

**Labour Welfare Legislation Awareness and Its Impact on Psychological Empowerment
and Organisational Commitment among Private Cement Industry Employees in Tamil
Nadu**

Prof. Dr. GOWRI RAMESH, M.L., Ph.D. (Law)

Registrar

The Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University,

Chennai - 600 028

ABSTRACT

The objective of India's labor welfare legislation is to advance social justice, labor dignity, and industrial peace. The extent, to which employees are informed, however, is what determines the effectiveness of such laws, not simply their passage into law. The relationship between psychological empowerment, comprehension of labor welfare legislation, and organizational commitment among workers in the private cement factories in Tamil Nadu's Ariyalur District is empirically investigated here. The research uses a quantitative methodology that is based on structured surveys and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and draws on Social Exchange Theory, Psychological Empowerment Theory, and Organizational Support Theory. The main source of data came from cement industry workers in a variety of positions. The findings demonstrate that understanding labor welfare laws has a significant positive impact on psychological empowerment, which in turn has a significant impact on organizational commitment. Research indicates that psychological empowerment partly mediates the relationship between labour welfare legislation awareness and organisational commitment. The study also includes forward-looking viewpoints and legislative proposals for enhancing legal literacy, labor governance, and worker empowerment in labor-intensive industries. By integrating behavioural and organizational consequences with legal understanding, the study contributes to labor law scholarship, emphasizing the need for labor welfare initiatives in India that are aimed at promoting awareness.

Keywords: awareness, cement industry, labour welfare legislation, organisational commitment, psychological empowerment.

1. Introduction

Labour welfare rules in India aim to advance labour dignity, social justice, and industrial harmony. However, the effectiveness of such legislation depends not merely on its enactment but on the extent to which employees are aware of their rights and entitlements. Despite the existence of a comprehensive framework governing wages, working hours, occupational safety, and social security, significant gaps persist between statutory intent and workplace realities, particularly in labour-intensive industries. In sectors such as cement manufacturing, where employees are exposed to physically demanding conditions and occupational risks, labour welfare legislation plays a crucial protective role. However, when workers lack awareness of these legal safeguards, the intended benefits of such legislation are substantially weakened. Contemporary organisational research further highlights that legal awareness interacts with psychological empowerment and organisational commitment, influencing employee behaviour, compliance, and long-term organisational stability. Against this background, the present study examines the relationship between labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment among employees working in private cement factories in the Ariyalur District of Tamil Nadu.

2. Theoretical Foundations

2.1. *Labour Welfare Legislation Awareness*

Labour welfare legislation awareness refers to employees' understanding of statutory provisions governing wages, working conditions, occupational safety, social security, and grievance redressal mechanisms. Such awareness extends beyond mere familiarity with the existence of laws and includes knowledge of applicability, rights, benefits, and enforcement procedures. Contemporary labour law scholarship emphasises that legal frameworks shape employment relationships by defining rights, obligations, and power balances between employers and employees (Deakin & Wilkinson, 2018; Budd & Bhawe, 2019). Recent research further highlights that when employees are informed about legal protections, they are more likely to perceive fairness and security in the workplace, thereby strengthening trust in organisational systems and compliance with regulatory standards (Budd & Bhawe, 2019).

2.2. *Psychological Empowerment*

Psychological empowerment represents an internal motivational state through which employees perceive their work as meaningful, believe in their competence, experience autonomy in decision-making, and feel that their actions have an impact on organisational outcomes. Empirical studies demonstrate that empowerment is enhanced when employees have access to relevant information, supportive leadership, and institutional safeguards that reduce uncertainty and vulnerability in the workplace (Seibert et al., 2016). Leadership practices that encourage participation and autonomy further reinforce empowerment by legitimising employee voice and strengthening confidence in engaging with organisational processes (Kim & Beehr, 2018). In this context, awareness of labour welfare legislation functions as an important enabling condition that supports empowerment by clarifying rights and protections available to employees.

2.3. *Organisational Commitment*

Organisational commitment refers to the psychological bond that motivates employees to remain with an organisation and contribute positively to its objectives. Recent literature conceptualises commitment as a dynamic and multifaceted attitude shaped by workplace experiences, perceived organisational support, and opportunities for meaningful participation (Klein et al., 2019). Empirical evidence suggests that commitment is strengthened when employees experience empowerment, fair treatment, and organisational concern for their well-being, rather than being driven solely by economic necessity or job security (Meyer & Maltin, 2017). These findings indicate that commitment is increasingly linked to qualitative aspects of the employment relationship rather than purely contractual considerations.

This study is informed by contemporary interpretations of social exchange processes in employment relationships, which emphasise reciprocal interactions between organisational practices and employee attitudes. Modern social exchange research explains how organisational actions that signal support, fairness, and concern for employee welfare generate positive attitudinal and behavioural responses from employees (Cropanzano et al., 2017). When organisations promote legal compliance, awareness-building initiatives, and supportive policies, employees are more likely to reciprocate with higher levels of psychological empowerment and organisational commitment. Empirical research further confirms that perceived organisational support plays a critical role in shaping employee

loyalty, engagement, and long-term attachment to organisations, particularly in industrial settings (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Labour welfare legislation has long been recognised as a critical institutional mechanism for safeguarding employee rights, promoting workplace justice, and ensuring balanced employment relationships. Contemporary labour law scholarship emphasises that the effectiveness of statutory labour protections depends not only on legislative enactment but also on the extent to which employees understand and are able to exercise their rights in practice. Deakin and Wilkinson (2018) argue that labour law performs a normative and regulatory function by shaping power relations between employers and employees, thereby influencing workplace behaviour and attitudes. Similarly, Budd and Bhawe (2019) conceptualise the employment relationship as a structured exchange governed by legal rules, organisational practices, and employee perceptions, highlighting the importance of legal awareness in fostering trust and fairness at work.

Empirical research suggests that employees' awareness of labour welfare legislation plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of organisational justice and security. Studies indicate that informed employees are more likely to perceive their organisation as compliant and supportive, which enhances confidence in management and regulatory institutions. Legal awareness has also been linked to improved participation, compliance with safety norms, and reduced workplace conflict, particularly in labour-intensive industries where statutory protections are crucial for employee well-being (Budd & Bhawe, 2019). However, much of the existing literature treats labour law awareness as a contextual or background variable rather than examining its direct behavioural and psychological consequences.

In recent years, psychological empowerment has emerged as a key construct for understanding how organisational practices and institutional frameworks influence employee motivation and behaviour. Psychological empowerment refers to an individual's perception of meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact in the workplace. Seibert, Wang, and Courtright (2016) provide strong empirical evidence that empowered employees demonstrate higher levels of engagement, performance, and proactive behaviour. Empowerment is further reinforced through leadership practices that encourage participation, autonomy, and access to information, thereby strengthening employees' confidence and sense of control (Kim &

Beehr, 2018). Within this context, awareness of labour welfare legislation can be viewed as an enabling condition that legitimises employee voice and reduces uncertainty, particularly in highly regulated and hierarchical work environments.

Organisational commitment has been widely examined as a critical outcome variable in organisational and industrial research due to its strong association with retention, productivity, and organisational stability. Recent literature conceptualises commitment as a dynamic psychological attachment shaped by workplace experiences rather than merely economic dependence. Meyer and Maltin (2017) highlight that employee commitment is closely linked to well-being, fairness perceptions, and supportive organisational practices. Klein et al. (2019) further emphasise that commitment reflects an employee's psychological bond with the organisation and is influenced by meaningful participation and perceived organisational support. These studies suggest that empowerment plays a central role in fostering commitment by enhancing employees' emotional attachment and voluntary engagement.

Theoretical explanations for the relationship between legal awareness, empowerment, and commitment are strongly grounded in contemporary social exchange perspectives. Cropanzano et al. (2017) argue that employment relationships are governed by reciprocal exchanges, where organisational actions signalling fairness, support, and concern for employee welfare elicit positive attitudinal responses. Perceived organisational support has been empirically shown to strengthen employee loyalty, trust, and long-term commitment, particularly when organisations demonstrate compliance with legal and ethical standards (Kurtessis et al., 2017). These findings suggest that labour welfare legislation awareness may indirectly influence commitment by shaping employees' perceptions of organisational support and fairness.

Despite these insights, the existing literature reveals a notable gap in integrated empirical studies that simultaneously examine labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment within a single analytical framework. Much of the research on employee voice and meaningful work has focused on behavioural outcomes without explicitly linking them to statutory awareness and legal protections (Gupta & Shaw, 2018). Furthermore, labour-intensive sectors such as cement manufacturing remain under-researched, despite their reliance on labour welfare legislation for employee protection.

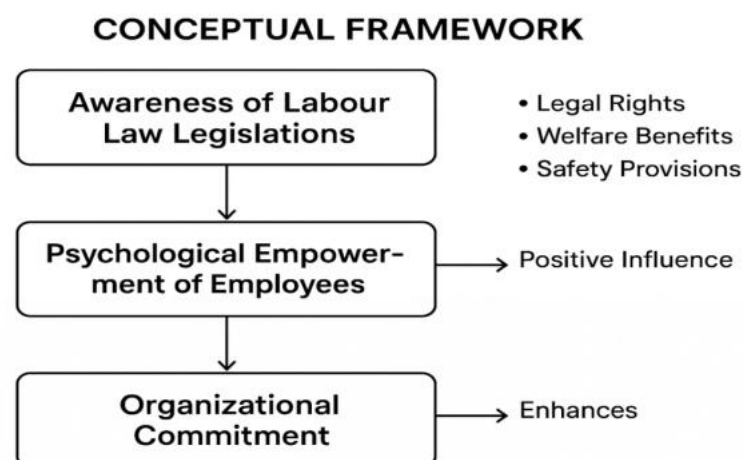
Addressing this gap, the present study contributes to the literature by empirically examining how awareness of labour welfare legislation influences psychological empowerment and organisational commitment among employees in private cement factories in Tamil Nadu.

3.1. Research Gap

Although recent studies have examined labour regulations, employee voice, and organisational attitudes independently, limited empirical research integrates labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment within a single analytical framework. Prior research has largely focused on behavioural outcomes such as employee voice and meaningful work without sufficiently linking these outcomes to legal awareness and statutory protections (Gupta & Shaw, 2018). Furthermore, labour-intensive sectors such as cement manufacturing remain under-represented in empirical investigations despite their significant contribution to industrial employment. Addressing this gap, the present study adopts an interdisciplinary approach to examine how legal awareness influences psychological empowerment and organisational commitment among employees in private cement factories in Tamil Nadu.

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Source: Author's own conceptualization based on Seibert et al. (2016) and Meyer & Maltin (2017).

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the hypothesised relationships among labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment. Labour welfare legislation awareness is treated as the exogenous variable, psychological empowerment as the mediating variable, and organisational commitment as the endogenous outcome variable.

The framework is grounded in contemporary social exchange and organisational support perspectives, which emphasise reciprocal relationships between organisational practices and employee attitudes. Awareness of labour welfare legislation enhances employees' perceptions of fairness, security, and organisational support, which in turn strengthens psychological empowerment by increasing employees' sense of competence, autonomy, and impact (Seibert et al., 2016; Cropanzano et al., 2017). Empowered employees are more likely to develop stronger psychological attachment and commitment towards their organisation, reflecting positive exchange relationships and perceived organisational concern for employee well-being (Meyer & Maltin, 2017).

The model therefore integrates legal awareness with behavioural and organisational outcomes, demonstrating how labour welfare legislation awareness indirectly influences organisational commitment through psychological empowerment.

4.1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- i. to examine the level of labour welfare legislation awareness among cement industry employees;
- ii. To analyses the impact of labour law awareness on psychological empowerment;
- iii. To assess the influence of psychological empowerment on organisational commitment;
- iv. To test the mediating role of psychological empowerment between awareness and commitment.

4.2. HYPOTHESES

- ❖ H1: Labour welfare legislation awareness significantly influences psychological empowerment.
- ❖ H2: Psychological empowerment significantly influences organisational commitment.
- ❖ H3: Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between labour law awareness and organisational commitment.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design** to examine the interrelationship between labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment among employees working in private cement factories in Ariyalur District, Tamil Nadu. The study is interdisciplinary in nature, integrating perspectives from **law, management, and organisational psychology**. Both **primary and secondary data** were utilised to achieve the research objectives.

Primary data were collected through a **structured questionnaire** administered to employees across different categories, including managerial, supervisory, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers. The questionnaire consisted of three sections measuring labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment, using a **five-point Likert scale**. Secondary data were sourced from statutes, judicial decisions, reports of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO) publications, books, journals, and earlier research studies.

The **population** of the study comprised employees working in selected private cement factories in Ariyalur District which is approximately 3000. A **convenient sampling technique** was adopted to collect the responses from the respondents using questionnaire among the sample size of 350 employees using a social science calculator for social science.

The collected data were analysed using **descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis**, and **Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)** to test the proposed hypotheses and examine the mediating role of psychological empowerment. Reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using **Cronbach's Alpha**, which indicated satisfactory internal consistency. The methodological approach ensured validity, reliability, and robustness of the empirical findings.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Core Variables

Variable	Mean Level	Variation	Inference
Labour Welfare Legislation Awareness	Moderate–High	Low	Employees possess basic legal awareness, though not comprehensive
Psychological Empowerment	Moderate	Moderate	Empowerment exists but is limited by hierarchical structures
Organisational Commitment	Moderate–High	Low	Employees show loyalty despite moderate empowerment

Source: Primary Data

The table-1 indicates that employees demonstrate a reasonably consistent level of awareness regarding labour welfare legislation, as reflected by a moderate to high mean score and minimal dispersion. This uniformity suggests that statutory information is broadly accessible across the workforce; however, the depth of legal understanding appears limited to fundamental provisions rather than comprehensive legal knowledge.

Psychological empowerment records a moderate average score with noticeable variation, indicating uneven experiences of autonomy and influence among employees. Such variation may be attributed to hierarchical organisational practices and restricted participation in decision-making processes.

In contrast, organisational commitment exhibits a relatively high and stable mean value, signifying strong attachment and loyalty towards the organisation. This sustained commitment, despite moderate empowerment levels, may be influenced by job security, welfare benefits, and long-term employment considerations.

Collectively, the findings reveal a disparity between employee commitment and empowerment, suggesting that greater participative practices and decentralised authority

could enhance psychological empowerment and reinforce long-term organisational engagement.

6. INFERENCE ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 2: Correlation Analysis between Study Variables

Variables	Awareness	Empowerment	Commitment
Awareness	1.00	0.61**	0.54**
Empowerment	0.61**	1.00	0.67**
Commitment	0.54**	0.67**	1.00

Table-2 presents the correlation coefficients among labour welfare legislation awareness, psychological empowerment, and organisational commitment. The results indicate a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between awareness and psychological empowerment ($r = 0.61$), suggesting that employees who are more aware of labour welfare legislations tend to experience higher levels of empowerment at the workplace. Similarly, awareness is positively correlated with organisational commitment ($r = 0.54$), implying that legal awareness is associated with stronger employee attachment to the organisation. The highest correlation is observed between psychological empowerment and organisational commitment ($r = 0.67$), highlighting the critical role of empowerment in fostering employee commitment. These correlations provide preliminary empirical support for the hypothesised relationships and justify further causal analysis using regression and structural equation modelling.

Table-3: Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	t-value	Result
Psychological Empowerment	Awareness	0.61	Significant	H1 Accepted
Organisational Commitment	Psychological Empowerment	0.67	Significant	H2 Accepted

Source: Primary Data

Table-3 reports the regression analysis results testing the direct effects proposed in the study. The regression model examining the influence of labour welfare legislation awareness on psychological empowerment yields a statistically significant coefficient ($\beta = 0.61$), confirming that awareness is a strong predictor of empowerment. This finding supports Hypothesis H1. The second regression model reveals that psychological empowerment has a significant positive effect on organisational commitment ($\beta = 0.67$), thereby supporting Hypothesis H2. These results indicate that employees who perceive themselves as empowered are more likely to develop stronger commitment towards their organisation. The regression findings establish a clear causal direction between the key variables and lay the groundwork for mediation analysis.

Table-4: Structural Equation Model – Path Analysis

Path	Standardised β	p-value	Effect Type	Decision
Awareness → Empowerment	0.61	< 0.01	Direct	Significant
Empowerment → Commitment	0.67	< 0.01	Direct	Significant
Awareness → Commitment	0.32	< 0.05	Direct (Reduced)	Partial Mediation

Source: Primary Data

Table-4 presents the results of the Structural Equation Model. The path from labour welfare legislation awareness to psychological empowerment is positive and statistically significant; demonstrating that awareness directly enhances employees' sense of autonomy, competence, and impact. The path from psychological empowerment to organisational commitment is also strong and significant, indicating that empowered employees are more emotionally attached and loyal to their organisation. When psychological empowerment is introduced into the model, the direct effect of awareness on organisational commitment decreases but remains significant, confirming the partial mediating role of psychological empowerment. This result validates Hypothesis H3 and empirically supports the conceptual framework proposed in the study.

7. DISSCUSSION OF THE RESULT

The present study explored how awareness of labour welfare legislation is connected with psychological empowerment and organisational commitment among employees working in private cement factories in the Ariyalur District of Tamil Nadu. The discussion of findings follows the study objectives and hypotheses and is interpreted within the broader theoretical framework.

The descriptive findings show that employees generally possess a moderate to high level of awareness of labour welfare legislations, with very little variation among them. This suggests that information related to wages, safety measures, and welfare benefits is reaching workers through organisational communication, trade unions, or everyday work experience. However, the results also indicate that this awareness is largely limited to basic aspects of the law. Most employees appear to know that such laws exist, but they may not fully understand detailed procedures or enforcement mechanisms. This reflects a common pattern observed in earlier studies on Indian industrial workers, where legal awareness exists at a surface level rather than in a comprehensive form.

Psychological empowerment among employees was found to be moderate, with noticeable differences across individuals. This variation points to unequal experiences of autonomy, competence, and influence within the organisation. In labour-intensive industries such as cement manufacturing, work is often structured around strict hierarchies and centralised decision-making. As a result, while employees in supervisory or skilled roles may feel relatively empowered, others continue to experience limited control over their work. These findings support the idea that empowerment is strongly shaped by organisational structure and management practices, rather than being uniformly experienced by all employees.

Organisational commitment, on the other hand, was found to be relatively high and consistent across the workforce. Interestingly, this level of commitment remains strong even though psychological empowerment is only moderate. This suggests that employees' attachment to the organisation may be influenced by factors beyond empowerment alone. Job security, welfare benefits, limited alternative employment opportunities, and long-term association with the organisation appear to play an important role in sustaining commitment. This observation reflects the continuance and normative forms of commitment, where employees remain loyal due to necessity, obligation, or long-standing ties.

The inferential results offer deeper insight into these relationships. The strong positive link between labour welfare legislation awareness and psychological empowerment confirms that legal literacy acts as an important psychological resource for employees. Workers who are aware of their statutory rights tend to feel more confident, protected, and capable of expressing their concerns at the workplace. This supports the principles of Social Exchange Theory, as awareness of legal protection strengthens perceptions of fairness and mutual responsibility between employees and employers.

Similarly, the positive influence of psychological empowerment on organisational commitment highlights the importance of employees feeling valued and involved in their work. When employees experience a sense of autonomy and meaning, they are more likely to develop emotional attachment and loyalty towards the organisation. This finding is consistent with earlier research in organisational behaviour that identifies empowerment as a key driver of long-term commitment.

Most importantly, the structural equation analysis shows that psychological empowerment partially explains how labour welfare legislation awareness leads to organisational commitment. Legal awareness influences commitment directly by creating a sense of security and justice, and indirectly by strengthening psychological empowerment. This dual effect highlights the importance of viewing labour welfare legislation not only as a legal safeguard but also as a factor that shapes employee attitudes and behaviour.

Overall, the discussion makes it clear that legal awareness alone is not enough to fully strengthen organisational commitment. For employees to truly benefit from labour welfare legislations, awareness must be supported by workplace practices that allow them to feel empowered. In labour-intensive industries like cement manufacturing, organisations need to move beyond formal compliance and adopt participative management approaches, decentralised decision-making, and empowerment-oriented practices. Such efforts can help transform labour welfare legislation into a meaningful tool for protecting workers while also fostering a committed, motivated, and productive workforce.

8. CONCLUSION

This study set out to understand how awareness of labour welfare legislation influences the way employees feel about their work and their organisation in the private cement industry of

Tamil Nadu. The findings make it clear that labour laws achieve real value only when employees are aware of them and are able to experience their benefits in everyday working life.

This study shows that labour welfare legislation becomes truly meaningful when employees understand it and are able to feel its impact in their daily working lives. The findings suggest that workers in the private cement industry who are aware of their legal rights feel more confident, secure, and capable at work. This sense of empowerment helps them develop a stronger connection with their organisation and encourages a greater sense of loyalty and responsibility.

The study also highlights that psychological empowerment plays an important role in linking legal awareness with organisational commitment. While employees may remain committed due to job security or long-term association with the organisation, empowerment strengthens this commitment by making it more positive and voluntary rather than purely situational.

Overall, the conclusion points to the need for organisations to go beyond basic legal compliance. By actively promoting legal awareness, encouraging employee participation, and creating supportive work environments, organisations can help employees feel empowered and valued. Such efforts not only strengthen organisational commitment but also contribute to healthier workplace relationships and long-term industrial harmony in labour-intensive industries like cement manufacturing.

Reference

- Budd, J. W., & Bhawe, D. (2019). The employment relationship. *Human Resource Management Review*, 29(1), 1–13.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.10.001>
- Cropanzano, R., Anthony, E. L., Daniels, S. R., & Hall, A. V. (2017). Social exchange theory: A critical review with theoretical remedies. *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1905–1935.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316673842>
- Deakin, S., & Wilkinson, F. (2018). Labour law and economic theory: Reclaiming the normative foundations of labour law. *Industrial Law Journal*, 47(1), 1–27.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/indlaw/dwx025>
- Gupta, R., & Shaw, J. D. (2018). Employee voice and meaningful work. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 28(3), 385–402.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12188>
- Kim, M., & Beehr, T. A. (2018). Empowering leadership and employee outcomes. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 25(3), 257–276.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051817750538>
- Klein, H. J., Cooper, J. T., Molloy, J. C., & Swanson, J. A. (2019). The assessment of commitment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(3), 338–357.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000344>
- Kurtessis, J. N., et al. (2017). Perceived organizational support: A meta-analytic evaluation. *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1854–1884.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206315575554>
- Meyer, J. P., & Maltin, E. R. (2017). Employee commitment and well-being. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(3), 395–416.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2159>
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G., & Courtright, S. H. (2016). Antecedents and consequences of psychological and team empowerment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 101(7), 981–1003.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000066>

