

Working Conditions and Labour Welfare of employees engaged in road construction in Arunachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT.

There are numerous workers engaged in the construction of roads in India both National Highways and Public Works Development Roads. Many of these workers are putting in very long hours of work and also working in very unearthly hours. There are labour laws in India to ensure that their rights are taken care of but enforcement is another matter altogether. Many of these workers are also unaware about their rights due to lack of proper education. This study is an endeavor to examine the basic working conditions and welfare facilities available amongst workers engaged in construction of roads under various organisations/contractors in national and state highways of Arunachal Pradesh. It is expected that the results of this study will help to understand the plight of these worker and recommend ways how their working conditions and labour welfare measures can be improved.

Keywords : Labour Welfare, Working conditions, construction employees, Factories Act

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC.

There are numerous labour laws in place in India for improving the working conditions and overall labour welfare of workers in India. Welfare facilities are designed to take care of the well-being of the employees; they do not generally result in monetary benefits to the employees nor are these facilities provided by employer alone. Government and non-government agencies and trade unions too, contribute towards employee welfare. The importance of Labour welfare officers was recognized as early as 1929 but it got formalized only after the enactment of the Factories Act 1948. Section 49 of the Factories Act mandated the appointment of Welfare Officers in Organisations employing more than 500 workers. In 1947, the Industrial Disputes Act was passed where functions of Labour officers were elaborated.

The need and importance of proper working conditions and the ensuring that welfare measures are in place contributes a lot to the overall productivity of the workers and the growth of the Organisation.

Labour welfare has been defined in various ways though unfortunately no single definition has been found universal acceptance. The oxford dictionary defined labour welfare as “Efforts to make life worth living for workers”. Prof. Richardson defined labour welfare as arrangement of working conditions, organization of social and sports club and establishment of funds which contribute to the workers’ health and safety components and efficiency, economic, security, education and recreation. Dr. Panindikar defines Labour Welfare as “work for improving the health, safety and general well-being and the industrial efficiency of the workers beyond the minimum standard laid down by labour legislation.”

In India, the Royal Commission of labour under the Chairmanship of J.H. Whitely was the first detailed study set up to study labour related issues. The commission submitted its report in 1931 covering all aspects of labour problems including employment of women and children, hours and conditions of work, industrial relations etc.

The committee on labour welfare (1966-69), set up by the Government of India under the chairmanship of R.K. Malviya reviewed at length the functioning of various statutory, non-including mines, plantations, railways and made comprehensive recommendations for their improvement. The National commission on labour (1966-69) also covered several aspects of welfare services in different establishments and made useful suggestions for their improvement. In

1999 the second National Commission on Labour was set up to study the conditions of labour in India. Post this the emphasis shifted towards empowerment of employees.

Today in competitive market , everyone aims to profit human beings are the most important factors of production in order to facilitated the satisfaction of human being these welfare measures are very important. Welfare activities will go a long way to better the mental and moral health of workers by reducing the incidence of vices of industrialization. Welfare activities reduce labour turnover and absenteeism and create permanency which benefits the establishments.

ABOUT THE ORGANISATIONS:

The Organisations/ Organisations engaged in construction business are basically sub contractors who have been contracted the job by the main contractors. Most of these organizations are not very systematic in terms of rules, regulations etc. The Organisations use the same workers for different projects as and when they get work. The organizations are reputed and have good experience in the construction of roads. They are also employing a lot of manpower as many of them are involved in various sites across multiple states of India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objectives of the study are -

1. To study the employees' perception towards the welfare facilities provided by the organisations engaged in road construction.
2. To study the working conditions and welfare facilities provided by the organization.
3. To help identify areas in labour welfare which the organisation needs to focus on.

DATA COLLECTION: -

To achieve the objectives of the present study, data was collected as under.

a) Primary Data: -

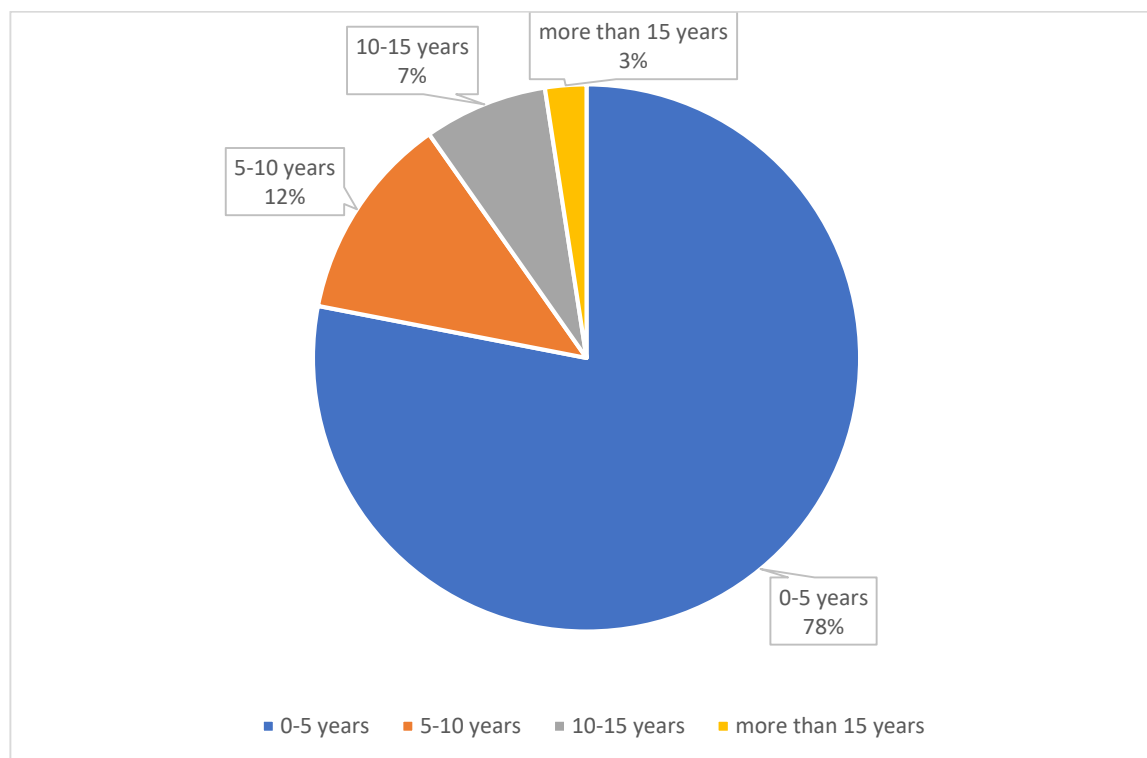
The primary data collection was done with the help of a survey. A questionnaire regarding working conditions and labour welfare amenities was designed and administrated. Around 41 workers from three different Organisations who are working on National Highways and State roads in the Capital region of Itanagar were surveyed. All the information was collected with help of face to face interviews with workers.

b) Secondary Data: - Secondary data was collected from books, records, brochures etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. For how many years are you working with your organisation?

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
0-5 years	32	78%
5-10 years	5	12%
10-15 years	3	7%
More than 15 years	1	3%

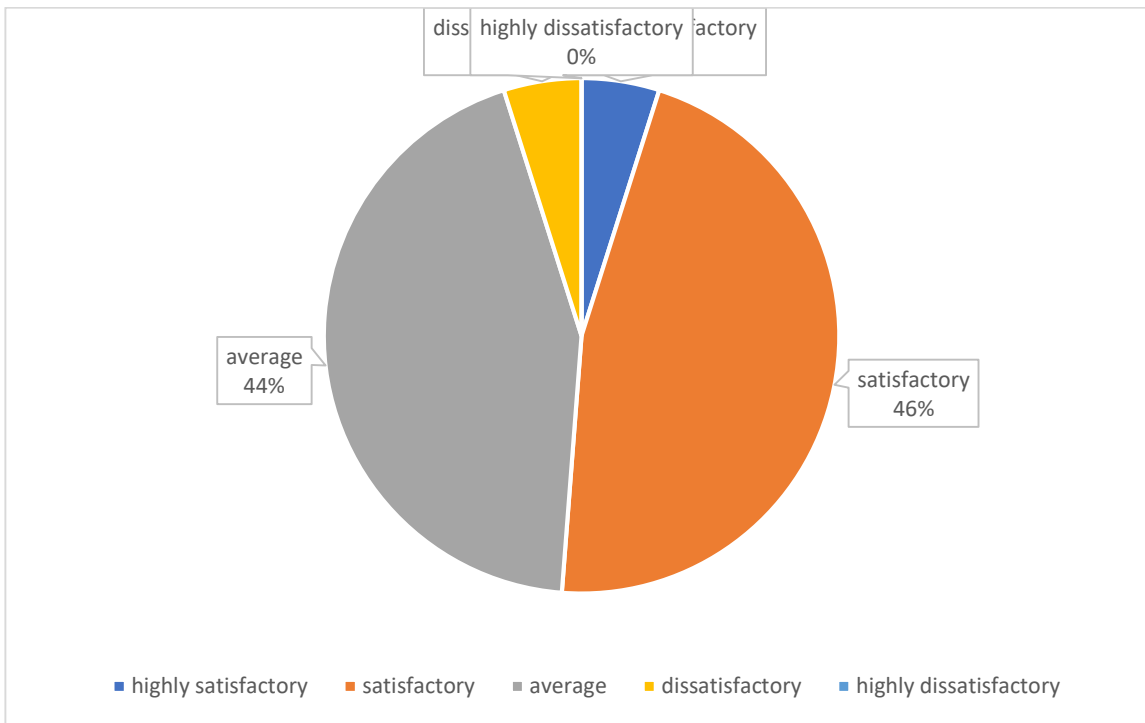


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it is seen that a majority of the employees i.e. 78% are new.

2. How do you rate the working hours of your organisation?

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Highly satisfactory	2	5%
Satisfactory	19	46%
Average	18	44%
Dissatisfactory	2	5%
Highly dissatisfactory	0	0

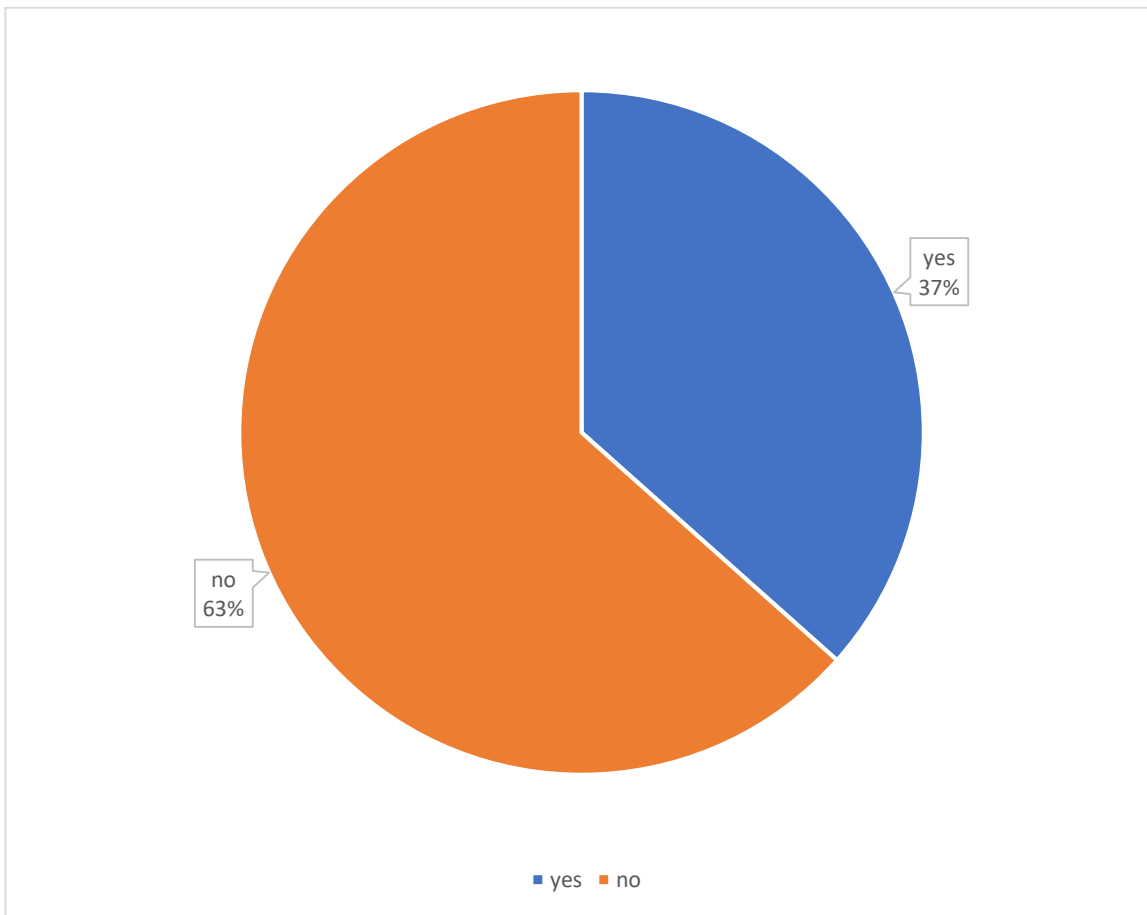


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 51% of the employees are satisfied with the working hours and 44% employees are at least satisfied. 5% of the employees are not satisfied with the working hours.

3. Does the organisation take safety measures for employee’s safety?

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	15	37%
No	26	63%

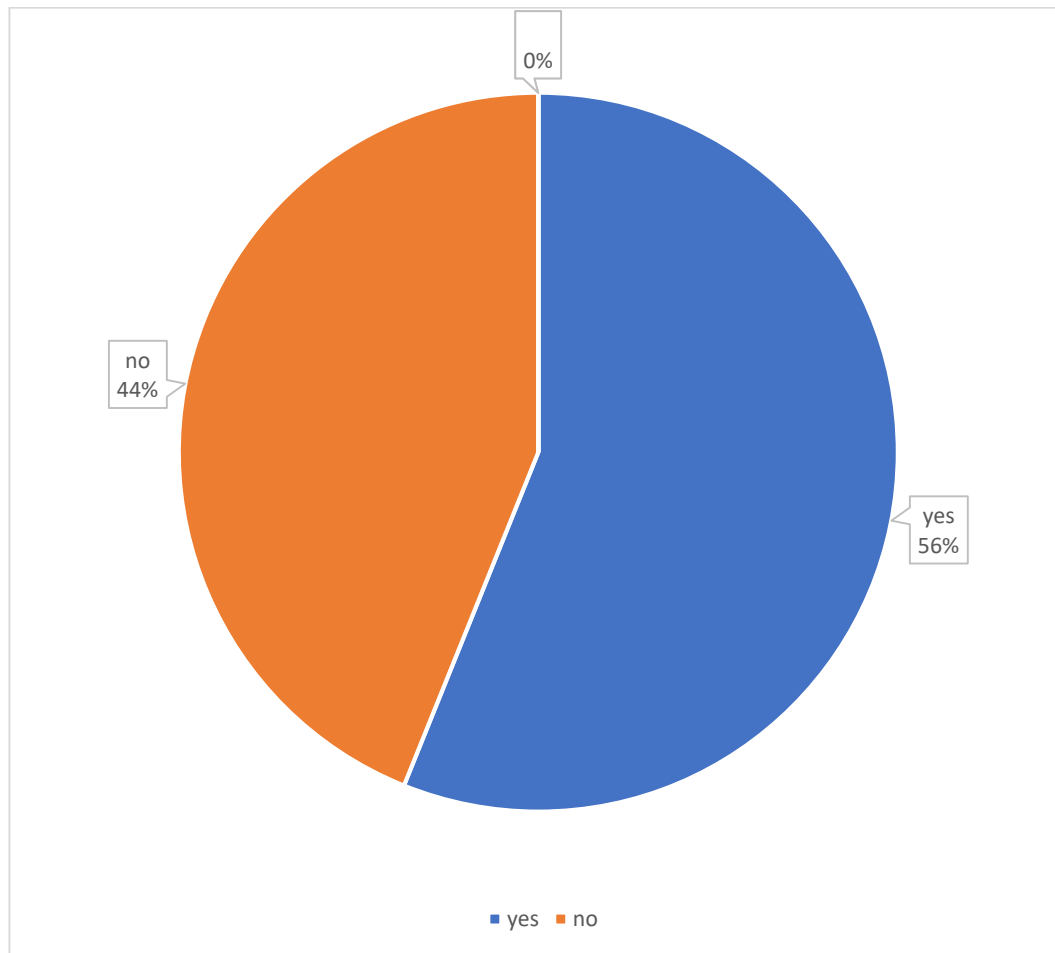


INTERPRETATION.

From the above figure it is seen that the most of the Organisations are not taking adequate measures for safety as 63% of the employees have replied in the negative and only 37% have responded positively.

4. Are you getting wages on time?

opinion	No. respondents	percentage
yes	23	56%
no	18	44%

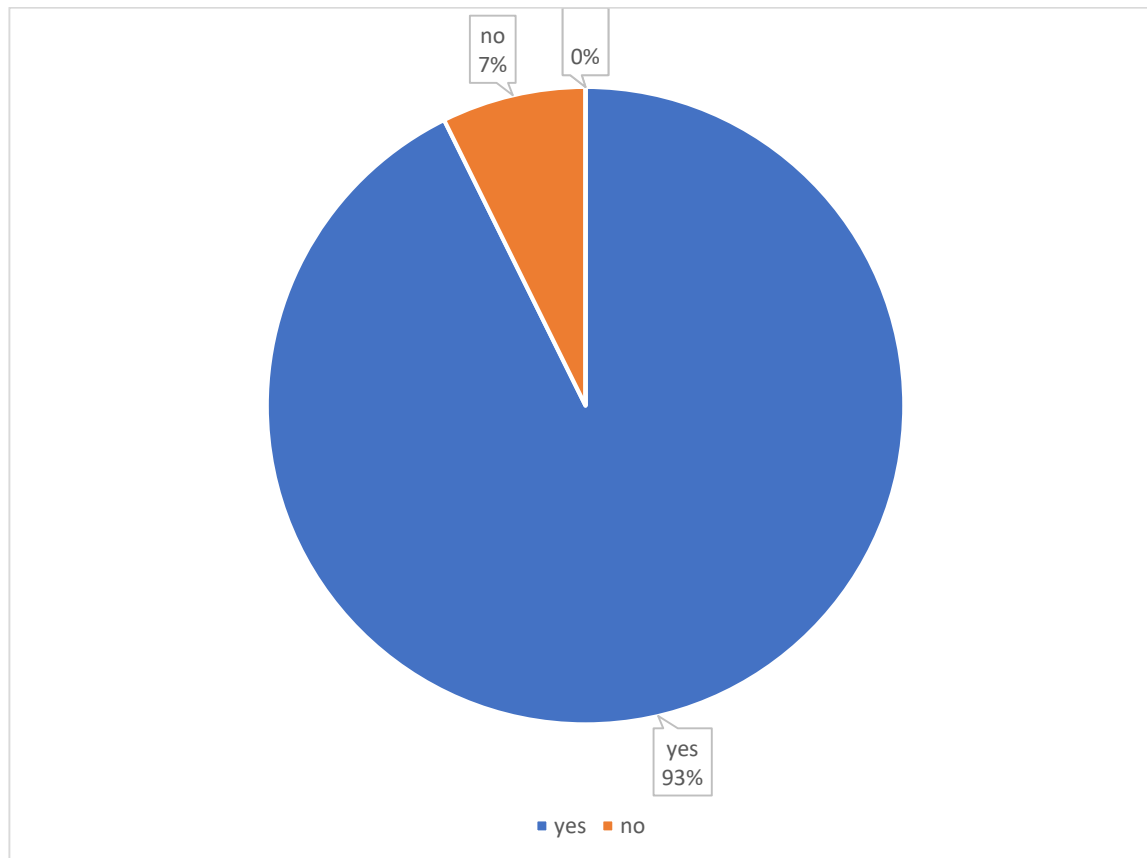


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it is seen that 56% of the employees have expressed that they get their wages on time and 44% employees have responded that they do not get their wages on time which means the response is divided.

5. Are you provided with drinking water facilities?

Opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
Yes	38	93%
No	3	7%

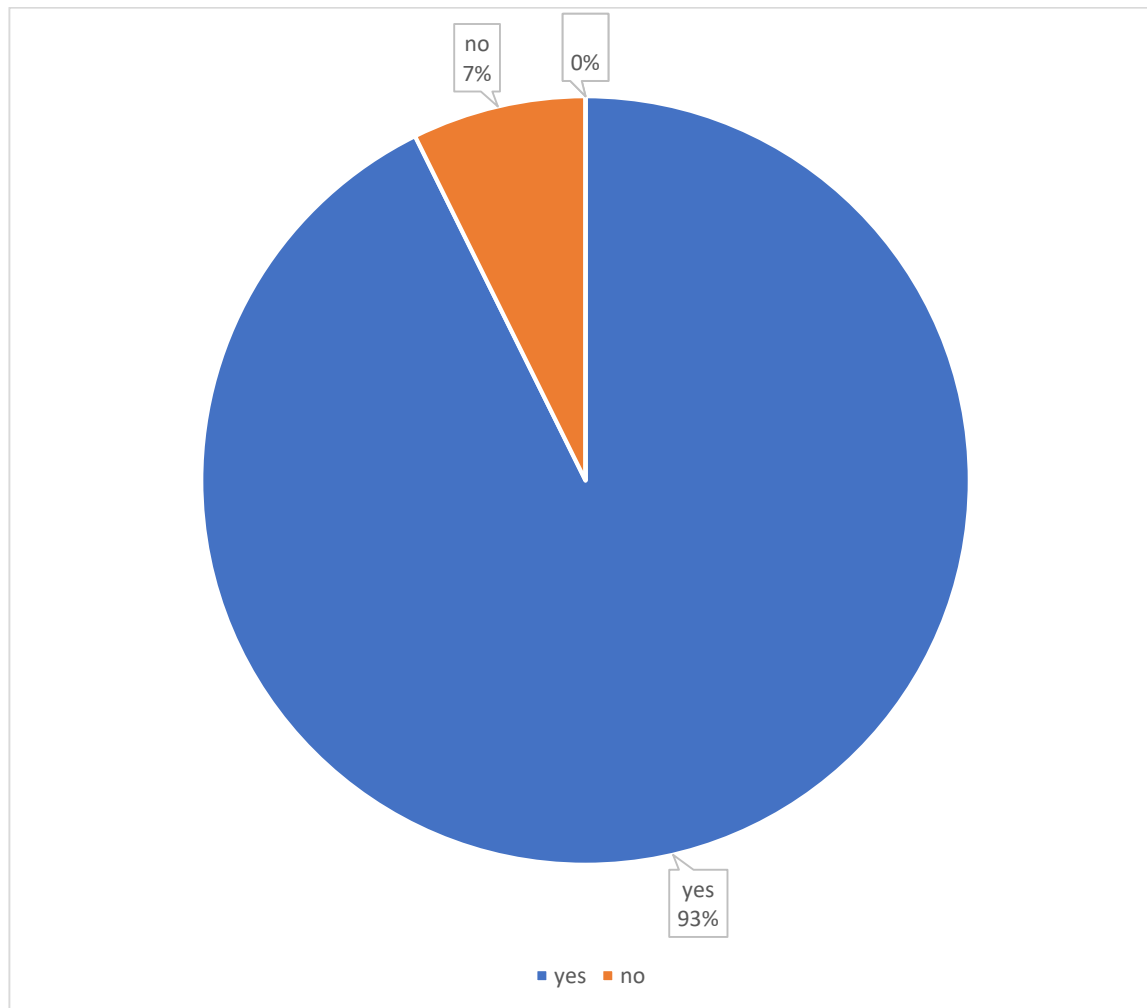


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 93% of the respondents have expressed that drinking water facilities are provided to the employee.

6. Does the organisation provide canteens/ food?

opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
yes	38	93%
no	3	7%



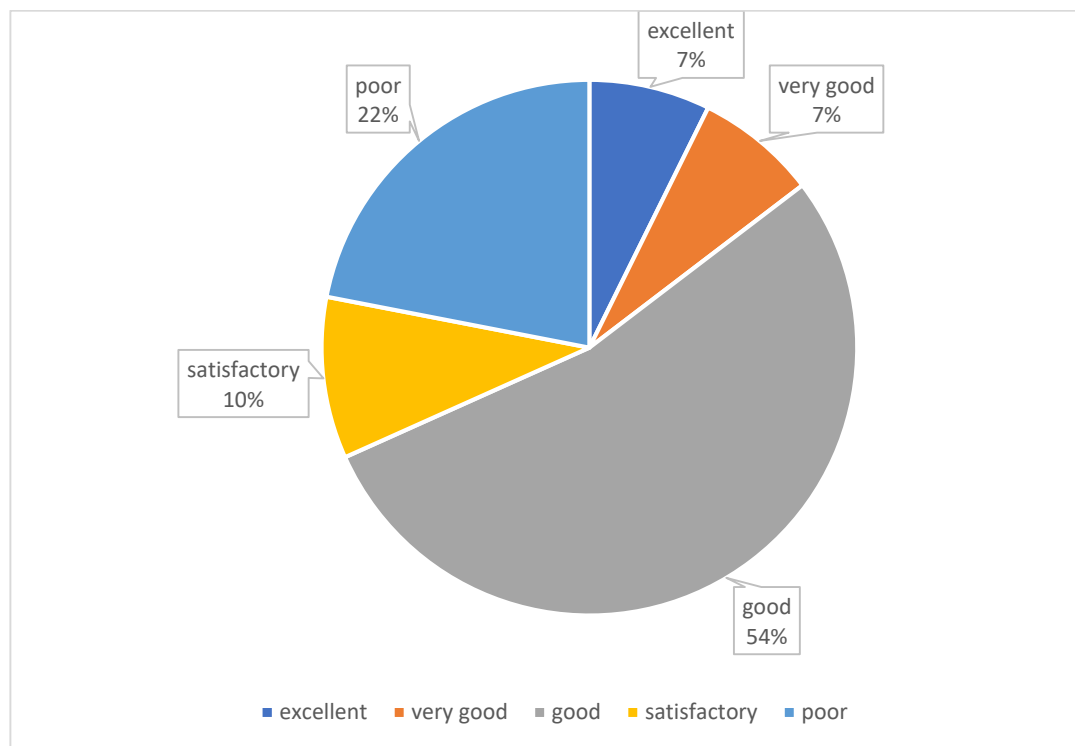
INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that the organisation does provide canteen/food facilities to their employees.

7. What is the opinion on the quality of food items?

opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
excellent	3	7%
Very good	3	7%
good	22	54%
satisfactory	4	10%

poor	9	22%
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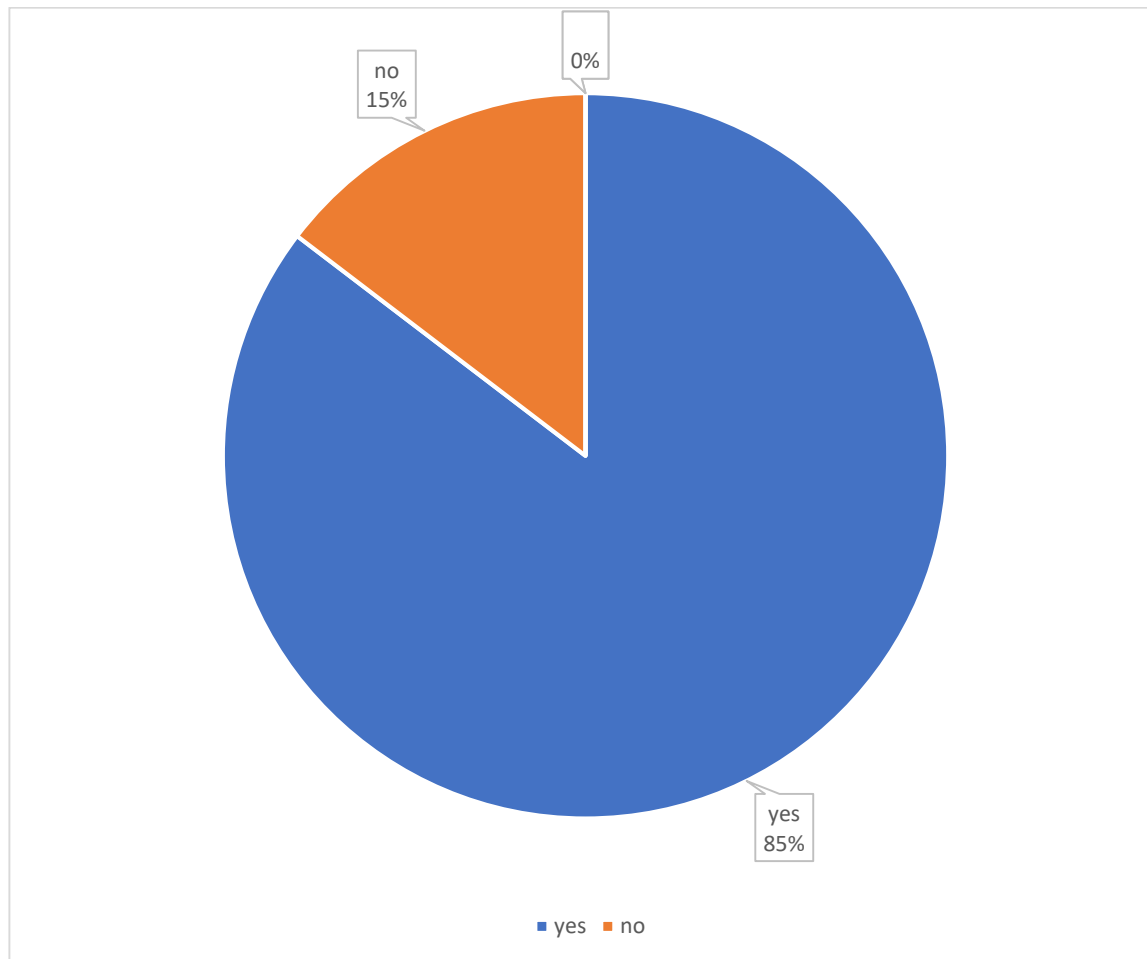


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 54% employees say that the food provided by the organisation in the canteen is good while 22% employees say that the food is poor which means that in general the quality of the food provided is good.

8. Are you provided accommodation?

opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
yes	35	85%
no	6	15%

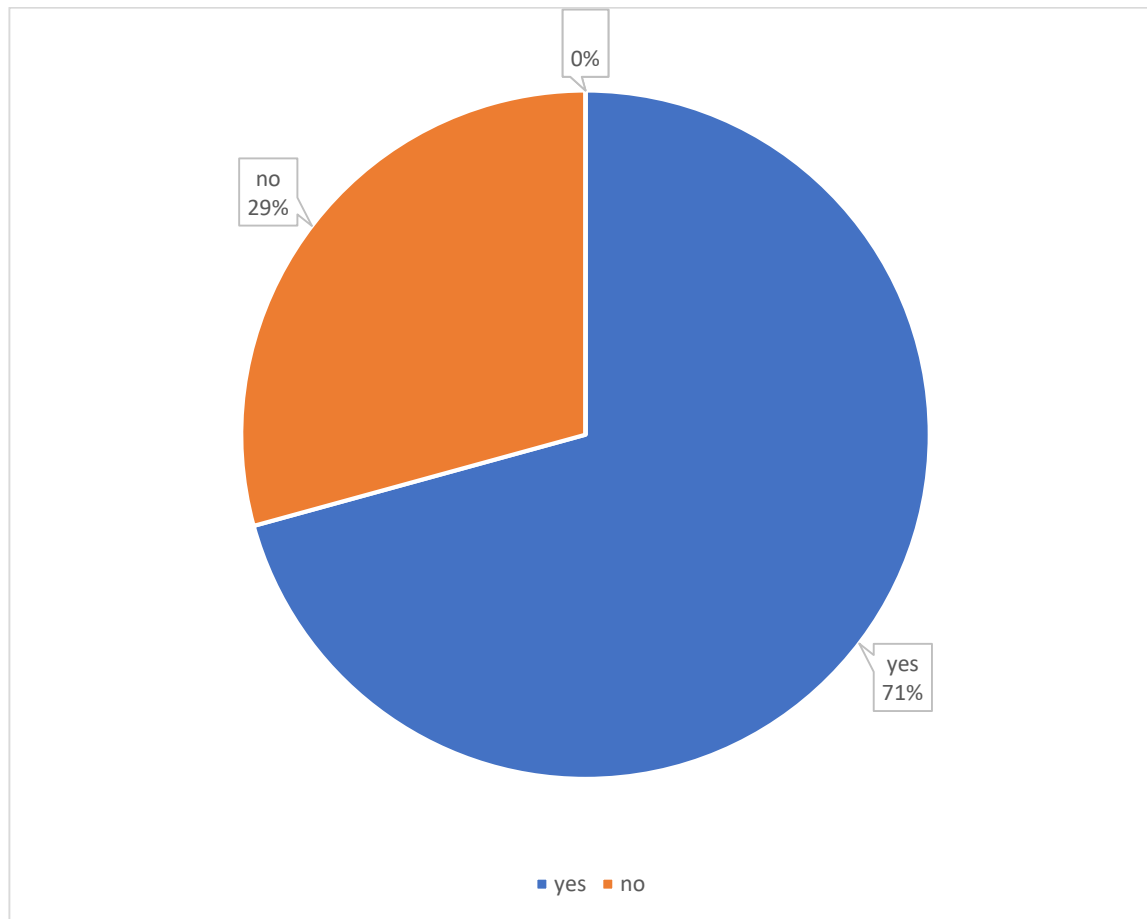


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 85% of the employees are staying in accommodation provided by the organisation.

9. Do you work overtime?

opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
yes	29	71%
no	12	29%

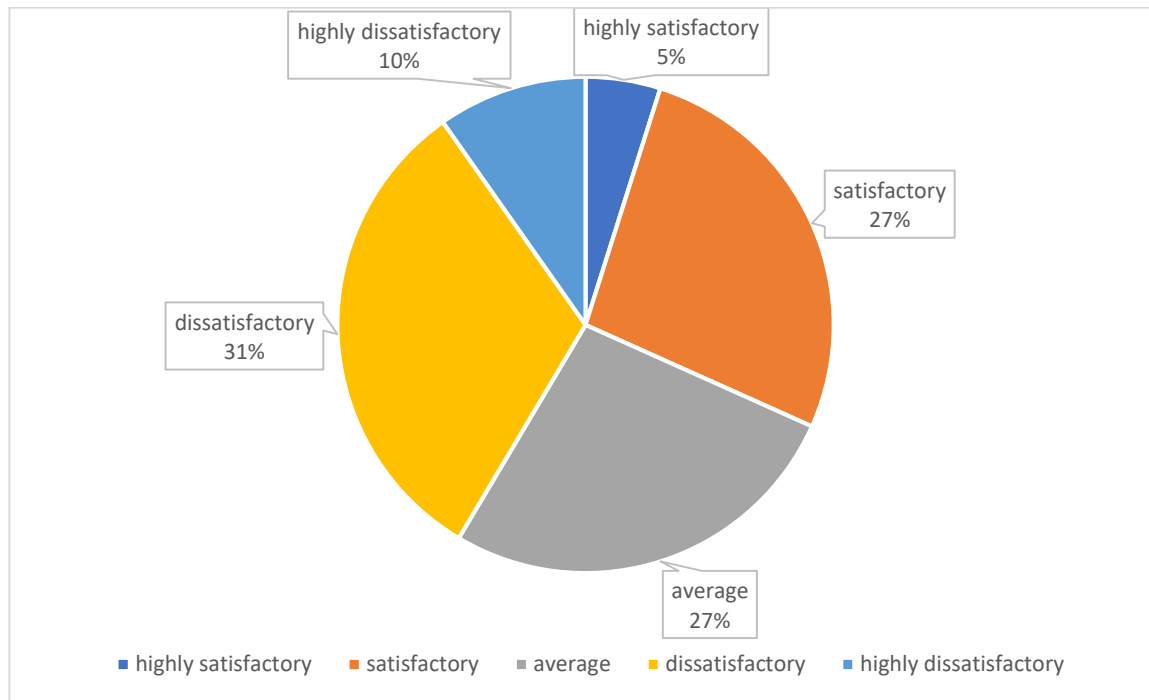


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 71% of the employees work over time.

10. Rate the overtime allowance offered by the organisation?

opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
Highly satisfactory	2	5%
satisfactory	11	27%
average	11	27%
dissatisfactory	13	31%
Highly dissatisfactory	4	10%

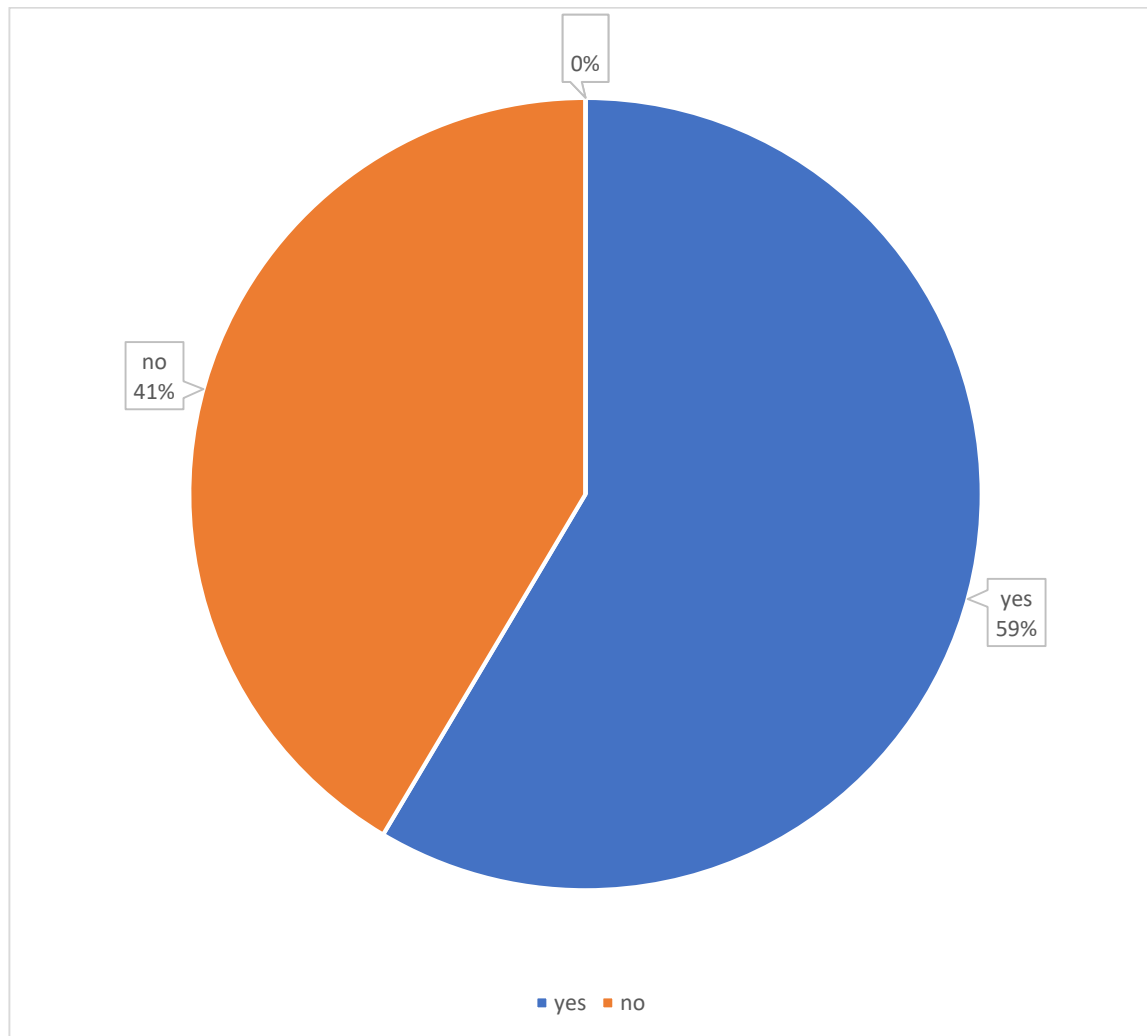


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that the maximum number of employees is dissatisfied with the overtime allowance offered by the organisation.

11. Does the organisation provide leave?

opinion	No. of respondent	percentage
yes	24	59%
no	17	41%



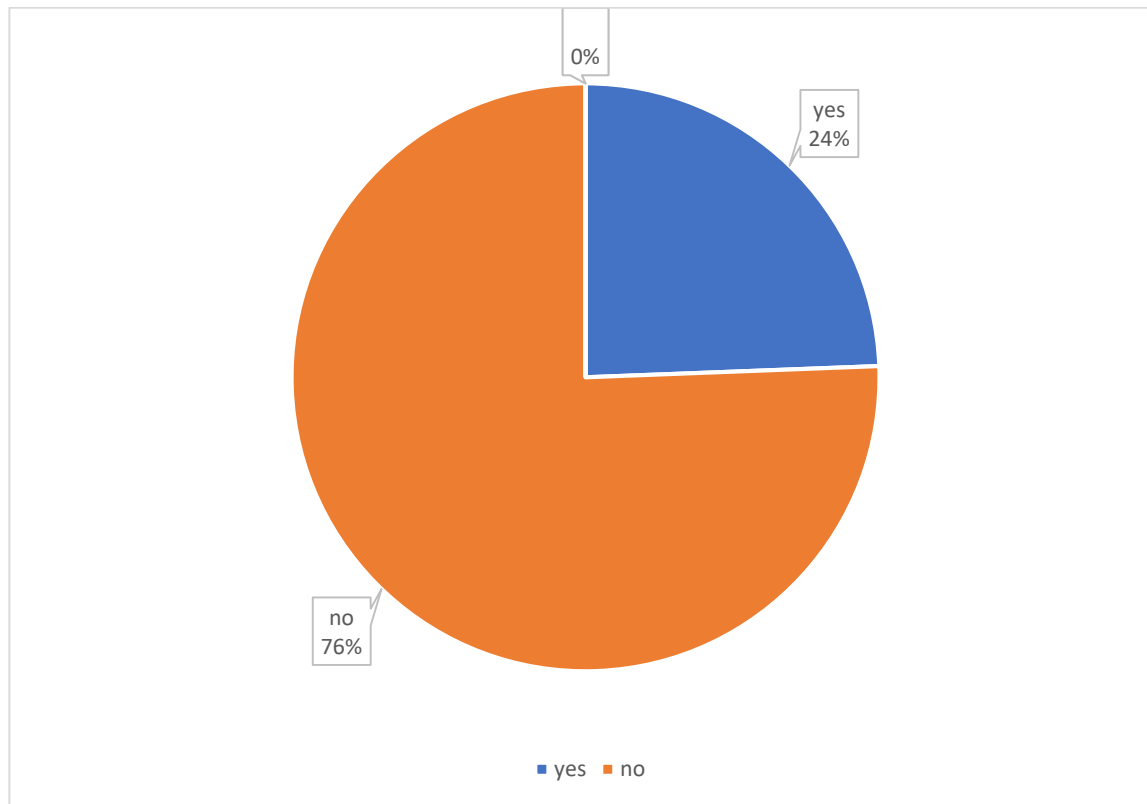
INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 59% of the employees say that the organisation provides leaves.

The responses are mixed.

12. Do you get paid leave?

opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
yes	10	24%
no	31	76%

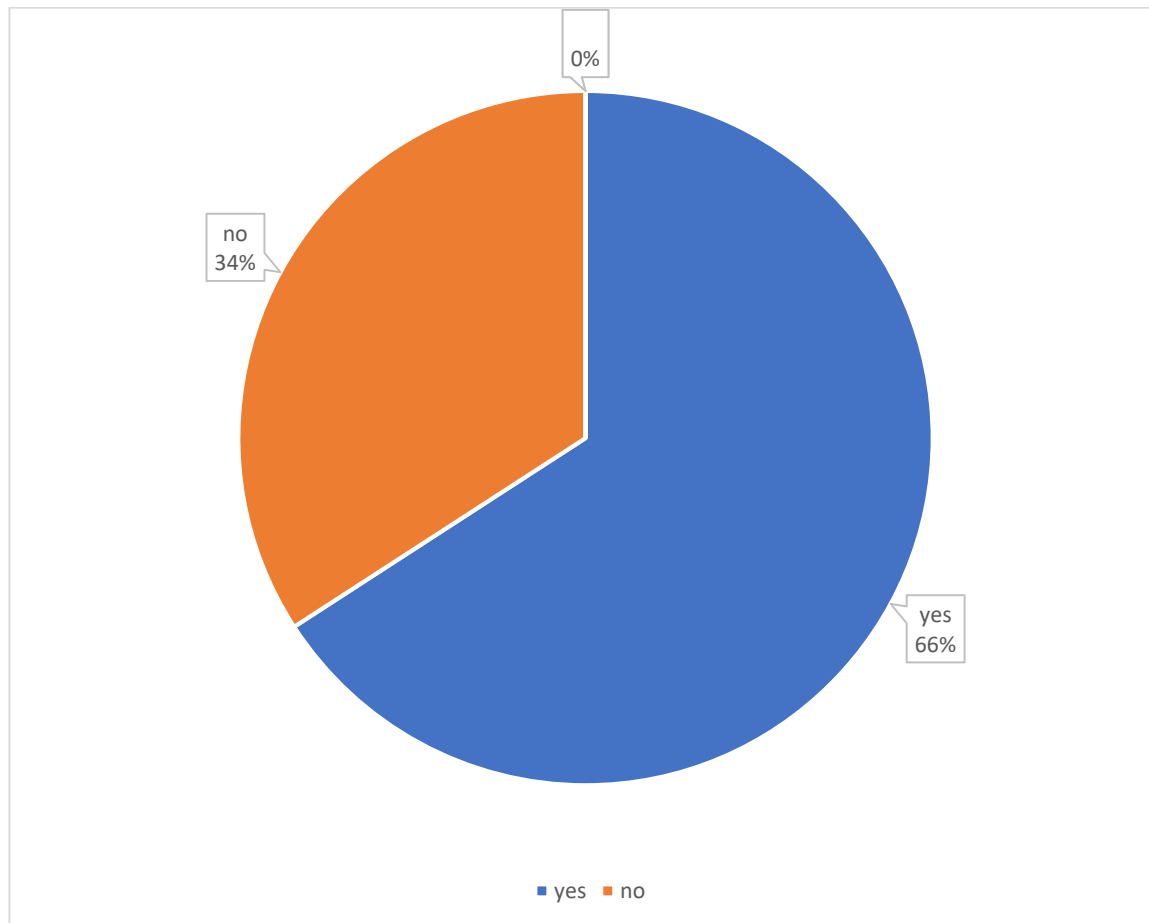


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that the organisation provides leave but maximum employees do not get paid leave. They have to generally proceed on without pay leave.

13. Does the organisation ensure that adequate safety measures are in place for the employees working in night shift?

opinion	No. of respondents	percentage
yes	27	66%
no	14	34%

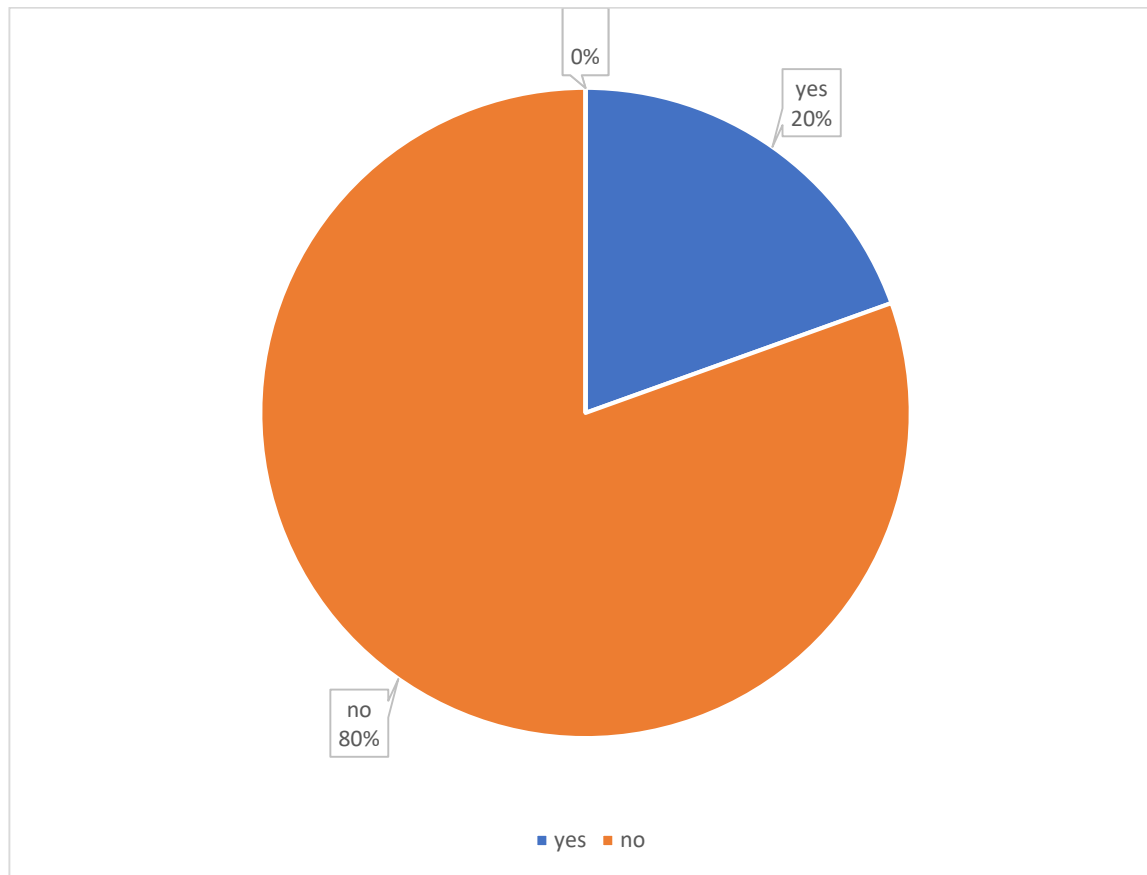


INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that the organisation takes safety measure for employees working in the night shift.

14. Does the organisation provide you with bonus and incentives?

opinion	No. of respondents	percentage
yes	8	20%
no	33	80%



INTERPRETATION

From the above figure it shows that 80% of the employees have expressed that the organisation does not provide bonus and incentives to their employees.

FINDINGS

The main findings based on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected has been given below:

1. Maximum numbers of employees are new and the employee turnover is very high.
2. Maximum numbers of employees are satisfied with the working hours of the organisation.
3. Most of the Organisations are not providing adequate safety measures to most of their employees.
4. From the analysis it is seen that employees are getting wages on time.
5. Most of the organisations are providing basic necessities like canteens, accommodations, drinking water etc to their employees.

6. Though a majority of the employees are doing overtime, most of them are not satisfied with the overtime allowance paid to them.
7. The organisations also provide leave to the employees but in most cases it is not paid leave.
8. The organisations provide safety measures to employee working at night therefore people feel safe while working at night.
9. The organisations do not provide bonus and incentives to their employees.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The suggestions below are intended for the improvement in the functioning of organization and to reduce the gap between the perception of workers, statutory requirements and the organisation's present practice by way of compliance.

1. All the Organisations need to take action to ensure and increase safety awareness among employees at all levels. This can be done through basic training.
2. The Organisations needs to put in place some quality checks on canteen and food provided that will help in improvement of food quality.
3. The Organisations need to ensure that proper leave rules are in place and the same is communicated to the employees.
4. Overtime Policies in accordance with statutory provisions needs to be drawn up by all the organizations.
5. Proper bonus and incentive scheme needs to be made for the benefit of the employees. This will help to retain the employees
6. All the organizations needs to improve the overall communication channels as many employees are not very clear on the benefits available for them.

7. The Organisations should look at providing health services and recreational activity for the employees which will help to retain them. This will reduce the turnover which in turn will bring in efficiency in the Organisation.

CONCLUSION

Welfare facilities are statutory provisions under Factory act 1928 and it is mandatory that every organization provides these facilities to the workers. Welfare facilities are very important aspect in every organization as they help to increase the productivity and efficiency of the workers and also help to retain them. Providing welfare to the labour is a fundamental duty of the organisations as the welfare of the labour will reflect on the performance of the workers, industry and also has an overall impact on the economy of the nation.

This study reveals that more labour welfare measures in accordance with the statutory rules and regulations need to be introduced amongst the employees engaged in road construction in Arunachal Pradesh as this will help to motivate them and will also benefit the organizations as it will help in retention. The organizations need to come up with welfare measures which have a positive impact on the employees and also adhere to the legislations and compliances.

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