

MORALE, WELFARE MEASURES, JOB SATISFACTION: THE KEY MANTRAS FOR GAINING COMPETITIVE EDGE

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Abstract

Today most of the theorist has emphasized the importance of human resource as single most important factors for sustaining competitive edge. Morale is considered to be the main element in the mental phenomenon driving performance in the organization. Employee welfare relates to all the benefits which are provided by the organization to provide comfort .In today era welfare facilities are necessity for an organization to have sustainable, efficient and satisfied workforce. This paper seeks to investigate the role played by welfare practices in the process of motivating Employees. The study explored three prominent factors like communication for determining satisfaction.. The paper attempt to answer various questions like is there any relationship between morale and welfare measures. Is there any association between employee welfare measures and satisfaction? Is there any association between employee job satisfaction and employee morale? The study also explored the relationship between longevity ie tenure of an employee and job satisfaction.. The study was conducted in Behr India Ltd which is a joint venture between Behr GMBH& Co kg Stuggart & Ananad Automotive Industry incorporated since 1997.Its one of the leading manufacturers and suppliers of equipment for passenger and commercial vehicle and leading name in providing world class welfare amenities. The findings supported the notion that a relationship exist between employee morale and job satisfaction and so between the welfare measures and satisfaction The findings also revealed that the hypothesized relationship between the longevity of the job and job satisfaction cannot be hold true.

Keywords: Employee welfare, Morale, Job Satisfaction .Communication, Productivity etc.

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Introduction

Employee morale is new buzzword in strategic human resource management. It common belief that employee with high morale is going to outperform as compared to other with the low morale. There are numerous measures which are adopted by the company to build on morale of its employee. Every company tries endless number of motivational tool and thus end up spending huge amount in providing welfare practices to its employee .The H.R managers focuses not only on providing the mandatory welfare facilities as deemed necessary by the labor tribunal but also provide certain other amenities like medical check up ,bonus ,birthday and anniversary gift, library ,sports facility, recreation facilities like cultural programmes, movie watch ,safety spectacles etc to mention just a few .Provision of these welfare measures toady act as one of main cost component which human resource specialist justify by naming it as an exercise to build the job satisfaction and morale of people.

Employee welfare means the effort to make the life comfortable for the workers. . Key objective behind providing welfare measures is that employees obtain satisfaction which would ultimately lead to better productivity. The objectives of welfare measures include providing better life and health to workers, to keep them contended and provide relieve to workers to minimize the industrial fatigue and thereby improving intellectual and living conditions of workers. Labor welfare facilities include provision of facilities like housing, benefit, and education and recreation facilities etc .Certain welfare facilities like working conditions, factory sanitation and cleanliness are mandatory by government but organization also extends it further by providing recreation facilities, crèche etc in hope of inculcating a feeling of belongingness among the workers. Job satisfaction is considered as one of the important measures for retainment of an employee in this era of talent war. There are numerous factors which lead to job satisfaction prima facie communication, welfare measures, empowerment, compensation, etc .The belief is that highly satisfied people are going to have high morale and this would lead to greater productivity. This paper tries to find out the relationship of communication, welfare measures work experience which can be defined as longevity of the tenure, with the job satisfaction. The relationship between morale and job satisfaction and concurrently the association between morale and welfare measures is examined. To get the conceptual clarity of the same literature review is presented as below.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Literature review starts with undermining the concept of morale by first defining it terms than laying down the causes for same and lastly recommending ways to improve morale. The second part of literature review relates with the theoretical studies done in welfare measures which is followed by scholarly view on job satisfaction. The last section concludes with the researches done for associating morale, welfare measures, satisfaction and finally gap to be addressed through this study.

Definition of morale:

Morale can be defined as intangible wave which depicts how optimist and supportive group feels towards the organization to which it belongs (Haddock 2010). Ginon (1958) consider morale as a personal phenomenon. Kanter (1977) defines morale as an attitudinal and relative response of people to job satisfaction it belongs (Haddock 2010). It denotes a feeling of trust, self-worth, purpose and pride in one contribution towards organization.

As per Seroha(2009) employee morale relates to how much willingness is exerted by group member to reap organizational goals and excellence. Finger (2005) said that morale is resultant of top down rather than bottom up. It consists of series of factors. Millet (2010) gave six reasons specifying the importance of morale prominent among them being the staff-increased productivity, improved performance and creativity. Reduced number of leaves, low absenteeism, increased efficiency and more productive work force are the other resultant benefits of high morale. Masin (2010) added that benefit of high morale is seen in the form of improved communication, low attrition, high retention, and innovative organization. Morale also creates a positive working environment and increases productivity per employee raito. Therefore it is evident that employee morale is very important in organization and low morale leads to problem like decrease in productivity, low performance of company. Therefore it's very important to identify the causes of low morale which is discussed in next section.

Causes of low morale

There can be numerous reasons for low morale, as per (Scheler 2004) the low morale is an outcome of poor leadership and callous management which have no or negligent welfare practices for employees. Robbin(2003) and Herzberg (2003) advocated removing de motivation and improving welfare practices as per demographic profile of the workers to address the issue of low morale. Steven (2009) identified other factors like no career or succession planning and delegation of authority, lack of communication as other reasons for low morale. As per Dye and Garmar(2006) negligent welfare practices, inflexible working condition ,lack of confidence in management lay off conflicts, high employee turnover, and role ambiguity are other reasons for low morale.

Ways of dealing with Low Morale

As per Senge (1990) and Greenleaf (1996) the major ways of dealing with the low morale can be providing a competent leadership and paying ear to workers need wherein besides mandatory welfare services, need based welfare services also needs to be showered on workers. Welfare measures would create a feeling of ownership among the workers and thus would build in trust. Unbiased approach in reward distribution like compensation, promotion and benefit can be some other ways of improving morale. Being an empathetic listener to workers issues, providing clarity of roles and openness in communication can be some other ways of improving morale. As per Finger (2005) the improvement of morale and esprit de corps can be done by addressing the issues of morale. Attitude survey, welfare measures addition from time to time can be some other ways of improving morale. This study therefore presents a concurrent review of welfare measures and its impact on employee morale. Employee morale is further tested for its link with employee satisfaction. The next part of the literature review therefore presents a small gist of literature studied for welfare measures which is followed by job satisfaction.

Welfare measures:

Welfare measures relates to certain additional activities which are provided by an organization like housing facilities,transfortationfacilities.medicalfacilities,recreational and cultural facilities,

libraries ,gym and health club etc in hope of winning the satisfaction index of an employee .McGuire and McDonnel (2008) suggested that the welfare facilities aids in enhancing the self confidence and intellectual level of an employee. .Torjman 2004 demonstrated that welfare facilities and recreation accounts for healthy individual besides encashing among their happiness and emotional quotient .Kirsch (2009) was of the opinion that welfare facilities should be flexible and continuous innovation needs to be done .Pinder ,Mathew(2011) advocated that employee welfare measures serve as an oxygen for motivation of the workers and increasing the effectiveness of the workforce..

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most prominent aspects of work attitudes studied .There are numerous definition given for job satisfaction. Green(2010) defines it as positive emotional reaction towards the job. Its feeling of happiness which one finds while doing a job. Kreitner (2006) defined job satisfaction as constellation of different dimensions which affects the job McNamara(1999) defines job satisfaction as state of mind which is influenced by various factors like welfare measures, autonomy , communication ,equity, etc .Partlow(1993) linked employee job satisfaction with the total quality management .Mc Land (2002) associated job satisfaction with the feeling of pride which builds in to group feeling of esprit de corps thus paving way for high morale. Thus it can be hypothesized that there is significant association between job satisfaction and morale. The next part of the literature review therefore lays some blocks on association of morale with satisfaction and welfare measures.

Relationship of morale with the satisfaction and welfare measures:

Neeley(1999) researched the relationship between employee morale and productivity and satisfaction. The result showed that there is a strong link between the productivity of an employee and their level of morale .Ewton (2007) was of the view that morale is directly proportional to satisfaction which in turn is negatively related to percentage of absenteeism and job turnover. He also emphasized that low morale acts as driver for workers discontentment and

poor performance .Millet (2010) gave six benefits of implementing the welfare ,measures among which the prominent ones were job satisfaction and high morale.

The literature review suggest that still there is wide gap to study the association between welfare measures, job satisfaction and morale which could provide justification for spending endless amount in providing welfare measures to its employees. The below mentioned research aims to provide an answer to these unanswered question and at least partly attempts to minimize the research gap

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Problem statement:

To find out if the welfare measures adopted by the company has any association with the employee job satisfaction which would concurrently be associated with employee morale building.

Objective.

- To find out if the welfare measures provided by the company is satisfactory or not
- To check for the effectiveness of the motivation tool provided by the company
- To find the interdependency of motivation with the satisfaction level
- To study the association of communication, welfare measures and work experience on the job satisfaction
- To study the association of work satisfaction with the employee morale

Sampling frame

Sample size:50 employees

Sampling Unit: Employees of Behr India Ltd.

Collection Method: Primary as well as secondary

Primary data: Using Questionnaire

Secondary: website, books.

Analysis Tool: Statistical tools and Graphical presentation

Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling

Statistical Tools: Chi square, Regression and Correlation

Graphical Presentation: Bar charts and Pie chart

Chi Square Test: (To check whether two variables are independent to each other or not)

H01: Communication at work place and work satisfaction are independent to each other.

H1: Communication at work place and work satisfaction are not independent to each other.

H02: Welfare measures and work satisfaction are independent to each other.

H2: Welfare measures and work satisfaction are not independent to each other.

H03: Work experience and work satisfaction are independent to each other.

H3: Work experience and work satisfaction are not independent to each other.

Regression: (To Check impact of independent variable on dependent variable)

H04: There is no significant impact of welfare measures on employee morale.

H4: There is a significant impact of welfare measures on employee morale.

Correlation: (To check the degree of association between variables)

H05: There is no significant correlation between the work satisfaction and morale of the employees.

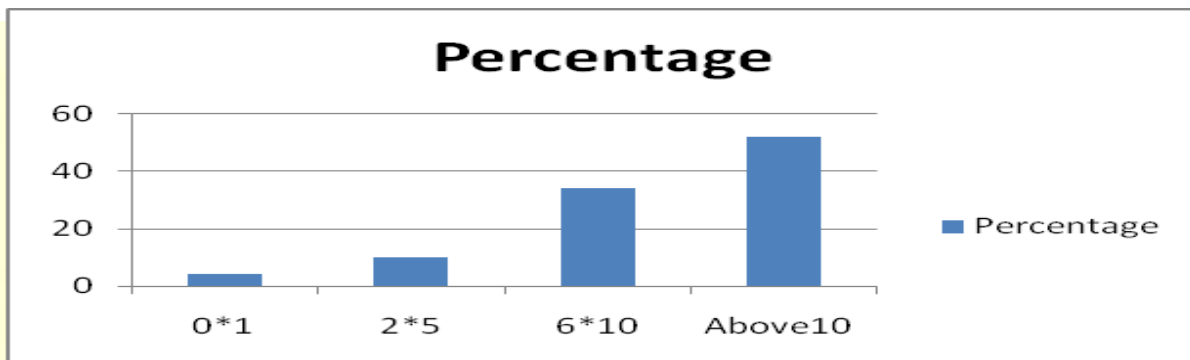
H5: There is a significant correlation between the work satisfaction and morale of the employees.

GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENT :

<u>Experience</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
0*1	4	2

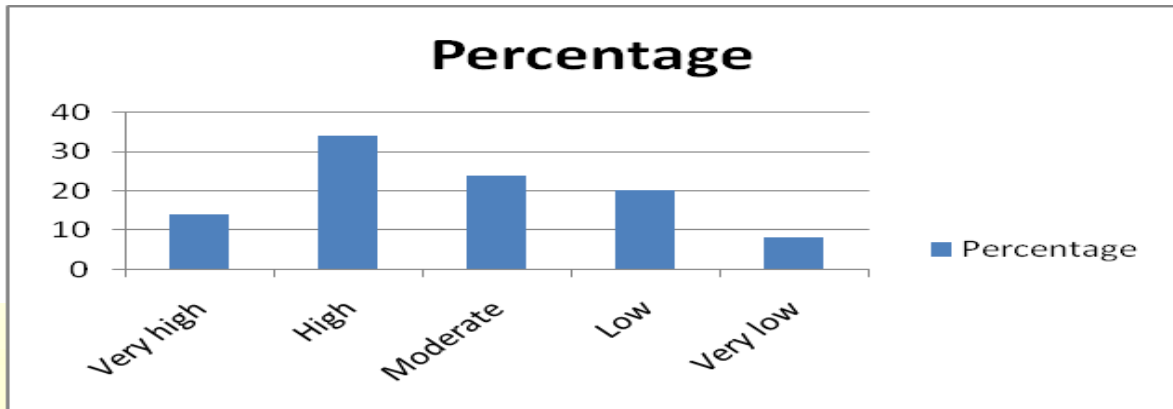
2*5	10	5
6*10	34	17
Above10	52	26
Total	100	50



From the chart we can say that 52% respondents have an experience of more than 10 years.

2. LEVEL OF MORALE:

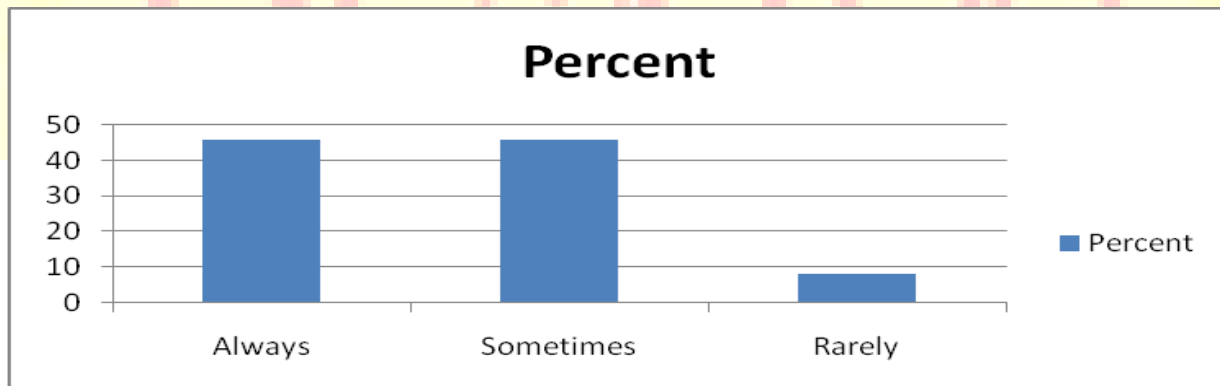
Opinion	Percentage	Frequency
Very high	14	7
High	34	17
Moderate	24	12
Low	20	10
Very low	8	4
Total	100	50



From the chart we can say that only 14 % respondents were reported to have high morale

3. WORK SATISFACTION LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE:

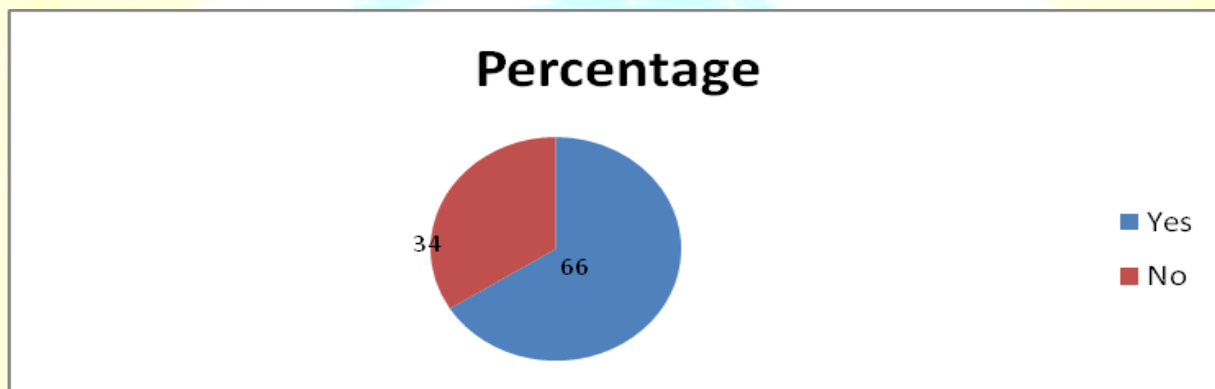
Opinion	Percent	Frequency
Always	46	23
Sometimes	46	23
Rarely	8	4
Total		50



From the chart we can say that 46% respondents are always satisfied with the work given to them.

4. SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEE ABOUT WELFARE MEASURES:

Opinion	Percentage	Frequency
Yes	66	33
No	34	17
Total	100	50



From the chart we can say that 66% respondents are satisfied with the welfare measures provided by the company.

5. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Chi Square test

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Significance value(P)</u>	<u>Level of significance(α)</u>
Communication at work place and work satisfaction	0.000833	0.05
Welfare measures and work satisfaction	0.063442	0.05
Work experience and work	0.806069	0.05

satisfaction		
motivation given to employee and Work Satisfaction	0.011076	0.05

From the output,

For Communication at work place and work satisfaction, $p < \alpha$

So we accept H1 therefore we can say that there is linking of communication and satisfaction.

The findings suggest that communication process paves way for work satisfaction..

For H02 and H03. Welfare and work satisfaction and Work experience and work satisfaction $P > \alpha$

I.e. Work satisfaction is independent to welfare and work experience. Therefore we can say that longevity of tenure and welfare measures does not necessarily contribute to work satisfaction

For motivation given to employee and Work Satisfaction $P < \alpha$

So we cannot accept H3.

I.e. Motivation given to employee and work satisfaction are not independent to each other. Therefore we can say that motivation given to employee contributes to work satisfaction

Regression

Independent variable	Welfare measure
Dependent variable	Morale of employee
Significance value (P)	0.451696
Level of significance(α)	0.05

From the output,

$P > \alpha$. So we can accept H04.

I.e. there is no significant impact of welfare measures on employee morale. Therefore it would not be wrong to say that increase in welfare measures would not necessarily increase employee morale.

Correlation

<u>Variable</u>	<u>correlation</u>
Work Satisfaction and morale given to employee	0.667428

Here from the output,

We can say that there is a positive correlation between work satisfaction and morale of an employee. Thus satisfied worker would have high morale.

FINDINGS:

1. More than 50 % respondents are working with more than 10 years out of that only 14 % morale of the people was high, 46% are satisfied with the work given to them and 66% employees are satisfied with the welfare measures given to them. Thus we can say that there is no role of work experience in employee satisfaction and thus with employee morale.
2. Work satisfaction is not independent to communication at work place,
3. Work satisfaction is independent of welfare and work experience.
4. Motivation given to employee and work satisfaction are not independent to each other.
5. There is no significant impact of welfare measures on employee morale
6. There is a positive correlation between work satisfaction and morale of an employee

Conclusion and Recommendation:

To conclude we can say communication plays a major role in increasing the satisfaction of an employee. Satisfied employees are reported to have high morale. Welfare measures and work experience does not necessarily relates to satisfaction. Therefore its recommended that company should provide for adequate welfare measures but should not burden itself by increasing the cost part of it in greed to earn the competitive edge and declare itself as most desired company. Other factors like good and open communication, providing motivating factors, empowerment etc should be taken into consideration for increasing the employee satisfaction level. The research also shows that there is association between satisfaction and morale of an employee therefore to build an employee morale company should go for building employee satisfaction. The myth that longevity gives more satisfaction to the job is also eroded from this research as experience and satisfaction were found to be independent.

Limitation and Future research:

Sample size taken is very small therefore the data cannot be generalized. The information received from respondent may be biased. Future research exploring the factors of morale building and satisfaction building and theirs hypothetical relationship should be tested with the larger sample size. There is miniscule literature available in the field of morale and satisfaction linking with productivity. Therefore future research exploring the relationship between morale and satisfaction with productivity is recommended.

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