

IMPACT OF EMPLOYEES WELFARE MEASURES ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

A lot of changes have taken place recently with regards to employee welfare measures. Completely new methods in the way of operations of organizations could be one of the significant reasons for the same. These resulted in the off shoot of many new jobs. In this study, an attempt has been made to understand about the various specific welfare measures being provided to employees doing contemporary jobs. It also focusses on the link between employee well being and organizational performance with the help of some case studies. In the end, it highlights the benefits of implementing such schemes. These welfare measures contribute a lot for the prosperity of the employees and employers.

Key Words

Contemporary jobs, Employee welfare measures, Performance.

Introduction

The term employee welfare is being used widely these days. It is also called staff welfare and refers to the services and benefits that are provided by the employer for the well-being of the employees. It includes healthcare, paid time off and amenities. These services impact the physical as well as mental health of employees, helping create an efficient and contented workforce. Employee welfare not only benefits the individual employee but also the organization as a whole. A strong employee welfare program can lead to improved job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, increased productivity, and higher employee retention rates. The main aim of employee welfare is to improve employee morale, develop a better image of the company, develop efficiency and create a satisfied workforce. The main features of employee welfare are that it is dynamic in nature and varies from region to region. It is flexible as new measures are added from time to time. It may be introduced by the company, charitable organizations, and the government. It is a continuous process and is done for the betterment of employees.

Employees Welfare can be of two types:

- **Statutory:** The Statutory welfare services are introduced by the government, and it sets the minimum standard for safety and well-being for the employees at the workplace, in terms of first-aid, hours of work, hygiene, sanitation, etc.
- **Voluntary:** This refers to the amenities provided by the organization besides the statutory obligations. These include transport, medical treatment, free meals, schooling facilities for children, sports, games and many more.

The objective of employee welfare is to upgrade the life of the working class, to bring about holistic development of the worker's personality and so on. Employee welfare is in the interest of employee, employer and the society as a whole. It enables workers to perform their work in healthy and favourable environment. Hence, it refines efficiency of workers and keeps them satisfied, thereby contributing to high employee morale. It also develops a sense of responsibility and dignity amongst the workers and thus makes them good citizens of the nation. Apart from the wages and salary, anything done by the organization to improve the living standard of employees and keep them contented comes under the domain of employee welfare. All those services, benefits and facilities offered to employees by the employer to make their life worth living, are included in employee welfare.

According to ILO, "Employee welfare should be understood as such service, facilities and amenities which may be established in or in the vicinity of undertakings to enable the persons employed in them to perform their work in healthy and peaceful surroundings and to avail of facilities which improve their health and bring high morale". The objectives of employee welfare are discussed below:

- (i) To enhance the level of morale of employees, (ii) To create a loyal, contented workforce in organization., (iii) To develop a better image of the company in the minds of the employees, (iv) To enable the workers to live comfortably and happily, (v) To develop efficiency of the workers, (vi) To reduce influence of trade unions over the workers, (vii) To expose philanthropic and benevolent activities of the company, (viii) To make the workers know that the company takes care of them., (ix) To develop positive attitude towards job, company and management, (x) To reduce tax burden, (xi) To develop a feeling of satisfaction of employees with the company, (xii) To develop a sense of belongingness to the company, (xiii) To retain skilled and talented workers, (xiv) To develop better human relation, (xv) To

prevent social evils like drinking, gambling through improvement of working conditions, cultural activities and social conditions.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the specific measures such as health insurance, wellness programmes, flexible work environment.
2. To highlight the link between employee well-being and organisational performance with the help of case studies.
3. To study the benefits of implementing employee welfare measures.

Specific Measures of Employees Welfare

The present study throws light upon the top fifteen welfare measures for workers. Some of the measures are:

1. **Hours of Work and Adequate Wages:** Some conflicts can arise between the employer and the workers in connection with reduction of working hours. It is true that long working hours affect the period of rest and sleep and results in exhaustion, physical and mental strain, which lead to illness. Therefore, the working hours should be reasonable. Shorter hours of working increase the productive efficiency of the workers. But reduction of working hours cannot be encouraged below the limit where the total output is affected. The employer will pay wages in relation to the total output. Reduced output means lower wages and lower standard of living for workers.
2. **To avoid Industrial Fatigue and Rest Pauses:** Fatigue injures health of workers and causes inefficiency and reduction in output. If not relieved by timely rest pauses, it would cause loss of concentration, reduce in muscular control and adversely affect the functioning of the eyes and ears and thus result in greater chances of accidents. Rest pauses serve the most useful purpose of avoiding harmful effect to strain and fatigue. Therefore, adequate rest pauses must be introduced for the factory workers at the proper inter-val.
3. **To Avoid Accident and Safety Precautions:** Safety measures to prevent accident are necessary in the interest of workers as well as employers. Some of the safety measures are: (i) At places of dangers, mechanical safeguards and safety devices should be provided. (ii) Protective clothing

should be supplied to the workers to avoid accidents due to loose dresses. (iii) Many accidents take place due to over-crowding of working space. Therefore, there should be reasonable and safe distance between the machines. (iv) The safety devices should be checked from time to time and defects in them should be removed before the actual failure. These will greatly help in avoiding accidents.

4. **Fire Protection:** For protection against fire, the factory building should be fire proof. Fire alarms and fire extinguishers should be installed at proper places and regular fire drills should be held, so that, in case of emergency, every person in the factory must know what to do. Special exits and stairs should be provided in case of fire.
5. **Lighting and Ventilation:** Bad lighting can cause accidents and affect the performance of workers. Therefore, the lighting systems in the factory should be carefully designed. Good ventilation will result in the supply of constant fresh air and maintain even and bearable temperature in the workshops. Artificial cooling of hot air during summer providing 'Khas Parda' or desert cooler can go a long way in increasing the efficiency and output of the workers.
6. **Labour Discontent:** To eliminate labour discontent, following points may be noted: The workers should be allowed to have a free expression of their grievances. Their complaints should be given due consideration, underground discontentment results a spirit of re-volt and it becomes more difficult to solve the problem at a delayed stage. Once the grievances are known, these should be settled in just and fair manner.
7. **Industrial Housing:** Over-crowding of labour in unhealthy and insanitary surrounding is considered as one of the evils of the factory system, which affects health and efficiency of workers. Industrialists should try to construct their own cottages in the vicinity of the works and rent these to their workers. The sanitation and supervision of such colonies should be the re-sponsibility of the employer. This will greatly improve the relations between the employer and the workers.
8. **Transport:** Where the workers live far away from working sites and ordinary means of transport are not available at cheap rates, the employers should provide buses to carry the workers, who have to walk for long distance in order to reach their factory. The unnecessary strain on walking reflects on the efficiency of his work and output.

9. **Education:** The welfare department should include among their activities, the education of adults, and the children of workers. The workers must be encouraged to attend these classes and to send their children to schools, run by the employer. Some major industrial concerns have provided these facilities.
10. **Lunchrooms and Cafeteria:** Where the housing accommodation is far away from the works, and the workers cannot go home and return in time during recess hours, they should be provided mess facilities inside the factory area for supply of cheap wholesome and well-cooked mid-day meals to workers. The food should be provided at actual cost and the activities should be controlled and managed by the works committee under the guidance of welfare workers. Some concerns provide meals etc., at subsidised rates.
11. **Rest Rooms:** Properly equipped rest rooms should be provided away from the noise and dirty atmosphere of the factory for providing an opportunity to the workers to relax and restore their energy during the rest time. These rooms should be well ventilated, bright and provided with adequate sanitation.
12. **Medical Service:** Good health of workers would mean better output and more profits for the employer. It is, therefore, considered as the responsibility of the employer both from business and humanitarian point of view. The medical service is considered as the activity of the welfare department. Free medical aid should be provided to the sick workers. It would be desirable to maintain a hospital with a few beds in the charge of a fully qualified medical officer and to provide a well-equipped dispensary, and first-aid appliances. A fulltime nurse can be very helpful in cases of accidents and other things, where the patients are admitted in the hospital.
13. **Sports and Games:** Games and sports ensure robust health and feeling of brotherhood among the workers. Provision of rest rooms and indoor games can be enjoyed by the workers during mid-day intervals. Subordinate and higher officials can come in contact with the workers. This develops cooperation and cordial relations amongst them and reduces the industrial disputes. They will learn to respect each other.
14. **Financial Assistance:** As the workers often need money for discharging their family obligations and they generally do not have a reserve to fall back upon at such emergency. Hence following welfare schemes should be made to help the workers to improve their economic securities to

protect them from continued financial worries: (i) Savings Deposits. (ii) Co-operative Savings and Loan assistance. (iii) Mutual Benefit Schemes. (iv) Pension Fund. (v) Provident Fund. (vi) Home Ownership Scheme. (vii) Group Insurance. (viii) Employer's Co-operative Stores. These schemes can serve in the interest of the workers to a large extent and bind them with loyalty to the employer.

15. **Other Activities:** Among other activities of the welfare department, a few more can be added, such as: (i) Training and care of young recruits. (ii) Work Library. (iii) Work Magazines. (iv) Annual outings. (v) Sports competition. (vi) Relief fund for families of workers in difficulties. (vii) Conduct of enquiries into wrongful dismissals. (viii) Special facilities for women and young person are working in the factory. (ix) Sickness and accident insurance.

The link between employee well-being and organisational performance

Before assessing the evidence on the relationship between employee well-being and productivity, it is useful to first understand and reflect on why we might expect employee well-being to affect productivity in the first place. Several different theories have been propounded by various researchers. Perhaps the most long-running and widely known is Human Relations Theory. Going back nearly a century, the human relations movement has hypothesised that higher employee well-being – typically measured in terms of job satisfaction (a cognitive, evaluative judgement) – is associated with higher morale, which, in turn, leads to higher productivity (see Strauss (1968), for example). This framework is in line with research showing that positive attitudes towards a particular life domain carry with them positive behavioural implications (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Following this reasoning, higher job satisfaction, with presumably more favourable attitudes towards work and the workplace, should be associated with less absenteeism or staff turnover, among other important outcomes. More recently, there has been a more “emotional turn” to the research. Emotion Theory assumes that employees’ emotional status can affect and drive their performance (see Staw et al. (1994), for example). There are several different channels through which this may take place. First, positive affect – or “mood” – may itself lead to heightened motivation, and hence better job outcomes and organisational citizenship (Isen and Baron, 1991). A further channel is through positive, stimulating arousal, either directly (Russell, 2003) or indirectly via changes in attitudes or behaviour (Baumeister et al., 2007). A related stream of work burdens the positive effect of emotions on creativity, arguing that positive affect leads to what psychologists call cognitive variation (Clore et al., 1994). Here, three mechanisms are proposed in the psychological literature: first,

positive affect increases the number of cognitive elements available for association. Second, it increases – through defocused attention – the breadth of these elements. Finally, it increases cognitive flexibility, and hence the probability that cognitive elements become associated with each other (Isen, 1999) – for example, helping people make connections between ideas for a new project. In other words, positive affect increases the number and diversity of our thoughts, helps us muse about them more intensively, and in doing so, helps us build relationships between thoughts that have previously been disconnected from each other – a perpetual, creative process bearing new thoughts and ideas.

The nature, form, and temporal dynamics of the relationship between positive affect and creativity at work was studied by Amabile et al. (2005). The authors employed experience sampling methods to collect – for several months – daily and monthly reports of affect and creativity from 222 employees in seven companies and three industries (chemicals, high-tech, and consumer products) working on 26 organisational projects that called for creativity. Using 11,471 daily reports of employees and peer ratings, and controlling for education level and company tenure, amongst other factors, the authors found that positive affect has a positive relationship with creativity, defined as production of novel and useful ideas and measured by asking peers to assess the creativity of employees' work. Is this just a case of 'reverse causality'? Amabile et al. (2005) showed that positive affect is an antecedent of creativity with an incubation period of up to two days. Perhaps even more convincingly, the causal effect of affective states on creativity has been shown in the laboratory. Isen et al. (1987), for example, induced positive affect in participants – by showing them a few minutes of a comedy film or by giving them a small bag of candy – and then administered tasks generally regarded as requiring creative ingenuity. They found that participants in the experimental condition (i.e. those with more positive affect) performed better in creative tasks than participants in the control condition. Interestingly, negative affect did not produce comparable improvements in creative performance. Besides creativity, how do emotions relate to productivity more generally? Oswald et al. (2015) conducted a series of lab experiments that randomly allocated students into either an experimental condition in which they received a happiness-enhancing treatment (like watching a ten-minute comedy clip or receiving free chocolate, fruits, and non-alcoholic drinks) or a control condition (in which they watched a calm placebo clip or received nothing at all). The participants then performed a real effort task for which they were paid a piece-rate. Increases in happiness were strongly associated with increases in productivity of up to 12% on the task (they were asked to correctly sum up numbers for ten minutes). This is a large effect that can – due to the randomised

experimental nature of the study – be interpreted as causal. Importantly, the authors showed that the happiness-productivity relationship goes beyond the artificial lab setting, by exploiting randomly occurring real-life shocks to well-being (bereavement or family illness): students who reported such shocks performed systematically worse on the task than their peers who did not. Another piece of real-life evidence comes from De Neve and Oswald (2012). Using data on more than 10,000 young adults in the US, and comparing siblings from the same family while also controlling for a wide range of observables including education, intelligence, physical health, and self-esteem, the authors found that individuals who reported higher levels of positive affect and life satisfaction at ages 16, 18, and 22 have significantly higher levels of earnings later in life. Important pathways were a higher probability of obtaining a college degree, getting hired and promoted, and higher levels of non-cognitive skills (more optimism and extraversion, less neuroticism). Interestingly, a significant stream of research on individual well-being and workplace performance has focused on call centres. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that many tasks in this setting can be easily quantified at high-frequency intervals, for example, the number of calls or sales per hour or day. This is not true of many other professions, where researchers are forced to instead study outcomes like quarterly or annual managerial reviews (which are more problematic to interpret). Rothbard and Wilk (2011) studied affect and productivity of call centre agents in two callcentres of a large insurance company. The authors were particularly interested in how start-of-workday mood affects how call centre agents see interactions with customers, how they feel after them, and how these feelings affect their (objective) work productivity and quality of work. Employing experience sampling methods, the authors recorded affect – covering positive mood such as being excited, enthusiastic, upset, or irritable – daily over a period of three weeks, at the start of the workday and after calls. The authors showed that start-of-workday mood, or mood before calls more generally, did indeed affect the productivity of call centre agents: positive affect subsequent to calls related to better quality of work, whereas negative affect was positively associated with quantity – that is, more calls in total. Coviello et al. (2017), using a simple daily questionnaire, tracked the mood of more than 2,700 call centre agents located in nine different call centres for over a year. The authors found that better mood decreases the number of calls per hour, or average call duration in minutes. This finding held even after controlling for individual fixed effects (including, for example, the innate ability of call centre agents) as well as leveraging variation in local weather patterns that may affect mood. A potential mechanism they discuss is that better mood may lead to a heightened vulnerability to social distractions, i.e. call centre agents in better mood may talk more with each other than clients on the phone (Cunningham, 1988; Pacheco-

Ungueti and Parmentier, 2016).¹⁴ Although call centres offer an interesting real-world laboratory to study well-being and performance, some of the performance metrics are difficult to interpret. This is especially true for the number of calls. In particular, Coviello et al. (2017) rightly note that the number of calls is not necessarily a good measure of productivity: to the extent that an increase in the number of calls comes at the expense of actual call quality (which may be the case for a call centre agent in bad mood), it is difficult to interpret an increase in the number of calls as an increase in productivity per se (in fact, it could be interpreted as a decrease). Staw and Barsade (1993) tested the question of whether positive or negative affect leads to better performance at the management level. Contrary to call centre agents, the work of managers is less structured, and when it comes to decision-making, potentially more influenced by affect than routine tasks. The authors conducted managerial simulations (in which 111 first-year MBA students were required to run a fictitious production plant) as part of a weekend assessment centre, including a three-hour in-basket exercise (an exercise in which participants must work themselves through a simulated inbox under time pressure) with 21 different decision items. They found that management students with higher levels of positive affect did perform better in terms of interpersonal tasks (within-group discussions) and overall decision-making. Zelenski et al. (2008) confirm this result in a study of 75 directors employed in the private sector and the Canadian federal government: managers with higher levels of positive affect rated their productivity higher than their peers. Overall, the literature at the individual level suggests a positive impact of mood on performance. However, the sign (and to some extent size) of the impact of positive affect on performance seems to be context specific. It depends, in particular, on the tasks being completed and the working environment. Employee well-being and firm performance having looked at the relationship between well-being and productivity at the individual level, we now zoom out, and look at this relationship at the firm level. We first present results from novel empirical analyses in collaboration with the Gallup Organization, analysing its extensive client database to study the relationship between employee well-being and various firm performance outcomes. We then supplement this analysis with other, supporting evidence from the literature. In general, we expect the direct effects of “happier workers working better” identified previously to translate into positive impacts at the aggregate firm level. But beyond immediate, direct effects of mood on motivation and productivity, we also expect there to be more slowly moving and indirect effects. We thus look additionally at employee recruitment and turnover – the extent to which more satisfied workplaces are more likely to attract and retain talented workers – and at customer loyalty and satisfaction, which are particularly relevant in service industries where employees are in direct contact with customers.

Performance Outcomes.

We studied four outcomes, arguably the most important key performance indicators from a business perspective:

- **Customer Loyalty:** Measures of customer loyalty varied across the 339 research studies. Most studies included fairly standard customer loyalty metrics such as the likelihood to recommend or repurchase a product or service, the “net promoter score”, or simply the number of repeated transactions. Other studies also included measures of customer satisfaction, service excellence, or customer evaluation of the quality of claims.
- **Employee Productivity:** Measures of employee productivity included mostly financial measures such as revenue or sales per person, growth in revenue or sales over time, quantity per time period, enrolments in programs, labour hours, costs to the budget, cross-sells, or performance ratings.
- **Profitability:** Measures of profitability included the percentage profit of revenue or sales, or the difference between current profit and budgeted profit or profit in the previous time period.
- **Staff Turnover** Staff turnover is defined as the percentage of (voluntary) turnover per business unit.

Benefits of investing in Employee Welfare Services for the Organisation

1. **Increased Productivity:** Satisfied employees tend to be more engaged and focused on their work. When employees feel cared for, they are likely to perform better, leading to increased productivity.
2. **Innovation Opportunities:** A positive work environment encourages creativity and innovation. When employees feel supported, they are more likely to contribute fresh ideas and solutions.
3. **Reduced Staff Turnover:** Employee welfare initiatives can reduce turnover rates. When employees are content and feel valued, they are less likely to seek employment elsewhere.
4. **Talent Retention:** Companies that invest in employee welfare retain valuable talent. High employee morale and job satisfaction lead to longer tenures.

5. **Cost Savings:** While implementing welfare programs incurs costs, it can save money in the long run. Reduced turnover, improved health, and higher productivity contribute to cost savings.
6. **Dynamic Corporate Culture:** A vibrant corporate culture positively impacts employee well-being. Healthy and happy employees are more independent and proactive.
7. **Enhanced Reputation:** Prioritizing employee welfare enhances a company's reputation. It demonstrates social responsibility and attracts top talent.

There are several reasons to invest in the welfare of employees. When the business takes reforms to care for the work culture and seeks the satisfaction of the work team, it becomes more productive, innovative and efficient. In the long term, on top of a much more efficient workforce, this builds a successful image, and a better reputation, with key aspects to grow over time.

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