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Abstract:

Work-life balance (WLB) is an important area of Human Resource Management (HRM) that is receiving increasing attention from government, researchers, management and employee representatives and the popular media. Work life balance is a state of equilibrium in which the demand of both professional and personal life is equal. Each role having different set of demands and when such role demands overlap, multiple problems are faced. The objective of this research is to study the work life balance among Executives in mining companies. The research was conducted among executives in mining companies with special reference to Singareni Collieries Company Limited. Work life balance entails attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities, so that it reduces friction between official and domestic life. Work life balance refers to the effective management of multiple responsibilities at work, at home, and in the other aspects of life. It is an issue that is important both to the organizations and to employees. It enhances satisfaction, in both the professional and personal lives. The ultimate performance of any organization depends on the performance of its employees, which in turn depends on numerous factors. These factors can be related to work or family or both. The relationship between personal and professional life can be achieved through emotional intelligence. Better emotion management is necessary in order to accomplish day-to-day objectives of life. This paper attempts to identify the various factors which help to maintain work life balance among executives in SCCL.

Key Words: work life balance, personal life, professional life, work pressure, Emotional Balance, Job Satisfaction.

Introduction:

Work-life balance (WLB) is an important area of Human Resource Management (HRM) that is receiving increasing attention from government, researchers, management and employee representatives and the popular media (Pocock et al., 2001). Over the past few decades, there is a witness of considerable changes in the conventional patterns of paid work. There is a mismatch between individual and organizational values leading to work life imbalance. Employees both men and women encounter great difficulties in balancing work and family life (T.G. Vijaya&Hemamalini, 2011). In India the concern over work-life balance is gradually becoming a common talk especially for women employees. Work life balance is a state of equilibrium in which the demand of both professional and personal life is equal. Each role having different set of demands and when such role demands overlap, multiple problems are faced. In reality life and work over-lap and interact. In designing the work life policies, employer should think that the commitment of employees can make the difference between those companies which compete at the marketplace and those which cannot.

Work life balance refers to the effective management of multiple responsibilities at work, at home, and in the other aspects of life. It is an issue that is important both to the organizations and to employees. In the current economic scenario, organisations are hard pressed for higher productivity and need employees with improved work-life balance as an employee with better work-life balance will contribute more meaningfully towards the organisational growth and success (Naithani, 2010). This issue has come to the fore due to multitude of changes in the work place, in employee demographics and in the family sphere.

The term “work/life balance” was coined in 1986, although its usage in everyday language was sporadic for a number of years. Interestingly, work/life programs existed as early as the 1930s. Before World War II W.K. Kellogg Company created four six-hour shifts to replace the traditional three daily eight-hour shifts, and the introduction of new shifts were found to have resulted in increased employee morale and efficiency. Work-life balance is used to describe the equilibrium between responsibilities in an organisation at work and responsibilities outside paid work; having a work-life balance means that this equilibrium is in the right position for the individual concerned.

Need of the Study:

The studies so far reviewed have focused on changing technology, changing values, dual earners, stress and dissatisfaction emerging from demanding job pressures in work life, work family conflicts, absenteeism, high attrition rate, burnouts, job switching, work alcoholism, health issues etc. with regard to the above findings, the researcher strongly felt that there is an immense need to find out the various issues pertaining to Work Life Balance specifically in the Coal mine sector. In the present study the researcher aimed at focusing on examining the perceptions about Work Life Balance among executives, find out the executive's approach towards spending quality time, identify the factors hindering the executives in attaining balanced work and family life and suggest the strategies for achieving Work Life Balance.

Objectives of the Study:

The study focuses on examining the perceptions about Work Life Balance. More specifically the study aims at achieving the following objectives:

1. To examine the approaches towards spending quality time and attention using "Six F's Model".
2. To identify the various factors hindering achievement of a healthy balance in work and family life.
3. To examine the organization's approaches and strategies adopted by organization to achieve Work Life Balance.
4. To examine the personal strategies used to achieve Work Life Balance.

Methodology:

As the study of Work Life Balance has a very broad focus and practically it applies to every industrial organization, it is proposed to undertake the research study as a case study to explore organizational and personal strategies. Thus the study is an explorative study. The study was based on secondary data. In addition secondary data relating to the sample organization was collected through secondary source of data, like Annual reports, Documents of HRD Department, Books, Journals and Internet.

Review of Literature:

Osman and Mehmet (2006)²⁵ revealed that work-family conflict increased emotional exhaustion and decreased job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivation was found to exert a significant negative impact on emotional exhaustion. A high level of intrinsic motivation results in high levels of job performance, job satisfaction and affective commitment to the organization.

Kinman et al., (2006)⁴⁴ identified that the most stressful aspects of academic and academic-related works are long working hours, too much administrative paper work, lack of support, obtaining research funding and finding time for research, frequent interruptions, rapid change, poor leadership and management, poor salary and lack of promotion prospects.

Wilson, et al., (2007)⁴⁸ concluded that the inclusion of social coping strategies combined with family involvement significantly reduced work-family conflict. Open response categories on the survey suggest that these reductions were due to the facilitation of a joint problem solving approach by family members. In contrast, employee focused training on psychological coping alone appears to increase family conflicts.

Rotondo, et al., (2003)⁴⁹ identified that both time-based conflict and strain-based conflict were lower among persons employing direct action coping at home. Direct action coping involves individually motivated effort towards the resolution of family problems that may cause work to suffer. This coping style reflects the tendency to tackle the problems and do what needs to be done within family domains so that conflict is reduced.

Sakthivel Rania, Kamalanabhanb&Selvarania (2011) analyzed the relationship between employee satisfaction and work/life balance. The construct used for this research consists of career opportunity, recognition, work tasks, payments, benefits, superior subordinate relationship, employee satisfaction, and work/life balance. The study makes a contribution to join two distinct research streams, namely employee satisfaction, and work/life balance. Findings suggest that high correlation exists between work task and employee satisfaction with a mediator variable namely work-life balance.

V. Varatharaj, S. Vasantha (2012) studied the work life balance of working women in service sector. Work life balance entails attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities, so that it reduces friction between official and domestic life. Work life balance enhances efficiency and thus, the productivity of an employee increases. It enhances satisfaction, in both the professional and

personal lives. The findings of the study reveal the majority of the women employees feel comfortable in their work place irrespective of their trivial personal and work place irritants.

The aim of the study of **Lalita Kumari (2012)** was to find about the employee's perception of their work life balance policies and practices in the public sector banks. Quota sampling method was followed. Survey was conducted and data was analyzed on the basis of responses provided by 350 respondents. The findings of the study emphasized that each of the WLB factors on its own is a salient predictor of job satisfaction and there is a significant gap among the female and male respondents with job satisfaction with respect to various factors of WLB. The positive correlation indicates that job satisfaction is an important indicator of WLB. The result of study may have practical significance for human resource managers of especially banks to improve staff commitment and productivity along with designing their recruitment and retention policies.

History of SCCL:

In the year 1871, Dr. King of the Geological Survey of India discovered coal near the village of Yellandu in Khammam district and one of the important coal seams bore his name. The Hyderabad (Deccan) Company Limited incorporated in England acquired mining rights in 1886 to exploit coal found in Yellandu area. The present Company was incorporated on 23rd December 1920 under the Hyderabad Companies Act as a public limited company with the name 'The Singareni Collieries Company Limited' (SCCL). It acquired all the assets and liabilities of the Hyderabad (Deccan) Co. Ltd. Best & Co., acted as Secretaries and Selling Agents. The State of Hyderabad purchased majority shares of the Company in 1945. From 1945 to 1949, the Hyderabad Construction Co., Ltd., was acting as Managing Agent. In 1949 this function was entrusted to Industrial Trust Fund by the then Government of Hyderabad. The controlling interest of the Company devolved on the Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1956 pursuant to the reorganization of States. Thus, the SCCL became a Government Company under the Companies Act in 1956.

Large-scale expansion of SCCL was undertaken during the initial Five-year plans. In 1960 the Govt. of India started its participation in the equity of the Company and also started extending loan assistance. Thus since March 1960 it has been jointly owned by the Government

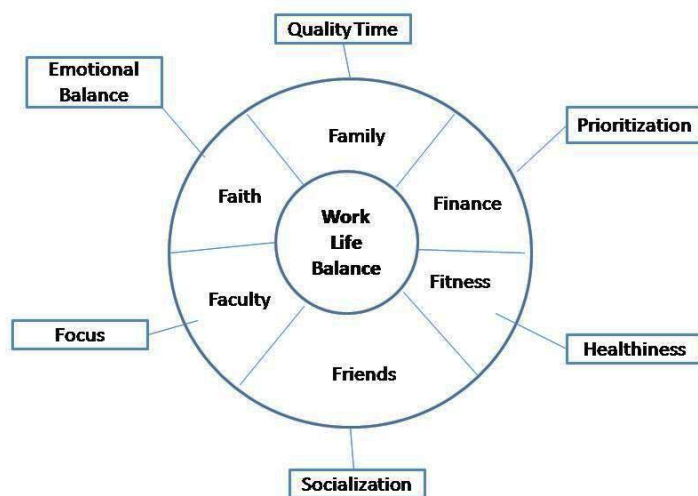
of Andhra Pradesh and the Govt. of India. In 1974 the Government of India transferred its share capital to the Coal Mines Authority Limited.

Strategies of SCCL Executives:

Work life balance is the need of the day. People of all age groups are the victims of imbalance both in personal and professional life. There are many factors affecting work life balance i.e., nuclear family structure, dual earner couples, multi tasking, financial indiscipline, job pressures and demands, unrealistic aspirations, unhealthy food habits, social deprivation, cultural adjustments etc. All these factors contribute to conflicts in personal and professional fronts leading to an imbalance. It is not that all the employees have an imbalance but it is not an exaggeration to say that most of the employees both male and female are suffering from imbalance. Hence it is the responsibility of the organizations to help employees cope up with the problems in all the areas of life i.e., family, finance, fitness, friends, faculty and faith.

The personal strategies followed by executives working in SCCL to achieve balance in all areas of life. ie family, finance, fitness, friends, faculty and faith with the help of a model.

Figure showing personal Strategies of SCCL Executives to achieve Work Life Balance



Organizational Approaches to Achieve Balance in Family Life:

Family is the most important aspect in a human beings life. Family life may not be same for all the individuals. It differs based on many factors like number of family members, income level, status, number of children, dependents etc. other than these factors the behavior,

attitude, character and values of the family members also influence the family life of executives. This is an era of modernization, globalization and civilization where most of the families are from double income group i.e., both the couple work. As both the partners have their own financial independence their outlook is different. Coming to the single earner families i.e., where only husband earns the family has different culture. In this context, the opinions of executives are collected on the organizational approaches in achieving balance in family life. During discussions the executives described that the following approaches are adopted by SCCL to achieve balance in their family life.

Work from home: Few of the executives have given the facility to work from home on a special permission.

Nearby working facilities: This is another facility provided by SCCL to its employees to balance their family life. The employees particularly are given the provision to work in the nearby hometown or the place they prefer because of relocation problem to children and spouse.

Basic Facilities: Different facilities like quarters, water, cooking gas supply, electricity, etc. are provided by SCCL to their employee which enables them to lead life comfortably.

Other facilities: Green parks, auditorium, stadium, gym centre, club house, sports court etc. are being maintained by the organization where employees spend leisure time with their family.

Leaves: Grant of emergency leaves, weekly holiday, hometown and LTC, LLTC to facilitate long trips to keep the employees away from monotonous activities, picnics during winter season to bring families together. For women 2 years leave with payment is given for taking care of children.

Club house: The facilities of Club days are also scheduled for executives to spend time with families every week. "Singareni Employees Wives' Association" (SEWA) was started in the year 2000 in association with SingareniSevaSamiti (SSS) in all the areas with the active participation of Wives of employees. The main objective of SEWA is to create awareness among the workmen and their families about various issues covering the family. The effort of organizing counseling to desperate spouses is also a motive of SCCL to help employees in balancing personal life. Programs on safety related and post retirement planning awareness among wives' of the employees are also organized through the association.

Welfare measures: Many hospitals are being facilitated to treat the employees with multi-specialty requirements and accommodation facilities. The executive's children are rewarded for their academic achievements.

Organizational Approaches to Achieve Balance in Fitness:

Fitness is an important aspect for anybody. "If money is lost one can earn it but if health is lost it cannot be earned". People these days are spending their whole life in earning money and finally when they want to enjoy life they have to spend their whole money earned in time to protect their health. Of course few segments of people have awareness on fitness but they fail to implement because of many reasons. Coming to the area of work life balance people think of only two aspects one is family life and other is professional life. But most people does not realize that without fitness there is no life. Hence with an intention to know the knowledge of executives on fitness and to the present the approaches of SCCL on employee's fitness the questionnaire is being administered on the sample respondents, additionally discussions are also held to collect relevant information.

Fitness through Sports:

SCCL has a long history in encouraging its employees in the field of Sports and Games with a schedule framing Sports Calendar. Work People Sports and Games Associations (WPS&GA) are formed in all the areas. It conducts departmental level/Regional Level/Company Level Games for the employees every year as per Sports Calendar. Even though SCCL is not a subsidiary of CIL, it is one of the participants in the Sports & Games being conducted on All India basis under the banner of "CIL Inter Company Tournaments". The Company has also been encouraging the employees to participate in the Inter District, State Level Tournaments conducted by Sports Authority of A.P. (SAAP). The players from the Company have also participated in the National/International Level Meets and won the medals. SCCL is encouraging the workmen and their children to participate in the sports and games events to keep up better health, leading to personality development. SCCL teams are being sent to participate in All India Coal Fields Tournaments.

Induction Training Programs for Executive Trainees:

The induction training program is conducted for all trainees before deputing them to Areas for "On the Job Training". The induction training program is aimed at acquainting the employees about the rules, regulations and procedures of the company. The training program runs for six months as it provides exposure to the executive trainees about the entire company.

Further, it provides basic knowledge to all the trainees, which enables them to perform higher functions at a later stage. To make the induction training program effective, it has been divided into six modules. While first module provides basic exposure to employees about the various facets of the coal industry, the second module makes employees familiarize with all the departments in the company at

corporate level. The third module is an advanced course in the relevant functional area. In this phase, trainees are given small assignments and they are required to suggest ideas for improvement in the system under the guidance of a middle level executive at corporate level. In the fourth module, trainees are exposed to all Area Level Departments and they are familiarized with the same. In the fifth phase, employees are deputed to unit level offices of the respective disciplines so that they get experience in the same. In the sixth or final phase, trainees have to formulate a report and then they have to make a presentation at both Area level and Corporate level. After that trainees will be deputed to the respective places of postings and continue the remaining training period on the job.

Training Institutes of SCCL:

SCCL has eight Mines Vocational Training Centers (MVTCs) located at Kothagudem, Yellandu, Manuguru, Ramagundam-I Area, Ramagundam-II Area, Mandamarri, Sri Rampur and Bhoopalapalli. Besides, it has two major training centers viz., Corporate Training Center, Kothagudem and Nargundkar Institute of Management, Godavarikhani. Corporate Training Center (CTC) conducts in-house training programs for executives and supervisors and Nargundkar Institute of Management (NIM) undertakes training programs only for executives. Further, the company deposes its executives and non-executives to various external training institutes in India and abroad for undergoing training programs.

In-House Training Programs for Executives:

SCCL undertakes in - house training programs for its executives. The topics covered in the in - house training programs for its E1 to E3 executive levels are emotional intelligence, basic computers, health & nutrition, management of stress, work - study and productivity techniques. On the other hand, the topics covered for its senior executives or E4 level and above cadre are the basic computers, modern office management, and management of stress and new techniques of management. It is to be noted that the training period varies from cadre to cadre. For instance, junior executives who fall in the E1, E2 and E3 cadre undergo in- house training for a period of two weeks in a year while middle level executives undergo in-house training for a period of one week in two years. On the other hand senior executives undergo in-house training programs for one week in a year.

TABLE 1: In-House Training Centres of SCCL

Name of the Centre	No. of Centers Progressing in each year					
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Mines Vocational Training Centers (MVTC)	NA	8	8	8	9	9
Corporate Training Centre (CTC), Kothagudem	NA	1	1	1	1	1
Technical Training Centre (TTC), Ramagundam	NA	1	1	1	1	1
Underground Mechanism Training Institute (UMTI), RG-II (for underground technology)	NA	1	1	1	1	1
Nargundkar Institute of Management (NIM), RG-II (for executive training)	NA	1	1	1	1	1

Source: Annual Reports & Accounts NA – Not available

The company has good in-house training centers with facilities like library, LCD projector, computers and internet at various areas. The table 1 reveals that among all the centers Mines Vocational Training Centers (MVTC) the number has increased from 8 to 9 in the year 2013-14. Remaining all the centers has the same number of centers from 2009-15. This indicates that there is need for thinking of increasing the number of centers to meet the increased demand.

In-House Training Programs for Non – Executives:

SCCL undertakes In-house training programs for its non-executives and the topics covered in the In-house training programs are literacy, emotional intelligence, management of stress & neuronal (nervous system) empowerment, health & nutrition, savings & terminal benefits. It also covers areas like basic computer training, modern office management and secretarial practice.

Encouragement for Inventions and Innovation:

SCCL is committed to provide work life balance by encouraging faculty of knowledge. Beyond imagination it promotes the spirit of innovations and inventions among employees. To encourage the executives/non executives who are striving to make inventions and innovations, a circular is issued requesting area GMs/HODs to send the details.

Hence the efforts of SCCL are highly appreciable in empowering the executives in the area of faculty. Therefore it is understood from the efforts outlined here about the faculty of knowledge among employees that the company is taking all reasonable efforts to bring a balance in the work life. Informal discussions with the executives have revealed that due to various programs organized by the company they are able to scale up to the positions without much of stress and the time to adjust to the responsibilities of new position is being conserved. Thus such time is being allocated to other activities of life balance. They opined that still some scientific effort is needed to make these programs more effective than being taken as mandatory or rituals.

In this context discussions are made with the executives to find out the approach of SCCL to look after the area of faith of employees. Most of the employees are very happy with the facilities given by SCCL to spend time on faith related activities. To encourage the employees towards spirituality, SCCL arranged 7 non A/C rooms for providing the accommodation to employees and their families who are under pilgrimage at Pushpagiri Trust Choultry at Thirumala. This accommodation will be available throughout the year except during the period of Brahmotsvam and vaikuntaekadasi days and English New Year day.

The other set of employees belong to Muslim community shared that they are given a facility of reduced work hours during the month of Ramzan festival. Few others added that they together celebrate Iftar party where the executives in the manager cadre also take part without any cultural difference.

Employees belonging to Christianity said that they are happy with the approach of SCCL towards faith related activities as it enables them to serve their community related activities. Some other expanded the same point saying that their colonies are decorated with stars and lights during Christmas and New Year celebrations. Hence it is positive sign where employees can achieve balance in the aspect of faith.

Conclusion:

Work life balance refers to how people combine paid work with life's other responsibilities. The work life balance is an issue that is important both to the organizations and to employees. This issue has come to the fore due to a multitude of changes in the work place, in employee demographics and in the family sphere. The employees are thus under a lot of pressures and feel compelled to put in longer hours of work to prove their worth and meet the expectations of the organizations. The '24/7 lifestyle', dominates the lives, especially of highly educated and skilled professionals and managerial personnel. Advancement in technology has blurred the line between office and home, and with a laptop, employee is on call at virtual office 24 hours a day. As time spent at work is increasing steeply, quality time available for the family is shrinking. Moreover, the health of employees is also being affected.

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