



Health and welfare facilities in Organisations: A theoretical study

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Abstract

The health and Welfare of the employees working in the Organisations is the concern of the management. The statutory provisions give various measures to be taken up by the organisations. The organisations need to take all precautions in looking into these aspects relating to the employees. The health and welfare facilities ensure the maintaining of physical, mental and overall well-being of the employees. This is indeed required to ensure the overall productivity of the employees. The present study takes into account the theoretical framework of the health and welfare facilities to the employees in the organisations.

Keywords: health, statutory provisions, precautionary measures

Introduction

Welfare includes anything that is done for the comfort and improvement of employees and is provided over and above the wages. Welfare helps in keeping the morale and motivation of the employees high so as to retain the employees for longer duration. The welfare measures need not to be in monetary terms only but in any kind/forms. Employee welfare includes monitoring of working conditions, creation of industrial harmony through infrastructure for health, industrial relations and insurance against disease, accident and unemployment for the workers and their families.

Safety and welfare measures are inevitable to any organization where workers are involved. An organization's responsibility to its employees extends beyond the payment of wages for their services. The employee's safety and welfare on and off the job within the organization is a vital concern of the employer. Welfare helps to improve employee retention and creating positive image for longer time period. It helps to motivate and improve morale of the employees.

Health

Health as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." This definition has been subject to controversy, as it may have limited value for implementation. Health may be defined as the ability to adapt and manage physical, mental and social challenges throughout life.

The meaning of health has evolved over time. In keeping with the biomedical perspective, early definition of health focused on the theme of the body's ability to function; health was seen as a state of normal function that could be disrupted from time to time by disease.

Then in 1948, in a radical departure from previous definition, the world Health Organization (WHO) proposed a definition that aimed higher: lining health to well-being, in terms of physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity." Although this definition was welcomed by some as being innovative, it was also criticized as being vague, excessively broad and

was not set aside as an impractical ideal and most discussions of health returned to the practically of the biomedical model. Just as there was a shift from viewing disease as a state to thinking of it as a process, the same shift happened in definition of health. Again, the WHO played a leading role when it fostered the development of the health promotion movement in the 1980s.

Welfare

Employee welfare is a term that describes various services, benefits and facilities offered to employees by the employers. The welfare measures need not be monetary, but they can be in any kind/forms. They include items such as housing and transport allowances, medical insurance and food. Employee welfare also includes monitoring of working conditions, creation of industrial harmony through infrastructure for health, industrial relations and insurance against disease, accident and unemployment for the workers and their families. Through such generous benefits the employer makes life worth living for employees.

Many scholars argue that there exists somewhat relationship between employee performance and employee welfare benefits and services. For instance, Sila (2014) opines those poor standards of living, bad health, lack of education and housing, poor transportation to and from work, bad conditions in the workplace reduce workers' productivity, and low productivity in turn reduces the capacity of society to improve working conditions. Welfare facilities refer to certain additional activities which are provided by an organization, including housing facilities, transportation facilities, medical facilities, recreational and cultural facilities, libraries, and gym and health clubs among others in the hope of increasing the satisfaction index of an employee.

History of Employee Welfare

The history of employee welfare is rooted back to the times of the First World War (1914 – 18). In the initial stages employee welfare was done on the charitable grounds. The economic depression in the year 1930's, gave impetus to employee welfare activities. In the new era, both the employers and the government have started taking keen

interest in the activities related to employee welfare. It is also because of the industrial disturbances and the pressure fabricated by International Labour Organisation (ILO). The movement related to employee welfare activities picked up the pace during the Second World War by the organisations in their respective countries.

India is lagging behind in the employee welfare aspect and has done very little in this area. The activities are only limited to the meetings and conferences on labour laws. At the time of war the activities related to employee welfare did start in those enterprises whose work are related to war production, in the later stages it was also undertaken by government and other private enterprise, respectively. As the era of independence reached the activities related to employee welfare become stronger and special attention was given to labour class. After independence many laws were framed for the welfare of the labour class as the Constitution says, give employment to each and every individual who are willing to and able to work.

Factories Act

According to the Factories Act, 1948, a 'factory' means "any premises including the precincts thereof - (i) whereon ten or more workers are working, or were working on any day of the preceding twelve months, and in any part of which a manufacturing process is being carried on with the aid of power, or is ordinarily so carried on, or (ii) whereon twenty or more workers are working, or were working on any day of the preceding twelve months, and in any part of which a manufacturing process is being carried on without the aid of power, or is ordinarily so carried on; but this does not include a mine subject to the operation of the Mines Act, 1952, or a mobile unit belonging to the armed forces of the union, a railway running shed or a hotel, restaurant or eating place."

The Factories Act, 1948 (Act No. 63 of 1948), as amended by the Factories (Amendment) Act, 1987 (Act 20 of 1987)), serves to assist in formulating national policies in India with respect to occupational safety and health in factories and docks in India. It deals with various problems concerning safety, health, efficiency and well-being of the persons at work places.

The Act is administered by the Ministry of Labor and Employment in India through its Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labor Institutes (DGFASLI) and by the State Governments through their factory inspectorates. DGFASLI advises the Central and State Governments on administration of the Factories Act and coordinating the factory inspection services in the States.

The Act is applicable to any factory whereon ten or more workers are working, or were working on any day of the preceding twelve months, and in any part of which a manufacturing process is being carried on with the aid of power, or is ordinarily so carried on, or whereon twenty or more workers are working, or were working on any day of the preceding twelve months, and in any part of which a manufacturing process is being carried on without the aid of power, or is ordinarily so carried on; but this does not include a mine, or a mobile unit belonging to the armed forces of the union, a railway running shed or a hotel, restaurant or eating place.

Provisions Regarding the Health of Workers

Sections 11 to 20 of the Act contain certain provisions

intended to ensure that the conditions under which work is carried on in factories do not affect the health of the workers injuriously. Summary of the provisions of the Factories Act relating to the health of workers are as follows

▪ Cleanliness

Every factory shall be kept clean and free from dirt, and the outflow of drains etc. The floors must be cleaned. Drainage shall be provided. Inside walls, partitions and ceilings must be repainted at least once in five years. When washable water paint is used they must be painted once every three years and washed at least every period of six months-Sec. 11, as amended in 1976.

▪ Disposal of wastes and effluents

The waste materials produced from the manufacturing process must be effectively disposed of Sec. 12.

▪ Ventilation and Temperature

There must be provision for adequate ventilation by the circulation of fresh air: The temperature must be kept at a comfortable level. Hot parts of machines must be separated and insulated of Sec. 13.

▪ Dust and Fume

If the manufacturing process used gives off injurious or offensive dust and fume steps must be taken so that they are not inhaled or accumulated. The exhaust fumes of internal combustion engines must be conducted outside the factory of Sec. 14.

▪ Artificial humidification

The water used for this purpose must be pure. It must be taken from some source of drinking water supply. The State Government can frame rules regarding the process of humidification etc. of Sec 15.

▪ Over Crowding

There must be no overcrowding in a factory. In factories existing before the commencement of the Act there must be at least 350 cubic ft. of space per worker. For factories built afterwards, there must be at least 500 cubic ft. of space. In calculating the space, an account is to be taken of space above 14 ft. from the floor of Sec. 16.

▪ Lighting

Factories must be well lighted. Effective measures must be adopted to prevent glare or formation of shadows which might cause eyestrain of Sec. 17.

▪ Drinking water

Arrangements must be made to provide a sufficient supply of wholesome drinking water. All supply' points of such water must be marked "drinking water". No such points shall be within 20 ft. of any latrine, washing place etc. Factories employing more than 250 workers must cool the water during the hot weather of Sec. 18.

▪ Latrines and Urinals

Every factory must provide' sufficient number of latrines and urinals. There must be separate provision for male and female workers. Latrine and urinals must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition. In factories employing more than 250 workers, they shall be of prescribed sanitary types of

Sec 19.

Provisions regarding the welfare of workers

Summary of the provisions of the Factories Act regarding the welfare of workers are stated below

▪ **Washing**

In every factory adequate and suitable facilities for washing shall be provided and maintained. They shall be conveniently accessible and shall be kept clean. There must be separate provisions for male and female workers - Sec. 42.

▪ **Storing and drying**

The State Government may make rules requiring the provision of suitable facilities for storing and drying clothing - Sec. 43.

▪ **Sitting**

Sitting facilities must be provided for workers who have to work in a standing position so that they may take rest when possible. When work can be done in a sitting position efficiently the Chief Inspector may direct the provision of sitting arrangements- Sec. 44.

▪ **First Aid**

Every factory must provide first aid boxes or cupboard. They must contain the prescribed materials and they must be in charge of persons trained in first aid treatment. Factories employing more than 500 persons must maintain an ambulance room containing the prescribed equipment and in charge of the prescribed medical and nursing staff - Sec. 45.

▪ **Canteens**

Where more than 250 workers are employed the state Government may require the opening of canteen or canteens for workers. Rules may be framed regarding the food served its management etc. - Sec. 46.

▪ **Shelters**

In every factory where more than 150 workers are employed there must be provided adequate and suitable shelters or rest rooms and a lunch room (with drinking water supply) where workers may eat meals brought by them. Such rooms must be sufficiently lighted and ventilated and must be maintained in a cool and clean condition. The standards may be fixed by the State Government - Sec. 47.

▪ **Creches**

In every factory where more than 30 women are employed, a room shall be provided for the use of the children (below 6 years) of such women. The room shall be adequate size, well lighted and ventilated, maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and shall be in charge of a woman trained in the care of children and infants. The standards shall be laid down by the State Government -Sec. 48.

▪ **Welfare officers**

Welfare officers must be appointed in every factory where 500 or more workers are employed. The State Government may prescribe the duties, qualifications etc. of such officers- Sec. 49.

Importance of employee welfare

Employee Welfare is one of the most important parts of any organisational activity which can provide that level of satisfaction to the employees in the organisation which a handsome salary package alone cannot provide. It also plays a significant role in the society where the employees live. Welfare is not only related to the facilities which the organisation provides to its employees, it is much more than that. It is also providing the right kind of working atmosphere to the worker, where they can respire in the congenial environment and taste the goodness of growth and development that facilitates them to give their maximum input and help achieve both individual and organisational goals respectively¹⁰. In today's era, every industry takes employee welfare activities as an essential component of the human resource system. Many measures are being adopted by the companies across the world for the development of such activities and special attention is given to employee satisfaction. In a country like India it has become mandatory to focus on employee welfare activities in a very inclusive way so as to accomplish the promise in the direction of societal development and progress.

Undoubtedly, it's the workers who are behind the success of a company, if the worker is ill then the complete organisational unit will be ill, if the organisation neglects the growth of its employees then the productivity of the organisation will surely diminish. In a country like India it is more important to establish the concept of employee welfare practices due to various reasons like poor state of wages, work schedule, team work, job satisfaction, morale, mental health, work environment etc.

Importance is given to employee welfare in order to enhance good and qualitative relations within industry. Welfare facilities help in motivating the employees and improve their work performance, employees think employers and government are taking interest in their health, wellbeing and life and their tendency of grievances vanishes with time. As a result organisational harmony increases, productivity of employees enhances and ultimately organisational objectives are achieved. Industrial norms and rules are very rigid and unfriendly. The reason behind giving welfare facilities to employees is the improvement and growth of employee and their personality. Welfare movements provide comfort and tenderness in employee's lives and help them treat as humans with respect.

Provisions regarding the safety of workers

Sections 21 to 40A, 40B and 41 of the Act lay down rules for the purpose of securing the safety of workers. Summary of the provisions of the Factories Act regarding the safety of the workers are stated below: (Sections 21 to 41).

▪ **Fencing of machinery**

All dangerous machinery must be securely fenced e.g., moving parts of prime movers and flywheels connected to every prime mover, electric generators, etc. of Sec 21.

▪ **Work on or near machinery in motion**

Work on or near machinery in motion must be carried out only by specially trained adult male workers wearing tightly fitting clothes of Sec. 22.

▪ **Employment of young person's on dangerous machines**

No young person shall work at any dangerous machine unless he has been specially instructed as to the dangers and the precautions to be observed has received sufficient training about the work and is under the supervision of some person having thorough knowledge and experience of the machine of Sec 23.

▪ **Striking gear and devices for cutting off power**

In every factory suitable devices for cutting off power in emergencies from running machinery shall be provided and maintained in every work room of 24.

▪ **Self-acting machines**

Moving parts of a self-acting machine must not be allowed to come within 45cms of any fixed structure which is not part of the machine of Sec 25.

▪ **Casing of new machinery**

In all machinery installed after the commencement of the act certain parts must be sunk, encased or otherwise effectively guarded like set screw bolt, toothed gearing etc. of Sec 26.

▪ **Women and children near cotton Openers**

Women and children must not be allowed to work near cot/On openers, except in certain cases of Sec 27.

▪ **Hoists, lifts, chains etc.**

Every hoist and lift must be so constructed as to be safe. There are detailed rules as to how such safety is to be secured. There are similar provisions regarding lifting machines, chains, and ropes and lifting tackle of Sec 28 & 29.

▪ **Revolving machinery**

Where grinding is carried on the maximum safe working speed of every revolving machinery, connected therewith must be notified. Steps must be taken to see that the safe speed is not exceeded of Sec 30.

▪ **Pressure plant**

Where any operation is carried on at a pressure higher than the atmospheric pressure, steps must be taken to ensure that the safe working pressure is not exceed of Sec 31.

▪ **Floors, stairs and means of access**

All floors, steps, stairs, passage and gangways shall be of sound construction and properly maintained. Handrails shall be provided where necessary. Safe means of access shall be provided to the place where the worker will carry on any work of Sec 32.

▪ **Pits, sumps openings in floors etc.**

Pits, sumps openings in floors etc. must be securely covered or fenced of Sec 33.

▪ **Excessive weights**

No worker shall be made to carry a load as heavy as to cause him injury of Sec 34.

▪ **Protection of eyes**

Effective screen or suitable goggles shall be provided to protect the eyes of the worker from fragments thrown off in

course of any manufacturing process and from excessive light if any.-Sec. 35.

▪ **Precautions against dangerous fumes**

No person shall be allowed to enter any chamber. Tank etc. where dangerous fumes are likely to be present. Unless it is equipped with a manhole or other means of going out. In such space no portable electric light of more than 24, volts shall be used. Only a lamp or light of flame proof construction can be used in such space. For people entering such space suitable breathing apparatus, reviving apparatus etc. shall be provided. Such places shall be cooled by ventilation before any person is allowed to enter.-8secs. 36 and 36A.

▪ **Explosive or inflammable gas etc**

Where a manufacturing process produces inflammable gas, dust, fume, etc. steps must be taken to enclose the machine concerned, prevent the accumulation of substances and exclude all possible sources of ignition. Extra precautionary measures are to be taken where such substances are worked at greater than the atmospheric pressure-Sec. 37.

▪ **Precaution in case of fire**

Fire escapes shall be provided. Windows and doors shall be constructed to open outwards. The means of exit in case of the fire shall be clearly marked in red letters. Arrangements must be made to give warning in case or fire-sec. 38.

▪ **Specifications of defectives etc**

Safety of buildings and machinery. If any building or machine is in a defective or dangerous condition, the inspector of factories can ask for holding tests to determine how they can be made safe. He can also direct the adoption of the measure necessary to make them safe. In case of immediate danger, the use of the building or machine can be prohibited.-Sec. 39, 40.

▪ **Maintenance of Buildings**

If the Inspector of Factories thinks that any building in a factory, or any part of it is in such a state of disrepair that it is likely to affect the health and welfare of the workers he may serve on the occupier or manager or both in writing specifying the measures to be done before the specified date. Sec. 40A.

▪ **Safety Officers**

The State Government may notify to the occupier to employ a number of Safety Officers in a factory (i) wherein one thousand or more workers are ordinarily employed or (ii) wherein any manufacturing process or operation which involves the risk of bodily injury, poisoning, disease or any other hazard to health of the persons employed in the factory -Sec. 40B.

Employee Welfare Facilities Types

Employee welfare is not only limited to the basic amenities and benefits given to the employees for having a clear understanding of the concept and scope, we need to study the methods in which the employee welfare is being categorized. We can categorize these activities into two parts: statutory and non-statutory/ voluntary facilities or intra-mural and extra-mural welfare activities. Statutory welfare includes the activities which are mandatory to be given to the employees. These types of

activities are implemented on the basis of coercive authority of the government. The government imposes specific rules related to employee welfare, which are related to wellbeing and security of employees. Employers are being asked by the government to execute these statutory welfare activities on a compulsion basis, and non-statutory welfare activities are the facilities which are given by the employers to the employees on a voluntary basis.

The welfare experts committee for workers composed by International Labour Organisation in the year 1963 had categorized welfare facilities into two types:

Intra-Mural Activities

Intra-Mural activities are the facilities which are provided to employees within the organisation. Facilities like sanitation, shelter, rest room, drinking water, spittoon, health measure, safety measure, protective clothing, shift allowance etc are included in these.

Extra-Mural Activities

Extra-Mural activities are the facilities which are given to the employees outside the organisation. Facilities like accommodation, educational benefits, insurance, maternity benefits, cultural function, training; co-operative stores, credit societies, transportation, library etc. are part of this. Labour welfare is broad term which includes all the facilities which have been provided by the employers, government, trade union, society and other agencies within the establishment to help the employee and their families.

The scope of welfare facilities is neither limited to the establishment, nor is it so wide that it will include the entire range of all the aspects of social service. It includes all the activities that come under the preview of extra-mural and intra-mural as well as statutory and non-statutory welfare activities provided by government, society, employer and trade union. In this category even education, cultural, housing, insurance are also included.

Statutory welfare measures are being covered under the following acts like Employee's State Insurance Act 1948, Payment of Gratuity Act 1972, Maternity Benefits Act 1961, Workmen's Compensation Act 1923 and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1952. Non-Statutory welfare measure includes the following: Accommodation, Insurance, Medicines, Training, Recreational, Education, Loans and other activities which are being provided by the employer on a voluntary basis.

Statutory Welfare Facilities

Many acts have been formulated by the Government of India on the basis of requirement.

Factories Act (1948)

The act relates to the working conditions of employees in India in the early stages i.e. 1881 when the Factories Act was first formulated and approved. Before the approval this act, the government had a non-interfering act for the workers. In the year 1881, steps towards establishing the factories act were taken for safeguarding the interest of the workers. Since its inception this act has been time and again revised on regular interval in the years 1911, 1922, 1923 and 1931 based on the requirements. The act was amended again in the year 1934 on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour as a result of division of factories into two parts i.e. permanent and seasonal.

The maximum working hours for adults was fixed at ten hours per day and fifty four hours per week with respect to permanent establishments. In the case of seasonal establishments the working hours were fixed as eleven hours per day and sixty hours per week, further the act was revised between the year 1935 to 1946 to include holidays and reduction in working hours in the case of permanent establishments. After that in the year 1947, a bill was passed by the Government of India which further became a regulation and was implemented from April 1948. The act worked as a social cause and helped the workers, working in the factories against the manufacturing and work related vulnerability. In the current scenario the act compels the employers to provide compulsory security and wellbeing to the employees working in their factories. The act characterizes factory as a property and includes the following:

- If ten or more employees are working for a period of twelve months in any property where production process is being conducted with the use of powers.

- If twenty or more employees are working for a period of twelve months in any property where production process is being conducted without the use of powers.

Principles of Employee Welfare

Employee welfare depends on a few basic principles, which must be kept in mind and properly followed to achieve a successful implementation of welfare programs (Deodhar, Sankaran and Puneekar, 2012). These principles are as follows:

Principle of Adequacy of Wages

Employee welfare measures are not a substitute for wages. Workers have a right to adequate wages. However, high wages alone cannot create a healthy atmosphere or increase the commitment of employees. Instead, a combination of social welfare, emotional welfare, and economic welfare would achieve better results.

Principle of Social Responsibility of Industry

According to this principle, industry is obliged to look after the welfare of its employees. This aspect of labour welfare is also emphasized by the Constitution of India in its Directive Principles of State Policy.

Principle of Efficiency

This principle plays an important role in welfare services and is based on the relationships between welfare and efficiency, though it is difficult to assess or quantify this relationship. Irrespective of the fact whether either aspect is the responsibility of industry or not, employers quite often accept responsibility for implementing such employee welfare measures as would increase efficiency. For instance, programs for housing, education and training, the provision of a balanced diet, and family planning measures are some of the important programs of employee welfare which increase the efficiency of workers, especially in Underdeveloped or developing countries.

Principle of Re-personalization

According to this principle, the development of human personality is the goal of industrial welfare and should complement the beneficial effects of the industrial system. It is therefore, necessary to implement employee welfare

services both inside and outside the factory, i.e., intra-mural and extra-mural employee welfare services.

Principle of Totality of Welfare

This principle emphasises that the concept of employee welfare must be spread across all the levels of an organisation. Employees across the hierarchy must accept this total concept of employee welfare failing which employee welfare programs will never really be successful.

Principle of Co-ordination or Integration

Here, again, welfare is a total concept. From this perspective, a co-ordinated approach will promote healthy development of the employee in his work, home, and community. This is vital for the sake of harmony and continuity in employee welfare services.

Principle of Association or Democratic Value

The basis of this principle is cooperation among employees. Consulting with and gaining the agreement of employees in the formation and implementation of employee welfare services is important for their success. Moreover, employees who play a part in planning these programs become keenly interested in their proper implementation. This principle also develops a sense of pride and ownership when they are made to feel that employee welfare programs are created by them and for them.

Principle of Responsibility

This principle recognizes the fact that both employers and employees are responsible for employee welfare. The trade union is also involved in these programs in a healthy manner, since employee welfare should basically belong to the domain of the trade unions. Further, when responsibility is shared by different groups, employee welfare work becomes simpler and easier. Accordingly, various committees are elected or nominated and power and responsibility related to welfare measures are delegated to them. For instance, the safety committee, the canteen committee, and the sport committee, all work in their respective areas simultaneously with specific purposes. They function over limited periods and fresh committees are elected or nominated when they are dissolved.

Principles of Accountability (also called the Principle of Evaluation)

According to this principle, one person is responsible for providing an assessment or evaluation of existing welfare services on a periodic basis to the higher authorities. This is essential to evaluate the success of employee welfare programs. Proper empirical evaluation is lacking for employee welfare services in Indian industries.

Principle of Timeliness

Timely attention to any service aids in its success. To discover labour problems and to evaluate the kind of actions necessary to solve these problems and when to provide this help, are all essential in planning employee welfare programs.

Principle of Self-help

Employee welfare must aim at helping workers to help them in the long run. This helps them to become responsible and more efficient persons.

Benefits of welfare measures

They provide better physical and mental health to workers and thus promote a healthy work environment. Facilities like housing schemes, medical benefits, and education and recreation facilities for workers' families help in raising their standards of living. This makes workers to pay more attention towards work and thus increases their productivity. Employers get stable labor force by providing welfare facilities. Workers take active interest in their jobs and work with a feeling of involvement and participation. Employee welfare measures increase the productivity of organization and promote healthy industrial relations thereby maintaining industrial peace.

Advantages of welfare Facilities on employee

1. High efficiency

When the employees get an appreciation for what they do, it helps in increasing the work efficiency of employees. When the work is done lauded by the organization it proves lucrative to both the company as well as the employees.

2. Boost the morale of employees

The employees work only when they are motivated to work. If the company wishes to get 100% output, then it is the company which has to put in little efforts to encourage the employees.

3. To build a competitive edge

Competition is must if the company wants employees to work well. In order to form a competitive environment in the office, it must provide employees with opportunities. It is vital role provide employees with welfare facilities.

4. To get timely result

If the companies want the employees to give the result on time or deliver the work in time, there needs to be some extra effort by the company so as to encourage the employees to give timely work.

5. Improved industrial relations

The employees when benefited, results in good industrial relations too. Not just the work output is good, but also the amiable relations are built by the employees when encouraged through various facilities.

6. Mental and moral health are also improves

The employees when given different facilities at work; it improves mental health as well as helping in becoming a good citizen. So, it helps in overall development of the company.

Conclusion

Health and Welfare is the main concern to the employees. Its focus is on employee safety and it can provide for higher morale and productivity in the workplace. This is due to the perception that the industry truly cares about the health and well-being of its employees, thus creating a sense of pride for the industry. Increased productivity as it correlates to safety and morale is a difficult metric to measure, but forward-thinking organizations realize that it does exist and can therefore justify the costs of their safety programs as compared to the productivity benefits that they provide. In contrast to measuring productivity as it relates to safety, the

indirect costs of employee injuries are much more measurable.

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