

## WELFARE TO WELLNESS and WELLBEING – THE NEW TRENDSETTER OF THE NEW NORMAL ERA

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**Abstract:** Employee Welfare entails everything from services, benefit, and facilities that are provided to the employees by their employer to add comfort to their life. It is a powerful motivating tool to boost up the morale of an employee which impacts his performance and his loyalty towards the organisation. Employee welfare schemes are dynamic it varies as per the industry and the position of the employees. While excavating the past we can see the abolishment of slavery marked the inception of Industrialisation. With industries came labours who were illtreated by the owners as they were unaware of their value. The conditions of the labours were miserable before the inception of the employee welfare measures. Labours or the manpower who were the driving force behind an industry were exploited with unsafe working conditions, long working hours, child labour etc. They were not paid properly and were deprived of basic measures also. With Globalisation and changing socio economic environment the meaning of employee welfares took a steep turn. The employees were considered as important resources which marked the onset of Human Resource departments in various Industries and organisation. Welfare of the employees became an important part of any successful organisation. The conditions, however, changed in due course of time. The developments led to substantial changes in the attitude of the employers towards workers and the role of the state in regards to labour matters. The organisation started enacting labour laws with a view to enriching physical working conditions at the place of work, laying down minimum standards in specified areas of terms and conditions of employment, making available to workers certain welfare amenities, adopting social security measures against certain contingencies such as disablement and death resulting from workinjuries, sickness and maternity and establishing workers' right to form trade union and bargain collectively with the employer. The revolution in the corporate world have forced the organisations to shift their prevailing welfare practices to wellness of the employees. This article will try to excavate the truth behind this change.

**Keywords:** Welfare, Wellness, Globalisation, Socio- economic environment,Industrialization.

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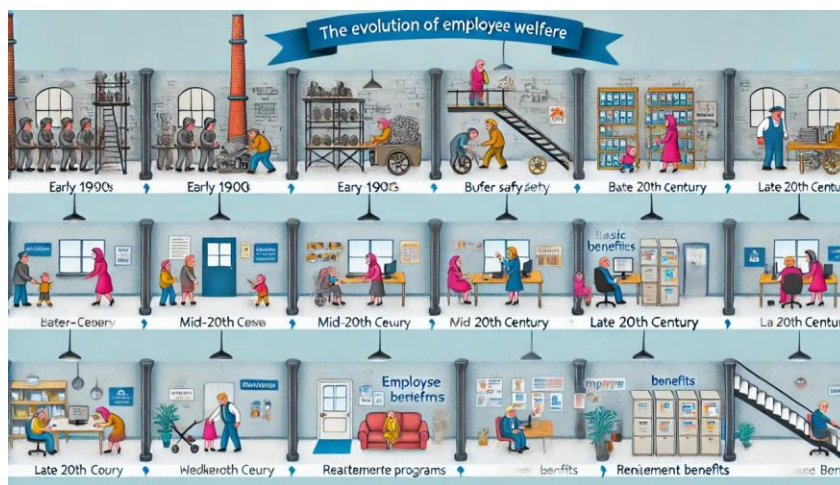
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## HISTORY OF EMPLOYEE WELFARE

History reveals that Pre independence workers or labours were treated like machines. No attention was given toward their wellbeing by the firms. The worker’s ordeal was marked by depleting working conditions, long working hours etc. They were deprived of basic needs in return of gruesome jobs that they undertook. Gradually with passage of time the influence of social reformers and various labour movements compelled the companies to start providing basic amenities such as housing, healthcare, and education for employees and their families. During early years there was absence of any sole department to handle the wellbeing of the employees so Post Independence to uplift the conditions of the workers various acts were introduced. To name a few like:

- Factories Act (1948): This was one of the earliest legislative measures aimed at regulating working conditions in factories. It included provisions related to health, safety, and welfare of workers.
- Employee State Insurance Act (ESI Act, 1948): Enacted to provide social security and healthcare benefits to industrial workers and their dependents, the ESI Act marked a significant step towards comprehensive employee welfare.



Along with these act into action and continuous pressure from trade unions the employers were forced to introduce various welfare programs for their workers. These welfare programmes gained momentum when the Philadelphia charter, 1944 declared “ labour is not a commodity.”

With the growth in industrialisation, trade and commerce all companies were in the contest in introducing various welfare measures for their employees.

The sole purpose of employee is to improve the life of the working class. The purpose of providing welfare amenities is to bring about the development of the whole personality of the worker-his social, psychological, economic, moral, cultural, and intellectual development to make him a productive worker and motivate him contribute his positivity in work.

In yesteryears, before the introduction of Human resource departments the companies concentrated on basic welfare. It was widely divided into two parts.

### Intramural

These are provided within the organization like:

- Canteen
- Rest rooms Crèches
- Uniform
- Drinking water
- Washing and bathing facilities
- Provision of safety measures like fencing and covering of machines
- Good layout of machinery and plant
- Fire extinguishers
- Provision of pension, provident fund, fringe benefits etc.

### Extramural

These are provided outside the organization such as:Housing

- Education
- Child welfare
- Leave travel facilities
- Interest free loans
- Workers cooperative stores
- Vocational guidance etc.

## THE ERA OF REVOLUTION-

**It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change.**

**~ Charles Darwin**

These remarkable words said by Darwin was not for Corporate world but with the changing time these words are becoming important in maintaining Human Capital. Welfare measures began to encompass a more holistic approach. The organisations concentrated more on considering their workforce as Human assets.

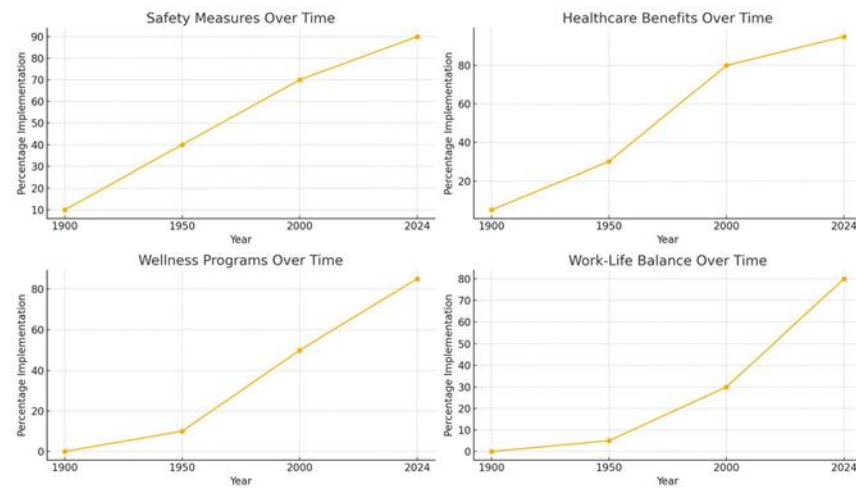
This era where most of the workforce are Millennials and Gen-Z , are more focussed on job challenges, wellness ,rather than basic welfare measures. This generation have gone through a big change during Covid pandemic which compelled most of the organisations to rethink and reform their existing welfare measures to keep up their work force motivated. The mayhem caused during the covid pandemic forced the organisation to accept work from home model. This brought lot of challenges and a need to concentrate on the well ness of the employees

The present generation employees are seeking more than just a job.They want a sense of purpose, innovations and challenges in their work. Companies are aligning their

missions with the values of their workforce. Connecting work to a broader purpose motivates employees and strengthens the organization's identity and reputation.

Other than conventional welfare measures which are pre-existing in every workplace the corporate world have taken a big step in amalgamating welfare with wellness and wellbeing. A happy and healthy employee creates a positive and productive work place.

**THE TRENDSETTERS OF NEW NORMAL-**



- Hybrid Work Model

The new normal have paved the path of this model. The remote and hybrid work models have become an important aspect. This trend recognizes the importance of flexibility. It promotes a healthier work-life balance along with increased productivity across dispersed teams.

[Ranstad workmonitor 2023](#) states research shows that more than half(61%) wouldn't accept a position that is detrimental to their work-life balance.

- Employee Recognition in the workplace

Employee recognition is one of the major trendsetters stands out. Companies are increasingly realizing the importance of appreciating their team members. Its about recognizing successes at the moment. Apart from traditional performance appraisals and monetary bonus organizations are increasingly realizing the power of acknowledging and celebrating their employees' contributions in real-time.

It's more than a pat on the back – it's tool for boosting confidence, creating a positive atmosphere, and making employees feel important, resulting in increased productivity and job satisfaction.

- **Wellness and wellbeing**

The want of the hour is a stress free workforce with a healthy body and mind. Recent studies have shown that it is a burning problem that the new generation employees are engrossed in rat race are suffering from stress, depression which in turn taking a toll on their productivity. This have pushed the organisation to take up well ness and well being of the employees seriously.

Employees spend a huge amount of their hours in their workplaces and this in turn health has a lot to do with the company's work environment and work culture. Hence it's a crucial responsibility of the company to offer a sound [corporate wellness program](#)

In the upcoming, much emphasis will be given to mental health and creating a [stress-free work environment](#).

- **Creche Facility-**

This is a big relief for working parents as they can give their full concentration and loyalty towards their job. The tension of the wellbeing child will not be tossing in their minds as their oragnisation is taking care of it. They can visit their child in between work. This measure is always a hit among the employees

### **OUT OF THE BOX WELFARE MEASURES**

Few unconventional welfare measures are totally new but impactful, which are getting adopted by many companies. The companies with futuristic thought process are implementing and modifying many welfare measures as per the need of the employees.

1. **Nap or Quiet time-** This is another trend setter which may not be a conventional one but is well accepted in many organisations. Google,Facebook,Cisco are few to name who not only allow but encourages employee naps.
2. **Menstruation leave-**This measure is getting in the mainstream slowly but steadily. The New age organisations like Zomato,Swiggy,Culture Machine,Gozoop was at the forefront introducing 'period leave' and acted as a gamechanger setting an environment of ease for the Female workforce.
3. **The Ergonomic workspace-** In past the offices were designed with a purpose of fulfilling the basic need of the employees compared to the new age designing which concentrates on the wellbeing of the employees. The office décor, comfortable workstations etc acts as a motivator for the employees.

### **Conclusion-**

Employee welfare is dynamic in nature. Organisation who implements changes along with time can be fortunate to observe a positive, motivated, and healthier workforce. Starting from Senior generation till the new age generations Job itself is the greatest motivator but one cannot deny completely that welfare measure acts as a catalyst in creating a successful work force and in turn contributing towards the growth of organisation. Every company should strive for creating a BLUE ZONE to strive forward in the market.

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