

Impact of Work life balance on job characteristics: special reference to coal mines in Odisha

Dash Anuradha^{1*}

¹ School of Management Studies, Ravenshaw University

*Corresponding author E-mail: ad.anu88@gmail.com

Abstract

Happy employees are productive employees. In today's business world, employees are facing a lot of challenges in order to maintain a smooth balance between their personal and professional commitments. Personal Life and Work Life are like two opposite poles of a same sphere and they are intermingled as well. Employees become more productive when they are capable of balancing physical and mental wellbeing of themselves and their families, along with organisational commitments. Work life balance (WLB) not only encourages the employees to be productive but also makes the organisation a better place to work in and gives the employer a chance to become a top-hiring organisation. In this paper, the special focus is on the employees of coal mines of the State of Odisha. This empirical study aims at examining the impact of WLB on various job characteristics and its benefit to the employees. For this purpose, primary data has been collected from employees working in various mining divisions in Odisha and the result is interpreted in a comprehensive manner.

Keywords: Work Life Balance; Coal Mines; Job characteristics

1. Introduction

Work is an important element of life. It gives human social, psychological, economical benefits as well as sense of accomplishment and achievement. It provides income for employees and their families; it can help them socially with group identification, and can provide satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment, achievement and success (Burke et al., 2010). Workplace now days are full of challenges due to increase in demand for qualitative services, new and better advancement of Information Technology and competitive market.

Work life balance has become a predominant issue in Indian Organisations. It is not only affecting employees but also the various dept of the organisation. Economic conditions, various social and personal demands, aging workforce, organisation culture, workplace practices, urbanisation & modernisation play most important role in WLB. It aims at providing employees the efficiency to handle their personal and professional life effectively and productively hence improving the quality of life. The success of an organisation depends on its employees. Happy & motivated employees are productive employees

India has the fifth largest coal reserves in the world, and is the fourth largest producer of coal in the world, producing 662.79 million metric tons (730.60 million short tons) in 2016-17. As on 31 March 2017, (Wikipedia) . Total **3,13,829** no of employees work for Coal India Ltd.(Wikipedia). Hence it is very much important companies to look after the overall mental & physical wellbeing of its workforce by providing and supporting them with necessary work life balance benefits.

2. Literature review

Work plays a significant role in a man's life. A man goes through different psychological and physiological stages which heavily affect his work and personal life.

The term work life balance refers to harmonious interface between different domains of life (Frone,2003) . Dundas(2008), affirmed that work-life balance is about efficiently managing the pressures between paid employment and all additional activities that are essential to people such as family, community activities, voluntary work, individual growth and spare time and amusement. Work life balance can be defined as the satisfactory level of employee's involvement in work as well as personal life. It can be described as the way and means through which an employee brings equilibrium to his personal as well as professional life.

An employee's success depends on their ability to manage work and personal commitments successfully. Their capability to manage work and personal life not only helps in improving mental and physical health but also their efficiency and productivity. A balanced work life gives man the autonomy to happily play his role in different life orientations. And happy employees are productive employees. A little bit of imbalance in work and personal life can bring in stress, depression, poor performance and verity of health problems. Less favourable working conditions such as unfriendly environment, tough manager, poor child care options, harassment, unethical work practices, no pay parity, lack of employee friendly provisions etc.

The mining industry is not a very appealing and interesting industry to work in since mining industry employees face lots of hard time in balancing their work and private life due to the hectic work schedules. So, companies now a day's are becoming more con-

cerned about implementing suitable and favourable WLB policy. Coal India Ltd contributes around 82% of the total coal production in India. It produced 554.14 million tonnes of raw coal in the year 2016-17. The company has received Maharatna status by the Union Govt of India. The company has around 4 Lakhs employees. So it is very much essential for an organisation like CIL to develop and implement a well defined WLB policy for its workers. Tough working conditions such as shift work, production deadlines, overtime have a great impact on mining employee's life. For mines workers WLB is a state of well being both physical and mental which enables them to do multiple tasks at organisational and personal level.

In the last few years a no of studies have been conducted to find out the impact of work life balance on various job related factors. Various job characteristics such as work load, stress, job satisfaction, job security, job commitment, career development, performance, organisational culture, interpersonal relationship, management practices like flexi timing, job sharing, work from home, mental and physical well being of employee's are highly impacted by WLB policy of any organisation. When any kind of conflict occurs in these domains, harmony becomes unstable thus it brings in work life imbalance by causing adverse impact both on employees and organisation. Thus WLB can't be taken lightly. Research indicates that organizations that identify, plan and implement work-life balance policies that are receptive to the changing nature of the workforce reap positive results in the guise of high levels of staff retention and increased productivity (Bardoel et al 2000).

WORK LIFE BALANCE & STRESS: Stress is undoubtedly the biggest and most worrying problem for mining workforce. Research says 46% of total workforce in India suffers through stress (Economic Times: 2016). Shift work, overtime, hectic work, disturbed sleeping pattern, schedules bring in so much stress in mining workforce.

WORK LIFE BALANCE & ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE: Organisational culture plays a significance role in employee's work life balance. Flexible working arrangements, adequate tools and equipments, training & development facilities have high impact on WLB of employees.

WORK LIFE BALANCE & INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP:

According to Kalleberg (2013), work intensity, i.e. control over the pace and scheduling of work, is one of the dimensions of job quality. A lot of research has been done on work intensity in the context of work quality (Boxall and Macky, 2014; Kalleberg, 2013; Svetlik, 1996: 163). Boxal and Macky (2014) compare the effects of work intensity on employee well-being, and emphasise the importance of including work intensification in the assessment of employee well-being. Work intensity has emerged as a considerably more powerful and consistent predictor of work and health outcomes than hours worked (Burke et al., 2009).

WORK LIFE BALANCE & MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: Flexible working conditions act as a stimulator for work life balance. It not only lowers employee turnover but also helps in employee engagement and job satisfaction. (North Coast 99, 2014) and (WorldatWork, 2013) report that flexible work arrangement have a positive relationship on employees motivation, satisfaction, engagement and reduces organizational turnover rates, besides, the accumulation to higher degree of work/life fit, flexible working also arrangement promote good health, improves better sleeping, provide time for more exercising and works well in reducing stress level. Job sharing, work from home are some of the other practices done by management to motivate and retain employees.

3. Research gap

A no. of studies have been conducted in India & abroad to find out the impact of WLB on various job related factors. Work Life Balance has become the new interest area of researchers now days & Indian researchers are also becoming more interested to know and explore further about this particular topic. However very few researches have been done in coal mining sector of Odisha. This paper aims to explore the impact of work life balance on various job characteristics and special reference has been given to Odisha Coal Mines.

4. Objectives of the study

- To study the work life balance of the employees.
- To identify the factors that affects the work life.
- To determine the relationship between WLB and job related factors.

5. Research methodology

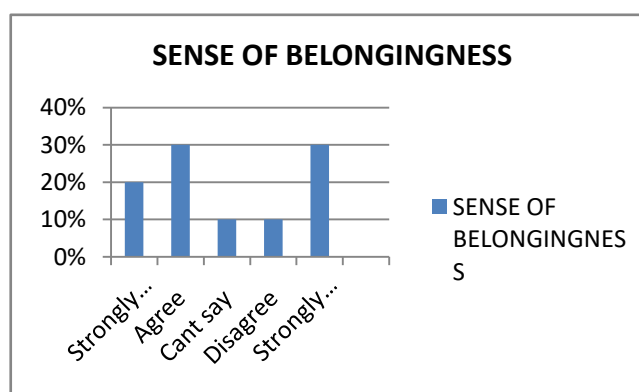
This study tried to investigate the relationship between work life balance and various job related factors in coal mining sector of Odisha. Primary data collection method has been used and information's were collected using questionnaire technique.

• **DATA & SAMPLE SIZE:** Data was collected through questionnaire method. A total no of respondents was 200 out of which 50 are Executives & 150 Non-Executives. Responses were collected from MCL, Talcher Zone. And interpretation is made with the use of chart.

• **METHODOLOGY USED:** After collection of data, information is filtered and graphs and charts are used to show the responses of the collected data. For making it further simple, they are converted to percentages and then the result is interpreted.

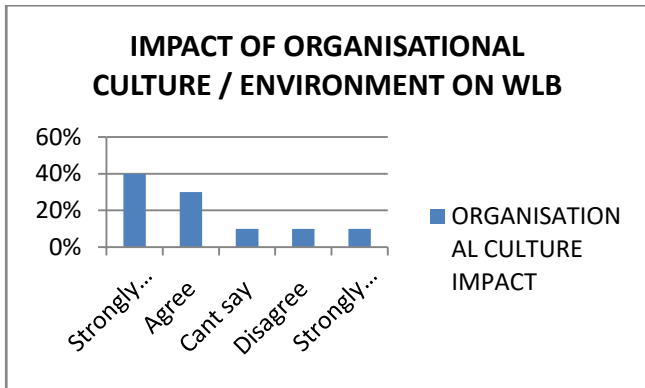
6. Data analysis and interpretation:

CATEGORY 1: SENSE OF BELONGINGNESS



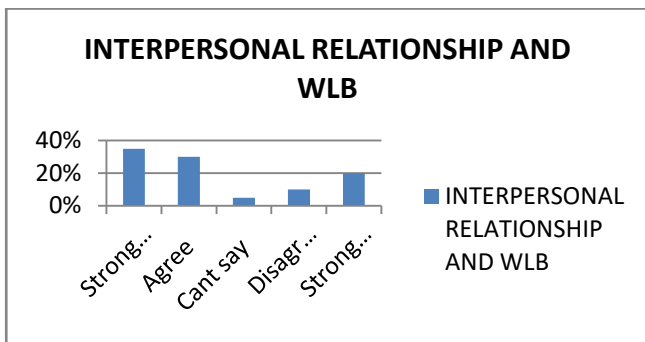
From the chart it can be interpreted that around 50% of the total workforce feel a strong sense of belongingness towards the organisation. They also feel that their talent and skill is being utilised in the right way. However a substantial proportion of the employees i.e 30% feel that they are not satisfied with the organisation.

CATEGORY 2: IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE



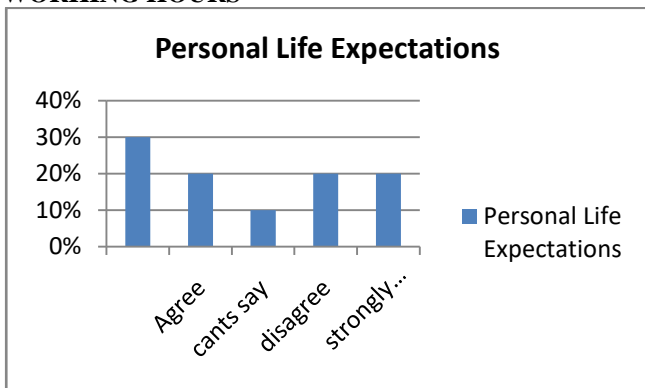
Over 70% of the establishment reported that the culture of their workplace playing a vital role in WLB. CIL has a well-defined Safety Policy and a multi-disciplinary Internal Safety Organization (ISO) functioning in each subsidiary company including MCL to monitor its implementation. Safety awareness drives are being organised along with continuous training and skill up gradation programmes. Integrated management programmes are also a part of environmental activity which promotes healthy environment for the employees to work in.

CATEGORY 3: INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AND WLB



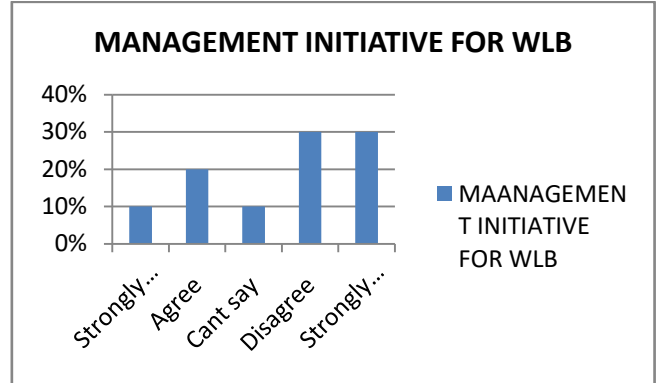
It is apparent from the graph that over 60% of the employees feel WLB is highly affected by interpersonal relationship at workplace. They reported that there is a high level of communication between them and their supervisor and they are encouraged to share their opinion and ideas. Maximum workforce reported that they are happy with their co-workers and they share a helping each other relationship. However 20% of the respondents said they don't get support and cooperation at need.

CATEGORY 4: SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH WORKING HOURS



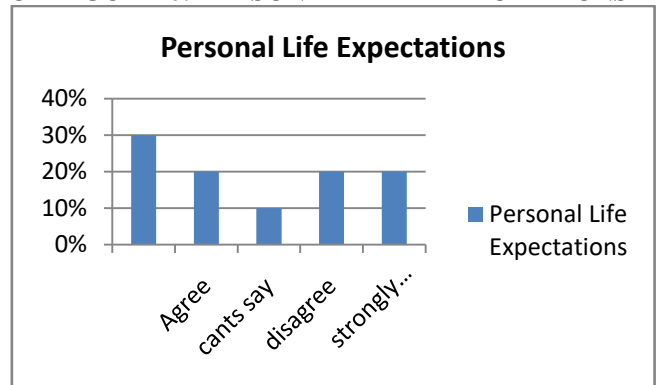
To measure the extent to which each flexible working time arrangement was formally established, respondents were asked if they had an option to their work and non-work interest. Only 20% of the respondent said that they are able to take care of their personal interest like sporting a new hobby, taking care of elderly at home etc. They even reported that they are not able to spend quality time with their family due to the hectic work schedules.

CATEGORY 5: MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE FOR WLB



As per the graph in around one third of the employees completely disagree with the fact that management is taking any initiative to enhance their work life balance. It is assumed that if leaders of an organization exhibit a proper balance between work and life, employees will be more likely to follow their trend. Such a balance should be seen and lived from the top level down. But in this case the principle is not available. The organisation's policy related to child care services are not upto mark. There is a need for improvement of its family friendly working environment and reliable working culture as well. Community engagement opportunities, flexible working hours, team building exercises are some of the options employees look for.

CATEGORY 6: PERSONAL LIFE EXPECTATIONS



Participants were asked if they are able to meet their personal life expectations and above one third reported that they are capable of managing their personal life. The other respondents reported that they are not able to fulfil their personal goals and, satisfying one's expectation plays an important role in motivation. A majority of the respondents said they want to spend more qualitative weekend with their family whereas only 30% said they have achieved one. A major portion of the respondent said they want to get involved in social activities and devote more time to their families and friends and they are striving to get one.

Findings and conclusion

The findings indicate that the organisational culture & interpersonal relationship play a major role in WLB since more than 50% of the workforce reported about the same. They feel that their capability to balance work and personal life is highly affected by

the organisation. There is a high level of trust and cooperation among employees however the hectic work modules of non-executive employees making the life difficult. Only 20% employees reported that they are satisfied with the working time arrangement and rest of the employees have reported about their inability to perform personal task due to having lack of time. Some of the employees have elderly parents and other dependants and they are facing major trouble. The women employees reported about their inability to give their best to their newborns as the company doesn't have any work from home facility. A substantial portion of the employee's i.e more than 30% feels the absence of any specific WLB policy in the organisation. Newly joined have a lot of expectation from the company since it is one of the companies of India Government Having the Maharatna Status. Better child care services, family friendly working environment can do the trick. Since all most all the project of coal mines are located in rural areas the scope for entertainment is less as compared to other companies. The organisation should look into the matter and take initiative to make the organisational environment a more welcoming one having more community engagement centres. Nearly half of the employees feel that satisfying one's personal life need is the prime requirement in achievement of a proper WLB, and upon being asked about if they are capable to meet their personal life expectations 30% and above gave a positive response and reported that they are able to meet their expectations since the organisation is looking into their basic needs like child education, hospital and healthcare facilities, and other financial & non financial benefits. It was also stated that the company's giving facilities like free health check-up, free treatment for employee and their families, at renowned hospitals for high end diseases, establishing CBSE and ICSE schools and colleges where the employee's children can enrol themselves which are giving the employees a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.

In between the good and bad, there is a lacuna of a proper WLB policy at the workplace. It can be stated that coal mining sectors in odisha are not much concerned about the WLB of employees and that can become a major drawback for the worlds no1 coal producing country, India. Countries like Norway, Germany, Australia, Austria, Hungary, Sweden are far above in this regard and not missing an single opportunity to help their employees achieve Work Life Balance. Achieving Work Life Balance is a top priority for most of the people and companies should take initiative for this as well.

References

- [1] Agarwal P. (2014), "A Study of Work – Life Balance with special reference to Indian Call Center Employees", International Journal of Engineering and Management Research.
- [2] Choudhary L. (2011), "Work Life balance problems & solutions", International Referred Research Journal.
- [3] Deery M., "Talent management, work life balance and retention strategies", International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.
- [4] Gupta Y & Sharma N, (2013), "An Empirical Analysis of Work Life Balance in Corporate Employees with Special Reference to Marital Status in Moradabad Region", Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing & Management Review, Indian Research Journals
- [5] Kudachimath B & Rotti A, (2014), "Work Life Balance: Emerging Challenge to HR Professionals", International Journal of Multifaceted and Multilingual Studies,
- [6] Singh J, (2013), "Individual and Organizational Strategies to Balance Work-life with Indian Way", Global Journal of Management and Business Studies.
- [7] Yadav N. (2014 Mar), "Comparison of the work life balance of women employees in educational field. SIES Journal management.