ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: IN CASE OF DREDGING CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD, VISAKHAPATNAM

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Abstract: *Benefits being regarded as an important tool to retain employees improves the bottom-line of the organisation which motivates the employees to contribute more with high determination with respect to the work being served. To find out the current benefit plans are matching with the needs of the employees in DCI, and cover the work life of employees as the objective, the research continued with a method mix of descriptive and exploratory design. The study underwent with mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative research with the convenient sampling technique and gathered the data from all levels of employees. The results exposed certain findings at the standpoint of employee satisfaction level on the benefits offered by the organisation.*

Keywords: Benefits, Satisfaction, DCI, Strategic choice.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a highly competitive market it is a great challenge for an industry to be amongst the list of top industries in a country like India. If the target goal is to be achieved there must be good industrial relations between management and labourers. From the time of production to sale of product, each and every member from the high level of executive to low level of worker should work together.

The human resource has immense potential. The role of economic development of any nation depends on the degree of effective mobilization of these resources. India is a developing country. This means that majority of the population belong to the working class. They have to struggle to make both the ends meet. In their struggle for daily living, they lose sight of the individual development, self-actualization, etc. There are certain special characteristics with regard to the Indian labourer, such as coming from villages to city in search of work, being away from loved ones, having to accept work at poor working conditions, low wages, etc.

The present scenario in India is that the employers are becoming aware of their workers needs and are taking effective measures to improve their morale and self-worth. The reason being the increasing awareness created globally, by the initiative of ILO, and organisations.

The social concept implies the welfare of the man, his family and his community. All these three aspects are inter-related and work together. Safety and providing benefits are inevitable to any organisation where workers are involved. An organisation's responsibility to its employees extends beyond the payment of wages for their services. The employee's safety on and off the job within the organization is vital concern of the employer. Providing a safe and healthy environment is for any productive effort. This research deals with the study on the benefits provided to the employees.

In addition to compensation in the form of wages and salaries, organizations provide workers with various services and programmes known as employee benefits. Previously these services and programmes were known as fringe benefits. Now these have become part of compensation package hence the word fringe in now not used and not appropriate even. Nowadays employee benefits are regarded as an important tool to retain employees and to improve the bottom-line of the organisation.

Benefit programmes play a vital role to maintaining an employee's standard of living when he suffers from health problem. The organisations that provide these benefits to their employees have improved image of caring employer. These benefits are the advantages that accrue to an employee apart from salary. They are not related to performance.

Housing (employer-provided or employer paid), group insurance (health, dental, life, etc.), disability income protection, retirement benefits , day care, tuition reimbursement, sick leave, vacation (paid and non-paid), social security, profit sharing, funding of education, and other specialized benefits.

 The purpose of employee benefits is to increase the economic security of staff members, and in doing so, improve worker retention across the organization. As such, it is one component of reward management.

 The development of the organization is purely depends upon the human resources and hence they are considered as the assets of the organisation. As they invest their energy, knowledge, skills in the organization, naturally they have to be given due importance of their lives and their family members. In this context, organisations should enhance certain benefit plans to their employees so that they can be motivated to work and thereby they can strive for the growth of organisation.   A benefit implies the provisions of services, a congenial work atmosphere, etc. It also refers to a condition of well-being of the working population. Almost all organizations are adopting benefit plans but in varying degrees.

 The Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCI) was established in the year 1976 to provide dredging services to major ports of the country in India, has been successfully implementing benefit plans all these years. The Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCI) is one such organisation which is taking due care of this employees and it can be easily inferred that it is adopting certain measures for the well-being of employees and their family members.

 In today's environment, there is a need to look into various benefits plans adopted by DCI. With the rapid perhaps variety of new needs may arise for the employees and for their families. The no. of employees working also increased manifolds and as

such, their requirements also change against the backdrop, the present study focuses on various employee benefit plans adopted by DCI.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To understand various employee benefits plans adopted by DCI for various categories of employee.

2. To identify the association between benefit schemes and the employee rating

3. To analyse the employee opinion on the benefit schemes and facilities.

4. To find out the current benefit plans are matching with the needs of the employees in DCI, and cover the work life of employees.

HYPOTHESIS

HO1: There is no association between Personal policy accident scheme and Overall benefit rating.

HO2: There is no association between Group Saving Linked Insurance and Overall benefit rating.

HO3: There is no association between Canteen facilities and Overall benefit rating.

HO4: There is no association between Housing facilities and Overall benefit rating.

HO5: There is no association between Medical facilities and Overall benefit rating.

HO6: There is no association between Rewards and Overall benefit rating.

HO7: There is no association between Education facilities and Overall benefit rating.

HO8: There is no association between Personal Computer Advance and Overall benefit rating.

HO9: There is no association between Grant of Special Casual Leave and Overall benefit rating.

HO10: There is no association between Leave travel enhancement and Overall benefit rating.

HO11: There is no association between Washing facilities and Overall benefit rating.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The human resources management is an integral part of the management process, put differently, managers need to understand the critical importance of people in their organizations so as to recognize that the human element and the organization are synonymous. Therefore, it is imperative to compensate an employee with benefits, if he merits it. Cascio (2003) opines that because of the importance that compensation holds for people's lifestyle and self-esteem, individuals are very concerned about what they are paid: a fair and competitive wage, while organizations are also concerned about what they pay because it motivates important decisions of employees about taking a job, leaving a job and on the job performance.

Compensation as a concept according to (Bernadin 2007) refers to all forms of financial returns and tangible benefits that employee receives as part of employment relationship. Compensation as it were is divided into two parts and these are cash compensation which is the direct pay provided by employer for work performed by the employee and fringe compensation which refers to employee benefit programs.

Cash compensation has two elements which include base pay and pay contingent. Base pay has to do with hourly or weekly wages plus overtime pay, shift differential and uniform allowance while pay contingent is concerned with performance allowances such as merit increases, incentive pay bonuses and gain sharing. Fringe compensation on the other hand refers to employee benefits programs.

Fringe compensation also has two parts to it which are legally required benefit programs and discretional benefits. Legally required benefit programs include social security, workers compensation while discretional programs include health benefits, pension plans, paid time off, tuition reimbursement, recognition award, foreign service premiums, responsibility allowance, child care, on campus accommodation, promotion, annual increment and a host of others (Cascio 2003, Dessler 2005, In: Bernadin 2007). Benefits, in a nutshell are the indirect financial and non-financial payments employees receive for continuing their employment with an organization. The concept of employee compensation and benefits cannot be discussed in a vacuum. Various studies have established that salaries and benefits are closely related to job satisfaction (Lifer 1994, In: Odunlade 2012) and job satisfaction can bring about motivation which in turn affects employee job performance and organizational commitment.

International Accounting Standard IAS 19 identifies and classifies benefits into five categories namely: short-term employee benefits, post-employment benefits, other long-term benefits, benefits for the employment termination contract, compensation in the form of the equity participations.

Wellness programs. Healthy employees are more focused and productive. That may be why a 2015 survey of over 400 employers by the Society for Human Resource Management found that 80 percent of respondents currently offer wellness resources and information, while 5 percent plan to offer the benefit in the next 12 months. These programs can take a number of forms depending on what the company feels would benefit employees. Evren Esen, director of survey programs at SHRM, says she's seen an increase in health and lifestyle coaching, smoking cessation programs and incentives or bonuses for employees who participate in fitness programs or complete health assessments. Interestingly, 11 percent of respondents in the SHRM survey even offered on-site massage therapy, which ties in with overall health and wellness. "A lot of employers are finding that wellness programs are helping not only to encourage their employees to be healthier, which impacts healthcare costs," Esen says, "but create a sense of community within their organizations. Financial fitness. Financial health can contribute to emotional and physical health, so a growing number of employers now provide resources to help employees manage and invest their money. This can take the form of online resources, one-on-one financial advising, seminars on saving for retirement or paying for college and more. In fact, Aon's 2015 Hot Topics in Retirement report found that 93 percent of 250 employers surveyed said they are very or moderately likely to expand their focus beyond retirement to other aspects of financial wellness. "Employers are seeing that having people who are more financially literate should help them reduce their stress and help them become better, healthier employees," says Rob Austin, director of retirement research at Aon

Hewitt. "[They want to] make sure people don't spend their time on the job dealing with creditors." High-deductible health plans. Employers face higher health care costs, and many are shifting these expenses onto employees in the form of surcharges for insuring a spouse who has access to insurance through his or her own employer and higher deductibles. The Kaiser Family Foundation's 2015 Employer Health Benefits Survey found that the average deductible amount for workers in plans with deductibles has nearly doubled the past decade.

Greater automation and integration of benefits. Some employers who used to handle paperwork by hand are moving toward online systems that automate the process. "Clients want to automate delivery of information to us for enrolments, terminations or from their carrier for claims processing," Lanier says. "By integrating that with your [insurance] carrier, you don't have to remember to file that claim to get reimbursed." While it helps employers reduce administrative headaches, it's also good news for employees, because it potentially means faster and easier reimbursements.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at Dredging Corporation of India Ltd (DCIL) in Visakhapatnam which is one of the famous cities of India with more than 1.5lakh population in number, located in northern coastal of the state Andhra Pradesh. Dredging Corporation of India owns most modern and sophisticated fleet consisting of Two Cutter Suction Dredgers and Ten Trailer Suction Dredgers. The Dredging Corporation of India Limited (D C I) was established in the year 1976 to provide dredging services to the Major Ports of the country in India. D C I is a pioneer organization in the field of dredging and maritime development.

The study design of this research is an explanatory cross-sectional research type. The design was selected because it allowed analysis of assessing of the employee benefits in Dredging Corporation of India Ltd (DCIL) in Visakhapatnam.

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher followed the mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative through focus group discussion through Zoom app and survey questionnaires through online survey respectively.

The population of the study covers employees who are working in the organization. There are 850 employees (Float Employees-500+Shore Employees-250+ContractEmployees-100) in different departments related to retail and sales section.

Sample size is determined by using the formula population proportion when the population is known as 850 but the primary data collection has had some challenges to contact the determined size due to Covid pandemic, the researcher has received from only 14 respondents, so the technique had to be used for the study was a non-probability sampling technique of convenience sampling. The questionnaires was formulated to address the study subject and collected back by assistant researchers or data collectors within two weeks upon which the researcher acted on the information collected to come up with findings. In this study, the questionnaire consists of 42 questions have been administered.

The research, being a quantitative study, used both dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable is Employee Benefit Rating and the Independent variables are Washing facilities, Medical facilities, Group Saving Linked Insurance Scheme, Personal computer advance, Housing facility, Grant of special casual leave, Canteen facilities measured with five point Likert scale.

To meet the research objectives, primary and secondary data were collected. The primary data was collected from randomly selected respondents through survey questionnaire. Secondary information usually includes some printed pertaining to previous researchers and studies in the related study area. In this study, several sources of internal (from the organization) and external information (outside of the organization the study conducted), including necessary periodicals and government publications, annual reports and other necessary data were collected.

5. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Multiple Regression analysis of the predictors relating to employee opinions on the overall rating benefits is as follows

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.147	8	.268	6.367	.018[b]
	Residual	.253	6	.042		
	Total	2.400	14			

Table 5.1.1: ANOVA[a]

a.   Dependent Variable: Overall how do you rate the benefits provided by the company

b.   Predictors: (Constant), Benefits provided by the organisation create disparities among employees, Our company clearly communicates it's benefits to us, Benefits provided by the DCIL are very important to the employees, Our company maintains better employee benefits in comparison with other companies in this Industry, I get all the benefits in time, Company focus on the employee satisfaction through welfare programs, Both Financial or Non-Financial benefits are important equally, Employee is given the opportunity to select among different employee benefit plans

Table 5.1.1 shows the relationship among the overall rating to the independent variables of Employees opinion on the benefits i.e. Benefits provided by the organisation create disparities among employees, Our company clearly communicates it's benefits to us, Benefits provided by the DCIL are very important to the employees, Our company maintains better employee benefits in comparison with other companies in this Industry, I get all the benefits in time, Company focus on the employee satisfaction through welfare programs, Both Financial or Non-Financial benefits are important equally, Employee is given the opportunity to select among different employee benefit plans. The F value between dependent variable and predictors is 6.367, and the significant value is 0.018 which is highly significant at 0.05 level. On the other hand, we can also conclude whether there is one level in items' increase, there will be the increase of 0.253 in compensation

Table 5.1.2: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	9.110	2.360		3.860	.008
	EO1: Benefits provided by the DCIL are very important to the employees	-.251	.227	-.214	-1.107	.311
	EO2: Our company maintains better employee benefits in comparison with other companies in this Industry	.152	.190	.190	.803	.453
	EO3: Company focus on the employee satisfaction through welfare programs EO4:	.183	.206	.236	.885 -2.318	.410
	I get all the benefits in time	-.835	.360	-.762		.060

EO5: Our company clearly communicates it's benefits to us EO6: Employee is given the opportunity	.842	.216	1.140	3.891	.008
to select among different employee benefit plans EO7: Both Financial or	-.225	.198	-.382	-1.136	.299
Non-Financial benefits are important equally EO8: Benefits provided	-1.151	.203	-1.356	-5.659	.001
by the organisation create disparities among employees	.013	.088	.041	.150	.886

a. Dependent Variable: Overall how do you rate the benefits provided by the company

As per the Coefficients retrieved from the table X, the formula $y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4$ can be as follows

Overall Benefit Rating (DV) = α + (-1.107) EO1 + (.803) EO2 + (.885) EO3 + (-2.318) EO 4 + (3.891) EO 5+ (-1.136) EO6+ (-5.659) EO 7+ (.150) EO8

Employee Opinion on benefits with respect to the EO 1(Benefits provided by the DCIL are very important to the employees) is -1.352 (-0.251-1.107); if EO1 increases by one unit, the loyalty is increased by -1.352. Likewise, with their respective inceptor values, if the predictors (EO2, EO3 EO4, EO5, EO6, EO7 and EO8) are increased by one unit, the dependent variable i.e. overall rating benefits is increased for EO 2 (Our company maintains better employee benefits in comparison with other companies in this Industry) by 0.955; EO 3 (Company focus on the employee satisfaction through welfare programs) by 1.068; EO 4 (I get all the benefits in time) by -3.153; EO5(Our company clearly communicates it's benefits to us)by 4.733; EO6(Employee is given the opportunity to select among different employee benefit plans)

by-1.361; EO7(Both Financial or Non-Financial benefits are important equally) by-6.81 and EO8 (Benefits provided by the organisation create disparities among employees) by 0.28. We can interpret that the maximum weightage acquired by the items "Both Financial and Non-Financial benefits are important equally" with 6.81 and "Our Company clearly communicates its benefits to us" with 4.733 which will explain the most. "Our company maintains better employee benefits in comparison with other companies in this Industry" and "Benefits provided by the organisation create disparities among employees" show the least weightage with 0.955 and 0.28 respectively which explain the least. It is also clearly noted that Overall benefit rating is explained significantly by the item "Both Financial and Non-Financial benefits are important equally" and "Our Company clearly communicates its benefits to us" since the significance level p for both are 0.001 and 0.008 respectively which is less than the alpha value (0.05).

5.2 Multiple Regression analysis of the predictors relating to Benefit Schemes on the overall rating benefits is as follows

Table 5.2.1: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.400	7	.200	1.400	.334[b]
	Residual	1.000	7	.143		

Total	2.400	14			

a.   Dependent Variable: Overall how do you rate the benefits provided by the company

b.   Predictors: (Constant), Washing facilities, Medical facilities, Group Saving Linked Insurance Scheme, Personal computer advance, Housing facility, Grant of special casual leave, Canteen facilities

Table 5.2.1 shows the relationship among the overall rating to the independent variables of benefit schemes i.e. washing facilities, Medical facilities, Group Saving Linked Insurance Scheme, Personal computer advance, Housing facility, Grant of special casual leave, Canteen facilities.

The F value between dependent variable and predictors is 1.400, and the significant value is .334 which is not significant at 0.05 level. On the other hand, we can also conclude whether there is one level in items' increase, there will be the increase of 1.000 in compensation.

Table 5.2.2: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-7.000	4.865		-1.439	.193
	BS1: Group Saving Linked Insurance Scheme	.500	.367	.425	1.363	.215
	BS2: Canteen facilities	-.500	.423	-.986	-1.183	.275
	BS3: Housing facility	.250	.393	.312	.636	.545
	BS4: Personal computer advance BS5: Washing facilities	.500	.262	.624	1.908	.098
		2.000	1.297	1.247	1.542	.167

a. Dependent Variable: Overall how do you rate the benefits provided by the company

After eliminating the excluded variables due to data disassociation Overall Benefit Rating (DV) = α + (1.363) BS1 + (-1.183) BS2 + (.636) BS3 + (1.908) BS4 + (1.542) BS5+

Benefit Schemes with respect to the EO 1(Group Saving Linked Insurance Scheme) is 1.863 (0.5 +1.363); if BS1 increases by one unit, the loyalty is increased by 1.863. Likewise, with their respective inceptor values, if the predictors (BS2, BS3 BS4 and BS5) are increased by one unit, the dependent variable i.e. overall rating benefits is increased for BS 2 (Canteen facilities) by 1.683; BS 3 (Housing

5.3 Hypothesis Testing

facility) by 0.886; BS 4 (Personal computer advance) by 1.148 and BS 5 (Washing facilities) by 3.542.

We can interpret that the maximum weightage carried by the items "washing facilities" with 3.542 will explain the most. "Housing facility" shows the least weightage with 0.886 and 0.28 that explains the least. It is also clearly noted that Overall benefit rating is explained insignificantly by all the items since the significance level p for all items are greater than the alpha value (0.05).

H No	Null Hypotheses	Significance through chi square	Test result
HO1	There is no association between Personal accident policy scheme and overall benefit Rating	0.875	ACCEPTED

HO2	There is no association between Group Saving Linked Insurance and overall benefit Rating	0.749	ACCEPTED
HO3	There is no association between Canteen Facilities and overall benefit Rating	0.121	ACCEPTED
HO4	There is no association between Housing facility and overall benefit Rating	0.875	ACCEPTED
HO6	There is no association between Medical facility and overall benefit Rating	0.966	ACCEPTED
HO7	There is no association between Rewards and overall benefit Rating	0.031	REJECTED
HO8	There is no association between Education facilities and overall benefit Rating	0.031	REJECTED
HO9	There is no association between Personal computer advance and overall benefit Rating	0.194	ACCEPTED
HO10	There is no association between Grant of special casual leave and overall benefit Rating	0.537	ACCEPTED
HO11	There is no association between Leave travel enhancement and overall benefit Rating	0.875	ACCEPTED
HO12	There is no association between Washing facilities and overall benefit Rating	0.031	REJECTED

From the above table of hypotheses testing it is evident that the null hypotheses relating to washing facilities, Education facilities and Rewards have good association with overall benefit rating by employees. On the other hand the hypotheses which are failed to reject are Personal accident policy scheme, Group Saving Linked Insurance, canteen facility, medical facility, housing facility, Personal computer advance, Grant of special casual leave and Leave travel enhancement do not have good association with overall benefit rating by employees.

6. SUGGESTIONS

1. It is found important that the company may focus on the new employees with respect to the benefits that they can get maximum in line with their eligibility criteria since most of them tend to compare with experienced persons.
2. The company may focus on the rationale behaviour of the employees and promote the benefits at the standpoint of the performance rather than relating to belongingness, more work and hard work.
3. The company may establish the benefits such as housing which is very important since many

of the employees with low experience who have yet to be provided with housing facility.
4. Company may focus on the exceptional fringe benefits in addition with the common minimum benefits that every government employee gets.
5. Employees' opinion on the benefits is dexterous enough and the rating is appreciable and the analysis shows that the benefits are overall significant and suggests to have an internal survey of individual benefit rating which would let the company know the grading strength of different benefits.
6. There is some distraction among the benefit schemes where most of the employees feel that the discrimination exists since the insignificance is found with overall rating. The company can focus on exercising the composition of benefit schemes.
7. More benefit schemes or additional schemes and facilities are to be provided in correlation with the performance in the way of incentives for the employees should not feel that the benefits are meant for experienced only.
8. If the company increases the facility of housing, there is a chance of increase in good

rating since the regression weight for housing facility is maximum.

9. Benefits such as Personal accident policy scheme, Group Saving Linked Insurance, canteen facility, medical facility, housing facility, Personal computer advance, Grant of special casual leave and Leave travel enhancement are felt by employees as the common minimum benefits provided by any government organisation and the benefits relating to washing facilities, Education facilities and Rewards are highly required to improve more since their association with employee benefit rating is significant.

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