Chapter - 3
Labour Welfare and Industrial Health
Facilities of Labour Welfare

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Introduction:

Even though the concept of labour welfare, has cleared to us that the efficiency of a labour, could increase by welfare measure voluntarily contributed by employers and it could be the driving force for higher productivity and profitability, in an organization; but arguments of labour welfare are obvious:

- does the provision of welfare services increases the loyalty and motivation of employees has long been exploded?
- is gratitude is a prime motivator factor?
- isn't gratitude a thing of the past-remembered for a short term & forgotten soon after?

Therefore, what is the ultimate meaning and purpose of labour welfare today? In a competitive environment (the present scenario) WELFARE is not a charity or a simple package programme for employees but to create a culture for continuous improvement and ownership of business.

Now the meaning of labour welfare may be made clearer by listing the activities and facilities which are referred to as welfare measures:
A comprehensive list of labour welfare activities is given by M.V.Moorthy in his monumental work on labour welfare. He divides welfare measures into two broad groups, namely:

A. Welfare measures inside the work place and
B. Welfare measures outside the work place

A. Welfare measures inside the work place

1. Conditions of the work environment:
   - Neighbourhood safety and cleanliness
   - Housekeeping; up keeping of premises
   - Workshop (Room) sanitation and Cleanliness; temperature, humidity, ventilation, lighting, elimination of dust, smoke, fumes, gases etc.
   - Control of effluents.
   - Convenience and comfort during work that is operative’s posture, seating arrangements.
   - Distribution of working hours and provision for rest hours, meal times and breaks.
   - Workmen’s safety measures, that is maintenance of machines and tools, fencing of machines, helmets, aprons, goggles, and first – aid equipments.
Supply of necessary beverages, pills and tablets like salt tablets, milk, soda etc.
Notice boards; posters, pictures, slogans, information or communication.

2. Conveniences:
- Urinals and Lavatories, wash basins, bathrooms, provision for spittoons; waste disposal.
- Provision of drinking water, water coolers
- Canteen services; full meal, mobile canteen
- Mobile phones and e-mail facilities.
- Management of workers’ clock rooms, rest rooms, reading rooms, and sectional library.

3. Worker’s Health services:
- Factory health centre, Dispensary, ambulance, emergency aid, medical examinations for the workers,
- Health education, family planning, Awareness programme on HIV–AIDS.

4. Women and Child Welfare:
- Antenatal and postnatal care; maternity aid, crèche and child care;
- Women’s general education; family planning services,
- Separate services for women workers, that is lunch rooms, urinals, rest rooms,
- Women’s recreation (indoor)

5. Worker’s Recreation:
- Indoor games; strenuous games to be avoided during intervals of work.

6. Employment Follow up:
- Progress of the operative in his/her work; his/her adjustment problems with regard to machines and workload, supervisors and colleagues; industrial counselling.

7. Economic Services:
- Co-operatives, loans, financial grants, thrifts and saving schemes; budget knowledge, unemployment insurance, health insurance, employment bureau, profit – sharing and bonus schemes; transport services, provident fund, gratuity and pension; reward and incentives; workmen’s compensation for injury; family assistance in times of need.

8. Labour management Participation:
- Consultation in welfare area, in production area, in the area of administration, in the area of public relations.
- Workmen’s arbitration council / quality council
- Research Bureau.

9. Workers’ education:
- Literary classes, skill based trainings, adult education, social education, daily news review, factory news bulletin, quality education etc.
B. Welfare measures outside the work place

- Housing: bachelors’ quarters, family residences according to types and rooms.
- Water, sanitation and waste disposals.
- Roads, parks, recreation and playground.
- Schools: nursery, primary, secondary and high schools.
- Markets, cooperatives, consumer and credit societies.
- Bank and ATM
- Transport.
- Communication: Post, Telegraph, Internet, Téléphone, etc.
- Health and medical services: dispensary, emergency ward, out-patient and in-patient care, family visiting, family planning
- Recreations: games, clubs, craft centres, cultural programmes, study circle, open air theatre, swimming pool, athletics, gymnasium etc.
- Watch and ward; security
- Community leadership development: council of elders, women’s association / clubs, youth clubs, etc.

Moreover, welfare activities may also categorize as:

1. **Intra-mural**
2. **Extra mural**

**Intra – mural:**

Consist of activities / measures provided within the factories and include medical, compensation for accidents, supply of drinking water, washing and bathing, provision of safety measures and work environment.

**Extra – mural:**

Cover the services and facilities provided outside the factory such as housing, accommodation, indoor and out door recreational measures, amusement and sports, educational facilities for adult and children etc.

**Different Agencies for Labour Welfare:**

Practically, welfare activities provided by the employers, the government and non government agencies and the Trade Unions.

While, what employers provide we will see later, the activities undertaken by other agencies are mentioned below

**Welfare works by Voluntary agencies (Voluntary):**
Voluntary welfare includes all those activities which employers undertake for their workers on a voluntary basis.

Philanthropic or policing theory may be the underlying theory behind voluntary welfare work, which leads to good results.

There are some social organizations like Bombay Social Service League, the Seva Sadan Society, The Maternity and Infant Welfare Association, the Y.M.C.A also undertake voluntary welfare works like night schools, promotion of public health and organizing the sports and games for the working class people.

**Welfare activities by the Trade Unions: (Mutual)**

Mutual welfare is a “corporate enterprise” undertaken by the workers themselves. Some Trade Unions also undertake the responsibility of worker’s welfare. Like,

- The Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad,
- The Railwaymen’s Union and
- The Mazdoor Sabha of Kanpur,

The welfare activities of the Textile labour Association, Ahmedabad are:

1. 25 Cultural and Social Centres.
2. Schools for worker’s children, reading rooms, libraries, gymnasium.
3. Dispensaries and maternity homes.
4. A cooperative bank, with which a number of housing societies, consumer’s societies and credit societies are affiliated.
5. Training programmes in the principles and practices of Trade Unionism.
6. A bi-weekly, the Mazdoor Sandesh.

**Welfare facilities by the Government (Statutory):**

The conservative labour welfare policy changed during the Second World War, when the government took several steps to boost the workers’ morale and increase their productivity. The labour welfare schemes initiated then and continued. Moreover, with a view to making it mandatory for employers, to provide certain welfare facilities for their employees, the Government of India has enacted certain laws for the provision of labour welfare in order to enforce the minimum standards of health, and safety of the workers. Employers have to observe the rules relating to working conditions, hours of work, hygiene, safety, light, ventilation, sanitation etc.

The Welfare related Laws are:

- Factories Act : 1948
- The Mines Act : 1952
- The Plantation Labour Act : 1951
- The Bidi and Cigar Workers Act : 1966
- Contract Labour Act : 1970
- Industrial Disputes Act : 1947
Employees Provident fund Act : 1952  
Workmen’s Compensation Act : 1924  
Payment of Gratuity Act : 1972  
Bonus Act : 1965

Another significant steps taken by the Central Government has been to constitute welfare funds for the benefits of the employees. These funds have been stablished in coal, mica, iron-ore, limestone, and dolomite mines. The welfare activities covered by these funds include housing, medical, educational, and recreational facilities for employees and their dependents.

**Welfare work by State Government:**

- **The Government of Bombay** (Maharastra) and **Uttar Pradesh** are the pioneer of labour welfare, in India, the administration of labour welfare measures was a provincial subject in 1937-1939.
- In **1937**, the **Bombay Government** introduced labour welfare centres which are changed with the responsibility of organising composite welfare activities.
- At present more state Government and Union Territories have labour welfare centre, which take care of the educational, recreational and cultural needs of industrial employees.

**Example:**

*The Bombay Labour Welfare Fund Act was passed in 1953.* This Act is applicable to factories, covered by the Factories Act. 1948, to motor services, and other establishments, such as Societies and Charitable Trusts and other trusts employing at least 50 labourers. The Fund set up under this Act finances the labour welfare programmes of the state.


**Welfare work by Employers:**

The labour welfare movement, however, has been pioneered by several employers who were partly motivated by:

1. **Philanthropy**
2. **A desire for greater efficiency**
3. **A desire to attract labour and keep it committed to them.**

**The Genesis:**

- In 1915, the Calico Mills in Ahmedabad started medical services for their workers by appointing a doctor and a nurse.
- A year later, they started a maternity home for their confinement.
■ Calico mills even opened a Crèche for the benefit of children of their women employees.
■ In 1917, at Ahmedabad a package of labour welfare activities was put together and made available by a Mill owners family.
■ These programmes included worker’s Education, Sanitation and Medical Relief, Thrift and savings and drinking water.
■ In 1918, in Bombay, the Tatas started a medical unit in one of their mills, which has now become the industrial health department.
■ In 1920, in Delhi, Lala Sri Ram of Delhi Cloth Mills started housing for their workers and few other activities in health.

However, employers of larger or smaller have normally been able to offer welfare activities to employees since from early twenties. Some of these have been described in details report of the Malaviya Committee (1969)

A. Cotton Textiles:

The Indian Cotton Textile Industries is more than a hundred years old & one of the biggest industries in India.
■ The Bombay Mill owners Association has furnished following information on the mills welfare programmes for the year 1980.
1. All the members Mills provided canteens, Crèches and ambulance rooms for their employees.
2. Almost all the Cotton Mills had set up sports and Cultural Clubs.
3. Gymnastics and other recreation facilities such as film shows, radio sets and cultural programmes etc. were provided for the benefits of their employees.
4. Drama Training course, Bhajan competitions and literacy camp were organized for mills employees.
5. ‘GIRNI SAMACHAR’ a Marathi monthly magazine was published for the information and benefits to the employees.
6. Most of the establishment do not provide transport for their workers. Some of these Mills provide roofed cycle sheds for the parking of their worker’s vehicles.
7. Distress relief and cash benefits in the form of grants are provided to workers by some employees when there is a justified need.
8. Apart from these, textile workers are covered by social security legislation, such as the Employees Provident Fund Act. 1952, and The Employee State Insurance Act. 1948.

B. Engineering Sectors:

Most of the welfare activities were standardized after the ‘Engineering Tribunals” award in West Bengal in April 1948.

TISCO’s welfare programmes are the commendable work in the field of welfare:

1. TISCO has provided housing accommodation to 68% of its workers.
   (House rent is collected from the employees at the rate of 10% of their salary.)
2. **Provide medical facilities**, runs well-equipped hospitals in Jamshedpur, supplemented by health centres of dispensaries in different residential locations. Medical care is free for workers and their families. The following data give the ratio of the no. of beds to the nos. of employees. Nos. of beds = 608, no. of employees 34,223, ratio of beds to employees 1:56.

3. **Education receives a lot of attention**: Higher secondary Schools – 10, Middle – 3, Upper Primary – 3, Lower primary – 9. Beside, TISCO runs 2 night schools (technical night school and adult literacy classes) Annually, about Rs. 14 Lakhs are spent by the educational department.

4. **Monetary grants for those who suffers from prolonged illness**, grants for blood transfusion, college / technical education for meritorious students, are all sanctioned by the Tata Steel Charitable Trust.

5. **Interest Free Loans** to deserving employees for the settlement of their debts.

6. **50 cooperative credit societies** and one cooperative store having fair price shops, grocery shops, controlled cloths shops, grinding mills, Coal Depots, etc. through out the town functioned since the year 1977-78.

Finally, for a total of 38,000 workers who are employed in TISCO the expenditure incurred on non statutory welfare amenities for each workers per year is reproduced below the report of the Malaviya Committee, 1969.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Medical</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>181.80</td>
<td>160.56</td>
<td>61.32</td>
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<td>29.64</td>
<td>433.32</td>
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From those figures it is obvious that out of the total expenditure on welfare, 42% is on housing, 37% is on Medical, 14% is on Education, nil on Transportation, 7% is on Recreation.

7. TISCO runs **13 community centres** at important points in and around the city. These centres have a stage, a hall, a library etc. The activities of these centres are organization of Yuvak Dals, Mohila Dals, Keshor Kendras, and Seva Dals for the benefit of Bustees, in the field of:
   1. Sports & Games
   2. Picnics
   3. Cultural Competitions
   4. Adult Literacy Classes
   5. Dance and Music Classes
   6. Clinics
   7. Child care Centre (Below 5 years)

8. TISCO had built **16,698 quarters** till the end of 1984.

**Statutory and Non Statutory Provision of Labour welfare:**

Moreover Labour welfare activities may also be also classified under two provisions:
1. Statutory provision and
2. Non Statutory provision


**Factories Act 1948:**

The welfare amenities provided under the Act are given below:

1. Washing facilities (S.42)
2. Facilities for storing and dry clothing (S.43)
3. Sitting facilities for occasional rest for workers who are obliged to work standing (S.44)
4. First Aid Boxes or cupboards – one for every 150 workers and ambulance facilities, if there are more than 500 workers (S.45).
5. Canteens if employing more than 250 workers (S.46)
6. Shelters, rest rooms, and lunch rooms, if employing over 150 workers (S.47)
7. Crèche, if employing more than 30 women (S.48)
8. Welfare officer, if employing 500 or more workers (S.49)
9. No adult worker shall be required to work in a factory for more than 48 hours in any week (S.51)
10. Working hours 9 in any day (S.54)
11. An adult worker shall have a weekly paid holiday, preferably Sunday. When a worker is deprived of weekly holidays, s/he is eligible for compensatory holidays of the same number in the same month.
12. Employee’s safety and health should be taken care of in order to protect the employees against accidents, unhealthy working conditions and to protect worker’s capacity (provide safe working environment).

**The Mines Act 1952:**

The main obligations of the mine owners regarding health and welfare of their workers are as follows:

1. Maintenance of Crèches where 50 women workers are employed
2. Provision of shelters for taking food and rest if 150 or more persons are employed.
3. Provisions of a canteen in mines employing 250 or more workers.
4. Maintenance of first – aid boxes, first – aid rooms in mines employing more than 150 workers
5. Provision in coal mines of: 1. pit head baths equipped with shower baths; 2. sanitary latrines; and 3. lockers separately for men and women workers.
6. Appointment of a welfare officer in mines employing more than 500 or more workers to look after the matters relating to the welfare of the workers.
The Plantation Labour Act 1951:

The following welfare measures are to be provided to the plantation workers:
1. Canteens in plantations employing 150 or more workers (S.11)
2. Crèches in plantations employing 150 or more women workers (S.12)
3. Recreational facilities for the workers and their children (S.13)
4. Educational facilities in the estate for the children of workers, where there are 25 workers’ children between the age of 6 and 12 (S.14).
5. Housing facilities for every worker and his / her family residing in the plantation. The standard and specification of the accommodation, procedures for allotment and rent chargeable from workers, are to be prescribed in the rules, by the state Governments (S.15 and 16).
6. The State Government may makes rules requiring every plantation employer to provide the workers with such number and type of umbrellas, blankets, raincoats or other like amenities for the protection of workers from rain or cold as may be prescribed (S.17)
7. Appointment of a welfare officer in plantations employing 300 or more workers (S. 18)
8. The exact standards of these facilities have been prescribed under the Rules framed by the state Government.

The Motors Transport Workers Act, 1961

The Motor Transport Undertakings are required to provide certain welfare and health measured given as follows:

1. Canteens of prescribed standard, if employing 100 or more workers (S.8)
2. Clean, ventilated, well-lighted and comfortable restrooms at every place wherein motor transport workers are required to halt at night (S.9)
3. Uniforms, raincoats to drives, conductors and line checking staff for protection against rain and cold; A prescribed amount of washing, allowances is to be given to the above mentioned categories of staff (S.10)
4. Medical facilities are to be provided to the motor transport workers at the operating centres and at the stations as may be prescribed by the state Government (S.11)
5. First Aid facilities equipped with the prescribed contents are to be provided in every transport vehicle (S. 12)

The Merchant Shipping Act 1958:

Provisions in the act relating to health and welfare cover:
1. Crew accommodation
2. Supply of sufficient drinking water
3. Supply of medicines, medical stores, and provision of surgical and medical advice
4. Maintenance of proper weights and measures on board, and grant of relief to distress seamen abroad a ship.
5. Every foreign going ship carrying more than the prescribed number of persons, including the crew, is required to have on board, as part of her complement, a qualified medical officer
6. Appointment of Seamen’s Welfare Officer at such ports in or outside India as the Government may consider necessary.
8. Provision of medical treatment and hospital
9. Provision of educational facilities

The Governments have been authorized to frame rules, inter alia, for the levy of fees. Payable by owners of ships at prescribed rates for the purpose of providing amenities to seamen and for taking other measures for their welfare.

**The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.**

The following welfare and health measures are to be provided to the contract workers by the contractor:
1. A Canteen in every establishment employing 100 or more workers (S.16)
2. Rest Rooms or other suitable alternative accommodation where the contract labour is required to halt at night in connection with the work of an establishment (S.17)

3. Provision for a sufficient supply of wholesome drinking water, sufficient number of latrines and urinals of prescribed types and washing facilities (S.18)
4. Provision for first aid boxes equipped with the prescribed contents (S.19)

The Act imposes liability on the principal employer to provide the above amenities to the contract labour employed in his other establishment, if the contractor fails to do so.

**Therefore,** the acts provides for welfare facilities mainly for adequately screened washing facilities, drying, resting places, first-aid or medical, crèches etc. to the employees in different industries. The acts are also stipulates the provision of facilities in terms of numbers of employees and their working hours per day, weekly holidays, overtime wages and allowances etc. The acts are also stipulates the provision of facilities for women workers specially in working hours (women workers are not to be employed during night or between 7 p.m and 6 a.m – though expectation can be made), no child below 14 years of age is to be employed in any factory Industries.

Non statutory benefits, also called voluntary benefits, include
- loan for house building,
- education of children,
- leave travel concession,
- fair price shops,
Loans for purchasing personal vehicle / conveyance and a host of other facilities.