

Quality of Work Life of Employees in an Organization

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Abstract

Quality of Work Life deals with various aspects of work environment, which facilitates the human resource development efficiently. Thus, Quality of Work Life helps in the development of human resources. In fact, QWL includes and motivates the employees to born further for present and future roles. QWL as a process by which an organization responds to employee needs for developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work. This study is to find out the socio economic background of the employees and their Contribution to QWL. Improved QWL naturally helps to improve the family life of the employees and world also improves the performance of the Industry/ enterprises. This article reviews the meaning of QWL, various definition of QWL and determinant of QWL based on the reviews. Improving the Quality of Work Life, barriers and Issues of QWL described. However, there is positive and significant relationship between QWL and employees' job satisfaction. QWL practice involves acquiring, training developing, motivating and appraising for the best performance of the employees as per Organizational objectives. QWL provides for the balanced relationship among work, non-work and

family aspects of life. We therefore, have undertaken this study influence of workers QWL.

Keywords: Quality of life, Job performance, Job satisfaction

Introduction

Human Resource Development techniques include performance analysis and development, training and development, career planning and development, organizational change and development and quality circles. Quality of Work Life deals with various aspects of work environment, which facilitates the human resource development efficiently. Thus, Quality of Work Life helps in the development of human resources. In fact, QWL includes and motivates the employees to born further for present and future roles.

Employees at the grass root level experience a sense of frustration because of the low level wages, poor working conditions, unfavorable terms of employment, inhuman treatment by their superiors and the like, whereas managerial personnel feel frustrated because of alienation over the conditions of employment, interpersonal conflicts, role conflicts, job pressures, lack of freedom in work absence of challenging work.

The improvement of quality of work life has captured the imagination of managers and

researchers alike. A number of researchers have tried to identify the kinds of factors that determine and their effort has resulted in different perspectives (Kahn, 1981; Kalra & Ghosh, 1984).

Quality of work life refers to the level of happiness or dissatisfaction with one's career. Those who enjoy their careers are said to have a high quality of work life, while those who are unhappy or whose needs are otherwise unfilled are said to have a low quality of work life. Quality of work life is viewed as an alternative to the control approach of managing people. The quality of work life approach considers people as an 'asset' to the organization rather than as 'costs'. It believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions. This approach motivates people by satisfying not only their economic needs but also their social and psychological ones. To satisfy the new generation workforce, organizations need to concentrate on job designs and organization of work. Further, today's workforce is realizing the importance of relationships and is trying to strike a balance between career and personal lives.

Definition

“Quality of Work-Life refers to programmes designed to create a work-place that enhance employee well being” [Thomas S. bateman and Scott A Snell 2003]

“Quality of Work-Life is the degree to which members of an organization are able to satisfying important personnel needs through their experience in the organization” [J. Richard and J. Loy]

“The recent definition by serey (2006) on Quality of Work-Life is quite conclusive and best meet the contemporary work environment. The definition is related to meaning full and satisfying work which emphasizes 4c's i.e. concern, consciousness, capacity and commitment. It includes

- (i) An opportunity to exercise one's talent and capacities to face challenges and situation that requires independent initiatives and self direction.
- (ii) An Act thought to be worthwhile by the individual involved.
- (iii) An act in which one understands the role of individuals in the achievements of some overall goals.
- (iv) A sense of taking pride in what one is doing and in doing it well.

According to Sink (1985), “Quality of Work-Life is the way participants in a system respond to socio technical aspect of that system. This is an important measure or aspect of an organization's ability to perform.

R.E Walton (1973) defined “Quality of Work-Life as a process by which an organization responds to the employee needs developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work “.

Wheelen and Hunger (2000), states that Quality of Work-Life emphasizes improving the human dimension of work. Human resources try to improve Quality of Work-

Life by introducing participative problems solving, restructuring work. The various definitions of the QWL are as:

First definition	1969-1972	Quality of Work Life = Variable
Second definition	1969-1975	Quality of Work Life = Approach
Third definition	1972- 1975	Quality of Work Life = Methods
Fourth definition	1975-1980	Quality of Work Life = Movements
Fifth definition	1979-1982	Quality of Work Life = Everything
Sixth definition		Quality of Work Life = Everything

The term “Quality of Work Life” has different connotation to different persons. And also Robbins (1989) defines QWL as “a process by which an Organization responds to employee needs by developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work.”

After reviewing various definitions over a period of time, it can be concluded that Quality of Work-Life is a process by which all members of the organization, through appropriate channel of communication, have some say about the design of their jobs in particulars and work environment in general.

Origin of the concept

1. After Industrial Revolution, the importance of human factor reduced because of the vast mechanization. Various problems like job dissatisfaction, boredom, absenteeism, lack of commitment etc came up.
2. Most management theories give emphasis on production, manipulating the skills of employees.

3. Tavy stock Institute of Human Relations me research on “workers problems in Industrial world” and they produced a study approach called Socio-technical system in which they gave great importance to “job design” to satisfy human needs adequately and the need for Q.W.L. in an organization was emphasized

Review of Literature

Hackman and Oldhams (1980) they emphasized that the personal needs are satisfied when rewards from organization, such as compensation, promotion, recognition and development meet their expectations. They mentioned constructs of quality of work-life in relation to the interaction between work environment and personal needs. The work environment that is able to fulfill employee’s personal needs is considered to provide a positive interaction effect which will lead to an excellent quality of work-life.

Mirvis P.H and Lawler (1984) Quality of work-life associate with satisfaction with wages, hours, working conditions, describing the basic element of a good Quality of work-life as ; safe work environment, equitable wages, equal employment opportunities and opportunities for advancement.

Baba V.B and Jamal (1991) the typical indicators of Quality of work-life which includes job satisfaction, job involvement, work role ambiguity, work role conflict, work role overload, job stress, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. They also explored noutinisation of job content, suggesting that this facet should be

investigated as part of the concept of Quality of work-life.

Cunningham, J.B and T. Eberle (1990) highlight the elements that are relevant to an individual's Quality of work-life. These include the task, the physical work environment, social environment within the organization, administrative system and relationship between life on and off the job.

C.H and W.O Einstein (1990) describes that reflects a concern for people's experience at work, their relationship with other people, their work setting and their effectiveness on the job.

Danna & Griffin (1999) in this research suggested that quality of work life is not a unitary concept but it has been seen as incorporating a hierarchy of perspectives that not only include work-based factors such as job-satisfaction with pay and relationship with work colleagues but also factors that broadly reflect life satisfaction and general feelings of employees.

Ellis and pompli (2002) draw attention towards the factors that are responsible for low quality of work-life. These are poor working environments, resident aggression, workload, inability to deliver quality of care preferred. Balance of Work and family, shift work, lack of involvement in decision making, role conflict, lack of opportunity to learn new skill. They requested that these factors should be kept in mind in order to improve quality of work-life.

Raduan Che rose (2006) overcome dissatisfaction and make the work interesting believes that quality of work-life programs

will benefit both faculty and management, by mutually solving work-related problems, building cooperation, improving work environments, restricting tasks carefully and payoffs. The result indicate that three exogenous variables are significant: career satisfaction career achievement and career balance in quality of work-life.

Daljeet Kaur (2010) administered questionnaire and conducted interview to carry out the study to know the quality of work-life in the branches of ICICI Bank Ltd in Chandigarh. The purpose is to find the satisfaction level of employees. The study found that higher level executives are more satisfied with their job as they feel they are safe and secure in Bank.

Syed Mehdi Hosseini (2010) Quality of work-life or quality of work system as one of the most interesting methods creating motivation and is a major way to have job enrichment which has its roots in staff and manager's attitude to motivation category that is more attention to affair pay, growth opportunities and continuing promotion improves staff's performance which in turn increases quality of work-life of employees. They argue that career satisfaction, career achievement and career Balance are significant variables to achieve good quality of work-life.

TS. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Dr. Swamy D.R (2012) in their extensive literature review on Quality of work-life and leadership styles found that leadership styles can affect Quality of work-life. However this should be studied with more dimensions of Quality of work-life with different leadership styles.

Dr. Meenakshi Gupta & Ms. Parul Sharma (2012) Conduct research on Quality of work-life for the employees of telecom sector. They conducted survey of BSNL employee in Jammu region and determined whether and how Quality of work-life affects the satisfaction level of employees. The findings of their research suggest the Quality of work-life in BSNL can be enhanced by these factors such as “adequate and fair compensation, social integration in the work force”, eminence of work life and social relevance of work”.

Bearfield (2003) to examine the Quality of work-life used the 16 questions and distinguished between causes of dissatisfaction in professionals, intermediate clerical, sales and service workers, indicating that different concerns might have to be addressed for different groups. The distinction made between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in v reflects the influence of job satisfaction theories.

Sirgy M.J and Efraty (2001) in a book, social indicator Research (85), Page No. (357-384), the author gives an excellent account of changing work environment. They said that Quality of work-life is a wide term covering an immense variety of factors such as need satisfaction based on job requirement, need satisfaction based on supervisory behavior and work environment. They defined Quality of work-life as satisfaction of these key needs through resources activities and out come stemming from participation in the workplace. Maslow’s need were seen as relevant in underpinning this model covering health and safety, economic and family, social, esteem,

Actualization needs, although the relevance of non- work aspect is play down as attention is focused on Quality of work-life rather than the broader concept of Quality of life. These attempts at defining Quality of work-life have included theoretical approaches, list of identified factors, and correlation analysis with opinion varying as to whether such definitions and explanations can be both global or need to be specific to each work settings.

Objectives of Study

1. To study the various influencing factors of the QWL.
2. To study the socio economic background of the employees and their Contribution to QWL.
3. To suggest suitable measures for improving Quality of Work Life.

Quality Work Life in India

The quality of work Life (QWL) Apart from ensuring fair pay, the fair treatment of employees and safe working conditions, many companies respond to specific employee needs. In India, some of the companies that emphasize the quality of work life are Hewlett-Packard, Smith Kline Beecham, American Express, Colgate Palmolive, Gillette, Dr.Reddy’s Laboratories, Reliance and Maruti Udyog Limited. HP allows flexible working arrangements for its employees and follows certain innovative practices such as allowing employees to avail leave for special occasions (marriage, exam preparation, adoption of a child, bereavement in the family, and paternity). QWL in India has emerged as a movement. Following are the

factors that led to the QWL movement in our country:

1. Changing profile of the Indian worker from and illiterate, rural, low caste individual to educated, urban and essentially belonging to upper strata of caste structure has made him/her more concern for own hopes and aspirations.
2. That worker is not just like other factors of production such as, machinery, land, and capital but a human being with feelings and emotions, has made organizations behave with workers accordingly. The establishment of a separate Ministry of Human Resource Development by the Government of India is a testimony to such realization.
3. In India, around 10 per cent of workers in organized sector are unionized. The past record relation to labor unions lends enough evidence that the unionized work force has been much vocal for demands of one type or other.
4. That human behavior is highly unpredictable and complex underlines the need for the study of organizational behavior. QWL is one of the newer concepts experimenting how to make effective utilization of human resources.

QWL in India seems in practice in a variety of operational systems like workers participation, job enrichment, quality circles, etc. Here, an attempt has been made to give an overview of these in terms of their broad coverage and experiences of Indian organization with them.

Measuring Quality of Work Life

The Richard Walton, an American Professor, played a major role in developing the concept of Quality of Work Life. The eight factors he proposed to measure Quality of Work Life has made the task easy worldwide.

1. Adequate and Fair compensation
2. Safe and healthy working conditions
3. Opportunity to develop human capacities
4. Opportunity for career growth
5. Social integration in the workforce
6. Constitutionalism
7. Work and Quality of Life
8. Social relevance

As per the model given by Walton (1996), following factors are the basic determinants and parameters of QWL (Table 1 below).

Table 1: Conceptual categories in Quality Work Life-QWL

Criteria	Indicators of QWL	
1. Fair and appropriate compensation	- Internal and external fairness - Justice in the compensation	- Allotment of productivity profits - Proportionality between wages
2. Work conditions	- Reasonable hours of working - Safe and healthful physical environment	- Absence of unhealthy
3. Use and development of capacities	- Autonomy - Relative self-control	- Multiple qualities - Information on the total process
4. Chance of growth and security	- Possibility of career - Personal growth	- Perspective of wage advance - Job Security
5. Social integration in the organization	- Absence of prejudice - Equality - Mobility	- Relationship - Communitarian sense
6. Constitutionalism	- Rights of protection to the worker - Personal privacy - Labor laws	- Freedom of expression - Impartial treatment
7. Work and the total space of life	- Balanced paper in the work - Stability of schedules	- Few geographic changes - Time for leisure of the family
8. Social relevance of the work in the life	- Image of the company - Social responsibility of the company	- Responsibility for the products - Job practices

Source: Walton apud Frenandes (1996)

The measures to improve QWL are as follows:

A) QWL THROUGH EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT (EI): One of the most common methods used to create QWL is employee involvement. Employee involvement (EI) consists of a variety of systematic methods that empower employees to participate in the decisions that affect them and their relationship with the organization. Through (EI), employees feel a sense of responsibility, even ownership of decisions

in which they participate. To be successful, however, EI must be more than just a systematic approach; it must become part of the organization's culture by being part of management's philosophy. Some companies have had this philosophy ingrained in their corporate structure for decades; Hewlett-Packard, IBM, General Motors, Ford, etc.

B) QUALITY CIRCLES: Quality circles are small groups of employees who meet regularly with their common leader to identify and solve work-related problems. They are a highly specific form of team building, which are common in Japan and gained popularity in North America in the

late 1970s and early 1980s. By the 1980s most medium- and large-sized Japanese firms had quality control circles for hourly employees. This effort began as a quality improvement program but has since become a routine procedure for many Japanese managers and cornerstone of QWL efforts in many Japanese firms. Several characteristics make this approach unique. First, membership in the circle involuntary for both the leader (usually the supervisor) and the members (usually hourly workers). Secondly, the creation of quality circles is usually preceded by in-house training. For supervisors these sessions typically last for two or three days. Most of the time is devoted to discussions of small-group dynamics, leadership skills, and indoctrination in the QWL and quality circle philosophies. About a day is spent on the different approaches to problem-solving techniques. The workers also receive an explanation of the supervisor's role as the group's discussion leader and information on the quality circle concept. Thirdly, as is pointed out in the training, the group is permitted to select the problems it wants to tackle. Management may suggest problems of concern, but the group is empowered to decide which ones to select. Ideally, the selection process is not by democratic vote but is arrived at by consensus, whereby everyone agrees on the problem to be tackled. (If management has been pressing problems that need to be solved, these problems can be handled in the same way that they were resolved before the introduction of quality circles). When employees are allowed to select the problems they want to work on, they are likely to be more motivated to find solutions. And they are also more likely to be motivated to stay on as members of the circle and solve additional problems in the future.

C) SOCIO-TECHNICAL SYSTEMS: Another intervention to improve QWL is the use of

Socio-technical systems. Socio-technical systems are interventions in the work situation that

Restructure the work, the work groups, and the relationship between workers and the technologies

They use to do their jobs. More than just enlarging or enriching a job, these approaches may result in more radical changes in the work environment.

D) AUTONOMOUS WORK GROUP: A more common, still rare, approach to employee involvement is the use of autonomous work groups. These are teams of workers, without a formal company-appointed leader, who decide among themselves most decisions traditionally handled by supervisors. The key feature of these groups is a high degree of self-determination by employees in the management of their day-to-day work. Typically this includes collective control over the pace of work, distribution of tasks, organization of breaks, and collective participation in the recruitment and training of new members. Direct supervision is often necessary. QWL is more likely to improve as workers demand jobs with more behavioral elements. These demands will probably emerge from an increasingly diverse and educated work force that expects more challenges and more autonomy in its jobs ± such as worker participation indecisions traditionally reserved for management.

Barriers to QWL

1. Resistance to change both by management and employees.
2. There is a general perception that Q.W.L. implementation will cost much to the organization.
3. Continuous increase in QWL may result in less productivity, i.e., after a certain level the productivity will not

increase in proportion to the increase in QWL.

4. Widespread unhappiness due to comparison with colleagues.
5. Regional prejudice
6. Skepticism about the performance appraisal system and promotion criteria.

How to improve QWL?

In our country, recently many changes have introduced in the Government policies like privatization. The Government organizations are mismanaged incurring heavy loss on public money either due to corruption by bureaucrats' intervention of politicians and Trade Union leaders and their affiliated political parties with the motives of winning elections. The scope for transfer of technology has increased and inflow of investments from non-resident Indians allowed. The privatization created many avenues for many unemployed people by reducing severity of the problem. Hence, it is absolutely necessary to improvement in the Quality of Work Life of our country.

Following are some suggestions that can help, to a large extent; improve Quality of working life in India:

1. Employers should: There are many steps that should be taken by the employers to improve the work life in the organizations:
 - Provide physical amenities at the work place, health and safety and welfare provision.
 - Involve workers in decision-making on all matters.
 - Initiate suitable forms of work design
 - Formalize QWL experience for future use.
 - Develop an appreciation of changing environment.

2. Professional organizations should: The steps should be taken are as :

- Organize workshops and seminars to bring about greater awareness of QWL.
- Initiate specific research projects in this field.
- Provide professional assistance to organizations to help generate internal competence.
- Develop state-of-art profiles on QWL.

3. Unions and workers should: The steps should be taken by the trade and workers unions are as follows:

- Educate and make workers aware of QWL.
- Identify areas of collaboration with management.
- Encourage workers to participate in QWL activities.

4. Government should: The steps that should be taken by the Indian government to improve the quality work life in the different organizations are as follows:

- Legislate standards and norms in newer areas.
- Execute in policy to provide greater autonomy experiment with QWL.
- Execute actions to ensure implementation of legislated facilities.
- Encourage and adopt appropriate technology.
- Find projects on QWL

Recommendations

The recommendations or the suggestions to improve the Quality Work Life of the

employees in the organizations are as follows and it must be followed to improve work life.

- Safety measures could be improved in the organization so that worker safety could be ensured and accidents could be minimized.
- Workers may be encouraged to offer suggestions for making improvements in the organization. This makes them feel their importance in the company.
- Sufficient training programs can be arranged so that the worker productivity could be improved.
- Appropriate pay strategies could be evolved to give fair and adequate compensation to the employees. Performance based increments would improve the performance of the workers.
- Medical expenses of the workers could be reimbursed.
- Providing adequate casual leave or permission may be considered.
- Information flow within the organization could be improved.

Conclusion

Quality of Work Life plays a vital role in Human Resource Management. QWL creative awareness of workers in successful Organization. QWL in India can be improved through a variety of instrumentalities like education and training, employee

communication, union participation, research projects, and appreciation of changing environment. A good human resources practice would encourage all employees to be more productive while enjoying work. Therefore, QWL is becoming an important human resources issue in all organizations. The Quality of Work Life intends to develop enhance and utilize human resource effectively, to improve Quality of products, services, productivity and reduce cost of production per unit of output and to satisfy the workers psychological needs for self-esteem, participation, recognition etc., Improved Quality of Work Life leads to improved performance. Performance means not only physical output but also the behavior of the worker in helping his colleagues in solving job related problems, team spirit and accepting temporary unfavorable work conditions without complaints. An assured good Quality of Work Life will not only attract young and new talent but also retain the existing experience talent.

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