

AN IMPACT OF RECENT LABOUR WELFARE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON INDIAN LABOUR MARKET: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Welfare is another expression of well-being. Labour is a crucial factor of production. Healthy and congenial labour management relations are the prerequisite for efficient production. Labour Welfare measures are very important since they have strong impact on workers willingness to work and their productive capacity. During the 20th century, employers increased the economic security of employees by providing, in exchange for labour, benefits in addition to direct compensation. Apart from direct compensation, benefits encompass all other inducements and services provided by an employer to employees. The welfare services in an industry is to improve the living and working conditions of workers and their families because the workers well-being cannot be achieved in isolation of his family. It is well known that economy of India is passing through transitional phase where rural and agriculture based society is changing into urban and industry based economy. Labour welfare service is necessary to face problems being created by this transitional phase. The study has been conducted in Delhi & NCR.

KEYWORDS: *Labour Welfare, UNESCO, UAN, EPF Scheme, NCSP, RSBY.*

Introduction

Many schools of thoughts have advocated for the labour welfare from time to time. Karl Marx has propounded the theory of surplus-value of production emphasizing the importance of labour to the capitalistic society. Further Adam Smith's Absolute theory and Ricardo's Comparative Cost Doctrine are mainly based on labour resources. Human asset is the main issue and reactant compels which implants life in different assets like cash and material. There have been breathtaking changes in the setting in which work is performed. The procedure of globalization pushes in innovation, expanded rivalry, work escalation, broadening of the workforce, expanded number of ladies in the workforce, and the obscuring of limits amongst work and family are a portion of the progressions that have affected the workplace. Given that people spend a significant proportion of their lives at work, changes in the work environment can have deep influence on their health and well-being, and consequentially on job and organizational performance so fostering a work culture that promote work-life balance, employee growth and development, health and safety, and employee engagement can be the key to achieving sustainable employee well-being and organizational performance.

Welfare is another expression of well-being. Labour is a crucial factor of production. Healthy and congenial labour management relations are the prerequisite for efficient production. Labour Welfare measures are very important since they have strong impact on workers willingness to work and their

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productive capacity. In other words, it is worker who really delivers the goods. It is absolutely true that machine should be kept in good condition for proper functioning. Likewise machine operator too should be maintained in satisfactory physical, emotional, mental and moral conditions for uninterrupted and more production. During the 20th century, employers increased the economic security of employees by providing, in exchange for labour, benefits in addition to direct compensation. Apart from direct compensation, benefits encompass all other inducements and services provided by an employer to employees.

Like other HRM policies, employer-sponsored benefits have been shaped by social, cultural, and legislative forces. To maintain focus, this manuscript addresses voluntary employer-provided benefits for individuals in the U.S. Employer-provided benefits in countries other than the U.S. are not addressed given the significant variation in legislation, norms, and implementation. Similarly, statutory benefits that federal and state governments require employers to provide to U.S.-based employees (e.g., workers' compensation insurance), are not addressed given the significant variation in legislation, cost-containment strategies, and implementation approaches across states. Most industrialized nations assure the welfare of citizens through government-sponsored systems that provide for the health and safety of citizens, protecting them from consequences of economic fluctuations. In contrast, in the U.S. a system of welfare capitalism emerged whereby employers, rather than the government, played a primary role in assuring the health and welfare of employees and their families. Labour welfare involves a wide range of private, public, firm-level social and benefit policies, including employee representation, recreation, stock ownership, and benefits relating to retirement, sickness, paid time off, and unemployment.

Need of Labour Welfare In India

Labour welfare in India was largely influenced by humanitarian principles and legislation. In the beginning of industrial development in India, efforts towards worker's welfare measures were made solely by social workers, philanthropists and other religious leaders, mostly on the ground of humanity. Before introduction of welfare and other legislation in India, the conditions of labour were miserable. Exploitation of child labour, long working hours, bad sanitation and absence of safety measures were the regular features of industry.

Reality is that over 94 percent of India's working population is part of the unorganized sector. Though only a small part of total population in India (7 to 8 percent) are employed in the organized sector, industrial workers today constitute functionally a very significant and vulnerable element, they also constitute a substantial part of the nation's economy. But if we make an overall survey of the living and working conditions of workers, the need for labour welfare in India would immediately become apparent. Their welfare services have become necessary to counteract the handicaps to which workers are exposed, both in their work-life and social life and to provide opportunities and facilities for the harmonious development of the workers' personalities. Good educational and training facilities for workers are also very necessary in Indian industries because of the high rate of illiteracy among them. As per Global Education Report by UNESCO, there has been a jump in India's adult literacy ranking, from 121 last year to 105 this year. Yet, the adult literacy rate at 61.3% is still way below the 76% average for developing countries and 81.7% global average. Survival to class 5 has actually declined marginally to 61.2% from 62% last year, and is way below the global average of 83.3%.

According to the Indian Labour Market update by ILO, "the share of workers in the unorganized sector fell from 86.3 per cent in 2004-05 to 82.2 per cent in 2011-12". Further the report explains that the share of informal workers in the organized sector (i.e. workers without access to social security) increased significantly because of a greater use of contract and other forms of casual labour. In 2011-12, 79 per cent of non-agricultural wage workers had no written contract and only 23.8 per cent were eligible for social security benefits. Because of these countervailing trends, the overall proportion of informal workers in total employment (e.g. unorganized sector workers plus informal workers in the organized sector) has remained relatively stable, at around 92 per cent. Within the overall category of informal workers, the largest group is own-account workers (32.2 per cent), followed by informal employees in the informal sector (30.0 per cent) and contributing family workers (17.9 per cent).

Labour welfare occupies a very important place in the industrial development and economy. It is an important aspect of industrial relations which gives satisfaction to the worker in a way which even a handsome amount of wage cannot. With the progress of industrialization and automation, it has acquired added importance. A happy and contented work force is an asset for the industrial prosperity of any

nation. Labour welfare is nothing but the maintenance function of personnel in the sense that it is directed specifically to the safeguard of employee health and attitudes. In other words, it contributes to the maintenance of employee morale. The welfare services in an industry are to improve the living and working conditions of workers and their families because the workers well-being cannot be achieved in isolation of his family. It is well known that economy of India is passing through transitional phase where rural and agriculture based society is changing into urban and industry based economy. Labour Welfare service is necessary to face problems being created by this transitional phase.

These facilities would also help in decreasing the number of industrial accidents, in increasing workers' efficiency and then sense of commitment. Other recreational facilities help workers to improve their health and develop their personality and make them feel that the state and employers are interested in their welfare. These also help in reducing the impediments of their work. The higher rate of labour absenteeism in India industries is indicative of the lack of commitment on the part of workers, for they want to escape, whenever possible, from the environment of the work site. This absenteeism can be reduced by the provision of good housing, of health and family care, of canteens where healthy, balanced diet is made available in congenial surroundings. Family welfare, child welfare and maternity care facilities help workers in a variety of ways. They reduce infant mortality, improve the health of the spouse and keep the family size at the desirable minimum. They also tend to reduce these workers anxiety and absenteeism in so far as these were due to sickness in the family.

Recent Development

Indian government has gone a step further to bring transparency and accountability in labour enforcement system by introducing "Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Shrameva Jayate Karyakram " under the aegis of Ministry of Labour & Employment on 16th October, 2014 by the Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi. Shrameva Jayate Scheme is a multi-point programs. Also, many other developments has taken place recently, introduced by the Government of India. Followings are the most important steps taken recently, towards the labour welfare in India:

- **Shram Suvidha Portal:** Launching of Shram Suvidha Portal brought four major organizations under the Ministry of Labour and Employment to one platform. These are Office of Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), Directorate General of Mines Safety, Employees' Provident Fund Organization and Employees' State Insurance Corporation. That would allot Labour Identification Number (LIN) to nearly six lakhs units (small, medium and big, all organizations) and allow them to file online compliance for 16 out of 44 labour laws. The portal is utilizing technology to eliminate human discretion (Eliminating Inspector Raj) in selection of units for inspection, and it is mandatory to upload the Inspection Reports within 72 hours of inspection. Also, timely redressing of grievances is ensured with the help of the portal.
- **Common Registration Under 5 Central Labour Acts, By Integration With Dipp's Portal:** The design of portal for Common Registration under 5 Labour Acts has been developed in association with Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, the Acts covered for common registration include:
 - The Employees Provident Fund & Miscellaneous Act, 1952,
 - The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948,
 - The Building & Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996,
 - The Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970, and
 - The inter-stage Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979
- **Universal Account Number:** It enables 4.24 crore employees to have their Provident Fund Account portable, hassle-free and universally accessible. The employees can avail of online transfer claim portal services while changing jobs. EPF members who have activated their UAN (Universal Account Number) can get total EPF balance details on their registered mobile numbers through a new SMS service.
- **Improvement On EPF Scheme:** The EPF Act, 1952 provides for the EPF Scheme, the Employees Pension Scheme and the Employees Deposit-Linked Insurance Scheme. There were several improvements in the delivery of benefits under this scheme. Over nine lakh establishments are registered under the EPF Act benefiting over sixteen crore employees and

nearly one crore pensioners. Fifty lakhs new subscribers were registered under the scheme in a recent employee enrolment campaign. The EPFO's computerization plans have benefited to both employers and employees. Now, the employees can avail of online transfer claim portal services while changing jobs. EPF members who have activated their UAN (Universal Account Number) can get total EPF balance details on their registered mobile numbers through a new SMS service.

- **Apprentice Protsahan Yojana:** This yojana supports mainly the manufacturing units and other establishments by reimbursing 50% of the stipend paid to apprentices during first two years of their training which is a great support to new trainees and other manufacturing units.
- **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY):** Introducing a Smart Card for the workers in the unorganized sector seeded with details of two more social security schemes. RSBY has been launched by Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India to provide health insurance coverage to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. The RSBY has objective to provide protection to BPL households from financial liabilities arising out of health shocks that involve hospitalization. Beneficiaries under RSBY are entitled to, hospitalization coverage up to Rs. 30,000 for most of the diseases that require hospitalization. Government has even fixed the package rates for the hospitals for a large number of interventions. Pre-existing conditions are covered from day one and there is no age limit. The coverage extends to five members of the family which includes the head of household, spouse and up to three dependents. Beneficiaries need to pay Rs. 30/- only as registration fee while Central and State Government pays the premium to the person selected by the State Government on the basis of a competitive bidding.
- **Enhancing Scales Of Benefits Under Various Welfare Schemes Funded By The Acts:**
 - **Housing:** The RIHS 2007 has been proposed for revision to increase the subsidy amount from Rs.40,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 per tenement. The proposal has been submitted to Secretary (Expenditure) for holding CNE appraisal meeting.
 - **Education:** Amount of Assistance for ITI education has been enhanced from Rs.2,000 to Rs.10,000. Beneficiaries are presently getting this enhanced stipend.
 - **E-Portal:** A national e-portal for online application and disbursement of scholarship has started for electronic mode to the beneficiary account. The initiative started in 2013 has reached full scale w.e.f. 1st April, 2015.
 - **DBT:** Cash assistance under housing and scholarship schemes is now being transferred in electronic mode to the beneficiary account. The initiative started in 2013 has reached full scale w.e.f. 1st April, 2015.
- **National Career Service Portal (NCSP):** The ministry of L & E has implemented the National Career Service (NCS) Project as a mission for transformation of the National Employment Service to provide a variety of employment related service like Career counseling, vocational guidance, information on skill development courses, apprenticeship, internship, etc. Since its launch on 20th July, 2015, approximately 3,57,34,092 job seekers, 9,30,343 employers, 27,460 skill providers and 537 counselors are registered on the NCS portal. Data from 15 States available in the electronic form have also been migrated on the NCS Portal. (States includes: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Goa, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, West Bengal).

Development in Progress

The latest Economic Survey 2016-17 stated “the multiplicity of labour laws and the difficulty in their compliance have been an impediment to the industrial development and employment generation.” The NITI Aayog's three-year Action Agenda has also suggested continuing the labour reforms for faster employment generation which ultimately will accelerate the industrial development. Different trade unions have welcomed the Government historical steps for simplification of laws but pleaded not to curtail workers' social security or time-tested methods of collective bargaining by this reforming move.

As part of legislative reforms of labour laws, the Centre has started the process of codification and amalgamation of 44 Central labour laws into four codes in order to simplify them. The four codes will pertain to labour, industrial relations, social security and welfare and safety and working conditions. It has

not got the status of legislature because amalgamating of 44 Central labour laws needs a comprehensive study. The time has come though it is too late, to make the labour laws easy accessible and uniformly implementable to the whole Indian labour market irrespective of different sectors.

Objectives of the Study

- To know the level of implementation of different labour welfare measures in India.
- To know the level of awareness of recent labour welfare developments among labourers in India.
- To identify the level of effectiveness of different recent labour welfare programs in the present level of challenges on Indian labour market.

Statement to be Tested

H₀: There is no significant impact of various programmes under labour welfare launched recently by the Indian Government, on Indian labour Market.

H₁: There is a significant impact of various programmes under labour welfare launched recently by the Indian Government, on Indian labour Market.

Area of the Study

Delhi & NCR has been selected for the study because these areas have number of manufacturing units established. These areas are considered as an industrial hub and reflect true and fair view of Indian industries. Delhi & NCR is having easy and better infrastructural and communication facilities due to which most of the semi-government & private organizations are interested to operate their business in these areas.

Sampling Technique

- **Universe:** Indian labour market
- **Sampling Area:** Sampling area is limited to the Delhi NCR and Alwar district of Rajasthan.
- **Sample Size:** 140 labourers from big and small organizations from the sample area.
- **Sampling Design:** Random and Convenience sampling is adopted on the ground of availability, convenience to access and level of participation.

Data Collection

Since the primary objective of this research work is to identify level of awareness and effectiveness of recent labour welfare developments in India. The present study is based on the primary data collected with the help of structured questionnaire and interview and secondary data collected through Books, journals, magazines, newsletters and internet etc. The necessary data for this study have been collected through an interview schedule by directly approaching the respondents and other relevant data from some secondary sources also. All the data for the purpose of the study has been collected during the field work and from government gazette.

- **Primary Data:** The structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. The questionnaire has both open-end and closed-end questions.
- **Secondary Data:** Books, Journals, Magazines, Newsletters and Internet.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The respondents for the present study are the human resource managers and workers/employees of different manufacturing units because the human resource managers/workers play a vital role in establishing coordination among the workers, organisation and the government. The responses to the questions prepared for the purpose were sought from a sample of 140 employees/workers from almost 25 different organizations. They were interviewed and interacted personally with a structured schedule. Also, some data related to recent yojanas are sought from the HR departments of the organizations. The collected data was put on Likert Scale as follows- Highly Satisfied - 5, Satisfied - 4, Neutral -3, Dissatisfied -2, Highly Dissatisfied - 1. Data have been analysed using SPSS software for the descriptive statistics and for the non-parametric test Chi-Square Test which has been applied for the validation of the hypothesis.

Table 1

NPar Tests						
Descriptive Statistics						
S. No.	Parameters	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mini.	Max.
Statutory welfare Measures						
1	Facilities for washing	140	3.87	0.517	1	5
2	Facilities for storing, drying & clothing	140	3.01	0.46	1	4
3	Facilities for sitting	140	4.36	0.469	2	5
4	First aid appliance	140	4.62	0.36	2	5
5	Canteen	140	3.05	0.492	1	5
6	Rest and lunch room	140	3.68	0.392	1	5
7	Occupational health services	140	3.66	0.792	1	4
8	Creches	140	2.12	0.859	1	4
9	Lighting and ventilation	140	4.63	0.604	2	5
10	Noise , temperature controlling	140	3.35	0.883	1	5
Non-statutory welfare Measures						
11	Transport facilities for employees	140	4.26	0.534	1	5
12	Facilities for training and education	140	3.92	0.632	1	5
13	Loans and advances	140	2.26	0.423	1	4
14	Leave allowance	140	2.98	0.403	1	4
15	Recreational facilities	140	3.05	0.386	1	4
16	Housing facilities	140	2.66	0.815	1	4
17	Benefits for dependents	140	1.99	0.892	1	4
18	Incentives and bonus	140	2.84	0.787	1	4
19	Uniforms facilities	140	3.98	0.452	2	5
20	Guidance and counseling	140	4.05	0.438	2	5
Social Security Measures						
21	Workmen compensation benefits	140	2.99	0.458	1	4
22	Gratuity benefits	140	2.98	0.56	1	4
23	Provided fund	140	4.68	0.482	2	5
24	Pension	140	4.36	0.513	1	5
25	Medical Insurance benefits	140	2.96	0.382	1	4
26	Maternity benefits	140	3.24	0.408	1	4
27	Group insurance	140	1.26	0.36	1	3
28	Bonus benefits	140	2.62	0.413	1	4
29	Wages benefits	140	4.66	0.386	1	5
30	Women Security	140	3.87	0.352	1	5

Table1: shows the Descriptive Statistics of the different labour welfare measures. The descriptive statistics reveals that most of the welfare measures are tending towards the satisfaction or high satisfaction of workers/employees. But, laborers are frustrated on some important and valuable measures like Creches, Loans and advances, Benefits for dependents, Incentives and bonus, Gratuity benefits, Medical Insurance benefits, Bonus benefits etc. Also, the maximum liker scale on the above mentioned measures goes up to 4 (Highlighted) means none of the respondents of any organization are highly satisfied.

Table 2

Chi-Square Test				
	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Visible at work place	36.400 ^a	4	0.016	0.011
Transparency	95.714 ^b	3	0.022	0.018
Standard of living	56.971 ^a	4	0.018	0.010
e-formalities	89.086 ^a	4	0.032	0.014
Solving grievances	66.343 ^a	4	0.025	0.009
Boost morals	21.786 ^b	3	0.032	0.021
Awareness of EPF	81.771 ^a	4	0.021	0.013
Governance	84.400 ^b	3	0.014	0.014
Peace and harmony	49.600 ^b	3	0.028	0.011
Cost effective	56.971 ^a	4	0.027	0.012

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 15. The minimum expected cell frequency is 28.0.
b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 19. The minimum expected cell frequency is 35.0.

Table 2: shows the Chi-square values of some indicators which are the objectives of bringing recent developments for labour welfare in India. Asymptotic Significance and Exact Significance of each indicator is less than 0.05 which allows rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternate hypothesis. Therefore it can be said that *there is a significant impact of various programmes under labour welfare launched recently by the Indian Government, on Indian labour market.*

Table 3
Findings related to different yojanas under the recent scheme introduced

S. No.	Particulars	Findings (on Average)
1	On average, number of factory inspection conducted	As per factory Acts
2	Percentage of organisations opted EPF Scheme for their employees	82%
3	Percentage of organisations using Shram Suvidha Portal	74%
4	Percentage of organisations using National Career Service Portal (NCSP)	35%
5	On average, fraction of total labourers who have been allotted UAN	92%
6	On average, percentage of total labours who has availed Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana	85%
7	Applicability of Apprenticeship Pratsahan Yojana	95%

Table 3: shows statistics regarding the implementation of different labour welfare programmes recently launched by the Government of India. The table indicates the direction of recent developments is very positive because implementation of all the schemes approaches towards 100 percent except the scheme NCSP. The National Career Service Portal (NCSP) is a new concept in India though, it has attracted the organizations in a very short span of time. The above discussion is sufficient evidence for accepting the hypothesis. Thus, the alternate hypothesis that *there is a significant impact of various programmes under labour welfare launched recently by the Indian Government, on Indian labour market is accepted and the significant impact is positive.*

Findings and Conclusion

The study concludes that various schemes recently launched by GOI for labour welfare have brought forward the transparency in working. No doubt, the schemes are simple to understand to the laymen and are very much convenient in dealing and operating. These schemes also address the issues of grievances within desired time framework and also boost the morale of the workers. These may also open gates for good governance, peace and harmony among all the sections of the organizations and establishment. The various scheme are very much cost effective and lessen the scope for further retrenchment of the labourers. The study has found that yojanas like Universal Account Number (UAN), Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana, Apprenticeship Pratsahan Yojana, Shram Suvidha Portal, National Career Service Portal (NCSP) etc. are very much effective and attractive. The recent schemes would add more to the growth and development of Indian industries and prove to be a milestone in the history of labour market.

Though the study highlights some important and valuable welfare measures, some measures like Creches, Loans and advances, Benefits for dependents, Incentives and bonus, Gratuity benefits, Medical Insurance benefits, Bonus benefits etc. need more focus in implementation. During the study it was found that some challenges in implementation of the labour welfare schemes are there. The major challenges are mind set of people, insufficient training institutions, lack of recognizing agencies, lack of regular promotional activities etc.

Limitations of the Study

The study is confined to the organized but private manufacturing sectors. Unorganized sector has not been taken in to consideration in the study. As the government sectors generally fulfill all the welfare means in their organizations, they have also not been taken in to consideration. The study includes big organizations where all the welfare means are provided and the small as well, which do not offer or can't offer all the welfare means. The selected sample area i.e. Delhi & NCR, is a manufacturing hub in India and so there is a competition in offering welfare means. The same can't be compared with the places where rare manufacturing unites are there.

Suggestions

On the basis of the survey and the focus interviews during the course of study, the researcher offers to make following suggestions:

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- Organizing intensive audit of labour welfare measure in all unites so that it can be crossed checked.
- India's population should be kept in mind when formulating labour welfare policies. The government of India and its respective agencies should take initiative to make uniformity in organized & unorganized sectors, formal & informal sectors on labour welfare point of view.
- Government should enhance the capacity of existing ITIs and also should take initiative for opening new ITIs where needed. Also, government may give some support to private training institutes.
- The mind set of Indian employers and employees also need to be changed regarding welfare measures.
- Government along with NGOs should organize awareness programs for the people so that their mindset can be changed for the skill training courses or programmes.
- Government should focus on proper and continuous awareness programs and training of newly implemented schemes.

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