

EMPLOYEE MORALEINTRODUCTION :

Interest in industrial morale developed rapidly after the Second World War. It was an out-growth of the Government concern with national morale. The results of studies of army and national morale have convinced the management that employee morale is as much a company's concern as national morale is the concern of a Government.

Modern Managers and Personnel Administrators are greatly interested in fathoming and influencing the morale of the employees in such a way that it will contribute in incentivating employees, growth and progress of the organisation and, above all, it exercises a potent influence on the human relations climate in an organisation.

Employee morale is psychological in origin. It reflects the psychological climate, as distinguished from the tangible physical, technological, operational and financial part, in the work-organisation. Being psychological in origin, it necessarily requires a proper matching of suitable psychological techniques with the physical part to develop and maintain it and to solve problems because of it.

A person's enthusiasm for his job reflects his attitude mind to work, which rest on his monetary benefits,

his welfare and social security measures, his working conditions environment, personnel policies etc., which goal him to strive to achieve the goal of his organisation. "Morale is a synthesis of an employee's diverse relations to, an feelings for his job, his working condition, his superiors, his organisation, his fellow-workers, his pay and so on " 1

Feelings, emotions, sentiments, attitudes and motives all these combine and lead to particular type of behaviour on the part of an individual or his group, and this is what is referred to as employee or group morale.

Employee morale is intimately connected with monetary and non-monetary motivational factors that are provided by the employer to his employees. The result of which employee appear to feel good, happy, optimistic and friendly and takes pride in saying " I belong to such and such organisation ". In the words of Dale Yoder " Employee morale describes a feeling, some what related to spirit, " esprit de corps ", enthusiasm or zeal. For a group of workers, popular usage suggests that morale refers to the over-all tone, climate and atmosphere of work, perhaps vaguely sensed by members. If workers appear to feel

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1 - Huneryager.S.C. & Heckmann.I.L. " Human Relations in Management, D.B. Toraporewala Sons & Co. Bombay : 1972 P.No. 329.

enthusiastic, optimistic about the group's activities and mission, and friendly to each other, they are described as having good or high morale. If they seem dis-satisfied, irritated, cranky, critical, restless and pessimistic, their relations are described as evidence of poor or low morale " .²

DEFINITIONS :

Some important definitions of employee morale are as follows :

- 1) Dr. William.R.Spiegel : " Morale means the Co-operative attitude or mental health of a number of people who are related to each other on some basis " ³
- 2) Edwin.B.Flipppo described morale : " as a mental condition or attitude of individuals and groups which determines their willingness to co-operate. Good morale is evidenced by employee enthusiasm, voluntary conformance with regulations and orders, and willingness to co-operate with others in the accomplishment of an organisation's objectives. Poor morale is evidenced by surdliness, insubordination, a feeling of discouragement and dis-like of the job company and associates " ⁴

2 - Dale Yoder : Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, Delhi : Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd. 1972. P. 527

3 - Dr.W.R.Spiegel, Principals of Business Organisation and Operation P.No. 480.

4 - Flipppo.Edwin.B, Principles of Personnel Management 1961, P.No. 416 - 17.

3) Theo Haimann Says : " It is a state of mind and emotions affecting the attitude and willingness to work which, in turn, affect individual and organisational objectives " 5

4) Daris Observes : " Organisational morale is basically a mental condition of groups and individuals which determines their attitude " 6

5) According to Jucias : " Morale is a state of mind or of a willingness to work which, in turn affects individuals and organisational objectives ".⁷ Morale he adds consists of " What is it ? " " What does it do ? " " Where does it reside ? " " Whocm does it affect ? " and " What does it affect ? " .

Jucius answers his own questions thus :

What is it ? It is an attitude of mind, an esprit de corps, a state of well-being, and an emotional force.

What does it do ? It affects output, the quality of product, costs, co-operation, enthusiasm, discipline, initiative and other ingredients of success.

Where does it reside ? It resides in the minds and emotions of individual in the relations of their group or groups.

5 - Haimann Theo, Professional Management, Eurasia Publishing House Delhi, 1976 P. 453.

6 - Daris R.C. Fundamental of Top Management, Harper & Co New York 1951 P.19.

7- Jucius Michal, Personnel Management, 1975 P. 430.

Whom does it affect ? It affects the employees and executives in their interactions. Ultimately, it affects the consumers and the community.

What does it affect ? It affects an employee's or a group's willingness to work and co-operate in the best interest of the individual or groups and the organisations for which they work. To give a full point to Jucius questions ~~one~~ more question is to be added,

On what factors it depends ? It depends on the factors like personnel policies and human relations of the organisation, treatment and status of the workers, monetary incentives for their efforts working conditions effective welfare amenities, security measures and role of workers in management decisions.

An analysis of the above definitions of morale reflects upon its two distinct conceptions. From one point of view, morale may be regarded as essentially an individual matter. It may be described in terms of the attitude of an employee towards his firm. It is the ' sum of satisfaction ' experienced by an employee on account of his job and as a member of a work team. In the industrial situation, this notion of morale is concerned with an employee's attitude towards the kind of work he does, his fellow workers, his prestige and status and his employer. Morale is made up of such attitudes combined

with others relating to his hours, earning, supervision, the personnel policies and the practices of the employer and other similar working conditions.

A second conception of morale is essentially, ' social ' or group-oriented. It is sometimes described as a ' group-aptitude '. It reflects the general acceptance of group-goals by group members and their agreement on the necessity for continuing the drive towards these goals.

ASSUMPTIONS IN UNDERSTANDING MORALE

The following basic assumptions about people are significant because they are tied up closely with an understanding of what morale is :

- I) There are psychological uniformities which obtain among all tribes, nations and races,
- II) Each psychological uniformity has a range through which it varies. Some variants are characteristic of particular groups of people and from a part of their culture.
- III) Everyone is disturbed by the following general stresses :
 - a) Threats to life and to the family members,
 - b) Discomfort arising from pain, heat, cold, fatigue and poor diet.

- c) Loss of the means of subsistence, whether in the form of money, job, business or property.
- d) Deprivation of sexual satisfaction,
- e) Enforced idleness,
- f) Isolation,
- g) Restrictions on movement,
- h) Dis-like and ridicule to which one may be exposed and rejection by other people, and
- i) Capricious and unpredictable behaviour on the part of those in authority on whom one's welfare depends.

FACTORS AFFECTING MORALE

Employee morale is very complex and intangible phenomenon and is influenced by many factors.

According to Mc Farland, the important factors which have a bearing on morale are : ⁸

- 1) The attitudes of the executives and managers towards their subordinates.
- 2) Working conditions, including pay, hours of work and safety rules.
- 3) Effective leadership and an intelligent distribution of authority and responsibility in the organisation.

8 - Mc Farland, Management : Principles and Practices.
P. 517.

- 4) The design of the organisation's structure which facilitates the flow of work, and
- 5) The size of the organisation.

On the otherhand Edwin B Flipppo, listed the major morale factors as : ⁹

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| i. Pay | vi. Opportunity |
| ii. Security | vii. Congeniality or associates |
| iii. Working conditions | viii. Employee benefits |
| iv. Credit for workdone | ix. Social status |
| v. Fair & competent Leadership. | x. Worthwhile activity. |

NATURE OF MORALE

Generally, the term ' Morale ' is used to describe an overall ' climate ' prevailing among the members of a group. It is not an absolute concept which can convey a specific meaning. Like the work ' health ' the word ' morale ' by it self does not convey any favourable or unfavourable meaning It has to be qualified with the degree, as high morale or low morale. It is a relative concept and only refers to the degrees of high morale or low morale. Thus, morale is the degree of enthusiasm and willingness with which the members of contribute their efforts towards the organisational goals. If the enthusiasm and willingness to work of a group is high, it is said that the morale is high and vice versa. According

9 - Flipppo, Edwin B, Op. Cit P.P. 425.

to Mc. Farland, " high morale exists when employees attitudes are favourable to the total situation of a group and to the attainment of its objectives. Low morale exist when attitudes inhibits the willingness and ability of an organisation to attain its objective " 10

High morale is represented by the use of such terms as team spirit, enthusiasm, loyalty, dependability and resistance of frustration. Morale has to be qualified like the word health. Just good health is essential for an individual, high morale is necessary for an organisation. Roethlisberger emphasises the importance of high morale when he says: " What physical health is to a physical organism, morale is to a co-operative system " 11. Employers can not establish high morale once and then forget about it for several years. High morale is to be built and maintained by continuous efforts.

Low morale on the other hand, is described by such words and phrases as apathy, bickering, jealousy, pessimism, fighting, dis-loyalty to the organisation, lack of interest in one's job and laziness.

10 - Mc Farland, Op. Cit; P.P. 573.

11 - Roethlisberger, Management and Morale, 1941
P.P. 192.

IMPACT OF HIGH AND LOW MORALE

As morale is intangible in nature the impact of high and low morale is to be found or expressed in behavioural pattern of employees about the job, the company and management.

According to R.C.Davis the impact of high morale leads to

- i) willing co-operation towards organisation objectives, loyalty to the organisation and its leadership,
- ii) good discipline or the voluntary conformance to rules, regulations and orders,
- iii) strong organisational stamina or the ability of the organisation to take it during times of difficulty,
- iv) a high degree of employee initiative, and
- v) pride in the organisation.

Thus high morale definitely results in high qualitative and quantitative production, higher efficiency and cordial relation between management and the employees. Society in general obtains better goods and services despite its limited resources. The company has a minimum rate of absenteeism, grievances, labour turnover, frustration and similar other personnel problems. Good morale pays off in rupees and goodwill.

On the otherhand the impact of bad or low morale in an industry as listed by Dr.W.R.Spiegel :

- 1) Excessive tradiness and absenteeism,
- 2) reduced productivity,
- 3) antagonism towards rules and supervision,
- 4) excessive complaints and grievances,
- 5) employee turnover,
- 6) employees friction,
- 7) alcoholism, and
- 8) accidents.

MEASUREMENT OF MORALE

The indicators of morale are the various attitudes and behaviour patterns of employees, which have to be properly and correctly interpreted to determine the kind of organisational climate and morale which prevail at a given time. Since it is an intangible and subjective concept, it can not be directly measured or evaluated. Employees may be unwilling to express their feelings of satisfaction or dis-satisfaction with their job to the management. To reveal their hidden attitudes a properly designed programme is to be set. The most commonly used methods for measuring morale are :

A) Observation :

Under this method, executives observe the

behaviour of their employees, listen to them while they talk, and note their action the shrugging of shoulders, a change in facial expression, a shuffling of feet, a nervous fluttering of hands, a change in work habits or avoidance of company. Any departure or deviation from the normal behaviour is likely to tell them that something is wrong and needs to be set right.

The shortcoming of observation as a yardstick for measuring current morale is that activities and events indicate a change to a lowered morale which has already occurred. The manager should be therefore, extremely keen while observing.

B) Attitude or Morale Surveys :

This method is generally used to discover the unfriendly feelings of employees to know why they are not optimistic and enthusiastic about their own or the organisation's future. For this purpose, principal reliance is placed on polls of employees opinions, widely described as attitude studies.

Objectives of Morale Attitude Surveys :

S.A.Raube , vice-President of Personnel Division of N.I.C.B.(National Industrial Conference Board) reported five measure reasons for conducting morale attitude surveys:

- 1) to findout what employee thinks,

- 2) to improve morale and check on effectiveness of personnel programmes,
- 3) to find out what education and information are needed by employees and
- 4) to determine training needs, and
- 5) to find out what employees like. " 12

Attitude study or survey is done under two methods viz ;

- i) The Interview Method.
- ii) The Questionnaire Method.

1) The Interview Method :

By this method, employees are interviewed so that a judgement may be arrived at about their feelings and opinions about the job and the company. Interviews are some what structured with enough direction to insure attention to the areas executives regard as of major importance. At the same time, however, employees are encouraged to introduce whatever may be of concern to them, to express their peevs and gripes.

The essential advantage of the method is its sensitivity and comprehensiveness, while the main demerit is that it is uneconomical for use with larger groups and it is, to some extent, depends on the interviewer's ability to classify and interpret his data.

12- RaubeS.A. " Experience with Employee Attitude Survey"
N.I.C.B (America) Studies in Personnel Policies No. 115,
April 1951, P 9-11.

ii) The Questionnaire Method :

Morale scales or questionnaires ask many questions and interpret replies to provide what is regarded as a measured evaluation of employee attitudes. Under this method standard questionnaire with Likert Method is used, prepared by one of the university centres or consulting firms; and administration of the questionnaire is done by outside agency. Results are discussed in top management and attention is given to changes suggested by survey results.

This method carried the advantages of low cost, well thought-out answers and reliable for large sample. On the otherhand demerits of this method are low rate of return, useful only when respondents are educated, willing response and slowest of all the methods.

C) Company Records :

This method is an indirect method to survey the moral attitude, prepared by the personnel department at regular intervals with the assistance of supervisors and departmental heads. The records and reports provide following information like ;

- Labour turnover rate
- Labour absenteeism chart
- Number of workers grivances
- Accidents due to workers carelessness, and

Attention to personnel records and the behaviour of workers including reports of personal interviews, rating by supervisors, and information gleaned from exit interviews with workers, the disciplinary action taken against employees and suggestions made by them. On the basis of this study evaluation of employee morale is also carried out.

D) Counselling :

This method is used to find out the causes of the dis-satisfaction of the employees and to take medial action, and offer advice on personal matters to that employee will be relieved from his personal problems.

BUILDING HIGH MORALE

Morale is a mental phenomenon. That is why, it is very difficult to build high morale. It is like marching ahead without knowing the end of the journey. Morale building is a perpetual process which can not be stopped even for a moment. Morale can not be built for ever. It is a dynamic process, it keeps on fluctuating. Even then moral building and maintaining is essential in an industrial organisation to achieve its set goals.

Morale building is done either on individual basis or on group basis. Morale building on group basis always preferred because ultimately it will achieve the individual morale also. Following measures, by an executive are

useful in building and maintaining high employee morale.

1) Two-way Communication :

Two-way communication between the management and workers exercise a profound influence on morale. The workers should be kept informed about the organisation policies and programmes through conferences, news bulletins and private discussions with the workers. Workers should be allowed to ask questions and satisfy themselves about their doubts.

2) Incentive System :

There should be a proper incentive system in the organisation to ensure monetary and non-monetary rewards to the employees to motivate them.

3) Welfare Amenities :

Management must give due regards to wellbeing facilities of the employees like; working conditions, canteens, health services, education, housing, transport, credit facilities, sports and clubs. Welfare measures to the employees boost the industrial relations at a high rate.

4) Social Activities :

Management should encourage social group activities by the workers. This will help to develop greater group cohesiveness which is used by the management for building high morale.

5) Training :

There should be proper training of the workers so that they do their work efficiently and avoid frustration. When the workers are given training they get psychological satisfaction as they feel that management is taking interest in them.

6) Workers Participation :

Industrial democracy in the organisation will fetch we-feeling among the employees. Management should allow workers' participation in management decisions. Whenever a change is to be introduced which affects the workers they must be consulted and taken into confidence. Workers must be allowed to forward their suggestions and grievances to the top management.

EMPLOYEE MORALE AND WELFARE AMENITIES

" An organisation whether formal or informal, large or small is composed of people - the human resources - who come from different walks of life and who are different from one another in their psychological makeup. Human resources consist of the total knowledge, skill, creative ability, talents and aptitudes of an organisations work force, as well as the values and attitudes and benefits of the individuals involved in it. They are the sum total of inherent abilities, acquired knowledge, and skills represented by the talents and aptitudes of the employed " 13

The quantity and quality of human resources are modified by such environmental factors as education, training housing, good food and material security. Mentally satisfied human being is capable of producing new ideas, developing and improving capital goods and modifying the available resources in order to achieve greater productivity, satisfaction and the goals set by an organisation. Capital, national resources, foreign aid and international aid play an important role in economic growth, but none of these factors is more important than an efficient pool of well-educated, well-trained, mentally contented, and highly

13 - Megginson Leon C, Personnel and Human Research administration, Richard D. Irvin, Homewood, Illinois 1977, P. 4.

developed personnel, through whose creative efforts the goals of an organisation are achieved. In this fact lies the importance of human resources.

Well-planned, well-staffed personnel department in each and every industry is essential for their human understanding. Labour and welfare officer should not be taken as apologies to meet the minimum requirements of law but, something much more important. They have some very important duties such as a better recruit of labour, extracting better services from labour by boosting their morale, approaching them in a human and humane way instead of suffering them as inevitable incorrigible evils. Personnel Manager and Welfare Officers who take all this into account improve the morale of industrial workers. " You can buy a man's time, you can buy a man's physical presence but can not buy enthusiasm, initiative, loyalty, devotion of heart, mind and souls. You have to earn those things."

To maintain industrial peace and to build high morale among human resources they must be well-looked after with amenities which are most important in earning will of the workforce. There are some other things which affect their state of mind like recognition, approval, appreciation, praise, job security, status and pride, participation, human treatment and better condition of work environment etc.

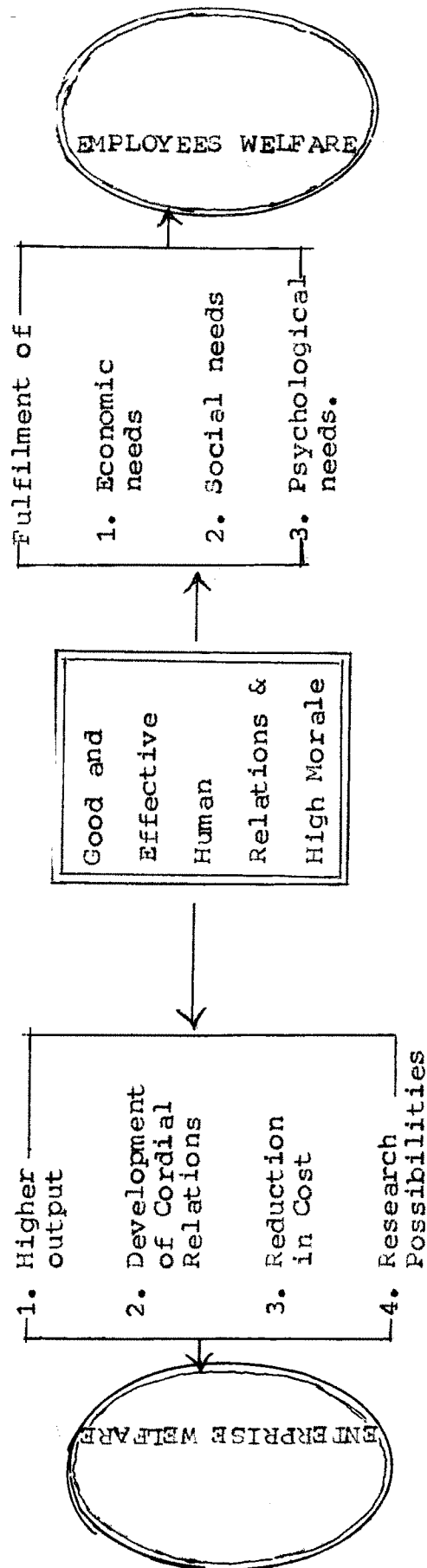
Therefore, " Welfare is the bridge that builds the gulf between management and labour and instils in them a sense of purpose " 14

Looking to the important of welfare amenities for all round well-being of the workers and building high morale. International Labour Organisation states " Such services facilities and amenities which may be established in or in the vicinity of, undertakings to enable the persons employed into perform their work in healthy, congenial surroundings and provided with amenities conducive to good health and high morale ". 15

The human beings are part of the organisation. The fulfilment of organisation objectives is possible only when employee's economic, social and psychological needs are satisfied. Thus effective welfare amenities aim at the achievement of double objectives as illustrated below ;

14 - Raman Rao.A.V., Industrial Social Services In a Developing Economy, Allied Publication, Bombay 1965 P. 225.

15 - I.L.O Report of the Second Asian Regional Conference P. 3



ROLE OF WELFARE AMENITIES IN BOOSTING HIGH MORALE

Labour Welfare is nothing, but the maintainance function of personnel in the sense that it is directed specially to the preservation of employee health and attitudes. In other words, it contributes to the maintainance of employee morale. In the words of S.N.Mehrotra " Obviously, there is some creation and stimulation in the maintainance function just as there is some maintainance in all other operative personnel functions. But the primary emphasis in employee service programmes has been an maintaining an employees favourable attitude towards his work and work environment ". 16

A welfare programme represents an attempt at improving employee morale. The following points explain the significance of labour amenities in building employee morale.

1) Sound Industrial Relations :

Welfare amenities make the workers contented and give a feeling that they are not ignored by the employer. This increases willing co-operation between management and labour, Unrest and conflict are reduced and industrial harmony and peace is established.

16- MehrotraS.N. "Labour Problems in India",
S.Chand & Co. Delhi, 1970 P. 226.

2) Relief From Worry And Anxiety :

Improved welfare amenities will relieve anxieties and worries of daily life and workers will work with greater concentration and enthusiasm. Thereby waste and inefficiency are reduced.

3) Sense of Belonging :

Well looked-after workforce, develops within itself a sense of responsibility self respect and love for the organisation. The worker feels himself a part and parcel of the organisation and it boots him to participate in the organisational activities with greater enthusiasm. It reduces labour turnover and absenteeism and thereby helps in building up an permanent workforce.

4) Commitment and Loyalty :

If workers have a feeling of one-ness with organisation, they consider themselves a part of the firm with a stake. This increases the devotation to the job and dedication to the progress of the firm.

5) High Morale Standards :

Community educational programmes sponsored by the organisation enables the workers to improve their morale standards. They help in fostering morale and mental health and protect them from social vices such as drinking gambling, prostitution. And high morals raise the morale of the workers.

6) Social Advantage :

Apart from peace and harmony, welfare amenities like canteen, entertainments, medical facilities, education, banks, co-operative credit and marketing societies etc., enable the worker and his family to lead a richer and fuller life. These amenities help in raising his standard of living and status in society. This respectability in society boosts his morale.

Thus the above observations bear testimony to the intimate relation between welfare amenities and employee morale.
