



EMPLOYEE WELFARE IS THE KEY: AN INSIGHT

Dr. P.Venkata Rao* Chandra Sekhar Patro K.Madhu Kishore Raghunath*****

**Professor and Dean, Department of Management Studies, GVP College of Engineering (A), Visakhapatnam.*

&Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, GVP College of Engineering (A), Visakhapatnam.*

Abstract

Employees are undeniably crucial stakeholders who influence organisational effectiveness by stabilizing the tremors caused by business environment. Every organisation has an inexplicable role to play in providing welfare facilities to the stakeholders not just monetary but also non-monetary, which go beyond money of which employees are the one who make the cut if prioritized. A satisfied employee is the key ingredient for progress of every organisation and the concept of employee welfare was and will always a part of organisational efficiency. These facilities may either be voluntarily provided by the progressive and enlightened employers at their will as a social responsibility towards employee, or laws may compel them to make provision for these facilities by the government and the trade unions. Employees have always been an integral part of an organisation and in this study an effort is put to realize the measures implemented to seek employee welfare in service sector by the way of making their work life contented. This paper also draws empirical evidence by studying the impact of welfare measures on the employee's performance in both public and private organisations.

Keywords: Employees, Organization, Performance, Service Sector, Welfare Measures.

1. INTRODUCTION

Employees spend most of the noteworthy time of their life in work place, keeping this fact in mind organisations become their home away from home. Employees, Shareholders, Creditors, Suppliers, Government and various other stakeholders influence organisational effectiveness. Stakeholders are pivotal for an organisation; well if they are to be prioritized it is obvious that employees undoubtedly top the list. Taking a glimpse into their growth and development in various spheres they do their best but are the organisations up to the challenge in satisfying the employees is a big question. Employees, employees, and employees! What's there in them? Do they really need to be looked upon by organisations? Of course it's a big question in the minds of different people, but the answer will be an indomitable YES.

The concept of 'Employee welfare' is flexible and differs widely with times, regions, industry, country, social values and customs, the degree of industrialization, the general social economic development of people and political ideologies prevailing at particular moments. In general the term labour, worker, workman or employee are all used to refer to the wage earning human agents in various industries and organizations. The term welfare refers to an act of seeking physical, mental, moral and emotional well-being of an individual. However, the Committee on Labour Welfare (1969) defined the phrase to mean, "Such facilities and amenities as adequate canteens, rest and recreation facilities, sanitary and medical facilities arrangements for travel to and from and for accommodation of workers employed at a distance from their homes, and such other services, amenities and facilities including social security measures as contribute to conditions under which workers are employed."

According to the traditional economic theory labour can be defined as, "A factor of production which consists of manual and mental exertion and receives some return in form of wages, salaries or professional fees" (Railkar, 1990). The Committee of experts on welfare facilities for employees constituted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1963 has divided the welfare measures in to intramural and extramural schemes. The Intramural welfare amenities are those provided within the premises of the establishments such as sanitary facilities, crèches, rest shelters and canteens, drinking water, prevention of fatigue, health services including occupational safety, administrative arrangements, uniforms and protective clothing, shift allowance, etc. Employer secures the benefits of high efficiency and low employee absenteeism and minimum employee turnover. Facilities like housing, medical benefits and education facilities help to increase productivity of workers.

The extramural welfare amenities are provided outside the establishment such as maternity benefit, social insurance measures, sports and cultural activities, library or reading room, leave travel facilities, workers co-operatives including consumers co-operative stores, co-operative credit societies, programmes for the welfare of women, youth and children and transport facilities, etc. Thus, employee welfare is very comprehensive and embraces activities provided by employers, State, trade unions and other agencies to help workers and their families to lead a happy work life. Welfare measures should be provided by the organizations, whether public or private sector as it raises the morale of employees, reduce risk and insecurity, eliminate turnover and absenteeism, and increase the production and productivity. Thus, improving the quality of working life by providing the employee welfare facilities would go a long way in achieving the goals of the organization.



2. WELFARE MEASURES IN INDIA

The crux of the problem of employee welfare, whether under legislative compulsion or otherwise, is to determine the respective roles to be played by the State, the employers, trade unions and voluntary agencies. Apart from social responsibility, the State as an employer has the basic social responsibility of acting as a model employer and to provide all types of welfare amenities to its workers. The state might also directly sponsor welfare programmes in the areas where workers live. Some of the measures like general education up to certain stage and public health are more appropriate for the State action.

It was only after independence that the problem of employee welfare was given due attention when the socialistic pattern of society was adopted for achieving various socio-economic goals of the country. The Government of India in view of enhancing welfare and wellbeing of employees has laid down provisions for employee welfare under different labour laws. One of the important laws in this regard, is the Factories Act, 1948 which elaborates various provisions in relation to health, safety, and welfare of employees, provisions regarding working hours including weekly hours, daily hours, weekly holidays, regarding employment of young persons, canteen facilities, first aid, shelters, rest rooms and lunchrooms annual leaves with wages and provision regarding employment of women and young persons in every organization. Finally the Act makes provision for the employment of Welfare Officer in manufacturing organizations and service sector also.

Thus, it is clear that the Act makes very elaborate and unambiguous provisions regarding the minimum welfare standards to be followed by the management. But laying down the standards alone is not enough. It must also to be ensured that these provisions are implemented successfully. The non-implementation leads to dis-satisfaction of the employees working in the organizations. In India, employees in different organizations get the benefit of various welfare facilities. The purpose is to provide them better quality of work life and to keep them happy as it influences the employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate the literature related to the welfare measures and its impact on the employees performance and satisfaction.
2. To identify and compare the welfare measures provided in different public and private service sector organizations.
3. To study the impact of welfare measures on employee's performance using statistical techniques.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature related to the provision of welfare schemes that influence the employee's satisfaction and efficiency are discussed in the present paper. A study by Kumar and Yadav (2002) titled satisfaction level from employee welfare schemes in sugar factories in Gorakhpur division, revealed the overall satisfaction level of workers from welfare schemes was low in both the private and State sugar factories. Further, the workers in both sectors ranked the four employee welfare schemes according to their importance, which fell in the following order housing scheme, medical scheme, followed by education and recreation schemes. Robinson, Sparrow, Clegg, & Birdi (2006) in a study identified the key behaviors, which were found to be associated with employee engagement. The behaviors included belief in the organization, desire to work to make things better, understanding of the business context and the 'bigger picture', being respectful of and helpful to colleagues, willingness to 'go the extra mile' and keeping up to date with developments in the field. Joseph *et.al.* (2009) studied in the article points out that the structure of a welfare state rests on its social security fabric. Government, employers and trade unions have done a lot to promote the betterment of worker's conditions.

Manzini and Gwandure (2011) studied that the concept of employee welfare has been used by many organizations as a strategy of improving productivity of employees; especially in the mobile industry since work related problems can lead to poor quality of life for employees and a decline in performance. It is argued that, welfare services can be used to secure the labour force by providing proper human conditions of work and living through minimizing the hazardous effect on the life of the workers and their family members. Brikend (2011) in a study observed that job satisfaction is under the influence of a series of factors such as: The nature of work, Salary, Advancement opportunities, Management, Work groups and Work conditions. It is one of the major challenges for today's organization. Job satisfaction represents a combination of positive or negative feelings that workers have towards their work. Meanwhile, when a worker employed in a business organization, brings with it the needs, desires and experiences which determinates expectations that he has dismissed. Job satisfaction represents the extent to which expectations are and match the real awards.

A research in different organizations by Patro (2012) identified that the employees are assets of any organization. The needs of the employee must be satisfied in order to meet the goals of the organization. Any organization would be effective only

when there is high degree of co-operation between the employees and their management. Meena & Dangayach (2012) analyzed the employee satisfaction of Private Sector Banks and Public Sector Banks, Five banks were considered in which, three were public sector banks (State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, and Punjab National Bank) and remaining two were private sector banks (ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank). It was found that satisfied employees made positive contributions to the organizational effectiveness and performance. Parul and Ashok (2013) concluded in terms of proving that different welfare provisions provided to the employees working in an organization under Factories Act, 1948 are having positive relation with the employee satisfaction, after analyzing the correlation between these two factors. The reason behind this result is that these are the factors that lead to satisfaction and if these facilities are not present, it sometimes leads to dissatisfaction. Ekta (2013) studied that staff well-being and their level of satisfaction and engagement has been found to directly impact on organizational performance and ultimately organizational success. It is an obvious statement but high employee satisfaction levels can reduce employee turnover.

Nanda and Panda (2013) stated that Rourkela Steel Plant has adopted a better kind of welfare activities which create an effective working environment and thus better productivity. The different kinds of welfare schemes like medical allowance, death relief fund, insurance, housing, transport, recreation club facilities, etc., are provided by the company to the employees to maintain better industrial relations. Walking in the similar path Rajkuar (2014) opined that Employees are highly perishable, which need constant welfare measures for their upgradation and performance in this field, the social and economic aspects of life of the workers have direct influence on the social and economic development of nation. Lalitha and Priyanka (2014) ideated that the welfare measures need not be in monetary terms only but in any kind/forms. Employee welfare includes monitoring of working conditions, creation of industrial harmony through infrastructure for health, industrial relations and insurance against disease, accident and unemployment for the workers and their families.

Patro (2015) in a comparative analysis of welfare measures in public and private sector found that an employees' welfare facility is the key dimension to smooth employer-employee relationship. These welfare facilities improve the employees' morale and loyalty towards the management thereby increasing their happiness, satisfaction and performance. Venkataramana & Lokanadha (2015) conducted research with objectives of welfare measures in South Central Railways and its impact on employee satisfaction. The study concluded on with basis of observations are Extra-Mural particularly on Sports, Cultural, Library, Reading, Leaves on travel, Welfare Cooperatives, Vocational, Welfare facilities to Children and Women, where as in Intra-mural particularly protective clothing, crèches, restrooms and drinking facilities are in poor state to improve the rate of employee satisfaction.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is an inquiry into the various employee welfare measures provided and a comparison is drawn on the employee's perception, working in different public and private sector organizations of Visakhapatnam district, India. For the purpose of the study, required statistics was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through survey method using questionnaire method from the employees who are working in different service sector organisations viz., Educational institutions, Medical Centers and Banks, along with their views and suggestions. And the secondary data was collected from books, journals, magazines, monographs, thesis, government reports, organization websites, and other searching websites.

The purpose of the study was explained to the employees, and they were asked to rate the questions on a 3-point scale and were assured of confidentiality on their responses. The questionnaire was distributed to the employees (teaching staff, non-teaching staff, managers, clerks, accountants, and supervisors) from both public and private service sectors. Out of which 60 valid responses from each sector were considered for the present study.

To analyze the satisfaction level of the employees on the provision of welfare measures in different public and private service sector organizations, a 3-point scaling technique is proposed which ranges from Agree (1), Neutral (2), and Dis-Agree (3). The impact of welfare measures on employee's performance and satisfaction are analyzed using Pearson Chi-Square statistic test. To test the hypothesis regarding the level of significance in various welfare measures practiced in both public and private service sector organizations, the hypothesis relates to Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference regarding the provision of various welfare measures on employee's performance, and Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is statistically significant difference regarding the provision of various welfare measures on employee's performance.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The employees of various public and private service sector organizations are contacted for their opinion regarding the perception on the welfare measures practiced in their organizations. The questionnaire consists of twelve questions and each

consists of different options related to the question, along with comments and suggestions. The opinion collected from the employees are based on the questionnaire is used for comparative analysis and test the hypothesis using SPSS software. The results and findings regarding the significance of each welfare measure on the employee's efficiency are discussed below wherein a question was put forth to the sample selected i.e. "Has the organisations been good enough in providing various welfare measures". The responses of the employees are shown in Table.1.

Table.1. Employee's Responses towards Welfare Measures

Sl. No.	Factor	Organisation	Agree		Neutral		Dis-Agree		Total	
			#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	Housing Facilities	Public	48	80	12	20	0	0	60	100
		Private	8	13	16	27	36	60	60	100
		Total	56	47	28	23	36	30	120	100
2	Education Benefits	Public	46	77	8	13	6	10	60	100
		Private	23	38	25	42	12	20	60	100
		Total	69	58	33	28	18	15	120	100
3	Medical Facilities	Public	41	68	18	30	1	2	60	100
		Private	5	8	14	23	41	68	60	100
		Total	46	38	32	27	42	35	120	100
4	Retirement Benefits	Public	56	93	4	7	0	0	60	100
		Private	2	3	11	18	47	78	60	100
		Total	58	48	15	13	47	39	120	100
5	Work Environment	Public	30	50	12	20	18	30	60	100
		Private	34	57	18	30	8	13	60	100
		Total	64	53	30	25	26	22	120	100
6	Canteen Facilities	Public	37	62	21	35	2	3	60	100
		Private	46	77	12	20	2	3	60	100
		Total	83	69	33	28	4	3	120	100
7	Retention Policies	Public	48	80	7	12	5	8	60	100
		Private	7	12	27	45	26	43	60	100
		Total	55	46	34	28	31	26	120	100
8	Recreation Facilities	Public	19	32	25	42	16	27	60	100
		Private	24	40	24	40	12	20	60	100
		Total	43	36	49	41	28	23	120	100
9	Grievance Handling	Public	37	62	19	32	7	12	60	100
		Private	12	20	17	28	28	47	60	100
		Total	49	41	36	30	35	29	120	100
10	Transport Facilities	Public	35	58	20	33	5	8	60	100
		Private	14	23	16	27	30	50	60	100
		Total	49	41	36	30	35	29	120	100
11	Drinking and Sanitary Facilities	Public	43	72	10	17	7	11	60	100
		Private	44	73	9	15	7	12	60	100
		Total	87	73	19	16	14	11	120	100
12	Other Amenities	Public	37	62	14	23	9	15	60	100
		Private	10	17	34	57	16	27	60	100
		Total	47	39	48	40	25	21	120	100



Table.1. shows the responses of the employees on provision of various welfare measures in both public and private service sector organizations. Well when taking the response of different employees over the effectiveness of welfare measures provided to them, 12 indicators were taken to form a consensus. The observations ascertained from the tabulated data are analyzed.

1. Housing facility being the primary need of every employee, 80% from public organizations agreed that they were good enough for them, compared to only 13% in private organizations. Number of employees who voted against good housing facilities accounted to 60% in private organizations, the disagreement in public organizations being nil. People having mixed opinion about good housing facility accounted for 20% in public organization and 27% in private organizations.
2. The educational benefits provided for the employees and as well as their children in public organizations have held its head high. The respondents who agreed with positive impact in public organization constituted to 77% in contrast to 38% in private organizations, people who has foot on both sides with mixed reactions accounted for 13% in public organizations and 42% in private organizations. Employees who disagreed with proper educational benefits accumulated to 10% in public organization and 20% in private organizations.
3. Health has always been a matter of concern with employees in their workplace irrespective of their work and when it comes to medical facilities, public organization has been on top of their game and employees who agree with good medical facilities in public sector comes to 68% whereas the percentage went down to 8% in case of private organization. And employees who disagree with the concept of good medical facilities accounted for 30% in public organization and 23% in private organization and coming to employees holding mixed review about the condition of medical facilities accounts for 2% in public organizations and 68% in private organizations, which should be improved upon to enhance employee performance.
4. Employers play a significant role when it comes to post retirement of employees. The employee's response in this regard is has been recorded and it is found that public sector has always been the best destination for retirement plans. The statistics proves that 93% of employees in public organization agree with the effectiveness in retirement schemes compared to a very discriminating 3% for private organizations, nevertheless employees who share neutral opinion accounts for 7% in public organization and 18% in private organizations. Well critics are always there to show us what an organization lacks and employees who disagree with concept of proper retirement plans accounts to 78% in private organizations and none disagreed in public organizations.
5. The working environment should be clean and hygiene enough for employees to seek a sense of satisfaction in one way and when surveyed there was a turnaround in the favor of private organisations a statistics convey 57% of employees agree with the fact that private organisation provide better working conditions in comparison to 50% in public organisations. Employees having neutral opinion constitute 20% in public and 35% in private organisation and disagreement is also a criterion to judge the facilities where private organisation constitutes 13% disagreement in contrast to 30% in public organisation.
6. Canteen facility is very important for every employee in their free or break time and when asked about how good the canteen facilities were the numbers accounted as follows. Employees who agreed that facilities are good were around 62% in public organizations a few times less compared to 77% in private organizations, 35% employees in public and 20% in private hold neutral opinion about effectiveness of canteen facilities and speaking about the employees who are often disappointed with these facilities account for just 3% in public organization and 3% in private organization.
7. The employees being faithful to employer holds a strong point but when comes to the efforts put in by the employer in retaining the employees there has been a significant difference in public organisation and private organisation as we have seen, 80% of employees from public organisations agree with the fact that public organization put in good effort in retaining employees when compared to only 12% in private sector, well employees who disagree with fact of retaining employees accounts for 12% in public sector and 45% in private sector. Employees who have neutral opinion on retention policy followed in their organisation have come up to 8% in public organisation and 43% private organisations.
8. Recreational facilities are very important for every employee whether public or private given the fact that these facilities energize the employees and push up their confidence, in fact the statistics when collected from different employees 32% of employees in public sector agreed with the fact that recreational facilities are often given to them in contrast to only 40% in private employees. Employees who are in neutral zone account for almost same at 42% in public organisation and 40% in private organisation, employee who disagree with the availability recreational facilities counts for 27% in public organisation and 20% in private organisation.
9. Grievance handling being the tool to bring justice to employee problems by different organizations, the employees who agreed with the fact that grievances are handled efficiently accounts for 62% in public organization constituted in contrast to 20% in private organizations, people who has foot on both sides with mixed reactions accounted for

32% in public organizations and 28% in private organizations. Employees who disagreed with proper Grievance handling accumulated to 12% in public organization and 47% in private organizations.

10. Transport facility in the form of allowances has been always been boon for public organization where the numbers accounted as follows. Employees who agreed that facilities are good were around 58% in public organizations in competition to 23% in private organizations. 33% employees in public and 27% in private hold neutral opinion about effectiveness of transport facilities and speaking about the employees who are often are disappointed with these facilities account for just 8% in public organization and 50% in private organization.
11. It is fact that one of the basic physiological need of human being is drinking water and sanitary facilities and when asked to different employees 72% of them agree with the facilities being in place in public organization in consensus to 73% in private organization, employees who hold mixed opinion to these facilities come to 17% in public organization and 15% in private organization. Well we have section of employees who disagree with the provision of these facilities account for 11% in public organisation and 12% in private organization.
12. Finally, considering other amenities like cooperative stores facilities, insurance facilities, post offices, etc., which enhance employee performance can be analyzed as follows given the statistics that 62% of public organization employees agree with the good provision of other amenities against 17% in private organisation, taken the other side of the equation employees who do not agree with the fact accounts for 23% in public organisation and 57% in private organisation and employees who hold neutral opinion comes for 15% in public organization and 27% in private organisation.

The descriptive analysis and chi-square test is performed to test the significance difference of the hypothesis on the provision of welfare measures in public and private sector organisations are shown in table.2.

Table.2. Descriptive Statistics and Chi-Square Test

S. No.	Welfare Indicator	Organisation	Mean	SD	p-value	Significance
1	Housing Facilities	Public	1.200	0.403	65.143*	0.000
		Private	2.467	0.724		
2	Education Benefits	Public	1.333	0.655	18.424*	0.000
		Private	1.817	0.748		
3	Medical Facilities	Public	1.333	0.510	66.769*	0.000
		Private	2.600	0.643		
4	Retirement Benefits	Public	1.067	0.252	100.543*	1.000
		Private	2.750	0.508		
5	Work Environment	Public	1.800	0.879	5.296	0.071
		Private	1.567	0.722		
6	Canteen Facilities	Public	1.417	0.561	3.430	0.180
		Private	1.267	0.516		
7	Retention Policies	Public	1.283	0.613	56.554*	0.000
		Private	2.317	0.676		
8	Recreation Facilities	Public	1.950	0.769	1.173	0.556
		Private	1.800	0.755		
9	Grievance Handling	Public	1.500	0.651	27.302*	0.000
		Private	2.267	0.821		
10	Transport Facilities	Public	1.733	0.756	0.676	0.173
		Private	1.667	0.774		
11	Drinking and Sanitary Facilities	Public	1.400	0.694	0.064	0.968
		Private	1.383	0.691		
12	Other Amenities	Public	1.533	0.747	25.804*	0.000
		Private	2.100	0.656		

* 5% level of significance



The data presented in Table.2 shows there is statistically significant difference in seven indicators out of twelve. From the above analysis it is observed that the housing facilities has significant difference as it is interesting to know that mean score (2.467) of private sector is higher than the mean score (1.20) of public sector organizations. Provision of education benefits has a significant difference on the employees as the mean score (1.187) of private sector is more than the mean score (1.333) of public sector. Another significant difference is observed regarding the provision of medical facilities as the mean score of private sector (2.60) is more than that of public sector (1.333). Similarly there is a significant difference in provision of retirement benefits in both private sector (mean score 2.750) and public sector (mean score 1.067). Practicing of retention policies also has a significant difference in public and private sectors as the mean scores are 1.283 and 2.317 respectively. There is significant difference regarding the grievance handling of the employees also as the mean scores in private sector (2.267) is more than public sector (1.500). Regarding the provision of other amenities also there is a significant difference i.e. the mean score of private sector (2.100) is greater than mean score of public sector (1.533). In case of the above seven indicators the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

The above analysis show that in both the public and private service sector organisations, regarding the provision of welfare facilities like proper work environment (1.683, 1.683), hygiene canteen facilities (1.417,1.567), recreation facilities (1.950, 2.167), transport facilities (1.733, 1.400), drinking water and sanitary facilities (1.400, 1.383) it is observed that there is no statistical significant difference. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted in case of the above four welfare indicators as these do not show much impact on the employee's performance and satisfaction.

The welfare measures such as housing facilities, retirement benefits, medical facilities, education benefits, retention policies, grievance handling and other amenities have shown significant impact on the employee's performance, whereas work environment, canteen facilities, transport facilities, drinking and sanitary facilities have shown no association with the employees based on the Pearson's chi-square analysis in different public and private sector organizations. Therefore, welfare measures are considered as critical indicators that influences the performance of the employee'. The employee's working in public sector organizations are highly satisfied with the welfare measures provided to them when compared to those working in private sector organizations. The public sector offer superior employee welfare facilities to their employees than those provided in private sector. Proper implementation of welfare measures increases the employees' performance and therefore helpful in overall development of an organization.

7. CONCLUSION

The concept of employees is literally as old as human civilization. As civilization keeps ticking so is the role of employee and facilities around him in an organization. As citizens constitute a country so are the employees for an organisation. It's high time that employers start realizing that 'No employee - No organisation' concept is omnipresent hence organisations must put more efforts in prioritizing employee needs first. Well the fact that employees have always been the key for every organizational growth, the same has been iterated time and again through various theories by ubiquitous notable intellectual scholars, emphasizing their welfare and development. The concept of employee welfare have reached many milestones in improving the efficiency of employees since work related problems compliment poor quality of life for employees and a decline in performance. The Welfare measures are requisite for every employee, without welfare measures employee is isolated in the organization. The objectives of the study have been achieved after conducting relevant statistical test and results obtained. The organizations are encouraged to be a driving force regarding these welfare facilities in motivating the employees and increase their work efficacies.

Limitations are part and parcel of any study, and the present study is no exception which includes constraint of geographical coverage, since the study was conducted only in Visakhapatnam district service sector and the result articulates the viewpoint of different employees working at these organizations. The private sector units have to take necessary initiatives in finding out the employee pre-requisites and initiate those welfare facilities for the success of business units. New schemes and facilities should complement the existing ones in improving the competence and work life quality of the employees by the management of all organizations.

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