



International Journal of Research Publications

LABOUR WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY MEASURES IN INDIA- A SYNOPTIC STUDY

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Abstract

Every nation strives to improve the quality of lives of its people which can be achieved by the level of economic development it attains. Rapid industrialisation is one of the most important national activities which can trigger the economic development and quality of life of its citizens. And that is the very reason that government is highly interested in the development of industries. Welfare activities in India were largely influenced by philanthropists and social workers. Through the review of literature it is seen that the condition of labour, in the initial stage was very miserable. Later on, a number of acts were passed by the Government to affect various welfare measures and improve the condition of the labour. The present study makes an attempt to understand the condition of the labour class during the inception of the legislations and the changes that had taken place over the years.

Key Words: Labour Welfare, Social Security, Private Sector, Public Sector, Working class.

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1. MEANING OF LABOUR WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Employees play an important role in the industrial production of the country. The human resource managers are really concerned with the management of people at work. It is necessary to secure the cooperation of labour or employee force in order to increase the production and to earn higher profits. The cooperation of employee force is possible only when they are fully satisfied with their employer and the working conditions of the job. In the past, industrialists and employers believed that their only duty towards their employees was to pay them satisfactory wages and salaries. In course of time, with the introduction of the concept of human resource management, psychological researches convinced them that workers required something more important. In addition to providing monetary benefits, human treatment given to employees plays a very important role in seeking their cooperation. Labour or employee welfare activities benefit not only the workers but also the management in the form of greater industrial efficiency.

“The human resource managers realize that welfare activities pay good dividends in the long run because they contribute a lot towards the health and efficiency of workers.”

The terms labour welfare, employee welfare and workers welfare are generally used interchangeably to denote various benefits and facilities provided by the employers to the employees in addition to wages.

According to Royal Commission on Labour (Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, Central Publications, Calcutta, 1931.), “the term welfare as applied to industrial workers is one which must be necessarily elastic, bearing a somewhat different interpretation in one country from another, according to the different social customs, the degree of industrialisation and the educational development of workers”.

Thus labour or employee welfare is a comprehensive term, which may include any activity, which is connected with the social, intellectual, moral and economic betterment of workers provided by any agency. Such activities may differ from country to country and from region to region or from organisation to organisation. Labour or employee welfare has the following objectives:

- To provide better life and health to workers.
- To make the workers happy, satisfied and efficient.
- To improve intellectual, cultural and material conditions of workers and to relieve them from industrial fatigue.

Social security is essentially a term of Atlantic origin introduced by Abraham Epstein with a view to differentiating it from economic security. It is both a concept and a system. The concept of social security is very old, though the term, the laws and institutions built around it in order to institutionalize the concept may be of recent origin. Social security conveys a meaning that necessitates a security in the society in case of contingencies. But it also extends to security by state in case of contingencies.

The term social security, its meaning, its denotation and connotation are vague. It speaks of a condition of the masses as a symbol of an end greatly desired and has been duly sensed by statesman. It is the principle or practice of public provision for the economic security and social welfare of individual and his family as such, through social assistance or insurance.

In 1952, The International Labour Office defined in Convention 102 Social Security as: “the protection which society provides for its members, through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death; the provision of medical care; and the provision of subsidies for families with children.”

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present research enquiry was undertaken with the following objectives:

- To make a review of the existing literature with regards to studies on labour welfare and social security measures and provide a future scope of study.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Though public sector undertakings are the biggest employers in the country, very few studies dealing with either employee welfare or social security measures have been carried out. In fact, in-depth studies on the provision of employee welfare and social security measures in public sector undertakings especially are negligible. However, some useful literature is available in textbooks and published theses. In this regard, a few of the available literature has been outlined hereunder:

Joshi, M.M (1927), in his book, "Trade Union Movement in India", Bombay, 1927 , p.157-169, has observed that the employee welfare related tasks covers the efforts that an employer should undertake over and above the minimum standard of working conditions fixed by the various legislations as provided by the government towards the upliftment of the employees.

Mukherjee, Radhakamal (1945), "The Indian Working Class", Hindi Kitabs, Bombay, p.137 has studied the problems of low wages as well as the dilapidated condition of housing that were prevalent in different collieries in India.

Punekar, Sadananda Dattatreya (1949), "Social Insurance of Indian Industrial Workers" Ph.D thesis, University of Bombay, studied about the social insurance prevalent in his time. His study found out that social insurance was absent in most of the industries except a very few of them. He also stated the importance of social insurance and how it can provide benefits to the insured on compulsory basis during unemployment, sickness and retirement.

Srivastava, S.S (1953), "Labour Welfare in India", Ph. D thesis, Lucknow University, made a comparative study on the labour welfare measures adopted and practiced in the public sector and private sector enterprises in the country. He concluded that the public sector companies were far better in providing the labour welfare benefits and facilities than the private sectors.

Viel, Claude, (1957), "Medical and Psychological Aspects of Modern Industry" in International Labour Review, I.L.O, Geneva, p.16, has observed the aim of 'Industrial hygiene'. He asserted that about the highest degree of physical, social and mental health of the employees by preventing any factors leading to ill- health of the workers in the working conditions. Further, he has also advocated the protection of workers from occupational hazards by providing them with environment- friendly atmosphere and further the adaptation of work to man and each man to job.

Arora, Shanti (1957), "The Social Security in India" Ph. D thesis, Banaras Hindu University, Banaras, made a comprehensive study on the social security measures available during that period to the employees. She concluded that the various acts and legislations propounded by the Government had miserably failed to provide social security to the masses.

Bose, K.K (1958) in his study, "A Psychological approach to productivity movement" in Indian Journal of Psychology, has advocated about the effective implementation of various labour welfare measures in order to create positive mind set in employees. Through his study, he has also found out that when certain organizations starts implementing and providing such labour welfare measures, it also has positive impact on

other organizations not following the same till then.

Veeraragavan, P.V. (1960), "Employee Attitudes", The Second Conference on Human Relations in Industry, Coimbatore, p.83-89, made a study on job satisfaction of the employees working in public and private sector. His study revealed that the employees of the private sector were more satisfied and favourably inclined towards the management.

Carlson R.E et.al (1962), "The Measurement of Employee Satisfaction" Mimesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation, XII Minneapolis, Industrial Relation Centre, University of Minnesota, point out that industrial workers has suspicion in their mind with regards to various welfare schemes. Furthermore, the Industrial Undertakings have been directed to win the trust and confidence of the workers by accepting social responsibilities and provide them the security of employment, fair wages and opportunities for growth and advancement.

Mehrotra, B.N (1964), "Industrial Relations in Public Sector", Commerce, Annual, No.6, opines that "Labour legislation over the years, or collective bargaining from the part of employees would not have improved labour's working and living condition in Public Sector Undertakings. We have yet to reach a stage where society would shoulder at least a part of this responsibility."

Verma, Omprakash (1965), "Labour Welfare and Industrial Peace in India", Ph.D thesis, Agra University, had studied about the labour welfare measures followed in various industries and had pointed out that most of the industries had failed to provide adequate welfare facilities to its workforce and because of industrial unrest was a common feature during that time period.

Bhattacharya, Ranjan (1965), "Social Security Measures in India", Doctoral thesis, University of Delhi, made a study on the various social security measures available to the workers during that period. However, he concluded that the various Government machineries had failed to implement and provide the various acts related to the aforesaid subject matter.

Narayan Murthy, O (1992), "Employee welfare in Public Sector- A study on selected units in Visakhapatnam", Doctoral thesis, Andhra University, made a study on the labour welfare measures in some of the selected public sector undertakings. Companies like BHPV Ltd., Hundustan Shipyard Ltd., Port Trust and Dredging Corporation of India were taken as sample units. From his study, he could conclude that all the four organizations are highly employee- oriented and the employees satisfaction rate with regards to the various facilities was high.

National Commission Report on Labour (1966), has stated that the employees are of the view that the post of 'Welfare Officer' has become unnecessary because he is trusted neither by the workers nor the employer.

Vaid, K.N (1970), "Labour Welfare in India", has pointed out the different legislative machinery available for labour welfare in India only provides the minimum welfare requirement to a worker. Only mutual negotiations between the industry and labour can fetch them with any additional facilities. Furthermore, he also observed that the welfare measure need should depend upon "the felt needs of the workmen, their habits and customs, the location of the establishment and other factors."

Maslow, Abraham (1972), "The Importance of other factors besides Economic Rewards" has postulated that individuals seeks gratification of their needs in certain sequential order. He has explained motivational dynamics in terms of the hierarchy of needs. According to him, individuals do not seek gratification of higher

needs until and unless their lower needs are fulfilled.

Hasan, N (1972), "The Social Security System of India", S. Chand & Co., New Delhi, p.4, has pointed out that the social security system in India has characteristics such as provision of cash, medical benefits, disablement benefits and the said system has also the active involvement of the state in providing the same.

Kumar. A (1976), "Industrial Relation in Public Sector Undertakings in Orissa", Industrial Journal of Lab Economics XIX, p.3-4, has asserted that the labour welfare measures are only maintenance factors. They are not motivators but they have significant role in promoting health of the organizations as they bear a very close connection with improving productivities of labour force.

Don, Beckingham, N. (1978), "Psychological Aspect of Welfare Measures", Journal of Personnel Psychology, Vol. XII, College Station, advocates that the labour welfare measures will only give rise to social inequities between the workers of large undertakings and the small and medium sized undertakings. This may happen in line with the fact that the large undertakings are in a better position to run the welfare programmes as compared to that of the small and medium sized organizations who are not in a position to provide better amenities and facilities.

Kudchelkar, D.L.S. (1979), "Aspects of Personnel Management and Industrial Relations", Excel Books, New Delhi, p.10, states that the need for labour welfare measures in Indian Organisation arises from the prevalent Industrial system. It is due to the environmental condition that the labours performs their duty, they are entitled to avail the various welfare facilities to ease up their sufferings and hardships.

Mukherjee, Sunil Kumar, (1981), "Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations with Special reference to selected industries in India", Ph.D thesis, University of Burdwan, West Bengal, has asserted that the various labour welfare measures are a means to building and bonding up relationship among the workers and management. Such measures not only restricts the mobility of the working class but also at the same time increases the employer's power and assertion over the workers personal lives.

Tyagi, B.P (1982), "Labour Economics and Social Welfare", Educational Publishers, Meerut, p.595-612, has discussed about the various agencies in India involved in providing labour welfare measures. The study made by him is totally theoretical in nature. However, he has elaborately discussed about the prevalent labour welfare practices such as the intra- mural and extra- mural facilities.

Sinha, D., (1985), "Job Satisfaction in the office and manual workers", Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.19, p.39-46, made a study on the factors influencing job satisfaction of office and manual workers. He found that social status, challenging works, etc. were some significant factors influencing job satisfaction. Whereas insecurity of job and inadequate remuneration for work were the factors influencing job dissatisfaction.

Gupta, R.K (1986), "Manpower Management and Human Resources Accounting", studied that the employers doesn't have a favourable stand over the labour welfare statutory norms and were opposing the same. He suggested that, "the existing social security benefits available under the law are adequate for the welfare needs of labour anything over and above these should be voluntary as a result of mutual negotiation and collective agreements between employer and employees."

Varma, Pramod (1987), "Labour Economics and Industrial Relations", Tata McGraw Hill publishing Company Limited, New Delhi, p.381, has pointed out about three types of welfare facilities as provided by the organizations. The first types of facility, as referred by him relates to the provision of canteen facility at

subsidized rates, crèches and medical facilities. The second types of facility as pointed by him were related to Consumer Co- operative stores and credit societies and educational facilities. Lastly, he mentioned about community centres, welfare centres, etc.

Ahuja, K.K (1988), "Labour Welfare and Social Security", Personnel Management, Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, p.935-947, has discussed about the importance of labour welfare and social security measures in an Industrial set up. He has also advocated the fact that the provision of labour welfare and social security measures helps improving the condition of workers considerably making them feel satisfied at workplace which further leads to enhanced productivity.

Zachariah, George (1990), "Profile of Industrial Workers in Kerela- A comparative study of the Socio-economic profile of workers in traditional and modern industries", unpublished doctoral thesis, has observed that there is a disparity between the modern and traditional workforce and this disparity has arisen because of the comparatively economic background of the latter. It has further perpetuated because of higher remunerations and welfare facilities of which the traditional workers were deprived. It has been also seen that the modern workers are more satisfied with the working condition when compared to that of the traditional workers.

Monappa, Arun (1990), "Labour Welfare and Social Security in Industrial Relation", Tata McGraw Hills Publishing Company Limited, New Delhi, p.243- 271, has made a comprehensive discussion on the labour welfare measures and social security schemes. He has also discussed about the different implementing authorities and their problems and failure in implementing the same.

Sonny, V.A (1993), "Pattern of Executive Remuneration in the manufacturing Public Enterprises in Kerela" has asserted the fact that monetary incentive is the most important incentive that is available to an employee but the monetary incentives needs to be further supported by some non- monetary incentives and congenial workplace environment in order to motivate the workforce.

Chauhan, Daisy (1995), "Challenges for Human Resource Development in the Changing Environment" Personnel Today, Vol.XV, No. 4, January-March, observed that through a systematic and effective human resource development system, 'ordinary' people can be converted to 'extra-ordinary' performers.

Agarwal, S.C (1996), "A Study on Wages and Productivity in selected public sector units", has made a comparative analysis of total factor productivity with labour productivity. According to him, it is only through implementation of various labour welfare measures at workplace, the attitudes of the workers can be significantly changed and higher productivity may be attained.

Rao, Sambasiva (1996), "A study of Welfare, Health and Safety of Workers in the Cement Industry of Guntur District in Andhra Pradesh", Andhra University, studied about various welfare measures provided to the workers of cement industries. He considered different size of cement factories and concluded that the large sized firms provide better welfare facilities as compared to the medium and small-scale firms.

Sharma, R.K (1997), "Industrial Labour in India", Atlantic Publication and Distribution, made an attempt to show the entire image of labour problems in India in his book. A detailed discussion on labour welfare activities has been provided in this book. He has illustrated comprehensive sight on labour welfare amenities to relief distress among the staffs and children, medical schemes, maternity benefits and child welfare.

Dr. Ashok Singh, A.R (1999), "Welfare Measures- the positive and negative sides", Indian Labour Journal,

Indian Labour Bureau, Shimla, has provided an interesting insight about the labour and management relations. According to him, neither the management nor the labours are aware of one another's problems. The employees are always under the impression that they deserve more than that has been already provided to them by the management whereas the latter always thinks that the former is always dissatisfied. He further said that healthy relationship cannot be built on the path of suspicion and misunderstanding. To tackle the same, a systematic approach should be followed where interest of both the stakeholder is taken care of.

Decenzo, David A. and Robbins, Stephen P. (2001), "Benefits and Services", Personnel Management, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p.451-475, has explained about the various facilities and benefits provided to the employees by their companies. They have also pointed out several legislative rights of the employees in the context of labour welfare schemes. Such benefits include the social security premium, unemployment compensation, disability benefits, etc.

Michael, V.P (2001), "Labour Welfare measures and Labour Welfare Officers" in Human Resource Management and Human Relations, Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai, p.612-618, explains that the various extra- mural and intra- mural welfare facilities has significant role to play in improving the quality of work life of the employees and maintaining a better degree of relationship among different cadres of employees.

Cheng, Kue-Nel (2002), "A Structural Balancing Equation on Statutory and Non- Statutory measures of welfare of Taiwanese health club", points out that the non- statutory welfare measures are more favoured by the employees when compared with the statutory welfare measures. Such measures are more accepted and appreciated by the workers.

Sharma, A.M (2003), "Aspects of Labour Welfare and Social Security", Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai, made an elaborate study on labour welfare and social security measures prevailing in the country since independence. He has made an attempt to put before the readers a comprehensive study of the vast scope, variety, concepts and principles of labour welfare and social security measures which has developed over time. He has also discussed about the labour welfare philosophy and how the idea of welfare state has added new dimension in this regard.

Pylee M.V and Simon George A, "Retirement Benefits in Industrial Relations and Personnel Management", Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p.153-159, has asserted that the organizations should provide social security benefits like provident fund, gratuity and pensions to their employees since these benefits provides them with a sense of security and as whole their performance at work improves."

Tyagi, B.P (2004), "Labour Economics and Social Welfare", Jai Prakash Nath & Co., India, provides a comprehensive description of the labour problems and social welfare. He has discussed the current problems prevailing at that point of time. The author had tried to discuss the problems of labour economics in the Indian Railways. His work concentrated on matters like maintenance of hospitals, well- equipped dispensaries for medical treatment of employees and their family members. He has also pointed out that the Indian Railways had taken measures to take care of the issues.

Gupta, Shashi K & Joshi, Rosy (2005), "Human Resource Management", Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, p. 26.1- 26.13, discusses about 'Labour Welfare' in details and covers all the aspects of employee welfare measures such as its types, statutory and non- statutory provisions, approaches to welfare and also regarding the significance of labour welfare in an industrial set- up."

Mishra, K.K (2005), "Labour Welfare in Indian Industries-with special reference to sugar factories of eastern region of Uttar Pradesh", made a study on the sociological analysis of labour welfare prevalent in the sugar industry. His study revealed that the condition of workers in the sugar industry were far from being satisfactory in nature. He also pointed out that the factories did not adhere to the guidelines of Factories Act of 1948. Furthermore, the provision of leaves, holidays, housing and medical facilities were also very poor.

Mamoria, C.B; Mamoria, Satish and Gankar, S.V (2005), "Dynamics of Industrial Relation", Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai, p. 529-565, discusses about the different labour welfare measures undertaken and implemented by the Government under various plan periods. They have also discussed about various welfare facilities that are provided by several well-known organizations in India.

Singh, B.D (2005), "Industrial Relations: Emerging Paradigms", Excel Books, New Delhi, p.228-229, has asserted that social security measures should not be treated as a burden by the employer. Rather it should be treated as a kind of wise investment that offers good 'social dividends' in the long run.

Armstrong, Michael (2006), "A Hand Book of Human Resource Management" Kogan Page Ltd., New Delhi, has discussed about the various labour welfare measures available to an employee. According to him, the provision for labour welfare measures in terms of individual and group services helps improve the identification of employees with the companies they are working for.

Mishra, Shobha & Bhagat, Manju (2007), "Principles for successful implementation of Labour Welfare Activities from Police theory to Functional theory," Tesionline, has studied the scope, objectives and theories of labour welfare. The article shows an attempt into studying the success of the various welfare activities. It discusses the matter of fact by linking success of the schemes with the approach of the employer in implementing the same. They have also explained that the labour welfare activity has far-reaching consequences not only in the industrialized society but also in all facets of human resources.

Deepika, M.G (2008), "A Relook into the measurement of Human Welfare and Happiness", HRM Review, Hyderabad, November, p.42-44, stated about a new method of measuring human welfare and happiness which is presently prevalent in Bhutan. She has asserted that the Government should measure Gross National Happiness (GNH) rather than Gross National Product (GNP).

Dessler, Gary & Varkkey, Biju (2009), "Human Resource Management", Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p.513-546, has elaborately discussed about the various benefits and services provided to the employees in India. They have discussed briefly about the benefits that are required to be provided under various legislations under the Centre or State bodies apart from those voluntary benefits provided by the employers.

Mukul G. Asher (2009), "Pension plans, Provident Fund Schemes and Retirement Policies: Indian Social Security Reform Imperative", ASCI Journal of Management, Hyderabad, September 2009, Vol.39, No.1, p.1-18, stated about the various social security schemes and its importance in smoothening the life of the workers throughout his lifetime. He asserted about the importance of these schemes with regards to safeguard against inflation risks, health hazards, uncertainty, illness and poverty relief.

Aswathapa, K (2010), "Human Resource Management", Tata McGraw Hill Education Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p.378-392, has elaborately discussed about the various facilities and benefits (both monetary and non-monetary). He has also discussed about the benefits that are provided in terms of payments for time not

worked, pension plans, retirement benefits, insurance benefits, etc. and its mechanism for successful implementations in organizations.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY:

After going through a comprehensive review of the existing literatures found in a number of books, journals, theses, etc. with regards to various studies conducted in respect of employee welfare in India as well as around the world, the researcher has been able to jot down the following findings:

- The Researcher has found out that in the first part of the 20th Century, the concept of labour welfare and social security measures were rather vague and only a few employers abided by the same. The condition of the labour class was deplorable and the employers were expected to undertake measures over and above the minimum standards set by various legislations for the betterment of the labour class. However, the scope of social security measures was negligible except in a few industries.
- Studies conducted in the second half of the century portrayed that the public sector units were better in the adoption and practice of welfare measures when compared to the private units.
- Studies during that period also threw light on the importance of maintaining industrial hygiene for providing a better working environment to the working class. Such working environment was advocated in the line of safeguarding the employees against any sort of occupational hazards.
- Studies in the late 50's also suggested that the government had miserably failed to provide protection and security to the working class as a whole.
- The studies from the beginning of the 60's depicted that the employees in the private sector were more satisfied with the various facilities provided to them and were more of management loyal.
- However, studies during the late 60's especially with regards to the public sector units showcased that the management in such units failed miserably in providing their employees with various welfare facilities. The Government during that period failed to implement the various legislations to the benefits of the working class.
- Studies in the 70's showcased that the welfare measures provided through various legislations are meager and minimum and the requirement of the employees are comparatively more. Such welfare measures only acted as maintenance factors and not as motivators.
- The researcher also found out that the studies in the late 70's opined that the labour welfare measures in India are obligatory since they arise from the prevalent industrial system and hence it is obligatory on the employer to ease up the process of work of the labour class by facilitating them with welfare measures at workplace.
- The studies in the 80's mostly focused on segregating the different broad heads of labour welfare and social security measures in line with what may be voluntarily and involuntarily undertaken by the employer both in the private as well as in the public sector.
- The studies in the 90's pointed out the satisfaction level of the employees working in the differently sized organizations and it was evident that the large- sized firms were doing much for their employees and as such the level of satisfaction of such employees were more as compared to that of the small- sized ones.
- Some of the studies in the first part of the 21st century pointed out the fact that the employees are more inclined towards the non- statutory welfare facilities as compared to that of the statutory welfare facilities. Some of the well- reputed public sector undertakings have done great job in

providing such voluntary services when compared to that of the private sectors.

- The researcher also found out that some of the industries were yet to abide by the various legislations with regards to the welfare and social security even after the passage of almost 60 years of independence. Workers in certain industries were found to be living in deplorable condition even then since the industries didn't abide by the legislation to provide them the protection.

5. FUTURE SCOPE OF STUDY:

After conducting an elaborate review of literature, the researcher would like to put forward the future scope of study in similar lines with regards to labour welfare and social security measures:

- ❖ A Comparative study on the 'Labour Welfare and Social Security measures' in Public and Private Sector enterprises.
- ❖ 'Influence of labour welfare and social security measures on productivity and industrial relation'.
- ❖ Assessment of the Role of trade union in implementing and improving labour welfare measures in select public sector enterprises.
- ❖ Quality of Work life of the employees of private sector and public sector enterprises- A comparative study.

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