



Studying the Relationship between Quality of work life and Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between the qualities of work life with organizational commitment amongst the customs employees of Iran/Guilan province. The research statistical population covered all Guilan province custom office employees and as the Morgan table the sample population consisted of 196 persons. The results proved that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between the quality of work life and its dimensions including safe and healthy environment, development of human capabilities, constitutionalism, social integration and the total life space with the organizational commitment. The results of model fit indices have an acceptable range, which allows the conclusion that the fit of the model is acceptable.

Keywords: Quality of work life, organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment.

Introduction

The role of efficient management and human resources in achieving organizational goals is an undeniable. Competent managers attempt to increase organizational commitment, because it is considered necessary for the development of their organization¹. Human resources as a driving and synergetic force in an organization, is multifaceted and complex. One of the enabling and critical capabilities of an organization is to provide a cohesive environment for talents to improve that in many sources it is known as quality of work life². Quality of work life in any given organization amplifies the mental peace and development motives among the employees³. Normala⁴ quoting Cascio defines quality of work life as employees' comprehension of physical and mental wellbeing in their workplace⁴. Walton⁵ defines quality of work life through 8 parameters including: Adequate and fair compensation, Safe and healthy environment, Growth and security, Development of human capabilities, The total life space, Social integration, Constitutionalism and Social relevance⁶. QWL is a comprehensive program that is influencing organizational commitment in the present technical, technological, economic, cultural and social complexity era⁷. Mayer⁸ describes commitment as one's willingness to consume energy and be loyal to social system.

Organizational commitment strengthens employees' positive attitude toward their organization. On the other hand the employees committed attitude has a considerable impact on improvement of organizational behavior². Based on Allen and Meyer⁹ and views there are three "mind sets" which can characterize an employee's commitment to the organization. These Three dimensions are Affective Commitment,

Continuance (rational) Commitment and Normative (loyalty) Commitment. Affective commitment is defined as the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization and believing in organization's goals and values. Continuance or rational commitment is based on calling to account the expenses of staying in the organization or quitting it. In this process the risk (impossibility) of adopting another occupation and the possible damages resulted from quitting the present job are evaluated. If a tremendous damage is conceived by quitting, then his commitment to remain the organization will be strengthened. Finally, normative (loyalty) commitment is defined as a sense of obligation and duty toward organization's goals and expectations¹⁰.

Many researchers including Kanter and Erbink have studied the relationship between organizational commitment and the quality of work life. The findings have proved a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and the quality of work life³. In this regard parish and colleagues believe that employees' attitudes toward their organization depend on the services that the due organization grants them. Abdulaziz and Nazarmahd⁷ quoted that quality of work life would influence the individuals' involvement in the indicated duties because it emphasizes on the organizational commitment. Riley et al.¹¹ believes that all dimensions of quality of work life are related to job satisfaction and improvement of quality of work life will increase job satisfaction. Hua¹² also believes that quality of work life has positive impact on job satisfaction as well as on decreasing job's strain which finally increases organizational commitment. Lewis et al.¹³ in conclusion of the quality of work life results, pointed out the followings as the main influential elements: fairness (justice), clear supervision system,

organizational decisions, professionalism, education, contradiction and limited role, occupational feedback, promotion opportunity, fair payment, commitment and loyalty to the organization, positive relationship, free hand, being recognized, capability of predicting work activities.

Theoretical Foundations of the Research

Quality of work life: Quality of work life is an employee's reaction to his/her job, especially its personal Consequences in satisfying the needs and mental health¹⁴. Feldman¹⁵ generalizes quality of work life in the quality of relationship between the staffs and with the total working environment. He reminds that in the programs and the activities that we conduct to enhance the quality of work life, along with technical and economic aspects which are more concern to the organizations, human affairs also should be considered¹⁴. Quality of work life also emphasizes on organization's ability in fulfilling individuals' important needs through experiences.

Comprehensive of human resources management system, desirable working conditions, stimulating payment system and challenging and protective work are the most important goals of quality of work life developing systems¹⁶. The members of the organization take part in decision making which affects their duties and working environment through the suitable facilitating communication channels prepared by quality working life and consequently their satisfaction of the job will be increased but their job stress will be decreased. Some believes that quality of work life is an indicator of the type of organizational culture or a way of management so in lieu of it the employees feel ownership, autonomy, responsibility and self-esteem¹⁷.

Walton⁵ proposed eight criteria for measuring quality of work life, include: i. Adequate and fair compensation: employees should be paid equally and there should be a uniform or consistent payment guideline for employers to follow. ii. Safe and healthy environment: The main aim of this item is to establish work safety, reasonable work hours and physical condition with minimum work danger besides imposing age limitation for employment. iii. Growth and security: This is achievable through optimizing individual capabilities, progress opportunities, security, income and job. iv. Development of human capabilities: Using autonomy and self-control, benefitting from diverse skills, accessing to information about the future, and planning and executing activities for the employees are among the mentionable items in quality of work life. v. Social integration: No bias towards race and gender, considering various aspects of personnel life, mobility in the organizational hierarchy, organizational socialization and the freedom to express ideas and feelings, are effective in establishing the quality of work life. vi. Constitutionalism: Freedom of expression (the right to dissent or criticism of the attitude of supervisors), ability to respond to organizational issues, including salary, bonuses and job security and organization's desire to regulate them are among the elements

of quality of work in the organization. vii. The total life space: Balance between time devoted to work and do the job and time devoted to family, can greatly increase the quality of work life. viii. Social relevance: Organization's Policy to neutralize the effects of anti-social activities could prevent the negative aftermath such as despising personnel's work and profession value and destruction of a sense of personal satisfaction and self-respect. Thus it can enhance the quality of work life¹⁰.

Organizational Commitment: Organizational commitment is considered to be one of organizations' ultimate goals to survive. Staff who have a high level of organizational commitment are more friendly, happier, more efficient, loyal and more accountable. They are hardworking employees and have lower cost¹⁰.

Zaki¹⁷ defines commitment as a strength and power that obliges people to demonstrate rational behavior towards one or multiple objectives.

Organizational commitment also means supporting and having emotional bond with organization's goals and values, for the sake of the organization itself and not for its Instrumental values or as means to reach targets¹⁸. Commitment is an emotional response which is created by individuals' behavior, beliefs and attitude¹⁹. Martyr Motahari declares commitment as believing in principles, philosophy or social conventions which have a durable nature in human values hierarchy. He says a committed person should be loyal to his covenant and promises and must support the aims agreed upon. Organizational commitment is an attitude or an approach which links one's identity to the organization. Commitment is a sign of social activists' inclination to grant their loyalty to social systems³.

In Allen and Meyer⁹, three dimensional model, commitment is supposed as a factor that connects individuals to the organization and decreases willing to quit the job.

They distinguish between three types of commitment. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment is willing to stay in the organization because of the costs or benefits of leave to remain in the organization, and finally normative commitment is defined as a sense of obligation and duty to remain as an organization's member²⁰.

Conceptual Model and Hypothesis

As it is shown in figure 1, the conceptual framework for the present research on quality of work is derived from Walton's model⁵. Walton⁵ defines quality of work life as an organization's ability to meet the individual essential needs⁷. Eight dimensions of quality of work life on Walton's approach are presented, including: i. Adequate and fair compensation, ii. Safe and healthy environment, iii. Growth and security, iv. Development

of human capabilities, v. The total life space, vi. Social integration, vii. Constitutionalism and viii. Social relevance.

On organizational commitment, this research framework is based on Allen and Meyer⁹. Allen and Meyer⁹ believe that organizational commitment is a multidimensional structure that describes people's sense of belonging and attachment to their organization. In this study Meyer and Allen's three-component model of commitment is used to explore the dimensions of organizational commitment. There components are: i. Continuance (rational) Commitment ii. Affective commitment, and iii. normative (sense of obligation) commitment. In fact, people who have a high level of organizational commitment, show a higher level of adaptability, satisfaction, productivity, greater accountability, and a strong sense of loyalty to the organization and they are less expensive as well¹⁰.

Research Hypotheses: The main hypothesis of the study is the following: There is a significant positive relationship between the quality of work life and organizational commitment. Based on the theoretical background three additional hypothesis, are developed: i. There is a significant positive relationship between the adequate and fair compensation and organizational commitment. ii. There is a significant positive relationship between safe and healthy environment and organizational commitment. iii. There is a significant positive relationship between development of human capabilities and organizational

commitment. iv. There is a significant positive relationship between the growth and security and organizational commitment. v. There is a significant positive relationship between the constitutionalism and organizational commitment amongst Customs employees of Guilan province. vi. There is a significant positive relationship between social relevance and organizational commitment. vii. There is a significant positive relationship between the total life space and organizational commitment. viii. There is a significant positive relationship between social integration and organizational commitment.

Method

The research method is descriptive – correlation and its goal is to be applicable. From data point of view it is quantitative.

Sampling: The research was carried out in the Iran customs at Gilan province. Based on Morgan's table, the sample is consisted of 196 customs employees of Guilan province of total population of 411.

Instruments for measuring (scales): The research tool is a questionnaire consisted of two parts: Walton QWL and Meyer and Allen's organizational commitment. To determine the questionnaires' reliability, the Cronbach's Alfa technique and is used and for its validity, content and face validity test is applied (table 1).

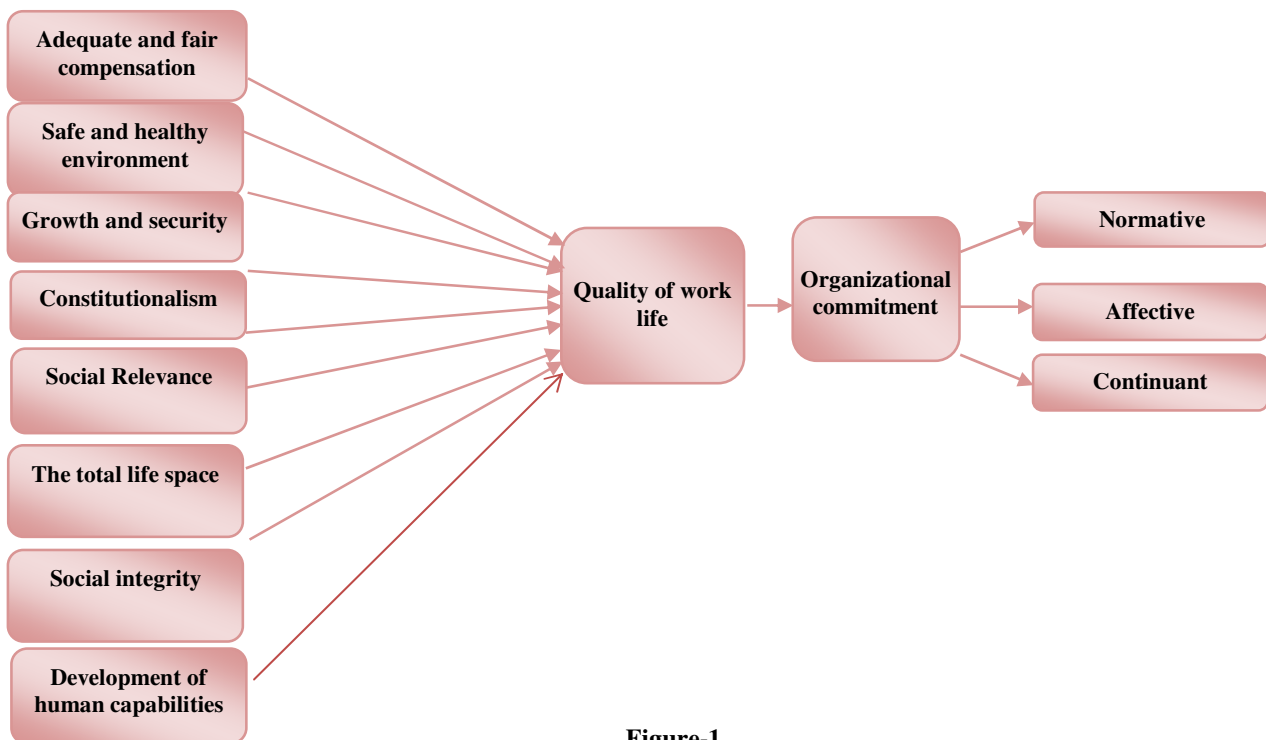


Figure-1
 Conceptual framework⁴

Results and Discussion

Research findings: Respondent profile: Analysis of demographic variables revealed that out of 196 selected samples in regard of sexuality (gender) the majority of the 102 (52%) repliers were male, in regard of age the majority of 112 (57.1%) of employees were between 30 ~ 41 years old, in regard of education the majority of 121(61.1%) had BA degree, from the years of service aspect the majority of 63 persons (32.1%) had served between 11~15 years, and in viewpoint of organizational level 1 person (5%) was at chairman level, 18 people (9.2%) were at management and deputy levels and the majority of 177 people (90.3%) were at common staff level .

Statistical population description: Before the checking the hypothesis, table 2 shows the different average measurements about research variables description and its dimensions. Also we applied Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to identify the statistical population normality. Since this study aims to investigate the relationship between variables, so the Spearman correlation coefficient is used for the variables that did not follow a normal distribution and for variables that follow a normal distribution the Pearson correlation coefficient is used. The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to identify the statistical population normality showed that except the quality of work life, other dimensions of independent variables are normally distributed (table 2).

Testing the hypothesis: In order to check the hypothesis we use the correlation r test to measure The relationship between the variables. Results showed that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between quality of work life and organizational commitment, thus the main thesis of the study is proved. The findings also proved that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between safe and healthy work environment, development of human capabilities, constitutionalism, social relevance and the total life space with organizational commitment. On the other hand data analysis showed that there is no meaningful relationship between adequate and fair compensation, growth and security and social integration with organizational commitment, therefore the due thesis that claimed such a connection were rejected (table-3).

Analysis of the conceptual model: After confirming the conceptual model variables, the conceptual model was examined through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. The advantage of this approach is that instead of analyzing variables separately, it can analyze the relationships of all the variables simultaneously. SEM is a comprehensive approach to testing hypotheses about the relationship between the observed and the latent variables. Therefore, in order to analyze this relationship using structural equations, LISREL software was used. The results of path analysis and causal relationship between variables are shown in figure 2.

Table-1
Questionnaire's reliability coefficient

Variables	Row	Investigated dimensions	Questions	Number of questions	Cronbach's alpha
Quality of work life	1	Adequate and fair compensation	1-2	2	0.735
	2	Safe and healthy environment	3-4	2	0.724
	3	Development of human capabilities	6-5	2	0.736
	4	Growth and security	7-10	4	0.758
	5	Constitutionalism	11-13	3	0.779
	6	Social relevance	14-16	3	0.881
	7	The total life space	17-19	3	0.713
	8	Social integration	20-21	2	0.721
Organizational commitment	1	Affective commitment	22-29	8	0.854
	2	Continuance (rational) commitment	30-36	7	0.825
	3	Normative commitment	37-44	8	0.807

Table-2
Research variables measurements

Dimension	Frequency	Min	Max	Average	Standard deviation	Variance	Distribution of the variable
Adequate and fair compensation	196	1	5	2.7	0.9	0.81	Normal
Safe and healthy environment	196	1	5	3.7	0.69	0.48	Normal
Development of human capabilities	196	1.5	5	2.97	0.82	0.68	Normal
Growth and security	196	1.25	5	3.04	0.69	0.48	Normal
Constitutionalism	196	1.23	5	3.34	0.76	0.58	Normal
Social relevance	196	1	5	3.35	0.86	0.74	Normal
The total life space	196	1.67	5	3.29	0.73	0.54	Normal
Social integration	196	1	5	3.1	0.86	0.75	Normal
QWL	196	2.1	4.3	3.1	0.52	0.27	Not normal
OC	196	1.87	4.7	3.1	0.53	0.28	Normal

Table-3
Results of correlation coefficients between variables

Correlation	Test	Freq.	Sig	Correlation Coefficient	Test result
1-Quality of work life with Organizational commitment	Spearman	196	0.007	0.191	hypothesis is accepted
2-Adequate and fair compensation with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.108	0.115	hypothesis is rejected
3-Safe and healthy environment with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.000	0.367	hypothesis is accepted
4-Development of human capabilities with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.000	0.311	hypothesis is accepted
5- Growth and security with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.192	0.094	hypothesis is rejected
6-constitutionalism with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.001	0.238	hypothesis is accepted
7- Social relevance with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.001	0.074	hypothesis is accepted
8-The total life space with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.001	0.221	hypothesis is accepted
9-Social integration with organizational commitment	Pierson	196	0.416	0.058	hypothesis is rejected

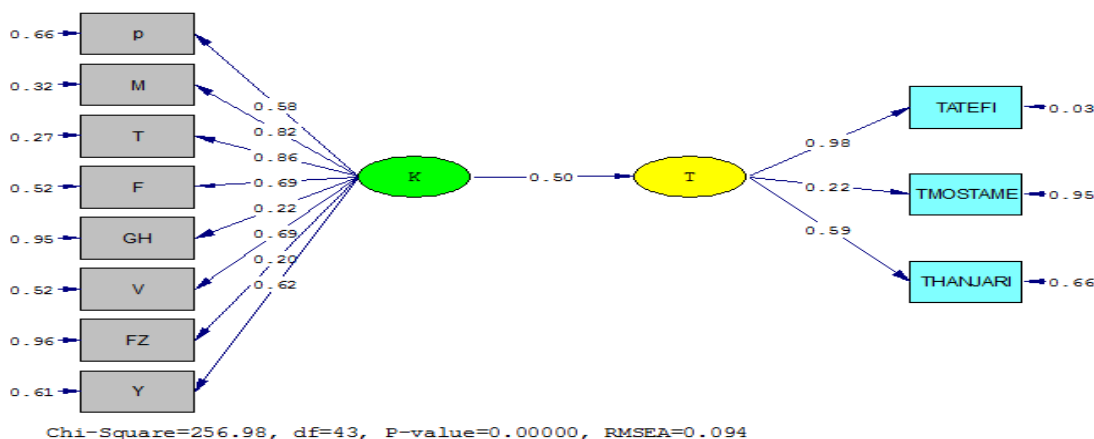


Figure-2
Final Model

Table-4
The standardized path coefficient

Variable	Dimensions	path coefficient
Organizational commitment	Affective commitment	0.98
	Continuance Commitment	0.22
	Normative commitment	0.59
Quality of work life	Adequate and fair compensation	0.58
	Safe and healthy environment	0.82
	Development of human capabilities	0.86
	Growth and security	0.69
	Constitutionalism	0.22
	Social relevance	0.69
	The total life space	0.20
	Social integration	0.62

In the table 4, the standard parameter values obtained for each of the factors and their factor loading on the latent variables is depicted. Based on the results of the factor analysis, the theoretical structure of the model is confirmed.

The table above also summarizes the LISREL software outputs regarding the coefficients of each of the paths and its explaining effect. Each path coefficients shows the relationship of each dimension on the hidden variable. All relationships except for affective commitment loading factor, was significant ($T > 2$).

To evaluate the suitability of the model, path analysis and other goodness of fit criteria were studied. LISREL output results are shown in the table 5. Estimation of the standard model shows that the model is appropriate. However the chi-square divided by degrees of freedom is different from the range of 2 to 3, but as this measure is influenced by sampling, other factors are considered. RMSEA index is equal to 0.094, which indicates a good fitness of the model.

Table-5
Results for fit indices of the structural models

RMSEA	Degrees of freedom/chi-square	Degrees of freedom	Chi-square
0.094	5.97	43	256.98

The standardized path coefficients, according to the analysis performed, can be seen in the table. The regression coefficient for the quality of work life and organizational commitment variable is shown in the table 6.

Table-6
Standardized regression coefficients for hidden variables

Variables	Regression coefficient	T	result
Quality of work life Organizational commitment	0.50	6.92	Relationship confirmed

Conclusion

The first hypothesis test showed that the more quality of work life results in the higher organizational commitment of the customs employees of Guilan province. This result is consistent with test results of Garmabdari³, Hosseini¹, Abdul-Aziz and Nazarmahd⁷ and also Normala⁴ studies. Accordingly, organizations can increase one's organizational commitment by utilizing strategies such as paying adequate and fair compensation, establishment of a safe and healthy environment, creating opportunities for development of human capabilities, creating security, Social integration and relevance, committing to constitutionalism in the organization and creating balance between employees' work and home environment.

The second hypothesis test showed that there is not a meaningful relationship between Adequate and fair compensation with organizational commitment amongst customs employees of Guilan province. Adequate and fair compensation means that employees' wages either internally or externally should imply equality. This result is a little unexpected, because usually the salary is an important factor in increasing the motivation and commitment of individuals. During similar researches executed by Hosseini¹ and Garmabdari³ a meaningful relationship between adequate and fair compensation and organizational commitment was found. Hence the results of these two studies are not aligned and It seems biased answers resulted that.

The third hypothesis test showed that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between safe and healthy environment and organizational commitment amongst customs employees of Guilan province, while safe and healthy environment is including establishment a reasonable working hours and working conditions with minimum of physical risks and age limits for employment. In other words the more safe and Healthy work environment in organization prevails the more employees' commitment to the organization will be emerged. This claim matches with Abdul-Aziz and Nazarmahd⁷ and Hosseini¹ studies.

The fourth hypothesis test results showed a meaningful and positive relationship between organizational commitment and development of human capabilities among customs employees of Guilan province. Improving human capabilities, reflects in creation of opportunities such as independence and self-control, take advantage of a variety of skills, access to information about future and planning and implementation of activities for employees. In other words, organizations efforts to enhance the ability of individuals, increases the organizational commitment. This claim matches with Garmabdari³ and Hosseini¹ studies.

The fifth hypothesis test results showed that a meaningful and positive relationship between growth and security with organizational commitment among customs employees of Guilan province does not exist. This result is a little unexpected. The questions of the questionnaire in this dimension are: i. Autonomy in execution the job tasks. ii. Job security. iii. Sufficient technical skills associated with the job. iv. To be relaxed while doing the job. After examining these questions in the questionnaire, it appears that factors like autonomy, job security and peace of mind at work, cannot increase organizational commitment among customs employees of Guilan province. This matter contradicts Garmabdari³ and Hosseini¹ studies.

The sixth hypothesis test results showed a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment of employees and constitutionalism in the customs of Guilan province. This variable (constitutionalism) reflects in the form of freedom of expression (the right to express opposing views without fear of

punishment), the right to respond to the issues such as wages, bonuses and job security, and superiority of law authority to individuals authority the force of law). This result is consistent with results of Garmabdari³ and Normala⁴ studies.

The results of the seventh hypothesis proved that there is a positive and significant relationship between social integration with organizational commitment in customs office of Guilan province.

Social integration can be seen in the absence of bias towards race and gender and ethnicity of human resources, improvement opportunities in the organizational hierarchy, socialization and the personnel's freedom to express their ideas and feelings. this finding coincides with finding of Garmabdari³ and Hosseini¹ studies.

The results of eighth hypothesis showed a positive and significant relationship between the total life spaces with organizational commitment in customs office of Guilan province. The importance of creating balance between work and life has attracted executives' attention to build organizational commitment through promotion of this organizational matter. This result confirms the results of the research performed by Abdul-Aziz and Nazarmahd⁷ and Hosseini¹. And finally, the results of the ninth hypothesis didn't show a meaningful relationship between social relevance with organizational commitment among customs employees of Guilan province. This is clearly in contradiction with the results of the researches executed by Garmabdari³.

Suggestions: Suggestions based on the findings of the research (executive Suggestions): i. It is recommended that the human resources management of the customs office consider standards criteria when planning for safe working environment. ii. It is suggested that a performance assessment committee be formed to evaluate the organization's performance based on these indexes: development of human capabilities and skills, social relevance, constitutionalism and the total life space of the employees. iii. It is recommended that HRM of Guilan Customs office, based on the results of continuous assessment, pay attention to the staff training needs and provide the necessary training to develop their capabilities. iv. It is suggested that the customs office directors, monitor the organization's work procedures and it's adhere to the principles and rules set out in the statute. v. It is suggested that management consider strategies and solutions to create balance in work life, such as teleworking, part-time work, vacation incentives, etc.

Suggestions for further researches: i. A study should be done separately to assess the effect of each of the dimensions of organizational commitment on quality of work life. ii. It is suggested that a similar study be conducted in other organizations across the country to increase the generalizability of the study and to compare the results. iii. The same issue could be investigated using other questionnaires such as Porter's

organizational commitment questionnaire, and compare the results. iv. It is suggested to rank and prioritize all aspects of the present research by using other statistical methods such as the Friedman test. v. It is suggested to investigate the influence of other variables such as organizational structure, job satisfaction, leadership style and internal and external motivational factors, on the quality of work life.

Research limitations: i. The sample of this study was the personnel of the customs office in guilan province. Therefore the results can be extended to customs offices in other provinces. ii. Staff concerns that their jobs may be compromised, could have affected the accuracy of their answers. iii. This study examined the impact of quality of work life on organizational commitment. But other organizational variables can also affect the organizational commitment. Those variables are not considered in this study. iv. In this study, the Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Questionnaire was used. While other questionnaires such as Porter's organizational commitment Questionnaire can also be used. v. In this study the rating of quality of work life and organizational commitment dimensions has not been addressed.

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