

Labour Welfare Measures Leads To Healthy Industrial Relations – An Empirical Investigation on Indian Private Sector Sugar Mills

Bhavani

*Assistant Professor, Faculty of Business Administration,
Sathyabama University, Chennai.*

bhavanimedha@gmail.com, (M) – 98848 43916

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Management Studies, Sathyabama University, Chennai.

bhavanimedha@gmail.com, (M) – 98848 43916

Abstract

This empirical research paper deals with study of the labour welfare provisions and its effect on the three dimensions of industrial relations like association of workers with organization, relationship of workers with management and supervisors. This study throws light on how far the satisfaction level of the workers in accordance with the labour welfare measures helps the employers to maintain healthy industrial relations. To measure the satisfaction level of workers about labour welfare measures a set of questionnaire were formed. The data were collected by using stratified random sampling from 150 workers working in the different parts of the sugar mills functioning at various States of India. Using the SPSS, some of the relevant tests were carried out like reliability test, percentage analysis, ANOVA and T-test. Based on the analysis made, various findings were derived that will be useful, relevant and significant to develop healthy industrial relations.

Key Words: Employers, Labour Welfare Measures, Industrial Relations, Workers

Introduction

The role of labour as a factor of production is becoming increasingly important in modern society. Growing industrialization and spreading up of service of sector resulted in the galloping demand for skilled labour. The emergence of the concepts of HR, HRM and HRD contributed to the increasing importance of labour. The issue of IR arose from the issue of divorce of the workers from the ownership and

management of the machinery and materials of production. This has brought about a sense of deprivation or loss of independence on the part of workers and is probably the sole cause of the industrial disputes.

IR constitute one of the most delicate and complex problems of the modern industrial society which is characterized by rapid change, industrial unrest and conflicting ideologies in the national and international spheres. It is a dynamic concept which depends upon the pattern of society, economic systems and political set-up of a country and changes with the changing economic and social order. *It is an art of living together for the purposes of production, productive efficiency, human wellbeing and industrial progress. It comprises of a net work of institutions, such as, trade unionism, collective bargaining, employers, the law and the state, which are bound together by a set of common values and aspirations.* Labour is the most important factor of production even today. Neither the development of science and technology nor the sophistication of modern, automation has been able to establish a perfect substitute to labour obviously. Labour still the major factor in the field of production and deserve due recognition.

Hence the protection of the labourer's interests has become obligatory on the government and the employer as well. Labour welfare is the key to smooth employer-employee relations. In order to increase labour welfare, Employers offer extra incentives in the form of labour welfare schemes, and to make it possible to pursued workers to accept mechanization. Sometimes the employers to combat the influence of outside agencies on their employees use labour welfare as a tool to minimize the effect they may have ton the labour. Labour welfare measures are also initiated with the view to avoiding payment of tax on surplus and to build up at the same time better relations with employees.

Review of Literature

Labour welfare is being defined in several ways and is therefore understood in various ways in various countries. Arthur James Todd aptly remarks, "A series of sharply divers opinion exist on the motives and merits of industrial welfare work". The oxford dictionary defines labour welfare as "effort to make life worth living for workers". Dunlop defines it as 'the complex inters relations among workers managers and government'. Prof. Dale Yoder defines industrial relations as the whole field of relationship that exists because of the necessary collaboration of men and women in the employment process of industry. It is the relations of all associated in productive work including industry, agriculture, mining, commerce finance, transport and other activities.

Alport. G (1943) in his article on "The ego in contemporary psychology" observed that money incentives alone do not bring about desired motivation. Employees in an industry are no 'economic men' so much they are 'ego men'. What they want above all else is; credit for work done, interesting tasks, appreciation, approval and congenial relations with their employees and fellow – workers. This satisfaction they want even more than high wages or job security.

Saltonstall (1959) considers that, “Human Relation is a study of people in action”. The main function of the manager is to co-ordinate the work amongst workers. Effective leadership needs knowledge of human relations.

Unwala. B (1957) in his study on “Human Relations in Textile World”, dealt with organizational efficiency, hierarchy co-operation and conflicts, communications, education, approach incentives, personality traits, supervision and rationalization. He found that a conspicuous failure in the human sphere. The factors like poor health, the economic factor and working conditions have considered to the lack of interest among the employee. Failure of maintenances, negligence of duty, absence of co-operation, indifferences to communication, misconception about education, conscious omission of incentives, mobility of motives and unqualified supervision are major symptoms of chronic malady of the industry.

Veeraraghavan, P.V. (1960) in the study conducted in three industries investigated about the employees attitudes satisfaction and discontentment of employees with regard to wages, supervision, management, job, co-workers, working conditions, communication, welfare facilities and labour union. The study has revealed that the workers in private enterprises were more satisfied than those working in public enterprise. Evidences indicate that a deliberate effort to create favourable working conditions was allowed by an improvement in morale.

According to Ragnar Arvidson (1971), the basic factors required for satisfactory employer and employee relationship are (1) clean work place (2) safety provisions (3) Insurance Benefits (4) Vacations and holidays (5) social policies (6) personnel policies (7) status (8) fair pay rates.

Sivayya. K.V., (1971), in his article on “Industrial Relations in selected units of the sugar industry of Andhra Pradesh” states that if the employees are satisfied with the employment and working conditions, social security and welfare measures, that attitude of the management towards their unions, and the methods adopted to settle disputes that may arise from time to time, there exist good industrial relations.

Choubay. B.N., (1972), in his article on “Industrial relations in Banking Sector” states that the natural desire of the employer is to maximize profits by paying less wages for more labour and that of the worker is to obtain better remuneration and better working conditions. These conflicting interests give rise to problems of labour management relations require careful and efficient handling in order to maintain harmony between the employers’ and employees’ interest.

Ram S. Taneja (1987) in his article on “Towards Better Technology Utilizing Human Resources” has observed that one cannot manage machines, finance, marketing, production so on and so forth, without the proper utilization of human resources. He has concluded that both the technology and social values are changing and in this background an organization should maintain a balance between changing technology and changing social values with an aim to maximize the utilization of human resources.

Abdul Ghani (1989) in his study titled “Labour management relations in textile industry in Jammu and Kashmir state since 1976”, has presented the economic, living and working conditions of the textile workers in the state. The study revealed that the workers have been found working in appalling working and living conditions.

Majority of them are working continuously in standing positions in poor lighting and ventilation, cleanliness and conservancy conditions are exposed to undesirable dust, fumes, gases and steam etc. they are deprived of proper drinking water, washing and bathing facilities, canteen, rest room, recreational amenities, medical facilities, and live under poor housing conditions. The welfare activities undertaken by the state government have not been able to bring about any appreciable change in the welfare of the vast working class. The working of various social security measures has been far from satisfactory. The pressure of poor physical and psychological work environment has made significant difference in the attitude and morale of the employees and has consequently led to greater degree of dissatisfaction among the workers from their jobs.

Sharma G.R. (1990) conducted a survey on the living conditions of workers in Jharia coal fields by taking a sample of workers, both underground and of open cast mines. His study covered aspects like safety, wages, welfare measures and trade union organization. He found that by and large living conditions of coal workers were not satisfactory.

Sumathi. S (1995), in her research on “Industrial Relation in Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd. Triuchirappalli” observed “The existing industrial relations in the study unit and suggested for better industrial relations by highlighting the wages and welfare measures, machinery for settlement of disputes, role of trade unions, process of accident and safety measures provided by Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd.

Sandhya Sridevi. M (2007), in her article on “Business Ethic – HR implications” has observed that, the deeper challenge is not merely to set business or corporation to change, but to get the people who are making decisions within these organizations to change the way they think – to realize that the same care they take to behave ethically in their personal lives should drive the decisions they make in their professional lives.

Tanjua Agarwala (2005) in her article on “Human Resource Management: The emerging trends” has described that, though the people factor has always been important, its importance will grow in future. HR innovation, that integrate employee needs and expectations with organizational objectives assume tremendous significance.

Ranga Reddy (2005) in this article on “HRD in India: Needs innovative techniques” has stated that among the species, human being is the finest one who needs skills, talent, aptitude, motivation to deliver goods and service time with quality. Labour is highly perishable which needs constant training for upgradation of information. If manpower utilized optimally, certainly the Nation-State grows rapidly. In every employee / citizen the habit of imbibing learning curve is to be naturalized.

Rupa Mathan (2004), in her research on “Industrial relations in Private Sector”, pointed out that the industrial relations is not a one sided game but depends on the mutual understanding, faith and goodwill of all employees in industrial relations system. Good and harmonious relations require active participation and proper communication channels if not it leads to strikes, lockout, absenteeism, indiscipline and even violence.

Anil Kumar Singh (2005), in his article, on “HRD practices and Philosophy of Management in Indian organization” has stated that, HR concepts that get packaged

along with modern managerial philosophy are likely to revolutionize the work place. The bottom line is that people want to be cared for and respected.

Scope of The Study

Labour welfare activities, is combination of various steps, the cumulative effect of which is to grease the wheels of industry and society. Sound industrial relations can only be based on human relations and good human relations dictate that labour being, human being should be treated humanely which includes respect for labour dignity, fair dealing and concern for human beings physical and social needs. In any industry good relations between the management and workers depend upon the degree of mutual confidence, which can be established. This in turn, depends upon the recognition by the labour of the goodwill and integrity of the organization in the day to day handling questions, which are of mutual concern.

Objectives of The Study

- To analyze the personal profile influences the labour welfare measures in the sugar mills at India
- To study the existing labour welfare measures in the sugar mills at India
- To find the impact of labour welfare measures on industrial relations in the sugar mills at India

Research Methodology

The research design used in the study was descriptive in nature as it evaluates the existing state of affairs related to labour welfare measures policy followed in the sugar mills and its impact on industrial relations. The sample size of the study was 150 selected based on stratified random sampling. The variables taken for this study is Monetary Benefits, Working conditions, workers participation in management, Grievance handling, Trade union and welfare measures were been considered to be as determinant of labour welfare measures. The primary data are those which collected as a fresh and for the first time and this happen to be original in character. Questionnaire was developed for collecting primary data from the respondents. The questionnaire consists of several statements related to the variables selected using 5 point Likerts scale and few demographic factors questions are also been collected. The study was also supplemented by references from different magazines, literatures, books and publications related to labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

A pilot study was conducted to validate the questionnaire and Cronbach's alpha statistical tool used to measure the internal consistency or reliability of the questionnaire. It is found that the Cronbach alpha value is .985. This implies that the research instrument is valid at 98.5 % level. The data gathered through the survey are

to be analyzed with appropriate tools and techniques and are represented with tables and graphs as and when necessary.

In order to analyze descriptive data analysis the statistical tools used such as percentage method, ANOVA and T- test were employed. Demographic and Rational profile of the respondents were analyzed using percentage analysis. Other statistical tests were used to test the significant and association of the variables selected for this study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this chapter, effort has been made to identify the demographic profile of the respondents and to find out the opinion of the respondents related to the labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Validity and Reliability

Reliability of scales is tested with Cronbach alpha. The following are the alpha values for respective scales that have satisfied the minimum requirement of 0.7.

Table of Reliability values of the variable

S. No.	Variable Names	No. of Statements in each variables	Reliability values
1	Overall reliability	108	0.985
2	Monetary Benefits	19	0.746
3	General Working Conditions	14	0.941
4	Workers participation in management	9	0.928
5	Employee Grievance Handling	5	0.879
6	Trade union	12	0.928
7	Welfare measures	17	0.939
8	Association of workers with organization	10	0.933
9	Relationship of workers with management	9	0.918
10	Relationship of workers with superiors	13	0.944

Source: Primary Data

Content validity is also called as face validity that is addressed in this study through review of literature. All the scales adapted in this study are already used in previous research.

Percentage Analysis

Demographic profile of the respondents

Particulars	Classification	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	20 – 30	42	28
	31 – 40	14	09
	41 – 50	44	29
	51 above	50	34
	Total	150	100
Educational Qualification	Below 10 th	24	16
	10 th	35	23
	12 th	36	24
	Diploma/ITI	28	19
	Under graduate	17	11
	Post graduate	10	07
	Total	150	100
Designation	Officers	56	37
	Supervisors	65	43
	Workers	29	20
	Total	150	100
Experience	1-5	28	19
	6-10	31	21
	11-15	46	31
	16-20	29	19
	>20	16	10
	Total	150	100
Monthly Salary	<10,000	16	11
	10,001 - 20,000	39	26
	20,001 - 30,000	66	44
	>30,000	29	19
	Total	150	100
Marital Status	Married	132	88
	Unmarried	18	12
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

From the above frequency table it was evident that nearly 34 percent of the respondents falls in the age group of 51 and above, 24 percent of the respondents were having only 12th as their educational qualification, 43 percent of respondents were supervisors level, 31 percent of the respondents were having experience of 11 – 15 years, 44 percent of the respondents were getting monthly salary between 20, 0001 – 30, 000 and the 88 percent of the respondents were married.

T – Test

To find out whether there is any significant relationship between different marital status of the respondents and their opinion about labour welfare measures, a null hypothesis is framed and tested with the help of 't' test. 't' test values were calculated for marital status of respondents. The t – values calculated were compared with the table 't' values (at 5% level and at 1% level) to test the significance of variation in respect of perception of the respondents about labour welfare measures. The results were tabulated and interpreted in the table below;

Null hypothesis

There is no significant difference between marital status of the respondents and their opinion about labour welfare measures.

Table showing the significant difference between marital status and labour welfare measures

Labour Welfare Measures and the dimensions on Industrial Relations	Marital Status	Mean	SD	F	P value Sig.	Results
Monetary Benefits	Married	67.27	10.315	2.011	.158	Not significant
	Unmarried	64.17	12.167			
General Working Conditions	Married	38.18	9.860	.039	.843	Not significant
	Unmarried	39.61	9.787			
Workers Participation Management	Married	24.76	6.372	4.077	.045	Significant
	Unmarried	25.72	7.858			
Employees' Grievances	Married	13.38	3.745	4.919	.028	Significant
	Unmarried	13.94	4.684			
Trade Union	Married	32.13	9.300	.023	.879	Not significant
	Unmarried	32.89	8.950			
Welfare Measures	Married	45.96	12.896	1.175	.280	Not significant
	Unmarried	47.28	14.241			
Association of Workers with Organization	Married	27.44	6.482	7.401	.007	Significant
	Unmarried	27.61	8.431			
Relationship of Workers Management	Married	24.42	6.770	.025	.876	Not significant
	Unmarried	24.78	6.283			
Relationship of Workers Superiors	Married	34.80	10.312	.449	.504	Not significant
	Unmarried	37.22	11.471			

Source: Primary Data

From the table 5.3.1., it is revealed that the p value is more than table value at 5% level of significance in case of monetary benefits, general working conditions, trade union, welfare measures, relationship of workers with management and relationship with superiors. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between marital status and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations. However, the p value is less than table value at 5%

level of significance in case of workers participation management, employee grievance and association of workers with organization. The null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is significant difference between marital status and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Anova

To find out whether there is any significant difference between individual demographic variables such as, age, educational qualifications, salary and experience of the respondents and the opinion of the respondents about various labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations a null hypothesis is framed and tested.

Null hypothesis

There is no significant difference between age and the opinion about various labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Table shows the significant difference between age and labour welfare measures

Labour Welfare Measures and the dimensions on Industrial Relations	df	F	P value (Sig.)	Results
Monetary Benefits	3	.131	.941	Not significant
	146			
	149			
General Working Conditions	3	2.074	.106	Not significant
	146			
	149			
Workers Participation Management	3	2.298	.080	Not significant
	146			
	149			
Employees' Grievances	3	1.270	.287	Not significant
	146			
	149			
Trade Unions	3	1.788	.152	Not significant
	146			
	149			
Welfare Measures	3	2.275	.082	Not significant
	146			
	149			
Association of Workers With Organization	3	2.163	.095	Not significant
	146			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Management	3	2.842	.040	Significant
	146			
	149			
Relationship of Workers with Superiors	3	1.241	.297	Not significant
	146			
	149			

Source: Primary Data

From the 5.4.1 table it is inferred that the p value is more than table value at 5% level of significance in case of monetary benefits, general working conditions, workers participation in management, employee grievance handling, trade union, welfare measures, association of workers with organization and relationship with superiors. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between age and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations. However, the p value is less than table value at 5% level of significance in case of workers relationship with superiors. The null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is significant difference between age and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Null hypothesis

There is no significant difference between educational qualification and the opinion about various labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Table shows the significant difference between educational qualification and labour welfare measures

Labour Welfare Measures and the dimensions on Industrial Relations	df	F	P value (Sig.)	Results
Monetary Benefits	5	.578	.717	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
General Working Conditions	5	.302	.911	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Workers Participation Management	5	.373	.866	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Employees' Grievances	5	.182	.969	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Trade Unions	5	.785	.562	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Welfare Measures	5	.956	.447	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Association of Workers With Organization	5	1.012	.413	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Management	5	.651	.661	Not Significant
	144			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Superiors	5	.912	.475	Not Significant
	144			
	149			

Source: Primary Data

From the 5.4.2., table it is inferred that the p value is more than table value at 5% level of significance in case of monetary benefits, general working conditions, workers participation in management, employee grievance handling, trade union, welfare measures, association of workers with organization, relationship of workers with management and relationship with superiors. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between educational qualifications and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Null hypothesis

There is no significant difference between experience and the opinion about various labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Table shows the significant difference between experience and labour welfare measures

Labour Welfare Measures and the dimensions on Industrial Relations	df	F	P value (Sig.)	Results
Monetary Benefits	4	.493	.741	Not Significant
	145			
	149			
General Working Conditions	4	3.358	.012	Significant
	145			
	149			
Workers Participation Management	4	4.020	.004	Significant
	145			
	149			
Employees' Grievances	4	2.899	.024	Significant
	145			
	149			
Trade Unions	4	3.462	.010	Significant
	145			
	149			
Welfare Measures	4	3.916	.005	Significant
	145			
	149			
Association of Workers With Organization	4	4.188	.003	Significant
	145			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Management	4	4.852	.001	Significant
	145			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Superiors	4	3.069	.018	Significant
	145			
	149			

Source: Primary Data

From the 5.4.3., table it is inferred that the p value is more than table value at 5% level of significance in case of monetary benefits. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between experience and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations. However, the p value is less than table value at 5% level of significance in case of working conditions, workers participation in management, employee grievances, trade union, welfare measures, association of workers with the organization, relationship of workers with management and workers relationship with superiors. The null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is significant difference between experience and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Null hypothesis

There is no significant difference between salary and the opinion about various labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Table shows the significant difference between experience and labour welfare measures

Labour Welfare Measures and the dimensions on Industrial Relations	df	F	P value (Sig.)	Results
Monetary Benefits	4	.493	.741	Not Significant
	145			
	149			
General Working Conditions	4	3.358	.012	Significant
	145			
	149			
Workers Participation Management	4	4.020	.004	Significant
	145			
	149			
Employees' Grievances	4	2.899	.024	Significant
	145			
	149			
Trade Unions	4	3.462	.010	Significant
	145			
	149			
Welfare Measures	4	3.916	.005	Significant
	145			
	149			
Association of Workers With Organization	4	4.188	.003	Significant
	145			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Management	4	4.852	.001	Significant
	145			
	149			
Relationship of Workers Superiors	4	3.069	.018	Significant
	145			
	149			

Source: Primary Data

From the 5.4.4., table it is inferred that the p value is more than table value at 5% level of significance in case of monetary benefits. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between salary and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations. However, the p value is less than table value at 5% level of significance in case of working conditions, workers participation in management, employee grievances, trade union, welfare measures, association of workers with the organization, relationship of workers with management and workers relationship with superiors. The null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is significant difference between salary and labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations.

Findings

Frequency Table

From the above frequency table it was evident that nearly 34 percent of the respondents falls in the age group of 51 and above, 24 percent of the respondents were having only 12th as their educational qualification, 43 percent of respondents were supervisors level, 31 percent of the respondents were having experience of 11 – 15 years, 44 percent of the respondents were getting monthly salary between 20, 0001 – 30, 000 and the 88 percent of the respondents were married.

T – Test

Workers participation in management, employee grievance and association of workers with organization has its difference with the marital status of the respondents working in the sugar mills.

ANOVA Test

Salary and experience of the respondents were having a significant difference between the various labour welfare measures like working conditions, workers participation management, employee grievance handling, trade union, welfare measures, etc and it have an influence on industrial relations.

Suggestions

In our materialistic and competitive societies, people want to give meaning and importance to their socio-psychological factors. Apart from monetary benefits like wages, incentives, bonus, etc, the employees were expecting something like better working conditions, opportunity for participating in decision making along with top management, importance for their grievance with proper solution, effective functioning of trade union and encourage the right kind of trade union leadership all this will help the management and workers to act like a family, in turn which will help to develop strong and healthy industrial relations which results in better economy status.

So, it is mandatory that, apart from monetary benefits, the management should concentrate on various labour welfare measures to improve the industrial relations and the national economy in whole by avoiding industrial conflicts among the management and workers.

Conclusion

The study has focused on the various labour welfare measures and its impact on industrial relations existing in the private sector sugar mills functioning at India. From this study it is evident that, the employees not only giving importance to wages, bonus, incentives, etc they also insist on labour welfare measures like working conditions, workers participation in management, grievance handling, trade union functions also. To conclude this study focuses and found that monetary benefits alone will not bring out healthy and strong industrial relations but also there is a contribution of various labour welfare measures is also to be playing a vital role in determining the association of workers with organization, relationship of workers with management and superiors.

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