

Role of HR in promoting workplace safety in Ashok Leyland

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Human Resource (HR) management in ensuring workplace safety at Ashok Leyland, a leading automobile manufacturing company. Workplace safety is a critical concern in industrial environments due to the presence of heavy machinery and potential hazards. The study focuses on HR practices such as safety training, policy communication, employee awareness, and accident prevention measures.

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 118 employees using a convenient sampling method. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis,

Chi-square test, and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. The findings indicate that while employees are generally satisfied with safety measures, there are gaps in safety communication, training effectiveness, and regular use of safety devices. The study concludes with suggestions to improve HR-driven safety initiatives and strengthen the overall safety culture within the organization.

KEYWORDS

Workplace Safety, Human Resource Management, Employee Welfare, Safety Training, Industrial Accidents, Safety Culture, Ashok Leyland, HR Practices

INTRODUCTION

Workplace safety is a crucial aspect of industrial management, especially in sectors like automobile manufacturing where employees are exposed to heavy machinery, mechanical operations, and potential hazards. A safe working environment not only protects employees from injuries and accidents but also improves productivity, efficiency, and job satisfaction. Organizations today recognize that safety is directly linked to performance, as unsafe

conditions can lead to absenteeism, financial losses, and operational disruptions. Therefore, maintaining proper safety standards has become both a legal requirement and a strategic priority for companies.

Human Resource (HR) management plays a vital role in ensuring workplace safety by developing policies, conducting training programs, creating awareness, and promoting a strong safety culture among employees. HR also supports employee welfare through facilities such as medical care, insurance, and proper working conditions, which contribute to both physical and mental well-being. This study focuses on examining the role of HR in ensuring workplace safety at Ashok Leyland by analyzing employee perceptions, safety practices, and accident prevention measures. It aims to identify gaps in current practices and suggest improvements to strengthen overall safety management within the organization.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The theoretical background of the study includes employee welfare and safety management theory. This theory helps in explaining workplace safety based on how organizations ensure employee well-being through proper policies and practices.

Workplace safety is influenced by factors such as safety training, working conditions, employee awareness, and organizational support. The employee welfare theory implies that organizations provide facilities such as medical support, insurance, and safe working conditions to improve employee satisfaction and efficiency. In industrial environments, employees perform better and follow safety rules when their physical and mental well-being is maintained. The safety management theory also plays a crucial role in explaining workplace safety. This theory suggests that identifying hazards, providing safety equipment, and conducting regular training can reduce accidents and risks. It emphasizes that both management and employees must work together to maintain a safe working environment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

R. Kumar & S. Mehta (2026)

Kumar & Mehta (2026) stated that digital welfare systems improve employee safety and well-being in manufacturing industries. HR digital tools such as online complaint systems, safety dashboards, and automated alerts enhance safety awareness and responsiveness. These systems also help in faster resolution of safety issues and reduce workplace hazards. Thus, digital transformation strengthens employee protection and organizational efficiency.

P. Sharma et al. (2025)

Sharma et al. (2025) stated that welfare measures have a strong impact on employee safety and productivity. Facilities like healthcare, transportation, canteen services, and safety equipment improve safety compliance and reduce accidents. Employees working in better welfare conditions show higher morale and productivity. Thus, welfare measures improve both safety and organizational performance.

L. Nair (2024)

Nair (2024) stated that employee welfare practices play an important role in improving industrial safety outcomes. Basic facilities such as restrooms, drinking water, first aid, and medical support reduce stress and fatigue among employees. Lack of these facilities can increase the risk of accidents. Thus, proper welfare measures are essential for a safe and healthy work environment.

A. Verma & J. Singh (2023)

Verma & Singh (2023) stated that welfare facilities significantly improve occupational safety. HR-managed welfare schemes influence employee behavior and encourage safe work practices. Organizations with better welfare facilities experience fewer accidents and higher employee satisfaction. Thus, welfare facilities motivate employees to follow safety rules effectively.

M. Iyer (2022)

Iyer (2022) stated that welfare measures are closely related to employee safety compliance in industries. HR initiatives such as insurance, medical support, and safety training improve employee discipline and reduce unsafe practices. Employees in supportive environments follow safety rules more strictly. Thus, welfare systems enhance workplace safety and compliance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study has adopted a descriptive research design for analyzing the role of HR in ensuring workplace safety at Ashok Leyland, Chennai. The descriptive research design helps the researcher to understand employee opinions, safety awareness, and perception towards workplace safety practices.

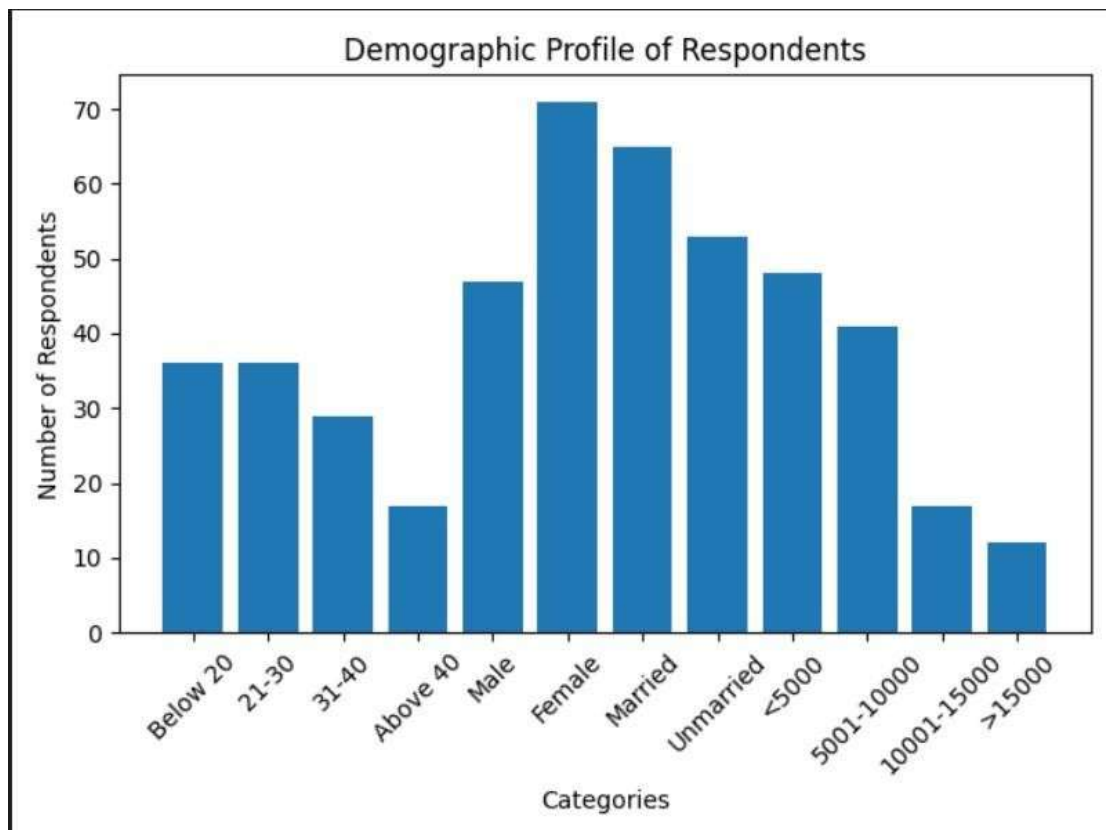
The primary research was conducted using a structured questionnaire to collect information from the respondents. A total of 118 employees were selected for the study. Secondary data was collected from journals, books, and online sources. The sampling technique used for the study is convenience sampling.

The research was carried out for a period of three months. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square test, and ANOVA were used to analyze the collected data. The data has been presented using tables for better understanding and interpretation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Variable	Category	No. Of Respondents	Percentage %
Gender	male	47	39.8%
	Female	71	60.2%
	Total	118	100
Age	Below 20	36	30.5%
	21-30	36	30.5%
	31-40	29	24.6%
	41-50	17	14.4%
	Total	118	100
Martial status	Married	65	55.1%
	Unmarried	53	44.9%
	Total	118	100
Monthly Income	Below ₹5,000	48	40.7%
	₹5,001- ₹10,000	41	34.7%
	₹10,001- ₹15,000	17	14.4%
	Above ₹15,000	12	10.2%
	Total	118	100

CHART 1:Demographic profile of the respondents

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the demographic profile of the respondents. It is observed that the majority of respondents (30.5%) belong to the age group of below 20 years and 21–30 years. In terms of gender, most of the respondents are female (60.2%), while male respondents constitute 39.8%.

Regarding marital status, a higher proportion of respondents are married (55.1%) compared to unmarried (44.9%). With respect to monthly income, the majority of respondents (40.7%) fall under the income group below ₹5,000, followed by 34.7% in the ₹5,001–₹10,000 category. This indicates that most respondents belong to lower and middle income groups.

TABLE 2: About safety

Question	Response	No. Of Respondents	Percentage %
Do you use safety devices regularly?	yes	41	34.7%
	no	77	65.3%
	Total	118	100
Are safety devices replaced from time to time?	yes	62	52.5%
	no	56	47.5%
	Total	118	100
Are safety rules communicated by your supervisors?	yes	35	29.7%
	no	83	70.3%
	Total	118	100

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the responses of employees regarding workplace safety practices. It is observed that a majority of respondents (65.3%) do not use safety devices regularly, while only 34.7% use them, indicating low compliance with safety measures. Regarding the replacement of safety devices, 52.5% of respondents stated that devices are replaced from time to time, whereas 47.5% disagreed, showing that maintenance practices are moderate but not consistent.

Further, 70.3% of respondents reported that safety rules are not properly communicated by supervisors, while only 29.7% agreed, highlighting a major gap in safety communication within the organization. Data regarding union support for safety or health is not available in the study. Overall, the findings indicate the need for improved safety awareness, better communication, and stricter enforcement of safety practices among employees.

TABLE 3: Gender and Behavioral Based Safety Management

H_0 = There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and behavioral based safety management.

Gender	Behavioral Based Safety Management			Total
	High	Moderate	Low	
Male	41	0	6	47
Female	30	18	23	71
Total	71	18	29	118

Calculated χ^2 Value: 25.858 Degree of freedom: 2

Table Value: Five per cent level: 5.991

INTERPRETATION

Since the calculated χ^2 value (25.858) is greater than the table value (5.991). Therefore it is concluded that there is a significant association between gender of the respondents and behavioral based safety management. Hence, Null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Human Resource management plays a crucial role in ensuring workplace safety in the organization. The findings reveal that while certain safety measures such as periodic replacement of safety devices are moderately practiced, there are significant gaps in areas like regular usage of safety equipment and effective communication of safety rules by supervisors. A majority of employees do not consistently use safety devices, which increases the risk of workplace accidents.

Furthermore, the lack of proper communication regarding safety guidelines highlights the need for stronger supervision and awareness programs. The study emphasizes that employee safety can be improved through regular training, strict enforcement of safety rules, and active involvement of management. Overall, strengthening HR practices and promoting a safety-oriented culture will help in reducing accidents, improving employee well-being, and enhancing organizational productivity.

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