

Chapter-III

Review of Literature and Methodology

3.1: Review of Literature

Several numbers of studies have been conducted on various aspects of Indian tea industry. A notable and relevant research works in connection with the statement of problem have been referred below to frame the objectives in our present study.

Bhowmik (1948)¹ in his study focused on the class formation of tribal workers of West Bengal. The study reflected on the migrated workers of outside of Bengal, especially from the Chotonagpur region and their indigenous occupations. Earlier they were agricultural labour and some of them were the poor cultivators. The modes of traditional activities of such labours were changed. Study also reflected that the methods of recruitment, activities and movement of trade unions, social norms of tribes, etc. of those days.

Griffiths (1967)² made a laudable work about tea industry of India. In his book, he stated that tea industry of India emerged in early 1830s. This study further revealed that problems of labour in the early stage were prevailed and multifarious problems were also confronted by the planters. The study further elaborately narrated about the labour recruitment, plantation associations, movement of unions, etc. in a lucid manner.

Guha (1977)³ studied on the two distinct dimensions of tea plantation economy of Assam; the planteraj and the swaraj. The special focus of this study was on the freedom struggle of tea cultivation workers of Assam. The study linked up economic problems and exploitations of tea workers by planters with political development of Assam. The study also dealt with issues such as indentures, agrarian problems, opium, exploitation conducts, etc. of European capitalists and planters during the colonial India.

Subramaniam (1993)⁴ studied on the need for development of human resource in plantations. The study utterly pointed out that there was a need for excellence in managerial function in the plantations sector, since the sector was growing tremendously in India. The training was extensively required to excel the industry. The study identified some areas where training and development were urgently required. Study gave a projected training and development curricular for all levels of employees of the industry. Study further suggested that there was a need for establishment of institutions for this purpose.

Medhi, Hazarika and Mahanta (2006)⁵ conducted study on adolescents' nutritional status of tea workers. Study was conducted with a view to measure the nutritional status such as Body Mass Index (BMI) of adolescent tea workers and teenage girls. The study concluded with that most of them were thin and stunted. The study further reported that girls had less reproductive outcome.

Khawas (2006)⁶ explained in his study on tea workers of Darjeeling Hills and their poor conditions in terms of education, sanitation, housing and health. Study also stressed on the income, livelihood pattern, alternative skills of garden labours. The study was conducted in three tea estates in Darjeeling. The study concluded that the electricity connections varied from garden to garden and on an average around 50 per cent of the garden household having electricity connections. Regarding the primary education, in maximum cases it was found not satisfactory. For the case of health facility, the plantation management was not provided such facilities as per the Act. The study also revealed that only 1.3 per cent population of tea garden community attained graduation education.

Asopa (2007)⁷ highlighted that the demand has declined in the global market of Indian tea. Thus,

the industry needs to be competitive in production, marketing, logistics and product forms. The study further revealed that for being one of the chief producers of tea, India needed thoroughly organized production and marketing systems where small tea growers could have been able to make sufficient space in the world market.

Saikia (2008)⁸ studied that in Assam the trend of discontent of labour against trade unions was increased. The study revealed that over the year, production of tea increased significantly but working conditions of tea labour remained same. Welfare facilities were absolutely eroded, health facilities were not up to the standard in majority of tea estates drinking water, electricity connection, and sanitation, etc. were worse. The study wrapped up with to progress the condition of labour, compromise schedule tribe status was not satisfactory rather amendment of the provision of the Act.

Sarkar (2008)⁹ explained about the process of transformation of formal labour market into informal in tea industry of Bengal. In his study, he pointed out that globalization was the main reason for such transformation of labour market. According to the study, due to the global economic changes, tea plantations were not in a suitable position to overcome its costs, especially labour cost. Management of tea estates made strategies of labour flexibility to minimize such costs but in reality it was not possible because of legislations. However, management of the tea plantation restructured their manufacturing process similar to the small tea growers system. Small growers have limited liability except payment of wage to the workers and employment of labour done as per the requirement. Thus, this practice made casual workforces and directly leads to the informal labour market.

Mishra, Upadhyay and Sarma (2008)¹⁰ analyzed about the crisis of tea sector of Assam. Their study particularly emphasized on the employment and production trend of tea sector in Assam.

The study highlighted that the productivity was declined across the state though there were trend of increasing of plantation area in few districts. The employment of labour was found in decreasing trend. The study observed that since 1990s the productivity of labour had come down. Employment elasticity was also in decreasing trend against the eighties. Further, the study proposed suggestive measures to revive the industry, promising investment highly needed to rejuvenate of the industry.

Mitra (2010)¹¹ studied on globalization and industrial relations in tea plantations of Dooars region. The study focused on comparison of variety of parameters of industrial relations relating to tea industry. The study used paired sample t-test. The study finally concluded that globalization had an ill effect on the tea plantation industry that has made the industry vulnerable in Dooars region.

Choudhary and Tayal (2010)¹² focused on their study on the permanent labour recruitment by the plantation management. The study was shown that unionization and labour legislation in tea plantation industry was not functioning in an expected manner for improving the condition of labour. Study further revealed that tea industry of Sri Lanka and India was facing stiff competition from Kenya and China. The study emphasized that improvement of economical and social status of tea workers highly required to combat the competition in international market.

Rahaman (2011)¹³ painted on the condition of living of tea garden workers in Bangladesh. The study intended to showcase wage composition, sanitation and health, status of literacy of the workers and for their family members. Study revealed that only 68 per cent of workers were contented with their accommodation that was provided by the planters. Only the permanent workers were residing in accommodation provided by the plantation management. 18 per cent of

such accommodations were *pucca* and remaining was *kutchha*. For the temporary workers, tin and bamboo accommodation were provided. The other facilities like sanitation, health, education, electricity, etc. were reported moderate.

National Labour Institute (2012)¹⁴ studied elaborately on valuing the life of tea workers in Assam. The article aimed at to estimate the existence of health hazards and deaths, the nature of various compensations on account of such injuries and health. The study concluded that in the plantation sector, casual workforce was high and the work performed by them was hazardous as well as risk prone. The wage compensation as well as other compensations was inadequate, inadequate safety measures were also found down to the standard.

Goowalla (2012)¹⁵ studied on the practices of labour relations of tea industry in Assam. The study was conducted to compare labour relations practices among private, public and government tea estates. The study covered a period of 10 years i.e. 2000-2010. A total 300 respondents were selected by applying simple random sampling techniques, 100 respondents from each category of the tea estates. The study finally revealed that almost for each and every category of workers were dissatisfied with recruitment and selection system, wages payment system, and working environment was also a matter of dissatisfaction. The activity and role of the trade union was found below to the expected level and even the grievance redressal procedure was not found suitable by the workers.

Biswas (2012)¹⁶ explained a detail account on trade unions' growth and history of tea plantation in Dooars. The study fairly explained about the origin of trade union just after the independence of India and a detail count of trade unions. Study concluded with that the movement of trade union was a greater impact on the sustainability and revival of the industry. Study further

exposed that trade union should play two distinct roles; for sustain and revival of industry, for the grievances and livelihood of workers.

Timing and Sarmah (2013)¹⁷ studied on nutrition, hygiene and health practices of female tea plantation labour of Assam. The central view of this study was to observe socioeconomic innate of female tea plantation labours of Assam; secondly, to observe prevailing practices of female workers in the area of health, hygiene and nutrition. The study further examined the relations between hygiene, health, nutrition of female workers and with their age, family type, education, income, etc. Four tea estates were selected under Jorhat district and total 100 samples were selected. Finally, the study concluded that female worker had lower level practice on health, hygiene and nutrition.

Sarkar (2013)¹⁸ studied on the workers living conditions of Jalpaiguri district during colonial India. The study found that workers of tea estate were indeterminate, hopeless and unbearable by the controlling policy of rude tea planters. The condition of workers during the period was worse than as of now and they were suffered stiffly from scarcity, ill health, exploitation, physical torture and exploitations because they had no option to protest or raise the voice against the merciless planters. The study further gave that during the last 150 years, the workers community of Jalpaiguri district was not received any attention for development purpose by the government. The study suggested that there were hardly need for development of tea workers of Jalpaiguri district.

Borgohain (2013)¹⁹ studied on occupational health and hazards of workers of tea estates of Assam. Study was conducted to examine on occupational health and hazards confronted by the workers of Marangi and Hajua tea estates of the state. Study was conducted by interviewing 212

workers including male and female workers. Study exposed that tea estates have a longer way to go on to mitigate such health hazards. The study suggested that the status of hazard and health could be enhanced through the better practices of health and hygiene, environmental sanitation, making aware the workers about health and balanced nutrition, improvement of economic condition, etc.

Majumder (2014)²⁰ studied in his book on issues of forest dwellers verses tea garden workers in Dooars. The study revealed that the lives of forest dwellers were less affected by the market force but tea workers those residing in the forest village were affected largely. Status of food consumption was comparatively good for the forest dwellers than the tea workers who also residing in the forest. Rate of participation in National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) program was higher in case of forest dweller but in case of the tea workers those were residing in the forest village was negligible. Finally, from the study it was observed that the living conditions of forest dwellers tea workers were worse.

Hzarika (2014)²¹ observed in her study that tea workers in Assam was the most affected worker class in India. Social security measures were seen most conflicted and struggling issues. The needy foundations that is human right, was also violating here in tea industry of Assam. Study unveiled that more or less every tea plantation was violating the constitutions of India in different ways. Further, the study suggested that the level of wage for workers needed to revise urgently. The status of workers reached to the extent that they were become bonded labour. Tea workers had put a lot of efforts from multi aspects to enhance their existing condition but they failed and their condition remains same day after day.

Hariharan and Kuamr (2014)²² observed women workers' status in tea plantation industry. The study found that in tea plantation, the number of female worker was higher than their counterpart of male worker. Female workers' saving capacity was much lower and many of them in deep debt due to the insufficient amount of income. The study further suggested that strong policy framework needed from the state and central level to safeguard the industry and for the wellbeing of the workers in tea industry.

Goowalla (2014)²³ conducted study on the corporate social responsibility for workers in tea industry in Assam. The study aimed at sustainable development, responsibility and roles of tea industry towards its workers. In the study, twenty respondents were selected randomly. The study only used graphical methods for its analysis. The study concludes with that the industry playing a vital role for the sustainability of the workers. The study further reveals that workers are unaware regarding the benefits which are available for them.

Borah (2014)²⁴ studied on the trade union and tea workers. He opined in his study that in the tea sector, the number of casual workforce was increasing trend. This section of workers cannot form any trade unions. This result on the increase of informal sector labour in organized sector. The impact of it was on the social life of the worker. The study further revealed that this section of workers in tea industry still neglected and isolated. Study also suggested that the social agencies should come across to avoid such unwanted situations.

Banik (2015)²⁵ studied on food security and migrant female workers in tea estates of Assam. The focal objectives of the study was to identify and analyze the food security available and availed by the migrant female workers; to know the experience of women workers during the situation of food scarcity. The study was based on primary data and descriptive in nature. Total 45

respondents were selected from the Tinsukia district. The study concluded with that migrant female workers in tea industry of Assam were casual workers, such kind of casual workers were the mainly members of poor families. The male counterparts of the family compelled them to work beyond their daily home work. As a result of that such females were suffering from malnutrition.

Kamruzzaman, Islam, Rana, & Rashid (2015) ²⁶ in their study of the existing strategy of women workers in tea estates in Bangladesh tried to find out the survival strategies opted by the female workers for maintaining their livelihood. Study opened that women workers adopted stiff survival strategies for food, hygiene and health also even financial independency. They used to work extra hours beside their schedule hours because whatever the payment made by planters were not sufficient for maintaining their family.

Institute of Social Science and Economic Change (2015) ²⁷ reflected in the study about the past history of women workers in North Bengal. The study unveiled that terrible tale of *coole-catching* from the tribal region during the colonial period. There were convincing factors and coercive politics by the colonial planters. Moreover, there were no other sources of livelihoods for the women worker during that time.

Medok and Goowalla (2015) ²⁸ studied on the main causes that leads to industrial disputes in tea industry and how to promote good relationship between worker and employer. For the purpose of the study, 13 tea estates were selected and 10 members were chosen from each tea estates. The study awakened that main causes of poor industrial relations in the tea estates were wages and allowances, bonus, working conditions, retrenchment, political influences and poor grievance

redressal measures. The study was shown overall poor relations between the management and workers.

Duara (2015)²⁹ described the industrial relations scenario in tea estate of Assam. The study gave a detail picture of labour condition and work environment in socio-cultural perspectives. The study was conducted in the selected 20 tea estates and 95 respondents were chosen including labour and manager. Study provided that huge wage difference between permanent and casual worker. Planters of Assam offered more employment to the casual workers to avoid the responsibilities as per the Act. Study further revealed that workers were living in the terrific conditions of without sufficient housing facilities, health care facilities and stiff poverty.

Tamang (2015)³⁰ made a detail investigation on the historical development of tea cultivation in Dooars and Terai region. The study lighted two aspects; the historical past and present status of the industry. Study reflected that cheap women labour was recruited for the industry. Male labour was recruited specially in the peak season. Earlier, Nepali coolies were involved in cultivation purpose but the number was insufficient and then labours were bought from the adjoining areas through *Sardar*.

Dutta (2015)³¹ observed in her study about the wage politics of women tea workers by the planters. The study had shown the conditions of vulnerable women workers in North Bengal. Women workers' less bargaining power was the positive strategic point of the planters. Study claimed that the amount of wage was not linked with the price of tea that planters fetch. The strong lobby of planters always made them winners during the process of determination of wages.

Hussan (2015)³² studied on the quality of work life on tea workers of Bangladesh. The study was carried out to accomplish the quality work life of tea workers with the help of demographic and other related information. 100 respondents were interviewed and gathered information was analyzed with the help of ANOVA. Study concluded with that the lower rate of wage made worker discontent. Irregular rations, poor medical facilities, worse educational facilities were also noticed in the study.

Sharma (2015)³³ explained in his study in detail on the valuable social security of informal tea worker in Assam. The study particularly emphasized on the various social security tricks for the workers and the impact of such measures on productivity. Study resolved that globalization was negative impact on the livelihood for informal workforce in tea industry. The growing trend of casual workforce impact badly on the economic life of the indigenous community. The condition of this section of people was still in slave. Study suggested that the social agencies should be more active to prevent such unwarranted situation.

Rai (2015)³⁴ presented a detail account of historical past of plantation industry in Darjeeling region. She studied particularly on tea and cinchona plantation industry of this region. In the study, it was found that the alimant in connection to the development of conceptual ideas was presented very befitting manner. However, the study concluded that no official records were found regarding the actual condition of labour on eve of the plantation industry of this region. The old records of some tea estates gave a brief picture of labour shortage, high mortality rate of labours, kala-jar, meleria, etc. of those days. According to the study, development of this region was possible only by plantation industry.

Tamang (2015)³⁵ elaborately explained in his study an extensive review of tea plantation and its labour in Dooars region. He designed the study into three subtle parts; the historical past of people of plantation, initiatives of governments for the wellbeing of labour community and revenue generation from plantations. The study observed that very negligible increase of area of plantation, upward trend of increasing population in plantation, increasing unemployment, more participation of female workers, etc.

Baishya (2016)³⁶ studied on the history of the tea plantation industry and the position of tea labourers in Assam. The study emphasized on the root of tea industry in the state and to showcase the condition of tea labourers in Assam. The study was descriptive in nature. The study noticed that high rate of mortality in case of maternal and infant were the most serious issues. The study concluded with that the workers were suffering from getting the different welfare facilities for example- medical facilities, housing, etc.

Pachoni (2016)³⁷ studied on labour welfare practice of Harmutty tea estate in Assam. The study focused on how to enhance the better health and life; to make them happy, efficient and satisfied by improving the intellectual, material and cultural conditions of the workers. The study elicited that the workers were still unaware about the different schemes of welfare facilities, otherwise the study exhibited that a significant satisfaction on the part of workers.

Paul and Hassan (2016)³⁸ studied and reviewed on hygiene and healthcare practices of aged people of tea estates in Bangladesh. The study reflected that majority of old aged people lived in deep poverty that results ill health and less care from the family as well as from the society. The study further transpired that lack of awareness of Government health care facilities among them.

Study exposed that the policy maker should aware about the present health crises of old people of tea estates and then made policy accordingly.

Purkayastha and Kalita (2016)³⁹ examined on the living condition of tea labours of Assam. The study highlighted on the socio-economic aspect of tea labours only. Study suggested that workers were suffering from multifarious problems of their daily life. According to the study, they were socially, culturally and economically lagged behind. The entire responsibility vested in the hand of planters to arrange for them opportunities to make them socially and culturally stable to live peacefully.

Srinivasan (2016)⁴⁰ studied on the various problems of workers in tea estates of Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu. The study emphasized on miserable condition of living and wage earned by them. Study exhaled that 77.1 per cent of workers were not covered by social security tricks, 94.7 per cent of workers earnings were between Rs. 3000-4000. All of the workers were not fully covered under the Plantation Labour Act as well as the Tamil Nadu Plantation Labour Act. Study further suggested that the Act should be amended and implemented immediately, the industry should bought under single ominous legislation as well as distinct committee should be formed and rigorous research and development are also necessary.

Shah and Pate (2016)⁴¹ examined in detail about the prospects vs. challenges of tea industry in India. The study was presented in two parts; the challenges and the prospects. Productivity of labour, extreme production cost, worse effects of climates, ill effects of disease and pests, lack of concentration of government, poor quality of products, etc. were studied under the aspects of problems of the industry. On the other hand, extensive demand in the domestic market,

production of organic tea, increasing use of information and communication technology, etc. were studied as prospects of the industry.

3.1.1: The Research Gap

A detailed review of the existing studies on the various aspects of Indian tea industry, it has found that no study has been conducted on management of human resources in Indian tea industry in the north Bengal region. Only a few studies have particularly focused on the industrial relations, working conditions of workers, wage issues of workers, welfare of workers, etc. Not a single study has been conducted on human resource management in tea industry as a whole. Moreover, the contributions of these existing studies are not relevant in the present context. Hence, the present study is relevant enough as per the present context of Indian tea industry. Further, the present study dealt with the entire human resource management aspects. The following gaps have been identified in our present study are as follows:

- The prevailing human resource management practices in the tea industry of North Bengal region of Indian tea industry.
- Formulations of policies on human resource management based on the existing human resource management practices in the tea industry of North Bengal region of Indian tea industry.

3.1.2: Objectives of the Study

After having a clear understanding about the problem area actually prevailing in the tea industry of North Bengal region and from the existing literatures relating to the study, following objectives have been framed for successful completion of the study:

1. To highlight the recruitment and selection aspects of the workers;

2. To give some light on the training and development initiatives taken by the managers of tea estates;
3. To observe the wage structure of the workers of tea estates;
4. To observe the working conditions of the tea plantation workers in this region;
5. To highlight health, safety, and welfare measures in accordance with Plantation Labour Act (PLA), 1951 in the organized tea estates in this region.

3.1.3: Research Questions

The following research questions have been probed in this research study:

1. What is the existing scenario of recruitment and selection in tea plantations of North Bengal?
2. What types of initiatives have been adopted by the managers in training and development activities?
3. How is wage structure determined in the tea industry located in North Bengal region?
4. What are the working conditions of the tea plantation workers located in North Bengal region?
5. Whether the organized tea estates located in North Bengal region are maintaining the health, safety and welfare activities as per the Plantation Labour Act, 1951?

3.2: Research Methodology

Research Design

The blueprint of the entire study has been prepared and proceeds accordingly. Following are the step-wise advancement of the study.

Step 1: An in-depth study has been done of the existing research publications relating to the present study. Based on that, attempt has been made to find out the actual research gap in conformity with the requirement of the tea industry of North Bengal region.

Step 2: The target population along with its size have been identified for the study and then sample size has been determined with the help of appropriate technique.

Step 3: For collection of primary data from the selected sample tea plantations, necessary permission has been taken from competent authority before collection of response.

Step 4: Suitable data have been gathered from the selected sample tea plantation through questionnaire on a variety of aspects on human resource management which has been identified from the available review of literature.

Step 5: Analysis of the collected data has been done with the help of SPSS along with interpretations have been made.

Step 6: Finally, conclusions and recommendations have been made based on result of the study.

Sources of Data

The study has been carried out with the help of primary as well as secondary data.

i) Primary data: The primary data has been obtained from 33 tea plantations of the North Bengal region through questionnaire. In the study, information related with workers has been considered. We have considered only worker in our present study as tea is labour intensive and most of the works in tea estate are performed by workers.

ii) Secondary Data: Secondary data has been gathered from the publications of the Labour Department of Govt. of West Bengal as well as from various tea magazines, master's thesis, doctoral thesis, journal articles, technical reports of various organizations, newspapers, website of Tea Board of India (TBI), website of Indian Tea Association (ITA), books, etc.

Population of the Study

In the study area, the population size is 276 (as per the survey report of Labour Department, North Bengal Zone, Govt. of West Bengal, 2014). It appears from the available office records that 276 number of registered organized tea plantations exist in the North Bengal region. Therefore, said 276 number of tea plantations is the target population for the study.

Sample Size Determination

As far as determination of the sample size is concerned, the following formula has been used to determine appropriate sample size:

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \left(\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2 N}\right)}$$

Where, *Population Size* = *N* | *Margin of error* = *e* | *z-score* = *z*

In the study population size is known and which is 276. Therefore, by using the above formula sample size comes to 31 but intentionally we have added two more and in totaling it is 33 which is around 12 per cent of the target population.

Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling technique has been adopted in our study. Strata have been chosen based on the ownership pattern of the tea plantations. The rationality behind choosing ownership as strata since, ownership pattern of tea plantations is heterogeneous in nature and the elements within each stratum are homogeneous. However, there are mainly four types of tea plantations exist in the tea industry of North Bengal region. These are namely, Public Ltd. Company, Proprietorship Company, Partnership Company and Public Sector Undertakings; in our study these have been regarded as strata.

A list has been prepared of all tea plantations of North Bengal region and segregate them based on their homogeneity i.e. ownership. Then distributed them proportionately based on the total sample size, for this purpose random number table which has been generated with the help of Ms-excel has been used to draw the appropriate sample.

Identification of Sample

Ownership	Public Ltd. Company	Proprietorship Company	Partnership Company	Public Sector Undertakings	Total
Number of Tea Estates	142	116	10	8	276
Sample Size	16	13	2	2	33

Area of Study

The study has been conducted across the three main tea growing regions of North Bengal. All these three regions are popularly known for their unique characteristics as Terai, Dooars and Darjeeling.

Period of the Study

The entire study has covered a period of almost three years i.e. April, 2015 to February, 2018.

Analytical Tools and Techniques

1. For the training and development of tea plantations, first of all we have determined the number of tea plantations offered training and development programs and then we have also determined the modes of training program is being provided by them. Finally, we have measured the effectiveness of training program with help of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. The analysis has been made through SPSS.

2. For the purpose of observing the growth pattern of wage rate over the period of time, we have tested the randomness of it with the help of Run test.
3. For the purpose of working conditions of the workers, One Sample t-test has been used. Average working hours and average overtime hours has considered only in the study. The actual average working hours and average overtime hours have been compared with the standard average working hours and average overtime hours of workers as per the PLA, 1951. Analysis has been made through SPSS.
4. In our study, we have compared the health, safety, and welfare facilities of different types of tea companies in the study area with the help of One Way ANOVA. For the purpose of our study, we have taken into consideration the previous year's average expenses of the sample tea estates on health, safety, and welfare.

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