to it is susceptible.

2. Rationale and Objective of the Study

Indian sugar industry has directly employed 5 lakh employees (Department of Food and Public Distribution, 2017). Being a part of organised sector, sugar industry is supposed to provide all the benefits of social security to its employees as directed by the State. In the state of Punjab, the workers of sugar mills are also authorised to avail the benefits available under various social security schemes. These workers are employed by different ownership structure i.e., co-operative and private. Type of ownership may influence the willingness of employers in providing social security benefits as these benefits are subject to deployment of funds (Jutting, 1999; Ramakrishna, 2009). Moreover, the employment in the manufacturing sector is subject to distress nature with resource crunch, low productivity and low wages (Rajarshi, 2006). Hence, the question becomes admissible if these different ownership patterns especially in the Punjab sugar mills are congregating the social security benefits to workers. In addition the perception of workers regarding complexity of the procedure, utility, sufficiency of amount availability, essentiality and satisfaction from the various social security measures has its research potential as well. Thus, the present study is an endeavour to examine and compare the social security practices in the co-operative and private sugar mills of Punjab. The main objectives of this study are:

- To examine the current status of social security practices in the sugar mills of Punjab.
- To compare the social security practices in the co-operative and private sugar mills of Punjab.
- To suggest the measures for the betterment of social security practices in the sugar mills of Punjab.

3. Methodology

The Sample

Data was collected from a sample of 490 workers (280 from co-operative sugar mills and 210 from private sugar mills of Punjab). The sample was drawn using referral sampling method taking into consideration the characteristics of the total population. The workers

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in the sugar mills included boilers, bitters, cane loaders, cane unloaders, machine men, centrifugal operators, khalasi and other manual workers directly engaged in sugar production.

Sampling Characteristics

Table 1 shows that majority of the workers were male in co-operative sugar mills and in case of private sugar mills all the participants were male. Most of the workers belong to age group of 48 to 58 years in co-operative sugar mills. Whereas in case of private sugar mills, majority of the workers lies in the age group of 38 to 47 years. In comparison to the workers of private sugar mills, workers of co-operative sugar mills were more experienced. In both types of sugar mills, majority of the workers were either matric or below matric. Salary wise, the workers of co-operative sugar mills were drawing more salary than the workers of private sugar mills. Regarding nature of employment, majority of the workers were permanent or seasonal permanent in both the types of sugar mills.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Sample Characteristics		Type of Mill				Total	
		Co-operative		Private			
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	276	98.57	210	100.00	486	99.18
	Female	4	1.43	0	0.00	4	0.82
Age Group	18-27 years	7	2.50	15	7.14	22	4.49
	28-37 years	15	5.36	56	26.67	71	14.49
	38-47 years	87	31.07	90	42.86	177	36.12
	48-58 years	163	58.21	43	20.48	206	42.04
	59 years & above	8	2.86	6	2.86	14	2.86
Educational Qualification	Below Matric	131	46.79	94	44.76	225	45.92
	Matric	77	27.50	69	32.86	146	29.80
	Senior Secondary	13	4.64	19	9.05	32	6.53
	Diploma	41	14.64	16	7.62	57	11.63
	Graduation	18	6.43	12	5.71	30	6.12

Total Experience	1-10 years	32	11.43	56	26.67	88	17.96
	11-20 years	82	29.29	104	49.52	186	37.96
	21-30 years	134	47.86	42	20.00	176	35.92
	31 years & Above	32	11.43	8	3.81	40	8.16
Experience in the Present Mill	1-10 years	37	13.21	107	50.95	144	29.39
	11-20 years	82	29.29	91	43.33	173	35.31
	21-30 years	131	46.79	12	5.71	143	29.18
	31 years & Above	30	10.71	0	0.00	30	6.12
Nature of Employment	Permanent	132	47.14	108	51.43	240	48.98
	Seasonal Permanent	107	38.21	62	29.52	169	34.49
	Contractual/Temporary	41	14.64	40	19.05	81	16.53

Hypotheses

The hypotheses have been tested from the perspective of procedure, utility, satisfaction, sufficiency of the amount availability and essentiality of social security benefits. The broad hypothesis for the study is

H₀: There is no significant difference between the social security measures available for the mill workers in co-operative and private sugar mills.

Measuring Instrument

To assess the workers' perception regarding various social security measures 'Social Security Scale' (SSS) developed by Babu (1995) has been used in this study. The scale consists of 5 dimensions on each of the social security measures namely, workmen compensation, employee provident fund, employee family pension, gratuity, maternity/paternity benefit and Employee Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme (EDLI).

Statistical Techniques

In the present study the perception of the workers regarding the complexity of procedures and level of utility has been examined and compared by calculating mean score, median

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score and applying t test. Further, the association of the type of sugar mills with the satisfaction from the benefits, sufficiency of amount availability and the essentiality of social security benefits have been examined by applying Chi-square test. These statistical tests have been applied by using SPSS software.

Procedure of Data Collection

Data were obtained from the sugar mills premises, workers' workplace areas, restrooms and canteens during the lunch breaks, and also from workers' residential areas. A total of 405 questionnaires were distributed in co-operative sugar mills, out of which, 292 questionnaires were received back and 280 were found to be complete in all respects. On the other hand, in private sugar mills, 350 questionnaires were distributed to workers, out of which 229 questionnaires were received back and finally 210 found to be completely filled. Thus, the analysis of data was based upon 490 workers (280 and 210 workers of co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively).

4. Results and Discussion

In this regard, the perception of the workers regarding the procedures and utility has been examined and compared by calculating mean score and applying t test. The satisfaction from the benefits, sufficiency of amount availability and the essentiality of social security benefits have been compared by applying Chi-square test.

Table 2 represents the availability, awareness regarding contribution and maturity of various social security schemes/benefits for the workers of co-operative and private sugar mills. These parameters have been asked on dichotomous (Yes/No) basis.

Table 2: Social security of workers of sugar mills

Social security measure		Type of the Mill				Total	
		Co-operative		Private			
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Availability	Workmen compensation benefit	222	79.29	134	63.81	356	72.65
	Employees' provident fund benefit	276	98.57	170	80.95	446	91.02
	Employee family pension benefit	255	91.07	164	78.10	419	85.51
	Maternity/paternity benefit	49	17.50	8	3.81	57	11.63

	Gratuity benefit	251	89.64	134	63.81	385	78.57
	EDLI benefit	180	64.29	114	54.29	294	60.00
Awareness regarding contribution	Employees' provident fund benefit	191	68.21	92	43.81	283	57.76
	Employee family pension benefit	178	63.57	78	37.14	256	52.24
	EDLI benefit	115	41.07	43	20.48	158	32.24
Awareness regarding maturity/ Actual benefit	Workmen compensation benefit	189	67.50	96	45.71	285	58.16
	Employees' provident fund benefit	243	86.79	146	69.52	389	79.39
	Employee family pension benefit	224	80.00	132	62.86	356	72.65
	Maternity/paternity benefit	46	16.43	10	4.76	56	11.43
	Gratuity benefit	223	79.64	114	54.29	337	68.78
	EDLI benefit	152	54.29	84	40.00	236	48.16

Source: Compiled from primary data.

Data in the table 2 shows that most of the workers in the co-operative (98.57 percent) and private sugar mills (80.95 percent) have access to provident fund benefit. 79.29 percent and 63.81 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively have availed benefit under Workmen Compensation Act, 1923. There are 91.07 percent workers in the co-operative sugar mills and 78.10 percent workers in the private sugar mills, who have access to the employee family pension benefit. A very few workers (17.50 percent in the co-operative and 3.81 percent in private sugar mills) have access to maternity/paternity benefit. In the co-operative sugar mills 89.64 percent workers have access to gratuity benefit and 64.29 percent workers have access to EDLI benefit. Whereas in private sugar mills 63.81 percent workers have access to gratuity benefit and 54.29 percent workers have access to EDLI benefit.

As far as the awareness regarding contribution is concerned, there were 68.21 percent workers in co-operative sugar mills and 43.81 percent workers in private sugar mills who were aware of their contribution regarding employees' provident fund benefit. Further, there were 63.57 percent workers in co-operative and 37.14 percent workers in private sugar mills who were aware of their contributions for employee family pension benefit. As far as EDLI benefit is concerned, 41.07 percent workers of co-operative sugar mills and 20.48 percent workers of private sugar mills were aware of their contribution towards EDLI benefit.

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The social security schemes aims at providing benefits at the time of maturity, so awareness regarding the maturity amount/actual benefit is must for all the workers. Data in Table 2 shows that there were 67.50 percent workers in co-operative and 45.71 percent workers in private sugar mills who were quite aware of the claims regarding workmen compensation benefit. Further, there were 86.79 percent workers in co-operative and 69.52 percent workers in private sugar mills who were aware of maturity amount regarding employees' provident fund benefit. 80 percent workers in co-operative and 62.86 percent workers in private sugar mills were aware of maturity amount of employee family pension benefit. As far as the maternity/paternity benefit is concerned there were 16.43 percent workers in co-operative and 4.76 percent workers in private sugar mills were aware of actual benefit available under the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961. Regarding gratuity and EDLI benefit, 79.64 percent and 54.29 percent workers, respectively in the co-operative sugar mills were aware of the maturity amount of these schemes. In the private sugar mills there are 54.29 percent and 40 percent workers, respectively who were aware of maturity amount of gratuity and EDLI benefit. These findings are supported by the research conducted by Gowda and Hanumanthappa (2011) who showed that the workers in the rice mills were not fully aware of benefits available to them as per Indian constitution.

Table 3 represents the perception of workers regarding the procedure of various social security schemes. Median score of the procedure "simple" to "very complex" is coded as 1 to 3 respectively on Likert scale.

Table 3: Perception of workers regarding procedure of the social security schemes/benefits

Social security measure	Median Score		t value	p value	Hypotheses Accepted/ Rejected
	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills			
Workmen compensation benefit	1	1	-3.184	.002*	Rejected
Employees' provident fund benefit	1	1	-.510	.611	Accepted
Employee family pension benefit	1	1	-4.917	.000*	Rejected
Maternity/paternity benefit	1	2	-5.000	.004*	Rejected
Gratuity benefit	1	1	-2.102	.037**	Rejected
EDLI benefit	1	1	-7.012	.000*	Rejected

Source: Compiled from primary data.

Note: * represents significant at 1 % level of significance ** represents significant at 5 % level of significance.

Data in the table 3 shows that procedure of workmen compensation benefit was considered as simple by workers of both types of mills. The median value for this particular benefit was found to be one both in case of co-operative and private sugar mills. The median score of employees' provident fund benefit (1 both in case of co-operative and private sugar mills) reflects that EPF procedure is regarded as simple in both types of sugar mills. Procedure of employee family pension benefit perceived as simple by the workers of both types of mills (median value 1 in co-operative and private sugar mills). The maternity/paternity benefit was perceived simpler in co-operative sugar mills (median score 1 and 2 in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively). Further, median score of 1 both in co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively shows perceived simplicity of gratuity benefit both in co-operative and private sugar mills. The median score of EDLI benefit was found to be 1 both in co-operative and private sugar mills represents the perceived simplicity about its procedure in both types of sugar mills.

Regarding the statistical difference, it was observed for workmen compensation benefit ($t=-3.184$, $p=.002$), employee family pension benefit ($t=-4.917$, $p=.000$), maternity/paternity benefit ($t=-5.0$, $p=.004$), gratuity benefit ($t=-2.102$, $p=.037$) and EDLI benefit ($t=-7.012$, $p=.000$) between co-operative and private sugar mills. Overall, the procedure for availing all the social security schemes/benefits was found near to simple in both types of mills, but perceived as more simple by co-operative sugar mill workers for the maternity/paternity benefit.

Table 4 represents utility of various social security schemes/benefits as perceived by workers. Mean score of "extremely low utility" is regarded as 1 and mean score of the "very high utility" is regarded as 4 on Likert scale.

Table 4 : Perception of workers regarding utility of the social security schemes/benefits

Social security measure	Mean Score		t value	p value	Hypotheses Accepted/ Rejected
	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills			
Workmen compensation benefit	3.12	2.58	5.810	.000*	Rejected
Employees' provident fund benefit	3.51	2.98	10.462	.000*	Rejected
Employee family pension benefit	3.26	2.60	8.972	.000*	Rejected
Maternity/paternity benefit	3.75	2.13	6.648	.000*	Rejected
Gratuity benefit	3.45	2.96	8.992	.000*	Rejected
EDLI benefit	3.40	2.46	10.979	.000*	Rejected

Source: Compiled from primary data.

Note: * represents significant at 1 % level of significance.

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Data in table 4 reveals high perceived utility of compensation benefit in co-operative sugar mills (mean score = 3.12) than private sugar mills (mean score = 2.58). The mean score of employees' provident fund benefit (3.51 and 2.98 in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively) shows better perceived utility of this benefit by co-operative sugar mill workers. Similarly, perceived utility of family pension scheme was considered high by co-operative mill workers (mean score = 3.26) than the private mill workers (mean score = 2.60). The mean score of maternity/paternity benefit was 3.75 and 2.13 in co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively that shows better perceived utility of this benefit in co-operative sugar mills. The mean score of gratuity benefit was 3.45 and 2.96 in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively. It shows the better perceived utility of this important retirement benefit by workers belonging to co-operative sugar mills than their counterparts. Similarly, high perceived utility for EDLI benefit was found in case of co-operative sugar mills workers than in private sugar mills workers (mean score was 3.40 and 2.46 in co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively).

The results of t-test depicts significant difference in the perception of co-operative and private sugar workers regarding utility of workmen compensation fund benefit ($t=5.810$, $p=.000$), employees' provident fund benefit ($t=10.462$, $p=.000$), employee family pension benefit ($t=8.972$, $p=.000$), maternity/paternity benefit ($t=6.648$, $p=.000$), gratuity benefit ($t=8.992$, $p=.000$) and EDLI benefit ($t=10.979$, $p=.000$). In nutshell, the perceived utility for all the social security schemes/benefits lies between very high to high for workers belonging to co-operative sugar mills but lies between high and low in case of private sugar mills workers. In this context, the study by Renapurkar (2013) has also supported that employers' perceive the social security benefits to be sufficient for the employees.

Table 5 represents the satisfaction of the workers of sugar mills of Punjab from various social security schemes. Chi-square test has been applied to examine the association between types of sugar mills (i.e., co-operative and private) and satisfaction of workers from various social security schemes/benefits.

Table 5 : Satisfaction of the workers from the social security schemes/benefits

Social security measure	Satisfaction		Dissatisfaction		No Opinion		Hypotheses testing	
	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Chi square test	Hypotheses Accepted or Rejected
Workmen compensation benefit	128 (45.7)	52 (24.8)	51 (18.2)	51 (24.3)	101 (36.1)	107 (51)	$\chi^2 = 12.516$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Employees' provident fund benefit	260 (92.9)	138 (65.7)	4 (1.4)	22 (10.5)	16 (5.7)	50 (23.8)	$\chi^2 = 25.908$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Employee family pension benefit	201 (71.8)	78 (37.1)	46 (16.4)	78 (37.1)	33 (11.8)	54 (25.7)	$\chi^2 = 44.189$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Maternity/ paternity benefit	51 (18.2)	2 (1)	2 (0.7)	5 (2.4)	227 (81.1)	203 (96.7)	$\chi^2 = 27.463$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Gratuity benefit	223 (79.6)	118 (56.2)	10 (3.6)	14 (6.7)	47 (16.8)	78 (37.1)	$\chi^2 = 5.469$ d.f.= 1 p = .019	Rejected**
EDLI benefit	165 (58.9)	39 (18.6)	10 (3.6)	56 (26.7)	105 (37.5)	115 (54.8)	$\chi^2 = 94.474$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*

Source: Compiled from primary data.

Note: * represents significant at 1 % level of significance, ** represents significant at 5 % level of significance.

Percentages are given in brackets.

Data in table 5 reveals that 45.7 percent and 24.8 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively were satisfied from workmen compensation benefit. Most of the workers in the co-operative (92.9 percent) and private (65.7 percent) sugar

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mills have shown their satisfaction from employees' provident fund benefit. In case of employee family pension benefit, 71.8 percent and 37.1 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively were satisfied. Regarding satisfaction from maternity/paternity benefit, 18.2 percent and only 1 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively were found to be satisfied. Most of the respondents have not opined on the maternity/paternity benefit. There were 79.6 percent and 56.2 percent workers in co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively who have reported to be satisfied from gratuity benefit. In total, 58.9 percent and 18.6 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively were found to be satisfied from EDLI benefit.

Results of Chi-square test found that type of sugar mill significantly associated with the workers' satisfaction from workmen compensation benefit ($\chi^2= 12.516$, $p=.000$), employees' provident fund benefit ($\chi^2=25.908$, $p=.000$), employee family pension benefit ($\chi^2 = 44.189$, $p=.000$), maternity benefit ($\chi^2= 27.463$, $p=.000$), gratuity benefit ($\chi^2 = 5.469$, $p= .019$) and EDLI benefit ($\chi^2= 94.474$, $p=.000$). These findings are in conformity with the study conducted by Vijay (2012), who concluded that social security benefits are associated to type of institutions. Comparatively, co-operative sugar mill workers were found to be more satisfied, from all the social security schemes/benefits, than the private sugar mill workers.

Table 6 shows the association between type of sugar mill and perception of workers regarding sufficiency of benefits available from different social security schemes.

Table 6: Perception of workers regarding sufficiency of amount availability/benefits

Social security measure	Sufficient		Insufficient		No Opinion		Hypotheses testing	
	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Chi square test	Hypotheses Accepted or Rejected
Workmen compensation benefit	128 (45.7)	46 (21.9)	51 (18.2)	43 (20.5)	101 (36.1)	121 (57.6)	χ^2 =10.257 d.f.= 1 p = .001	Rejected*
Employees' provident fund benefit	263 (93.9)	134 (63.8)	1 (0.4)	20 (9.5)	16 (5.7)	56 (26.7)	χ^2 =32.404 d.f.= 1 p =.000	Rejected*

Employee family pension benefit	205 (73.2)	76 (36.2)	37 (13.2)	71 (33.8)	38 (13.6)	63 (30)	$\chi^2 = 49.687$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Maternity/paternity benefit	49 (17.5)	2 (1)	3 (1.1)	7 (3.3)	228 (81.4)	201 (95.7)	$\chi^2 = 29.025$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Gratuity benefit	225 (80.4)	114 (54.3)	7 (2.5)	10 (4.8)	48 (17.1)	86 (41)	$\chi^2 = 4.527$ d.f.= 1 p = .033	Rejected**
EDLI benefit	166 (59.3)	37 (17.6)	10 (3.6)	51 (24.3)	104 (37.1)	122 (58.1)	$\chi^2 = 90.224$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*

Source: Compiled from primary data.

Note: * represents significant at 1 % level of significance, ** represents significant at 5 % level of significance.

Percentages are given in brackets.

Data in Table 6 reveals that in case of workmen compensation benefit 45.7 percent and 21.9 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively have perceived the available amount as sufficient. Most of the workers in co-operative (93.9 percent) and private (63.8 percent) sugar mills have reported the sufficiency of amount available under employees' provident fund scheme. The amount available under employee family pension benefit was perceived as sufficient by 73.2 percent and 36.2 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively. The benefit available under maternity/paternity benefit was perceived as sufficient by only 17.5 percent and 1 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively. Most of the respondents have not opined on the maternity/paternity benefit. There are 80.4 percent and 54.3 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively who reported the amount available under gratuity benefit as sufficient. In total, 59.3 percent and 17.6 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively have expressed about the sufficiency of amount available under EDLI benefit.

The study found significant association found between type of sugar mill and sufficiency of amount/benefit available from workmen compensation benefit ($\chi^2 = 10.257$, $p=.001$), employees' provident fund benefit ($\chi^2 = 32.404$, $p=.000$), employee family pension benefit ($\chi^2 = 49.687$, $p=.000$), maternity/paternity benefit ($\chi^2 = 29.025$, $p=.000$), gratuity

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benefit ($\chi^2= 4.527$, $p= .033$) and EDLI benefit ($\chi^2 =90.224$, $p=.000$). Overall the amount available from the social security schemes/benefits perceived better by workers of co-operative sugar mills than that private sugar mills workers. Results of the present study are not in conformity with the findings of Pandey (2011) who reported inadequacy of the social security benefits in India.

Table 7 represents the association between types of sugar mill with the perception of workers regarding essentiality of various social security schemes.

Table 7: Perception of workers regarding the essentiality of social security schemes/benefits

Social security measure	Essential		Not required		No Idea		Hypotheses testing	
	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Co-operative sugar mills	Private sugar mills	Chi square test	Hypotheses Accepted or Rejected
Workmen compensation benefit	138 (49.3)	84 (40)	8 (2.9)	15 (7.1)	134 (47.9)	111 (52.9)	$\chi^2 =6.488$ d.f.= 1 p = .011	Rejected**
Employees' provident fund benefit	215 (76.8)	145 (69)	0 (0)	14 (6.7)	65 (23.2)	51 (24.3)	$\chi^2 = 19.667$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Employee family pension benefit	198 (70.7)	125 (59.5)	0 (0)	25 (11.9)	82 (29.3)	60 (28.6)	$\chi^2 =35.554$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*
Maternity/ paternity benefit	49 (17.5)	23 (11)	0 (0)	1 (0.5)	231 (82.5)	186 (88.6)	$\chi^2 =2.070$ d.f.= 1 p = .150	Accepted
Gratuity benefit	191 (68.2)	130 (61.9)	2 (0.7)	3 (1.4)	87 (31.1)	77 (36.7)	$\chi^2 = 0.775$ d.f.= 1 p = .379	Accepted
EDLI benefit	138 (49.3)	74 (35.2)	3 (1.1)	20 (9.5)	139 (49.6)	116 (55.2)	$\chi^2 = 23.423$ d.f.= 1 p = .000	Rejected*

Source: Compiled from primary data.

Note: * represents significant at 1 % level of significance, ** represents significant at 5 % level of significance. Percentages are given in brackets.

Data in the Table 7 shows that 49.3 percent and 40 percent workers in co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively perceived workmen compensation benefit as essential. Most of the workers in co-operative (76.8 percent) and private (69 percent) sugar mills have reported about the essentiality of employees' provident fund scheme. In total, 70.7 percent and 59.5 percent workers in co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively have considered the employee family pension scheme as essential one. The maternity/paternity benefit was perceived as essential by only 17.5 percent and 11 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively. There were 68.2 percent and 61.9 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively who have reported about the essentiality of gratuity benefit. In total, 49.3 percent and 35.2 percent workers in the co-operative and private sugar mills, respectively expressed about the essentiality of the EDLI benefit.

The study found significant difference for essentiality of workmen compensation benefit ($\chi^2 = 6.488$, $p = .011$), provident fund benefit ($\chi^2 = 19.667$, $p = .000$), employee family pension benefit ($\chi^2 = 35.55$, $p = .000$) and EDLI benefit ($\chi^2 = 23.423$, $p = .000$).

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

To conclude the study found that majority of the workers in both types of mills were availing social security benefits except maternity/paternity benefit. Further, workers belonging to co-operative sugar mills were found to be more aware regarding the contribution and maturity amount/benefits than workers belonging to private sugar mills. The procedure for availing the various social security benefits have been perceived as simple by most of workers of both types of sugar mills. Perception regarding utility of various social security schemes seems better for workers of co-operative sugar mills than the private sugar mills. Satisfaction and sufficiency of the amount availability under various social security benefits have been perceived better in the co-operative sugar mills in comparison to private sugar mills. Most of the respondents of both sugar mills were in the favour of availing social security benefits as they realised the essentiality of these schemes. Further, the study found significant difference between co-operative and private sugar mills on maximum parameters of social security benefits. Hence, null hypothesis (H_0) has been rejected for most of the social security benefits. Overall, the workers of co-operative sugar mills have shown more contentment than the workers of private sugar mills from the social security benefits.

In the light of above discussed findings, few suggestions have been mentioned below for the betterment of the social security measures prevailing in the sugar mills of Punjab

state.

- Tenure of service in the present mill was found to be less in case of private sugar mill workers in comparison to workers of co-operative sugar mills. In this regard, workers in private sugar mills should be advised to have maximum stay in their present mill then only they will be able to enjoy proper benefits under social security schemes as some of these benefits can be availed only after the expiry of a specified period of service.
- Sugar mills are seasonal in Punjab state and so they employ seasonal workers too, who contribute proportionately toward the contributory social security schemes and as a result they are not able to draw full benefits. Thus, the sugar mills should devise some suitable plan to engage seasonal workers in non seasonal tasks also which will enable these workers to contribute regularly toward these social security benefits and become eligible for complete benefits.
- The study found lack of information among the workers regarding the availability, contribution and maturity amount from various social security benefits. Thus managements and employee unions should play an active role toward highlighting beneficial aspects of social security practices in their mills.
- Awareness camps regarding benefits from different social security measures should be organized, from time to time, by managements of sugar mills and workers' unions to educate their workforce on this aspect.
- State government should keep on ensuring periodically that employers and employees are properly complying with the various social security schemes. For instance the welfare officers/human resource manager must take charge of effective implementation of social security measures.
- In the private mills, it became evident during the data collection that most of the employers were not contributing towards various social security schemes available to workers. As a result, majority of the workers had to pay the employers' contribution as well as their own contribution for availing the social security benefits. Due to this, perception of the employees regarding social security has been adversely affected. Hence, the management of these mills should take care of this matter.

6. Limitations of the study

The study is not free from limitations. The main limitations of the present study are as follows:

1. As majority of workers in both types of sugar mills were below matric, so they

were not aware of social security provisions as per law. Hence the respondents might not have been able to analyse the sufficiency and attitude of management toward these provisions.

2. The present study is related to sugar industry in Punjab state only and thus the findings may not be generalised for sugar mills of other states of the country.

3. In case of private sugar mills, the response of respondents may be biased as they might feel that their true answers might result in loss of job.

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