IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION IN INDIAN INDUSTRIES

Ms. Priyanka Sharma

Sunrise University-Alwar, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT

The quality of life is gaining increasing attention by organizations. Quality of life encompasses the sum total of healthy experiences that individuals experience in the various facets of their life. A big component of the quality of life is the quality of life experienced by organization members, at the work place. The quality of working life is particularly important and worthy of investigation since individuals do not compartmentalize their lives but carry over their satisfaction or dissatisfaction experienced at work where they spend the major part of their time, their home. Thus the quality of life at work spills over to the quality of life experienced in the family. The key objective of the Organizational Development (OD) is to improve the quality of working life. The commonly measured indices of the Quality of Working Life (QWL) of employees is the extent of their job involvement at work, their sense of competence and job satisfaction, the supervision, coworkers pay, promotional opportunities etc. OD efforts are intended to enhance the QWL, not only from the employee's point of view, but also from the organizational and social perspective.

Key-Words: OD, QWL, Work Life, Job Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Dissatisfaction with working life affects the workers some time or another, regardless of position or status. The frustration, boredom and anger common to employees can be costly to both individuals and organisations.

Managers seek to reduce job dissatisfaction at all organizational levels, including their own. This is a complex problem, however, because it is difficult to isolate and identify the attributes which affect the quality of working life.

Profitability of a company is linked to satisfaction of its work force. A company that does not measure and improve employee satisfaction may face increasing turnover, declining productivity and limited ability to attract and retain qualified replacements.

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE INVOLVES THREE MAJOR PARTS

1. Occupational health care:

Safe work environment provides the basis for people to enjoy his work. The work should not pose health hazards for the employees.

2. Suitable working time:

Companies should observe the number of working hours and the standard limits on overtime, time of vacation and taking free days before national holidays.

3. Appropriate salary:

The employee and the employer agree upon appropriate salary. The Government establishes the rate of minimum salary; the employer should not pay less than that to the employee. Work represents a role which a person has designated to himself. On the one hand, work earns one's living for the family, on the other hand, it is a self-realization that provides enjoyment and satisfaction.

Work-Life Quality — defined, as the balance between an employee's work demands and outside interests or pressures — is a long-standing but ever-evolving area of corporate social responsibility. Some organizations view QWL as important, but do not formally link it to their strategic or business plans.

NATURE AND SCOPE OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Quality of work life is the quality of relationship between employees and total working environment. A Great Place to work is where "You Trust the people you work for, have pride in what you do, and enjoy the people you work with."

Quality of work life represents concern for human dimensions of work and relates to job satisfaction and organisational development.

The following aspects improve the QWL:

1. Recognition of work life issues:

Issues related to work life should be addressed by the Board and other important officials of the company like why people are not happy, do they need training, why employee morale is poor and numerous other issues. If these are addressed properly, they will be able to build, "People-Centred Organisations".

2. Commitment to improvement:

QWL can be improved if the staff is committed to improvement in productivity and performance. This issue can be taken by the board through staff recognition and support programmes. Board should prepare QWL reports on periodic basis to boost the system. They can also introduce reward system which will be of help to them.

3. Quality of work life teams:

Board members should form the combined team of managers and workers and all the issues and common themes must be identified.

Work Life Teams = Managers + Staff

All issues must be addressed like loss of morale, lack of trust, increased intensity of work, reward, recognition etc. and commonly, managers and staff should arrive at solutions.

4. Training to facilitators:

Both the leader and staff can assess the job requirement and decide jointly what type of training is required to improve the quality of work life

5. Conduct focus groups:

Formation of focus groups can affect the QWL and discuss the questions in a positive way like:

(a) What brought you here today?

(b) What do you feel are the top three issues that affect your quality of work life?

(c) What do you want the organisation should do for you?

(d) Do you want company to increase the salary, etc?

6. Analyze information from focus group:

After the formation of focus groups and their discussion on different issues and collection of information, the information should be analysed to give right direction to organisational activities.

7. Identify and implement improvement opportunities:

It is important to identify and implement improvement opportunities like communication, recognition and non-monetary compensation. Improving support structure, constant review of reward and recognition system etc. would help in formulating communication strategies, focusing on linkages between managers and staff.

8. Flexible work hours:

The diverse work force of today does not want to work for fixed hours or days. They want flexibility in their work schedule so that professional and personal life can be managed together.

Flexibility can improve the QWL in the following ways:

i. Work for longer hours in a day with less number of working days in a week.

ii. Going to office for fixed hours but in different time slots rather than fixed working hours. Many companies even provide the flexibility of work from home.

9. Autonomy to work:

Delegation is an essential element of organisation structure. People want freedom to work in their own way, in terms of forming teams and making decisions. If they are allowed to do so, it enhances the QWL . An organisation with high quality of work life is "an organisation that promotes and maintains a work environment that results in excellence in everything it does – by ensuring open communication, respect, recognition, trust, support, well being and satisfaction of its members, both, personally and professionally".

Importance of Quality of Work Life:

Many companies find that paying attention to the needs of employees can benefit the company in terms of productivity, employee loyalty and company reputation.

QWL is important because of the following reasons:

1. Enhance stakeholder relations and credibility:

A growing number of companies that focus on QWL improve their relationships with the stakeholders. They can communicate their views, policies, and performance on complex social issues; and develop interest among their key stakeholders like consumers, suppliers, employees etc.

2. Increase productivity:

Programmes which help employees balance their work and lives outside the work can improve productivity. A company's recognition and support — through its stated values and policies — of employees' commitments, interests and pressures, can relieve employees' external stress.

This allows them to focus on their jobs during the workday and helps to minimize absenteeism. The result can be both enhanced productivity and strengthened employee commitment and loyalty.

3. Attraction and retention:

Work-life strategies have become a means of attracting new skilled employees and keeping existing ones satisfied. Many job seekers prefer flexible working hours as the benefit they would look for in their job. They would rather have the opportunity to work flexible hours than receive an additional increment in annual pay.

a. More employees may stay on a job, return after a break or take a job with one company over another if they can match their needs better with those of their paid work.

b. This results in savings for the employer as it avoids the cost of losing an experienced worker and recruiting someone new.

c. Employers who support their staff in this way often gain loyalty from the staff.

4. Reduces absenteeism:

a. Companies that have family-friendly or flexible work practices have low absenteeism. Sickness rates fall as pressures are managed better. Employees have better methods of dealing with work-life conflicts than taking unplanned leave.

b. Workers (including the managers) who are healthy and not over-stressed are more efficient at work.

5. Improve the quality of working lives

a. Minimising work-life role conflict helps prevent role overload and people have a more satisfying working life, fulfilling their potential both in paid work and outside it.

b. Work life balance can minimise stress and fatigue at work, enabling people to have safer and healthier working lives. Workplace stress and fatigue can contribute to injuries at work and home.

c. Self-employed people control their own work time to some extent. Most existing information on work-life balance is targeted at those in employment relationships. However, the self-employed too may benefit from maintaining healthy work habits and developing strategies to manage work flows which enable them to balance one with other roles in their lives.

6. Matches people who would not otherwise work with jobs:

a. Parents, people with disabilities and those nearing retirement may increase their work force participation if more flexible work arrangements are made. Employment has positive individual and social benefits beyond the financial rewards.

b. Employers may also benefit from a wider pool of talent to draw from, particularly to their benefit when skill shortages exist.

7. Benefiting families and communities:

a. In a situation of conflict between work and family, one or other suffers. Overseas studies have found that family life can interfere with paid work. QWL maintains balance between work and family. At the extreme, if family life suffers, this may have wider social costs.

b. Involvement in community, cultural, sporting or other activities can be a benefit to community and society at large. For instance, voluntary participation in school boards of trustees can contribute to the quality of children's education.

Significance of Good Work-life Quality

1. Decrease absenteeism and increase turnover,

2. Less number of accidents,

3. Improved labour relations,

4. Employee personification,

5. Positive employee attitudes toward their work and the company,

6. Increased productivity and intrinsic motivation,

7. Enhanced organizational effectiveness and competitive advantage, and

8. Employees gain a high sense of control over their work.

1.   Problems in Improving the QWL:

Though every organisation attempts to improve the employer-employee relations and through it, the quality of work life of employees, problems may occur in effective implementation of QWL programmes.

These problems may occur because of:

1. Poor reward and recognition:

People will not do their best when they feel that employers' commitment in terms of reward and recognition is lacking. Commitment is a mutual phenomenon. When employers want to get the best from employees but do not give them reward and recognition, people will not be committed to work.

2. Dead-end jobs:

Work which does not offer opportunities for growth and promotion is one of the greatest reasons for employees' de-motivation and non-commitment. Jobs which deprive employees of self-development and growth opportunities lead to high dissatisfaction and disloyalty.

3. Managing by intimidation:

Mistreating people and managing them by threats and embarrassment leads to employees' dissatisfaction and weakens their commitment. In a best seller book" The Loyalty Link" Dennis G. Mc Carthty has identified managing by intimidation as one of the seven ways which undermine employees' loyalty.

4. Negative working environment:

Non-acceptance by colleagues, non-cooperation, too much politics, and negative behaviour by colleagues, supervisors and other people in the company also hamper commitment. At the end of the day people want peace of mind, which if not available in the work environment will discourage them to show total support to the company?

5. No job security:

One of the major needs of employees is job security. If the employee feels that he can lose his job anytime, he would not be committed towards company's goals.

6. Negative attitude:

Some people by nature are not committed to anything and anyone and as such they would not be committed to their employers also. Commitment is an attitude and those who lack it will not be committed to their jobs.

OBJECTIVES/SCOPE OF THE STUDY

For an effective development of both individual objective and company's objective, the Organization should provide a good overall working environment considering factors like career opportunities, participative management, working environment. In this process it can generate sense of satisfaction for which on his own capability to achieve simultaneously both individual and company's objective.

RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

Job satisfaction occupies a prominent role in both the life of an employee and an organization as each of them contributes for that simultaneously. Since the economic reforms in India, there is a growing disparity in terms of socio-economical, psychological and personal wellbeing among the employees in the conventional manufacturing industries and the fast growing knowledge-based industries. These factors necessitate the research on the factors contributing for the employee satisfaction and the resultant productivity in these two types of industries, where the workforce is vastly varying with different mindsets and their perceptions about QWL.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is designed to cover the aspects necessary for measuring the employees (middle level) opinion about the various QWL programs offered in their respective organizations. As already mentioned in this study, the organizations will have to recognize the importance of developing jobs and working conditions that would ensure the highest

performance and productivity of the employees, who in turn will support the organization to meet its business   objectives.

The present study is designed to analyze the factors which lead to high QWL in today's fast-developing world and to study whether these factors change with respect to manufacturing and service sectors. The study will identify the QWL criterion that is different in the manufacturing and service sectors and how it affects the employee's well-being. The outcome of the study is based on the opinion expressed by the managers and executives about QWL programs deployed in their organizations. The study also intended to uncover the hidden factors behind high QWL in selected conventional manufacturing industries and fast growing knowledge based service industries. This study collected opinion of the managers and the executives of the seven companies of manufacturing sector and nine companies of service sector . The companies selected were a combination of private and public sector industries.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cherns (1978, p. 39) stated that "QWL owes its origins to the marriage of the structural, systems perspective of organizational behaviour with the interpersonal, human relations, supervisory-style perspective."

It is a continuing process, not something with a beginning, middle and an end that could be turned on today and turned off tomorrow (Brooks & Gawel, 2001)

 Van Der Doef and Maes (1999) and Hade, et al. (2007) also regards job satisfaction as an outcome variable of QWL. Sergey, 2006, observed in his research on QWL that career growth opportunity is a crucial factor determining constructs of QWL. Koonmee, 2010, QWL is treated as a reformist movement that is concerned with the function and working of a good organization. Bharathi, 2011, found that QWL perception by the employees and its implementation has a positive role in the changing scenario and has been shown to improve the life of the employee along with the organization. McNall et all, 2014, studied the relationship between flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction. Tabassum et all, (2014), found that opportunity for continued growth and security is positively correlated with job satisfaction.

QWL IN INDIA

 Ayesha et al, 2011, demonstrated a significant difference between male and female employees working in bank in the way they perceive QWL. Sandhu and Prabhakar, 2012, observed that remuneration for the employees is an important determinant of QWL. Balchander et all, 2013, studied the impact of personal factors on QWL of the respondents in Insurance Sector. They found that there was no significance difference between male and female category officers wrt

QWL. Battu and Chakravarti, 2014, found that low QWL had an adverse effect on the nature of behavior, responses to others, handling critical situations and on the personal life.

Several scholars and HR practitioners have studied the QWL from different angles and have arrived at factors affecting QWL. Yet, an attempt to conduct a comprehensive study to objectively measure the various dimensions of QWL that affects the workers of India is not studied. Hence, an attempt has been made to provide the perception of QWL by the workers in the Indian context in general. Special attention has been paid to understand the QWL perception by the manufacturing and service sector employees.

QWL IN MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Mohanrajet all (2010) in their study observed that QWL factors are essential for promoting a strong work culture. In (2012) Aggarwal's studies indicated that organizations can benefit by adopting WLB, wherein the employees become more responsive to the support provided which adds to their performance. Jagatheesh (2013) assessed that socio-economic background of the employees in the industrial estate is not satisfactory for economic development and employees were not satisfied with Opportunity for continued growth. Mohanraj and Sankar (2013) studied the relationship between QWL and work environment and wellness of workers.

Private Sector

Kavoussietal. (1978)studied the absenteeism in two textile factories in Iran. Poor working conditions in the factories led to the high absenteeism rate, which the authors say could be improved by improving the quality of working life as absenteeism have widespread consequences across the factory.

Public Sector

In 2012, Aggarwal investigated the 'work life balance' amongst the workers in the Gujarat refinery, Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Vadodara, Gujarat. The major constructs used in the study were perception of life by the employees, effect of stressors in work place and at home, effect of constructs which are related to professional and personal life, mind-set of the employees toward the regulations of the organization. The employees wanted the organization to be more worker-friendly and understanding to the problems of the employees' needs and support them with good work-life balance (WLB) and relaxing atmosphere. A good WLB can bring a positive attitude in the minds of the employees towards the company. From this result, it is understood that organizations can benefit by adopting WLB, wherein the employees become more responsive to the support provided which adds to their performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results were noted and analysed as per the statistical analysis. This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected and its interpretation pertaining to quality of work life in manufacturing sector and in service sector. A special focus will be on comparing the quality of work life on these two sectors and discuss the results based on the prevalent trend. The results would be analysed with regard to the dimensions of quality of work life as measured by the questionnaires that were used in this study. Focus will also be placed on the discussion of the results as well as the overall conclusions with specific reference to the literature study, research methodology and the results of the study. The results of are presented in three main sections- Section 1 will discuss the quality of work life in manufacturing sector; Section 2 about quality of work life in service sector and finally, Section 3 about comparison of quality of work life in manufacturing and service sectors.

From the results of the current study, the following model has been proposed, which clearly indicates that different factors are essential to achieve the balance in QWL among the manufacturing and service sectors.

REFERENCES

1. Acker, J. (2006). Inequality regimes gender, class, and race in organizations. *Gender & society*, 20(4), 441-464.
2. Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 2(267-299).
3. Adams-Webber, J. R. (1970). Elicited versus provided constructs in repertory grid technique: A review. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 43(4), 349-354.
4. Basit, T. (2003). Manual or electronic? The role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational research*, 45(2), 143-154.
5. Basu, R., & Green, S. R. (1997). Leader-member exchange and transformational leadership: An empirical examination of innovative behaviours in leader-member dyads. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 27, 477–499.
6. Cathcart, D., Jeska, S., Karnas, J., Miller, S.E., Pechacek, J., & Rheault, L. (2004). Span of control matters. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 34(9), 395–399.
7. Centers, R., & Bugental, D. E. (1966). Intrinsic and Extrinsic Job Motivations among Different Segments of the Working Population. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 50(3), 193-197.
8. Danna, K., and Griffin, R. W. (1999). Health and Well-Being in the Workplace: A Review and Synthesis of the Literature. *Journal of Management*, 25, 357-384.
9. U. Sekaran, & C. A. Schriesheim (Eds.), *Leadership: Beyond Establishment Views*, (pp.81-103). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.