

A Study on Employee & Employer Relation with Special Reference to Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, Valsang, Solapur.

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1. ABSTRACT

This study explores the dynamics of employee and employer relations at Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, a cooperative spinning mill located in Valsang, Solapur. In an era where employee satisfaction, welfare, and communication mechanisms significantly affect industrial productivity and harmony, understanding the nuances of such relationships is crucial.

The research employed a descriptive and participatory approach using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Primary data was collected through structured interviews with 60 employees across various departments, while secondary data was obtained from official documents and literature sources. Findings indicate a positive industrial climate characterized by cooperative grievance handling, management-provided welfare amenities, and mutual respect between employees and management.

However, the study also identified certain gaps in communication and training that impact employee motivation. Suggestions have been made to enhance grievance redressal transparency, encourage participative management, and introduce more systematic training and development programs.

By investigating the institutional, social, and economic aspects of industrial relations in this specific context, the research contributes to broader discussions on sustainable HR practices in cooperative textile units and provides a replicable model for similar organizations across India.

Keywords: *industrial relations, employee satisfaction, cooperative textile, Human Resource Management, Worker Motivation, Participative Management.*

2. INTRODUCTION

In the modern industrial ecosystem, industrial relations (IR) play a pivotal role in defining the framework within which employers and employees interact. IR encompasses not only employer-employee relations but also relationships between trade unions, management, and government bodies. A harmonious IR system ensures smooth functioning of an organization, increased productivity, and enhanced employee satisfaction.

The concept of industrial relations has grown in complexity, especially in developing countries like India where socio-economic, political, and legal frameworks are rapidly evolving. Given this background, it is essential to understand the ground realities of IR in specific industrial setups.

This study focuses on Shri Swami Samarth Shetkari Wa Vinkari Sahakari Soot Girni Niyamit, a cooperative spinning mill located in Valsang, Solapur, Maharashtra—a region historically affected by chronic drought and unemployment. Solapur district, particularly South Solapur and Akkalkot Taluka, has been economically backward due to its dry climatic conditions. However, it is also recognized as a major textile cluster, known for its handloom and powerloom industries. With the vision to curb the migration of local skilled weavers to other

towns and cities such as Bhiwandi, Malegaon, and Ichalkaranji, and to generate employment in rural Maharashtra, Shri V. G. Shivdare (Ex-MLA) took the initiative to establish the spinning mill in 1997. The cooperative nature of the mill was further supported by government financial assistance and local public participation. The production officially began in June 1984 after initial funding and infrastructure development.

Since its inception, the mill has grown into a significant local employer, with a workforce of 921 employees working across three shifts, and a structured pay system based on government wage norms. The organization not only contributes to employment but also actively engages in export markets like Sri Lanka, Australia, and South Korea, enhancing the region's economic output. This makes it a valuable case study for examining employee-employer relationships in semi-urban, cooperative industrial units.

Importance of Industrial Relations in Textile Industries

The textile industry in India is labour-intensive and deeply reliant on efficient manpower. In this context, Industrial Relations (IR) systems must ensure:

- Conflict-free work environments
- Functional grievance redressal mechanisms
- Fair treatment and inclusive management
- Access to welfare and social security measures

Poor IR can lead to issues such as:

- High absenteeism
- Increased turnover
- Strikes, lockouts, and gheraos
- Deterioration in productivity

A good IR system, on the other hand, enhances employee morale, reduces resistance to change, and ensures higher compliance with quality and safety standards. Especially in cooperative structures like Shri Swami Samarth Mill, where local socio-political factors influence management, a balance between organizational goals and worker welfare is essential.

Research Relevance

This research is not merely an academic exercise but also a practical inquiry into how human-centric management can be implemented in regional industrial setups. While many corporate mills focus on profits and automation, this mill presents a human-first, community-driven model. By studying the effectiveness of the mill's welfare policies (canteen, medical, transport), grievance handling systems, training practices, and communication channels, the research aims to highlight best practices and uncover actionable improvement areas.

Research Value and Utility

- For Management: Provides a roadmap to enhance HR policies.
- For Workers: Highlights areas where worker voices can be better heard.

- For Policymakers: Offers a ground-level understanding of industrial realities in cooperative units.
- For Academics: Contributes to the literature on IR in the Indian cooperative sector.

3. OBJECTIVES, SCOPE & HYPOTHESIS

3.1 Objectives of the Study

- 1) To examine the socio-economic profile of employees at Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill.
- 2) To understand the role of management in maintaining healthy industrial relations.
- 3) To evaluate the grievance settlement procedures implemented in the organization.
- 4) To assess employee satisfaction with welfare facilities and communication mechanisms.

3.2 Scope of the Study

- **Geographical Scope:** The study is limited to Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, Valsang.
- **Functional Scope:** Covers all aspects of employee-employer interaction including communication, grievance redressal, and industrial peace.
- **Time Frame:** Data collected from July 2018 to March 2019.

3.3 Hypotheses

- 1) There is a significant association between job satisfaction and the state of industrial relations.
- 2) A strong grievance redressal system positively correlates with industrial peace and worker motivation.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature provides a foundation for the present study and helps identify research gaps.

1. **K.G. Desai (1968)** - Desai conducted a comparative study between blue- and white-collar workers across industries in Bombay and Kolhapur. He found that adequate earnings, job security, and fair grievance handling were primary motivators. White-collar workers emphasized career advancement more than blue-collar workers.
2. **R.C. Saxena (1970)** - Saxena's study analyzed IR across five industrial sectors, including sugar and textile. He highlighted the importance of employee attitudes, effective personnel policies, and labor movement development in shaping IR climates.
3. **Gangadhara Rao (1980)**- His research on Indian Railways underlined the complexity of union-management relations and suggested that collaborative conflict resolution mechanisms are essential for industrial harmony in large public sector organizations.
4. **Ishwar Dayal & Baldev R. Sharma (1971)** - Their study on SBI's supervisory staff strike examined the impact of poor communication and grievance delays on labor unrest. Post-strike efforts revealed the importance of trust-building measures for restoring industrial peace.
5. **Baldev R. Sharma (1981)**- In his study of Corinthian Bank, Sharma identified management style, fair monetary benefits, and absence of perceived disparities as key to effective supervisory relations.

6. **Ramana Rao P.V. (1982)** - Focusing on Andhra Pradesh Electricity Board, Rao examined recurrent conflicts and highlighted the need for structural grievance redressal mechanisms to preempt disputes.
7. **Sharma & Sundararajan (1983)** - They assessed 50 Indian companies and found that scope for advancement and grievance handling efficiency were the most influential factors in determining labor-management relationships, accounting for 58% of IR variability.
8. **Menon P.K.S. (1983)** - His research into personnel management in Indian banks exposed manipulative unionism and emphasized the need for structured grievance protocols to counter politicization of HR functions.
9. **Sharma & Das (1984)** - Their banking industry study showed that employee recognition, welfare support, and appreciation systems contributed 78% to the variation in industrial harmony.
10. **Narasimha Rao V.L. (1985)** - This study linked strike occurrences in Vishakhapatnam industries to weak union-management communication and recommended collective bargaining improvements.

COMPANY PROFILE:

Shri Swami Samarth Shetkari Wa Vinkari Sahakari Soot Girni Niyamit is in **Valsang, Solapur**. As a cooperative textile mill, its foundation, mission, and operational structure are rooted in socio-economic empowerment of the rural weaving community. Solapur has traditionally been a textile hub. However, rural talukas like South Solapur and Akkalkot faced economic stagnation and migration of skilled weavers due to lack of local industrial opportunities. To address this, Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill was founded in 1997 under the leadership of Mr. V.G. Shivdare, Ex-MLA, and with support from Shri Appasaheb Kadadi, Ex-MP. The mill was registered under the Cooperative Act of 1982, and production began in June 1984 after installation of machinery and infrastructure. The mill follows a standardized yarn production process and has its own cotton development program on 20 acres of land.

Mission and Vision:

The mill operates with a community-first philosophy, emphasizing self-reliance and inclusive growth. The leadership actively engages in local welfare, skill development, and modernization, setting a benchmark for other cooperative enterprises.

Machinery and Modernization:

In collaboration with Maharashtra State Co-operative Spinning Mills Federation and Industrial Finance Company (IFCI), New Delhi, the mill received modernization funding of ₹542 lakhs. Machinery was sourced from Kaslavia, including technical support and operator training.

Organizational Structure and Departments:

The mill employs 921 workers across departments with a three-shift working system. Surprisingly, it lacks a formal personnel department. Instead, the Time Office, led by the Labour Officer, handles HR functions.

Production Flowchart:

1. Cotton Storage → 2. Blow Room (laps formation) → 3. Carding (sliver production)
4. Drawing Frame → 5. Speed Frame (rope-like yarn) → 6. Reeling Bundling & Bailing →
7. Marketing

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the framework used to investigate employee-employer relations at *Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, Valsang*. The methodology was carefully designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from workers to draw meaningful insights on industrial relations, welfare, communication, and grievance redressal mechanisms.

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and participatory research design. This dual approach enabled the researcher to:

- Understand existing industrial relation practices.
- Capture employee perceptions using both statistical data and personal experiences.
- Present an authentic reflection of employee-management dynamics at the mill.

Sampling Design

- **Universe of Study:** Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, Valsang, Solapur.
- **Sample Size:** 60 respondents
- **Sampling Method:** **Purposive sampling** was used. Respondents were selected from different departments to ensure representation across shifts, job roles, and demographics.
- **Data Collection Period:** September 2018 – March 2019

Sources of Data

Primary Data: Collected using a semi-structured interview schedule. Used to collect information regarding:

- 1) Socio-economic profile of workers
- 2) Perceptions on industrial relations
- 3) Views on grievance redressal and welfare benefits

Secondary Data: Sourced from:

- 1) Government records
- 2) Journal articles, books, and reports
- 3) Mill documents (e.g., staff structure, welfare records)
- 4) Internet resources (e.g., textile industry context)

Data Processing and Analysis

After data collection:

1. The data was analyzed using **MS Excel** and **SPSS software**.
2. Both **descriptive statistics (percentages)** and **visual tools (charts, graphs)** were used for interpretation.

Research Limitations

- **Location-Specific:** The study is limited to Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill and may not be generalizable to other textile mills or industries.
- **Sample Size:** Limited to 60 respondents due to time and accessibility constraints.
- **Self-Reported Data:** Responses may carry social desirability bias despite attempts to assure anonymity.

Ethical Considerations

- **Confidentiality:** Assured to all participants.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Respondents participated without coercion.
- **Transparency:** Research purpose was clearly explained before data collection.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section presents the **statistical analysis** of the primary data collected from 60 respondents of Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill.

7.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

7.1.1 Age of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18–23	2	3.30%
24–28	40	66.70%
29–33	15	25.00%
34+	3	5.00%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

A large majority (66.7%) of workers fall in the **24–28 age group**, indicating a **young and energetic workforce**. Only 5% are aged above 34, suggesting limited long-tenure employees.

7.1.2 Marital Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	40	66.70%
Unmarried	20	33.30%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Two-thirds of the employees are married, showing that **most workers have family responsibilities**, which can influence job stability and expectations from management.

7.1.3 Education Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	2	3.30%
High School	2	3.30%
Secondary	31	51.70%
Graduation	25	41.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Most respondents have at least a **secondary education (52%)**, and nearly 42% are **graduates**, indicating a fairly educated labor force, capable of understanding organizational policies and safety norms.

- 7.1.4 Number of Family Members

Family Size	Frequency	Percentage
1–4 Members	9	15.00%
5–7 Members	41	68.30%
8+ Members	10	16.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

The majority live in **mid-sized families** of 5–7 members. This socio-economic context influences **income needs and job security preferences**.

- 7.1.5 Nature of Family

Family Type	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear	20	33.30%
Joint	40	66.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

A significant number of workers (67%) belong to **joint families**, which often have strong community bonds and mutual financial dependency.

- 7.1.6 Monthly Income

Income Range (₹)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5000	3	5.00%
5000–10000	20	33.30%
10000–15000	25	41.70%
Above 15000	12	20.00%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

The largest segment (42%) earns between ₹10,000–₹15,000 per month. Only 20% earn above ₹15,000, suggesting moderate wage structures in the mill despite long working hours.

7.2 Industrial Relations & Work Conditions

This section focuses on **employee opinions** regarding the state of industrial relations, grievance redressal mechanisms, communication quality, and welfare facilities provided by the management.

7.2.1 Perception of Industrial Relations

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Good	38	63.30%
Average	19	31.70%

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	3	5.00%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

A significant majority (63.3%) of respondents believe industrial relations in the mill are **good**, while only 5% find them poor. This reflects a **harmonious work environment** and acceptable employer behavior.

7.2.2 Provision of Management Canteen

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	78.30%
No	13	21.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Over 78% confirmed the availability of a **canteen facility**, which shows compliance with **statutory welfare standards** under the Factories Act.

7.2.3 Availability of Transport

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	38.30%
No	37	61.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Transport facilities are available for only 38.3% of workers. A **majority (61.7%) lack transportation**, indicating a **gap in support for commuting employees**, especially in rural settings.

7.2.4 Methods of Maintaining Industrial Relations

Method Used	Frequency	Percentage
Mutual Understanding	26	43.30%
Staff Committee	15	25.00%
Trade Union Intervention	19	31.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

IR is primarily maintained through **direct mutual understanding (43.3%)**. This suggests a **low-conflict, high-trust environment** with limited dependence on unions or formal grievance structures.

7.2.5 Satisfaction with Welfare Facilities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	39	65.00%
No	21	35.00%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

65% are satisfied with current welfare facilities. However, **over one-third are dissatisfied**, signalling areas for improvement—especially in healthcare, education, or transport schemes.

7.2.6 Awareness of Grievance Redressal Procedure

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	41	68.30%
No	19	31.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

68.3% know about grievance mechanisms, but **nearly one-third are unaware**. This reflects a **communication gap** and need for training or orientation programs.

7.2.7 Is Grievance Redressal Helping Industrial Peace?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	58.30%
No	25	41.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Only 58.3% believe grievance settlement helps maintain peace. The **41.7% negative response** is a serious concern, possibly due to **delayed or biased grievance handling**.

7.2.8 Communication of Rules/Notices

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Clear & Timely	37	61.70%
Irregular	23	38.30%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

While most respondents receive timely information, **communication irregularities affect over one-third of the workforce**, impacting compliance and morale.

7.3.1 Satisfaction with Management Practices

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	43	71.70%
Not Satisfied	17	28.30%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

A large proportion (71.7%) of respondents expressed satisfaction with the means and methods adopted by management, indicating **positive managerial perception**. Yet, the 28.3% discontent points to **room for refinement in communication or fairness of practices**.

7.3.2 Satisfaction with Organizational Discipline

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	40	66.70%
No	20	33.30%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Around two-thirds of employees acknowledge the presence of effective discipline, reflecting a **controlled and systematic work environment**. However, the 33.3% who disagree may experience **inconsistencies in rule enforcement or favoritism**.

7.3.3 Nature of Co-worker Relationships

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Friendly	42	70.00%
Neutral	14	23.30%
Unfriendly	4	6.70%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

The majority (70%) report **friendly co-worker relationships**, creating a **supportive and collaborative workplace culture**—a positive trait for productivity and morale.

7.3.4 Relationship with Department/Managers

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Cooperative & Supportive	39	65.00%
Only Work-Based Interaction	18	30.00%
Poor Relationship	3	5.00%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation:

Most respondents (65%) perceive a **cooperative and humanized departmental environment**, while 30% experience **only formal interactions**, which may limit trust and open dialogue.

8. KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study explored multiple dimensions of employee and employer relations at **Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, Valsang**. Based on survey data, observations, and interviews with 60 employees, the following findings emerged:

8.1 Demographic and Socio-Economic Insights:

Youth-Dominated Workforce: The majority (66.7%) of workers are aged 24–28, indicating a relatively young labor force.

Family-Oriented Workers: 67% of respondents are married and come from joint families, reflecting strong familial responsibilities.

Moderate Educational Background: While 52% completed secondary education, 42% are graduates, showing a workforce capable of understanding workplace regulations and rights.

Middle-Income Group: The highest proportion (42%) earn ₹10,000–₹15,000 per month, suggesting modest income levels typical of rural textile units.

8.2 Perceptions of Industrial Relations:

Positive IR Environment: 63.3% of respondents consider the industrial relations in the mill to be good, showing general satisfaction with employer behavior.

Grievance Awareness Gaps: 31.7% of employees are unaware of grievance redressal procedures, indicating limited communication or orientation.

Mixed View on Grievance Effectiveness: 58.3% agree grievance mechanisms contribute to peace, but a notable 41.7% feel otherwise.

IR Maintained through Informal Means: Mutual understanding (43.3%) and staff committees are preferred over trade union intervention.

8.3 Facilities and Welfare:

Canteen Facility Availability: Over 78% acknowledge receiving canteen services, showing compliance with statutory welfare provisions.

Transport Challenges: Only 38.3% have access to transport facilities, making commuting difficult for a majority.

Partial Satisfaction with Welfare: 35% of workers are not satisfied with the available welfare facilities—especially regarding medical aid, housing, and children’s education.

8.4 Organizational Culture and Communication

Management Perception is Largely Positive: 71.7% of respondents are satisfied with management methods and communication.

Discipline Not Universally Accepted: 33.3% are dissatisfied with how organizational discipline is maintained, suggesting subjective or inconsistent enforcement.

Strong Peer Support: 70% report friendly co-worker relationships, aiding collaboration and morale.

9. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and data analysis from Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, the following suggestions are proposed to enhance industrial relations, employee satisfaction, and organizational efficiency:

9.1 Strengthening Communication Channels

Regular Communication of Rules and Notices A noticeable portion of employees reported unclear or inconsistent communication. The mill should:

- 1) Install notice boards in all departments.
- 2) Use multilingual notices (Marathi/Hindi) to ensure inclusivity.
- 3) Conduct monthly team briefings.

Orientation for New Employees Introduce a **structured induction program** to explain:

- 1) Organizational policies
- 2) Welfare schemes
- 3) Grievance procedures

9.2 Improving Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Grievance Cell Activation Establish a dedicated and **visible Grievance Redressal Committee**:

- Include peer representatives and HR/labour officers.
- Set up a confidential complaint box in each department.

Feedback Loop for Grievances Ensure that every grievance is not only addressed but communicated back to the complainant in writing or verbal confirmation.

9.3 Enhancing Welfare Measures

Introduce Internal Transport Facility

More than 60% of employees lack commuting support. Management can:

- Partner with local transport vendors.
- Offer shuttle services for workers from nearby villages.

Medical Benefits Enhancement While medical camps are held occasionally, employees suggest:

- A first-aid unit with 24x7 support.
- Increase the medical allowance beyond 4%.

Scholarship Schemes for Employee Children Extend educational scholarships to all levels (not just 10th standard), including:

- ITI, Diploma, and Degree programs.

9.4 Workforce Engagement and Training Skill Development Programs

Offer periodic technical and soft-skills training for:

- Machine handling
- Safety compliance
- Conflict resolution

Create Employee Suggestion Scheme

Encourage employees to suggest improvements through:

- Suggestion boxes
- Monthly recognition of best ideas with incentives
-

9.5 Participative Management

Strengthen Works Committees

Reactivate or empower joint consultative committees to:

- Facilitate dialogue between workers and management.
- Discuss work policies, safety, and productivity targets.

Conduct Periodic IR Audits

Introduce internal audits of industrial relations and employee satisfaction using:

- Anonymous surveys
- Focus group discussions

9.6 Social and Environmental Responsibility

Community Engagement Projects

As a cooperative unit with a large land base, the mill can:

- Launch community cleanliness drives.
- Offer basic adult education or skill classes to family members of workers.

10. CONCLUSION

This study set out to assess the **state of employee-employer relations** at Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill, a cooperative spinning mill located in the rural setting of Valsang, Solapur. The goal was to understand not just the organizational structure, but also the lived experience of workers—how they perceive management, handle grievances, and engage with welfare systems. The findings reflect a generally **positive industrial climate**,

supported by a **young, educated workforce**, and a **culture of mutual cooperation**. A majority of workers expressed satisfaction with management behavior, discipline, and peer collaboration. The existence of basic welfare amenities like the canteen, medical allowance, and cooperative credit society further supports employee stability.

However, challenges persist. **Gaps in grievance awareness, transportation issues, and inconsistent communication of policies** were significant concerns raised by workers. These issues, though not severe, have the potential to impact long-term employee morale and industrial peace if not addressed. The suggestions offered—ranging from grievance committee strengthening to skill training and communication reforms—aim to transform these challenges into opportunities for improvement. Particularly in the cooperative sector, where **community well-being** is tightly interlinked with organizational success, such improvements can have **multiplier effects** on local development.

In conclusion, the research confirms that **strong employee-employer relations** are central to maintaining productivity, motivation, and industrial harmony. With strategic focus on communication, welfare, and participative management, Shri Swami Samarth Soot Mill has the potential to become a **model cooperative textile unit** not just for Solapur, but for similar rural enterprises across India.

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