

# A Study on Quality of Work Life Balance among Salem Steel Plant (SAIL) Employees

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## ABSTRACT

Quality of Work Life (QWL) has emerged as a critical factor influencing employee satisfaction, productivity, and organizational success. This article examines the QWL of employees in the steel industry, with a specific focus on Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL). The study highlights key determinants such as working conditions, work-life balance, compensation, and job security, and analyzes their impact on employee performance and well-being.

**Keyword:** Work-Life Balance, Employee Satisfaction, Job Stress, Organizational Support, Productivity, Steel Industry.

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive industrial environment, organizations increasingly recognize the importance of maintaining a high Quality of Work Life (QWL). It refers to the level of satisfaction, motivation, and well-being employees experience in their workplace.

QWL is closely linked to work-life balance, which ensures that employees can effectively manage professional responsibilities alongside personal commitments. Particularly in industries like steel manufacturing, where work is often physically demanding and time-intensive, maintaining this balance becomes crucial.

## IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

A high level of QWL contributes to:

- Increased employee productivity
- Greater job satisfaction
- Reduced stress and burnout
- Stronger organizational commitment

Studies indicate that poor work-life balance leads to conflicts between professional and personal roles, affecting both employee well-being and organizational efficiency. Hence, organizations must implement policies that promote flexibility, safety, and employee support.

## Overview of the Steel Industry in India

The steel industry is a backbone of industrial development in India. It supports infrastructure, transportation, manufacturing, and technological growth.

India is among the top global producers of steel, and the sector has experienced significant expansion due to:

- Government policies like the National Steel Policy
- Increasing domestic demand
- Technological advancements

## **QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL) – DEFINITION:**

Quality of Work Life refers to the degree to which employees are able to satisfy their personal needs while working in an organization. It focuses on improving the overall work environment, job satisfaction, employee well-being, and organizational support.

According to Richard E. Walton, “Quality of Work Life is a process by which an organization responds to employee needs by developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making decisions that design their lives at work.”

## **COMPANY PROFILE**

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is one of the largest steel-making companies in India and one of the Maharatnas of the country's Central Public Sector Enterprises. SAIL produces iron and steel at five integrated plants and three special steel plants, located principally in the eastern and central regions of India and situated close to domestic sources of raw materials. SAIL manufactures and sells a broad range of steel products

### **Ownership and Management**

The Government of India owns about 65% of SAIL's equity and retains voting control of the Company. However, SAIL, by virtue of its 'Maharatna' status, enjoys significant operational and financial autonomy

Magnesite was discovered at Salem by an English man, Henry Turner in the year 1890 making the beginning of the Basic Refractory Industry in India. Open cast mining of Magnesite began and the first woodfired kiln for calcining Magnesite was put into operation and the calcined Magnesia was exported to the U.K.

Subsequently, the Company became a unit of the Martin Burn House company namely Burn & Company Limited who established facilities for Dead Burning Magnesite and to manufacture basic refractory bricks to cater to the nascent steel industry in India and assay material for export. In 1973 parliament enacted the Burn & Company Limited and Indian Standard Wagon Company Limited taking over of Management Act, 1973 whereby the management of the undertakings of said two companies were taken over by Central Government with effect from 1973.

The Company registered further growth after the Government of India took over the plant in 1976 and transferred & vested both the said undertakings to Burn Standard Company Limited (BSCL). BSCL as a subsidiary of Bharat Bhari Udyog Nigam Limited under the administrative control of the Ministry of Heavy Industries and put through a programme of Modernisation and Expansion in order to meet the growing demand of high quality Basic Refractory of the modern steel plants, copper, cement and glass industries, etc.

The Salem unit of Burn Standard Company Limited became a wholly owned subsidiary of SAIL with effect from December 16th, 2011. The unit has now been renamed as SAIL Refractory Company Limited (SRCL). SRCL located in Salem, Tamil Nadu, has an installed annual capacity of 18000MT for production of calcined magnetite, 14400MT for Basic bricks, 14400MT for Magnesia Carbon bricks, 36000MT for bulk & monolithic and 24000MT for dunite. Surrounded by greenery, the SRCL Township boasts of community facilities for its residents.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Quality of work life in an organization is essential for the smooth running and success of its employees. The work-life balance must be maintained effectively to ensure that all employees are running at their peak potential and free from stress and strain. The quality of work life can affect such things as employee's timings, work output, available leaves, etc. Quality of work life helps the employees to feel secure and like they are being thought of and cared for by the organization in which they work. An organization's Hr department assumes responsibility for the effective running of the quality of work life for their employees

### **Key Features:**

- Government-owned enterprise with operational autonomy
- Diverse product portfolio
- Strong focus on employee welfare and corporate social responsibility

SAIL has consistently emphasized employee development, workplace safety, and community welfare, making it an ideal case for studying QWL.

### Research Objectives

The study aims to:

- Analyze the quality of work life among employees
- Identify factors influencing work-life balance
- Examine the relationship between job conditions and personal life
- Evaluate the impact of workplace conditions on employee satisfaction

### Methodology

- **Sample Size:** 100 employees
- **Data Collection:** Primary (interviews, questionnaires) and secondary sources
- **Tools Used:**
  - Percentage analysis
  - Chi-square test
  - Correlation analysis

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Demographic Insights

- Majority of employees are male (65%)
- Most employees fall within the 36–40 age group
- A large portion holds undergraduate qualifications

#### Work Conditions

- 48% of employees are permanent staff
- Majority work 9–10 hours per day
- Regular shifts are most common

#### Income & Experience

- Most employees earn between ₹16,000–₹20,000
- Majority have 3–5 years of experience

#### Work-Life Balance

- Many employees experience occasional work-life interference
- Long working hours and workload are key stress factors

#### Analytical Design

- Simple Percentage Method
- Chi square analysis
- Correlation

#### Simple Percentage Analysis

A percentage analysis is used to interpret data by the researcher for the analysis and interpretation through the use of percentage. The data are reduced in the standard from which base equal to 100 which fact facility relative comparison.

### TOOLS TO USE

$$\text{Simple percentage} = \frac{\text{No. of respondents}}{\text{Total No. of respondents}} \times 100$$

### 3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table No 1: Working Hours Per Day**

Working hours	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than 9 hours	42	35%
9 to 10 hours	51	42%
10 to 12 hours	14	12%
Above 12 hours	13	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

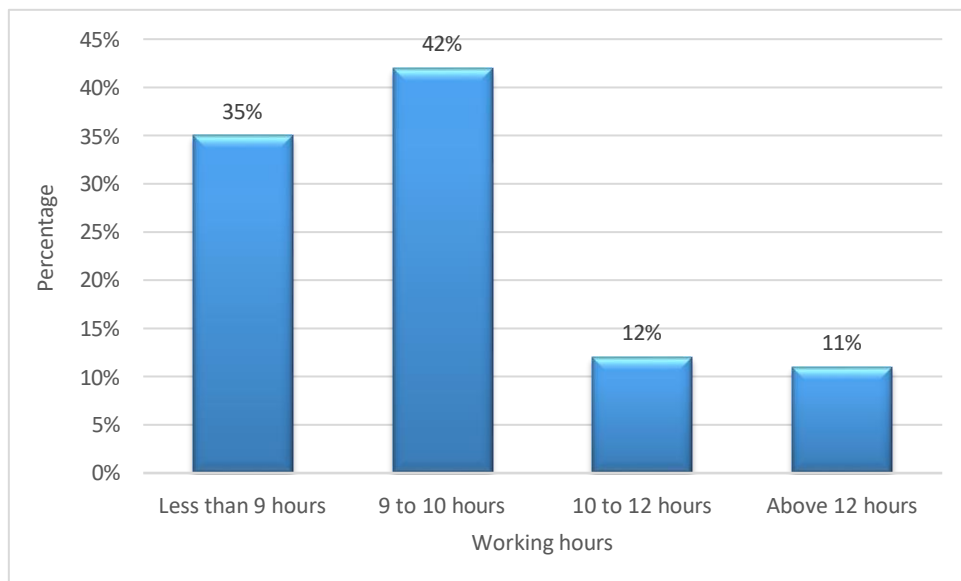
Source: Primary data

#### INTERPRETATION:

From the above table it is inferred that, 35% of respondents are working less than 9 hours per day, 42% of the respondents are working 9-10 hours per day, 12% of the respondents are working 10-12 hours per day and 11% of the respondents are working above 12 hours per day.

Majority 42% of the respondents are working 9-10 hours per day.

**CHART NO 1: WORKING HOURS PER DAY**



#### DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that while employees have stable employment and moderate income levels, challenges remain in maintaining work-life balance. Factors such as extended working hours, workload pressure, and limited flexibility impact overall satisfaction.

However, organizational support, job security, and structured work environments contribute positively to QWL.

## **Recommendations**

To improve Quality of Work Life, organizations should:

- Introduce flexible working hours
- Enhance employee wellness programs
- Provide better career growth opportunities
- Strengthen communication between management and employees
- Promote a supportive and inclusive work culture

## **CONCLUSION**

Quality of Work Life plays a vital role in shaping employee satisfaction and organizational success. In the steel industry, where work demands are high, maintaining a balance between professional and personal life is essential.

The study concludes that improving QWL not only benefits employees but also enhances productivity, reduces turnover, and strengthens long-term organizational growth.

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