



Quality of Work Life with Special Reference to Academic Sector

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Abstract

The term Quality of Work Life was first appeared in 1970's. Since then researchers has given various definitions and components to it. "Quality of work life" includes all aspect of employee's life, specially his work and work environment. Every Organization requires high QWL to attract, retain and improve human resource qualitatively. The article is an attempt to give the origin, Meaning and factors affecting QWL. Finally it analyses QWL in the academic sector of India.

Keywords: Quality of work life.

Introduction

Origin of Quality of work life is dated back in industrial revolution. When higher productivity is emphasized to such an extent that workers were considered as machines or we can say human factor is totally misplaced. Soon the negative results of this practice became prevalent in the form of absenteeism, low turn over, poor morale and occasional sabotage, boredom, fatigue, accidents resulting from inattention, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc. Therefore In early 20th century Legislation was enacted to avoid job-injuries and dangerous working conditions. Job security was stressed in the unionization movement (1930-1940), mainly because of the production process and economic gains for the workers. During 1950s and 1960s, various theories were developed by psychologists suggesting a "positive relationship between morale and productivity", and the possibility that improvement in human relations would lead to enhancement of both.

The term "Quality of Work Life" has appeared in 1970's in the Research Journals and press in USA. Louis Davis coined the term quality of work life. In 1972, the first International QWL conference was held in Toronto and in the same year, the international council for quality of work life was established.

Meaning of QWL

Quality of Work Life refers to "the favorableness or unfavorableness of a job environment for people"¹.

QWL means the sum total of values, both material and non-material, attained by a worker throughout his career life. QWL includes aspects of work-related life such as wages and hours, work environment, benefits and services, career prospects and human relations, which is possibly relevant to worker satisfaction and motivation².

One way equates QWL with a set of objective organizational conditions and practices (e.g., promotion from within policies,

democratic supervision, employee involvement, safe working conditions). The other way equates QWL with employees' perceptions that they are safe and relatively well satisfied, they have reasonable work-life balance, and they are able to grow and develop as human beings. This way relates QWL to the degree to which the full range of human needs is met³.

QWL encompasses every aspect of a person's work which includes working condition, job security, pay and allowances, recognition, appreciation, development, interpersonal relation, etc. and its effect on his life outside work. Therefore, it can be concluded that QWL is concerned with improving life not only at work but also life outside work.

Why Quality of Work Life?

An institution is made of people who possess skills, ability, aptitudes that create competitive advantage for it. Various functions of an institute is planned, executed and controlled by human resource. So it is essential for the institution to do proper management of human resource in order to achieve its objectives efficiently and effectively. The management of human resource plays a key role in opening up new opportunities for promoting the growth of both individual and institutional. Through 'Quality of work life' the institute works in the same direction.

Now-a-days, jobs are so demanding that it imbalance the family and work life due to job pressure and conflicting interests. So it is essential for the institution to develop quality relation between its employees and working environment.

In order to attract and retain employees, an organization has to develop a high quality of work life. Organizations by adopting QWL programmes ensure to create excellent work condition and job for its employees. Hence, QWL seeks to create such a work environment where the employees work co-operatively and make positive contribution in achieving organizational objectives.

Table-1
QWL factors from previous research studies

Study	Factors Identified Work Environment	Employee
Kershaw ⁴	Work load, communication, support	Recognition
Lam ⁵	Job satisfaction	Social relevance of work
George Mason University's QWL Task force ⁶	Work Load	Promotion and recognition
Mentz ⁷	Job satisfaction	Perception
Rauduan che Rose et.al ⁸	Career achievement	Career Satisfaction
Rishu Roy ⁹	Job Performance	Motivation and Rewards
Nasal Saraji G, Dargahi .H et.a ¹⁰	Health and Safety	Employee Satisfaction
Julia Connell, Zeenobiyah Hannif, ¹¹	Working conditions	Employee focus
Guna seelan Rethinam, Maimunah Ismail ¹²	Dynamic changes	Work Life
Rochita Ganguly ¹³	Job satisfaction	perception
Shariq, Vandana and Anant ¹⁴	Job satisfaction	Organizational prestige and financial factors

The above table provides various factors that affect QWL of university's employees.

Education empowers human beings by developing their skills, abilities, rationale that provides competitive edge to them. It gives strength to the person. They get knowledge through education, evaluate the phenomenon and generate as well as share the ideas in the society.

Teacher's role is pivotal in providing education, creating knowledge, facilitate technological advancement and enriching the national culture. In order to attain these goals the teacher should not only be a committed and devoted but also competent and creative and for that matter they should be provided a better quality of wok life.

Factors Affecting Quality of Work Life

Studies are conducted on the QWL of teachers in academic sector. Researchers aimed at finding the factors affecting QWL of teachers. In this regard the table given below shows the results of previous researches.

QWL and Academic Sector in India

UGC is a statutory body of Indian government which serves as a link between union, state and the institution of higher learning. It takes actions for promotion and co-ordination of university education and for the maintenance of standards in teaching, examination and research.

Indian higher education statics ,as provided by UGC, shows that there are 44 central universities, 306 state universities, 129 deemed universities, 154 private universities, 5 institutions established and functioning under the State Act, and 67 Institutes of National Importance. Apart from this we have nearly 35,539 affiliated colleges as government degree and private degree colleges functioning under these universities and institutions.

QWL has direct bearing with productivity, as improved QWL will ultimately lead to higher productivity and job satisfaction¹⁵.

If the QWL of teachers is below average then its resultant impact will be on teaching and research work and these are the basis for the progress of any society. QWL and Quality of life has a significant association in teaching environment. Research carried out in academic sector shows that QWL of college teachers is in low level¹⁶.

QWL of academicians, particularly in the Private Technical Institute, is not in a better condition. Factors such as salary and wages biasness between same qualified employees, advancement opportunity for growth is low, salary and job security issues are badly affecting the relationship with administration and academicians, dissatisfaction regarding leave flexibility etc. are responsible for low QWL of respondents¹⁷.

A study on the university employees revealed that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and QWL dimensions. QWL significantly contributes towards increasing the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction depending upon the employee's negative or positive perception of QWL dimensions¹³.

Faculty members indicated positive job satisfaction and would continue to stay in the same job only if they have opportunity for growth and development along with organizational prestige, financial factors. In this direction the major cause of disgruntlement was found to be advancement opportunity, organizational prestige and financial factors. So the college administration must give due wait age to these factors as respondents have held these factors responsible for retaining them in their present jobs¹⁴.

The four major determinants of QWL, i.e. decision-making authority, growth and development, recognition and appreciation, and promotional avenues were missing and the teachers would like an environment that included these determinants¹⁸.

QWL programmes provide opportunity for growth and development by facilitating training to the employees which consequently increases job satisfaction. QWL is concerned with creating work environment which is conducive and congenial. There is a significant relation between job satisfaction, personal growth, and team effectiveness even in the academic sector¹⁹. A high QWL is required for the growth of both the employees and the institutions.

QWL: Major issues in Academic sector

QWL of teachers at academic sector is below satisfaction and required attention and implementation of effective measures to improve it. The major issues regarding QWL in academic sector are: i. Avenues for growth and development not satisfactory. ii. Promotional aspects are not satisfactory. iii. Teacher's participation in decision making is below satisfaction. iv. Job security is there but Job satisfaction is missing. v. Job involvement is lacking.

Solutions: i. The level and number of designation regarding faculty should be increased and it should be same at college and university level. ii. There must be transparency and decisive role of teachers in decision making bodies of institution since teachers are not only the part parcel the institution, but also the important instrument in the implementation of different policies, rules and regulations. iii. Autonomy of the institution should be maintained with respect to its various dimensions such as recruitment, selection, framing of general policies, rules regulation etc. iv. Regular orientation/refresher courses, workshops, seminar, symposium etc. should be organized for teachers up gradation on current trends, methods, strategies, pedagogy of education. v. "Personality assessment test" for selection of new faculty should be rigorously conducted. vi. The administration should organize health related programmes for teachers in order to provide them better QWL.

Conclusion

Researches divulged that QWL in Indian academic sector is of low level. A planned change in the working environment is required to improve QWL in academic sector. Training, redesign of work, workshops for knowledge enhancement and personal growth, valuable participation in decision making, modification in promotion scheme etc. are some of the ways through which we can improve QWL. Improved QWL is beneficial for both the employee and institute so it's the mutual responsibility of the two.

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