

A Study on Labour Welfare Measures towards Managing Absenteeism in Sri Vishnu Shankar Mill Limited, Rajapalayam

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Abstract: *Employee welfare is an important fact of Industrial Relation, giving satisfaction to the worker in a way, which even a good wage cannot. The various welfare measures provided by the employer will have immediate impact on the health, physical, mental efficiency, alertness, morale and overall efficiency of the worker contributing to the higher productivity. The basic purpose of labour welfare is to enrich the life of employees and to keep them happy and conducted. Welfare measures may be both statutory and non-statutory; laws require the employer to extend certain benefits to employees in addition to wages or salaries. Lack of welfare facilities can lead to employee absenteeism. The factors contributing to absenteeism from work includes sickness, accidents, occupational diseases, bad working conditions, inadequate welfare activities, lack of interest, lack of cohesive and so on. In the present study the attempt has been made to study the employee welfare facilities and its impact on employee absenteeism at Sri Vishnu Shankar Mill limited. Findings were from the part of canteen facilities, medical facilities and other fringe benefits. The employee reaction is neutral towards the facilities provided by the company. High rate of absenteeism is neither desirable to employers and nor good for the employees. The levels of absenteeism and reasons for its occurrence are dependent on many variables in an organizational environment. This study highlights the ways to manage the absenteeism of the employees in the industry. It can be concluded that the welfare measures in an organization are one of the factors for the workers to stay within the organization and to work towards success of the organization and this has been evident in this organization.*

Keywords: welfare measures, statutory, non-statutory, absenteeism

1. Introduction

Welfare in Indian industry implies the provision of medical and educational services, a congenial work atmosphere etc. The need for providing such services and facilities arises from the social responsibility of industry, a desire for upholding democratic values and a concern for employees. In India, welfare is of the statutory and the non-statutory kinds. Though statutory welfare ensures a bare minimum of facilities and reasonably good working conditions, employees are free to provide, or not to provide, non-statutory welfare. However practically all organizations in India provide non-statutory measures in varying degrees.

Employers provide amenities to discharge their social responsibility, raise the employees' morale, use the work force more effectively and reduce turnover and absenteeism. Benefits such as bonus, etc; are bound by length of service, thus ensuring that an employee will remain for a certain minimum period at least. Though paternalism may be out-moved, many managers feel, while others are convinced, that welfare benefits not only raise employee morale but make it easier for employers to attract and hire competent personnel. Welfare helps build a positive image of the organization and facilitates dealings with the union.

The responsibility for organizing labour welfare work was accepted by the employers' organizations like the Indian Jute Mills Association and the Bombay and the Ahmadabad Mill Owners' Association. They organized activities in working class localities with the object of providing

recreation to workers and their families. The emphasis was on outdoor games such as volley ball, badminton and wrestling. The Indian Jute Mills Association provided indoor attractions too through various welfare centres run by them. While a good number of schools for workers' children were attached to these centres, women's concerns where baby shows were held and milk distributed free to mothers and children were also a part of such activity.

The economic development of a country depends upon the production of commodities and services. The production is the point of five factors of production viz., land, labour, capital, organization, management and entrepreneurship. Out of these five factors, the labour is the active factor of production. The productivity of active labour gained the greatest attention of industrial psychologists and researchers in the field of economics and management. The productivity of labour depends upon its efficiency. Quality of labour depends primarily on its health and nutrition, social values and customs. Poor digits, unhygienic conditions, inadequate preventive diseases and lack of medical and medical care have an adverse bearing on their efficiency. The happiness and efficiency of the workers are the mirror of the prosperity of an industry.

2. Review of references

"Employee Absenteeism: A Study at Titan Industry Limited, Bangalore", noticed that there are several reasons for employees absenteeism in that particular organisation such as Domestic problems, Lack of coordination among the

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colleagues and others. However, the absenteeism can be minimized and controlled by implementing good working condition, etc. Hence, it can be concluded that people are the assets in any organization and absenteeism is the practice or habit of being absence therefore the organization has to overcome such habitual stays.

“A Study on employee Absenteeism in Sundaram Brake Linings Limited., Chennai” analyzed the various factors that lead to the employee absenteeism- lack of training, quality of work life, policies regarding promotion, incentives, benefits, etc., Finally, he suggested many practices to reduce the absenteeism such as reviewing of credit policies, practicing job enlargement and job enrichment at regular intervals, taking attendance matters seriously, maintaining good relationship between superiors and subordinates, fine tuning of grievance handling systems, arranging better welfare programs, creating awareness about absenteeism and quality of work life.

“A Study in a Steel Organization on Employees Absenteeism”, aims to identify factors that results in employees absenteeism, which may help the company manager to develop and identify the attitudes of employees for minimising absenteeism. He also evaluate the employees awareness regarding the impact of absenteeism on productivity in Agni Steels, Erode. He conclude that most of the respondents are absent after availing the sanctioned leave by the company. It is observed that low wages leads to absence, resulting in absence for attending other remunerative jobs. Also observed that personal factors also influence the absenteeism. The ill health is the major criteria which influence the employee towards absenteeism

“Employee Welfare and Social Security Measures with special Reference to Selected Units” aims to evaluate the impact of such measures on the performance of employees and the productivity of the employees. He his study as employees have problems with the organization such as inadequate educational, recreational, transportation and accommodation facilities. Finally, he said that better welfare measures will improve the morale of the employees.

“A Study on Employee Welfare Facilities Adopted at Bosch Limited” analysed that the awareness among the employees in statutory and non statutory measures adopted by the company. Finally, concluded that there is a necessity of making some provision for improving the welfare facility through that employees will happy, employees performance will become increase. It leads to improve favourable effects of productivity and products of organization. A. Sabarirajan, T. Meharajan, B. Arun, (2010), *Asian Journal of Management Research*, conducted a study on “A study on various labour welfare measures” and concluded that the every organization provides the statutory welfare measures but some organization provides additional measures to retain the employees within the organization. By the result of improved quality of work life among the employees their involvement in their job gets increased and results in increased productivity of the organization.

“Employee Welfare Facilities And Its Impact On Employees Efficiency At Vindha Telelinks Limited”. This study aims to

find out the level of satisfaction among the employees and to understand the extent of awareness among employees with various statutory and non- statutory measures. Finally, he stated various suggestions such as improving recreation facilities, complete medical facilities, more commitments towards welfare measures.

3. Theory

3.1 Meaning

Labour Welfare is comprehensive term including various services, benefits and facilities offered by employer to the employee. Through such fringe benefits the employer makes life worth living for employees.

3.2 Objectives and Significance of labour welfare:

Promote Economic Development: The objective of welfare activities is to promote the economic development by increasing production and productivity. The primary principle is to make workers, given their loyal services, ungrudgingly.

Provide Proper Human Conditions of Work and Living: Organization may be other objective of welfare activities is to secure the labour proper human conditions of work and living.

Minimize the Hazards: The welfare activities are done to minimize the hazardous effects on the life of the workers and their family members.

Supplement Wages in Monetary Terms: The facilities are provided to addition the income of the workers by services such as housing, medical assistance and school, cooperative, stores, canteens and playgrounds.

Improve the morale and loyalty of the workers: Employee welfare improves the morale and loyalty of the workers by making them happy and satisfied.

Reduces Labour Turnover and Absenteeism: It reduces labour turnover and absenteeism and thereby building a stable workforce.

3.3 Need of Labour Welfare

From Worker's Point of view: Welfare Measures must eliminate risk and insecurity. The organizations besides providing fair wages must also provide facilities like medical aid, crèches, subsidized food and transport required by the workers.

From Employer's Point of View: Employers provide facilities to raise the employee's morale. Welfare helps build positive image of the organization and makes it easier for them to attract and hire new personnel.

From union's point of View: Trade Union's role in labour welfare stems from workers need for welfare services. Unions feel that welfare services ought to be provided either by the government or by the employers.

3.4 Classification of Labour Welfare:

3.4.1 On the Basis of Industrial Welfare Working:

- a) **Statutory Welfare:** The government enacts certain laws for the provision of labour welfare in order to enforce the minimum standards of health and safety of the workers.
- b) **Voluntary Welfare:** It includes all those activities, which employers undertake for their workers on a voluntary basis.
- c) **Mutual Welfare:** Mutual welfare is a “corporate enterprises” undertaken by workers themselves. Some trade unions also undertake the responsibility of workers welfare.

3.4.2 On the Basis of Categorization of ILO:

- a) **Intra- mural welfare activities:** - This includes all those activities, which are undertaken inside the factories. For e.g. medical facilities, canteens, restrooms and washing facilities etc.
- b) **Extra – mural welfare activities:-** This includes all those welfare activities, which are undertaken outside the factories e.g. Proper housing accommodation, education facilities’ for children’s and adults

3.5 Voluntary / Non – Statutory welfare Schemes:

- **Educational facilities :-** A scheme of workers education was predict on all India basis by the government of India, way back in 1957 to develop strong union and leadership.
- **Medical facilities:-** Both private and public sector employers facilitate medical facilities for their workers and their families.
- **Transport facilities:** - The committee of labour welfare, 1969, recommended the provision of transport facilities to workers so that they can reach the work place punctually and comfortably.
- **Recreational facilities:** - It is in form of music, dance, drama, games and sports, paintings, etc are usually offered to the employees to build a physical and mental relax and discipline, and creating a healthy climate for industrial peace and progress.
- **Housing facilities:-** Recognizing the need for housing accommodation, an industrial housing scheme was introduced in 1952. Under this scheme, the central government offers loans to industrial workers for constructing houses at concessional rates.

3.6 Statutory Welfare measures

Factories Act, 1948:

Washing Facilities: (Sec 42): Adequate and suitable facilities for washing for the use of workers in the factories. Such facilities being easily available, and being kept clean.

Facilities For Storing And Drying Clothes: (Sec 43): A suitable place for keeping clothes not damaged during working hours shall be provided in every factory. Facilities shall also be for the drying of wet clothes.

Facilities For sitting: (Sec 44): For workers who are to work in a standing position, suitable arrangement for sitting shall be provided in the factories. This is to enable workers

to take advantage of any opportunity for rest which may occur in the course of their work.

First-Aid Appliances: (Sec 45): First-aid boxes or cupboards equipped with the required contents should be provided for workers in every factory. This should be readily available to them during all working hours. The number of such first aid boxes shall not be less than one for every 150 workers employed in the factory. Such first-aid box shall be kept in the charge of a responsible person who is trained in first-aid treatment and who shall be available during the working hours of the factory. In factories employing more than 500 workers, there shall be an ambulance room.

Canteen (Sec 46): In factories employing more than 250 workers, there shall be a Canteen for the use of workers.

Shelters, rest rooms and lunch rooms (Sec 47):

In every factory where more than 150 workers, organization should make adequate and suitable arrangement for shelters or rest rooms and lunch rooms with provision of drinking water where the workers can take rest or eat meals brought by them.

Crèche facilities (Sec 48): In every factory, where more than 50 women workers are employed, provision shall be made for suitable and adequate room for the use of children under the age of six years of such women. Such a room shall be adequately lighted and ventilated.

Welfare officer (Sec 49): The factories Act also provides for employment of welfare officers with given qualification. Such a provision exists in every factory employing more than 500 workers.

3.7 Absenteeism

It refers to workers absence from their regular task when he is normally schedule to work. The according to Webster’s dictionary —Absenteeism is the practice or habit of being an absentee and an absentee is one who habitually stays away from work. According to Labour Bureau of Shimla: Absenteeism is defined as the total man shifts lost because of absence as percentage of total number of man shifts scheduled to work.

3.8 Causes of the Absenteeism

Sickness and Low Vitality: The committee pointed out that sickness is most important responsible for absenteeism in almost of the in Industrial sector. Epidemics like cholera, small-pox and malaria always break out in severe form in most industrial areas. The low vitality of the Indian workers makes them easy prey to such epidemics and bad housing and unsanitary conditions of living aggravate the trouble. However, the Commission has been noticed that the rate of absenteeism among the female workers is higher than their male counterparts.

Means of Transport: The Commission also stated that the transport facilities also play very important to contribute the absenteeism of the worker in the industries. It has been pointed out that, the rate of absenteeism is higher in those

factories where transport facilities are not easily available as compared to those where such facilities are easily available or provided by the factory itself.

Hours of work: The long hours of work also affect the workers' efficiency and consequently their sickness rate and absenteeism rate are increased.

Nightshift: It has also been pointed out that there is a greater percentage of absenteeism during the nightshifts than in the dayshifts, owing to the greater discomforts of work during the night-time.

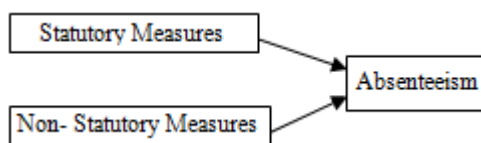
Rural exodus: The committee also pointed out that probably the most predominant cause of absenteeism is the frequent urge of rural exodus. It has been noticed that the workers go back to their villages at the time of harvesting and sowing the crops. It increases the rate of absenteeism in factories.

Accident: Industrial accident depends upon the nature of work to be performed by the worker and his ability for doing that work. In case of hazardous nature of job, the accidents occur more frequently which lead to higher rate of absenteeism.

Social and religious Function: it has been noticed that workers become absent from their duty on occasions of social and religious functions. Since the workers like to join their families on such occasions, they go back to their villages for like to join short periods.

After Pay-Day: the Labour Investigation committee also noted the level of absenteeism is comparatively high immediately after the pay-day because they get their wages, they feel like having a good time or return to their villages to make purchases for the family and to meet them, so the absenteeism is high after they got paid.

4. Conceptual Model



5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

In this study, descriptive research design is used. Descriptive research designs help provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem. A descriptive study cannot conclusively ascertain answers to why. Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation

5.2 Sampling Method

In this study, stratified sampling method is used which comes under probability random sampling technique.

Stratified random sampling method is obtained by separating the population elements into overlapping groups, called strata, and then selecting samples randomly from within each stratum. In this present study, the total population is divided into three groups viz., Admin staffs, Technical staffs and Labours.

5.3 Sampling Size

Sampling is a finite subset of population and the process of selection of samples is called sampling. This refers to the number of items to be selected from the population to constitute a sample. The overall population size is 868. The total sample size of 200 samples has been taken for the study.

5.4 Sampling Unit

Employees of Sri Vishnu Shankar Mill Limited, Rajapalayam.

5.5 Data Collection Method

In order to have an accurate data, this study has gathered data through primary and secondary sources of data.

Primary Data: Primary data are collected through individuals through survey method. Primary data are the original source from which the researcher directly collected data, in other words they are first-hand information collected through various methods. The questionnaire consists of both open ended and close ended questions.

Secondary Data: This study has also used secondary data. They were collected from research studies in different universities relating to labour management, books, and journals dealing with the subjects, websites, company records and various reports published by agencies working in this field are the sources of secondary data.

5.6 Tools for data analysis

Descriptive Statistics
Correlation
Regression
Chi-square test

6. Results

6.1 Descriptive Statistics

The section presents the data findings on the respondent's general information through tables and charts by using simple percentage analysis. The demographic information included the frequency and percentage of gender of respondents, their level of education, age, source of income, departments, grade, level of experience and marital status.

Table 1: Respondent's Profile

Attributes	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male (138)	69
	Female(62)	31
Age	20-30yrs(30)	15
	30-40yrs(90)	45
	40-50yrs(50)	25
	Above 50yrs(30)	15
Education	Degree(15)	7.5
	Diploma(45)	22.5
	8 th to 12 th (90)	45
	Below8 th (50)	25
Experience	0 to 10(100)	50
	10 to 15(43)	21.5
	15 to 20(27)	31.5
	Above20(30)	15
Income level	5000-8000(68)	34
	8000-10000(45)	22.5
	10000-15000(87)	43.5
Marital Status	Married(167)	83.5
	Unmarried(32)	16
	Divorced(1)	0.5
Grade Level	Permanent(87)	43.5
	Badli(45)	22.5
	Temporary(68)	34
Department	Technical Staff(34)	17
	Workers(145)	72.5
	General(21)	10.5

6.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation between welfare measures and Absenteeism

Welfare Measures		Absenteeism	
Canteen Facilities	Pearson	1	1.000*
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0
	N	200	200
Retiring Hall	Pearson	1	.111*
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.004
	N	200	200
Medical Facilities	Pearson	1	.103*
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.417
	N	200	200
Transport Facilities	Pearson	1	.112*
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.056
	N	200	200
Overall Welfare Measures	Pearson	1	.076*
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.022
	N	200	200
Management Employee Relationship	Pearson	1	.063*
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.037
	N	200	200

Table 2 shows that the correlation between welfare measures and absenteeism. There is a significant evidence of a relationship between Canteen facilities and Absenteeism ($r=1.000$, $p<0.005$), which is a positive correlation and the two variables are significantly correlated. There is a significant evidence of a relationship between Retiring Hall facilities and Absenteeism ($r=.111$, $p<0.005$), which is a positive correlation and the two variables are correlated. Then, there is no relationship between medical facilities and absenteeism and the variables are not significantly correlated ($r=.103$, $p=.417$). There is a evidence of a significant relationship between transport facilities and absenteeism and the value is given by ($r=.112$, $p=.056$). The overall

satisfaction level of welfare measures and management-employee relationship with absenteeism are significantly correlated and their p value is less than 0.05 significant level.

6.3 Regression Analysis

Table 3: Regression between welfare measures and absenteeism:

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate	
	.112 ^a	.130	.002	.54485	
Anova					
Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	.735	2	.367	1.238	.002 ^a
Residual	57.590	194	.297		
Total	58.325	196			
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandard coefficients		Standard coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
Constant	2.356	.219		10.77	.000
Washing canteen	-.030	.093	-.023	-.325	.004
First aid Restroom					
Esi loan transport	-.087	.058	-.107	-1.47	.011

Table 3 shows that the model summary of the analysis and it provides R and R square value The R value is 0.112a. It indicates a moderate degree of correlation.

The R square value indicated how much of the dependent variable of Absenteeism can be explained by the independent variable Welfare Measures. In this case, 13% can be explained. The variability of all independent variables and dependent variable is 13%.the regression model predicts. The outcome variable significantly well. Here $P<0.005$ which indicates that overall, the model applied can statistically predict the outcome variable. The Coefficients, provides information on each predictor variable. Welfare Measures contributes significantly to the model. The relationship between welfare measures (independent variable) and Absenteeism (dependent variable) is significant ($p<0.05$).

6.3 Chi square Analysis

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no association between gender and absenteeism

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is association between gender and absenteeism

Table 4: Chi square Computation between Gender and Welfare measures

Gender	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Male	9	22.2	-13.2
1.33	12	22.2	-10.2
1.67	40	22.2	17.8
Female	60	22.2	37.8
2.33	37	22.2	14.8
2.67	23	22.2	.8
3.00	11	22.2	-11.2
3.33	7	22.2	-15.2
4.00	1	22.2	-21.2
Total	200		
Absenteeism	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1.00	9	22.2	-13.2
1.33	12	22.2	-10.2
1.67	40	22.2	17.8
2.00	60	22.2	37.8
2.33	37	22.2	14.8
2.67	23	22.2	.8
3.00	11	22.2	-11.2
3.33	7	22.2	-15.2
4.00	1	22.2	-21.2
Total	200		
		gender	Analysis
Chi square		137.230 ^a	137.230 ^a
df		8	8
Asymp. Sig.		.000	.000

Table 4 shows that there is association between gender and absenteeism. It is observed that there is a evidence of a relationship between gender and absenteeism (.000) and it is below the significant level (0.05). Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept the alternative hypothesis.

7. Conclusion

Labour welfare measures prove to be an important factor when compared to other factors in the organization. When these factors are not provided to the fullest extent the workers self-interest and motivation decreases and their dedication to the work may declines. Lack of welfare measures will leads to several problems in the organization. Compared to various problems, the effect of absenteeism among the employees is very critical one. Absenteeism is an unavoidable menace which most of the organization have to bear with and it has to be managed. After analyzing whole data it can be stated that the overall satisfaction level of employees about welfare measures in the organization is satisfactory. However, few are not satisfied with the welfare measures provided by the organization. Most of the workers are not aware about the effect of absenteeism to the organization. So the workers need to be sensitized on the determinable effects of their absenteeism. Though, the absenteeism can be controlled and minimized by implementing good working condition, etc. Hence, it can be concluded that people are the assets in any organization and absenteeism is the practice or habit of being absence therefore the organization has to overcome such habitual stays.

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