International Conference on Recent Innovations in Science, Technology, Management and Environment
Indian Federation of United Nations Associations, New Delhi (India) (ICRISTME-16)
19th June 2016, www.conferenceworld.in ISBN: 978-81-931039-1-3

EMPLOYEES' STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SCCL

(*A study on role of welfare measures and social security schemes to reduce employees' workplace stress which leads to effective workers' participation: An empirical study in Singareni Collieries Company Limited*.)

Dr. A.V.V. Siva Prasad[1], Dr. P. Vijay Kumar[2], Mr. S. Venkata Siva Kumar[3]

[1] *Principal & Professor, Dept. of Management Studies, Laqshya College of Management, (India)*
[2] *Director,* [3] *Research Scholar, School of Management Studies, JNTU Kakinada, (India)*

ABSTRACT

Workplace stress can be defined as the change in one's physical or mental state in response to workplaces that pose an appraised challenge or threat to that employee. The present research is conducted in Singareni collieries company limited, Kothagudem, Khammam District, Telangana. This research obsolete the role of employees' welfare and social security schemes as a technique in reducing workplace stress of an employee and make him to participate effectively in his working environment. In this research the researcher tried to evaluate the steps and techniques followed and implemented by the SCCL in order to reduce the employees' workplace stress. The sample collected and used in this research constitutes the workers in production department, Open Cast workers etc.

Key Words: Workplace Stress, Workers' Participation, Stress, Employee Welfare, Social Security Schemes.

I. INTRODUCTION

In this research, the researcher wants to explore the opinions of the production and open cast employees who are working in a life risk conditions. These employees are experiencing a high level workplace stress which might lead to psychological and physical problems. As the organization is Singareni Collieries Company Limited, where these employees have to work in very dangerous conditions in extracting coal from open casts, which is life risk problem with heavy physical and mental stress. In this regard, the researcher has explored the opinions of these workers about the occupational stress relief techniques adopting by SCCL. As there are several ways to reduce occupational stress of employees working in critical conditions, but the researcher started his journey to evaluate the role of "welfare measures" provided by the organization to reduce the occupational stress among

employees. For this purpose, the researcher collected primary data from the workers who are facing stress in their working environment.

II. WORKPLACE STRESS AND EMPLOYEE WELFARE

The organizations forfeit less interest to manage their workers in order to avoid workplace stress. For every organization to achieve its set of objectives and goals it must enthrone an encouraging stress-free work environment and the welfare of workers should not me made secondary. Without the human factor in the organization there will be nothing to achieve because the machine and equipment needed to be manned by employees. The creative and innovative tendencies that will drive the organization are made plausible by human effort. In this recent times demand on these onerous and this usually snowball to occupational stress. With the technological advancement and new world order, there are new ways of doing things, it becomes very imperative for organization to expose their employees by way of training and development in order to meet up with the technical know-how and be in tune with current realities. Today, most societies and organizations want to have effective cost management thereby finding ways to reduce labour cost and at the same time meeting production targets. In such circumstances, you see an employee involved in multiplicity of tasks and thereby subjecting him/her to undue pressure. In a situation like this employee may begin to struggle to cope and thereby causing gap in job satisfaction.

The term 'welfare' is an imperative facet, in the process of establishing civilized industrial relations in any enlightened humanity. The worker in the industry cannot muddle through the pace of the current day modern life without enjoying minimum welfare amenities. As such, it is indispensable for the employer to provide amenities to the worker to improve his living conditions which is a part of welfare measures. It is pointless to articulate, that the welfare facilities provided by the employer are proved to be enhancing the efficiency of the workers in production and productivity, by reducing the wastage in the utilization of resources. Welfare measures should reduce the displeasure, absenteeism, labour turnover, labour disputes and grievance among the workers, in addition to these the researcher wants to prove that the welfare measures also reduce the worker's occupation stress and always it acts as a stress management technique.

According to the research done by *Alegbeleye G.I, Ojeifo, A. & Idris, D.S (2014),* it has often shown that when stress in whatever semblance is not managed properly by the individual; it becomes a recipe for hypertension or psychological trauma. There have been concerns of cardiac arrests and mental retardation among workers and most of these cases have been medically proven to be caused by the distress and poor health management caused by stress. Most organizations are only interested in growing their production capacity and financial profile and meeting set targets without recourse to '*workers welfare*'. They pay little or no attention to the state of mind and psychological well-being of workers. Organizations fail to realize that a stress free worker will have improved performance than a worker who faces occupational stress.

2.1 Welfare Measures Provided By SCCL

In this research, it has been found that the SCCL always give first priority to look after the welfare of their employees. Here the researcher shared some of the welfare measures which play a crucial role in reducing employees' occupational stress.

2.2 Medical Facilities

SCCL always cares about the employees' health conditions in and out working conditions of employees. The SCCL maintains eight hospitals along with dispensaries which contain well advanced equipment for treatments along with well experienced specialist doctors and nursing staff. It also conducts health camps for general check up frequently on a periodic basis. SCCL also refers some private hospitals for their employees and their families who are under severe conditions with free treatment. In this context, the employees will always be self assured and self motivated in improving their working efficiency and productivity. And, these medical facilities can act a technique for SCCL to reduce their employees' occupational stress.

2.3 Social Security Schemes

The researcher states that the Social Security Schemes like "Insurance Schemes, Coal Mines Provident Fund Scheme, Coal Mines Pension Scheme-1998, Settlement of Terminal Benefits in respect of Mine Accident Cases, Group Gratuity Scheme with LIC of India, Ex-Gratia, Matching Grant, Dependant Employment, Sports and Recreational Facilities – are the future assured programs provided by SCCL to their employees which helps them to reduce their workplace stress and improve their efficiency and productivity in working environment.

2.4 Welfare Amenities @ SCCL

SCCL also provide a stress-free working environment by giving proper amenities to their employees which includes insurance schemes, medical aid, supply of essential commodities, sports and recreational facilities, educational facilities, housing, Singareni Seva Samithi etc. These amenities make employees to feel assured better working conditions for both employees and their families which leads to reduce occupational stress.

III REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Alegbeleye G.I, Ojeifo, A. & Idris, D.S[1], stated that employee stress is not immune to any organization and there are techniques for reducing stress related issues, but the intensity given to employees' stress is not enough. The researcher says that the factors such as depression, frustration and work related stress are the superseding variables to organizational stress. This study has established a relation between employees' welfare and occupational stress. Thus, the researcher opined that the organizations should concentrate highly on employees' welfare as it is the universal remedy to having a stress free workforce.

[1] Alegbeleye G.I, Ojeifo, A. & Idris, D.S (2014), "Stress Management and employees' welfare: The Implication on Performance", "Review of Public Administration and Management". Vol: 3, No: 6, pp: 191-203.

Ramezan, Seyyed, Behnaz[2], opined that the stress is not a fixed negative phenomenon among employees, but the stress might be sometime positive too. The employees' from top to bottom level who are affected by workplace stress will have different psychological behaviours which reflects on the organizational productivity. The authors suggested that the organizations might take some special training programmes for line managers and their manpower in all departments for reducing their stressors and to get recognized with their improved performance in the organization.

Mu.Subramanian, Anjali.N[3], emphasizes that quality of work life in engineering industry is better than textile industry. As, these two industries bear major part of Indian industry, these both industries has to enhance the quality of work life among employees' and provide proper motivation and morale of the employees to reduce their workplace stress and overcome their hurdles which results in improvement in health of Indian Industrial Sector.

Dr. A.V.V. Siva Prasad[4], concluded that yoga is a very important technique to control stress in job and also it is an answer for healing or reducing stress among male and female employees in their job roles. He suggested that the insurance companies should spend some time and resources to implement stress reduction programmes like 'Yoga' for their employees to make them to reduce their stress and everyone would agree with his saying that the insurance companies should always focus on "maintenance", rather than "repair".

A.Sabarirajan, T.Meharajan, B.Arun[5], found that in the area of textile industry from salem district, Tamilnadu, few organizations provide lawful welfare measures whereas some organizations provide few more welfare measures to the employees which encourages the employees to reduce their workplace stress and improve their quality of work life. The authors finally concludes that organizations maintain soft relationships between workers and management, on the other hand the research report also confines that the employees of Textile Mills in Salem district are satisfied with the welfare measures provided by their organization.

3.1 Research Gap

Many of the research studies are focused either on the stress management or on the welfare measures. Only, few research studies covered the areas of welfare measures in relation with workplace stress. In this context, the researcher wants to evaluate the specifics about the concept Employee Welfare Measures as a Stress Management Technique and accomplish the above found research gap.

3.2 Objectives of the Study

[2] Ramezan, Seyyed, Behnaz (2012), "Stress Management in the Workplace", "International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences". Vol: 1, No: 6, pp: 1-9

[3] Mu.Subramanian, Anjali.N, "Constructs of Quality of Work Life – A Perspective of Textile and Engineering Employees", "Asian Journal of Management Research". pp: 299-307

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[5] A.Sabarirajan, T.Meharajan, B.Arun, "A study on various Welfare Measures and their impact on QWL provided by the Textile Mills with reference to Salem District, Tamilnadu, India". Asian Journal of Management Research, pp: 15-24.

The objectives of this study have been drafted based on the different levels of *work experience* of workers in selected departments of SCCL:

1. To identify the employees' satisfaction levels on welfare and safety measures provided by SCCL.
2. To identify the employees' perception among various measures provided by SCCL regarding their amenities.
3. To explore the level of satisfaction among employees towards social security schemes.
4. To evaluate the workers opinions and their perceptions towards workplace stress.
5. To measure the employee response towards the measures followed and implemented by SCCL to reduce workplace stress.
6. To examine whether the organization as well as the employees together work out to reduce workplace stress and try to improve the organization's growth along with one's individual career.

3.3 Need and Importance of the Study

As the people feel stress in their routine works, long work hours under constant deadline pressures and conditions for overload, so to reduce their stress there is a need to study stress management.

- Stress Management is very important to know the stress which is facing by the employees.
- With the help of this study we can know the level of stress of employees which have adverse effect on satisfaction.
- As it is important because we can reduce the stress among the employees.
- This study explicates that the welfare and safety measures implementing by the organizations also play a crucial role to reduce the workplace stress among workers especially in coal mines.
- The study also reveals that the employees who are experiencing workplace stress can be able to reduce their stress with the help of labour welfare measures adopting by their organization and social security schemes which motivate the workers to reduce their stress and motivate themselves to work hard to improve the organization's productivity.

3.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to collecting the data from the workers of open cast mines of Singareni Collieries Company Limited, Kothagudem with reference to the objectives stated above and an analysis of the data with a view to provide suggestions relating to the workers of SCCL.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For many systematic inquiry application of appropriate methods and a science bent of minds are a sine-qua-non. This has an important bearing on the collection of the reliable information. The present study is to acquire an intensive opinion about the employees' perception towards labour welfare and social security schemes as a stress

management technique for reducing workplace stress. For this purpose, a descriptive research method was followed. The study in this context has utilized the available material about various aspects of HRM, data collected through well-structured questionnaire from the workers of open cast mines of SCCL.

4.1 Sampling Design

The usual approach is to make generalization or draw inferences based on samples about the parameters of population from which the samples are taken. This sampling design is determine before any data is collected. The simple random sampling refers to that sampling in which each every unit of the population has an equal opportunity of being selected in the sample. To collect the data Convenience Sampling Technique has been used. The study had randomly selected 250 workers from opencast mines of SCCL. But the sample size has been restricted to 200 only because of inadequate and incomplete questionnaires given workers.

4.2 Limitations of the Study

- Due to constraint of time and resources, the study was conducted and collected data from only 200 workers.
- The accuracy of the analysis and conclusion drawn entirely depends upon the reliability of the information provided by the employees, which may change according to time and situations.
- Sincere efforts are made to cover maximum employees of opencast mines of SCCL, Kothagudem, but the study may not reflect the entire opinion of the employees.
- In the fast moving/ changing employee's behavior, many new and better things emerge in the near future, which cannot be safeguarded in the report.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Statistical Analysis Based On Various Levels Of Experience

In this part, the researcher tried to exaggerate the facts of employees' opinions towards question that whether the welfare measures and social security schemes act as a technique for reducing workplace stress. The data has been collected both from different levels of employees based on their experience level (in years) those who are working in open cast mines and offices. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) one-Way Classification has been applied to analyze the responses given by the respondents according to their age groups classified into four categories i.e. 25-35 yrs, 35-45 yrs, 45-55 yrs, 55-65 yrs.

TABLE – IV.A: EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS ON WELFARE MEASURES AND SOCIAL SECUTIY SCHEMES OF SCCL.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION TOWARDS WELFARE MEASURES, SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES		ANOVA ONE-WAY	
S.NO	**QUESTION**	**F-Value**	**H_0 acc/rej**
1	Are you satisfied with the welfare amenities provided by your organization?	1.6909	ACCEPTED
2	Are you satisfied with the overall health and safety facilities provided by the organization?	3.3940	ACCEPTED
3	Are you satisfied with the recreational activities arranged by the company to refresh employees'?	1.3736	ACCEPTED
4	Are you satisfied with the sanitary facilities provided by the organization?	1.8268	ACCEPTED
5	Are you satisfied with the drinking water and canteen facilities in your organization?	1.2575	ACCEPTED
6	Are you satisfied with the commodities available at a subsidy price in Singareni Collieries co-operative central stores limited?	2.3130	ACCEPTED
7	Are you satisfied with the Educational benefits/allowances provided by the organization?	2.2468	ACCEPTED
8	Are you satisfied with the facilities provided by the Employees' cooperative credit society in SCCL?	1.7386	ACCEPTED
9	Are you satisfied with the Women welfare programs implemented by SCCL?	3.6515	REJECTED
10	Are you satisfied with the measures implemented by the SCCL about health and safety using Media?	2.4480	ACCEPTED
11	Are you satisfied with Social Security schemes like Insurance, Provident Fund and Pension Schemes which are providing to the employees of SCCL?	1.3035	ACCEPTED
12	Are you satisfied with the opportunities provided by SCCL to the employees to make their active participation in taking important decisions about the growth of company?	1.8802	ACCEPTED

Source: Questionnaire ***Critical Value: 3.4903***

Interpretation

From the above analysis based on the various experience levels (in years), it is found that the entire F-values are less than the critical value i.e. 3.4903, we can accept the null hypothesis (H_0). But, in one case i.e., it is identified that the F-value (F-cal=3.6515) is greater than the critical value (F-crit=3.4903). By seeing this we can say that

there is a difference between the opinions on "employees satisfaction towards Women Welfare Programs implementing by SCCL" and it seems to be significant. In this case, the null hypothesis will be rejected and the alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

TABLE – IV.B: WORKPLACE STRESS AMONG EMPLOYEES

WORKPLACE STRESS AMONG EMPLOYEES		ANOVA ONE-WAY	
S.NO	**QUESTION**	**F-Value**	**H0 acc/rej**
1	In your organization you will be affected by stress in various working conditions. Do you agree?	2.6441	ACCEPTED
2	Do you agree that there is a stress management committee to train employees to cope up with stress?	3.3028	ACCEPTED
3	Do you agree that the workplace stress leads to health problems like Diabetes, Blood Pressure etc., diseases which affect employees' performance in workplace?	2.3177	ACCEPTED
4	The Singareni Collieries Company Limited provides health and safety measures in the workplace to reduce the employees' workplace stress. Do you agree?	2.8986	ACCEPTED
5	Do you agree that your organization facilitates recreational activities for employees in order to refresh their physical and mental conditions from the workplace stress?	1.9729	ACCEPTED
6	Do you agree that the welfare measures and social security schemes provided by your organization will reduce the levels of employee stress and make them to improve their effective performance?	2.2609	ACCEPTED
7	Do you agree that the stress reducing techniques implementing by SCCL will lighten the effective workers' participation in the organization to reach the organizational goals?	1.4845	ACCEPTED
8	Do you agree that the workplace stress will be easily handled and can be in control of employees' with the moral support from the organization by creating a good stress relief working environment.	2.5647	ACCEPTED

Source: Questionnaire ***Critical Value: 3.4903***

Interpretation

From the above analysis, since all the F-calculated value are less than the F-critical value (F= 3.4903), we can confirm that there is no significant difference between the responses regarding various areas of questionnaire. Hence, we can accept null hypothesis and reject alternative hypothesis. Finally, we can narrate that, the employees or workers of different experience levels are opining in a similar way regarding their opinions on employee welfares measures and social security schemes adopted and implementing by the company.

VI. FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

Based on the categorized experience of workers, the result obtained after applying the ANOVA test on the opinions collected, interprets that there is no significant difference between the responses given by the respondents towards welfare measures and social security schemes implementing by SCCL. But, it is observed that there is a significant difference between the responses given by respondents towards women welfare programs implementing by SCCL. It is also explored that, there is no significant difference between the responses given by the respondents towards their perception on workplace stress among employees and they believe that the employee welfare measures might play a crucial role in reducing employees' workplace stress.

Organizations cannot avoid the occupational stress, hence it can follow certain policies to deal with employee stress, because stress plays very important role in employee's job satisfaction and productivity. The Singareni Collieries Company Limited is extra-ordinarily supporting their employees and in reducing their workplace stress. The SCCL Company has to make some more welfare programs for women employees' which will make them feel secured in their job, reduce their inferiority in workplace and make them to participate actively towards their company's development. The management of SCCL is following extreme quality in providing welfare measures and social security schemes for their employees, but they can still try to provide best quality of welfare measures in addition to existing ones which will make employees feel that these welfare measures and social security schemes will always play an important part to reduce workplace stress.

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