

# Theories of Labour Welfare (Approaches)

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# Theories of Labour Welfare

The theories of labour welfare reflect the evolution of the concept of welfare. Earlier, the Government had to compel the industrial organizations to provide basic amenities to their employees. Such compulsion was necessary because the employers used to exploit the labour and treated them in an unfair manner. With the passage of time, the concept of welfare has undergone changes.

Progressive managements today provide welfare facilities voluntarily and with enlightened willingness and enthusiasm. In fact, welfare facilities are no longer restricted to workers alone but also extended to social welfare also. In this regard, a brief description of the various theories of employee welfare has been outlined hereunder.

## The theories of labour welfare

- The Police Theory
- The Religious Theory of
- The Philanthropic Theory
- The Trusteeship Theory
- The Placating Theory
- The Public Relations Theory
- The Functional Theory

# Police Theory

The police theory is based on the contention that a minimum standard of welfare is necessary for labourers. Apparently, this theory assumes that man is selfish and self-centred, and always tries to achieve his own ends, even at the cost of the welfare of others. If wealth or authority or both help him to be in an advantageous position, he uses it for his own advantage, exploiting those who are under him. According to this theory, owners and managers of industrial undertakings get many opportunities for this kind of exploitation. The welfare state has to prevent this kind of exploitation and coerce the industrialists to offer a minimum standard of welfare to their workers

# Religious Theory

- This theory is based on the concept that man is essentially “a religious animal”. Even today, many acts of men are related to religious sentiments and beliefs. These religious feelings, sometimes, prompt an employer to take up welfare activities in the expectation of future benefit, either in this life or in some future life. According to this theory, any good work is considered as “Investment”. In this case, both benefactor and the beneficiary are rewarded. Many trusts and charitable institutions in India function on the basis of this belief.
- Another aspect of religious theory is the atonement aspect. Some people take up welfare work in a spirit of atonement for their sins. Thus, the benevolent acts of welfare are treated either as an investment or an atonement. According to this theory, man is primarily concerned with his own welfare and only secondarily with the welfare of others. The religious basis of welfare, however, can not be rational

# Philanthropic Theory

This theory is based on man's love for mankind. In Greek, 'philo' means love of and 'anthropes' means man. So philanthropic means loving mankind. Man is believed to have an instinctive urge by which he strives to remove the sufferings of others and promote their well-being. This drive may be a rather powerful one and may impel him to perform noble sacrifices. When some employers have compassion for their fellowmen, they may undertake labour welfare measures for the benefit of their workers

# Trusteeship Theory

This is also called the paternalistic theory of labour welfare, according to which “the industrialist or employer holds the total industrial estate, properties and profits”. These properties and profits, he uses for himself, for the benefit of his workers and also for society. Workers are like minors. They are ignorant because of lack of education and are not able to look after their own interests.

# Placating Theory

This theory is based on the fact that labour groups are becoming more militant and are conscious of their rights and privileges than ever before. Their demand for higher wages and better standards can not be ignored. According to this theory, timely and periodical acts of labour welfare can appease the workers. They are some kind of pacifiers by way of friendly gestures. Sincerity may be lacking in these programs. Psychologically this theory is unsound, though it has often been acted upon to secure the worker's cooperation.



# Public Relations Theory

This theory provides the basis for an atmosphere of goodwill between labour and management and also between management and the public. Labour welfare programs, under this theory, work as a sort of an advertisement and help an industrialist to build up good and healthy public relations. This theory is based on the assumption that the labour welfare movement may be utilized to improve relations between management and labour.

# Functional Theory

This is also called Efficiency Theory. Here, welfare work is used as a means to secure, preserve and develop the efficiency and productivity of labour. It is obvious that if an employer takes good care of his workers, they will tend to become more efficient and thereby they step up production. But all this will depend on a healthy collaboration between union and management and their mutual concern for the growth and development of the organization.

# Conclusion

Labour welfare and job satisfaction are two dimensions that are important to ensure industrial peace, excellent industrial relations and progress of the nation. Labour welfare facilities provided by employers are based on diverse approaches and connected to various theories. Job satisfaction is influenced by different factors, which determine the level of satisfaction employees will experience at the workplace. Job satisfaction also rests on certain theories and is influenced by different schools of thought.

The job is satisfying when there is a match between the characteristics of the job and the needs of the individual. Labour welfare facilities can bring about the fulfilment of employees' expectations and thus promote job satisfaction.

**Thank You**