

WORKERS' INTERVIEW REPORT

Factory Address:

Jeans Knit Private Limited
No: 36/A, 2nd stage
Peenya,Bangalore

Total Workforce: 1200 employees.

Date of Interview: November 19-22, 2005.

Interviewers: Ms. Prathibha, Ms. Yashoda and Mr. Jayaram.

Report Compiled by: Miss.Biji.P.Johnson

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Workers Interviewed:

Name	Age	Sex	Type of Job	No: of Years/Mon/ Days	Department	Union
1.xxx	31	M	Tailor	3 years	Production	No
2.xxx	30	F	Tailor	1 Years	Production	No

II. LABOUR STANDARDS:

There are no restrictions with regard to the employment. The workers can leave the employment whenever they wish to do so. They are also not indebted to the company and apart from the legal deductions no other deductions are made from their salary. Both male and female security guards are posted at the gates and the workers are subject to stringent security checks while leaving the premises. Only in case of emergencies the workers are allowed outside provided they produce a letter from the supervisor to that effect.

a) Discrimination in Employment:

There is discrimination on the basis of sex for wages in same type and same amount of work. Male workers are paid more than the female workers as they tend to work for more time compared to the female workers. But the female Workers are unaware about the equal pay for equal work principle and do not pay much attention to this discrimination.

b) Freedom of Association and collective Bargaining:

Even though the workforce of the factory is more than 1200 employees, there are no worker associations within the factory nor are the workers members of any outside trade union. There is general fear among the workers that if they associate with any union, they will be dismissed from the employment.

Workers do not opt for any collective bargaining strategy and are forced to abide by all orders given by the management. If they raise their voice against the management, they face the risk of being black listed and followed by termination at a later point of time. The workers do not have any job security as the dismissals are arbitrary.

c) Payment of a living wage:

The payments are made on a monthly basis. There is a difference in wages of females and males which ranges from 10-30 rupees. Most of the workers are unaware about the mode of calculation of the payment of wages.

d) Working hours:

There is no public announcement about the working hours in the factory. But the workers are generally aware that working hours are divided into 3 shifts which is listed below.

The details of the shifts are as follows:

- a) 1st shift- 7.00am -3.00pm
- b) 2nd shift-3.00pm-12.00am
- c) 3rd shift -12am-7.00am

Even though there are three shifts, the inflow of the workers to the factory can be seen only at 7.00 am and not for the other two shifts. This leads to the conclusion that the workers for the others two shifts are automatically filled up by the first shift workers. The other peculiar feature is that it is one of the few factories in Bangalore where the women worker have to report for duty at 7.00 am in the morning and continue to work up till 6.00 –7.00 in the evening.

Generally during the 8 hour workday, workers are required to meet a production target which they will achieve only if they work non-stop for the whole 8 hours. But the workers generally find it difficult to achieve this target and end up working for more time

to attain this target. But no overtime payment is made for this extra work. Absence of breaks and shortage of lunch timings cause a lot of hardship to the workers.

e) Health and safety:

The health and safety of the workers are given least priority in this Factory. There is a lot of accumulation of cloth dust in the unit premises due to which many workers suffer from breathing problem and watering of the eyes frequently. The tailors are not provided with back rest which leads to continuous back pain. Due to the constant watching of the movement of the needles many workers experience continuous headache. The workers are generally unaware about the fire extinguishers and the first aid box. Not even a single worker has been trained in first aid.

The workers are eligible for governmental health care under the ESI scheme. The female workers are given maternity benefits including maternity leave under the ESI scheme.

The name board “crèche” exists inside the factory, but the workers are never allowed to bring their children inside the factory. Even there is a board called “sexual harassment committee” which is never functional. As all the supervisors are men, the female workers find it very difficult to address their problems and they also do not have any contact with the management.

Workers are verbally and physically abused if they do not attain the production target. Supervisors use very coarse and unprintable language and cannot be put in any printable form. If workers make any slight mistake during their work, the clothes are generally thrown on their face very rashly. There are instances where if any worker due to some health reasons avails leave for one day he/she is terminated from employment.

f) Legally Binding Employment Relation:

There is no appointment letter nor any legal contract exist between the employer and the workers. Workers are hired directly by the company and not through any labour contractor.

General Observations :

Workers are abused in a coarse language and clothes are thrown at them in a rash manner. The supervisors are very harsh and rude to the female workers. The tailors are also not given back rest which leads to continuous back pain as they sit in the same position for long hours. There is no procedure laid down for appointment and dismissal of workers and the management's decision is always arbitrary. There is some degree of discrimination in wages between men and women workers and men are generally paid higher.